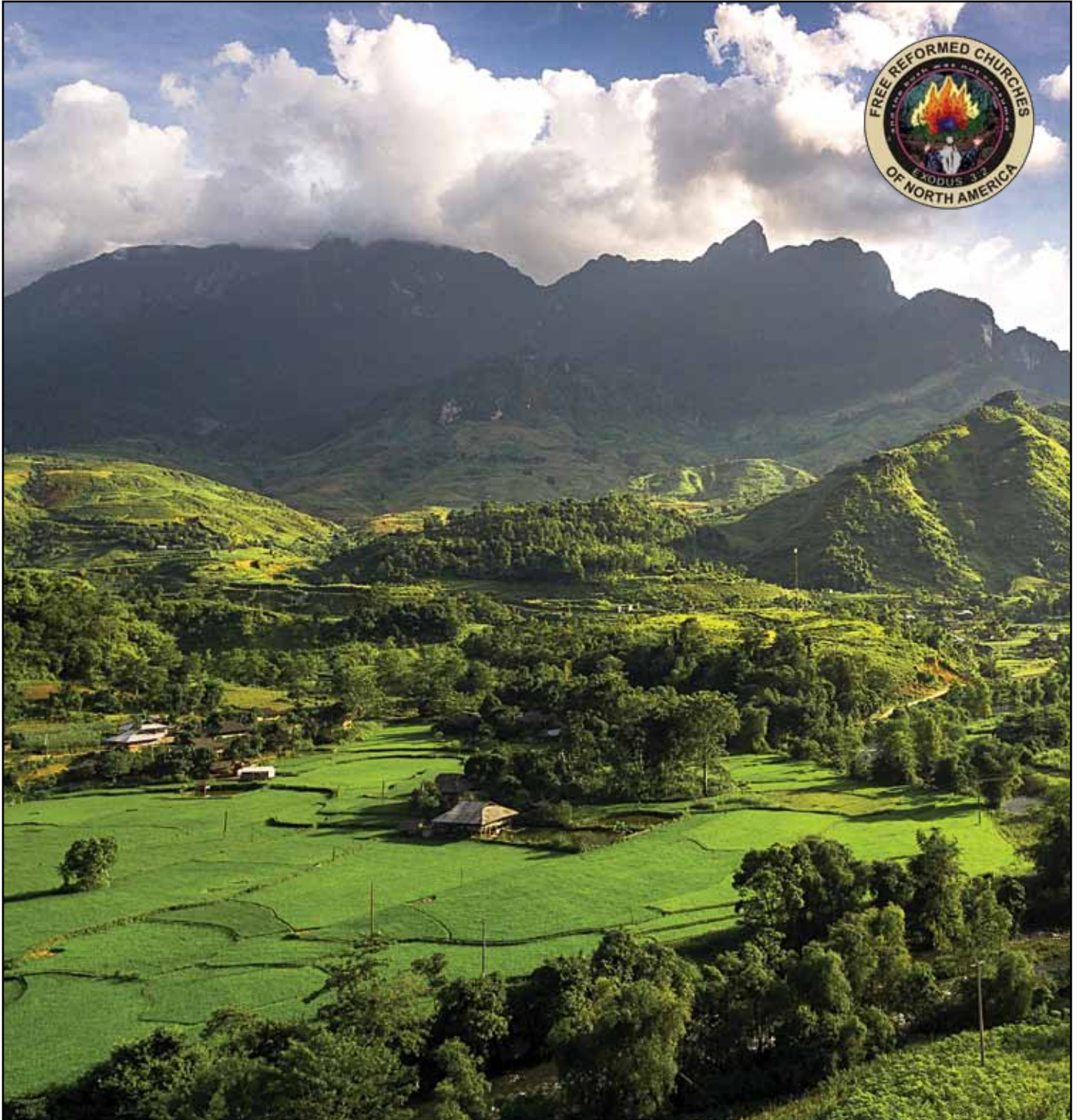


VOLUME 68 NUMBER 6 · JUNE 2021 EDITION

THE MESSENGER

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF NORTH AMERICA



02 MEDITATION
A CHALLENGED PEOPLE
RESTING IN GOD'S GREATNESS

08 CHURCH HISTORY (7)
THOMAS HOOKER (2)

16 FRC YOUTH:
EARLY FRC YOUTH
ACTIVITIES



A CHALLENGED PEOPLE RESTING IN GOD'S GREATNESS

Jude wrote his letter to those who needed to *earnestly contend for the faith*. Even as he exposed false teaching, Jude urged his readers to contend (v.3), grow (v.20), look for mercy (v.21), have compassion (v.22), and save others (v.23). Yet, they were not to find this in themselves. They were to rest in the greatness of God. “*Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever*” (vv.24-25).

We Are Challenged

The challenge we face is no less real than the challenge in Jude's day.

We need to contend for the faith in a world that increasingly rejects God and has no space for those who desire to follow Him. We need to contend for the faith in a world that appeals for us to pursue things other than faith and hope in God.

We need to grow because in ourselves we are prone to halt and stumble. Even though we may be strong in the doctrines of grace, we find it difficult to live lives of grace. We need the gifts of God that we cannot give ourselves or each other.

We are prone to stumble and fall into sin because the evil one is as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Satan delights in pride and lies. He will use all means, including distraction, sin, and in-fighting, in order to break down and weaken Christians.

The challenge is real. So, how can we live and rest considering this?

We Rest in God's Great Ability

As Jude begins his doxology, he begins with an address – *Now unto Him*. But he stops short of naming who that “Him” is. Instead he breaks into praise of what this One does. *Unto Him that is able to keep*. He alone has the ability, the power to preserve His church. This is the Triune God.

The ability which God has is not just a hidden ability, He is *able to keep me and you* from falling. In spite of our tendency to wander, slip, stumble, and fall, He is able to keep us from that. God is able to be your guardrails on the narrow road through the valleys and mountains of life. He is able to guard you from slipping into canyons of sin. But there is more - He is able to keep you sure-footed on His path. He is able to make your way plain before you, so you will know the way to go.

God is able to preserve you until the day on which Jesus Christ returns. Malachi had asked (3:2): *But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?* The human answer, as long as we look to ourselves and our own ability, is nobody. But in Christ we can. *Now unto Him who is able to present you faultless before the presence of His Glory.*

How then will Christ present the challenged who have been kept? Faultless! Without spot or wrinkle! Because of Christ's pure, sacrificial death, the church is also seen as having no blemish. He is able to take those who struggle with all the things Jude warns the people about and present them faultless. He takes those who need warnings and presents them blameless. He takes those who struggle keeping themselves in the love of God and presents them perfect. *He is able.*

This is not an ability to perform in a clinical or judicial kind of way. He does not just issue a report saying – not guilty. No, there is exceeding joy, exuberant joy, exultant joy, bubbling joy in God's redemptive work.

In the challenges of the past year, that joy may seem foreign. In some ways, it is because we have felt like we have had to contend for the faith. It has been stressful. We have been confronted with our own sin and limitations. We have wondered how long this could continue.

But dear friend, take Jude's doxology and pray it - *Now unto Him that is able to keep me from falling, and to present me faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.* Rest in God's ability.

We Rest in God's Great Authority

God not only has the ability, but He also has the authority to use and display that ability. This God of power and authority, in whom we are called to rest, is also *the only wise God our Saviour*. His wisdom makes Him trustworthy. His wisdom will keep us from false teachers. His wisdom should drive us to prayer. He does not keep His wisdom to Himself. He gives that wisdom to all who ask.

The church is not the Saviour, nor is any ministry or seminary. Yes, the church is the demonstration of the effectiveness of His gospel, and the messenger of His gospel to others. But the church is to point to God, not to itself or its own ideas.

To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. When we pray that as individuals, we are giving up the control of our own lives. When we pray that as a denomination, we are confessing we live under His authority. We exist, not to serve ourselves, but to live for His glory. We live to rest in, and enjoy His glory, majesty, dominion, and power forever.

What many see as coincidences should be seen as His wisdom made clear in providence. Often people question, wonder, and worry because they cannot fathom providence. But we need to trust the wisdom of God in practical things too, and praise Him for that.

All the needs and challenges within the church do not diminish His glory and dominion. His glory and majesty remain, now and ever. From the very beginning to the present age. In every circumstance. After every decision. After every project. After every move. Are we resting in Him? When others look at us, do they see our confidence in the ability and authority of the King?

Beloved, remember God is the only One who keeps us. If it were not for His grace, all the meetings and all the means would not keep us from falling. Do not stumble at His ability, but rest in this truth: He is able to do more than we ask or can even imagine! It is only as we rest in the great ability and authority of our God that we will not be led astray. ①

Pastor David VanBrugge serves Grace Free Reformed Church of Brantford.

Now unto Him that is able to keep me from falling, and to present me faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

02

MEDITATION:

A Challenged People Resting
In God's Greatness

04

EDITORIAL:

Satan's Tactic to
Weaken and Ruin

08

CHURCH HISTORY (7):

Thomas Hooker (2)

12

BIBLE STUDY:

Seeking a Partner

14

12 WAYS:

We See Christ's
Infinite Wisdom

16

FRC YOUTH:

Early Free Reformed
Youth Activities

22

MISSIONS:

Why A Missional
Institution in a
"Christian" Country

24

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONTENTIONS AND DIVISIONS IN CHURCHES:

SATAN'S TACTIC TO WEAKEN AND RUIN (I)

“Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand” (Matt. 12:25).

The Lord Jesus spoke these words when the religious leaders were accusing Him of casting out demons through Beelzebub, the prince of demons. In other words, Satan's kingdom knows something that people, including Christians, often don't realize – at least not sufficiently.

Satan would like Christians to weaken their influence, witness, and strength. With that purpose, he tries incessantly from different angles, with an ever-shifting landscape of issues, to divide and conquer. We need to be aware of Satan's strategy (2 Cor. 2:11), and resist it by heeding the exhortations: “that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Cor. 1:10).

Obviously, this does not mean that we sacrifice truth on the altar of harmony. The Reformers could do no other than confess the truth of the Word of God and its doctrine in the face of falsehood and another gospel. On the other hand, the unity of the body of Christ should be a cherished article of faith. We should desire to see the evidence of it and certainly endeavor to “keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:3).

The Gift of Unity

In our divided world, true unity as God would have it can only come through grace, by faith, and on the basis of God's Word. Man's pride and arrogance sets him against his neighbor and replaces the love he should have for his neighbor with bitterness and envy. Unbelievers can indeed have good relationships, and by God's general favour have a unity that sometimes we fail to see evidenced among God's children. However, the unity of brothers and sisters is like anointing oil, and like the dew of Hermon, both of which descend from Christ to His church (see Psalm 133). Because true believers are united to Christ, they are also united one to another. This is a unity in faith, in hope, and in the gospel. There is “one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (Eph. 4:6).

Unity does not equal uniformity. There is diversity in the body of Christ, but it is the diversity of a body with a Head, “even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love” (Eph. 4:16).

The gift of unity does not preclude growth in unity. In fact, the Lord envisions and enables the church to grow “till we all come into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (Eph. 4:13). How important Christ-centered instruction is on the basis of the Bible. Preaching should call us to turn away from

the many ways in which we stray further and further from God (Isa. 53:6) to the one and narrow gate and the one and narrow way that leads to life.

Alienation From One Another

When division comes within Christian bodies, it is usually preceded by a waning and even disappearance of our tenderness and affection towards each other's true welfare. Instead of esteeming others better than ourselves, we tend to suspect others, impute wrong intentions to them, and close our hearts of compassion from each other. Instead of keeping up with each other Christ-centered and biblically rich conversations that seek each other's edification and strengthening, as well as endeavoring to learn from each other in the body of Christ, we fall silent towards each other, or are disingenuous, superficial, and begin to speak evil behind one another's back. At this point we close off tender compassion towards our brothers and sisters and do not seek their spiritual refreshment (Philemon 20; 1 John 3:17). We should hear the exhortation of Paul in Colossians 3:12-15: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful."

When love for fellow-Christians wanes, love for Christ does not remain strong and intact. The Bible makes clear that love for God and love for fellow-Christians is related. John writes: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen" (1 John 4:20). The Spirit that is in each believer directs us to love other Christians. When we do not love fellow-Christians as we should, we grieve the Spirit. Paul connects grieving the Spirit with bitterness towards others. He writes: "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph. 4:30-32).

A Party Spirit

You can know whether Christian love has declined in your heart or never been there when you define your religion and identity not from Christ or the Scripture, but from the points that your particular party or group holds to in opposition to other parties. These identity markers may be doctrinal beliefs or practical points, or people or writers you identify with and others you dismiss and despise. The Corinthians demonstrated this spirit when they hailed "Paul" or "Apollos," or "Peter" as their true identity definer (1 Cor. 1:11-13). It should be worrisome, alarming even, when we find ourselves talking more about hot-button points or more minor points in the compass of Scripture to the disregard of major and clear teachings and commandments. When what occupies our hearts and speech are not the great realities of God and Christ and sin and redemption, we ruminate over and talk at length about outward trends, consistory decisions, issues the media pushes into our focus, even if our opinions might have biblical warrant.

To be blunt: If we feel a greater affinity with an unbeliever, who happens to believe the same thing we do about a minor issue, than with a fellow-Christian, who happens not to agree with us, we are in a bad place spiritually. If we connect our identity with a certain "camp" or "party" of a certain writer or speaker or position on issues to the disregard or downplaying of fellow-Christians to whom we are bound, we have imbibed the spirit of contentiousness that reigned among the Corinthians. We are no better than they, and only give proof of carnality, for Paul says: "Ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are

When love for fellow-Christians wanes, love for Christ does not remain strong and intact. The Bible makes clear that love for God and love for fellow-Christians is related.

EDITOR: Dr. Gerald M. Bilkes
2692 Bridge Place NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49525
USA · T: 616.977.0599 ext.121
E: jerry.bilkes@prts.edu

ASSISTANT EDITOR:
Rev. David H. Kranendonk
T: 226.980.9607 · E: kranendonk@frcna.org
The Editors report to the Synodical Publications Committee.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:
· Mr. David Tamminga
· Rev. Ian Macleod
· Rev. W. Klaver
· Rev. Scott Dibbet
· Mr. Hans VanDoodeward
· Mr. Michael Driesse
· Mr. John DenDekker, Treasurer

SUBSCRIPTION RATE
Canada & U.S.A. - \$33.00 ANNUALLY
PER SUBSCRIPTION The Messenger is published 11 times per year (July & August issues are combined).

SUBSCRIPTIONS/REMITTANCES
Subscription requests, invoices, and payments should be addressed to:
Janey Slingerland
(Publications Administrator)
18 Chapala Cres. S.E.
Calgary, AB T2X 3M4 CANADA
T: 403.254.6591 · E: bookorders@frcna.org

SUBMISSIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/NOTICES: All articles, notices for family announcements, obituaries, anniversaries, and non-commercial advertisements for the **JULY/AUGUST 2021** issue should reach the editor no later than **TUESDAY, JUNE 8, 2021** and should be sent to:
Mrs. Rhonda Kroesbergen
(Messenger Administrator)
E: messenger@frcna.org

OPEN WINDOWS
This bi-monthly publication for children is under the direction of the Free Reformed Publications Committee:
Rev. Jerrold Lewis, General Editor
160 West Parkway
Pompton Plains, NJ 07444
E: jlewis@frcna.org

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR MISSIONS AND OUTREACH CAUSES SHOULD BE DIRECTED AS FOLLOWS:

FOREIGN MISSIONS
Dietrich DeKruyff, Financial Administrator
14 Southland Dr., London, ON. N6P 1C2
E: dietrichdekruyff@gmail.com

Keep in contact with your missionaries online:

RADIO EVANGELISM & HOME MISSIONS
Banner of Truth Radio Broadcast
Mr. John denDekker, Treasurer
16726 – 80th Avenue
Surrey, BC V4N 0G8 CANADA
T: 604.576.8935 · E: jdendekker@telus.net

REFUGEE FUND
James Van der Zwan, Treasurer
26829 – 33B Ave., Aldergrove, BC V4W 3G8
T: 604.818.3423 · E: jplumber@telus.net

CHRISTIAN MINISTRY TO ISRAEL
Mr. John Wilbrink, Treasurer
8 Weneil Drive, Freelon, ON L8B 0Z6
T: 905.659.7413 · E: john.wilbrink@gmail.com

Read *The Messenger* on the Free Reformed website: www.frcna.org

ye not carnal and walk as men?" (1 Cor. 3:3).


The Bible spends many chapters on binding the weak and strong in faith together (e.g. Rom. 14-15; 1 Cor. 8). Paul warns against sinning against brothers, making them to stumble, wounding them. Such actions he censures to the high degree: "When ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. Wherefore if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend" (1 Cor. 8:12-13). So precious was brotherly love to Paul and to the Spirit that inspired him that He would devote himself to such great a cost to the love of the brethren.

The Passions of the Old Nature

One of the great reasons that a divisive spirit is so dangerous is that believers may have legitimate cause for concern and yet the manner of our actions, words, thoughts and motives is corrupted by our old nature, with its sinful tendencies. We need much prayer that the flesh does not subtly leaven things. We can become blinded to what and how we are handling controversy. In his treatment of divisions among the people of God, Jeremiah Burroughs shows great insight into how human nature can do much damage in seasons of controversy and in life in general. He speaks of "distempers," such as pride, envy, self-love, rigidity, rashness, wilfulness, inconstancy, and jealousy.

Many of us will recognize times, usually long afterwards, in which our remarks or actions were too heated, uncharitable, or self-focused. We were blinded to our real motives. Often it is hard to maintain a Scriptural balance in a humble and charitable attitude in the genuine pursuit of the spiritual welfare of all involved without becoming too rash or rigid, or too passive or compromising. Certainly, at the level of our speech, we need to pray: "Guard thou my thoughts, I thee implore, and of my lips keep thou the door." May the Lord give us a true spirit of contrition for the many times we have failed the Lord and our brothers even in good matters. ¹¹ *To be continued...*

[Next time we will see how Satan craftily uses a contentious and divisive spirit to seek to damage God's cause, and how to resist this. A helpful resource is Jeremiah Burroughs, *Irenicum: To the lovers of truth and peace. Heart-divisions opened in the causes and evils of them: with cautions that we may not be hurt by them, and endeavours to heal them.*]

ReformedBookServices 

A CHRISTIAN BOOKSTORE

STORE HOURS: MON.-WED. 10-5 • THURS. 10-9 • FRI. 10-5 • SAT. 10-3

230 LYNDEN ROAD (BEHIND GALAXY CARWASH) BRANTFORD, ON N3R 8A3
 T: 519.304.4709 • E: SALES@REFORMEDBOOKSERVICES.CA

NEW NIAGARA DEPOT
 195 VICTORIA AVE., FENWICK, ON L0S 1C0 • T: 905.714.6257



Contact your deacon
or Peace Haven
Director, (SEE BELOW)

FREE REFORMED ASSOCIATION

PEACE HAVEN, a ministry of Free Reformed deacons, offers you and your family help with disabilities:

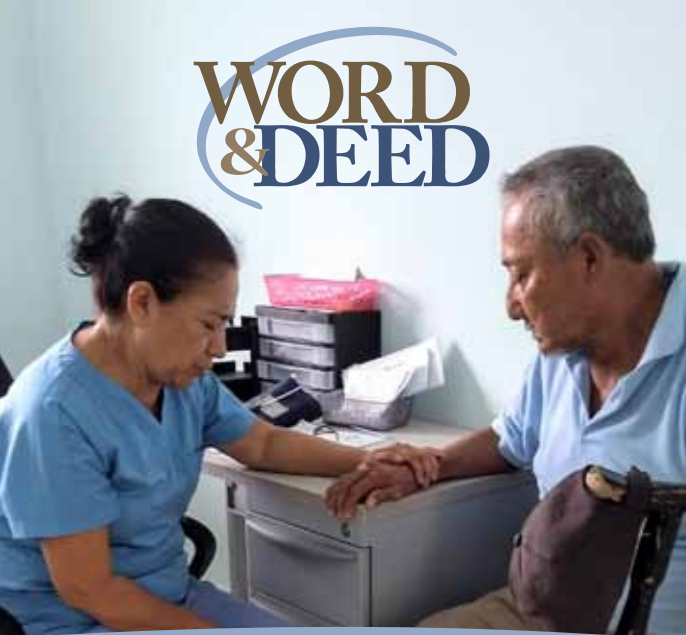
- a listening ear
- help accessing church and government resources
- meaningful day and evening programs
- respite or vacation care
- residential care

Margaret Heemskerck, mheemskerck.peacehaven@gmail.com or 519.770.8816

Don't discard used Christian literature or Bibles!
CHRISTIAN SALVAGE MISSION
 "Worldwide Distribution of Evangelical Literature"
 3 - 120 Lancing Drive, Hamilton, ON Canada L8W 3A1
 Phone/Fax: 905-574-3334 Email: info@csmcCanada.org
www.csmCanada.org

The mandate of Christian Salvage Mission is to gather Bibles and other evangelical Christian literature that is no longer needed from the shelves of people across Canada and ship it to Christians in third world countries who are less blessed than we are.

"Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost."
 John 6:12



WORD & DEED

And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

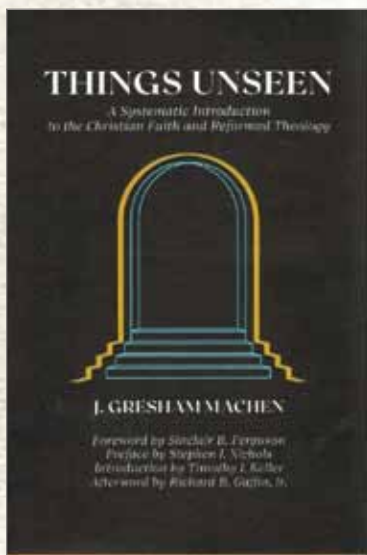
Colossians 3:17

www.wordanddeed.org

ReformedBookServices

PROMOTING GODLINESS, REVIVAL & REFORMATION

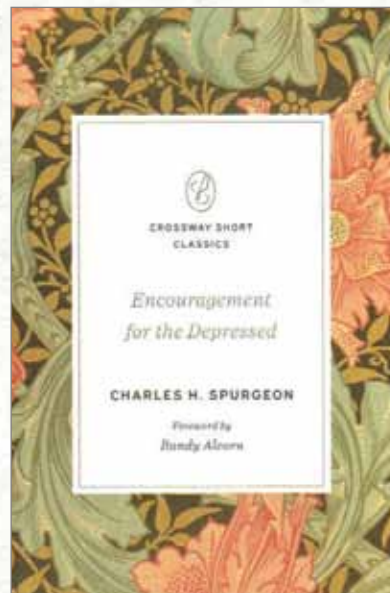
**GREAT
SELECTION
OF CHRISTIAN
NEW & USED
BOOKS AT
LOW PRICES**



Things Unseen: A Systematic Introduction to the Christian Faith and Reformed Theology

By Gresham J. Machen

J. Gresham Machen (1881-1937) was a professor at Princeton Seminary. He founded Westminster Seminary in 1929 and led the formation of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in 1936. R.C. Sproul said: "The recovery of this work of J. Gresham Machen is not like finding a gold mine in the mountains, it is more like discovering a diamond mine. It is a true treasure--one of sparkling jewels and glorious truth. To mine this treasure is to find a deposit in heaven." Hardcover, 446 pages, Westminster Seminary Press **RBS Price \$48.00**



Encouragement for the Depressed

(Crossway Short Classics)

By C. H. Spurgeon

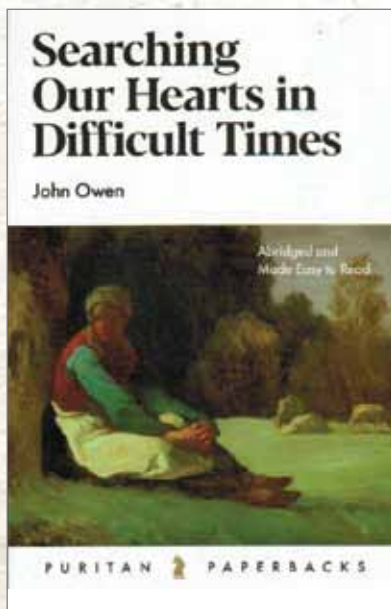
In this classic sermon, Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892) gently encourages the distressed to hold fast to the promises of God, for He is steadfast and will comfort His children as they walk faithfully with Him. Softcover, 102 pages, Crossway **RBS Price \$11.00**

Searching Our Hearts in Difficult Times (Puritan Paperbacks)

By John Owen

O that we might advise one another as to what to do; to help one another to recover from our weaknesses! Hailed as Britain's greatest theologian, Owen knew that following Jesus is not easy. It involves self-denial, daily cross-bearing, and lifelong obedience. Salvation is promised to the one who 'endures to the end.' Christians need much encouragement, especially in 'difficult times'.

The short chapters in Searching Our Hearts in Difficult Times contain a number of Owen's talks and sermons and are as relevant to Christians today as they were some three and a half centuries ago. Abridged and made easy to read. Softcover, 144 pages, Banner of Truth Trust **RBS Price \$10.50**



The Foundation of Communion With God (Profiles in Reformed Spirituality)

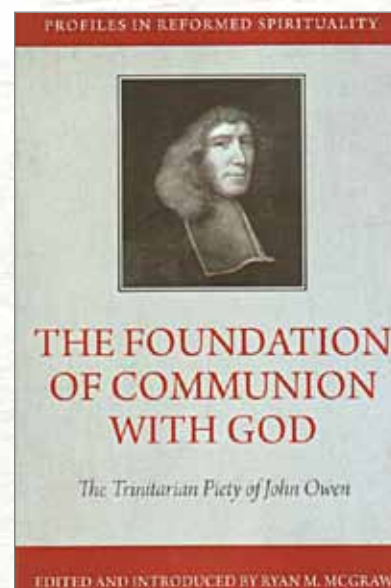
By Ryan M. McGraw

This book introduces readers to the Trinitarian piety of John Owen (1616-1683).

Ryan McGraw's introduction to Owen sketches the major events of this important theologian's life and shows how his circumstances shaped his thought on the themes of the Trinity and public worship. The second part of the book presents forty-one brief selections from Owen's writings that trace his thoughts on knowing God as Triune, on Scripture and worship, on heavenly-mindedness, and on covenant and the church.

Softcover, 147 pages, Reformation Heritage Books

RBS Price \$10.00



GIFT CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE

IN CANADA: REFORMED BOOK SERVICES • 230 Lynden Road, Unit 5A, Brantford, ON N3R 8A3 • **T:** 519.304.4709
E: sales@reformedbookservices.ca • www.reformedbookservices.ca • Store Hours: Mon-Wed 10-5 | Thurs 10-9 | Fri 10-5 | Sat 10-3
Orders and Deliveries also at: *Niagara Depot, 195 Victoria Avenue, Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0 • **E:** niagaradepotrbs@gmail.com

USA CUSTOMERS: REFORMATION HERITAGE BOOKS • 2965 Leonard St. N.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49525
T: 616.977.0889 • **F:** 616.285.3246 • **E:** orders@heritagebooks.org • www.heritagebooks.org



PILGRIMS AND PURITANS IN AMERICA (7)

SOME OUTSTANDING PURITAN LEADERS IN NEW ENGLAND (4) THOMAS HOOKER (2)

Last time, we began to examine the theology of Thomas Hooker, one of New England's leading theologians, who, together with John Cotton and several other learned divines, laid the foundations for Puritanism in America. We mentioned Hooker's emphasis on conversion as the starting point of his theology and his reason for doing so, namely the low level of spiritual life among most English church members at that time. It is important for us to understand the context in which theologians and other scholars do their work.

Difference between Puritan and Reformed Protestantism

To understand Puritan theology, as practiced in England and New England, we need to understand its context. It was developed in the context of the Protestant Reformation, particularly the Reformed branch of it, with its emphasis on the sovereignty of God and the doctrines of grace. While Puritan theologians stood firmly in the tradition of Geneva, they tended to put more emphasis on the practical aspects of theology than on their theoretical formulations. Many of them followed William Ames, who defined theology as the art of living well. For him "to live well is to live a life suitable and fitting to God, and so happily in God."¹

Ames, who spent many years in the Netherlands and became a professor at the Franeker University in 1623, never tired of reminding his students that theology must be much more than dogmatics or polemics and that men need to hold pure doctrine and practical divinity in proper balance and relationship.² In his view, biblical doctrine is the means a theologian-pastor must use to reach the end or goal of theology, which is "to save himself and them that hear him (1 Tim. 4: 16). He must model the art of living to God by living to God Himself, and so lead others to God, devoting himself wholly to the glory of God, and the edification of the church."³

Crucial Importance of Conversion

To be a theologian who can influence others for their eternal good, one needs to be converted. This may seem obvious, but Ames feared that many students aspiring for the ministry were sadly deficient in godliness, which he rightly regarded as the evidence of the new birth or conversion. Because he saw very little evidence of such godliness in both ministers and their congregations, Ames stressed the necessity of conversion. Ever since his own conversion at Cambridge under the preaching of William Perkins, Ames made conversion the first step in theology, for only then, he insisted, would theology have meaning.⁴

Although Ames died in The Netherlands and never set foot in Ameri-

ca, his influence on New England Puritans was enormous. In fact, several of the best-known ministers who served in New England had become his disciples while living in The Netherlands as refugees. Among them were Thomas Hooker and John Cotton. They and other leading theologians in New England shared Ames' convictions regarding the necessity of prioritizing the doctrine of conversion in their preaching and pastoral ministries.

Sketch of Hooker's Doctrine on Conversion

Hooker sets forth his doctrine of conversion, also known as his doctrine of preparation, in several major works, the most important of which is his *The Application of Redemption*, published in two volumes (books 1-8 and 9-10), *The Soul's Preparation for Christ and the Doubting Christian Drawn to Christ*. In these and other works, he explains how God prepares sinners for conversion in such a detailed manner that, while most of his Puritan contemporaries agreed with him, some questioned the wisdom of his pastoral approach and more recent theologians have even accused him of departing from Reformed orthodoxy.

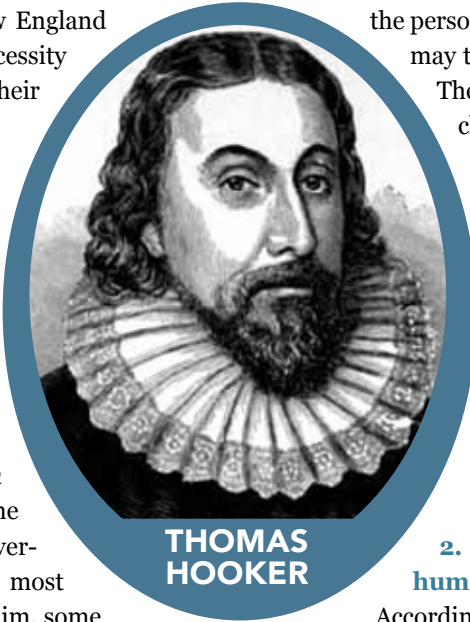
In 1979-1980, Iain Murray wrote a five-part series in the *Banner of Truth Magazine* on *Thomas Hooker and the Doctrine of Conversion*, which presents a clear and balanced explanation of Hooker's teaching on this crucial subject. I will be referring to Murray's articles and other sources both pro and con Hooker.

1. Man must be willing to come to Christ

Fundamental to Hooker's doctrine of conversion is his insistence that man must be willing to come to Christ. In contrast to Cotton, who seemed to promote an attitude of passivity in a sinner's appropriation of salvation, Hooker is convinced that, except for infants and mentally handicapped persons, all who hope to be saved must and will to come to Christ.

His emphasis on man's will in conversion led his opponents to accuse him of Arminianism. Even close friends were uneasy with what they called Hooker's voluntarism, a theory which views the will as prior or superior to the intellect or reason.⁵ However, these opponents, then as now, seem to forget what Hooker says about man by nature. According to him, the human will is hostile to Christ until it is renewed by the power of God.

The will of the unregenerate man can turn in any direction except to Christ and to holiness. Certainly, the man willing to believe the promises of God shall be saved but since the Fall such willingness was never found in any natural man. The will of a natural man is the worst part about him... It is uncontrollable, it will stand out against all reasons and arguments, and nothing can move the will except God work upon it.⁶



THOMAS
HOOKER

If man is ever to be saved, it is essential that his will be changed. This happens, Hooker says, in the divine act of regeneration or the new birth, which implants a new principle of spiritual life, producing a new understanding and a new will. As a result, the person undergoing this sovereign and almighty act may truly be called "a new creature" (2 Cor. 5:17).

The new birth is not brought about by man's choice but solely by the Holy Spirit. In regeneration "the soul behaves itself passively, and is wrought upon by an over-ruling power."⁷

Regeneration, Hooker says, is the act of God whereby a sinner is renewed in such a secret and unsearchable way that he can by no means tell with certainty how or when it occurs. But while regeneration itself is hidden, its effects are known, although the speed with which these become observable in the consciousness of a convert varies.⁸

2. Conversion involves both a divine and human activity.

According to Hooker, conversion is not begun and concluded at the actual point of regeneration. Were that the case, then in conversion man would be only passive and acted upon by God. But Scripture teaches that man also plays an important role in this process. Unless both the divine and human activities are properly correlated, the presentation of the gospel is bound to be seriously distorted.

Here Hooker is reacting to Antinomians who taught that since all depends upon Christ, there is nothing left for man to do but to "believe." Some went even further and said that Christ repents and believes for us. Against these wrong ideas, Hooker points to Scripture's many exhortations to repent and believe. The Christ who preached that no one can enter the kingdom of God until he is "born of the Spirit" (John 3:5-8), also preached, "Repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15); "Strive to enter in at the strait gate" (Luke 13:24). Paul also preached that men "should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance" (Acts 26:20).

One clear Puritan deduction from the above texts was that, in conversion, God deals with men as responsible moral agents and acts suitably to their nature. They are not "sticks and stones," but intelligent beings with minds and consciences, which have to be affected by the truth if they are to be converted. Thus the means of grace (especially the Word of God) are given to men and call for a response.

Given this conviction, it is not surprising that the sermons of Hooker abound in exhortations to action: men are to humble themselves, repent, pray, believe, and obey the truth. He stressed this not because he believed in human ability, but because he knew it was God's command to use the means which He is pleased to use effectively.⁹

Hooker's insistence that man has an active part to play in his conversion has led some scholars to conclude that he was not free from Arminian tendencies. Perry Miller, R. T. Kendall, and Norman Pettit allege that, in exhorting men to duty, Hooker was deviating from Calvin by emphasizing human ability in salvation.¹⁰

These criticisms are not new. Hooker and his colleagues were aware of them and dealt decisively with them. They recognized that at the root of that error lay a defective, one-sided definition of conversion. Although man is passive at the instant of regeneration, what follows that instant is conversion, which is a process in which man is active. Additionally, Hooker maintains that also prior to regeneration, man has certain natural abilities which God can use in preparing him for salvation.¹¹


3. The importance of using the means of grace

Hooker taught, therefore, that the means of grace have a definite role to play in conversion both before as well as after the moment of regeneration. Although the unregenerate man is spiritually dead, this does not mean that he cannot react to Scripture in any way. His mind and conscience may be reached by the truth and preachers must see to it that their hearers are so reached, because, until they are, there will be no conviction of sin, and without conviction of sin there will be no conversion. If repentance means turning one's back on sin, no one will see the need for such a change, if sin is not first felt to be a burden.¹²

Truth must be presented to the mind before it can reach the heart. Without conviction of sin, there is no felt need for a Saviour, hence there can be no faith in the gospel. The gospel proposes remedies for a sickness from which, man thinks, he does not suffer. Only a changed view of man's real condition will show him his need to respond positively. The reason for the change in the three thousand on the day of Pentecost was not that they had not *heard* of Christ before but that they had not been *convicted* before: "They were pricked in their heart, and said to Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2.37).¹³

Men under conviction of sin, Hooker taught, generally pass through two stages, first, contrition, and second, humiliation. By the first, "God brings the sinner to a sight of himself and his sin" so that he sees "an absolute necessity of a change." At this point, man begins to change his life and practices, and begins to use seriously "all the ordinances of God," yet all his endeavours only reveal more clearly the real state of his heart and his helplessness to change anything more than the external. At length, having looked "to himself and his self-sufficiency, and finding no comfort there, he falls down before the Lord and begs for mercy, and yet he sees himself unworthy of mercy, without which he must perish. He has nothing, and he can do nothing to merit it."¹⁴

Hooker's teaching on the sinner's "preparation for grace," his activity in it as well as the degree and duration of it, elicited criticism, not only from modern theologians but also from some of his Puritan colleagues and their successors. The latter are in basic agreement with him but have certain reservations regarding his methodology.

We will examine some of these critiques and evaluate their validity next month, DV. 

Endnotes

- 1 Keith Sprunger, *The Learned Doctor William Ames*, 144.
- 2 Sprunger, *The Learned Doctor William Ames*, 129.
- 3 Sprunger, *The Learned Doctor William Ames*, 145.
- 4 Sprunger, *The Learned Doctor William Ames*, 145.
- 5 Warren C. Young, *Baker's Dictionary of Christian Ethics*, 701.
- 6 Thomas Hooker, *The Application of Redemption*, Books 1-8, p 328.
- 7 *The Application of Redemption*, Bks 9-10, p. 50.
- 8 *The Application of Redemption*, Bks 1-8, pp. 77-8.
- 9 *The Application of Redemption*, Bks 9-10, p. 306.
- 10 Perry Miller, *The New England Mind*, 200; Kendall, *The Influence of Calvin and Calvinism upon the American Heritage* (1976), 14.
- 11 Iain Murray, "Thomas Hooker and the Doctrine of Conversion," *Banner of Truth Magazine* (Feb. 1980): 15-17.
- 12 *The Application of Redemption*, Bks 1-8, p. 36.
- 13 *The Application of Redemption*, Bks 9-10, pp. 35-6.
- 14 Thomas Hooker, *The Soul's Humiliation* (1638), 131-2.

Christian Ministry to Israel commits over \$105,000 CDN annually to support Ha-Gefen Publishing who's mission is to translate solid Reformed literature and books into Hebrew for distribution to Jews around the world.



We are committed to spreading the Gospel of CHRIST JESUS among the people of Israel and Jews worldwide. Help us to spread the Gospel through your prayers and donations. Please donate by cheque or online at www.cmisrael.org



To donate by cheque, please mail your donation to: Christian Ministry to Israel, c/o John Wilbrink, 8 Weneil Drive, Freelon ON L8B 0Z6 Reg. Charity: 85123 0466 RR 0001

PROVIDENCE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Providence Christian School is accepting applications for a full-time position for a Jr. and Sr. High School teacher, commencing August 15, 2021. Our main subject areas of need are Sciences and Math. The ability to teach part of our High School P.E. program will be a definite asset.

Providence Christian School is also accepting applications for a possible assistant-principal position.

We are looking for enthusiastic teachers who have a passion for Christian Education. We encourage applications by qualified teachers who submit to God's Holy Word, subscribe to the Reformed confessions, and are committed to educating children and youth for formation of a distinct Christian worldview.

Suitable candidates are encouraged to electronically submit:

- a letter of application
- a résumé containing three references
- a brief philosophy of Christian Education statement

Providence Christian School is a growing Christian school in Monarch, Alberta.

It is situated in a beautiful, southern, rural community, minutes from Lethbridge.

It has grades K-12 with over 160 students and with 11 FTE staff members.

PCS offers:

- a four-day school week
- attractive working and living conditions
- a growing, committed school community
- a dedicated team of teachers

For inquiries, check out our website pcsmonarch.com or contact the principal, **Mr. Hugo VanderHoek**, principal@pcsmonarch.com, 403-381-4418

REHOBOTH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Invites applications for:

- **Secondary Humanities Teacher: for a maternity leave from August 2021 to August 2022**
- **Elementary Teacher: a definite, part-time position in grade four**
- **Education Assistant: a definite, full-time position**

We are looking for qualified individuals with a vision for Christian education to join our committed, vibrant community of learners. We are a K-12 parent-run school serving the families of four local Free Reformed Churches and beyond. Located on a beautiful rural setting between Hamilton and Brantford, RCS has been blessed with a strongly supportive community, and, since our inception in 1978, have grown to an enrollment of 360 students. Please send a cover letter, resume, statement of faith, and references, including a pastoral reference (teacher applicants are also asked to include a philosophy of education) to the attention of:

Adam Kloostra, Principal

198 Inksetter Road P.O. Box 70, Copetown, ON L0R 1J0
t. 905.627.5977 e. principal@reboth.on.ca w. www.reboth.on.ca

OXFORD REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Invites applications for the 2021-2022 school year:

- Full-time elementary teachers
- High-School teachers (especially Math & Science)
- Secondary Curriculum Coordinator

About us:

- An expanding student body of 350+ students from K to 12
- A dedicated, Reformed, parent-run school community
- New facilities in a rural setting in south-western Ontario (Mount Elgin)
- A unified, professional staff committed to a Christ-centered education

We are looking for enthusiastic, qualified teachers who have a passion for Christian education, and submit to the Holy Scriptures as summarized in the Reformed confessions. Seasoned veterans looking for a positive change, or young beginners looking to gain experience are both encouraged to apply.

Applications must include a resume, statement of faith, philosophy of Christian education, and references. Email applications to Mr. William Van Brugge (principal@orcschool.ca). Visit our website (orcschool.ca), or come and visit our school: 333182 PlankLine, Mount Elgin, Ontario.

HERITAGE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Invites applications for following positions:

- Part-Time or Full-Time Secondary Teacher
- Full-Time Special Education Teacher
- Part-Time Grade 7 Teacher
- Possible Primary Teacher
- Supply Teachers and Supply Educational Assistants

HCS

- A dedicated and supportive Reformed Christian community
- A student body of 660+ students from K-12
- A cohesive, professional faculty and staff of 65+ persons

WE SEEK

- Qualified applicants who seek to serve Jesus Christ in the area of Christian education and who submit to Holy Scripture as confessed in the Reformed creeds
- Committed professionals who positively lead students to a life of dedicated service to our Lord
- Enthusiastic rookies or seasoned veterans looking for a positive change

HOW TO APPLY

- Submit a cover letter, résumé, a statement of faith, and references, (including one from your current pastor). Teacher applicants, please submit your philosophy of education as well.

Please forward inquiries and/or applications to:

Mr. Brian Kemper, Principal

Heritage Christian School, 2850 Fourth Avenue, Box 400
Jordan Station, Ontario, Canada L0R 1S0

Phone (905) 562-7303 Fax (905) 562-0020

Email: bkemper@hcsjordan.ca Website: www.hcsjordan.ca

"Behold, children are an heritage from the Lord." Ps. 127:3

CONFESSIONAL STUDIES

FREE REFORMED PUBLICATIONS
18 CHAPALA CRESCENT S.E. CALGARY, AB T2X 3M4
EMAIL: BOOKORDERS@FRCNA.ORG
TEL: 403-254-6591



*Simply, Faith! Expository
Sermons on the Belgic
Confession*

REV. C. SCHOOLS

Hardcover | 323 pages | \$19.50



*The Canons of Dort:
Expository Sermons on
the Canons of Dort*

REV. C. PRONK

Hardcover | 285 pages | \$15.00

To see our catalogue visit us
@
<http://frcna.org/publications>

RELATIONSHIPS (1):

SEEKING A PARTNER

READ: GENESIS 24:1-9

The teaching of God's Word covers all of life. In this series of Bible studies, we will listen to what God's Word teaches us about relationships. That is a broad topic, so we will limit ourselves to one family: that of Isaac and Rebekah. We can learn much today from how this family was formed and how its members related together.

Abraham's Concern

Genesis 24 is by far one of the longest and also one of the most beautiful chapters of Genesis. It contains the last record of the patriarch Abraham speaking. When we hear him charging his servant (likely Eleazar of Genesis 15:2) to find a wife for Isaac, we may well wonder whether this charge has any relevance for us today. Isn't this method of finding a wife so different from current methods? Whether we consider it old-fashioned or ascribe it to the culture of Abraham's day, this is not done anymore, except perhaps in some Muslim circles.

Our youth may read this chapter and think: "Thankfully things are different today and I myself can decide whom to marry!" Yet, is it wise to exclude your parents from any involvement in important decisions, such as the choice of a life-partner? Though they may not be 140 years old, like Abraham was here, they still have more experience, and hopefully more spiritual experience, than their children. To consult with them speaks of wisdom on the part of children.

Within the family, and especially society, seniors are often considered more of a problem than a benefit, but Genesis 24 reveals a different picture. In a natural way, a father here shows concern for the future of his son. He assumes the responsibility to care for Isaac by sending his servant on a long journey. Isaac's wife must come from his extended family in Haran, hundreds of kilometers away.

This requirement has a spiritual ground to it. Notice the oath of verse 3. Why is it so weighty? Why may the servant not look around closer to home? God had bound his master to the land of Canaan but not to the inhabitants of Canaan. If you know your Bible well, you know why that is so. The Canaanites were infamous for their idolatry and immorality. Already in Genesis, God had pronounced His judgments upon them. Abraham therefore understood that Isaac's future could not be blessed through a relationship with someone from a people who had no future!

The way in which God later used Israel to root out the Canaanites has been called "genocide" lately. People are thankful we have progressed beyond the violent, blood-filled Old Testament. But can we not replace "Canaan" with the word "World," and remember our calling to be "in the world, but not of the world"? God does not call us to physical violence against the world, but the calling that Abraham sensed remains essen-

tially the same today: though you live amid the “Canaanites,” keep your heart far from them. Let that estrangement from the world have consequences for the relationships you pursue and what you allow into your home, through whatever technology you have. Whoever I bring into my private sphere of life is bound to influence me. When Abraham called his servant to seek a wife for Isaac, he realized that especially a wife sets the tone of a home. Let us remember that whenever we establish (virtual) contacts and relationships with others. Let us especially remember that in light of God’s covenant promises and claim which we share with Abraham.

Abraham’s Commission

Notice the commission Abraham gave his servant. It raises the question for parents and children: with what instructions should I go seeking a spouse? Are the qualifications outward looks, a sense of humor, status, or wealth? Must someone be “cool”? The Scriptures do not say that someone’s outward appearance is meaningless. Notice that later in Genesis 24, attention is given to Rebekah’s beauty (v.16). Yet, beauty is not the decisive factor in the choice of a spouse. If it were, Abraham’s servant would not have had to travel so far. There were enough beautiful girls in Canaan, as Samson would later discover. The real question is: Can I serve God together with that person?

If that is the question, then a more fitting place to look for a spouse is at a youth camp or conference, or a Reformed social media page, rather than hanging out at a bar or some dating site like Tinder. We realize that being “church-going” is not the same as being “God-fearing,” but those who are wise will not seek a partner in Canaan, but in the church. It is a great blessing to find each other in a way which enables you to thank God for His leading, which you had sought and experienced in bringing you together.

Can God’s leading not also involve a church-going person going out with an unchurched person in order to bring such a person to know the Lord? There are certainly examples of the Lord doing this in His grace. But there are many more examples where the results were the opposite. Do not underestimate the alluring power of “Canaan” for the corruption of our hearts. That is why Paul echoes Abraham’s concern in his instruction: “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbe-

lievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?” (2 Cor. 6:14).

Abraham’s Son

Thus far, our focus has been Abraham’s care for his son. This care not only had a clear spiritual dimension, but also reached further than we might expect. Notice again the oath that Abraham had his servant swear. The associated ritual seems strange to us: the servant had to put his hand under Abraham’s hip. In Biblical language, the hip refers to Abraham’s ability to reproduce. At first sight, this ritual is strange; or does light begin to arise? Abraham is the bearer of God’s promise, including the promise that from his seed the Saviour would proceed!

Have you seen this search for a wife for Isaac in this light? God will use Isaac and Rebekah in the coming of the Son of Abraham. That thought makes Abraham’s concern very understandable. How beautiful to see how the concern for the welfare of God’s kingdom and the coming of His Son influences every aspect of Abraham’s life, including the relationship he and Isaac establish.

The Lord Jesus taught His disciples to pray: “Thy Kingdom Come!” Those who pray this petition from the heart will sense that that prayer has practical implications for the most ordinary aspects of life. Desiring His kingdom to come has consequences for what relationships we establish, how we main-

tain them, but also all our plans concerning studies, careers, work, hobbies, and recreation. Those who become part of the spiritual family of Abraham, the father of all believers, must learn to have the relationship with God as the primary relationship. The Lord teaches His children to know: “my life is not about myself, but the coming and work of Christ.” That realization makes us dependent on the Spirit of Christ who teaches right priorities. By the Spirit’s grace, the relationship with the Lord sheds new light over every other relationship in our life. ①

Rev. A. van der Zwan serves the Christelijk Gereformeerde Kerk of Dordrecht-Centre in the Netherlands. This Bible Study was taken with permission from De Wekker (of February 19, 2021), the bi-weekly periodical of our sister churches in the Netherlands.

QUESTIONS

01 How have you found and do you find the sharing of life and spiritual experience in the personal contact between parents and children? In the congregation? How can this sharing be stimulated?

02 God’s judgment over the Canaanites has a long history in the Bible. See Genesis 9:25-26, Genesis 15:16, Numbers 33:51-56, and Deuteronomy 7:1-5. This study has drawn a line from it to our calling to fight with spiritual weapons against the influence of sin, Satan, and the world. Is that a legitimate line? How do you experience this fight in your daily life? What weapons does God give (Eph. 6)?

03 Have you had to apply 2 Corinthians 6:14 to your own life? How did you experience that?

04 Though he never knew the Lord’s Prayer, Abraham was taught its priorities. How does God teach this? Have you begun learning this lesson? How does that show in your life?

12 WAYS

WE SEE CHRIST'S INFINITE WISDOM

DAVID DICKSON

We think we are superior in knowledge and values to previous generations, but often our values are upside down. We value what is new, instant, youthful, tangible, and technological and dismiss the converse. There may be much knowledge and intelligence, but wisdom transcends this. If wisdom is pursuing the best things in the best way, where best is defined by God, then it is in short supply today. Ultimately the one who completely knows how the best goals can be achieved in the best way is God, “the only wise God,” Himself. He has infinite wisdom. This is not just seen in creation and providence, but especially in redemption (Ephesians 3:10). In Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:3). No one knows more or knows better how to apply that knowledge for the good of His own people. We may be tempted to question how things are with ourselves and around us, but infinite wisdom is ordering all things for us.

Christ is fully equipped and qualified to do all that He has purposed for His people. There is nothing required for the work which He does not have. David Dickson imagines a poor soul asking, “Christ may be able to do all I need; but is He willing to employ His wisdom and strength for me?” He answers that Christ not only has wisdom and strength, but He will deal prudently. He foresees all the impediments in His way, anything that could mar the work of salvation. There is no wound His soldiers get that He has no cure for. There is no adversary He does not know how to defeat. In a word, everything from eternity to eternity is managed prudently. Dickson is expounding and applying Isaiah 52:13 “Behold, my servant shall deal prudently” and in the course of doing this, he brings out the way in which Christ applies His wisdom. There are twelve ways this is identified in the following updated extract (Dickson’s fifteen ways have been summarised into twelve).

1. CHRIST DEALS WITH GOD’S JUSTICE WISELY

The justice of God must lose nothing, before we are reconciled or get to heaven, a just God must be satisfied. Our prudent Lord answers, “If these people cannot get to heaven until justice is satisfied, behold I am come to satisfy it.” And yet the Lord’s mercy will have as great a place as it pleases; for He deals so prudently that He makes mercy and justice kiss each other. Mercy runs like a river, and justice is satisfied — is not that prudent dealing?

2. CHRIST DEALS WITH GOD’S LAW WISELY

The law says, “I will take satisfaction from Christ for past sins; but what obedience will I have for the future? Will those whom

Christ has redeemed be permitted to break me in the future?” Prudent Christ answers, “What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, for sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.” Before, the law could only get punishment for its being broken, now, it gets full obedience by Christ. Christ did not come to abolish but to fulfil the law; He came only to abolish the cursing part of it, but to establish the obeying part of it. Here is prudent dealing.

3. CHRIST CONQUERS SATAN WISELY

In comes Satan the jailer and death with him; he flies at Christ to get Him overthrown. But prudent Christ destroyed him who had the power of death by the means of death. He overcomes him who had the power of death, and says, he will be the death of death.

So death lies down in the grave and all his own die and lie down with him. Satan thinks to have Christ held in this way. But He could not be held by the sorrows of death. He rises and breaks an opening with Him through death. Like Samson, He takes away the gates and bars of death and has left death neither door nor lock to hold us in. Here is prudence.

4. CHRIST ENTERS THE WORLD WISELY

See His prudent dealing in His coming into the world. He comes not with pomp or show, but in a humble way. He was meek and lowly, riding on an ass’s colt. Though He was a great king, yet often He went on foot. When He rode, it was on such a low beast, that any might have stood beside Him, and presented their petition in His ear as He rode.

5. CHRIST SENDS OUT HIS GOSPEL WISELY

See His prudent dealing in sending His gospel forth to bring home souls. He does not use thunder and fire, but poor, weak men with His word in their mouth. By this means, the rod of Zion, He casts down proud hearts and allures others. He puts His heavenly treasure in earthen vessels and lets them carry it and takes the glory to Himself. He puts the sceptre of His kingdom in these weak men’s mouths.

6. CHRIST DEALS WITH RULERS WISELY

He gives kings no reason to envy His kingdom. He gives His ministers neither crowns nor lands, but only seeks that the workman gets his wages. Is this not great prudence, He does not trouble the kings and nobles of the land with His kingdom

on earth. All His office-bearers must be everyone's servant. "Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours" (1 Corinthians 3:22). His kingdom is not of this world, but a spiritual kingdom.

7. CHRIST DECLARES HIS SOVEREIGNTY WISELY

He deals so prudently that the mouth of the reprobate shall be stopped and have no just argument against their condemnation. He either sends His gospel to them and so invites them to repentance, or He makes them know His goodness by fruitful seasons, summer and winter, and use of all His good creatures. If they will not make use of these, they will be found to have in themselves the cause of their own damnation.

He makes the elect abandon their sins and come in, that they may be vessels of honour. He declares His doctrines in such a way that none who desire to quit their sins and come to Him will find a mark of reprobation in themselves. However filthy they are, if they come, He will cleanse them. His doctrine is so wise, that it will hurt none who seek to come to Him, only those who will not quit their sins.

8. CHRIST DEALS WITH HIS PEOPLE'S PRIDE WISELY

The elect are made to see their sinfulness, needs, and unworthiness, that they may have His sufferings in high estimation, as their main refuge.

9. CHRIST COMFORTS HIS PEOPLE WISELY

He deals prudently in urging all to believe, and yet He reserves the right to bestow comfort. He urges them to believe and yet keeps back the comfort of believing till they vomit out their sins. He deals prudently in calling His children to peace, joy, and comfort, and yet gives them heavy burdens and afflictions lest they go to excess. In this way, He comforts their souls while making sure also to have their flesh mortified. If He lifts them up in Himself, He puts them as low as possible in themselves. He does not let them sink into trouble for lack of comfort, nor let them disregard Him due to lack of affliction. He fills them with comfort and makes them shed tears for affliction.

10. CHRIST JUSTIFIES SINNERS WISELY

Christ exercises great prudence to make a sinner righteous, yet that righteousness is not in themselves, neither does it depend on their own keeping. In His prudent dealing, He sends forth ministers to preach and dispense heavenly mysteries, and yet keeps the seal in His own hand. Paul may plant and Apollos water, but God gives the increase (1 Corinthians 3:6). Thus, none may depend on the minister for the blessing. Christ has great prudence to forgive sin, and yet still keep us crying, "Lord, forgive us our sins!"

11. CHRIST FEEDS HIS PEOPLE WISELY

He continues to feed with the food that endures to eternal life, and yet still keeps us hungering for it. He holds our mouths to the well and yet we are still thirsty.

12. CHRIST EXALTS HIS PEOPLE WISELY

He exalts His own above principalities, powers, and afflictions, yet lays them exceedingly low with a sight and sense of their sins. He heartily and warmly comforts and refreshes them, making their bed in their sickness, and yet keeping them humble, so that the better He is to them the humbler they are. He quietly and shrewdly slides consolations into their hearts when no one knows, His voice is not heard in the streets. He keeps a covered table with rich delicacies in the souls of His own, and none know of it, for strangers do not meddle with their joy.

CONCLUSION

I have told you only of part of Christ's prudent and wise dealing. But it is a deep which cannot be fathomed, for even the angels stoop down to learn His wisdom and prudence. They wonder at the wisdom of the cross:

- that by death, so many should be brought to life;
- by His shame, there should come so much glory;
- by abasing Him down to the death, so many should be brought to heaven;
- by His becoming cursed, so many should be blessed.

This wisdom and prudence cannot be fully told, therefore I leave it, as a thing that cannot be grasped. But make use of it. When the work of Christ is not as you would have it, then believe deeper wisdom in it than you can see. His wise and prudent dealing gives to everyone's condition as their situation requires.

If He has trouble with a distorted piece of wood full of knots, He drives a hard wedge; if He deals with one that is stubborn, He takes a baton. If there is one whose root is fastened in the earth, He takes a sharp knife to cut these roots. He comforts a heavy heart. If He gives a weighty burden, it is not too heavy. He lifts us up, but not too high. Everything is done in wisdom, due time, measure, manner, and might. ¹¹

This article is a summary of a writing by David Dickson (c.1583–1662), a Professor of Theology at the University of Glasgow and Edinburgh, who wrote commentaries on many different books of Scripture. He opposed the unbiblical worship and church government foisted on the Church in Scotland by Charles II and this cost him his position. The summary and introduction were prepared by Mr. Matthew Vogan and is taken with permission from <https://www.reformationScotland.org/2021/05/12/12-ways-we-see-christs-infinite-wisdom/>.

Early Free Reformed Youth Activities



Early Free Reformed Youth Activities

As secretary of the Free Reformed Historical Centre, I – and my dear wife – are never sure what might end up in our home. Recently, one of our elders passed on some bags of material he had received from a member of the Brantford congregation. I soon discovered they were the records of the “League of the Federation of the Young People’s Societies of the Free Christian Reformed Church of Canada.” Brownish, fragile papers, some with water marks, filled old minute books and binders with correspondence, surveys, programs, and reports.

The league was established in 1953 and continued into the 2000s. It was responsible for serving as the link between local Free Reformed Young People Societies (YPS), as well as arranging Youth Rally’s and other youth events.

A Busy First Year

The first set of board meeting minutes is of a meeting held on November 14, 1953, in St. Thomas. Each of the represented young people societies in Chatham, Hamilton, and St. Thomas sent their local executive members and one society representative to the meeting. After the “first chairman” of the St. Thomas society, Mr. A. J. van Deel Piepers, opened the meeting with Psalm 84 and prayer, a board for the league was chosen. This went “very smoothly” with Jannus or James Brink chosen as chairman, Johan Tamminga as treasurer, and Meintje de Vries as secretary.

In the “rondvraag,” where anyone could bring a point forward, it was decided to send a telegram to Rev. W. Heerma of the Netherlands, who had been called to the St. Thomas con-

gregation, stating “The Jong People of south Ontario gathered together, Come over and Help us.” The need for ministers was felt among these immigrant youth in their new country.

The next month, the board met again to plan a youth rally. They also decided to ask that each YPS member pay 75 cents per year to help the work. They began developing a constitution, but since this would “cost a lot of time,” they decided to continue discussing it next meeting after getting input from the local YPS’s.

In April 1954, they welcomed representatives from Stratford (now Mitchell), planned a youth Rally to be held in a Baptist church in St. Thomas, agreed on a draft constitution, and nominated new board members for the local YPS’s to consider, including the current board as well as Bas Groeneweg, Jan Koopman, Stien Pennings, Jannie Benjamins, Teun Koopman, Stoffer Otten, Tiny Postma, and Froukje Otten.

A couple months later, most of the meeting was taken up with a letter from the Hamilton YPS expressing concerns about procedures in the constitution. It was decided to discuss them further on July 1, at which time it was decided to let the board be chosen by free vote, rather than by nominations. By this time Toronto had joined the League, and Arie Stehouwer (who was the first FRC student for the ministry and recently passed away in the Netherlands) was chosen as treasurer.

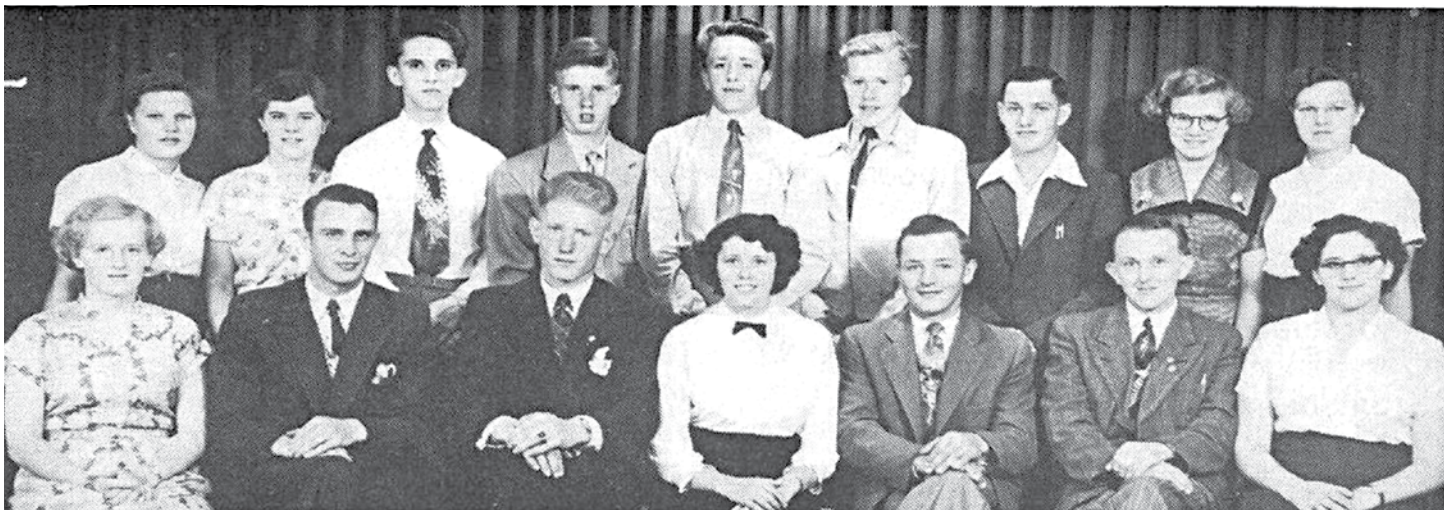
In August, at a meeting in Mr. Pol’s home, a new draft of the constitution was developed and stencilled for distribution to the local YPS’s. The importance of working together as societies was stressed. Note was taken that there were now five YPS’s represented: Chatham, St. Thomas, Mitchell, Hamilton, and Toronto, with a total membership of around 125 members.

In October, the board met in Mr. Noordam’s home. The membership dues were raised to \$1 per year and Tiny Postma was instructed to investigate the possibility of publishing a youth magazine. Jan Bargeman and G. Feijer had to leave early to be home before the Sunday. Arrangements were made for another

rally in November, with each YPS being asked to contribute to the program. A proposal was made to ask Rev. B. Densel of the New Jersey congregation speak, but they would first ask Rev. J. Tamminga about this “because Rev. D. is outside our denomination.”

Several things strike us about this first year of minutes:

1. The frequency of meetings. In these days without 400 series highways in Ontario and when immigrant families were poor, these youth took the time and paid the gas money to be able to regularly meet. They wanted to be connected as youth from different congregations who were in the same situation. Perhaps their relative isolation in their immediate surroundings encouraged this denominational contact in distinction from our denominational youth today who have many local connections. Yet, their commitment is a challenge to the youth (and adults) today to put effort into fostering denominational bonds.
2. The names of people involved. For some of us, these names mean nothing. Many who are connected to Ontario congregations will recognize some, many, or even all these names. The encouraging thing is that many of those who were committed at the time continued to be faithful members who served the churches throughout their lives. For example, the first treasurer would go on to serve as treasurer of various denominational committees and of Synod for over 40 years. What a testimony of the Lord’s faithfulness such examples are!
3. The passage of time. Almost seventy years later, some of the youth of the 1950s are now elderly and many of them have passed away. In another seventy years, who will remember them – or us? We are like the grass that grows, fades, and disappears. How urgent to seek the Lord while He may be found and for one generation to proclaim God’s wondrous works to another.



Young Peoples Society - Immanuel 1955

Surveys of the 1960s

One league board activity was to issue annual questionnaires to youth groups. Here were the results from 1963:

	CHATHAM	HAMILTON	LONDON	MITCHELL	ST. THOMAS	TORONTO
1. Official name:	"Knowledge through Study"	"Ora et Labora"	"The Pilgrims"	Immanuel	"Search the Scriptures	"The Lord is our Hope & Salvation"
2. Male members	18	20	3	6	11	
3. Female members	8	15	4	6	5	
4. Confessing members	2	2	0	4	6	
5. Not belonging to YPS	3	approx 15	4	3	8	
6. Executive offices						
Chairman	Keith Koke	C. Pronk	Bill Bruinink	Evert Benjamins	Mr. Dick Groeneweg	Mr. Peter Schouls
VP:	Henry Zuidema					
Secretary	H. J. Vreugdehil	Bill Vissers	Jane Landers	Nellie Salverda	Miss. N. van Driel	Miss Hetty Brasz
Treasurer	Jenny van 't Foort	Gerda Dendekker	Jane Landers	Gary Benjamins	Mr. Dick Brobbel	Miss Leny Schreuders
General Adjunct	Harry Roffel	Han Vissers		Tinus Otten	Mr. Laurens Bilkes	Mr. Jerry Bysma
Librarian	Anne Roffel	Henny Koppelaar	Christine v/d Keur	Margaret Meinen	Miss Grace van Kooten	Mr. Jerry Bysma
7. Representatives to the General Mtgs						
Primus	H. J. Vreugdehil	Pete DenDekker	Bill Bruinink	Evert Benjamins	Mr. Laurens Bilkes	
Secundus	H. Zuidema	John Vissers	Christine v/d Keur	Bruce Bergsma		Mr. John Versteeg
8. Day, time, location of regular meetings	Sat. 7:00pm @ church	7:30pm Sun. @ church	Hollandia Bakeries, Mt. Brydges Fri. 8:15pm	Wed. 8pm @ church	Tues. 9pm @ church	Sun. 6:30pm - 9pm
9. Average attendance	21	25	80%	very good	14	18
10. Are essays followed by general discussion?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
13. Does your society Use Dutch?	no	no	mostly English	yes	hardly	only occasion
14. Members belong to:						
(CLAC)*	0	0	0	0	5	5
(ARSS)**	0	0	0	0	0	3
Christian Ed***	0	3	0	0	4	5
15. Members of a neutral labour organization:	none	2	0	0	0	0
16. Regular contact between the YPS & other local groups?	yes	fair	not regularly	nil	as much as possible	no
17. Are junior groups encouraged to join the society?	yes	yes	definitely	yes	by all means yes	yes
18. Is an active, honest effort made to invite newcomers	yes if so	yes	yes, very.		yes	yes

*Christian Labour Association of Canada; ** Association for Reformed Scientific Studies; *** A local Christian elementary or secondary school society

For the sake of readability, I have bracked out the answers to the following questions:

10. Topics handled

Chatham: This year: study of gospel of John. Spare subjects: a suitable chapter from the Bible

Hamilton: the older members make essays on Hebrews. The younger members make essays on Exodus. At Christmas and

Easter, we change the roster to make essays accordingly
London: The topics we are now handling are the book of Matthew and Revelation. These are alternated every other week.

Mitchell: We are now discussing the book of Exodus. Before this we did Genesis. Each week an essay is made on the chapter we are at. After the essay has been read at the meeting, a discussion follows it with the person making the essay answering if he possibly can.

St. Thomas: Job, Sol., Mal., Hag., Zeph., 3 John, 1 and 2 Peter, Matt., Mark, Luke, Joh., Paul, the Sermon on the Mount, Ten Commandments, Exo., Apostles' Creed, Belgic Conf. Art. 9-11, Dutch booklet on church history (ds. Maris), Church Order, Spiritism, Canons of Dort

Toronto: There is a Biblical introduction before the intermission. The topics are chosen by the introducer from both the New and the Old testament.

12. How is the remaining meeting time filled?

Chatham: Since only 1 hour is available, little time is left after a discussion. If any a short hymn sing or a biblical quiz is held.

Hamilton: After intermission, we have one week a church history topic followed by a free topic. On the alternate week, we have a question & answer or a discussion on a general topic followed by a free topic.

London: The remaining time is filled with litis{?} a free lecture, brain gymnastics, and games like darts or sjoelen.

Mitchell: The meeting is opened by our president. We sing a psalter and the president leads in prayer. A welcome is given to all those present. The minutes of the previous week are then read. Next, we read together the chapter on which the essay is. A discussion follows. The roll call is held and contribution taken. We then have a ten-minute intermission. After intermission, we reopen the meeting by singing out of the psalter. A second essay is made or else we have a reading. The essay is on Revelation or Church History. The reading is Canadian History or De Bijble heeft toch Gelijk. A discussion follows. Then we have an impromptu speech or poem. Next, we read the mail if there is any. This is followed by general business and then the closing.

St. Thomas: Member Contributions: Music (playing of records), guest speakers, history topics, biblical figures, readings, Bible quiz, poems. Contributions are short: +- 10 to 15 minutes

Toronto: After the intermission, we have another introduction. The topics for these are chosen from a list of suggested topics drawn up by the board, which include: Church history, biographies on the life and works of John Huss, John Knox, Martin Luther, John Calvin, Oliver Cromwell, etc.


Do you have pictures, programs, handouts, or memories of youth activities in the 1950s and 1960s? Please contact the Free Reformed Historical Centre. Secretary: Pastor D. Kranendonk, kranendonk@frcna.org 226-980-9607.

Several things strike us about these surveys conducted a decade after the League was formed:

1. Frequency and length: The youth meetings were an important weekly aspect of church life. The meetings were also full in the sense of having two or three parts to them in addition to an intermission.
2. Content: The meetings were focused on the study of Scripture, with the youth themselves expected to study the passage to be discussed and prepare an essay on it. While it could be argued that this approach was because of a lack of pub-

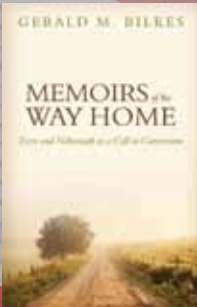
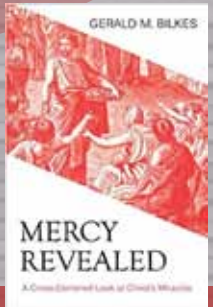

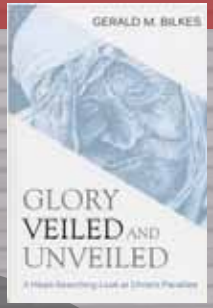
lished Bible studies for youth, this lack could be the consequence of the conviction that youth should study God's Word themselves, with the help of some classic commentaries. Even while I encourage our denominational committees to develop quality Bible study resources for youth, this earlier approach does raise the question whether we are fostering a laziness toward the study of God's Word itself with all our helps.

3. Organizations: I don't think a survey today would ask about membership in CLAC, schools, unions, or an intellectual society like ARSS (later renamed AACCS). Seniors of today remember (secular) Unions being a "hot topic." At the time, the Christian organizations



**AUTHOR:
GERALD
M. BILKES**

BIBLE STUDIES

	<p>Memoirs of the Way Home: Ezra and Nehemiah as a Call to Conversion Paperback 187 pages \$9.00</p>	
	<p>Mercy Revealed: A Cross-Centered Look at Christ's Miracles Paperback 192 pages \$11.25</p>	
	<p>Reservoirs of Strength: Lessons from the Book of James Paperback 192 pages \$11.25</p>	
	<p>Glory Veiled and Unveiled: A Heart-Searching Look at Christ's Parables Paperback 229 pages \$8.50</p>	

**Free Reformed
Publications**

18 Chapala Crescent S.E.
Calgary, AB T2X 3M4
Email: bookorders@frcna.org
Tel: 403-254-6591
To see our catalogue visit us at
<http://frcna.org/publications>

were led by especially Christian Reformed Church (CRC) members often under the influence of Abraham Kuyper's neo-Calvinism. Given that the Free Reformed Churches felt compelled to remain separate from the CRC and that most youth at the time were not pursuing further education, the minimal involvement in ARSS is not surprising.

4. Attendance: In the words of Rev. C. A. Schouls, "local atten-

dance was absolutely essential - our social contacts were limited to these. Friends from school? Those Canadians were not Christians!" Yet, even in these times when youth did not have many other connections, attendance was far from automatic. The number of youth who were members of YPS ranged from 90% in Chatham, to 64% in St. Thomas, to 60% in Hamilton, to 53% in London. Of the members, on average 80%

were present at each meeting. These realities remind that attendance has been a long-standing challenge. Sadly, over the years too many of our youth have not only failed to attend YPS but also drifted away from church itself. Some of those who drifted away were also actively involved in YPS for a time, showing more is needed than to be active in church activities.

Throughout the ages, as generations come and go, God's Word continues to sound and may its sound also rise from our hearts and return to Him: "We will not hide *them* from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: That the generation to come might know *them*, even the children *which* should be born; *who* should arise and declare *them* to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments" (Psalm 78:4-7). 11

FREE REFORMED PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS ANYWHERE
BETWEEN \$1.00-\$5.00
 PRICES IN EFFECT UNTIL JULY 31, 2021

WAREHOUSE SALE



The Signs of the Times:
 14 Bible Studies on Matthew 24 and 25
 Rev. J. W. Wullschlegler
\$1.00



New Age Movement
 P. VanderMeyden
 Today's culture exhibits that a mixture of anti-Christian religion and cultic mysticism has entrenched itself and has replaced Christianity. This booklet expose these ills for what they are.
\$1.00



Church & Caesar
 Ray Pennings
 As churches are more and more confronted with legal issues in relation to the government, this easy to read booklet will prove to be a much-needed and useful resource for ministers, elders and deacons, but also for all church members.
\$1.00



Psalmody Through the Ages:
 A Survey of the History of Psalmody
 Ted J. Postma
 It is extensively documented, providing reasons for maintaining psalmody, as well as perceptive evaluations regarding the construction and contents of hymns and contemporary Christian music. 'Psalmody through the Ages' is a valuable contribution to the discussions on the music of God's people.
\$5.00



Faith of our Fathers:
 Studies in the Doctrines of Grace
 Rev. C. Pronk
 Rev. Pronk concisely explains the doctrines of Grace as they have been understood in the Reformed tradition. He opens up with the hope provided for us in God's act of predestination. He shows man's desperate condition in bondage to sin, the effectiveness of Christ's atoning work to secure salvation for his people, the winsome and preserving nature of God's saving grace.
\$1.50

18 Chapala Crescent S.E.
 Calgary, AB T2X 3M4
 Email: bookorders@frcna.org
 Tel: 403-254-6591

To see our catalogue visit us at <http://frcna.org/publications>

I, EVEN I, AM
THE LORD;
AND BESIDE
ME THERE IS
NO SAVIOUR.

ISAIAH 43:11



Give the gift of reading with
Open Windows!

Open children's minds to history, vocations, music, the Bible, creation, art, and countries around the world. With stories, a meditation, puzzles, colouring contests, and book reviews, it's a magazine for the home, school, libraries, and outreach. For ages 4-12.



\$21.00 annually, 6 issues per year
Print subscription form at
openwindows.frcna.org
or contact
administrator@frcna.org

*THE BELIEVER'S ONLY COMFORT:
A STUDY GUIDE FOR THE HEIDELBERG
CATECHISM*

REV. J. SCHOEMAN

Free Reformed Publications
18 Chapala Crescent S.E. Calgary, AB T2X 3M4
Email: bookorders@frcna.org
Tel: 403-254-6591
To see our catalog visit us at <http://frcna.org/publications>

By Rev. J. Schoeman

Vol. 1: Lord's Days 1-24
Vol. 2: Lord's Day 25-52

AVAILABLE IN KJV & NKJV

Student Workbook:

Vol. 1 | Spiral Bound | 207 pages | \$32.00
Vol. 2 | Spiral Bound | 213 pages | \$32.00

Teacher's Guide:

Vol. 1 | Spiral Bound | 304 pages | \$40.00
Vol. 2 | Spiral Bound | 312 pages | \$40.00

Believer's Only Comfort

Guide for the Heidelberg Catechism

Volume 1: Lord's Days 1-25

Student's Workbook



ORDINATION INSTALLATION INAUGURATION

WHY A MISSIONAL INSTITUTION IN A “CHRISTIAN” COUNTRY

Is it necessary to have an academic institution with a missional heart – as Mukhanyo describes itself – in a country where more than 80% of the population calls themselves “Christian”? The answer is undoubtedly “Yes,” for a number of reasons.

First, such an institution is needed because not all people who call themselves “Christian” – as is the fashion in South Africa – are indeed Christian. Secondly, this is an ideal opportunity to do mission work. One can appeal to people who call themselves “Christian” to recognize the implications of being a Christian and be such a Christian. Profession of Christianity provides a sounding board.

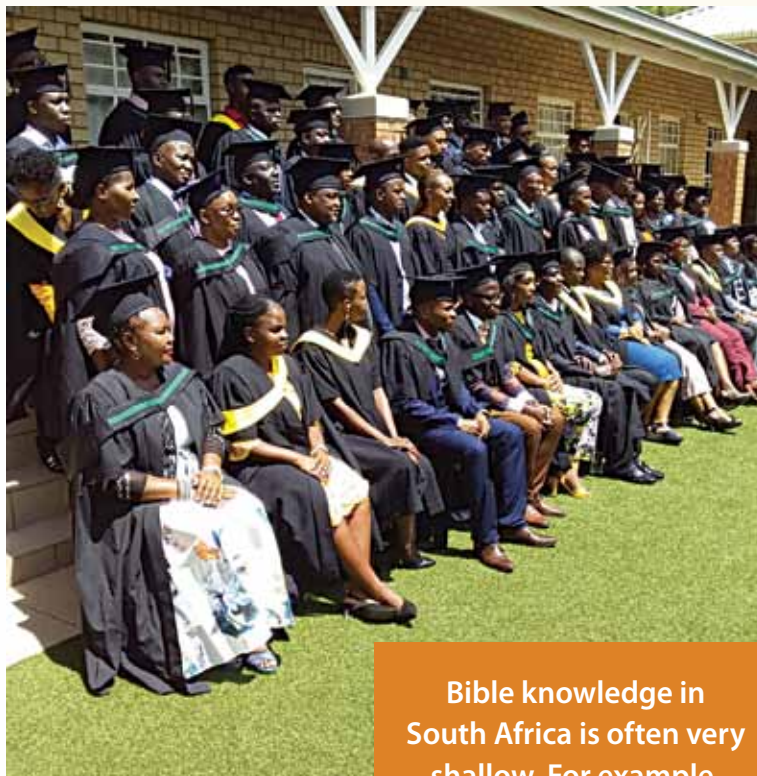
Ultimately, it is not for any human to judge who is or is not a Christian. Yet, one can have serious doubts about the millions in the country who belong to a “church,” where Christ is not the only Savior, where the Bible is not really used or is not viewed as God’s authoritative Word, or where the Lord’s grace is not embraced as the only way of salvation.

Often, knowledge of the Bible is so shallow that the term “Christian” does not have any implications for many. Many so-called “churches” are preaching the prosperity gospel or other sectarian messages and thus seriously misleading their flock, while other syncretistic “churches” are merging traditional religious beliefs with various biblical texts.

Africa in general, and South Africa in particular, faces an enormous shortage of church leaders. Many church leaders have a very limited training with only a simple knowledge of God’s Word. Many call themselves “Christian,” but have their own message or motivating stories to draw the crowds. Furthermore, the number of false prophets and witchdoctors (*sangomas*) continues to increase, even in modernized urban communities.

History teaches us that mission and evangelization should be done not in faraway locations only, but among local, misled people as well. For example, the gifted Apollos, who was “mighty in the Scriptures,” knew only the baptism of John. But Priscilla and Aquila explained to him “the way of God more perfectly” (Acts 18:26). Paul evangelized twelve disciples who had never heard that there was a Holy Spirit since they only knew the baptism of John (Acts 19:1-7).

Although some theologians deny it, John Calvin was not only a great reformer, but also a great missionary. In his *Institutes* (3.2.42) he states that when we pray “Thy kingdom come,” we are also asking “that God may gather churches to himself from all quarters of the world, may extend and increase their numbers, enrich them with his gifts, establish due order among them.” In his commentary on Isaiah 12:4, Calvin argues that God “means that the work of his deliverance will be so excellent that it ought to



Bible knowledge in South Africa is often very shallow. For example, young men and women who recently applied for study at a different Christian college in Pretoria were asked to name the author of the Book of Psalms: David, Paul, or Saint Frederick. The large majority of applicants chose Saint Frederick.

be proclaimed, not in one corner only, but throughout the whole world . . . spread abroad to all men.”

Calvin put his words into deeds after 1544 by training and sending many hundreds of missionaries to Catholic countries, especially to France, but also to many other European countries and even to the New World (today’s Brazil).

The point is that mission work should not be directed only towards people and nations who have never heard about Christ. When Paul arrived in a town, he always went to the local synagogue first to preach. That was where he was hoping to find a soundboard – people who knew the Scriptures and would be able to understand the gospel message he was bringing.

Apply all this to Mukhanyo. It has a God-given calling to equip students to preach to people who have heard of Christ and call themselves Christians, but who are often very confused and limited in their knowledge of the Bible. It aims to explain the way of

God more accurately so that students can speak eloquently about the triune God and Christ's life, death, and resurrection, and speak convincingly about the religion of love, grace, and other biblical norms and values. We know that many so-called "Christians" are lost, because believing in the real Christ of the Bible is the only way to be saved.

This is the reason why Mukhanyo needs to train as many people as possible to preach Christ with missionary hearts in the way that God wants His Word to be preached. Many people in South Africa and beyond are still prepared to listen; the soundboard is there. They must be taught the essence of the Scriptures: that the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever and the chief end of God is to glorify God and enjoy Himself forever (Westminster Catechism).

Many thousands of students need to be more thoroughly trained in God's Word. What is needed is much more than a revival, but a reformation in depth, away from traditional religion (paganism) and the prosperity belief that God lives for us, not the other way round. This latter error forgets the priority must be to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matt. 6:33). Only then will everything else be provided, and not the other way round.

At present (2021), Mukhanyo teaches approximately 1,000 theological students at more than 80 locations, mainly in South Africa, but also in many other African countries. There are five regional contact centers with staff, lecturers, and libraries (campuses in KwaMhlanga and Johannesburg, and growing centers in Pretoria, Rustenburg, and Durban). At all the other locations, study groups regularly meet under the leadership of a tutor or facilitator.

Yet, the reach of Mukhanyo and other similar schools still needs to be multiplied at least tenfold in Africa. The need is vast and urgent!

In addition, as a result of the colonial history of Africa and the apartheid history of South Africa, white church leaders are perceived to be less credible and are often less culturally compatible. Therefore, from a pragmatic point of view, it is even more necessary to train indigenous church leaders, be they missionaries, preachers, or elders.

Often these students are poor or come from communities and churches which are not able to support them. Mukhanyo subsidizes and supports them as much as possible. But in the present times, with people getting poorer and unemployment well over 35%, this is becoming increasingly difficult. Support in many forms, including prayer, manpower, finances, library books, etc., is more important than ever.

The past year was difficult, but Mukhanyo thanks the Lord daily for what He continues to provide so that Mukhanyo can function unabated. If He wants Mukhanyo to do more, He will also make it possible, as He has done in past years. ①

Mr. Rob van der Kooy is involved in Public Relations for Mukhanyo Theological College, which receives support from Free Reformed Missions.



COME OVER & HELP

Our vision is to see thriving, BIBLICALLY FAITHFUL churches serving EASTERN EUROPE!

VISIT www.coah.org | CALL 888-844-2624

1-866-833-2741



CHRISTIAN COUNSELLING
CENTRE | EST. 1990

Individual, marriage and family counselling.

www.christiancounsellingcentre.ca

OBITUARY

Peacefully at home, surrounded by her loving family,

ENA PENNINGS

(nee Janssen)

passed into Glory on the evening of
Thursday, April 22, 2021.

Ena was a cherished wife and helpmate to **Hans for almost 51 years**. A loving mother to **Ken and Janna Pennings, Jeff and Christine Pennings, Sherry (and Mike) Neven, Paul and Lori-Ann Pennings, Tanya Pennings, and Rob and Amanda Pennings**.

Ena enjoyed being a grandma to
23 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren.

Ena is predeceased by her parents, Jan and Grace Janssen and Gerda and Bernard Pennings. She is survived by her step-mother in law, Nellie Pennings.

She will be missed by her siblings, Bill and Chris Janssen, JoAnn and Klass Meeboer, Henk and Suzanne Janssen, Marg and Pieter VanderMeyden, and Gary and Joyce Janssen.

Ena has also been loved by her siblings-in-law, Bill and Gwen Pennings, Theo and Linda Pennings, Dick and Joanne Pennings, Lyda and Dave McKittrick, Henry and Coby Pennings, Joanne and Stan Puklicz, John and Ann Pennings, Gary and Janet Pennings, Brenda and Carl Heimstra, Jim Versteeg, Mary and Ryan Koning, Andrew and Tricia Versteeg, and Brian Versteeg.

Ena professed faith in Jesus. She was known for her giving, hospitality, and self-denying ways. She would have been 71 years old in June. She retired at age 65 from Ayr Coach Lines. Soon after, she started experiencing symptoms that would later be defined as Progressive Supranuclear Palsy. It was a hard journey. Her earthly body was tired and it did not allow her to function in the swift and loving ways with which she was characterized. But through this all, God has been gracious.

*Show me Your ways, O Lord; Teach me Your paths.
Lead me in Your truth and teach me, For You are the God
of my salvation; On You I wait all the day. Psalm 25:4-5*

Hans and Ena moved into an in-law suite in Paul and Lori-Ann's home about 2 years ago. Hans and the other siblings would like to praise God for the way in which He provided for mom's care through Paul, Lori-Ann and their children, Sarah, Reuben, and Abigail. The family wishes to also thank Sunnyside Senior Services, The LHIN, and Care Partners (Ethel and Eva) for their care.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Word and Deed. On-line condolences can be forwarded to the family at Corbett Funeral Home.

The funeral service was broadcast live Monday April 26 at 3:30pm. <https://youtube.com/c/FRCStgeorge>

ANNIVERSARY

April 28, 1956 – April 28, 2021

With thankfulness to the Lord, we rejoice with our parents as they celebrate **65 Years of marriage** together



NICK & MARGARET LOBBEZOO

(nee VanYsseldyk)

with much love from their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren

Mary & Bert Jonkman

Carolyn & Rick deHaan (*Cassandra, Travis, Kurtis, Silas*)
Heather & Richard Procee (*Tyrel, Katie, Sawyer, Dustin*)
Jeff & Danielle Jonkman (*Kade, Peyton, Emry, Dallas*)
Mark & Tracy Jonkman (*Jillian*)
Christine Jonkman
Tanya & Adrian Brouwer (*Jaxon, Kenzie, Taylor, Grayson*)

Bill Lobbezoo

Mike & Marsha Lobbezoo (*Michaela, Nicholas, Brooke, Faith*)
Corrina Lobbezoo
Nick Lobbezoo & Debbie Tylus
Dave Lobbezoo
Lydia Lobbezoo
Allyssa Lobbezoo
Andrew Lobbezoo & Colleen

Christine Lobbezoo

(*March 29, 1962 – April 20, 1984*)

David Lobbezoo

(*October 30, 1965 – October 31, 1965*)

Andy & Sylvia Lobbezoo

Jason & Carolyn Lobbezoo (*Weston, Trent, Blake, Esmé*)
Jen & Jordan Lavigne
Chris & Michelle Lobbezoo (*Paisley, Rose, Georgia, Lochlan*)
Brad & Jenna Lobbezoo (*Willow*)
Michelle & Will Dendekker (*Myles, Justin, Emma*)

Kevin & Trish Lobbezoo

Ashton & Mitchell Blackwell
Scott Lobbezoo & Jessie Dendekker
Madeline Lobbezoo

"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." Daniel 6:10

Home Address: 5-53 Beverly St E, St. George, ON N0E 1N0