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CHRISTIAN
FAMILY

Salt
n' Light

You  Tube

Contest



Getting to the Heart of Your Worry:

Applying Matthew 6:19-34 to a common problem

Guest Editorial

by Robert D. Jones

“Don’t worry, be happy!” So advised a popular song several years ago. But for the person who struggles with worry, such counsel is sadly simplistic. You can’t just flip a switch to end your anxiety.

Perhaps no single problem plagues people more than worry. It can arise suddenly and linger long. It saps your sleep, drains your joy, exhausts your energy, ruins your relationships, and aggravates your body ailments.

While worry is sinful, God gives you help and hope in Christ

The good news of Matthew 6 is that Jesus himself addresses worry. Worry is solvable. You are not left to human-centered psychologies and techniques. You have the Bible – God’s own Word – to teach you. Through His Spirit and His Word God guarantees you help and hope. And the fact that Jesus addresses his own followers means that even believers face temptations to worry. You are not alone. God your Father will help you.

What does Jesus say about worry? It is wrong. He forbids it no less than three times in our passage, “Do not worry” (vv. 25, 31, 34). The apostle Paul repeats this prohibition in Philippians 4:6, “Do not be anxious about anything.”

Does this discourage you? It shouldn’t. Grace applies. Christ came into the world to save sinners. While God might not reverse the tough situations that occasion your worry, He specializes in pardoning and transforming worriers like you.

Worry is idolatry, and the solution is repentance

Why is worry sinful? In Matthew 6 Jesus exposes the sinful roots of your anxiety and points to a way out.

First, He tells us in verses 19-25 that worry is idolatry. Idolatry means worshipping someone or something other than the true God. It involves hitching your heart to some false savior, exalting your personal desires above the Lord, serving some master other than God. Your anxiety is an automatic indicator that you are building your life on a false god.

In verse 25 Jesus says, “Therefore I tell you, do not worry. . . .” His “therefore” points us back to verses 19-24 where Jesus presents three pictures of idolatry.

Instead of focusing on heavenly treasures, worriers fixate on competing treasures (vv. 19-21) – earthly

things like your job, marriage, money, possessions, health, children, etc. You fixate on them and then live in perpetual worry about their future. These earthly “treasures” end up controlling you. By valuing them supremely you miss the heavenly treasures found in Christ, the greater glories of the Gospel that far outshine the perishable trinkets we inordinately value.

Instead of setting our sights on Jesus the Light of the world, the eyes of worriers are clouded with earthly cares (vv. 22-23), not the “things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God” (Col. 3:1).

And instead of serving God, worriers devote themselves to competing masters (vs. 24). Slave masters require exclusive devotion; you can’t work for two different bosses. “No one can serve two masters.” Whether it’s money (Jesus uses a typical object of worry) or your reputation, your spouse, or your vocation, you must submit it to Christ your Lord and refuse to allow it to ascend to the throne of your heart.

Whenever you worry, examine what treasures you value. On what do your eyes gaze? Who is functioning as your real lord? Then repent – not just for the sinful acts of worry – but for the idolatry that drives it. In a fresh way, make Christ your treasure, your vision, and your master. “Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face; and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace” (hymn writer Helen Lemmel).

Worry is unbelief, and the solution is faith

Worry is not merely idolatry. In verses 25-34 it is the fruit of remaining unbelief. Jesus addresses His hearers in verse 30 not as pagans or unbelievers but as those who have “little faith.” Worry within a Christian arises from doubts – pockets of remnant unbelief – that linger within.

In these verses Jesus does not merely prohibit worry but gives reasons not to worry, reasons that center on God’s character and promises. To worry is to deny, in practical ways, God’s power, wisdom, and love for you in your situation. It’s to forget that you are the Father’s chosen, adopted, and deeply loved child.

In verses 25-30 Jesus reminds you that the God who provides for birds and flowers values you much more than them. If God will provide for plants and animals, will He not much more care for you, dear Christian –

you who have been made in His image, bought by His Son, re-born with His life, and sealed by His Spirit?

Furthermore, verses 31-32 teach that worry characterizes pagans, not those who belong to the heavenly Father. Pagans – idolaters, unbelievers – eagerly seek temporal things. But you, Christian, have a Father who knows and meets your true needs, in His time and His way. As John Piper puts it, “Jesus says that the root of anxiety is inadequate faith in our Father’s future grace. As unbelief gets the upper hand in our hearts, one of the effects is anxiety. The root cause of anxiety is a failure to trust all that God has promised to be for us in Jesus” (*Future Grace*, p. 54.).

The antidote to worry, then, is to believe God’s promises and orient your life around His priorities. “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (Matt. 6:33). Not one of His good promises has ever failed.

Finally, Jesus reminds us in verse 34 that worrying cannot improve your future. It merely diverts you from your present responsibilities, draining your energy and sapping your life. You miss the present joys of God’s provisions.

Conclusion

Christian friend, whenever you worry, know that it is a symptom of your remaining idolatry and unbelief. There is someone or something you are living for at that point other than the Lord. There is some truth or promise about God that you are not embracing.

The following self-counseling questions may help you examine your worries in light of God’s Word. Be sure to talk to Him about these matters in prayer:

1. What one or two concerns in my life tend to become areas of worry? Repent of the ways you have let even the legitimate cares of this world control you.
2. What specific idols and lies do I tend to worship and believe? Name them and confess them to God.

What’s Inside

The adage “It’s better to light a candle than curse the darkness” makes it seem as if there are only two things to do when confronted with darkness: we can either criticize, complain and gripe, or we can embrace the hard work that is involved in making a real and positive change to the situation. But there is a third, very popular option: we can put on sunglasses and pretend it just ain’t dark out at all.

Inside we have details on our **Salt ‘n Light YouTube Contest**. We are encouraging our readers to get involved in a medium – that of film and video – that’s stained with the inkiest depths of darkness. But rather than curse this darkness, or put on blinders to it, ARPA Canada and *Reformed Perspective* have joined together to encourage candle production. We think we can let our light shine in this medium. If you think so too, look inside for contest details.

3. What specific truths about God or promises from God do I need to embrace each day? Filling your mind with God’s Word will chip away at the idols and remnant unbelief.
4. What steps of faith and obedience do I need to take today? What tasks does He call me to do? Pour your energies freely into today’s business.

Let me also encourage you to not do this alone. God has given you a body of fellow Christians. Enlist the help of your pastor, a wise friend, or a biblical counselor who can wisely and lovingly help you to know and apply God’s Word to your worrisome situations. My friend, Jesus can change you from a worrier to a God-truster, and He can begin to do so today.

This article is reprinted with permission from the May 2003 issue of The Biblical Counselor, a publication of National Association of Nouthetic Counselors (www.NANC.org).



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CALVINIST CARTOONS by EDDIE EDDINGS



<http://calvinisticcartoons.blogspot.com/>

A PASTOR PASSING A PASTOR IN A PASTURE



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

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

Editor: Jon Dykstra

Address for Editorial Matters (Letters and Submissions):

Reformed Perspective, 162 Cambridge Drive, Lynden, WA, USA 98264
E-mail: editor@reformedperspective.ca

Managing Editor: Wilhelm Gortemaker

Regular Contributors:

Sharon Bratcher, Jane deGlint, Christine Farenhorst, Margaret Helder, Johan Tangelder, Rene Vermeulen, Michael Wagner

Board of Directors: John Voorhorst, Chairman;

James Teitsma, Secretary/Treasurer; Peter DeBoer, Wilhelm Gortemaker, Jakob Kuik, Henk VanderVelde, Theresa Weessies

Secretarial Address (Board Matters): James Teitsma

449 Almey Avenue, Winnipeg, MB Canada R3W 1P6

Contact Address for South Africa:

Arie Roos, Box 584, Kuilsrivier, 7580 Republic of South Africa

Contact Address for Australia:

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

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Readers' Response



Dear Editor,

Recently, Reformed Perspective has been recommending books by Ken Ham. The latest is *Already Gone: Why your kids will quit church and what you can do to stop it*. According to Sarah Meerstra (Nota Bene, Sept. 2009, "Why young people leave the church") Ham's book claims that

"When children are taught to doubt the historical truth of the Genesis account. . . the entire authority of Scripture is questioned [and] young people come to question the truth of the Bible and its relevance for their lives."

Of course, Ham (a charismatic and dynamic young-earth creationist [YEC] evangelist) is referring to the notion that one must defend at all costs the YEC agenda which claims that Genesis 1 must be regarded as teaching the technical chronological details of our material origins. The standard rhetoric includes a reference to Psalm 11:3: "If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?" The implication is that if we doubt their approach to Genesis 1, we might as well toss out the whole Bible.

It is well known in Christian higher education circles that young-earth creationism can indeed lead to a crisis in a young person's life. However, YEC itself is the problem. Many who grow up with YEC and then in their college and university education begin to see its all-too-clear failures to grapple with the scientific evidences of an ancient creation are ill equipped to handle the tension, and dispense with YEC and along with it Biblical faith in its entirety, because YEC requires of its followers a particular interpretation of Genesis 1. There are even tragic cases of suicide triggered by this tension.

It should not be, though, that the truth of the Bible is questioned when scientific evidence is considered; it is instead the authority of leadership who promote YEC which should be questioned. Must we really tie ourselves to a particular way of linking Genesis 1 and science? Must we seek scientific evidence for what we think are the scientific details of the Genesis record? Why does the YEC approach have so much draw, even in our own Canadian Reformed circles, when we have instead a rich heritage of pursuing the careful analysis of the historical, textual, and cultural context of Scripture (including Genesis 1), relying on the redemptive historical hermeneutic approach, and letting Scripture interpret Scripture?

Arnold Sikkema
Langley, BC

Editor's Response

You ask why the Young Earth Creationist understanding of Scripture is so popular in our circles. It is because we are Reformed and we know our history.

Centuries ago the Bible was reserved for only the very educated. Simple folk were forbidden from reading a Bible because the church didn't think they were smart enough to interpret the true meaning of the text. Today we're again being told the Bible is a book

only the educated can understand, but now instead of being pointed to popes and priests for enlightenment, we're being pointed to PhDs – scientists will tell us what Genesis 1 *really* means and how to interpret tough theological terms like "day" and "morning."

It's the same error, updated. And the Reformed response remains the same: we believe in the perspicuity of Scripture – that God intended the meaning of his Word to be understood by the ordinary reader. That when He said we are justified by faith, He meant just that. And when He described the world as being created in six days, He meant just that.

You mention suicides. I don't think this despair comes as a result of being a Young Earth Creationist but rather comes from being the sort that relies on Science to prove the truth of the Bible. This is a flawed approach – looking to Science to establish Scripture – that causes despair to any sort of Christian who holds to it, including Young Earth, but also Old Earth sorts. I have seen students encounter a helpful, professing university lecturer who explained to them that the Bible simply doesn't say what they think it does, that "Science" says the Earth can't be mere thousands of years old. And while this prof may have stopped questioning the plain meaning of Scripture only a few chapters into Genesis, his students don't see any reason to stop – what reason is there? – and proceed to re-examine the whole Bible in light of what the majority of scientists are telling us is true these days. And then they despair because they are left with no Bible at all; it turns out that (or at least this is what the majority of scientists say) the evidence is stacked up against every part of the Bible.

The mistake here is in believing that "Science" can be used impartially to evaluate, back up, question, defend, attack or support the Bible. But there is no impartiality, no neutrality. We either acknowledge that we are looking at the world around us through eyes He designed, touching it with deft fingers He crafted, and evaluating it with the logic and reason that finds its origin in His character, or we put on blinders to all of that. But if we put on blinders to it, we shouldn't pretend that is impartiality. It isn't impartiality; it is obstinacy.

Now it is true that some Young Earth Creationists mistakenly elevate Science above Scripture – some have made Science the standard by which they are going to prove the Bible! But on your blog, *Reformed Academic*, the same type of mistake is made, though to a very different end. There Science is again elevated above Scripture, with the scientific consensus of the day used to determine how we should best interpret Scripture. Thus when the majority of scientists say we are related to chimps, well, according to your *Reformed Academic* colleague Jitse van der Meer, even that must be read back into the Bible.

It seems then that we can agree on only one thing – you rightly conclude that the real standard we should employ is using Scripture to interpret Scripture. I don't think you are. I pray you will.

Nota Bene

News worth noting

by Sarah Meerstra



ISN'T IT IRONIC?

Human Rights Tribunal rules Human Rights Act out of order

In early September the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ruled that Section 13 of the Canadian Human Rights Act – the infamous “hate speech law” – violates the right to free expression guaranteed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, because it carries the threat of punitive fines.

The decision was made by Tribunal member Athanasios Hadjis in the case of activist lawyer Richard Warman and the Canadian Human Rights Commission against Marc Lemire, webmaster of the right-wing website FreedomSite.org. Warman had brought a complaint before the CHRC in 2003, arguing that certain writings on the website were likely to incite hate against homosexuals and blacks.

Although the courts have upheld the constitutional nature of Section 13 before, Hadjis argued that they did so in

the understanding that the process was to be a conciliatory one, seeking mediation rather than punitive measures. By making a provision for a large fine, he argued, the process was undermined, especially since in this case punitive measures were sought against Lemire even though he responded to the complaint by removing the material in question and seeking mediation.

Popular conservative pundit and human rights commission critic Mark Steyn said that the end of the hate speech legislation is near, calling it a “landmark decision.”

“This is the beginning of the end for Section 13 and its provincial equivalents, and a major defeat for Canada’s thought police. . . . It’s not just a personal triumph for Marc Lemire, but a critical victory in the campaign by Ezra Levant, *Maclean’s*, yours truly and others to rid the Canadian state of this hideous affront to justice.”

Until this decision, no respondent had won a human rights case brought to the Tribunal under Section 13. Further, about half of the Section 13 cases have been brought by Richard Warman, and almost all of them in recent years. The case will likely now be appealed in the federal courts.

Sources: *The National Post*, *LifeSiteNews.com*, September 2, 2009

The case for early marriage

In a recent *Christianity Today* article, writer Mark Regnerus makes a case for early marriage among Christians.

Regnerus discusses the extensive efforts, particularly in evangelical circles, to promote chastity among youth, and suggests that these efforts are in large part failing because couples are marrying later and later, something that the church by and large is not discouraging. This, he argues, is the problem and the solution: rather than spend such extensive effort promoting courtship, chastity vows, and the like, the church should encourage couples to marry younger.



He points to data that shows that marriage is a financially and emotionally healthier option for relationships, and suggests that the church is not doing enough to promote and encourage young couples to marry. His conclusion is that the church, and families, need to do more to promote marriage and its benefit, rather than accept the ideology of the world, which encourages young people to put career and personal fulfillment before marriage. Such ideology, he argues, promotes and increases sexual immorality among Christian young people.

Source: *Christianity Today*, July 31, 2009



Sweden looks to stop parents from teaching their children

New draft legislation in Sweden would put severe restrictions on parents wishing to homeschool their children, allowing it only in situations in which “extraordinary circumstances” exist. To the dismay of those who homeschool in order to provide a Christian education, religious and philosophical beliefs would not be included in the definition of “extraordinary circumstances.”

The new legislation argues that a child’s education should be “comprehensive and objective,” and “designed so that all pupils can participate, regardless of what religious or philosophical views of parents or children. It is not necessary, therefore, the draft law says, “to offer the possibility of homeschooling because of religious or philosophical reasons in the family.”

The final law will be presented before Parliament next year and, if passed, will take effect in 2011.

Source: *LifeSiteNews.com*, August 11, 2009

New Zealand to bring back spanking?

New Zealanders have voted overwhelmingly to bring back spanking, two years after the country became the first in the world to ban it.

A recent referendum found that over 80 per cent of parents wish that the 2007 law against corporal punishment would be repealed. The law was initially passed in response to high levels of child deaths due to child cruelty in the country, in particular the beating deaths of twin 3-month old boys by a family member.

Now, however, it is clear that the law is unpopular, ineffective, and largely unenforced. New Zealand’s citizens have recognized that there is a marked difference between a parent who disciplines their child with a spanking, and one who likes to smack his kids around. Now it is up to the government to decide whether or not to repeal the ban.

Source: *The Times Online*, August 21, 2009

US parents miss the mountain, protest the molehill

by Jon Dykstra

September saw anti-Obama hysteria across the US rise to a fevered pitch when the American president arranged to do a short talk to the nation’s school children. Many conservative parents were furious that, as Florida GOP Chairman Jim Greer put it, “taxpayer dollars are being used to spread President Obama’s socialist ideology.”

The sad irony is that the very same parents who were outraged at the prospect of the president speaking directly to their children this one time, for a half hour, have no problem sending their children to public schools, where the government gets to imprint a secular worldview on young minds thirty hours a week.

Quebec supports killing the desperate

A recent Angus-Reid poll has found that more than three quarters of people in Quebec, regardless of their gender, income, or place of residence, believe that euthanasia should be legalized.

These findings show that the general public is in consensus with the Quebec College of Physicians, which in July announced its plans to recommend the decriminalization of assisted suicide and to pressure the federal government to amend the Criminal Code.

Dr. Margaret Somerville, conservative ethicist and the Director of the McGill Centre for Medicine, Ethics and Law in Montreal, suggested to the press that the rejection of their Catholic identity and culture has played an important role in Quebec’s acceptance of euthanasia. “You can infer that Quebecers need a moral justification for euthanasia and that terrible pain can be one for them,” Somerville observed. “It’s hard to argue against euthanasia if there is no religion.”

Source: *LifeSiteNews.com*, August 11, 2009

IT’S BAAAAACK!

Tories resurrect Court Challenges Program

by Jon Dykstra

In 2006 Canadian Prime Minister Harper cut the funding for the Court Challenges Program (CCP), a program that had funded court cases challenging parents’ right to spank their children, and cases challenging the traditional definition of marriage. So when the Conservative government killed the program, Christians had reason to rejoice.

But now a former aid to the Prime Minister warns that it is back.

In a Sept. 14 post on his blog, Joseph Ben-Ami writes that he can’t fathom why they would bring it back. This, “completely undoes one of the few big conservative policy successes this government has had since coming to office in 2006.”

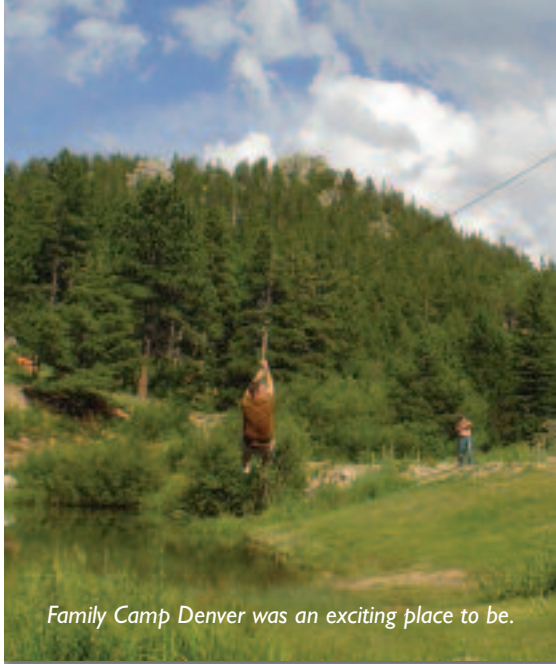


Though in its latest incarnation it is only supposed to involve itself in language-related cases, Ben-Ami notes this is exactly how the original program was started too, before it branched into more controversial territory. And he sees no reason to believe that history will not repeat itself with this new version of the CCP since there is no “logical reason for the government to fund the constitutional challenges of one minority group [language groups] but not others.”

This has Ben-Ami questioning if anything conservative remains in the Conservative Party:

“I’m asking myself, as a principled conservative, if the Harper Tories are still worth supporting. Until this past week, the two answers that kept coming back to me in response were: a) the Liberals would be much worse, and b) the Tories would be much better if they had a majority. The sudden and, in my view, gratuitous creation of the Language Rights Support Program has badly shaken my confidence in either of these answers.”

SOURCE: JosephBenAmi.com



Family Camp Denver was an exciting place to be.

Down to Denver

It's quite a drive but "Family Camp Denver" is worth it

by Joanne Dieleman

Ontario to Colorado is more than a 20-hour drive. That's a long trip, but two things made it more than worth it for our group.

First there was the drive itself. I don't have to tell anyone how awe-inspiring the Rockies are. Our trip took us to Mt. Rushmore, the Black Hills and Custer Park. And one point the elevation was so high we had some trouble breathing and had to seek lower regions, but we did still take a train up Pike's Peak (14,000 feet) and spend a day at the Royal Gorge, where we visited the seven falls. And in Colorado Springs, we toured the impressive offices of Focus on the Family and visited the United States Air Force Academy. These are all very worthwhile reasons to visit the area.

Family Camp Denver

But the main reason it was worthwhile was "Family Camp Denver" which took place from Aug 14-17. This year is the second in a row that the Denver American Reformed Church has organized this event at the beautiful Camp Eden.

When we arrived at the camp we were heartily welcomed by the organizers, Mr. and Mrs. Bruintjes and later in the day we met the other 50 or so participants. There were several families with children, ranging from infants to teenagers. Also present were Rev. Poppe from Winnipeg, Rev. Pol from Carman, and the Rev. Vandeburgt family from Waterdown. Along with them, we were the only guests from Canada, which was, I think, a little disappointing for the organizers.

The weekend was filled with worship, learning, fun and fellowship. Rev. Pol (who was there for a church visitation) left on Saturday, leaving Rev. Vandeburgt and Rev. Poppe together as our spiritual leaders for the camp.

Godliness

The topic of the weekend was godliness. At the first session of the camp, we were given a questionnaire to complete, something I do not like because it puts you on the spot. Luckily, you could remain anonymous. We also had to answer 25 questions, choosing from 1 to 10 to rate ourselves as poor to excellent on the question. I think I failed miserably, but apparently the children did very well. Certainly the questions made you think about the topic of godliness.

When the teaching part of the session began, we first of all learned more about what godliness is. We were urged to remember this definition: "Godliness is devotion to God, which

results in a life pleasing to Him." Godliness is the foundation upon which a Christian character is built. We do not need a special talent or gift to be godly. 2 Peter 1:3 says that God "has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by His glory and goodness." Scripture also gives us examples of godly people: Enoch, for example, was a godly man. His life was centred on God. Job also was such a man. Job 1 tells us, "There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright."

Next we learned that true godliness involves three attitudes of the heart:

- Reverence for or devotion to God: Jesus taught us that what lives in our heart will find expression in our lives. Reverence for God will lead us to turn away from sinful works of the flesh. See Matt. 15:18-19.
- Love for God: 1 John 4:8 tells us that God is love. God's love for us motivates us to live godly lives out of thankfulness for His redeeming grace.
- Desiring God: Godliness awakens in us the desire to enjoy God's presence and fellowship. For example, in Ps. 42, David says, "My soul thirsts for God."

On Saturday Rev. Vandeburgt elaborated more on godliness and how we ought to pursue this virtue. He referred us also to Jerry Bridges' book *The Pursuit of Holiness*.

In these sessions, there was plenty of opportunity to make use of question period (a truly Reformed expression). The children were encouraged to attend the speeches, but had their own chance to express their thoughts and questions in a special session.

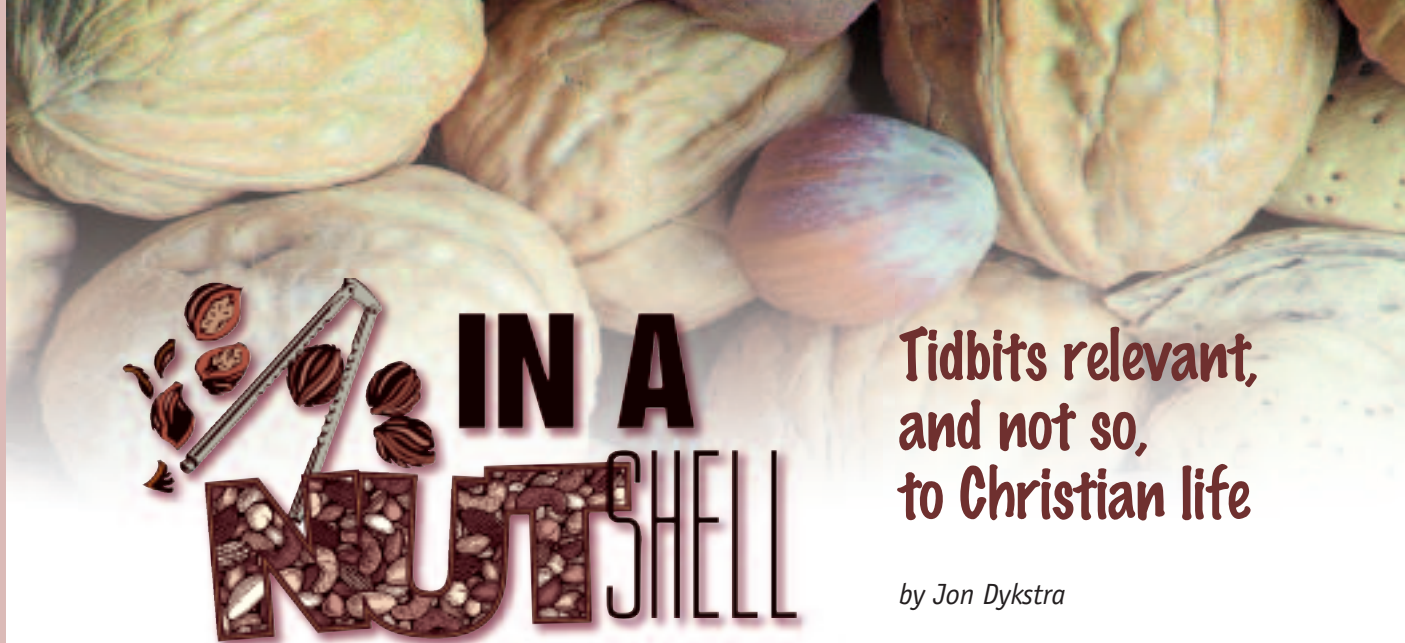
On Sunday the rest of the Denver congregation joined us for services and lunch. There were several specially invited guests from the area as well. What an opportunity to invite others and have a special time together and express our Reformed faith! As a former minister of the Denver congregation, Rev. Vandeburgt led the services, which again dealt with godliness.

After supper, our biblical knowledge was tested: the ministers won. Second were the children, who were allowed to use Bibles – how fair is that?

Other activities of the weekend included mini-golf (I twice had a hole in one!), a zip-line (I have some good pictures of some ministers zipping across the lake), card games, a game of Taboo, T-shirt painting, and hikes. We had a really good and blessed time, and we thank God for godly people.

Surely you don't want to miss this event next year?





IN A NUTSHELL

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

by Jon Dykstra

Balancing Grace and Truth

Members of Randy Alcorn's church would regularly go down to the local abortion clinics and hold up signs saying, "Consider Adoption," and "We'll Help Financially." In his book *The Grace and Truth Paradox* tells a story about the Sunday that three pro-abortion groups – Radical Women for Choice, Rock for Choice and the Lesbian Avengers – decided to give the church "a taste of our medicine" and picket it during their morning service. The abortion activists saw it as a chance for revenge; Alcorn's church saw it as opportunity knocking.

Having heard they were coming we set out donuts and coffee. I spent an hour and a half with a protestor named Charles, who held a sign that said, "Keep Abortion Legal." . . . I liked Charles. But when you believe as I do that abortion is killing children, it's a bit awkward serving coffee and holding an umbrella for someone waving a pro-abortion sign. . . . Yet because of the opportunity to share Christ's grace, it seemed right. . . .

On the morning we were picketed, some street preachers with signs shouting hell and damnation showed up to take on the abortion activists. Their message contained truth, but the approach lacked grace. One of the street preachers barged between my daughter and me and a few of the Lesbian Avengers just as we finally had an opportunity to talk with them. The door of witnessing was slammed in our faces. . . . by Christian brothers. . . .

The following Sunday two street preachers picketed our church, scold-

ing us for our "pathetic" attempts at doughnut and coffee evangelism. So after twenty-one unpicketed years, our church was picketed two weeks in a row! First by radically liberal non-believers, for speaking the truth. Second by radically conservative believers, for showing grace.

On true generosity

"Generosity is a reflection of what one does with his or her own resources and not what he or she advocates the government do with everyone's money."
– Ronald Reagan

Compelling conversation

Good conversation doesn't just happen – it's cultivated. In the May 2009 issue of *Faith in Focus*, Sally Davey goes into some detail on how we can nurture the art of conversation.

It seems to me that Christians at the beginning of the twenty-first century are frequently uninspiring conversationalists. We seldom do much to improve our conversational opportunities, especially in such prime settings as the dinner table. We do little to prepare our thoughts for making stimulating conversation. We do not read much, especially of the mind-stretching variety of books, such as would give us useful ideas to share in a discussion. When was the last time you enjoyed a brisk debate about ideas over the dinner table? Some families. . . . love to bounce ideas, to challenge each other's thinking, to play "solving the world's problems"

in a constructive way. Some people find this threatening, and bow out mentally, if not physically. But if such discussion is entered into generously, including all who are at the table, it can be edifying. Christians should do this kind of thing. It is how "iron sharpens iron," and it helps us equip one another for useful service.

Consider the ways that this kind of conversation may be used evangelistically, in giving an unbelieving friend a gentle challenge to face the inconsistencies in her view of the world. You may begin as the apologist, defending the Christian position on some topic, and continue by asking your friend to explain her own view of the matter. Then, as the evening wears on, she may be willing to risk a more personal examination of the claims of Christ upon her life. You see, being able to discuss ideas is important; and we need to prepare for such conversations. One friend says he prepares for such evenings by praying for his guests, and planning some suitable topics of conversation in the hope that they will lead to a discussion of the gospel. Think of the many, many conversations that are recorded in the Bible. So many of them demonstrate the ways our Lord, and his prophets and apostles, struck up discussion with someone and then turned the topic to matters of eternal weight. They knew how to use such opportunities to reach the minds, and the hearts, of lost sheep. We need to use our dinner tables to do the same.

SOURCE: "The dinner-table conversation" 



BEING DUTCH AROUND THE HOUSE

Stewardship in your backyard

by John Voorhorst

If your household is at all like mine, then I'm sure you too are constantly turning off lights and televisions and curling irons when no one is using them. Doing some of these little things, and a few bigger things can help you make the best use of your money. Stewardship should begin in the home, so let's find some ways to reduce household expenses.

Start with the easy ones

A good start can be had by simply turning off all the various gadgets found in the typical Canadian home: PDAs, computers, curling irons, small appliances, gaming devices and the other little toys that have become "necessities." Studies show that the average home wastes as much as 10 per cent of its total electrical consumption just to keep these gadgets on "standby" when we're not actually using them. But it's easy enough to set up our computer so it turns itself off after an hour of non-use.

Installing an automatic thermostat can save you as much as 10 per cent on your heating bill, just by turning it down 4 degrees centigrade from 11:00 PM until 7:00 AM each night. The same is true in the summer heat. If you adjust your thermostat 2 degrees warmer before the air-conditioning kicks in, you will again save 5 to 10 per cent of your cooling costs.

A little more complicated

There are other, slightly more difficult suggestions as well. The typical Canadian carries a balance of just over \$5,000 on their credit card, and the interest rate charged on the typical card is 19 per cent. If that's your situation, and you can't pay it off, the first thing you should do is call your credit card company and ask them to reduce the rate they are charging you. They'll probably do it if you've always been on time making your monthly payment. But if you can't negotiate a better rate, another option is to see if you can pay off your credit cards using a line of credit. Sometimes the bank will want to add this debt to your mortgage. This may not be the best solution even if the interest rate is lower. You need to remember that the mortgage has a locked-in factor. So, for example, if you are carrying a \$5,000 balance on your credit card at 19 per cent and you arrange your finances so that you make payments on that credit card of \$130 per month, the balance would be paid in just under 60 months and the total interest paid would be \$2,770. If you added the \$5,000 to your mortgage and the rate was 5 per cent but the amortization was 25 years, the addi-

tional payment required by the mortgage company or bank would only be \$30 but the interest cost over the term of the loan would be \$3,768. So you need to be smart about re-arranging this part of your finances.


Pay down your mortgage early

Another part of your plan could include a method to reduce the actual dollars paid for your mortgage. When you tithe or make donations of any kind (and that may include part of your Christian school fees) it will result in a donation receipt. So when you file your taxes in March (taxes, incidentally, should be filed as soon as you have all your receipts so the government will send you your refund earlier, rather than later) you'll get a sizeable tax refund. Now most mortgage companies in Canada allow the mortgagee (that's you) the right to make an annual additional payment up to 10 or sometimes 15 per cent of the original mortgage. So just imagine what could happen if you apply your tax refund straight to your mortgage.

If, for example you had a 25-year mortgage of \$150,000 and received a tax refund of \$6,000, if you then put that full amount towards the mortgage every year, you would pay off your mortgage in just *13 years!* The best part is that this will save you \$60,000 you would have had to pay in interest. That is real money – \$60,000 that you won't have to give the bank.

But, (and there's always a "but"), to make this all work, you need to be disciplined, you must have a budget, you must be very rigid about living within that budget. You must also faithfully tithe, (God requires it and the Canada Revenue Agency rewards you for it), and then and only then will your 25 year mortgage be paid off in 13 years.

Once you pay off your house the next step is to put all that extra money away for the next stage of your life. That is the stage we call retirement. Perhaps it would be good at some time in the future to reflect a little further on that whole concept – retirement I mean. Is the Canadian "freedom 55" goal a Biblical goal? Or is it a product of our selfish age?

Good stewardship, or the prudent use of our financial resources, certainly is Biblical. So, if you have other ideas about saving money, please send them in to the editor and we'll post them on the RP website (or compile them into another article). Check out the Stewardship section at www.ReformedPerspective.ca website and see if there are any ideas that you can use in your home. Let's do what we can to share our stewardship tips. 



On homosexual “marriage” Islamic “law” and “owning” cats

by Rene Vermeulen

Recent weeks have given some interesting items of news. Let's begin with the good.

Labor government

The good

Let us start with the conference of the Australian Labor Party. The Party held its annual conference some weeks ago and normally I would not comment on it. After all, Labor is regarded by us Reformed people as being on the wrong side – it is not that long ago that it was regarded as left wing, with the Liberal Party being the conservative party preferred by our people. Why would I then want to comment on this conference? What was so worth reporting?

For some time now the homosexual lobby has been pushing to have Labor change its stance regarding the place of marriage in our country. They wanted the definition of marriage changed to something like “any two people living together in a sexual relationship.”

In Australia each state has its own marriage law. As a result two of the six Australian states – Victoria and Tasmania – have changed their marriage law to allow homosexuals to legally marry. Additionally the Australian Capital Territory, which is not a state but does have self-government, has joined the two states. That leaves four states and one territory that adhere to traditional marriage.

Labor, at this annual conference, had a proposal before it to make the marriage law in the states of Victoria and Tasma-

nia obligatory for the other states and the Federal Government. When this proposal was put to the conference there was a fair bit of opposition, not least from Prime Minister Kevin Rudd. Mr. Rudd supports marriage from a Christian point of view. He defended this point of view at the conference and made it clear that he and his wife do not want a change to the law in Australia. The Prime Minister's side won the argument – something for which we can be thankful.

The bad

All this does not take away the concern of many that this government has been spending far more than is justified: the projected deficit for the coming year is an all time record of \$57 billion (\$44 billion US) which is nearly double the previous record deficit from last year of \$32 billion (\$25 billion US). As the leader of the opposition Mr. Malcolm Turnbull warned: “Rudd is in a fantasy world of debt.”

One of the features of the previous government under the leadership of Prime Minister John Howard and his Treasurer Peter Costello was to reduce Australia's debt to manageable proportions but Prime Minister Rudd and his Treasurer Wayne Swan have spent so much money that it is going to take a long time to pay off the debt.

The Prime Minister justified his spending on the grounds that his government was faced with the financial disaster that has befallen the world. It is true that on many grounds Australia has done better than other countries. The unemployment rate has remained rather low and interest rates are the lowest for many, many years.

Islam and its growth

Western Countries have generally be quite receptive to Muslim immigration, in part because some were perceived as being persecuted in their own country and were therefore regarded as refugees. Australia is no different.

But as the number of Muslim immigrants grows there is also a growing push to allow them to be ruled by Sharia law, a set of Islamic legal rules. In fact in some places in England there is a movement afoot to have parts of the country subject to Sharia.

Now some may argue that this is no different than our own desire to be ruled by Christian laws. But there is certainly a difference to the way these desires are worked out as Bill Muehlenberg, a well-known Australian columnist, made clear in his review of a book called *Cruel and Unusual Punishments*. The author, Nonie Darwish, grew up as an Egyptian Muslim and is now a Christian. Let me quote what Muehlenberg writes about Sharia as related by Darwish:

Muslim women are prohibited under sharia from marrying non-Muslim men. But Muslim men can marry Christian or Jewish women. And the sharia marriage contract “is essentially a document granting sexual intercourse rights to the male and giving him total control over his four wives.” There are even temporary marriages purely for the purposes of sexual pleasure for the male, called *mutaa*, or pleasure marriage. This “marriage” can last as little as an hour. Then there is *misyar*, or traveler’s marriage, which is “designed to accommodate the sexual appetite while traveling.”

It is tempting to quote more from the article but let this suffice for now for there is another matter that needs dealing with. For on Tuesday the 6th of August the Australian Federal Police and Victorian State Police raided homes in Melbourne to arrest a number of men who would be accused of organizing a terror attack on a Sydney army base. The young people arrested had been under surveillance for quite some time, some had gone to Somalia to train with terror groups over there. Most of those arrested were of Somalian descent and some were of Lebanese descent. Most had lived in Australia for almost all of their lives but had been indoctrinated to become opposed to what Australia is supposed to stand for. Some of those arrested when brought to court refused to stand when called upon to do so. Their reason was that they would only stand for god and not any human being. It remains to be seen what this raid will lead to.

The blessing of pets

There are some simple joys that are seemingly so common we can overlook them and under-appreciate them. One of these is the blessing of pets, which our household has just recently become reacquainted with.

It started with a car pulling up in the drive, and my wife and I going out to meet our visitors. We had not seen these friends for some time so it was nice to welcome them to our home. As they stopped, from under their vehicle came a kitten, white and very woolly. We thought it might have hitched a ride with the large vehicle.


The kitten came straight to us. On picking it up my wife noticed that it was very skinny, almost emaciated. She quickly said: “I don’t want a pet,” but as she later pointed out you couldn’t help but feed the poor animal, at least enough to still its obvious hunger. So while we didn’t want a pet, the animal soon made itself at home.

Being perfectly white my wife called it Persil. Some of our older readers will remember a soap powder by that name. At the time of writing it has been part of our household for some 4 months. During the night it sleeps in our shed but first thing in the morning it demands entrance to our home. When I go to wake up my wife Persil follows me in and then runs ahead to wake her.

Across the road from us are a number of units housing retired people. When Persil gets a chance she goes across, stops by one of the units and if she finds the door open she goes inside, inspects the home, allows herself to be patted and when she is ready she goes back to the door to have it opened for her.

If the door is closed she will “miaow” once or twice and then exit after the door is opened. The old people love her and she obviously knows it.

At our own home she has a number of nuts that have fallen off trees which she kicks around the kitchen and chases at an amazing pace. At other times she simply lies on the floor on her back and demands to be made a fuss of.

It is interesting to find out how an animal such as this cat can become so much part of the household. She is no longer emaciated but getting rather solid and enjoying her home life. And so do we. 





A light set on a new sort of stand

We want to impact the world, and what better way is there to do that than through the World Wide Web? That's why ARPA Canada and *Reformed Perspective* are holding the Salt n' Light YouTube Contest. It's sponsored by CV Benefits (see below for more on them) who will be awarding two \$250 grand prizes for the best short video that communicates our Christian worldview to the world. One of the grand prizes will go to the best video as selected by our judges with the other being selected by popular vote on www.ReformedPerspective.ca. There is no cost to enter and **every entrant receives a complimentary 1-year subscription to *Reformed Perspective***. Further rules and details are below.

UPDATE: We are excited to announce that our winner will be shown at the "REAL LIFE Film Festival du cinéma C'EST LA VIE" in Sudbury, Ontario (April 2010). The theme for the 2010 film festival is Life and Justice, which makes it an excellent complement to our Salt n' Light contest. You are invited to attend the festival to check out this winning film along with the other films that they will be showing, in an award-winning lineup of shorts, documentaries and feature films. Find more details about the REAL LIFE Film Festival on their website www.sudburycinema.com.

Rules and Details:

1. Entries will be judged on creativity, technical merit, overall impact (the "wow!" factor) and, of course, their Christian worldview. Entries need not quote Scripture, or be explicitly Christian, but cannot conflict with the Bible, as it is summarized in the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dort.
2. The video clip must be original and produced for this contest.
3. Entries must conform to copyright laws (including the use of music).
4. Maximum length is 6 minutes.
5. More than one person may make the movie, but only one *RP* subscription will be given per entry. A person may submit more than one entry, but will be given only one subscription.
6. Entrants are responsible for posting it on YouTube and marketing their movie to get more votes.
7. Viewing and voting will be done through the *RP* website (not YouTube).
8. The *RP* and ARPA Canada judges reserve the right to decline submissions or not award a grand prize.
9. **Voting begins on January 1st, 2010.** Late entries may be accepted but will be penalized by not having as much time to receive votes from the public.
10. Enter by emailing Jon Dykstra at editor@ReformedPerspective.ca and including your name and postal address (for the subscription) as well as the church you are a member of, the video's name, YouTube (or equivalent) web address, and social or political theme.

Our Sponsor: CV Benefits Inc. provides life insurance and financial planning services throughout British Columbia, Alberta and Manitoba. They are also licensed in Alberta to provide any type of general insurance including farm, home and auto or business insurance. Call 1-800-565-4434 to speak with a certified financial planner or an insurance broker. They can also be reached by email at info@cvbenefits.com or check out their website at www.cvbenefits.com.

From pre to post-production

How we got our YouTube video (almost) done

by Jon Dykstra

We all have dream goals, things we would do if only we had the money or the extra time we'd need to turn the dream into a reality. We'd study a foreign language, learn to play an instrument, maybe write a book.

Or, as in our particular case, we'd make a film.

But there's a reason dream goals rarely become realities – too much other stuff gets in the way. In our case the stuff that kept getting in the way was:

1. None of us owned a video camera
2. We didn't know how to act
3. Or direct
4. Or write a script
5. And we had a total budget of \$0

Add to that the conflicting schedules of our four-man crew, we all had our own church, work, social and family commitments, and it was clear we had excuses enough – ahem, reasons enough – to explain why our film never quite made it to YouTube.

There was just one problem: a friend reminded me that I had been talking about making some sort of short film for almost two years. In fact, I had done quite a bit of talking, and when you talk, if you talk long enough, you're left with just two options: putting up or shushing up. I chose the first (mostly cause I didn't see myself abiding with the second) and started working out just how I was going to put up.

One of the first steps I took was to consult an expert. Darren Doane is the filmmaker behind *Collision*, a documentary that goes behind the scenes, and up on the stage too, during the four debates that took place this past year between atheist Christopher Hitchens and Re-

formed pastor Douglas Wilson (for more on *Collision* see www.collisionmovie.com)

Doane recently gave a talk on "The Nitty Gritty of Film Production" (available online at <http://vimeo.com/6610026> and highly recommended) in which he outlines that two simple attributes you need to successfully complete a film.

Willing to bleed

First, he says, you need to be "willing to bleed." There's always going to be obstacles, and they can either overwhelm you, or you can grind through them one by one. Doane has made a standing offer to hire anyone who is willing to film the next 30 sunrises. It's a simple enough task, but one that requires a person to get up very, very early every day for the next month. No one has taken him up his offer. Doane argued that the main reason people aren't making the films they're dreaming of making is simply because most of us don't have the work ethic needed to get it done.

Willing to be bad

Second, Doane says, you need to be willing to be bad. Is it just me, or does this get you thinking about the last Christian film you saw? But Doane isn't saying we should be satisfied with being bad, just that we need to be willing to start there. The best way to make a good film is to start by making a bad one: "Go make something that's really, really bad. And then make something that's just a little bit better than that.... just film." Or as Nike puts it, "Just Do It!"

Getting it done

So we did.

First we finalized the script/storyboard, which you can see on the pages that follow. A storyboard doesn't need to be as detailed as ours. Stick figures can be good enough to give everyone on your crew a sense of what you are trying to shoot.

Next we decided on how we were going to shoot it. We got inspired by some videos from CommonCraft.com, which are simple and yet entertaining instructional videos. Those videos don't require the use of a video camera – still photographs would work well enough. And since we had an experienced photographer on our crew (and no experienced cameraman) we decided to go with this creatively simple approach.

Next we needed to find a day we could all meet. This may have been the hardest part of the whole thing. It took more than a month of trying.

Then, finally, shooting day arrived. Our two "stars" took their places, dressed in borrowed bits of wardrobe. Our lighting was primitive – some lamps from around the house – and our backdrop nothing more than a old sheet, but... we were getting 'er done!

Currently we are using Mac's IMovie to stitch the pictures together, and a free program called Audacity (from audacity.sourceforge.net) to manipulate the sound. We aren't quite done yet. But we're getting there; the dream is almost a reality.

Eric Brown, Dave Hofford, Jon Dykstra and Dustin Wielenga hope to have their video done, and up on ReformedPerspective.ca by the time you read this.

Storyboard of OBAMA and THE HUNTERS

a short film by
Dustin,
Dave,
Eric
& Jon





Is it Tom?



Is it beast or human?



Bob doesn't know... but does...



... Obama...



That question is above my pay grade.

know?



So no one knows whether human life lies within



But one thing we do know...



If we're confused, we can kill, right Mr. President?



What I know is, as I've said before, I am pro-choice

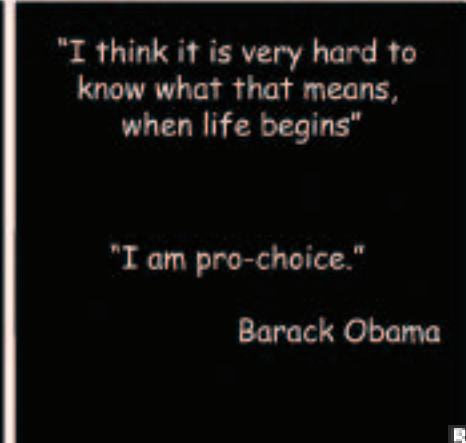


What choice will you make Bob?



"I think it is very hard to know what that means, when life begins"

Click! - Click!



"I think it is very hard to know what that means, when life begins"

"I am pro-choice."

Barack Obama



Traveling Home with Randy Alcorn

by Conrad van Dyk

An issue or two back I looked at William Paul Young's *The Shack*. Now we'll look at another author from the Pacific Northwest: Randy Alcorn. Based in Gresham, Oregon, Alcorn has written seven novels, and about twice as many works of non-fiction. He is a popular author among Evangelical Christians, and, it seems, also among Reformed people. His work explores such questions as "what will heaven be like?" and looks at the costs of discipleship on this side of eternity.

My own knowledge of Alcorn's work is fairly recent, and I have to admit that things didn't start well. A few years ago a pastor-friend of mine gave me a copy of Alcorn's novel *Edge of Eternity*. At the time I promised to give it a try, but I gave up a few chapters in. The book – a cross between *Pilgrim's Progress* and C.S. Lewis' space trilogy – tells the story of Nick Seagrave, a business executive who ends up in a car crash and wakes up in a different world. In this world he must decide whether to follow the red road to Charis (the narrow road to heaven) or go to the hellish Babel that is called Erebus. This is Alcorn at his most allegorical, but early on the writing is melodramatic and trite. Here are the opening paragraphs of the book:

The storm crashed down behind me, lightning bolts chasing me like a pack of bloodhounds, thunder screaming at me. As light flooded the darkness, I looked up through the pounding rain and saw a wall of jutting rocks looming above the road, their long arms poised like executioners. The wind was a giant hand at my back, driving me on. I tried digging in my heels, but the road was mud, my feet indistinguishable from the swirling brown goo that sucked me downward. My heart pounded as if I were pursued by a midnight stalker. My body dripped like a deep gash in a dark cloud.

Knowing nothing about Randy Alcorn at the time I figured I was dealing with someone who had just learned about similes and metaphors and was eager to demonstrate his literary pedigree. We have bloodhounds, executioners, giant hands, midnight stalkers, gashes in dark clouds (and in the next paragraph a "shadowy Cyclops")! And then we haven't even mentioned the incongruities. Why would a storm crash down *behind* you but not in front or beside? Is the main character outrunning the rain? Plus thunder doesn't usually scream and clouds are rarely said to have gashes. The book eventually gets better, but I never got that far at the time. After about fifty pages I gave up.

However, recently I decided that I really should give Randy Alcorn a second chance. Perhaps there was something that I had

missed. As it turned out, there was a lot more to Alcorn than I had given him credit for. For one thing, his biography is particularly compelling.¹ In the early 1990s, Alcorn quit his job as pastor of Good Shepherd Church in Gresham, Oregon, to explore his literary talents. However, Alcorn hardly changed careers and he certainly did not quit because he preferred writing to preaching. Instead, he could no longer carry on as pastor because of legal action against him. In 1989, Alcorn had been arrested a number of times by Portland Police because he had tried to protest abortions by blocking abortion clinics. The clinics sued and won. Alcorn had anticipated this and had put all his assets in his wife Nancy's name. He didn't expect that they would also be able to garner his wages.

So Alcorn quit his job and started up an organization called Eternal Perspective Ministries. He thus kept his ministry alive, but to keep his earnings he could only work for minimum wage. The proceeds from his books, many of them best-sellers, went to charity. Yet Alcorn hardly begrudges the fact that he could have lived very affluently all these years. Throughout his books he likes to remind readers not to lay up treasures on earth. One of his favourite maxims is that when one dies it is better to leave a heritage than an inheritance.

It is not surprising, then, that Alcorn's protagonists are often successful businessmen whose desire for success has destroyed their family life and left them alone and in need of spiritual reawakening. Sometimes this character type tends towards the stereotypical (e.g., Nick Seagrave in *Edge of Eternity*), whereas in other instances (e.g., Ben Fielding in *Safely Home*) the character is portrayed with more subtlety and nuance.

Alcorn's seven novels can be divided into four main categories:

1. Mystery/Detective fiction
Deadline – 1994
Dominion – 1996
Deception – 2007
2. In imitation of C.S. Lewis' *Screwtape Letters*
Lord Foulgrin's Letters – 2000
The Ishbane Conspiracy – 2001
3. Fantasy/Allegorical fiction
Edge of Eternity – 1998
4. Missionary Narrative
Safely Home – 2001

To give you a better idea of Alcorn's novels, let's take a closer look at one work in each category.

The Ishbane Conspiracy

This is arguably one of Alcorn's weakest books. Co-written with daughters Angela and Karina, it tells the story of four teenagers who are making the transition from high-school to college. Alcorn borrows a literary device first used by C.S. Lewis (easily Alcorn's favourite author) in *The Screwtape Letters*, that of a junior and senior devil who send letters back and forth on the topic of how best to tempt, and ultimately consume, the man the junior devil has been assigned.

Alcorn's devils are named Foulgrin and Prince Ishbane. Alcorn's innovation is to insert narrative between the letters so that we can follow a story of budding romance, teenage pregnancy, problems with self-esteem and self-image, and so on. From the back cover, with its hyped rhetoric and elisions ("Intense spiritual battle. . . confused parents. . . a year that will change four lives. . . forever"), to the plot which feels artificial in its attempt to deal with every college temptation out there, this novel lacks a certain depth. Prince Ishbane is given some mildly clever signings off at the end of his letters (e.g., looking on the dark side; praying without ceasing, etc.) but the devils go on too long explaining how Christians can be tempted and exploited, to the point where one wonders how ignorant Foulgrin must be not to know the most basic facets of the Christian faith.

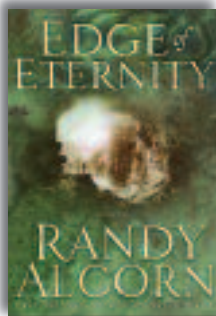


Edge of Eternity

Edge of Eternity is definitely better, but it still lacks a really compelling narrative. It takes about a hundred pages before any one scene is developed at length. Part of the problem is that the allegory is not always treated consistently.

Allegory is of course when a story line works realistically but also has a broader symbolic significance. For example, if someone in a story is called Christian, such a character might also represent every Christian or the average Christian. In *Edge of Eternity*, Nick Seagrave represents Christians who must follow the narrow road to return home to heaven (Charis).

Yet there are many moments where it's too obvious that the narrative is merely a platform for making a more general point. At one point Nick in quick succession comes across an abortion clinic and a jail (not exactly a fantasy world is it?) in order to show the importance of ministering to those in need. At another point the whole story of Christ (from the incarnation on) is re-enacted before Nick's eyes, with no realistic explanation of why this should take place right there and then.



As a work of fantasy, the world Nick Seagrave explores is also not extensively developed. For instance, there is only one food (a fruit called Senaba) that is different from earth. So you get strange sentences like this: "After a wonderful breakfast of bacon and sausage and fresh bread and strong rich coffee and senaba, we took off." In addition, the writing isn't always the strongest. One particularly bad piece of prose is this mellifluous bit: "We rose early, when the light was like rosy honey painting the hillsides, which looked like gentle ocean waves frozen in place." What artist ever paints with honey, not to mention "rosy" honey?

Perhaps the thing that bothers me most, however, is the worldview expressed in this book. There is a problem with building an entire allegorical structure around one or two Bible passages. For *Edge of Eternity*, the two most important Biblical concepts are the idea of the narrow road and the notion (from *Hebrews*) that we are aliens and pilgrims on this earth. This last verse is quoted repeatedly throughout the book (on pages 27, 212 & 309). The problem is that there is no cultural mandate, no real vision of how by God's grace we might serve God in our place and station. One of the characters asks, "But my art, my music, my books, my collections. . . These are good things aren't they?" The response that is given is that many of them are good but they are ultimately expendable. We are not of this world and our citizenship is in heaven (you know the phrases) so we should lead an ascetic lifestyle. A Reformed reader will have to think about whether to build an entire worldview out of these particular verses, or whether this life is more than just a desert on the way to the oasis of eternity.

Safely Home and Deception

These last two are very different novels but I have grouped them together because I really liked them. *Safely Home* tells the story of the persecution of Christians in China. The main characters are Ben Fielding and Li Quan, an American businessman and a Chinese locksmith. Both are Harvard educated, but their lives have gone down different paths. When they reconnect, Ben discovers the dire circumstances Chinese Christians face. He is also forced to reconsider many of his Western values in the light of the gospel message.

While *Safely Home* explores the same themes as the other novels (traveling home to heaven, saying no to materialism, etc.), it does so without sacrificing the story line. There are also moments where we get a glimpse of what it might mean not to run away from a life of business and commerce (as happens in *Edge of Eternity* where the estates of the rich are contrasted to the



journey on the red road), and to develop instead a vision of what Christ means in the workplace. At one point Quan says to Ben: "Have you not read the words of Yesu? . . . He spoke of capital, banking and earning interest, moneylenders, building barns to store grain for retirement income. He talked about counting the cost before undertaking business projects – about dividing up an estate, irresponsible spending, bad financial management, and dishonest business practices" Ben responds, "How do you remember all that?" – a response that shows that Alcorn is aware that teaching Christian business principles in a novel has to make sense in the context of the story. Perhaps the best part of *Safely Home* is its realistic treatment of the sacrifices we have to make as Christians, even in North America (see particularly chapter 5, which is quite moving).

Deception is a detective novel that reads like a Hollywood thriller with a Christian message. It shares one of Alcorn's favourite plot devices with *Safely Home* – that of having characters who have passed away look down from heaven and comment on the action – but otherwise this book reads entirely differently. For once the main character, Ollie Chandler, is not a business executive, although Alcorn retains the bit about the dysfunctional family and the lack of faith in God. The plot contains multiple murders, a trail of evidence that is increasingly perplexing, and a sense of humour that is refreshing. The book certainly shows Alcorn's lighter side. At one point Alcorn even pokes fun at his own book. Sergeant Seymour says to detective Chandler: "What if you read that the prime suspects in a murder mystery were a bunch of homicide detectives?" Chandler responds, "Well, in a book I might think it was. . . lame."



Everything about this book shows that Alcorn has become more subtle about teaching the truths of the Christian faith. The book contains a running discussion between Ollie and his Christian friends Clarence and Jake where they compare books by Bertrand Russell and C.S. Lewis. Most significantly, at the end of the book (I'll spoil things slightly here), Ollie has not converted yet, although he is starting to be persuaded, and he has promised to "investigate" this two-thousand-year-old mystery. Conversion does not happen overnight. Apparently, learning to appreciate Randy Alcorn takes some time too.

Endnote

¹ The biographical information that follows is gleaned from Tim Stafford, "The Pastor Without a Paycheck," *Christianity Today* 47.4 (2003), 4 pp.



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BEST BOOKS: THREE CHILDREN'S BOOKS THAT TEACH A LESSON

reviewed by Janet Faber

IF ONLY I HAD A GREEN NOSE

by Max Lucado

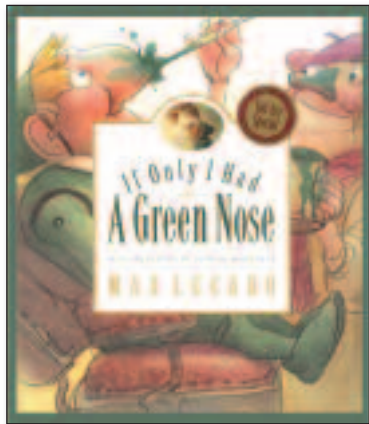
Why do we all, especially children, so easily succumb to peer-pressure? In *If Only I had a Green Nose*, author Max Lucado uses an apt allegory to show why we all want to be “with it.”

In the world of wooden puppets, called “Wemmicks” lives a Wemmick called Punchinello who wants to have a green nose like everyone else. Soon, however, green noses are no longer the latest fad – now it is red noses! To fit in Punchinello must constantly keep changing his nose color.

So often peer-pressure begins as a curiosity and then becomes a necessity to be “with-it.” Later comes the familiar refrain, “I did it because everyone else was doing it.”

Later, Punchinello’s friend Lucia tells him that “The One who made him” is asking about him. Punchinello goes to see the puppet-maker, Eli, who helps him to be the puppet he was created to be: a puppet who belongs to his Maker. Punchinello realizes that the color of one’s nose is not what will make him happy, but rather the confidence that he has been fearfully and wonderfully made.

If Only I had a Green Nose is an excellent story in itself but when the symbolism is understood it becomes an amazingly powerful book for children and adults.



TEAMMATES

by Peter Goldenbock



Who would be a good role model for standing up against peer-pressure? The inspirational story of *Teammates* tells how one man risked his career to stand up for what was right.

Peter Goldenbock, a well-known sportswriter, sets this book in the time when segregation was an accepted way of life.

When Jackie Robinson, the first black player in the all white Major Leagues, began to play for the Brooklyn Dodgers he faced harsh opposition from both the players and crowds. On the Dodgers roster was a player named Pee Wee Reece who was vying for the same position as Jackie. However, Pee Wee knew what was right and had the courage to act on it.

During a game Pee Wee heard the hatred of the crowd against this black player. Pee Wee walked over to Jackie and put his arm around his shoulder. “I stand by Jackie, and this man is my teammate,” Pee Wee said to the world. One could almost hear the crowd become silenced with shock.

Teammates is illustrated with photos from the archives of baseball history and also has water color illustrations that vividly depict the tension between the blacks and whites during this era.

Goldenbock poignantly shows how one man was willing to stand up against the racist peer-pressure of his time.

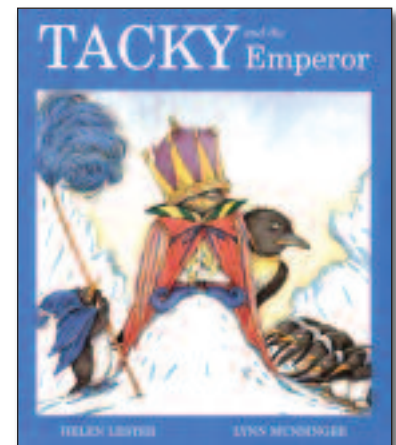
TACKY AND THE EMPEROR

by Helen Lester

Why do we find it so hard to accept those who are different? Tacky is a non-conformist, bumbling penguin who lives among a group of formal and very proper penguins. They like to put him down because of his appearance and strange ways.

When the penguins learn that the emperor is coming to visit everyone hastily prepares for his arrival. Tacky is given the job of blowing up the balloons but he blows one up too long and is sent careening to another iceberg, which is the emperor’s palace. Seeing some dazzling clothes, Tacky puts them on and waddles back home. Everybody there sees him dressed in his nifty clothes and assumes he is the emperor himself! Later when the real emperor comes to visit, the penguins are aghast at the mistake they made and Tacky realizes he must quickly improvise to save the day so he brings his own form of entertainment to the festivities. The emperor is enthralled by Tacky’s comical antics. In the end Tacky’s friends admit that he is “an odd bird but a nice bird to have around.” If only we could be as accepting of those “odd birds” around us.

This is a rollicking tale – full of humor children will get a good laugh from – that teaches a lesson of acceptance of those who are different.



James Robertson: APOSTLE TO THE WEST

by Michael Wagner

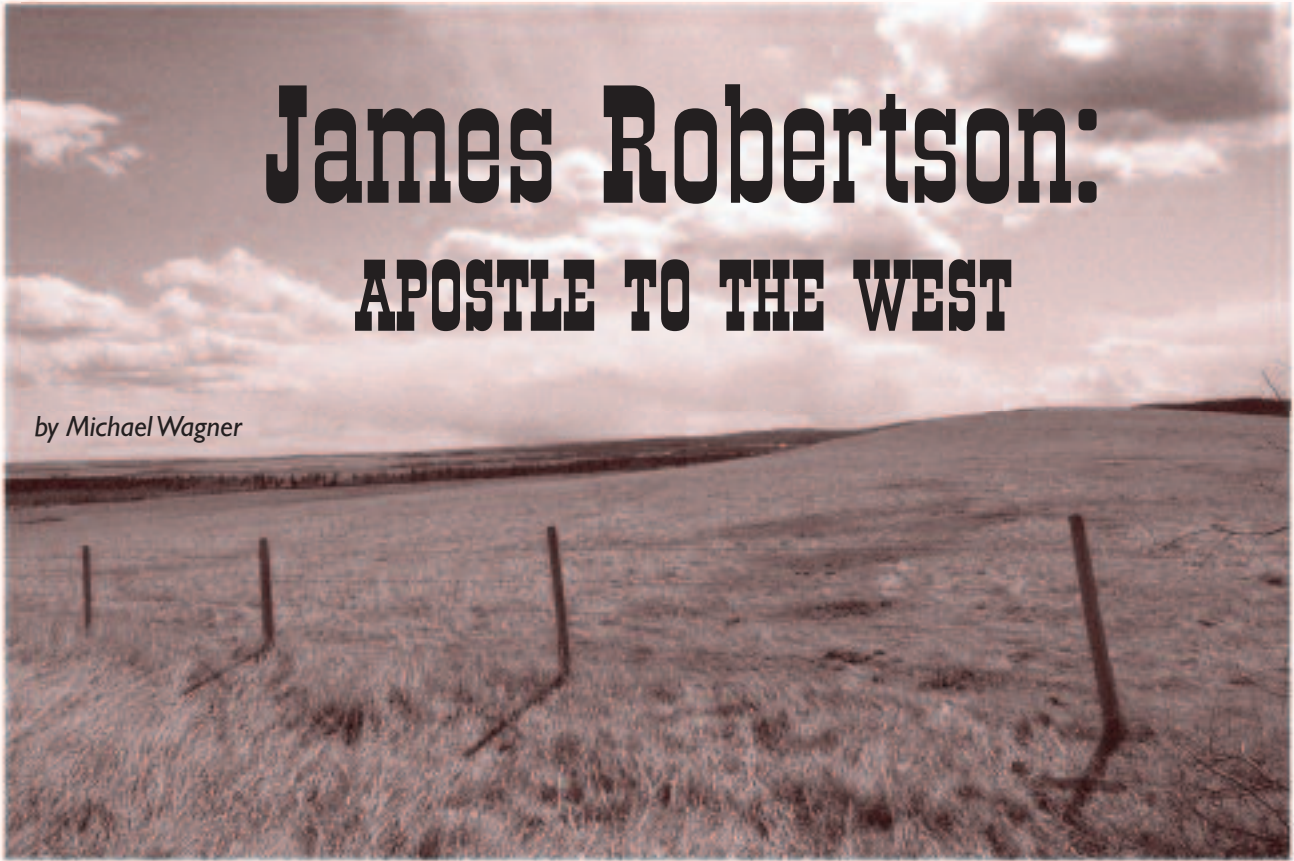


Photo for photo illustration by Kevin DeBoer

Reading about how the Lord can take a single person, and change the world – how He used people like Martin Luther and John Calvin – can be a great encouragement. But when we read about these great leaders from distant lands, and the distant past, we shouldn't overlook how God has worked wonders locally through Canadians like James Robertson.

Today, Robertson is largely forgotten because, two decades after his death, his denomination – the Presbyterian Church of Canada (PCC) – was overtaken by the false prophets of theological liberalism. The result was that in 1925 the vast majority of the Presbyterian Church folded itself into the United Church of Canada.

But during his lifetime James Robertson was used by God to spread the Gospel throughout the vast areas of Western Canada.

Scotland's loss. . .

In the late 1800s most of the settlers in Canada (outside of Quebec) had come from parts of Britain. Thus, the only substantial Calvinist church in Canada was the Presbyterian Church. James Robertson (1839-1902) devoted his life to spreading Presbyterian churches throughout the prairies to ensure that the Gospel would be present in the newly forming communities.

Originally from Scotland, Robertson came to Canada as a child with his family and grew up in Ontario. Feeling the call to be a minister, he spent two years at the leading orthodox Calvinist seminary in the western hemisphere, Princeton Theological Seminary in New Jersey, before finishing his studies at Union Seminary in New York. His pastoral abilities were clearly evident and he received offers to pastor churches in the US.

West to Winnipeg

However, Robertson believed he should serve the people in his own country, and he returned to Ontario to pastor a Presbyterian church there.

A few years later he made a trip to the new province of Manitoba to survey the growing needs of that field. What he saw convinced him that it was imperative for this new prairie region to immediately receive missionaries for the emerging settlements. The rest of his life was spent organizing churches and recruiting missionaries for western Canada. As such, he had a major influence on the spread of Christianity on the prairies. One of the missionaries he recruited, Charles W. Gordon, would later write a biography of Robertson, *The Life of James Robertson*, in 1908.

Robertson began his work out West as the pastor of Knox Presbyterian Church in Winnipeg in 1874. Although a popular and successful pastor, his real heart was in extending the work of the Presbyterian Church throughout the prairies and into British Columbia. Thus in 1881 the Presbyterian Church of Canada made him the Superintendent for Manitoba and the North-West Territories. The office of "superintendent" is not a Biblical office, so many people within the Presbyterian Church feared that the position amounted to the sort of hierarchical office a Roman Catholic or Anglican bishop holds, and opposed it accordingly. Nevertheless, Robertson remained as Superintendent until his death in 1902.

Presbyterianism was a major force in the West in these early years. In his 1886 report to the General Assembly of the Church, Robertson estimated that over 30 per cent of the population of the North-West Territories and over 40 per cent of the population of Manitoba was Presbyterian.

100 per cent growth

Robertson worked relentlessly to recruit missionaries for western Canada and to raise money for the work. Gordon writes that in the first ten years of Robertson's tenure as Superintendent in the West, "the mission fields went up from 81 to 176, a gain of over 100 per cent; the preaching stations from 335 to 652, a gain of nearly 100 per cent; the church buildings from 68 to 172, a gain of 152 per cent; the families from 3,148 to 5,926, a gain of over 88 per cent; the communicants from 3,956 to 6,773, a gain of over

71 per cent." Gordon adds that, "never in the history of Christendom was there ever such a pace set for the advancing line of Christian conquest."

Robertson was constantly traveling. Usually he was circulating around the prairies, preaching, organizing congregations, and encouraging the local missionaries. Occasionally he would travel around eastern Canada, raising money for mission work in the West. Unfortunately, he didn't have much time with his own family and was slowly working himself to death.

When the Yukon gold rush began at the end of the nineteenth century, Robertson immediately pushed for a strong missionary presence in that territory. Speaking of the large numbers of gold-seekers heading to the Yukon he said, "We must send with them some one to tell them of the treasure more precious than gold, some one to warn them in their day of prosperity, or remind them in their day of calamity, that God reigneth, some one to stand by the dying bed and point men to Christ." The Yukon effort was basically Robertson's last great missionary crusade before he passed away.

As Gordon notes, Robertson had been "God's own instrument for God's good work for Western Canada." In fact, Gordon went so far as to refer to western Canada as "the Robertson land." This was because "it bears to-day the mark of James Robertson's hand more than that of any other one man's, and that mark is cut deep into the heart and conscience, into the very life of the Western people."

One man, used by God, can do wonders.



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The Telescope: 400-years-old

From
awesome sights
to
data-mining

by Margaret Helder

It was a gentleman from Middelburg in the Netherlands who, in 1608, applied for a patent for the telescope. His application was rejected on the grounds that the design was already well known. Whatever the situation, it was Italian Galileo Galilei's use of this tool in 1609 that provided the foundation for modern astronomy. Galileo discovered craters, mountains and plains on the moon in December of 1609.

And that's why four hundred years later we're celebrating the International Year of Astronomy.

Bigger is better

The earliest astronomers peered through long tubes fitted with suitable lenses. At first these observers could only show the world what they had seen by drawing pictures of it. However, with the advent of the camera in the nineteenth century they could take actual pictures of bodies in space.

During the late nineteenth century, some major telescopes were built, designed for direct viewing through lenses. The largest of these is the Yerkes Observatory in Williams Bay, Wisconsin. This facility, with an objective diameter of 102 centimeters, was completed in 1897. Such *refracting* telescopes however had some major disadvantages including dimming of light as it passed through the thick lenses.

Many of the disadvantages of the refracting telescopes were solved with *reflecting* telescopes which used a mirror to focus the light. These structures could be much larger since the

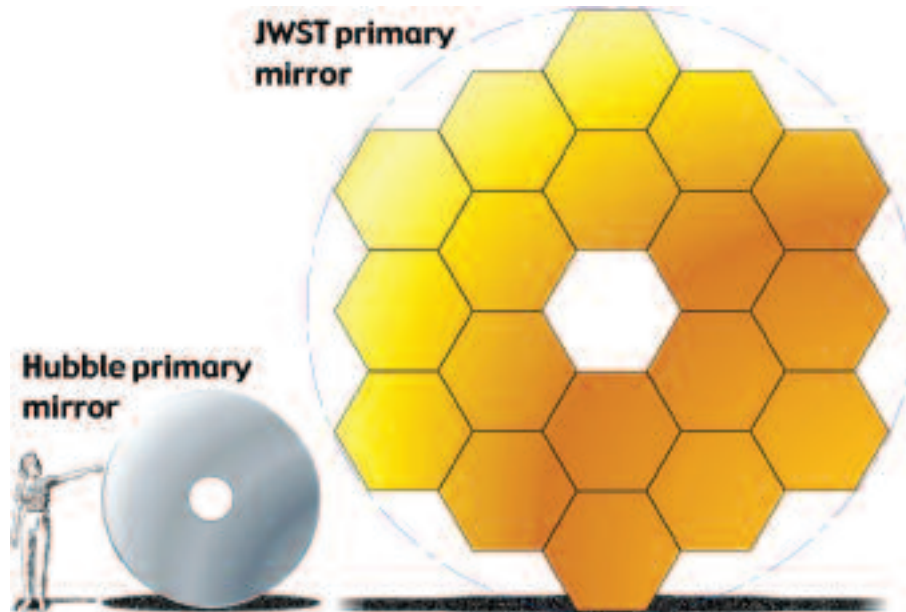
mirror could be strongly supported at the back. That was quite an advance because the larger the collecting surface is, the more light that is collected.

During the twentieth century, many reflecting telescopes were built. The largest was the Keck Observatory with a mirror diameter of 10 meters, completed in 1993 at Mauna Kea, Hawaii. Large mirrors are exceptionally heavy so facilities like the Keck use several smaller mirrors to make up the desired large area.

Reinventing the camera

The advances have kept coming. Astronomers have long since realized that photographic plates are inefficient light detectors. Thus for the past thirty years astronomers have made use of *charge-coupled devices* (CCDs). These involve a thin piece of silicon divided into an array of light sensitive squares





The James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) is designed to be the successor of the Hubble Space Telescope (Illustration by NASA).

called “picture elements” or “pixels.” When an image from a telescope is focused on a CCD, an electrical charge builds up in each pixel in proportion to the number of photons of light energy falling on it. The amount of charge in each pixel is stored in digital form in a computer. These devices were originally invented in 1969 (for another purpose) by Willard Boyle and George Smith of Bell Laboratories. Because of their extraordinary sensitivity, almost all optical astronomy is now recorded in digital form.

Seeing what our eyes don't see

While all of the previously mentioned telescopes collect visible light, in recent decades astronomers have begun to make observations at wavelengths of energy which are not visible to us. For example, astronomers first became aware of radio radiation (sound) in the 1930s and 1940s.

Only visible light, radio waves and ultraviolet light commonly penetrate our atmosphere from space. However with the advent of the space age, astronomers have been able to deploy spacecraft that can detect forms of energy more or less energetic than visible light. Thus the International Ultraviolet Explorer was launched in 1978, and in 1992 the Extreme Ultraviolet Explorer was deployed. Even more energetic sources of radiation were discovered when the High Energy Astrophysical Observatories were launched in 1977 and 1979. These discovered sources of x-ray and gamma rays coming from many points in the sky. ROSAT was another x-ray telescope launched in 1990 and the Compton Gamma Ray Observatory was launched in 1991.

These instruments have provided scientists with information on extremely high energy emitters in space. It is an interesting question how these bodies manage to release so much energy.

Not surprisingly, scientists continue to seek more information as they propose new theories, or rework old theories on the origin of the universe. All the new facilities are designed to provide such clues. As you'll learn, none of the proposed designs is cheap.

James Webb Space Telescope (JWST)

The James Webb Space Telescope is designed to be the successor of the Hubble Space Telescope (HST), which was launched in 1990. While the Hubble collects visible light images as well ultraviolet by means of a 2.4 meter primary mirror, the James Webb will record infrared data (heat energy) by means of extremely delicate sensors connected with a large 6.5 meter diameter mirror.

Since the mirror would be too large to fit into a space rocket, it will be launched in a folded position and then unfolded once out in space. And since the telescope's chosen orbit is an impressive 1.5 million kilometers away, everything has to work correctly the first time – there can be no rescue missions to fix problematic components as there was for the Hubble Space Telescope in 1991 (this year the HST was upgraded for the last time and it is expected to last at least another five years).

Estimated to cost \$4.5 billion, the James Webb Space Telescope is supposed to become operational in 2013. Since it will have the best infrared sensors possible, it's hoped that it will perceive areas with heat generating events in the distant universe.

Large Synoptic Survey Telescope (LSST)

A public-private partnership of American interests supported the formation of the Large Synoptic Survey Telescope Corporation in 2003. While the organization is based in Tucson, Arizona, the telescope itself will be built in Chile. It is

expected to become operational in 2015, having cost \$390 million to reach that point. Like most of the new telescopes under development, this one is expected to exhibit several exciting new features.

Like many others, it will be a reflecting telescope. Its primary mirror is to be only 8.4 meters, but other features are new. The system is highly robotic, designed to continuously scan the heavens, recording data in many different wavelengths (colors) of visible light. Moreover the area which it scans at any one time is unusually large.

Connected to the opening is the world's largest digital camera. This will produce the largest public data set in the world. The result will be a color movie of the universe. This movie will provide information on concentrations of matter in three dimensions, as well as short-lived events in space (like explosions far away, or the close approach of an asteroid or comet). Over ten years, this telescope will look at everything in its field of view about one thousand times. Any changes should be readily apparent.

European Extra Large Telescope (E-ELT)

As far as telescopes are concerned, most people agree that "bigger is better." The ability of a telescope to collect light increases dramatically with an increase in the size of the primary mirror.

With this in mind, the European Southern Observatory, based in Garching, Germany, initially hoped to build OWL, an

Overwhelmingly Large Telescope with a primary mirror of 100 meters in diameter. This consortium, with secure funding from thirteen member states, soon discovered that such a large mirror was much too difficult, so they have now downgraded their plans to E-ELT with a primary mirror 42 meters wide. This is still the boldest and most expensive of the planned new ground-based telescopes.

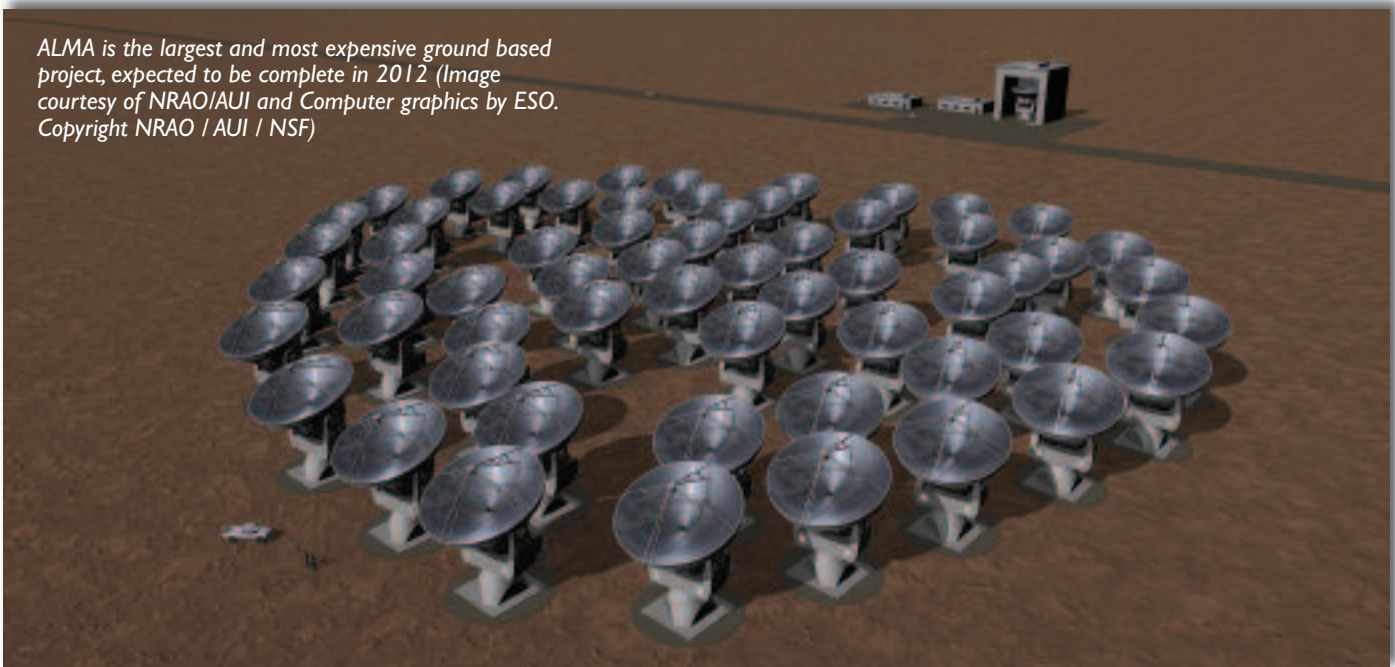
It is expected to become operational in 2017 at a cost of \$1.4 billion. The sites under consideration include Canary Islands, Morocco, Argentina or Chile.

Five-Hundred Meter Aperture Spherical Telescope (FAST)

Radio waves (sound) are another kind of information which penetrates our atmosphere from space. Inspired by a Bell Laboratories scientist who had recorded radio noise coming from the constellation Sagittarius, in 1936 Grote Reber, an electronics engineer from Illinois, built a radio telescope to map radio emissions from the Milky Way. In his backyard, he built a parabolic collector with a radio receiver at the focal point. By 1944 he had completed his map and astronomers began to take note.

Currently the largest such radio telescope (Arecibo Radio Telescope) is mounted in a bowl-shaped valley in Puerto Rico. It measures 305 meters in diameter, but it is not movable, so it can only measure objects which are overhead.

ALMA is the largest and most expensive ground based project, expected to be complete in 2012 (Image courtesy of NRAO/AUI and Computer graphics by ESO. Copyright NRAO / AUI / NSF)



Today the Chinese are building a 500-meter radio telescope (FAST). It sits in a natural bowl-shaped valley in Guizhou province in SW China and it is due for completion in 2014 at a cost of \$102 million.

Yet another radio telescope, called the Square Kilometer Array, as yet has no funding, nor a suitable site. Scientists hope to see it become reality in the 2020s at a cost of \$1.4 billion or more. While Arecibo achieves a collecting area of 73,000 square metres, this one would boast one million square kilometers! The collecting area would be distributed between thousands of small dishes all connected together. The data collected, scientists hope, will provide information on the characteristics of the most distant galaxies.

Atacama Large Millimeter Array (ALMA)

The largest ground-based project, ALMA is expected to collect energy from the most distant stars in our universe. Any dust surrounding these stars would absorb their light and re-emit it in much longer wavelengths of energy (somewhere between heat and radio waves). The farther away these stars are, with expansion of the universe (if any), the energy would stretch to a yet less energetic form, from far-infrared to sub-millimeter long wavelengths.

In order to seek such distantly originating energy, an array of high precision antennas is under construction high in the Chilean desert. Many nations from Asia, Europe and North America are involved in this project. Various designs of collector from several countries will make up the array. This is less than ideal, but without these concessions to national interest, there would be no facility. ALMA is expected to be completed by 2012 at a cost of \$1.3 billion.

Why the excitement?

The early astronomers were no doubt motivated by curiosity when they turned their telescopes toward the heavens. While curiosity may still motivate today's astronomers, most of their information is now digital in form. Without powerful computers, it would be impossible to make any sense of the *terabytes* of data! Most of these scientists use number-crunching programs to make sense of the data collected. Data-mining is fast replacing actual observations made through telescopes. What fun is that?

The most obvious feature of astronomical research is its high price tag. Billions and billions are being spent, so clearly there has to be a reason why governments are willing to spend these sorts of dollars to document energy distributions in space.

Has Astronomy rebutted the Bible?

"In 1633, the astronomer Galileo was ordered to stand trial before Pope Urban VIII on formal charges of heresy. His crime was proposing that the Earth moved around the Sun, and not the other way around."

– Richard Peacock (www.amateurscientist.org)

Does the Bible teach that the Earth is stationary? And if so, has Galileo, and the field of Astronomy, rebutted the Bible?

It's true the Bible does, repeatedly, speak of the Earth being unmoving. Psalm 93:1 and 96:10 as well as 1 Chronicles 16:30 all say, "the world is firmly established, it cannot be moved" (NIV). And it is often portrayed that Galileo disproved this, by showing that the Sun, not the Earth, is at the center of our Solar System.

A careful analysis of the situation would reveal however, as astronomer John Byl declares, that while it is clear that the Earth and stars are in motion with respect to each other, it is impossible to prove which is at rest, since there is no fixed ref-

erence point. The Earth does move, relative to the Sun, but relative to the Earth it is the Sun that does the moving. And relative to Alpha Centauri both are in motion!

As Byl further declares: "In short, the question as to whether it is really the Earth or the Sun that moves cannot be answered through scientific investigation. There are no direct proofs of the Earth's motion; there cannot be. At its deepest level the question is not even scientifically meaningful. The definition of what constitutes an 'absolute' standard depends largely on non-observational, philosophical considerations" (*God and Cosmos* p. 31). Some people pick the Sun as the reference point but it is hardly unscientific to pick the Earth as our

The simple truth is few people actually care about the details of such patterns. It is the story that is attached to the patterns that interests society. One can interpret data in all sorts of ways based on what starting assumptions one adopts, but a major trend has been evident for the whole 400 years. That trend has involved rejection of attitudes which prevailed before 1609. Of course, the popular medieval conceptions concerning space were based largely on Greek philosophy. Nevertheless, as more and more discoveries were made, people came to question all their former beliefs.

Billions for a foreign philosophy

An editorial in *Nature* in celebration of the International Year of Astronomy, reminds us of the “humbling nature of gazing at the heavens” and urges us to “ponder our place in the Universe.” (January 1/09 p. 7). So what is the astronomers’ objective in so doing? A prominent scientist tells us:

Today, telescopes can cost billions of dollars. It could be argued that such devices are ultimately as useful (or useless) to human progress as poetry. But they are funded because, like the greatest poetry or the building of a Gothic cathedral, cosmology is a voyage of the human spirit, and as such, a point of personal or national pride. It

is worth a great price to understand our place in the intricate web of time and space (Owen Gingerich. *Nature* Jan1/09 p. 29).

Many taxpayers might prefer to spend those dollars elsewhere than for somebody else’s philosophy!

It is clear that the objective of most astronomers is philosophical, to bolster conclusions which entirely exclude God from the scheme of things. When Dr. Gingerich talks about “our understanding of our place in the Universe” (as he does in the same piece), he means that man must acknowledge that everything is meaningless with no special anything.

Of course, when we look towards the heavens, we can still feel humble without rejecting our faith. King David looked up at the night sky and all this wonder made him reflect on the majesty of God: “O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! . . . when I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?” (Psalm 8:1, 3-4) King David, even without the benefits of modern astronomy, saw the true significance of the sky. The heavens, rightly interpreted, do not lead us away from God, but to God, the Creator of heaven and earth.



Galileo facing the Roman Inquisition
by Cristiano Banti (1857)

reference point (it is where we live after all!) and consequently describe the Sun as moving – rising in the morning and setting in the afternoon.

In addition, it is evident that in the biblical texts cited the meaning of the word “moved” is in the sense of “not subject to destruction.” For example, the note for Psalm 93:1 in the new *English Standard Version Study Bible* (2008) declares:

At one time this passage was taken to support the picture of the universe in which the earth is stationary and everything revolves around it. However, the verse does not imply this, for the term translated “moved” simply points to some kind of instability, and “never be moved” points to God-given security.... The expression probably means that the world’s ongoing order (and the moral principles that underlie that order) are faithful and sure, guaranteed by God’s own faithfulness.

Thus a rejection of the Bible, and a rejection of the Earth as special is not based on evidence from Astronomy. There is no need to reject the God who made Mankind on a special Earth in a wonderful cosmos.



Human-Ape hybridization: A failed attempt to prove Darwinism

by Jerry Bergman

Ilya Ivanov (1870-1932) was an eminent biologist who achieved considerable success in the field of artificial insemination of horses and other animals. Called “one of the greatest authorities on artificial fecundation,”¹ he graduated from Kharkov University in 1896 and became a professor of zoology in 1907. His artificial insemination techniques were so successful that he was able to fertilize as many as 500 mares with the semen of a single stallion.

Ivanov also pioneered the use of artificial insemination to produce various hybrids, including that of a zebra and a donkey, a rat and a mouse, a mouse and a guinea pig, and an antelope and a cow. His most radical experiment, though, was his attempt to produce a human-ape hybrid.² He felt that this feat was clearly possible in view of how successful he had been in his animal experiments – and how close evolutionary biologists then regarded apes and humans. The experiments were supported by some of the most respected biologists of the day, including Professor Hermann Klaatsch³ and Dr. F.G. Crookshank.⁴ The main opposition was from “two or three religious publications.”⁵

His project begins

In the mid 1920s, Professor Ilya Ivanov began his project, funded by the Soviet government, to hybridize humans and apes by artificial insemination.⁶ The funds for his project equaled over one million in today’s dollars. Ivanov presented his human-ape hybrid experiment idea to the World Congress of Zoologists in Graz, and in 1924 he completed his first experiment in French Guinea. He first attempted to produce human male/chimpanzee female hybrids, and all three attempts failed. Ivanov also attempted to use ape males and human females to produce hybrids but was unable to complete the experiment because at least five of the women died.

Because Ivanov was then an internationally respected scientist, he was able to obtain prominent sponsors for his project, including the polymath Otto Schmidt, editor of the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, and Nikolai Gorbunov, a chemical engineer and close friend of Lenin.⁷

After Professor Ivanov detailed the rationale behind his idea, the British government, home of Darwin, promised to help raise money for the project. The Russian government contributed the first \$10,000 US, and a number of prominent American patrons of science were also very supportive of the project.

Efforts to support evolution

Charles Lee Smith wrote that the objective of Ivanov’s experiments was to achieve “artificial insemination of the human and anthropoid species, to support the doctrine of evolution, by establishing close kinship between man and the higher apes.”⁸ The project was supported by The American Association for the Advancement of Atheism because it was seen as “proof of human evolution and therefore of atheism.”⁸ When applying to the Soviet government for funds, Ivanov emphasized the importance of his research for anti-religious propaganda.⁷

Attorney Howell S. England wrote that the scientists involved in advising the project “are confident that hybrids can be produced, and, in the event we are successful, the question of the evolution of man will be established to the satisfaction of the most dogmatic anti-evolutionists,” concluding that the “original idea was that only hybrids from the gorilla would prove fertile.”⁵

However, the scientist advisors wanted the field researchers to use orangutans, chimpanzees, gorillas, and possibly gibbons in the experiments. The researchers accepted the polygenetic theory of human evolution, concluding that orangutans should be crossed with humans of the “yellow race,” gorillas with humans of the “black race,” chimpanzees with the “white race,” and gibbons with “the more brachycephalic peoples of Europe” (he probably meant Jews). The purpose was “to try to demonstrate the close relationship of human and ape stocks.”⁹

The scientists concluded that these matches would ensure that the hybrids were fertile because it was believed that the “yellow race” evolved from orangutans, the “black race” from gorillas, the “white race” from chimpanzees, and the “brachycephalic peoples” from gibbons. They even concluded that, “it would be possible to produce the complete chain of specimens

from the perfect anthropoid to the perfect man.”⁷ Howell England wrote that Dr. Crookshank of London, who “has made a minute anatomical study of the three larger anthropoids,” is convinced from his research that if the “orang” can successfully be “hybridized with the yellow race, the gorilla with the black race, and the chimpanzee with the white race, all three hybrids will reproduce themselves.”

In his opinion each species of anthropoid is more closely related to its corresponding human type than it is to either of the other anthropoids. In other words. . . the chimpanzee has a closer relationship to the white race than to the gorilla or the orang. The gibbon. . . has its corresponding human type in the more brachycephalic peoples of Europe.¹⁰

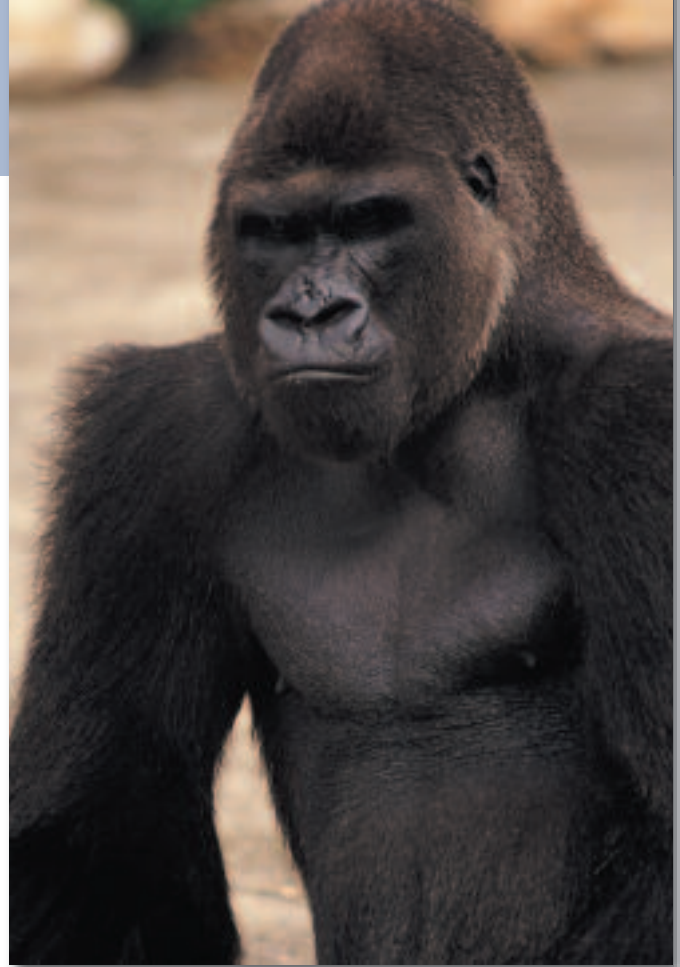
England noted that the research team would proceed along these lines because the scientists involved were all in complete accord with Dr. Crookshank’s views. To achieve their research goals, the scientists used deception. For example, Ivanov attempted to “inseminate black females with ape sperm without their consent, under the pretext of medical examination in the local hospital.”

The French governor, however, forbade him from carrying out this part of the project. But Ivanov saw no moral problem here. He angrily reported to his sponsors in the Kremlin about the primitive fears of the blacks and the bourgeois prejudices of the French.⁷

TIME magazine opined that if this experiment failed, evolution would still not be invalidated because this “test of evolution would be decisive only in the event that pregnancy, whether productive of healthy offspring or not, could be induced.” Conversely, if the experiment succeeded, “fresh and final evidence would be established that humans and anthropoids belong to a common genus of animal life.” Furthermore, to more confidently establish human-from-ape evolution as fact, the “hybrid fertilization would have to be attempted upon females of both species, human and ape.”

Fully formed, healthy offspring, if they resulted, would not be regarded as “missing links,” but as living proof that apes and men are species as closely allied as horses and asses which can be hybridized to produce mules or hinnies. If an ape-man or man-ape hybrid should prove fecund, the relationship of the two parent species would be proved even closer than is now supposed. If no offspring resulted, evolution would by no means fail; the distance of apes and men from a parent stock would merely be demonstrated to be as great or greater than it is now estimated.¹⁰

In the end, the research failed and has not been attempted again, at least publicly. Today we know it will not be successful for many reasons, and Professor Ivanov’s attempts are, for this reason, a major embarrassment to science. One problem is humans have 46 chromosomes – apes 48 – and for this reason the chromosomes will not pair up properly even if a zygote is formed. Another problem is a conservatively estimated 40 mil-



lion base pair differences exist between humans and our putative closest evolutionary relatives, the chimps. These experiments are the result of evolutionary thinking and they failed because their basic premise is false.¹¹

Dr. Bergman is an Adjunct Associate Professor at the University of Toledo Medical School in Ohio. This article is reprinted with permission from the May 2009 Acts and Facts. Copyright © 2009 Institute for Creation Research. Used by permission.

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Soup & Buns

Walking in someone else's shoes

by Sharon L. Bratcher

Life is entirely different when you work full time outside the home.

I couldn't understand that or see how it could be true until I did it myself. After all, I put in a good, long day at home with the younger kids, the household tasks, the insurance paperwork, the real estate questions, the redecorating, the doctors' visits and Ladies' Bible Study and a bit of time here and there with friends. I also worked part time, so it seemed like my life was just as full and sometimes frantic as those who worked full time.

But not quite the same.

In 2007 when our youngest entered 10th grade I began working full time outside the home for the first time since 1981. At first I felt like I was always at work and never at home. As time went on I began to notice several "truths" about my having this job:

Five facts

First: Daily family dinners were one of the first casualties. After working 8-9 hours and commuting for another hour, I often couldn't face the idea of cooking and waiting another half an hour for dinner so we just stopped at Wendy's on the way home.

Second: Less housework was completed. Since I wasn't home very much, I didn't look around at the house a lot and therefore it didn't bother me as often if it was messy/unpainted, etc. (truthfully, my house has *never* been the best, but now it took a definite nosedive). Out of sight, out of mind.

Third: There never seems to be time to get things done. *When* is one supposed to take care of life's business? When is there time to paint a room, get to the doctor or even *call* the doctor or the insurance company or the phone company, or . . . or . . . or. When I worked part time I could always pile all those things into the days I wasn't at the job. But when one is always at the job, where can they be piled? Now I had more responsibility at work so there was some guilt if I came in late due to home matters. Work needed me. Kids needed me. Husband needed me. It seemed impossible to get it all accomplished.

Fourth: Social life dwindled. Because I was gone so much of the time, my deep desire and need to socialize with other people was often replaced by a deep desire to stay home for some quiet relaxation. My "stimulus" card was full. I still looked for-

ward to church socials and get-togethers with friends, but I didn't plan nearly as many and didn't miss it if there weren't any. No offense to anyone else, but after being out and around people all day, this extrovert actually wanted to minimize the socializing later in the day! Also, since I saw so little of my family, *they* became my social appointments a good part of the time.

And this led to the most interesting realization of them all. An old song says: "Walk a mile in my shoes. . . Before you accuse, criticize or abuse, walk a mile in my shoes." My husband noticed that now I was realizing some of the pressures that he had always faced. I began to reflect on all the times that I had wanted to go somewhere in an evening and he had not been too enthusiastic about it. I thought about how we had each craved what we had not experienced during the day: time at home or time away from home.

Best to think the best

Our goals and desires are as changeable as our menus: if we've had spaghetti four times this week, we aren't likely to want it again tonight. When getting out with other people was infrequent, it was definitely one of my goals. Not so much after being away from home all the time.

And then it occurred to me that maybe when I was staying home longing for company and some of my fellow church members who worked full time didn't particularly want to get together: maybe I shouldn't have taken it personally – maybe they were tired! I wish now that I had just cut those friends a break and quit the pity party. I certainly hope others will do so for me because sometimes on Friday evening and Saturday I don't want to go *anywhere!*

I stepped into a different situation and it caused me to reflect on how I had viewed others in that situation before then. We do not know what someone else's life and energy level are like or all the frustrations and difficulties they face. No wonder the Lord told us through the Apostle Paul that we are to be patient and kind towards one another and always assume the best rather than the worst.

Let's be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us (Ephesians 4:32). Let's walk a mile in the other person's shoes.



ENTICING ENIGMAS AND CEREBRAL CHALLENGES

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

NEW PUZZLES

Riddles for Punsters #159 -

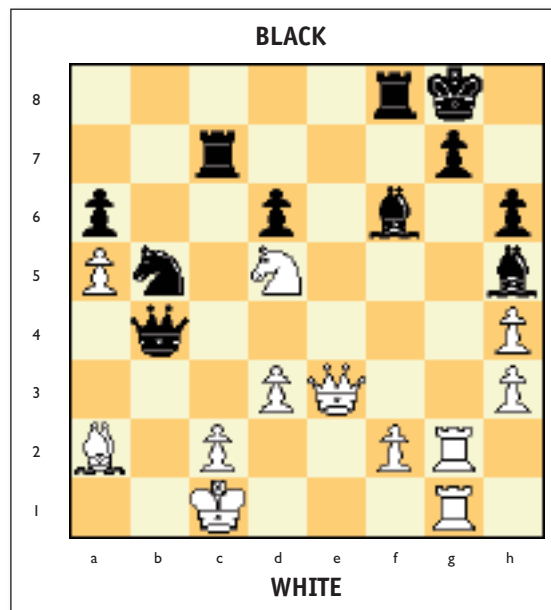
- What country would be suitable for setting up
 a) a school for fish? ___ land.
 b) a sleeping area for lions? _____ k.

Problem to Ponder #159 - "Be a 'PRO,' Show What You Know"

The challenge is to come up with a word, starting with the letters 'pro,' that fits the clue (definition or synonym) given. The number in brackets after the clue indicates the number of letters in each 'pro' word. For example, reproduce (9) procreate OR encourage (7) promote.

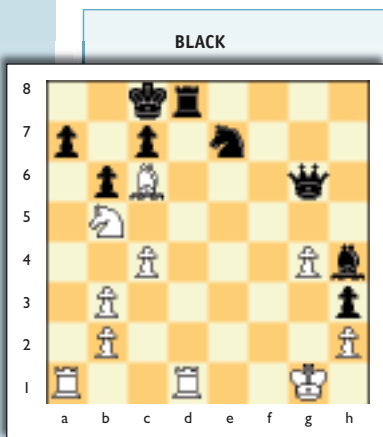
- defend (7) _____
- foul, offensive (7) _____
- set into motion (6) _____
- fuel for BBQ (7) _____
- medical evaluation (9) _____
- order of events (7) _____
- put off doing (13) _____
- fruit of the land (7) _____
- extensive job, task (7) _____
- show to be true (5) _____

Chess Puzzle # 159



WHITE to Mate in 4

Or, If it is BLACK's Move, **BLACK to Mate in 2 or in 3**



SOLUTION TO CHESS PUZZLE # 158

- OR**
 1. _____ QxP ch
 2. K-R1 or K-B1 RxR ch
 3. RxR QxR mate
- IF**
 1. _____ QxP ch
 2. B-N2 QxB mate
 and Black wins even sooner!
- Algebraic Notation**
 1. _____ Rd8xd1 +
 2. Ra1xd1 Qg6xg4 +
 3. Bc6-g2 Qg4xg2 ++
 or
 3. Kg1-h1 Qg4xd1 ++
 or Kg1-f1 Qg4xd1 ++
- OR**
 1. _____ Qg6xg4 +
 2. Kg1-h1 Rd8xd1 +
 or Kg1-f1 Rd8xd1 +
 3. Ra1xd1 Qg4xd1 ++
- IF**
 1. _____ Qg6xg4 +
 2. Bc6-g2 Qg4xg2 ++
 and Black wins even sooner!

WHITE to Mate in 3 Descriptive Notation

1. NxRP ch K-N1
2. RxR ch N-B1
3. RxN mate

Algebraic Notation

1. Nb5xa7 + Kc8-b8
2. Rd1xd8 + Ne7-c8
3. Rd8xc8 ++

BLACK to Mate in 3 Descriptive Notation

1. _____ RxR ch
2. RxR QxP ch
3. B-N2 QxB mate
or
3. K-R1 or K-B1 QxR mate

SOLUTIONS TO THE PREVIOUS (SEPTEMBER) PUZZLE PAGE

Answer to Riddles for Punsters #158 -

"Take Care, Mr. Bear - Don't be Beat by the Heat"

Why did the bear grizzly fail to complete a 10 km hike on a hot summer day? The heat was becoming unbearable and the grizzly could walk no further. Such a sad tale!

Answer to Problem to Ponder #158 - "Splashing for Fun Under a Hot Sun"

Angela's parents bought a backyard swimming pool for her to play in on hot summer days. The empty pool needs about 500 litres of water to be filled to the proper level. Tap water comes out of the garden hose at about 8 litres per minute. After waiting one hour, Angela goes into the not-yet-filled pool and starts playing. Her splashing causes an average of 3 litres of water to go onto the grass around the pool each minute. (a) How long will it take the pool to be filled to the proper level once Angela goes into the pool?

As soon as the pool is filled, the tap is turned off and Angela continues to splash around for one and a half hours more before going inside the house to get dried off. (b) How long will it take to drain the no-longer-full pool if water comes out of the pool's drain hole at an average rate of 20 litres per minute?

- (a) In the first hour, $8 \times 60 = 480$ L of water went into the pool, so another 20 L were still needed. After that, due to Angela splashing, the overall rate of water gain by the pool is $8 - 3 = 5$ L/minute. Thus, the remaining 20 L needed would take $20/5 = 4$ minutes. **Therefore 4 minutes are needed to fill the pool once Angela enters the pool.**
- (b) During the additional 90 minutes Angela splashes, the water that leaves the pool is $3 \text{ L/min} \times 90 \text{ min} = 270 \text{ L}$ which means $500 - 270 = 230 \text{ L}$ still needs to be drained from the pool. At a drainage rate of 20 L/min, it would take $230/20 = 11.5$ minutes. **Thus, to drain the rest of the water would take 11 minutes and 30 seconds.**

Crossword Puzzle

Series 16 No 10

Last month's solution
Series 16 No 9

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				

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
12	R	E	N	E	W		13	A	R	E	14	A	C	E	15
16	I	N	A	N	E		17	T	A	C	18	N	E	M	19
20	S	A	T	I	R	21		22	Q	I	23	N	G	24	E
						M	25	26	R	I	M	E	A	27	N
28	A	L	30		31	S	H	Y	32	E	A	R	33	T	E
34	D	O	E	R	35		36	O	E	R	37		38	T	O
40	S	P	O	O	41	F	42	S	E	L	43		44	O	L
					48	T	O	P	49		50	D	E	N	52
53	H	54	55	T	56	O	A	57		58	N	O	D	59	O
60	A	D	O		61	T	R	E	62	A	D	S	63	M	
64	R	A	M		65	S	E	L	L	66	H	67	E	A	68
71	S	M	A	72	R	T	73	E	O	74	N	75	A	L	76
				76	T	O	E	77		78	N	79	T	I	80

ACROSS:

1. Wall painting
6. Extra one
11. Temporary bed
14. French smell
15. Church member
16. Map abbr.
17. Kind of noodle soup
18. Place in England
19. Energy
20. Family groups
21. Criminal Investigation Dept. of Scotland Yard
22. French parent
23. Baby's bed
24. Strong point
25. Liquid container
29. Code for Chicago-O'Hare airport
30. Girl's name
31. Allow
33. Black bird
34. Hide of a small beast
37. Transgression
38. Night before
39. Little bit

40. European Theater of Operations (WWII)
41. Et cetera, for short
42. Letter of alphabet
43. Breakfast item
44. Kitchen utensil
45. Map abbr.
47. Spookily
49. Sprays someone with hot pepper spray
52. Make a sound like a cat or a dove
53. O.T. book
54. Creative form of expression
55. Walk around loudly
59. Breakfast item
60. Clean thoroughly
62. Duck with soft feathers
63. Lone number
64. Smallest components of an element
65. Vanity
66. Rodent
67. Miraculous food supplied in O.T.
68. Belief

DOWN:

1. Man's name, or wine sediment
2. Russian mountain or river
3. Type of tomato
4. Recompenses
5. Camera part
6. Bind together with thread
7. Peaceful
8. Make up on the spot
9. Category of instrument
10. Emergency Radio Service, for short
11. Flower bud used for pickling
12. Not concealed
13. Portable home from many years ago
22. Natural veggie holder
23. Very smart
24. Kitchen appliance
25. Flower holder
26. Send out
27. Harmonize
28. Votes in
29. Wild donkey
32. Golf accessory

33. Had dinner
34. French military cap
35. Style of lettering
36. Small horse
45. Socioeconomic status, for short
46. Season
48. Finish working
49. Military rank
50. Mountain in Song of Solomon 4:8
51. Celestial body
52. Sing softly to a baby
54. Official records of proceedings
55. Fall month
56. Norse god of war
57. Inhabitant of Media
58. Ready, in Paris
60. Kind of missile
61. Republic of S. Africa

Joyce