

Reformed

A MAGAZINE FOR THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY

JAN - FEB 2023
Volume 42 Issue No. 1

PERSPECTIVE

CELEBRATING 40+ YEARS



WHAT NEEDS REFORMING TODAY?

P. 46-51

Share your
message
with 10,000
Reformed
homes!



Advertise in *RP's* print edition and share your announcement, job posting, service, or product with FRC, URC, PCA, RPC, CanRC, OPC, HRC, and ARP families across Canada, while supporting this ministry at the same time.

GO TO
www.ReformedPerspective.ca/
advertise
FOR RATES AND DETAILS

Reformed PERSPECTIVE

A MAGAZINE FOR THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY

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

For advertising, print magazine requests, or to change your address, contact:

Joanne DeRuiter - Reformed Perspective Administration,
admin@reformedperspective.ca
PO Box 3609
Smithers, BC, V0J 2N0
250-643-8114 (Pacific time zone)

For Letters to the Editor and submissions: editor@ReformedPerspective.ca

Editorial Team: Mark Penninga (Executive Director); Jon Dykstra (Editor); Marty VanDriel (Assistant Editor); Jan Broersma (Copy Editor)

Board of Directors: Bruce DeBoer (Chairman); Marty VanDriel; Mark Penninga (Executive Director); Aren Vreugdenhil; Aubrey Vandergaag; Sharon de Boer; Lucas Holtvlüwer

Template Design: Compass Creative Studio Inc. compasscreative.ca

Art Direction, Design and Layout: Colleen Van Raalte

Contact Address for Australia:

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

Copyright statement: Copyright in letters, articles, cartoons and any other material submitted to Reformed Perspective and accepted for publication remains with the author, but RP and its reciprocal organizations may freely reproduce them in print, electronic or other forms.

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

If you are interested in the work of Reformed Perspective Foundation and in the promotion of Reformed principles in all spheres of life, especially in your local area, and you need help, contact our editor at editor@ReformedPerspective.ca.

Registration: ISSN 0714-8208

Charitable Organization under Canada Income Tax Act

Registration No. 118929272RR0001

**RETURN UNDELIVERABLE
CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO:**

**One Beghin Avenue, Winnipeg, MB
R2J 3X5**

reformedperspective.ca



UNSCRAMBLE
from page 55

Doorbell, Isaiah, Raspberries, Snow, Crimson, Scarlet, Tommy, Cake

CROSSWORD SOLUTION 8-1





RED, WHITE, AND BLUE

Are there greener pastures south of the border?

by Marty VanDriel

P. 16



FEARFULLY AND
WONDERFULLY MADE

by Michael Behe

P.38



"WHAT NEEDS REFORMING TODAY?"
CONTEST WINNERS

P.46



KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH
THE GRANDS P.26

- Sharon Bratcher

NO FREE LUNCH P.28

"MARKUS SHOWED US HOW TO
FIND MEANING IN SUFFERING" P.10

- Mark Penninga

COME AND EXPLORE:
Tommy's temptation P.52

- Stephanie Vanderpol

RP'S 52 IN 22 CHALLENGE:
FINALE P.58



IS IT TIME TO LEAVE CANADA?

by Mark Penninga

I had to answer this question in front of a live, though physically distanced, audience in Toronto in the fall of 2021. The presentation occurred in the midst of numerous COVID restrictions and concerning developments in Canada's Parliament and legislatures, including a proposal to criminalize "conversion therapy."

Since then, the hypothetical has become a reality for some Reformed families, who have decided to uproot and move to the USA, and Marty VanDriel is sharing some of their stories in this issue's feature article. While talk is cheap, action often inspires others to action. Their decisions to leave are provoking many of us to search our hearts and make our own decision about whether to stay or think seriously about relocating.

If I were to follow my heart or even my mind, it wouldn't be too hard to convince me to move, especially if the new location comes with a warmer climate and a few palm trees thrown in. Yet I also know we are called not to follow simply our hearts, but God's Word and law (Ps. 119) and to "test the spirits to see whether they are from God" (1 John 4:1). God's Word makes it clear that whether we stay or leave, what should ultimately motivate us is the furtherance of His kingdom, not our own.

DON'T LOOK FOR HEAVEN ON EARTH

C.S. Lewis once said that "if we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world." So when our hearts long for a better place than Canada, that long-

ing isn't a place on the planet that is free of the effects of the fall into sin. And even if one location is better than another, it might be just a matter of time before that changes, especially because it will attract people like ourselves, stained with sin even before we were born (Ps. 51).

...why not consider Prince George, BC, Niverville, Manitoba, or Powassan, Ontario? These communities have small Reformed church plants that are eager for more members.

ing isn't a bad thing. It only means we are pilgrims, looking for a country of our own (Heb. 11:14).

We just shouldn't be fooled by the hope that the USA, or any other region of this world, is going to satisfy that longing. The problem with going to a new location is that we take ourselves with us. And that is a problem because "the heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure" (Jer. 17:9). A change of location doesn't change our broken condition, as much as we may want it to. Although some places in this world may have more freedom than Can-

GOD WANTS THE EARTH FILLED AND THE GOSPEL SPREAD

This doesn't mean that we have a divine mandate to stay put. On the contrary, God has given humanity two commissions or mandates, and both come with a calling to move.

God's first instruction to humanity was the cultural mandate to "be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it" (Gen. 1:28). As beautiful as Eden was, God didn't want Adam and Eve's children to stay there. They were instructed to inhabit the entire earth.

When we fast-forward to Genesis 11, we read about people starting to move eastward and then settling down and deciding to build a city, “otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth” (Gen. 11:4). In response, God confused their language and “the LORD scattered them from there over all the earth” (11:8). He didn’t want them to get comfortable.

At the end of Christ’s ministry, He gave us another commission – the Great Commission – which once again included a global focus, to “go and make disciples of all nations” (Matt. 28:19). The apostles wasted little time and brought the Gospel throughout the known world. Centuries later, that Gospel reached our forefathers. Without people obeying that call to spread their wings, the Gospel wouldn’t have reached us.

REACHING THE WORLD WITHOUT LEAVING THE COUNTRY

Canada has recently seen a massive influx of immigration and is set to welcome 500,000 more immigrants every year. That means we don’t need to move to a different continent to reach others. God is sending them to our own neighborhoods. And even though Canada has a Christian heritage, most of the children growing up in this country don’t know the basics of the Gospel message. In northern BC, where my family currently lives, many communities still don’t have access to faithful Gospel preaching.

When we think about where to settle down, we often look at where our relatives are, where job opportunities may be, and the cost of real estate. These things matter a great deal, as we have to first be responsible for our own families.

But many of us are capable of relocating. In fact, technology has made it easier than ever to work and study in other places. Speaking from my own experience, our family has been able to stay very connected to the family members that we left a thousand kilometers away. So if Canadian Christians are able to move, instead


WHAT'S INSIDE?

A huge “thank you” to so many of you who graciously and generously gave a year-end donation so that RP can continue, and expand, our work in 2023! We will strive to use this faithfully, for the furtherance of God’s kingdom.

You may have heard of Reformed families leaving Canada, concerned over the direction this nation is taking. In this issue we feature a story in which Marty VanDriel talks with some of these families to learn more about what motivated them and how they are doing. The editorial takes a slightly different direction by looking to Scripture to guide us as we may consider a move, either to leave a country or to serve in a different community but in the same country. You likely have stories and thoughts of your own. You are most welcome to share them with us, also for publishing in a future issue. Email: editor@reformedperspective.ca

We are also very grateful for the many who sent in a submission to our “what needs reforming today” contest. In particular, *we are thrilled that we also had many from our young brothers and sisters!* It is very encouraging to see young Christians thinking deeply about how to conform our lives to God’s will. You’ll find the top eight entries featured further in this issue.

We’re putting a bow on “RP’s 52 in 2022 reading challenge” between André Schutten, Rev. Jim Witteveen, and Jon Dykstra. Be sure to check out the last installment this issue, and see the whole collection of almost 150 reviews at ReformedPerspective.ca/52.

We are finding it challenging to make all our content fit into 64 pages. So if you haven’t yet, subscribe to our free weekly e-newsletter for more great content – sign up at ReformedPerspective.ca/RoundUp. The benefit of that medium is you can also watch the videos we share with many of the articles. 

ROUNDUP

If someone you know should be getting this newsletter, forward it on and let them know they can subscribe to it [for free, right here.](#)



The “couldn’t be my kid” delusion

Sexual temptation caught up Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, Samson, the strongest man who ever lived, and David, a man after God’s own heart.

Our kids are not immune.

[READ NOW](#)



No, dino tissue is not immortal

Once again dino tissue has been discovered leaving scientists with two options: conclude it could be miraculously preserved millions of years, or it isn’t millions of years old after all...

[READ NOW](#)



Movie review: *The Horse in the Gray Flannel Suit*

Horses, humor, and a little romance will make this one a favorite among the preteen girls in your family...

[READ NOW](#)



Book review: *The Gospel Blimp*

Joseph Bayly’s short story collection is a classic, full of funny, satirical, and surprisingly profound parables...

[READ NOW](#)



of looking at other countries, why not consider Prince George, BC, Niverville, Manitoba, or Powassan, Ontario? These communities have small Reformed church plants that are eager for more members.

It may not be as attractive to head to communities where the climate is colder, where there aren't established Reformed schools, and there's little or no family or friends. But that is how most Reformed communities in Canada started just 50-70 years ago. We already know the language and the culture, we have skills that we can utilize immediately and there are often jobs waiting. In other words, although it may not stir our hearts in the way that a full-time mission position overseas may, moving to these communities is practical and impactful for God's kingdom.

SEEK THE WELFARE OF THE COUNTRY WHERE WE HAVE BEEN PLACED

Whether we stay or go, it is helpful to keep in mind that throughout the ages, most of God's people had little choice about where they would live. They had to work to survive and didn't have the luxury of uprooting. That is true of many of us today too. Even if we wanted to move to a better country or a different community, it doesn't mean that country would allow us to come or that a move would work for our spouse or children.

When God's people were forced to uproot in the Babylonian exile, God's instruction to them through His prophet was to "build houses and settle down" and "seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile" (Jer. 29:5,7). Regardless of where we settle, these are words we can still take to heart.

God's people are generally encouraged to "live as a believer in whatever situation the Lord has assigned to them, just as God has called them" (1 Cor. 7:17). But, lest we conclude that God intends that we just accept our situation, only a verse later He tells slaves "Don't let it trouble you – although if you can

gain your freedom, do so" (vs. 21). In other words, we should bloom as kingdom citizens where we are planted, but that doesn't mean that we need to wilt if the conditions are poor and another good option is possible.

Building off of this, if we are concerned by the direction of our land, we need to "be the change we want to see." God has given us opportunities to shine our lights in this land and even to serve in institutions and offices of government, or to support those who are. Knowing solid Christians who have answered that call and been willing to serve as MPs, MPPs, town councilors, and leaders in business or other realms, I'm convinced that we can do a better job of encouraging and assisting them in these roles, rather than just criticizing them. It is incredibly difficult to serve as a Christian in a secular land. Let's help each other rather than tear each other down, discouraging others from serving themselves.

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES MAY FORCE A MOVE

The points above apply in times of widespread freedom and safety. But circumstances can change quickly. Jesus experienced this early in His life. His parents were warned to leave Israel when he was still a baby, seeking refuge from political persecution by relocating to Egypt (Matt. 2). When it was safe to move back, his parents were warned in a dream about going to Judea, so they settled instead in Nazareth, the community where Jesus was raised.

And it isn't just our safety that can change quickly. The same can apply to our spiritual health. We confess that the preaching of the Gospel is one of the two keys of the kingdom of heaven (Lord's Day 31, Heidelberg Catechism). In other words, we need to be under the preaching. The last two years have made it clear that many of Canada's leaders simply don't care much if Christians can't gather for worship. In my home province, we were told that gathering virtually is a sufficient long-term replacement, even though churches respectfully explained that God's Word,

... we shouldn't get caught up in analysis paralysis.

not the government, should determine what is sufficient when it comes to worship. If it were up to many of our leaders, they would have no problem with shutting down churches for good.


Thankfully, God has restrained wickedness and still allows the freedom to preach the Gospel. This is something to be grateful for and to use while we have it.

DON'T BE PARALYZED

There is a lot, then, to prayerfully consider. But we shouldn't get caught up in analysis paralysis. If an opportunity arises where we can best further God's kingdom and bless our families in a different country or community, and if people who know us well advise us to pursue it, we can embrace the move with enthusiasm, not held back by those who don't agree or understand. God's kingdom isn't limited by earthly borders.

In his superb book, aptly titled *Just Do Something*, Kevin DeYoung advises:

"we should stop looking for God to reveal the future to us and remove all risk from our lives. We should start looking to God – His character and His promises – and thereby have confidence to take risks for His name's sake."

So whether in Canada or beyond, let's be strong and courageous, taking risks for His kingdom, not our own. 

Mark Penninga is Reformed Perspective's Executive Director.



Assisted suicide is **never** a solution to mental illness.



To help take a stand against the expansion of euthanasia in Canada, visit

CARENOTKILL.CA

AND

TAKE ACTION

care
NOT KILL



HIRING

We are

Whispering Pines Landscaping celebrates 30 years of excellence in 2023! Ours is a history of creating and maintaining beautiful outdoor environments. Thankful for continued growth, we are excited to add to our dedicated team these two key positions:

LANDSCAPE SALES	SERVICE MANAGER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with property owners to establish outdoor plans Manage your sales pipeline all year long 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foster a winning culture among service delivery teams Scheduling of Lawn, Garden and Snow divisions

We recognize that the Lord blesses us through our staff; we have created a work environment where careers can grow! We currently provide health benefits, profit-sharing, and retirement saving opportunities.

Located in beautiful Dufferin County, ON. Our service area boasts:

-  7 Reformed Churches
-  3 Reformed Elementary Schools
-  1 Reformed High school

Apply! www.wpn.ca/careers



The Free Reformed School Association (Tas) Inc. invites applications for the following positions:

Teachers

Urgently require Secondary and Primary teachers for 2023 Full-Time, Part-Time, 12-month or 6-month appointments accepted

At JCS, our vision is to be a *strongly connected* community of learners, *deeply committed* to our faith and to continual growth, nurturing individuals to be their best in the service of God and to His glory.

We are looking to add enthusiastic, committed teachers to our team for the 2023 school year. Due to growing class sizes we need additional, suitably qualified, teachers. Applications for full-time and part-time employment welcome, with 6-month or 12-month appointments considered.

John Calvin School currently has over 120 students from Kinder to Grade 10 with an average combined class size of 19. We are a well-resourced school, located in Launceston, a beautiful city in the north of Tasmania, a breathtaking part of God's creation. (<https://www.discovertasmania.com.au/>)

Applicants must be a member of the Free Reformed Church of Australia or any of her sister churches, be able to be registered to teach in Tasmania and be registered to work with vulnerable people.

Conditions and salary are based on the Educational Services (Teachers) Award 2020.

Expressions of interest for future positions, full-time or part-time, are welcome.

For application forms, see the school website (www.jcs.tas.edu.au/employment).

Forward completed applications to the Business Manager:

- E-mail: wielstrak@jcs.tas.edu.au
- Address: PO Box 89, Launceston 7250, Tasmania, Australia.

For more information, contact the Principal, Mr Daniel Coote

- E-mail: cooted@jcs.tas.edu.au



SHOULD CHRISTIANS TEST THEIR ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE GOV'T, OR LET SLEEPING DOGS LIE?

One Reformed Christian seeks his day in court

by Marty VanDriel

Harold Jonker has become a familiar face to many Canadians. In his folksy, good-humored, sensible way, Jonker acted as a spokesman for the “Truckers' Convoy” that went to Ottawa early last year. In that role he was asked and able to explain why the truckers went to Ottawa, and what would get them to leave. In a word: freedom! In a few more words, it was a protest against the government’s mandate that truckers crossing the US/Canadian border had to be vaccinated.

Media outlets all across Canada and the US kept him in their rotation of interviewees, partly for his common sense, and partly for his quotable quotes. On *Fox News*, when asked what he would do if his bank accounts were frozen, the West Lincoln (Ontario) resident responded:

“Go ahead, Mr. Trudeau. If you freeze my accounts, you’re not going to hurt me. You’re going to hurt my wife, my 13 children, my two dogs, and my 15 chickens!”

(One has to wonder what Janice and the kids thought about this!)

The “Jonker Trucking” company was well represented in the truckers’ convoy: partners Harold and Tim, along with brother-in-law Jeff Tenhage, visited Ottawa often and helped organize the event, which brought in truckers, with their rigs, from all across Canada, to park in and around the capital. Ironically, about half of their company’s truckers were vaccinated, and had been able to continue their runs into the US that were not possible for unvaccinated operators, but they still wished to do their part to send the convoy’s message.

Jonker at the time was also a town councilor for West Lincoln Township in the Niagara region, although he tried to make clear that he was in Ottawa with the convoy as a private citizen and business owner, not as a government representative of West Lincoln.

However, fellow town councilors were not happy with Jonker’s

outspokenness against both the vaccine mandates and the enforced lockdowns. This led to a complaint being filed, and an Integrity Commissioner investigation recommended that he be suspended from the town council, without pay, for thirty days due to violation of the council’s code of conduct. On what basis? For what was called the “unlawful nature” of the protests. The Commissioner also advised that Jonker should repay about \$300 of gifts



WHO ARE YOU GOING TO BELIEVE, ME OR YOUR LYING EYES?

A couple of years ago the American news outlet CNN famously declared a riot as being a “fiery but mostly peaceful” protest. A different sort of mischaracterization happened last year in Canada when the Prime Minister linked the Truckers' Convoy with Nazism and racism. He largely couldn’t make his charges stick, because protesters were able to use their social media feeds to bypass the mainstream press and directly share pictures and videos that showed the site was full of folks and whole families strolling, laughing, and even coming together in song. - JD

received, and the town council accepted both recommendations.

At first, Jonker was inclined to just accept the punishment and move on. Thirty days' pay and \$300 worth of gifts "is really chicken feed," said Jonker – that wasn't reason enough to fight.

But with time, he became convinced that justice had not been served.

"Basically, we in the convoy were exercising our right of free speech as guaranteed in the Charter of Rights. And two Ontario supreme court justices ruled that the protests were legal" [as long as certain conditions continued to be met].

Then when the Justice Centre for Constitutional Freedoms (JCCF) offered to represent him in a case against the township's ruling, Jonker accepted. A date has not yet been set for the hearing.

Many who spoke out against what they've judged to be government overreach in the vaccine mandates and the lockdowns are eager for this type of review. Now that the world has moved on from this pandemic, it is good to reflect on where any level of government may have overstepped its areas of stewardship, and where unjust judgments were given. Was it really necessary to prevent all churches from gathering for public worship for such a long period of time? Was it lawful to force police officers, members of the military, teachers, doctors and nurses to get what was a relatively new vaccine in order to keep their jobs? While many of us may be tired of the debate, we do well to allow these types of hearings to make judgments that may guide future decisions for different levels of government, and publicly correct past wrongs.

Lawyer Jorge Pineda, who represents Jonker in this case, summarized the situation in a Sept. 26 press release from the JCCF:

"The sad truth is that Mr. Jonker has been punished for his political position, in the context of an ongoing dispute with other councillors. In Canada, we must tolerate strong differences in political opinion. Elected politicians should not be permitted to weaponize codes of conduct to silence and intimidate their political opponents. The Charter is intended to guarantee free expression. Canadian democratic institutions cannot survive if such guarantees can be easily ignored through these kinds of tactics."

Jonker himself bears no animosity towards those who were against him in this particular fight. "I'm not holding anything

against people. We all need time to get over things." When asked if he had any regrets about the events of the past summer, Jonker said: "It would have been nice if the convoy leadership could have taken more time to organize everything," although in general the truckers were praised for being fairly disciplined and well behaved. "I wish we would have shut down the horns a bit sooner, they were loud! I'm not a horn guy... but people kept asking us to honk the horns!"

Harold is not sure what impact his high profile in the trucker convoy had on him not being re-elected as councilor in October. "I'm not a social media guy, but I know that some candidates painted a pretty radical picture of me." Jonker is not done with politics yet: he is an active and enthusiastic member of the Christian Heritage Party; he has run as a candidate more than once, and hopes that the Lord can use this party for the good of Canada.

During their time in Ottawa, Harold, Tim, and Jeff were all thankful to be able to witness to many people about the joy that they have to be children of the Lord. Many people told Harold that the convoy had given them hope, when they were in such a dark, gloomy, isolated place. "To have people say to truckers, you are our only hope, that's pretty sad. I would tell them, God is your hope!"

There were a lot of Christians amongst the trucker convoy leadership team, which met every morning and evening to be able to give direction to the group. "On the first day," recalled Harold, "one of the older men asked if anyone objected to us starting each meeting with prayer! I was ashamed that it wasn't my idea. But I was glad to help out, and that's how we opened every meeting that whole time!" Boldly written on the wall of the meeting room was a text from Ecclesiastes 10, verse 4 (that's right, 10-4 good buddy!): "If the anger of the ruler rises against you, do not leave your place, for calmness will lay great offenses to rest."

On one particular weekend, a young man that Harold and Tim had befriended asked if he could come to church with them! They of course were glad to take 16-year-old Logan along, and it worked out really well that Janice and the kids were coming up for the weekend. Some time later, the brothers got a text from Logan's mom, showing herself and Logan all dressed up and ready for church back home in Newfoundland: apparently he insisted to his mom that church should be a regular part of their lives. Praise the Lord that even in unusual circumstances, He can use His people to tell others of the real and eternal hope we have as His redeemed children – not perfect, but forgiven. RP



The convoy was met by lot of supporters, as in this scene just outside Grimsby, ON.

Pictures provided by Harold Jonker.



“MARKUS SHOWED US HOW TO FIND MEANING IN SUFFERING”

On Nov. 25, 2022, Mike and Jennifer Schouten testified before the parliamentary committee that is considering expanding euthanasia to children

by Mark Penninga

sion, as they received questions for the next 45 minutes. We highly recommend you take the time to watch it.

We reached out to Mike and Jennifer the following week to ask them about this experience.

How did you get invited to share Markus' and your family's story with this Parliamentary committee?

In April 2022 we sent in a written submission to the committee. At the time we had exhausted all treatment for cure and were focused on quality of life for Markus. We sent in the submission in consultation with Markus and with his blessing to use our experience as we were able to impact the current cultural conversations about euthanasia and assisted suicide.

The invitation to appear before the committee came as a reply to our emailed submission in April. We had about ten days' notice, but it came as quite a surprise to us.

Was it a difficult decision for you to agree to this?

There was some initial excitement about this opportunity that God had put before us, but quickly we began to relive those last days with Markus and this brought up the variety of emotions of his suffering and death. It was only with the help of God,

On May 29, 2022 Markus Schouten was promoted to be with his Lord, at the age of 18 and after battling cancer for over a year. Just six months later, his parents Mike and Jennifer had the very difficult job of appearing before the Special Joint Committee on Medical Assistance in Dying, in Canada's Parliament, to

share their story of walking with Markus through his suffering and death, and to urge our leaders to promote care for those suffering, rather than aid them with, and encourage them towards, suicide.

They were the final witnesses to appear before this group of MPs and Senators, and their presentation made quite the impres-

and the prayers of the saints carrying us along that we were able to push through.

What were some of your hopes or goals with doing this?

Even prior to the invitation we were having more frequent discussions about suffering and how we (as Christians and as a country) have so much to learn about suffering well. The main focus we had as we prepared for the presentation was to present a Christian perspective on suffering and death, with the purpose of ensuring the committee members had to wrestle with their own pre-existing worldviews on euthanasia and assisted suicide. While we were there to speak into the conversation about expanding this to minors, we purposefully framed some of our remarks in such a way as they would apply to all aspects of the euthanasia debate.

You has to endure a lot of questions from the MPs and Senators, some of which would likely have hurt. How did you feel about the questions that were asked?

We were surprised that they asked so many questions. Quite honestly we were preparing as though we might only receive one or two questions from sympathetic committee members, with those opposed to our perspective not giving us more opportunities to repeatedly emphasize our message. That so many MPs and Senators wanted to question us just meant we could speak truth to them in different ways each time.

You shared that “Markus showed us how to find meaning in suffering.” Can you share any advice with others who are in the midst of suffering in similar ways right now, or perhaps will face this in the future?

Suffering is hard and it looks different for everyone. Even though God has taken our family through the furnace of suffering (Isaiah 48:10) we have much to learn. Perhaps the most helpful advice we received early on in Markus’ cancer journey was the virtue of submission. Submitting to God’s will, especially when it appears His will is to go through a very hard season, and the only thing we (humanly speaking) want to do is flee from it, is challenging. Yet, through the

PRESENTATION TO THE SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE ON MAID

What follows is a transcript of Mike and Jennifer Schouten’s 10-minute, Nov. 25, 2022 presentation to the Special Joint Committee on Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD).

JENNIFER: This is our dear son Markus. On February 26, 2021 Markus was diagnosed with Ewing sarcoma, an aggressive form of bone cancer.

After 20 rounds of chemotherapy, 25 rounds of radiation, numerous surgeries, including the replacement of his entire upper right arm with an internal prosthetic, we made the decision with Markus and his doctors to end treatment for cure and focus on quality of life. Markus’ care was then transferred from BC Children’s Hospital to Canuck Place Children’s Hospice.

The palliative and hospice care Markus received at our home was focused on addressing his suffering and valuing his dignity. The doctors and nurses knew his days would be short, and their efforts ensured that the days he had left were lived well.

Markus wanted to die at home, surrounded by his family. But he also didn’t want to experience the intense pain and suffering that he knew would come as his lungs filled with tumors.

On what turned out to be his last Friday, nurse Shana assessed Markus and said, “His time is short.” She advised us to take the window we still had for Markus to be transported to Canuck Place Hospice in Vancouver. With the increased intensity of his care we agreed.

Our whole family was together at the hospice, and as we entered the evening it appeared that Markus would only last a few more hours.

As each of his siblings said good night to Markus, he told them he loved them, and said, “See you in paradise.”

Mike and I didn’t sleep at all but took turns sitting beside Markus. The nurses maintained his medication and Markus assured us that he was very comfortable and not in any pain. At one point he said to me, “This is how I hoped it would be.”

As dawn arrived, we realized that God had another day in store for Markus.

Early that morning Markus’ friends arrived at the hospice and together they cried, laughed, and prayed.

That afternoon both of Markus’ sets of grandparents also came to say goodbye.

By early Sunday morning Markus was non-responsive and his breathing had become a lot more shallow.

Just before 2:30 that afternoon Markus’ breathing slowed and with each of us around his bedside he took his final peaceful breaths and Markus’ soul departed from his broken body.

MIKE: Markus died 6 months ago, on May 29, 2022, only 15 months after his diagnosis. If he was here today his appeal to you would be to not expand euthanasia to minors, for two reasons.

Earlier this month it was reported in the news that CAMAP, the

Canadian Association of MAiD Assessors and Providers, is recommending that physicians have an obligation to bring up medical assistance in dying with patients who meet eligibility requirements.

As Jennifer just shared, Markus met the eligibility requirements.

This means that if euthanasia is extended to minors, the day will come when families just like ours, sitting with their dying children, will feel an obligation to end the suffering of their child by having a doctor euthanize him or her.

Dear committee members, we recommend against the expansion of euthanasia because by giving some minors the right to request, you put all minors and their families in a position where they are obliged to consider.

If that happened to Markus the message heard would have been clear: we don't think your life is worth living and if you want we can end it for you.

The second reason we recommend you don't extend MAiD to minors is because by doing so you eliminate unimaginably beautiful experiences.


When we went to the Canuck Place Hospice, we didn't know how long Markus would live. We hadn't even wanted to go the hospice initially, but being there allowed us to embrace each moment we had with him, and him with us.

If euthanasia becomes available to minors, then that Friday night when we thought Markus was going to go... after we'd all had our time with him to say our goodbyes... It would seem like the thing to do, right? "It's time," the nurse

would say. "It's the compassionate thing to do. You've all said your goodbyes... he doesn't have to suffer anymore... he should go now," the nurse would say.

But, then we wouldn't have had Saturday... a most beautiful day filled with precious memories.

We suffered much with Markus, and we miss him terribly. But Markus showed us all how to find meaning in suffering and was thankful for each day God gave to him.

It is our heartfelt recommendation to this committee, on behalf of Markus and our family, that you do not extend MAiD to minors and instead focus on providing the necessary palliative and hospice resources to ensure the best quality of living, even when someone is dying. 

You can also watch the Schoutens' presentation, and the question-and-answer period, by using your phone's camera app to scan the QR Code below (or you can find the video, along with this article, at ReformedPerspective.ca/Markus).



power of our Savior Jesus who has gone before us in traveling the road of suffering, we can submit to God's will. This is not only right, it is liberating; it allows the sufferer to give his/her afflictions over to God and live in the assurance that He will carry us in the arms of Jesus, come what may.

The love and hope that you have for Markus and our Lord radiated through your presentation and answers. Did you sense a spiritual battle being fought? Do you have any indication as to how your presentation went over?

Absolutely. The most challenging part of the time we spent in the committee meeting was the spiritual component. The antithesis was palpable and became more apparent the more questions that were asked. The Senators, in particular, clearly had their minds made up [that euthanasia needs to be legal for minors] and were trying their best to have us agree that even

though it wasn't something we would support, we should support it for others.

We had a few committee members thank us personally immediately after the meeting. Since then we have reached out via email to all those who had questions for us and can thankfully share that one of the more strident members expressed that it helped her "think through the tough stuff."


What would you like to see Christians doing in the face of Parliament's study into expanding euthanasia to minors?

We need to be in prayer for the testimony of witnesses to touch the hearts and minds of the committee members. While our testimony was unique in that it was the only personal story to come before the committee, there were many other witnesses who cautioned the committee in expanding euthanasia to minors. Please pray that God would work through all the evidence before the committee with the re-

sult being that they recognize the dangers in making euthanasia available to children.

There is still much opportunity to impact the recommendations that the Special Joint Committee will be drafting. They plan to have their report concluded by February 17, 2023 and we would encourage Christians to communicate to both their MP as well as the committee members before then. This can be done using ARPA Canada's EasyMail system (find it at EasyMail.ARPACanada.ca) or by visiting the committee website (Parl.ca/committees/en/AMAD) where you can find contact information for all the members.

Is there anything else you wish to share with RP's readers?

We are so appreciative for the many people who have reached out to us with words of encouragement and prayers on our behalf. We truly felt carried by your prayers. If God is for us, who can be against us? (Romans 8:31) 

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

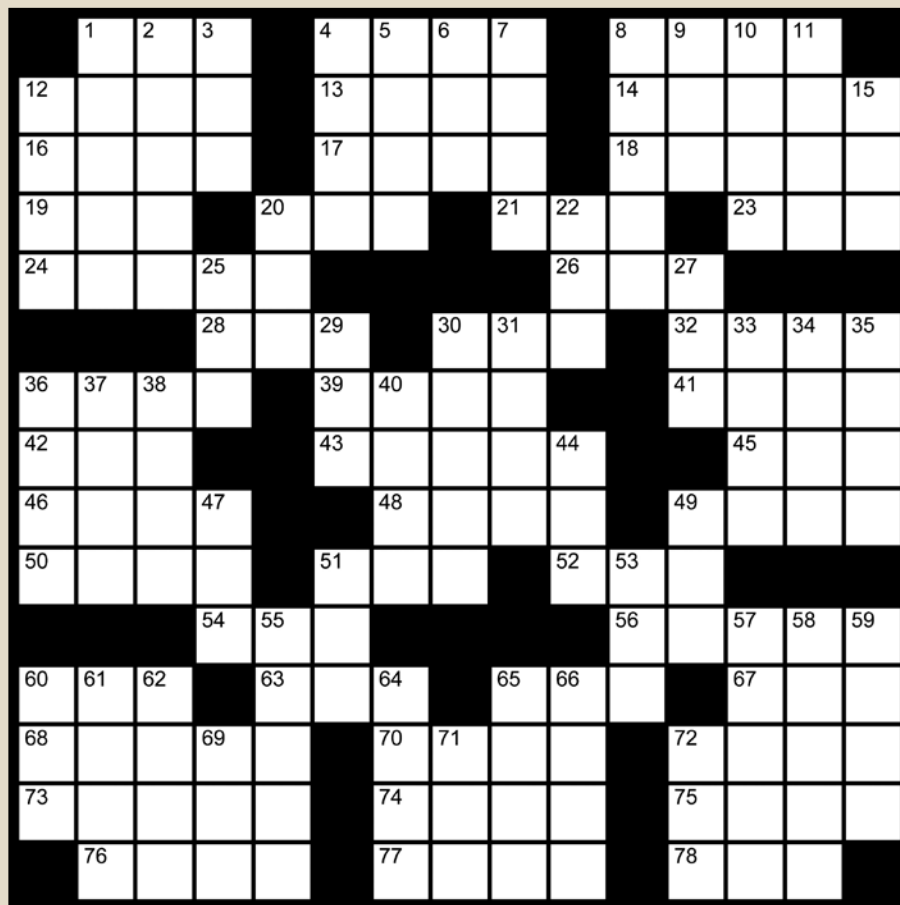
BY JEFF DYKSTRA

8-1 PUZZLE CLUES

Find this issue's solution on page 2!

ACROSS

1. Found on US speed limit signs
4. Speaker's platform
8. How an officebearer is elected
12. Film _____
13. Man-eating giant
14. They're useful for pressing needs.
16. Sea eagles
17. "_____ of Earl" (Gene Chandler hit song)
18. Blissfully (?) ignorant
19. "an ___ answer is a joy" (Prov. 15)
20. "___ versus Wade" (recently overturned)
21. "crossed... as on ___ land" (Heb. 11)
23. "Though you wash... with ___" (Jer. 2)
24. Cell or smart
26. "Simon's mother-in-law lay ___" (Mark 1)
28. Eggs
30. Cooking abbreviation
32. Cut; delete
36. "_____, poor Yorick." (quote from Hamlet)
39. Former royal ruler of Iran
41. Stun by gun
42. Keep for yourself (you pig!)
43. Infuriated (slang, two words)
45. Place to stay in (so to speak)
46. Command found in 50 Across
48. Some of the writing on the wall (Dan. 5)
49. They "go marching, one by one..."
50. Computers often have 46 Across in this.
51. A taxing month in North America (abbr.)
52. Egyptian version of a cobra
54. "no good tree bears ___ fruit" (Matt. 7)
56. Sounds as spooky as climbing into eagle nest
60. Boy's name that goes up and down
63. "envy makes the bones ___" (Prov. 14)
65. Drunkard
67. "To ___ is human..." (Alexander Pope)
68. "swept _____ by winds" (Jude, verse 12)
70. Yellow part of an egg
72. Tear in a garment; rhymes with snag
73. French farewell, commending one to God
74. "The LORD has heard my _____" (Ps. 6)
75. A cab _____ be a car?
76. Small, blackish fruit of the blackthorn
77. Vintage brand of matches
78. Prefix meaning before



DOWN

1. Change into another form
2. Multi-colored horse, or Ford car
3. Last part of 1 Across (abbreviation)
4. Extinct bird, or nearly extinct insult
5. Fever or shivering fit
6. Irritate, at least partly
7. "Is the _____ yet in the barn?" (Haggai 2)
8. Record-making material
9. _____ et labora (pray and "September holiday")
10. Archaic English for September holiday
11. "So put away... _____" (1 Pet. 2)
12. Type of tide
15. "...for they shall _____ God." (Matt. 5)
20. Minister's abbreviated title
22. Type of tide
25. Opposite of yeses
27. Abraham's nephew (Gen. 11, 12)
29. A tree, or what you get when you burn it
30. Spud
31. Snub; leave alone
33. "Go... to the _____ roads" (Matt. 22)
34. Ain't using good grammar?
35. "_____ of thousands" (Dan. 11)
36. Expression of discretion
37. Rich source of rich metal
38. For a second time (slang)
40. Type of rope used on ships
44. Split or black-eyed
47. Rub-a-dub-dub, three men in a _____
49. King Kong, for example
51. Much _____ about Nothing
53. "the truth will _____ you free" (John 8)
55. What Job wanted to do with God (Job 13)
57. Occur again
58. I rate what you say as very angry.
59. "Cogito, _____ sum." (Rene Descartes)
60. Ewe say this?
61. Agricultural community in Alberta
62. Does a watched kettle _____?
64. Adam was a _____ of Christ. (Rom. 5)
65. This goes downhill in winter.
66. Fine; good enough
69. Prefix meaning new
71. Opposite of 69 Down
72. Tree blood

IN A NUTSHELL

TIDBITS RELEVANT,
AND NOT SO,
TO CHRISTIAN LIFE

BY JON DYKSTRA

DAD JOKE REFRESHER

There's a lot of pressure being a dad, first and foremost the expectation that we'll always have a joke at the ready. So dads, here's a helping hand, with some jokes worthy of you.

- Did you realize that incorrectly when spelled correctly is still spelled incorrectly?
- What has four letters, sometimes has nine, never has five, but always has six.
- Did you know that adding "ic" turns metal into its adjective metallic, but it doesn't work for iron? Isn't that ironic?
- If April showers bring May flowers, do you know what May flowers bring? Pilgrims!
- Did you hear I got a job offer to teach an English class in prison? Now I just have to consider the prose and cons.
- Did you ever read that, back in his day, the ladies thought that Samuel Morse was a dashing young man?
- My son asked me for a book mark. I told him, "Surely. Here's *The Hobbit*, and my name's Brian." He replied, "Thanks dad, but don't call me Shirley." I'm so proud.

SOURCE: A hat tip to Al Siebring who was a source for some of these and an inspiration for them all!

JUST AIN'T THE SAME

"Watching church on a livestream is like watching a fireplace on TV: you can see everything with no warmth." – Charlie Kirk

PATRIOTISM VS. NATIONALISM: A USEFUL DISTINCTION?

In their Breakpoint.org column, "Should Christians be nationalists?" John Stonestreet and Timothy Padgett noted that the term "Christian nationalism" is being used by different people in very different ways. Some see it as "conflating the cross of Christ with the stars and stripes" while others equate it to white racism "dressed up in religious garb."

Still others, Reformed folk among them, are using the term to stake a claim for Christianity in the civic public square – they'd say they are simply denying that Christianity is something people should practice only in private, and that so long as we have nations we should seek for them to be Christian ones.

When a term is being used to describe ideologies that range from the outrageous to the orthodox, that's more than a little confusing. So might it be useful to find an alternative? Sometimes we do have to fight for a term, like "marriage" and "woman," because they have God-given definitions. Attempts to redefine here are rebellion against God, and the reality He has crafted. But not every word has to be a battleground; it's okay to never take back "gay."

Of course, we shouldn't be naive about the fact that whatever terms we use, they'll be attacked too. We might not think of the dictionary as a key front in the culture wars, but the Devil is all about twisting definitions whether it's *love*, *tolerance*, *family*, and

more. Thus, that a word is being twisted, isn't a reason to give up on it.

But does the term "nationalism" have the same sort of importance? And might its historical associations with the Nazis (national socialists that they were) be reason enough to let this one go? I'm going to

pitch *patriotism* and *Christian patriotism* as alternatives. They can and will be twisted too, but there is at least a little history that has already made a distinction between patriotism, and the nasty sort of nationalism.

- "My country, right or wrong,' is a thing that no patriot would think of saying. It is like saying, 'My mother, drunk or sober.'" – G.K. Chesterton, in *The Defendant*
- "Patriotism means unqualified and unwavering love for the nation, which implies not uncritical eagerness to serve, not support for unjust claims, but frank assessment of its vices and sins, and penitence for them." – attributed to Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn
- "Patriotism isn't the same as nationalism. The former is a healthy love and respect for your country, but the latter is blind, total, and unrestricted support for any and all legislation, policies, or activities of a nation. Nationalism is the extreme, whereas patriotism is the goal, because good patriots know when to challenge their political leaders, laws, and policies when they become unjust or immoral." – Fr. John Trigilio Jr. and Fr. Kenneth Brighenti

So, is it *wrong* to use the term "Christian nationalism"? No. I'm only questioning whether it's *wise*. And I'm suggesting that at this time and in this place, patriotism might be the less confusing term.

A STORY YOU MAY HAVE HEARD

Garrison Keillor once told a story of a Saudi prince who badly needed a transfusion, but was of such a rare blood type that he was having trouble finding a match anywhere in the world. His doctors finally found a willing Dutch-Canadian who would do. (Keillor says it was a Scotsman, but I have a reliable source who says otherwise.) Grateful for this lifesaving gift, the Saudi prince bought the Dutchman a house on a hill overlooking the Fraser Valley and gave him a million dollars.

But it wasn't long before the prince needed another pint. This time he gave the man a bottle of Advocaat and a thank-you card. Because now he had Dutch blood in him.

SOURCE: Adapted from Garrison Keillor, as told on "A Prairie Home Companion." And with a h/t to Sharon Bratcher

PRO-LIFE MEMES TRAVELING THE 'NET

Even since the overturn, earlier this year, of the 1973 Roe vs. Wade US Supreme Court decision that had legalized abortion in that country, pro-lifers have gotten a lot louder. And it is wonderful! Here are a few of the highlights:

- We are unashamed of our narrow-minded opposition to killing human beings



- Killing a person on the basis of their size, level of development, environment, or degree of dependency is as arbitrary and immoral as killing a person on the basis of their skin color. Our society hasn't progressed. We've just shifted our violence to a more vulnerable victim.
- "Abortion is not health care because pregnancy is not a disease." – Dr. Haywood Robinson, former abortionist
- "If abortion is healthcare, slavery is job creation." – Darrell B. Harrison
- Death is not a solution to foster care. Death is not a solution to abuse. Death is not a solution to rape. Death is not a solution to being unloved. Death is not a solution to suffering. Killing a child in the womb because they have the *potential* to suffer is not compassion.

A DEEPER PRO-LIFE PROOF

"Abortion is a Christological heresy too. It would posit that Christ, in the womb, was at some point fully God but not fully human..."

– "G.K. Chesterposting" on Twitter

WHEN THE CHURCH MARRIES THE SCIENCE OF THE DAY

"Moderns have been taught to regard the Galileo battle as a battle between faith and science. And science won out, three cheers, yay! Because the bigoted theologians were sticking to their guns and they wouldn't listen to Galileo who was the purveyor of new knowledge, new wisdom.

"But it was actually a clash between the old science and the new science. So the problem that the Church faced was that the people who were resistant to Galileo were churchmen who mar-

ried their theology to Aristotle. They had married the teaching of the Bible to the best science of the day when they were going through seminary. And then Galileo came along disruptively. The lesson urged upon us is, *always believe science over faith*. But the lesson ought to be actually, *don't let your faith get co-opted by the current science because he who marries the science of the day is going to be a widow tomorrow.*"

– Douglas Wilson, Dec. 1, on The Renaissance of Men podcast

A BUSINESS TIP FOR PARENTS

In his business book *The Advantage*, Patrick Lencioni has some advice that I thought my kids should hear. I read them a bit on what Lencioni called the *fundamental attribution error* (FAE). This is "the tendency of human beings to attribute the negative...behavior of their colleagues to their intentions and personalities while attributing their own negative...behaviors to environmental factors."

The way that translates from the business world to the home front wasn't immediately obvious to my littles, so I explained that if one little bumps another, an FAE might lead the bumped to accuse the bumper of doing that "on purpose!" even as the bumper might point to how narrow the hallway was, or how much mom was asking them to carry, to show how "it totally wasn't my fault." It is the victim accusing the bumper of *malice aforethought*, and the bumper pointing this way and that to everything except their own carelessness. We went on to have a fun little chat about how God wants us to "attribute to others as you would like others to attribute to you" (Matt. 7:12).

HOLLYWOOD WISDOM

"You just have to believe, man! You just have to trust it will all turn out right." That's a common sentiment found in many a movie, and not just the Christian sort, but even the Hollywood variety. In fact, it might be more prevalent there, found in everything from *Polar Express* to the trailer of the newest Indiana Jones film. It's there Indy explains:

"I've come to believe that it's not so much what you believe as how hard you believe it."

But as John Tweedy noted in a Facebook post, "The idea is always presented as wisdom, but it is really very, very stupid." That Indy is expressing this sentiment is particularly ironic, he notes, because Indy

"...has spent a whole franchise shooting, stabbing, crushing, and burning people because those people intensely believed wrong things. I'm pretty sure those Nazis believe in Arian supremacy. I'm pretty sure those cultists believed in Kali Ma. I'm pretty sure those Soviets believed in Communism. And they were all bad guys, not because they didn't believe hard enough, but because they believed wrong.... Intensity does not redeem error. It makes error more damaging."

SOURCE: With a h/t to Cap Stewart



This is an excerpt from Jason Bouwman's unique devotional, *Still Thinking*, which Canadians can buy at StillThinkingBook.com

RED, WHITE, AND BLUE?

Are there greener pastures
south of
the border?

by Marty VanDriel



"Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore."

These words are engraved on the base of the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor, calling out to countless immigrants to America, who were longing for freedom from persecution, from poverty, from overcrowding, from a restricted way of life.

These words, when written in 1883, were mostly aimed at citizens of the "Old World," but lately more Canadians are hearing the call of "Lady Liberty," and wondering if life would be better south of the 49th parallel. Are Americans really freer than Canadians? What would our lives be like if we moved to the USA?

I would like to make clear that I'm not entirely unbiased. I'm proud of my Canadian heritage, and I love Canada, but my wife Faith and I moved from British Columbia to the USA in 1996, first to Blue Bell, Pennsylvania, and later to Lynden, Washington, where we have lived since 2002. We love the US but we also recognize that there are many things about moving that should be considered carefully before making a momentous decision that will have generational consequences. I hope that this article may give good food for thought to *RP* readers who are thinking about pulling up stakes, or who know others who are considering such a move.

FREEDOM

Both countries' national anthems espouse freedom: America is "the land of the free, and the home of the brave," while Canada is "the True North, strong and free." As a test case, the COVID restrictions and lockdowns of 2020-2021 are a fascinating study in how much freedom was or wasn't prized, with all the different policies that were implemented in the hopes of saving lives.

In general, Canadian provinces locked down more tightly and for a longer time than most American states. Bryan Grim and his wife Leanne moved to Sioux Falls, South Dakota this past summer from Surrey, BC with their seven children. Bryan recalled that in BC for long stretches, they were restricted in their movements within the province, forbidden to travel between arbitrarily designated zones.

Travel restrictions were tough, but having "in person" worship services forbidden was another matter entirely. For many months, most Canadian churches did not gather together for wor-

ship in their church buildings, but resorted to live streaming of a pastor preaching to a mostly empty church. As these restrictions stretched on, church members debated and argued over whether or not they should defy the shutdown orders, or reluctantly obey. Church councils across the country had to deal with division among office bearers and among the members, and in some cases these wounds are still healing.

In the US, with fifty different governors, and fifty different legislatures, there were many different responses to COVID. Some more rural and conservative states (including Arkansas, Iowa, Nebraska, the Dakotas, Utah, and Wyoming) had very few state-wide restrictions, and no enforced “stay at home” orders. Other states like Arizona, Florida, Tennessee and Texas opened up to regular commerce, worship services, and in-person education much more quickly than more left-leaning states like California, New York, and Washington. One common pattern in both countries is that most big cities were tougher on lockdowns: whether you lived in Los Angeles or Toronto, at times you would have felt very restricted.

In more rural parts of both countries, there may have been more lenience by police forces and local governments. In my adopted home town of Lynden, the local police and the county sheriff’s department did not enforce any of the state governor’s directives restricting worship services, and local mayors and elected officials encouraged churches to use common sense in deciding whether or not, and how, to hold in-person worship services. Many of the “lesser magistrates” in different parts of the USA recognized the vital (literally, life-giving) importance of worship services to the lives of a free people, upholding the First Amendment of the Constitution that states: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...”

RP readers may be aware of areas in Canada where overly burdensome regulations from provincial or national governments were not enforced by local governments, but it’s safe to say that these cases were few and far between.

Canadians are by and large brought up to respect those in authority over us, and

most Canadian Christians can quote from Romans 13 by heart: “Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God...” Americans of course have the same Bible! But somehow, there is a spirit of independence among citizens of the US that pushes back strongly against any authority that is deemed to have over-reached its powers as granted in national or state constitutions. Americans rebelled against what they judged to be the unlawful and unjust authority of King George III in 1776; many who were loyal to the British crown and did not believe rebellion was the proper path left the country and moved to Canada.

Are Americans more free than Canadians? That likely depends greatly on the state or province in which you hang your hat, and on the size of the city you have made your home. But the spirit of independence of citizens, and their desire to curtail government powers to those specifically granted by constitutions does seem to be more alive in most of the fifty states than in the provinces and territories.

DRIFTING THE SAME DIRECTION?

The Canadian Charter of Rights guarantees fundamental freedoms such as “freedom of religion, freedom of thought, freedom of belief, and freedom of expression.” Yet many Canadians are angry about the government’s power being directed against them when they exercise these freedoms, and call homosexuality a sin against God, or when they speak out against government policies they judge to be unjust. (Some truckers who spoke out against the COVID lockdowns found themselves frozen out of their bank accounts!)

But how different are things in the US?

The recent mid-term elections in the US were disappointing for many American Christians. If the exit polling is accurate, millions of voters were swayed by pro-abortion advocates to keep the Democrat party in control of the Senate. Conservatives had hoped that the leftward drift of the country would be rejected by its citizenry. Instead, the voters appeared to endorse the leadership of President Biden, who despite his Roman Catholic faith, has embraced abortion as a “reproductive



Bryan and Leanne and the rest of the Grim family in South Dakota. Christian schooling options in the US aren't always as friendly towards large families, often times charging per child, rather than per family.



Here the VanAndels – Nate and Victoria and their son Jaxon – show off some of their geographical connections, sitting in front of the US, Canadian, and Australia flags.

right.” Self-identified independents who can sway election results for either side mostly voted for the Democratic candidates: in particular younger, female voters helped push results in favor of the more liberal of the country’s two major political parties. (The Republican party did gain control of the House of Representatives, but with a far slimmer margin than pollsters had predicted.)

One election does not necessarily indicate a permanent shift, but Canadians who wish to escape liberal trends in government might pause to look carefully at directions in the United States.

CHURCH COMMUNITIES

A generation or two ago, many Reformed people would narrow down the locations that they’d be willing to move, to only areas where they could find a church from within their own federation, or one that was already recognized as a “sister church.”

There is definitely some safety and wisdom in this approach: if we move for greater economic opportunities, or political freedom, but compromise in our choice of which church to join, we may live to regret that decision.

Nate and Victoria VanAndel recently moved to Maryville, Tennessee from Brantford, Ontario with their son Jaxon. The VanAndels were grateful for the ability to watch recorded worship services from churches they were considering; it helped them make their decision to join Sandy Springs Orthodox Presbyterian Church

(OPC) near Knoxville after also visiting some local congregations of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). “Sundays include a pre-service Sunday school in the morning, a bi-monthly potluck lunch, and an evening service,” said Victoria. “We have found this church to be very inviting, and we felt at home here very quickly.” (The OPC is in a fraternal relationship with both the URC and CanRC federations; the PCA is recognized within NAPARC as a faithful church body.)

Canadians who have been members of long-established Reformed churches back at home may be surprised by how small many of the conservative Presbyterian or Reformed churches are in the USA, particularly in areas where there has not been a large Dutch immigrant community. For example, the OPC has an average congregational size of 110 members. Smaller churches can have many benefits, with greater opportunity for strong relationships between members, and community involvement, but some of the resources of a larger church community may not be present.

CHRISTIAN SCHOOLING

Bryan Grim found this to be the case in particular with regard to Christian education. Grim grew up in BC’s Fraser Valley, and appreciates the schools founded by Canadian Reformed people in the 1950s, with many United Reformed members also joining these school societies in the last twenty years. Grim stated that the lo-

cal Christian school society in Sioux Falls appears to have drifted from its Reformed roots, and not many members of his new home church, Christ Reformed URC, send their children there (although Bryan and Leanne’s children are attending).

More parents have chosen to home-school their students, rather than worry about what the young people are taught when away from the home. This appears to be a more common trend in long established American Christian school societies in Reformed communities, which after a period of years, drop their requirements that teachers and leaders adhere to the Reformed confessions and maintain membership in a faithful church body. How the parents and educators who worked so hard to establish these schools would lament these developments!

HOW ABOUT OUR GRANDPARENTS?

Those in favor of moving out of Canada might point to their grandparents or great grandparents, many of whom moved away from the Netherlands without having issues of church membership or schooling finally settled. No doubt, many of the Dutch who left Holland had not thought through every detail of family and church life, but judged that greater opportunity in Canada, and further distance from European wars and struggles made the risk a responsible one.

In the rear-view mirror, they may judge that they made the right decision, that they by and large were able to establish strong, faithful churches, schools, and communities, and leave behind a country that had much less opportunity for the average citizen. This did not come easily, however, and these older generations had difficult

years and struggles along the way. The Lord blessed His people as they worked faithfully wherever He placed them.

AFFORDABILITY

In the last thirty years, real estate prices in Canadian cities have increased by leaps and bounds. In southern Ontario, in BC's Fraser Valley, and in the larger prairie cities, young people may have a very hard time buying their own home. Research firm Oxford Economics recently reported that overall Canadian real estate prices rose 331% from 1990 through today. The report sounded an alarm that with rising interest rates, many Canadians would have difficulties making their mortgage payments.

The study also reported that real estate had risen 289% during the same time period in the USA, which sounds like a similar rise in value, but as any realtor will say, all real estate is local, and the top three factors in a home's value are "location, location, location!" Home prices in rural American states remain much more affordable for the average wage-earner.

Bryan and Leanne Grim were able to buy a home on a four-acre property that would be far out of reach for the average buyer if that home were located in Surrey or Mississauga or Los Angeles. In addition, mortgage rates in the US can be locked in for up to thirty years, giving cost certainty for buyers who can be confident that their payments will remain constant as long as they stay in the same home.

With housing prices so high in the lower BC mainland, Bryan believed his children would likely have had to move away to become homeowners. By moving to Sioux Falls, he and Leanne have a greater chance that as their children grow up and form their own households, these might be near Dad and Mom.

So far, the Grims have found the cost of living in Sioux Falls to be significantly less than in BC with the exception of Christian schooling. Many Christian school societies in Canada charge at a discounted rate for large families, while these discounts might be smaller or non-existent in the more typical American Christian school system.

Federal tax rates are substantially lower in the US than in Canada, and there are nine states (Alaska, Florida, Nevada,

New Hampshire, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas and Washington) that have no state-level income tax at all. Michigan, with an abundance of Reformed churches, has the fourth lowest cost of living of the fifty states, and is among the most affordable for housing costs.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Emigrants inevitably leave behind precious loved ones in their family circle – parents, siblings, cousins, extended church family, and friends.

When four of Gary and Cindy Wieske's six grown children began to move south, one by one, it made the decision to pursue a move themselves easier. Daughter Jodi was already settled in suburban Chicago with her husband. Son Caleb, an entrepreneur like his dad, had always wanted to move to the States, and eventually chose Tennessee as his destination, where he and his brother Dustin have started an outdoor living company, supplying patio furniture, barbecues, smokers, and similar products.

As owners of Ontario Stone Supply in Dundas, Gary and Cindy Wieske were able to buy a similar company in Fort Myers, Florida, where they moved along with son Rodney and his family: Rodney

is manager of the new location in Fort Myers, while son Luke and daughter Nadia are running the company back home in Ontario. Gary Wieske is thankful to be able to travel to see his kids and grandkids in Florida, Tennessee, Illinois and southern Ontario.

In South Dakota, Bryan and Leanne Grim are also glad that Bryan's sister and her family moved to the same neighborhood, giving all the children the benefit of having cousins and friends nearby.

Most of those who move, however, will not have the benefit of frequent in-person contact with extended family and long-time friends. While staying connected through phone and internet is easier and more affordable now than it's ever been, it isn't the same as in-person visits or catching up over a cup of coffee. In particular, parents with young families may find it hard to be away from the network of babysitting grandparents, and friends ready to pitch in at a moment's notice.

CAN YOU DO IT?

There are a number of possible legal paths that Canadians can consider for a move to the US. Many American companies are looking for professionally



The VanAndels's son Jaxon exploring Tennessee .

qualified employees in diverse fields, and may be able to help with the immigration procedure. Investors' visas are another common route: they do require a good amount of capital, a good business plan, and a lot of paperwork to qualify, but the route is a well-trodden one.

It is possible to take care of the paperwork and filing to immigrate without a lawyer but it may be a much more frustrating and time-consuming endeavor. Everyone I spoke to for this article mentioned the value of a good immigration attorney. "They give you the confidence that you can do it," said Gary Wieske.

"Although there is still a lot of planning, and a lot of paperwork and charts."

In general, immigration attorneys know their business and are able to find the most expeditious path to a visa, including advice on which visas can lead to eventual permanent residence status (also known as a "green card"). It may be wise to find a lawyer who you know has been able to help other Canadians make the move legally: in our Lynden community, we could readily recommend which lawyers have been excellent, and which may not have quite as sterling a reputation.

SHOULD YOU DO IT?

When asked "Why make the move?" Gary Wieske quoted his son Dustin: "For faith, for family, and for freedom: if that's what we're doing it for, then we'll be blessed." So far, Wieske has no regrets: his family appreciates living among so many more outspoken Christians than back home. He recalls the simple gesture of a waitress in a Tennessee restaurant who reminded Wieske's grandkids to pray for their meal: "That's something I've never seen in all my years in Ontario!"

For Bryan Grim and his family, the move has so far been all very positive: he appreciates that South Dakotans value their freedom, and in particular their freedom of expression. Grim finds that folks in his relatively small town are tolerant of other viewpoints: "In South Dakota, you're still allowed to have your own opinion."

While Victoria VanAndel misses family back in Ontario, she instantly felt at home in the south: "The first week here in Tennessee I remember saying to Nate that I had such nice people serve me at the grocery store, and wherever I had to run errands that day. After a week of this though it became clear that the people are just friendlier and happier here! We had neighbors welcome us with baskets of veggies, porch flowers and a kind word of 'welcome to Tennessee, this here is God's country!'"

Whether or not a move out of your community is right for you and your family is really a question that you can only answer yourself. As has been discussed, there are many factors to consider. God has called us to live faithfully before Him as prophets confessing His name, as priests presenting ourselves as living sacrifices to Him, and as kings fighting against sin and the devil, and we may and must do all these things wherever we find ourselves living on this earth.

As we consider our roles as members of God's Church, as parents, as children, as employees and as citizens, let us use wisdom from God's word, listen to good council from those we respect, and pray to the Lord for guidance in these decisions. RP



Adam, the oldest son of Bryan and Leanne Grim's children, shown exercising his American "right to bear arms."



A DAILY DEVOTIONAL PODCAST WITH SINCLAIR B. FERGUSON

Many people today think that seeing is believing, but Christians know there is more to life than meets the eye. We must look beyond this momentary life to understand its eternal significance, walking by faith rather than by sight.

Things Unseen with Sinclair B. Ferguson is a new weekday devotional podcast featuring thoughtful reflections on the Christian life and our relationship with God. Each week follows a theme to guide you day by day in the pursuit of spiritual renewal. **Listen Monday through Friday.**



Ligonier.org/ThingsUnseen



WHEN YOUR FINANCES HAVE YOU SCARED

by Hank Van der Woerd and Maria Dawes

Inflation, rising interest rates, business failure, job losses – there’s no shortage of financial trouble these days. And these all contribute to anxiety and depression and even physical illness.

This financial uncertainty has us looking for solutions to our many questions, questions like:

- Am I being responsible with what God has given me?
- What will the future bring?
- Where can I turn for help and advice?
- What should I do?

Others aren’t looking for solutions – some will simply shut down in hopelessness and fear, as a kind of paralysis takes hold, procrastination sets in, and the feeling of financial doom settles over them.

TRUST THAT GOD DOES REIGN

How, then, do we move from fear to faith?

The Bible contains many commands to God’s people not to be afraid. There are



...some will simply shut down in hopelessness and fear, as a kind of paralysis takes hold

more than one hundred imperatives to “Fear not; be strong; be courageous,” and

the like. Some commentators suggest that these commands rank second in number only to the commands to love.

Why such repetition? The Lord knows we are weak, so He requires that we take hold of Him in faith. Our finances can be a major stumbling block in doing so. We confess that He is our provident God, and that all things come from His Fatherly hand, including prosperity and poverty. But when the prospect of poverty or financial difficulty looms over us, we panic and become fearful, and so we fail the test to trust Him.

Likewise in prosperity, one can easily forget that the Lord is the provider of it all.

USE WHAT GOD HAS GIVEN YOU

Trust does not mean sitting back and doing nothing. The Lord gives us knowledge, wisdom, and the ability

to plan. We must do so under His guidance and with much prayer. Proverbs 16:3 tells us to “Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established.”

We have been given the tools for the job. First of all, we have God’s Word which has over 2,000 verses that speak to possessions and finances. The Bible provides us with the principles by which we can think and act in a godly and faithful way, and it gives us direction and solutions.

Another tool we have is our basic elementary school education which taught us the essentials of addition, subtraction, division, and multiplication. Basic math can give us many answers. Armed with these tools, we can walk the path the Lord is leading us on.

The Lord has also given us many advisors and He tells us to use them

DON'T GO IT ALONE

We should not try to do this alone. It should go without saying that we must seek the Lord’s guidance and direction in our finances, except this may not always be the case. Prayerful contemplation needs to be part of our financial exercise. We must commit all our finances to the Lord, rather than trying to sort things out for ourselves, and we do well when we consult His Word in all situations. We are told in Proverbs 3:5 to: “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.”


The Lord has also given us many advisors and He tells us to use them. Proverbs 15:22 says: “Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisors they succeed.” There are many qualified and experienced brothers and sisters in the extended church who are able and willing to help. This may include the deacons whom God has appointed for circumstances of need, and the

ministry of mercy.

For many other financial issues there are accountants, lawyers, and experts in investments, insurance, banking, mortgages, etc., and these people are all not much more than a phone call away.

Qualified advisors can help us stand back from ourselves and our situation. This is a very important step in the quest for answers and solutions. Many who experience financial difficulty are too absorbed in their own problem to see a clear way out. Objective assessment is an important aspect of decision making. Standing back from your circumstances and understanding the problem in a detailed way, while looking at all the options, and asking lots of questions, will help to settle anxiety and to give comfort in decision making.

CONCLUSION

In all circumstances, including those relating to our finances, God tells us to turn from fear and anxiety and to look to Him for our comfort and help. He provides tools and support in both His Word and His people. Finding solutions in the midst of difficult circumstances may require us to expend a lot of effort as well. Knowing the character of our God, it should provide great comfort when we read in Proverbs 19:21: “Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the LORD that will stand.” 

This has been a father-daughter collaboration: Rev. Hank Van der Woerd (MDiv) is emeritus minister (URCNA) and past president of the Mortgage Brokers Association of BC; Maria Dawes CIM CFP is a Portfolio Manager for Capstone Asset Management (www.capstoneassets.ca).

COVENANT IS SEEKING

A Principal, High School, & Elementary Teachers

Neerlandia

Covenant Canadian Reformed School is looking to hire staff for the 2023/2024 school year. We

encourage energetic, qualified (or soon-to-be qualified) educators, committed to Reformed Christian education, to apply. Individuals can apply by submitting a resume, statement of faith, philosophy of education, and references. We would love to arrange for you to visit and would be more than happy to provide flights and accommodations to make this possible!

If you would like further information contact Mrs. Jenn VanLeeuwen at 780-674-4774 (school) or principal@covenantschool.ca



Learning to Walk Together
in the Light of God's Word

WANT TO SEE MORE?

View our promo video at:
COVENANTSCHOOL.CA



COME, SWEET DEATH, COME BLESSED REST!

by Christine Farenhorst

Last week, while working in the backyard, I chanced to speak with one of our neighbors. There is only a wire fence separating our properties and talking across it makes for good contact. "Bob," our neighbor, was weeding his garden on his hands and knees. Quite a feat actually because he is in his middle eighties. When I strolled over, he hoisted himself upright and we chatted about the weather, about the weeds and about our children.

"I've got to do something today," he inserted into the conversation, "that I've been putting off for a long time."

"What's that, Bob?" I asked.

"I've got to bury my wife," he answered.

I was floored for a moment. My husband and I knew that his wife had died some years ago before we had moved into the neighborhood.

"Bury your wife?" I repeated.

"Yes, and last week I dreamed that she told me: 'Bob, it's about time.'"

I really had no words and stared at him.

"We're going to the cemetery this afternoon to bury her ashes," he clarified.

"Oh." It was all I could come up with.

"My daughter's coming along. My wife's always wanted to be buried in the local cemetery here, the one by the Mennonite church."

We stood in silence for a moment before he continued.

"I contacted the gal over at the church who's in charge of the cemetery and she said it was fine."

"That's good." It was a neutral comment.

"Yes, but there was one problem. My wife, you see, was born Catholic and the priest said that the burial ground had to be consecrated. But when I mentioned that to the gal over at the Mennonite church, she said: 'Bob, ground's ground,' and that's all there is to it."

"She was right," I agreed.

"Yes, I thought so too. So this afternoon's the time."

"You must miss your wife a lot."

"Every day," Bob responded.

"You know," I said, and at this point my husband had also walked up to the fence, "if your wife believed in the Lord Jesus and that He forgave all her sins, then the moment she died she was with Him."

"She did," he said.

"And if you believe that too, Bob," I tacked on, "then you will someday see the Lord Jesus and your wife as well."

"I know," he said.

My husband then asked Bob if he ever read the Bible.

"It's a difficult book to read," he responded, "and so many people interpret different parts of it in different ways. How are you to know what's right and what is meant?"

"It's true," my husband allowed, "and some interpretations are wrong. But basically if you read the Bible, Bob, you will understand most of what you read and it will help you in living."

"There are so many things," Bob came back, "and where do you start?"

"By talking to your neighbors," I said.
And we left it at that, until next time. And Bob went to bury the ashes of his wife.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) used the lyrics of an unknown poet to compose the music to one of his wonderful, melodious works. The words ask death to come quickly and to bear the singer to heaven to see the face of his Savior. It is a moving song with an emotional text. If you can sing it, how blessed indeed you are!

*Come, sweet death, come, blessed rest!
Come lead me to peace
because I am weary of the world.
O come! I wait for you,
come soon and lead me,
close my eyes.
Come, blessed rest!*

As Paul said in Philippians 1:21: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Just last week we received notice that a dear friend had died. Betty was in her eighties and I was asked to write a remembrance. Betty was a friend I loved dearly. Her middle name could have been "helpful" and she was full of faith. There would only be a small service at the funeral home and perhaps people would be there who had no knowledge of Jesus. This is what I wrote.

Betty - a remembering and a looking forward to

"Faith," Hebrews 11 tells us, "is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."

It is a faithful friend who always points you towards things hoped for, and who tells you of her conviction of things not seen. Such a friend was Betty. She constantly pointed me to the protection of our heavenly Father.

Betty and I shared thoughts and ideas for the last twenty years or so. Letters were often sent to her address and, much to my regret, I can't do that any longer. Not much of a letter writer herself, she would phone me and we would chat. It was great! She can't phone me any longer. And yet it is at this point that I recall Hebrews 11 and 12.

Hebrews 11 is one of the most beautiful chapters of the Bible and one of the most encouraging. But Hebrews 12 follows hard on its heels and shines just as brightly if not more so. It begins with, "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses... let us look to Jesus...." That is to say, since we have access to so many ordinary people who lived faithful lives before we did, we can never use the excuse that we were not told about Jesus.

Betty lived before us; Betty was an ordinary housewife; Betty was gifted with remarkable and sturdy faith; and Betty is now part of the Hebrews 12 cloud of witnesses. She is now one of those who surrounds us and points us to look to Jesus.

Betty ran her earthly race, a race that was often marked with difficulties and loneliness, with endurance. She unfailingly looked for and spoke of Jesus, the Founder and Perfecter of her faith. She did so for the joy that was before her, the joy of going to heaven to see, not just her family, but her Savior, Jesus Christ.

When we miss Betty, let us remember her Creator and Savior. For she was with Him in Paradise at the exact moment she drew her last breath. I'm thankful to God that I knew her and that I will see her again.

Christine Farenhorst has a new novel "The New Has Come" which can be found at most any online retailer.

It's Time!

Time is running out! Canada is being changed—*without your consent!* Historic rights and freedoms are being stripped away, the economy is being badly mismanaged, and new carbon taxes will cripple your family finances.

**Health care?
Environment?
Taxation?
Abortion?
Censorship?**

You get the idea.

It's Time! ...
for **CHP** Canada.
It's Time!...
for better government

CHP
CHRISTIAN HERITAGE PARTY
PARTI DE L'HÉRITAGE CHRÉTIEN

For Better Solutions for Canada visit
www.chp.ca...while there's still time!
Or phone toll-free **1-888 VOTE CHP** for more information.

Wish to make a donation? Please send a personal cheque payable to Christian Heritage Party, Box 30009, 150 Main St. East, Grimsby, ON. L3M1P0

KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH THE GRANDS

"Grandchildren are the crown of the aged..." Prov. 17:6a

"A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children" Prov. 13:22a

by Sharon L. Bratcher

It used to be that if someone mentioned a woman's grandchildren, she would dig in her oversized purse for a small album and show off the pictures of her precious little people. Grandfathers, too, would pull out a wallet that trailed plastic sleeves filled with photos. Nowadays we might have to wait while he or she scrolls through their phone, but grandchildren remain every bit as loved! They are wonderful! They amuse, hug, and love us and remind us of when our own kids did this or that. They are usually not ours to raise and discipline, but they are ours to love and assist.

IF THEY DON'T LIVE NEARBY...

It is often the case that grandparents won't have the joy of living in the same general area as our grandchildren. Universities, jobs, missions, and marriages may take them to another province or state or even to a faraway country, and as we saw these past few years, governmental decisions may make visits even more difficult. We can praise God that it no longer takes a month or more to contact anyone, even if they are on the other side of the world! Most of the time there can be instant communication.

We can all agree that long distance communication pales in comparison to actually being together. Holding a child in your lap to read a story, swimming together in a pool, and hugging are all activities that require one's presence. But when the circumstances of life insist that grandchildren are physically out of reach, there are ways to let them know that they are loved and to be a regular part of their lives. If the grandparents get it started, hopefully the grandkids will respond in kind. Here are some great ideas I've collected from friends and acquaintances. Some of these may suit your situation and help you nurture those long distance relationships.

So what can grandparents and grandchildren do to be a regular part of each other's lives?

1. **Visit as often as possible.** Even a visit for a couple of days helps to build the relationship and remind them of your love. Perhaps you can transport them to visit you one or two at a time.
2. **Learn about their lives.** One daughter told about how her mother-in-law talked to the kids once a week on the phone, and had a knack of asking leading questions. She knew the names of their teachers and friends, what books and games they enjoyed, and what their interests were, so she talked knowingly about those things. When she sent them cards or small gifts, they would talk about those.
3. **Write letters.** Everyone loves "snail mail" that is personal. Stock up on some stickers and coloring books. With one stamp you can send a letter (remember to print if they are younger than 9 years old!) with a page of stickers and a page taken out of a coloring book. Perhaps you can write them a silly poem, or tell them an anecdote from your week, or a story about their dad or mom when they were young.
4. **Send cash or gift cards.** Many gift cards (such as Walmart!) do not work across the border, and banks in the US and Canada charge fees to process a foreign check. Postage for packages anywhere can end up costing twice as much as the gift! I have had success with including a small amount of cash in a birthday card. For larger amounts, PayPal has been our best option. If they have a Wendy's nearby, you might send them a 5-Frosties-for-\$1 coupon book around Halloween. Just be sure that they can easily cash in whichever gift card you send to them.
5. **Ask grandkids to write back.** Ask the kids to write back to the grandparents, even if it means having little ones dictate their words to a parent or older sibling. Writing a thank you for a gift or remembering the grandparents' birthday is also a loving way to respond.
6. **Schedule a regular online video call.** Zoom/Facetime/Facebook Messenger, etc. make it possible. Ask to speak to one child at a time. This may lessen silliness or arguments about whose turn it is. If the time zones make it difficult, try making short calls here and there rather than setting up a full appointment. Even a 5-minute call just to tell them about something that happened and ask about their day shows that you are a part of their life.
7. **Let grandkids call.** Allow the kids to call the grandparents when they want to, within reason. If there's a 3-hour time difference, Grandpa might not respond at 6 a.m. Pacific time.
8. **Read a weekly story book together.** You can read them part of a chapter book each week. They will look forward to

Even though they only saw her once a year, the kids felt like they knew her and they knew that she loved them.



...when the circumstances of life insist that grandchildren are physically out of reach, there are ways to let them know that they are loved.

your next call! Go to the library to improve your collection. Record your reading of the book and send it so that their busy family can listen to it at their convenience.

9. **Do an art project together.** You can do this while chatting via Facetime, Zoom, or the like, after making suitable arrangements with their parents.
10. **Play games together.** Kids love to play Battleship over Zoom/Facetime/Facebook Messenger. Another option is Drawful, which is part of a group of online games at Jackbox.tv. We had family members from 5 or 6 locations play this Pictionary-type game together.
11. **Sing or play a short song.** Do it regularly to help the little ones recognize you.
12. **Play Marco Polo together.** There's a phone app called Marco Polo (easy instructions can be found when you Google it) where you can send a video message to them to listen to later. This could include reading a story, sharing a Bible verse or song, or even showing them how to draw or create something. They can watch it repeatedly! They can send you videos as well, sharing the songs that they learned, introducing their friends, showing off their pets

or their dance steps, or having them tell about a funny movie that they watched.

13. **Try "Friendship Lamps."** One grandmother bought Friendship Lamps for herself and all of her grandkids. You simply plug them in and connect them to your wi-fi. Then, through the power of the internet, when one person touches their lamp, everyone else's lamps light up with a special color that is unique to that person. So, if Grandma touches her lamp, all the grandkids' lamps will turn orange, and they know that she is thinking of them. One grandparent declared that her grandkids love it. Ads on the internet list a "set of two" for about \$150 US.

CONCLUSION

Long distance between loved ones doesn't have to bring an end to regular communication. You can show your love, give a listening ear, make them laugh, teach them a skill, and most importantly, share the steadfast love of the LORD and ideas for employing the fruit of the Spirit in everyday life. It just takes a bit of planning and effort on the grandparent's part to get it started. ^{RP}

"But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children." – Ps 103:17



THERE IS NO FREE LUNCH

AN ECONOMIC PRINCIPLE CHRISTIAN TEENS (& ADULTS) NEED TO KNOW

by Peter Jacobsen

Small revolutions in schooling are occurring across the world. From homeschooling to microschools, many parents find themselves wanting more for their children in terms of education.

Resources are available for independent schooling now more than ever, but some subjects remain difficult to tackle. My own field of economics remains elusive for many educators. Part of the difficulty is that many people don't know what economics *actually is*. Many think economics is just composed of principles of budgeting and investment. This view of economics and finance being the same is common, but it's wrong.

Instead, economics considers how people interact in a world where there are limited means but unlimited desires. The study of this interaction and the rules that govern it is of fundamental importance for anyone who wants to understand human flourishing, politics, or any topic of

social importance.

My high school economics teacher used to say, "Everything goes back to economics." Math and science, for example, are the tools people use to accomplish their goals. But the *reasons* they use these tools are economic.

And I can't think of a better starting point for understanding economics than the concept of opportunity cost.

WHAT IS AN "OPPORTUNITY COST"?

One of the most famous phrases in economics is, "There ain't no such thing as a free lunch." This phrase is meant to illustrate the always present role of opportunity costs.

Whenever you make any decision to do anything at all, you're essentially choosing between two possibilities – your best option and your second-best option.

Consider an example. Molly has three offers of how to spend her Saturday evening. She can study for her college

algebra final exam, she can babysit for 3 hours at a rate of \$15 per hour, or she can hang out with her friends.

Let's say her favorite option is to study, her second favorite is babysitting, and her third pick would be having a night out with friends. Since studying is Molly's most urgent desire, she decides to allocate her time that way.

But what did she give up? You might be tempted to say she sacrificed \$45 *and* time with friends, but that isn't really the case. After all, Molly couldn't have babysat *and* spent time with friends. So even if she hadn't studied, she would still have only been able to do one of these other options, so in a very real sense that's the only option she was sacrificing.

In this case, her second favorite option would have been to earn \$45 babysitting. So, the "opportunity cost" of Molly's studying is \$45. To say it again, the opportunity cost is the option you value second highest and sacrifice when you

decide to pursue your first choice.

In this light, we can see every action has a cost. Time spent resting could be time learning or fixing up the house. Another hour of overtime at work is one less hour at home with family. Every time you say yes to one opportunity, that prevents you from accepting another. There is no free lunch.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

The concept of opportunity cost is important for people to understand for several reasons. First, opportunity cost helps us understand some of the hard-to-see downsides of certain policies.

Consider the income tax. If a government increases the income tax from 25% to 40% this has major ramifications for someone deciding whether they want to work an extra week during the summer for \$1,500. With a 25% tax rate, the per-

“Something having a price of zero dollars is not the same as something being free.”

son takes home \$1,125, while at 40%, the person takes home only \$900.

Now let's say this person values their relaxation time as being worth about \$1,000 a week to them. Then this tax policy will make a big difference. The opportunity cost of working this week will be the equivalent of what this fellow valued for his time off: the opportunity cost for working would be \$1,000.

Now with a 30% tax rate, that extra paycheck is worth more to the person than the extra week off (\$1,125 is greater than \$1,000). But with a 40% tax rate, suddenly the relaxation is worth more (\$1,000 is greater than \$900)!


So, by understanding the concept of opportunity cost, we can also understand that higher income taxes will mean people will work less.

EVEN FREE COMES WITH A COST

Opportunity cost has practical usefulness too. Why is it that sometimes deals sound too good to be true? It's because implicitly, we all have some understanding of opportunity cost. If a person offers to give you a free car, his opportunity cost is, at minimum, keeping the car for himself. Why would he give it away rather than keep it? Is it possible he is getting something from you?

Something having a price of zero dollars is not the same as something being free. When my local ice cream shop offers “free” ice cream, I know there's going to be a line going out the door. When I take into account the fact that my time is valuable, I realize waiting half an hour in line for free ice cream could have a higher cost than paying the regular \$3 but without waiting.

TO LEARN MORE...

If you're interested in learning more about opportunity cost and how it applies in the world, I highly recommend reading *Economics in One Lesson*. Author Henry Hazlitt does an excellent job of applying the logic of opportunity cost, and the book will only cost you your time (as it is a free download at fee.org/resources/economics-in-one-lesson). And trust me when I say, it's worth the opportunity cost. 

Peter Jacobsen is an Assistant Professor of Economics at Ottawa University and the Gwartney Professor of Economic Education and Research at the Gwartney Institute. He has previously written for both the Foundation for Economic Education (FEE.org) and the Institute for Faith, Work and Economics (tifwe.org).

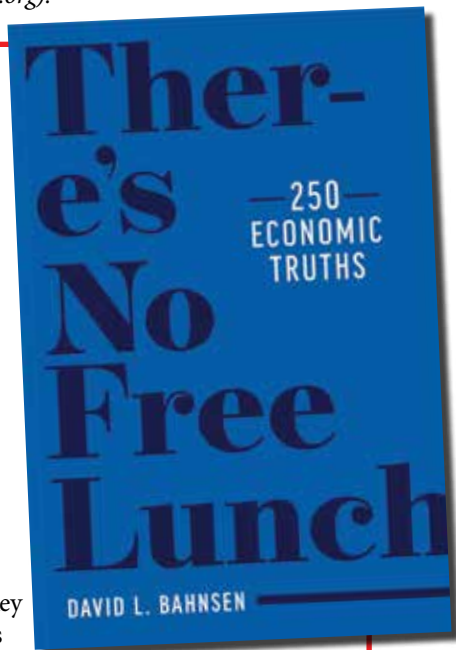
ECONOMIC TRUTHS + LIES

by Jon Dykstra

5 TRUTHS FROM DAVID BAHNSEN

In his economic primer, *There's No Free Lunch: 250 Economic Truths*, David Bahnsen shares 250 key quotes from some of the most brilliant economists on the planet, past and present, and follows each with his own expansion of that point. Here are 5 related to opportunity costs.

- “Economics teaches you that making a choice means giving up something.” – Russ Roberts
- “Trade-offs are not bad things – they are a fact of life. The only time trade-offs become unbearable is when we deny their basic inevitability to begin with.” – David Bahnsen
- “What I'm not saying is that all government spending is bad...but there is no free lunch.... You can never bail someone out of trouble without putting someone else into trouble.” – Art Laffer
- “Everyone wants to live at the expense of the State. They forget that the State lives at the expense of everyone.” – Frédéric Bastiat
- “The first lesson of economics is scarcity. There is never enough of



anything to satisfy all those who want it. The first lesson of politics is to disregard the first lesson of economics.” – Thomas Sowell

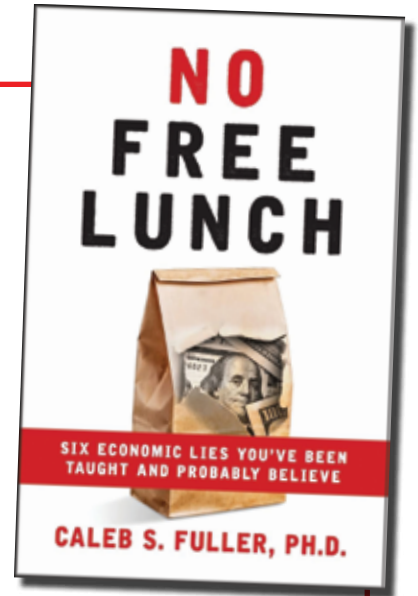
1 BIG LIE CONFRONTED BY CALEB FULLER

In *No Free Lunch: Six Economic Lies You've Been Taught and Probably Believe*, Caleb Fuller tackles a half dozen big lies, but the most important might be the most basic. Fuller begins his second chapter with a story about two 19th-century thinkers who were arguing.

“While Italian Vilfredo Pareto was presenting his work at an academic conference, German Gustav Schmoller repeatedly interrupted him to claim that there were no such things as universal economic laws.... Annoyed by Schmoller’s antics, Pareto was determined to prove him wrong. Later in the day, Pareto disguised himself as a beggar and waited for Schmoller to pass him on the street. Once Schmoller was in earshot, Pareto accosted him: ‘Sir, I’m a poor beggar. Do you know anywhere in this city where I could get a free lunch?’ Schmoller replied, ‘Dear sir, I know of many places you may have a lunch for very cheap – but there is no place where a lunch can be had for free.’ It was at this moment that Pareto is said to have leapt up and

shouted, ‘Aha! So you do believe in economic laws!’”

We can imagine how harmful it would be if someone were to simply deny that the law of gravity existed. If he denied that law, and proceeded to walk off a cliff, his denial would kill him. Well, there are economic laws too, and those that deny them (and there are many) do similarly deadly harm, though usually to others, rather than themselves. One such law is the simple fact of scarcity: what we invest in one effort (whether money, or even time) is a resource we can’t then invest in some other effort. How can denying this law hurt anyone? Well, when it comes to politics, we can say that when the government policies make energy more expensive, and talk of it as an investment in the future, that “investment” comes at the cost of the poor who are trying to find housing, and food, that higher energy prices will now make more expensive. ^{RP}



Expanding on our firm foundation

Six Classroom Expansion



Fergus Maranatha Christian School has been blessed with continual growth over the past years.

With this growth expected to continue in the years to come, we are in need of additional classroom space!

Together we can build towards our goal!

We are asking for your support.

The budget for the project is approximately \$3.5M. We are in our fundraising stage, and our goal is to raise \$2M, in order to keep our mortgage around \$1.5M.



Visit www.buildingonmcs.com for details, pledge forms and contact information.



USS MEREDITH VICTORY: THE "GALLANT SHIP"

SOME OF THE DESPERATE 14,000 REFUGEES STANDING SHOULDER TO SHOULDER ON THE DECK OF THE US MEREDITH VICTORY.

(Picture credit: US Army)

by James Dykstra

There was nothing about *USS Meredith Victory* that would make it stand out from the crowd. The ship was a cargo vessel, built as part of the merchant marine during the Second World War. It was 455 feet long from bow to stern. The width at the widest point was a mere 62 feet. To give that context, a Canadian football field is 450 feet long from the farthest part of the endzone to the tip of the other end zone, and 195 feet wide. The *Meredith Victory* was not an especially big ship.

The ship, however, was destined for a brief moment of fame. During the Korean War, the vessel was sent to bring supplies for the troops of the United Nations forces. With the Chinese invasion in December 1950, United Nations and South Korean forces were pushed to the brink. Close to 100 ships, including *Meredith Victory*, were sent to the port of Hungnam to evacuate 100,000 troops and as many of the 100,000 civilians as possible. Leonard LaRue, captain of *Meredith Victory*, offloaded any cargo or weapons that had been on board and set off for the port in order to accommodate as many refugees as he could.

ROOM FOR TWO DOZEN

On December 22, his vessel was guided through the minefield in the harbor by a minesweeper, and was then left to load passengers. *Meredith Victory* normally had a crew of 35, with 12 officers, and bunks for up to 12 additional passengers. There was food, water, and sanitation supplies for only that small complement of 59. By the time the ship had been fully loaded, around 11 the next morning, *Meredith Victory* had brought on approximately 14,000 Korean civilian refugees.

No one would have blamed the captain if he had left the port hours earlier, leaving many of the refugees behind. The ships that had escorted *Meredith Victory* safely in had left during the night, making the vessel's trip out through the minefield extremely perilous. All around, United Nations ships were shelling the port

in order to deny it to the enemy forces. Yet Captain LaRue stayed until his ship was, literally, standing room only.

Left vulnerable without a military escort, the ship arrived in the port of Pusan on Christmas Eve. First Mate D.S. Savastio, with only basic first aid training, had delivered five babies en route. Despite the bitter December cold, the lack of light or heat in the holds, and the fact that many were forced to stand on the ship's deck shoulder to shoulder due to overcrowding, there were no injuries. However, Pusan already had its own problems with refugees, and was only able to accept those injured before boarding the ship. *Meredith Victory* sailed another 50 miles to Geoje Island where it was able to unload the refugees on Boxing Day, December 26.

SEEING RIGHTLY BEGETS BRAVERY

After the war, the South Korean government awarded the ship the Presidential Unit Citation. An act of the US Congress gave the vessel the title "Gallant Ship." And the Guinness World Records group has called the event the largest evacuation from land by a single ship. Considering when it happened, it's tempting to look at this story as a Christmas miracle, the kind you might find on a *Hallmark* movie. The description certainly fits.

However, it's worth noting that Leonard LaRue, the captain of *Meredith Victory*, said that he believed "God's own hand was at the helm of my ship." His words are backed up by his later decision to give up the sea in favor of a life in a monastery. While that was a wrong turn, it's clear that LaRue saw his life, and the lives of these thousands of others, as gifts from God. So he cherished them. And took enormous risks to try to protect these fellow Image-bearers.

Faith isn't a guarantee of success, but trusting God fully can be the catalyst for us to show love to others – *even at great risk to ourselves* – because we know that come what may, God's got us. RP



THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION: A GLARING GAP IN OUR KIDS' EDUCATION?

by Jonathon Van Maren

There is no series of historical events that has impacted every human being living in the West – and beyond – more than the Sexual Revolution. And yet, while many of us may be familiar with the term, few can explain what the Sexual Revolution really is and was.

Legal abortion; digital pornography everywhere; the LGBT movement; hookup culture; gender ideology; threats to religious freedom – all are either an aspect or a direct result of the Sexual Revolution. It has also shaped virtually everything that emanates from our screens, from popular TV sitcoms (which had a hand in mainstreaming revolutionary ideas) to mainstream Hollywood films, produced and directed by the revolution's most powerful storytellers.

A SEXUALIZED WEST

We live, in short, in a culture that has been effectively conquered by a revolution we know very little about – because unlike the American or French Revolutions, our society was overthrown from within. As the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard noted:

“A passionate tumultuous age will overthrow everything, pull everything down; but a revolutionary age which is, at the same time, reflective and passionless leaves everything standing but cunningly empties it of significance.”

Those who brought about the Sexual Revolution did not attack government buildings – they initiated the “long march through the institutions,” eventually occupying powerful places of influence

virtually everywhere.

When I arrived at university and lived on campus, I left a church community for what was, at first, a fundamentally foreign culture. For the most part, my peers had *not consciously rejected* the tenets of Christianity. Aside from traditional mentions of God at certain solemn occasions like Remembrance Day ceremonies, they had grown up in a world that was shaped, *not by Christianity*, but by the Sexual Revolution. So hookup culture was not simply uncontroversial, but standard. The idea that someone could actually oppose extramarital sex, or homosexuality, or pornography was for most of them simply weird. I had grown up shaped by the Christian community I was a part of; most of them had grown up in communities in which Christianity was a part of family history, a generation or two in the past.

NOT TREATED LIKE THE PIVOTAL EVENT IT WAS

At the Christian school I attended, I learned the history of the Bible; church history and the great stories of the Reformation; the bloody history of the twentieth century, and of Canada's great

The ideologies of the Sexual Revolution now form the basis of nearly every field of study in academia...

explorers and leaders of the past. Despite much insistence from some quarters that students do not learn about the injustice of the residential schools, I learned about those, too, as well as the history of a local Indigenous group (the Sto:lo).

But while we learned a little about the consequences of the Sexual Revolution – evils like abortion were covered in Bible class – we learned nothing about the Sexual Revolution as a historical event that had transformed and shaped the society we lived in, and that would impact nearly every aspect of our lives not only on campus, but beyond.

For many people, the study of history can seem tedious or useless. But if we wish to understand the cultural movement we find pressing in all around us, an understanding of the history of the Sexual Revolution is absolutely essential. The ideologies of the Sexual Revolution now form the basis of nearly every field of study in academia, and Christian university students often have no idea that what they are learning in education, law, psychology, or anthropology is actually based on the work of ideologues such as Margaret Mead or Dr. Alfred Kinsey. They will almost certainly hear arguments made against Christianity based on revolutionary research and junk science. To know the history of the Sexual Revolution is to have an invaluable context for what is taught in secular universities, and to possess a greater confidence in the Christian worldview.

THEN THE LIGHTBULBS GO OFF

Each summer at the Canadian Centre for Bio-Ethical Reform, I teach a course on the culture wars to dozens of university students and high schoolers. Every time, as I'm speaking, I see shock and realization spread across their faces as many of the things they have been taught click into place. "That makes so much sense!" they tell me. And when the summer ends and they head back to their places of learning, I get messages throughout the year:

"One of my fellow students is citing the Kinsey Reports to attack the Christian view of sexuality. Can you email me the titles of some of your sources?"

"Thank you so much for your course this summer. It helped me understand everything my prof was saying in my mandatory sexuality course!"

These students, armed with the historical and cultural context necessary to understand what they were being taught, were thus prepared to defend their own worldview. In academic institutions often openly hostile to Christian belief, this context provides an invaluable confidence.


3 RESOURCES TO HELP US UNDERSTAND

As revolutionary ideas spread even into many religious institutions, this history becomes even more essential to understand. As George Orwell once noted: "The most effective way to destroy people is to deny and obliterate their own understanding of their history." Unfortunately, the Sexual Revolution is as much a part of American or Canadian history as World War II or the Cold War –

...considering the state of our culture, I do not think age 16 is too young to begin preparing

and its daily, real-world impact is more keenly seen and felt.

I believe that for students to be forewarned and forearmed, they should be taught this history before they enter university. There are an increasing number of valuable resources available. For higher grades, Carl Trueman's *Strange New World: How Thinkers and Activists Redefined Identity and Sparked the Sexual Revolution* is a valuable analysis of the intellectual forces that brought this revolution about; Gabriele Kuby's *The Global Sexual Revolution* is an important worldwide view; I attempt to explain how our current society came about in my own 2016 book, *The Culture War*.

The material is, of course, difficult – but considering the state of our culture, I do not think age 16 is too young to begin preparing. Increasingly, people are not rejecting Christianity because they do not believe in the historicity of the Resurrection or because they find theism intellectually challenging. They are rejecting Christianity because they believe that biblical standards are cruel and that God is loveless. To understand that, we must understand the history of the Sexual Revolution. 

Jonathon Van Maren blogs at TheBridgehead.ca.



A NEW JK-8 CHRISTIAN SCHOOL!



BEACON HILL
CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Equipping Covenant Children for Service
in Christ's Kingdom in the York Region
Area, North of Toronto.

info@beaconhillca.org

WE'RE HIRING!
Looking for a unique, diverse, and meaningful career? Send us your resume!



FOUR PROBLEMS WITH STATE-FUNDED DAYCARE

...and the erosion of the family that the Church isn't talking about enough

by Levi Minderhoud and Anna Nienhuis

Orthodox Christians are champions of the family, and rightly so. Stretching back to the beginning of history, marriage – and, by extension, the family – was the first institution that God created (Gen. 2:18, 24-25). Chronologically, the family supersedes the State, the Church, and any other institution in society. For that reason, Christians often call the family the “basic unit” or “basic institution” of society.

Inseparable from the concept of the family is the principle that parents have the primary responsibility to care for the children that God has entrusted to them. This responsibility springs from the unique, natural relationship between parents and their children. Over the first few months and years of their lives, most children are raised almost exclusively by their parents. Over time, parents may gradually delegate some of their responsibility to professional caregivers and teachers. However, their right and responsibility as primary caregivers are never *forfeited*; they are only *delegated*. Ultimately, parental responsibilities towards their children are non-transferable.

This responsibility is not only natural but also biblical. Throughout the Bible, God commands parents to teach their children the law of God, their shared history, and their religious practices. The wisdom of the book of Proverbs is

imparted as from parents to children: “Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching.” Deuteronomy 6:7 also says that the people of God,

“...shall teach [God's laws] diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.”

Although the Bible teaches that parents bear the primary responsibility to raise their children, it does not indicate that parents are required to do it alone. All parents need assistance in this task. In the Reformed tradition, we even make commitments at the baptism of our children to “instruct them in these things or have them instructed in them” (from the “Form for the Baptism of Infants,” in the *Book of Praise*). We acknowledge, basically from day one, that there may be others involved in the raising and teaching of our children.

Because of this natural and biblical basis, Christians have traditionally advocated for primary parental responsibility in matters of modern education (for example, by advocating for parental choice on whether to homeschool or which school to send their children to).

But as the church and individual

Christians became less directly involved in delivering education, the government gradually took on more responsibility in this area. Public schools have been available options for more than 100 years now. Almost 90% of Canadian children now attend a fully funded, secular public school for the greater part of their childhood and adolescence. This has had an immense impact on our culture and ongoing transformation into a secular society.

Now, governments in Canada are

British Columbia recently moved responsibility for child care under the Ministry of Education. This signals that... the government wants schooling to start at an even earlier age.

proposing the single greatest expansion of state authority over the family in the past century in the form of child care policy. And Christians aren't even batting an eye.

THE STATE'S PLANS FOR CHILD CARE

When governments and advocacy groups speak of child care, they generally mean non-parental, institutionalized daycare, where trained professionals care for children from a wide variety of households in a daycare facility. (Because *child care* should refer to the care of a child no matter who provides the care, we're going to use the term *daycare* to refer to this professionalized, institutionalized form of child care.)

Daycare typically focuses on children aged 0-5. Recently, daycare has been undergoing a transformation away from being about just caring for children and towards early childhood education. For example, British Columbia recently moved responsibility for child care under the

Ministry of Education. This signals that, in essence, the government wants schooling to start at an even earlier age.

In their 2021 budget, the Canadian federal government earmarked \$30 billion over the next five years to daycare, with an annual commitment of \$9.2 billion by 2026 and beyond. Their goal is to cut daycare fees in half by 2022 and to ensure universal \$10 per day daycare is available to all parents by 2026. Subsidizing and regulating daycare falls within provincial responsibility, so the federal government will have to coordinate their efforts with the provinces. This is similar to how Canada's health care system works: the provinces are responsible for health care, but the federal government provides provincial governments with billions of dollars in funding under the condition that their health care system meet certain national criteria.

Now, although each province requires all children to receive a formal education, there is no such requirement that all

children must attend daycare. As it stands right now, the provinces are only planning to make universal, subsidized child care available for *those who want it*. Prior to the pandemic, the parents of 57.6% of children wanted non-parental child care, despite the current high cost of such child care.

The government – and many daycare advocates – are keen to establish government-funded daycare spots for a variety of reasons. Their primary argument is that access to daycare helps achieve gender equity for women by relieving mothers (who are disproportionately involved in child care) of the responsibility for caring for children. This enables more women to be employed and narrows the labor force participation rate gap between men and women. Second, advocates think that subsidized daycare will make life more affordable for the average Canadian family. Third, they claim that early childhood learning programs and quality daycare lead to better outcomes for children.



“Subsidized daycare encourages parents to see children as a burden rather than a blessing.”

FOUR PROBLEMS WITH STATE-FUNDED DAYCARE

Why is this approach to child care something Christians should be concerned about? There are at least four problems with this model:

Reason #1: Subsidized daycare encourages more parents to spend less time with their children

If parents are ultimately responsible for raising their children, particularly young children, then subsidizing daycare encourages parents to hand off responsibility for raising their children to others while they pursue economic goals or search for self-fulfilment outside of the home.

A classic principle of economics is that when you subsidize something, which is functionally the same as lowering the cost of something, people demand more of it. They demand more of it because it is cheaper for them. The same principle holds true for daycare. If the government subsidizes daycare, some parents who already use daycare a couple of days a week will find it convenient to use it for the entire week. Or some might start sending their child at age 3 instead of age 4. Other parents, enticed by the lower cost of daycare, will start sending their children to daycare for the first time. Obviously, the time that children spend in daycare is time not spent with their parents.

Reason #2: Subsidized daycare encourages parents to see children as a burden rather than a blessing

The primary argument in favour of subsidizing daycare sees children as a burden rather than a blessing. Supporters of subsidizing daycare view it as a way to increase women's participation in the labor force and the economy. Without access to daycare, women are "stuck at home" or "forced to stay home" to care for their child(ren). This is against their presumed "true desire" to rejoin the workforce, either to find fulfillment in a career or a higher material standard of living. According to this mindset, children are not a blessing, but a burden on the career advancement or financial stability of parents, particularly mothers. Subsidizing daycare contributes to this mentality.

Reason #3: Subsidized daycare fails to appreciate the choice of some parents to care for their own children

The subsidization of daycare underappreciates the decisions of some parents to stay at home and care for their own children. Our broader culture already looks down upon this decision as, at best, a waste of time or talent or, at worst, perpetuating outdated or sexist stereotypes. This disregard will only grow if our provincial governments support only daycare.

For Christian parents who choose to raise and/or educate their own children,

they would be required to pay taxes to support publicly funded daycare while also forgoing the income of a second parent in the workforce that most other families enjoy. In a country where the cost of living – particularly housing – is rising quickly, this extra taxation without any resulting benefit makes it more and more difficult for a parent to prioritize raising their children themselves.

...we should continue to praise parents who fully embrace the responsibility to care for and educate their children themselves

Reason #4: Daycare is not in the best interest of all children

In discussions around daycare, many advocates speak primarily of the benefits to parents, particularly women. But what about the children? Are daycare programs good for all children?

A significant body of evidence suggests not. In their 2019 report *A Positive Vision for Child Care Policy Across Canada*, Cardus describes how Quebec's universal, subsidized daycare led to poor outcomes for children. A working paper published by Baker, Gruber, and Milligan finds a correlation between attendance of an institutionalized child care center and lower social and behavioural skills.*

These findings should not be surprising when we look at the biblical pattern of parents having the ultimate responsibility for raising their children. God designed the structure of a family, and we know He designed it for His glory, our good, and the greater good of society.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

For these reasons, Christians should be critics of universal subsidized daycare. Yet, this change in government policy is an



"Daycare is not in the best interest of all children."

opportunity for Christians for at least two reasons.

First, we should continue to praise parents who fully embrace the responsibility to care for and educate their children themselves. The child care provided by stay-at-home parents has been discounted for decades. We live in a capitalist culture driven by goals of productivity and career advancement where many find their primary identity in their work. We also live in a secular culture dominated by individualism and materialism where being a stay-at-home parent is often met with disdain. We need to laud parents who make sacrifices in other areas of life to fulfill this responsibility well. We should support policies that enable parents to care for and educate their children themselves rather than encouraging parents to pass this responsibility to others at earlier and earlier ages.


Secondly, daycare is an incredible opportunity for the Church. Canadians are calling for a government-supported daycare program because they often don't

have the social networks to help them in this task. Many families need daycare due to poverty, disability or sickness, or single parenthood, and we know that childhood years are fundamental in shaping children's character. Rather than leaving only non-Christians to care for and educate young children, Christians should also pursue careers in child care and make child care a mission field.

CONCLUSION

Subsidized daycare is often presented as a pro-family policy because it reduces the expenses of many families. Although it might materially enrich some families in the short-term, however, it is more aptly characterized as a get-moms-back-to-“real”-work strategy. Our culture increasingly thinks children should be entrusted to professionals over parents. Parents, relieved of their duty, are then expected to work full-time. Extending significant funding to daycares will entrench this mentality in our society and perhaps increasingly creep into the Church. Instead, government policy ought

to emphasize that the care of children is primarily the responsibility of parents, and this is a task – and calling – to be taken up with joy.

We have a window of opportunity to influence the shape of child care systems now as these systems are being formed, but it will be much harder to change these systems once they are in place. Consider the points raised above, talk about it with your family and friends, consider how you can be a salt and a light to the world around us, and start a dialogue with your representatives today. 

ENDNOTE

* Michael Baker, Jonathan Gruber, Kevin Milligan. (2019). The Long-Run Impacts of a Universal Child Care Program. *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*. 11; 3. p. 1-26

Levi Minderhoud is the BC Manager, and Anna Nienhuis is a policy analyst and editor, for ARPA Canada (ARPACanada.ca).

R|U TELLING A NEW STORY



Redeemer
University

A degree you can believe in

REDEEMER.CA



**CONNECT
WITH US**



by Michael Behe

FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE

Elegant molecular
machines at the center of
life belie Darwin's theory

At a recent conference, I watched a computer simulation of the most important machine in the world: ATP synthase. Without it, no life can exist. In the cells of every organism on Earth, from bluebird to blue whale, from amoeba to alfalfa to Aunt Millie, this molecular machine packages energy for cells to use, like AA batteries for so many game systems.

No batteries, no game.

I sat halfway back in the room on the center aisle, amid the hundred-odd scientists and casually dressed grad students watching the colorful animated machine, the center of which was turning like a mechanical egg beater. Narrating was 81-year-old John Walker, a British scientist who has studied ATP synthase for over 40 years – fully one-quarter of the time since his countryman, the naturalist Charles Darwin, first proposed his theory of evolution in 1859.

Evolutionary mechanisms such as random mutation and natural selection have been assumed by most scientists and public intellectuals to account for how life arose and developed over eons without any guidance or direction – or more pointedly, with no help from God. But Darwin proposed his theory long before scientists discovered such elegant machinery as ATP synthase humming at the molecular foundation of life.

Now, as ATP synthase whirred on-screen, John Walker revealed the latest science on this marvel, which in 1997 earned him the Nobel Prize in chemistry after he used state-of-the-art techniques to glimpse the outlines of its form. His audience of scientists (including me) was meeting in semi-secrecy for a conference whose theme was a specific controversial question: Did Darwinian evolution have any limitations?

Maybe, as Darwin thought, his idea really could help explain curious facts such as why modified species of animals on islands resemble ones on the closest mainland. But can it explain ATP synthase? John Walker thought so, and the assembled scientists leaned forward in their seats to hear why.

ATP synthase is not simple. Comprising thousands of amino acid building blocks in about 10 kinds of protein chains, its intricate structure carefully directs a flow of acid particles, beginning from outside the cell, through deep channels in the machine's organization, into the cell's interior. Somehow, like the cascade of water over a hydroelectric dam that turns a turbine, the flow of acid through the channels rotates a central camshaft. The cams push against multiple discrete areas of a stationary region of the synthase, distorting their shapes. The distortion forces together two bound feed-chemicals, ADP and phosphate,

...the many copies of the machine in each person produce about 150 pounds of ATP molecules every day

provoking them to react to yield the energy-rich-yet-stable molecule ATP. As the camshaft completes a turn, the ATP is released into the cell, and the machine begins another cycle. Incredibly, the many copies of the machine in each person produce about 150 pounds of ATP molecules *every day*, but each is used rapidly as energy – in effect, recharging each cell like a reusable battery.

And Walker's more recent studies – using the newest, most powerful iteration of microscopy, called “cryo-electron” microscopy – would reveal its mechanism in unprecedented detail.

A LONG TIME AGO

David, Israel's second king, did not have a microscope. But he could see, and in Psalm 139 observed that he was fearfully and wonderfully made. Not only could his eyes survey their surroundings, his ears could detect the sounds of wildlife, his tongue speak to others, hands grip a sword, muscles guide a plow, fingers ply a harp. Inanimate matter could do none of that. Far surpassing everything else, his mind could, at least to an extent, grasp, contemplate, and plan. No other kind of living thing could compose songs in praise of its Maker as David could. No wonder he was impressed with himself.

The ancient Hebrews did not have much interest in science. No surprise there, since for almost all of time, all people for all of history had been absorbed by the immediate tasks of survival. Yet the human mind is nothing if not curious, so, when some leisure time is available for reflection, questions about how life works arise quickly. Like everyone else, David knew from direct experience that his body came with all manner of cool features: eyes, muscles, and much more. But how did they work? What were they made of? How did they get here? When fingers guide thread through a needle, or an eye shifts its gaze from near to far, what exactly is going on? How does a chick develop inside an egg, or an acorn grow into an oak? All those things happen regularly and repeatedly under the right circumstances, so it seems that most if not all of the reasons should be found in the regularities of nature. But where?

Answers to questions about how life works trickled in slowly, painfully, over millennia. The first person credited with thinking about biology in even a vaguely modern sense was Hippocrates, born some 600 years after David, when earth, air, fire, and water

were thought to be the basic elements of matter. Dubbed the Father of Medicine, Hippocrates knew next to nothing about healing. But he did at least urge his followers to classify common diseases and observe their progression, rather than to lazily attribute them to the Greek pantheon.

The next major figure in the history of science was Aristotle. Although many of us poorly read moderns think of him primarily as a philosopher, he was really the world's first Renaissance man, interested in practically everything. Aristotle's surprising honorific, the Father of Biology, is well-earned. Born less than a hundred years after Hippocrates, Aristotle worked hard to put flesh on the scientific skeleton. He introduced the blazingly obvious (in retrospect) idea of close observation: If you want to understand how nature works, get out of your armchair, go look, and write down what you see. With just his own observations, Aristotle was able to classify living things into broad categories that are remarkably similar to modern ones. That's what Aristotle himself did as he walked the beaches of the Aegean Sea long ago. Here's a snippet from his *History of Animals*:

David, Israel's second king, did not have a microscope. But he could see, and in Psalm 139 observed that he was fearfully and wonderfully made.



"The octopus breeds in spring, lying hid for about two months. The female, after laying her eggs, broods over them. She thus gets out of condition since she does not go in quest of food during this time. The eggs are discharged into a hole and are so numerous that they would fill a vessel much larger than the animal's body. After about fifty days the eggs burst. The little creatures creep out, and are like little spiders, in great numbers. The characteristic form of their limbs are not

yet visible in detail, but their general outline is clear. They are so small and helpless that the greater number perish. They have been so extremely minute as to be completely without organization, but nevertheless when touched they move."

Yet, as sophisticated as they are, Aristotle's writings show not only the promise but also the peril of simple observation: Our unaided senses may not be able to perceive crucial details.



Microscopes also changed humanity's very conception of the world. Imagine looking closely at some familiar object and suddenly realizing it is utterly different from what you had thought

We now know that those seemingly featureless baby octopuses Aristotle watched are actually exquisitely organized at a cellular and molecular level, far beyond the limits of any human's bare eyesight.

Aristotle's empirical heirs doled out more answers about how life works – at a snail's pace, over thousands of years. By contrast, Dr. John Walker took only 40 minutes to regale a room full of scientists with amazing aspects of the molecular machine on which all life depends. How its detailed structure is needed to channel acid along the right path, to turn the camshaft, to capture chemical energy with the efficiency needed to power the fundamental unit of life, the cell.

Yet, as Walker lectured on, many in the audience shifted impatiently in their seats. Despite the explicitly skeptical theme of the conference – does Darwin's theory hold water? – Walker was describing only how the machine worked but explaining nothing about how it arose.

BETTER AND WORSE

To understand nature, yes, one has to observe it, as Aristotle taught. But most of even the largish workings of life are on the insides of bodies, hidden from direct view. By using dissection, early naturalists such as the physician Galen, who practiced in Rome, were able to discover layer upon layer of further organization. For just the eye, Galen described the retina, cornea, iris, uvea, and tear ducts. With Galen's work, David's fearful body became even more so.

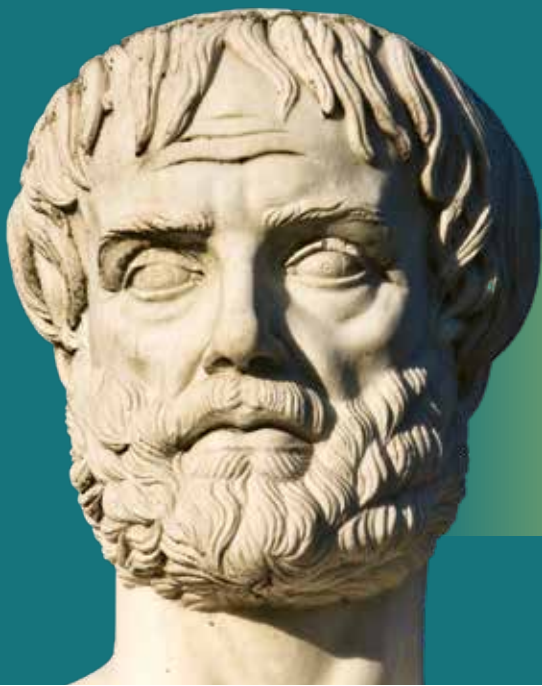
Yet Galen also made major mistakes, especially with his theory of blood. His naked eyes couldn't see tiny capillaries even in dissected creatures, so in his thinking blood didn't recirculate – it was consumed by tissues to nourish them.

Fast-forward to around the time of Shakespeare. In his study, English physician William Harvey is scratching his head. Since classical times, Galen had been revered as the ultimate authority on anatomy, and his work went unquestioned. Yet, by taking advantage of the newly introduced Arabic numerals, Harvey had just performed a simple calculation demonstrating that a typical human heart, pumping 2 ounces in each of its 72 beats per minute, would send out 540 pounds of blood in only one hour – triple the weight of a large man! The body couldn't make blood that quickly, so it *must* be reused. It *had* to recirculate. Galen was wrong.

The fall of Galen's ancient authority and the rise of mathematical reasoning helped launch modern science. But the study of biology needed more than that – it needed better vision.

SCIENCE GETS GLASSES

Lenses had been known from antiquity, but only in the 17th century were they ground and aligned with sufficient skill to make a working microscope. To support William Harvey's back-of-the-envelope calculation, Marcello Malpighi employed a microscope to directly observe the movement of red corpuscles through capillaries that connected arteries to veins, visually confirming blood circulation.



Aristotle worked hard to put flesh on the scientific skeleton. He introduced the blazingly obvious (in retrospect) idea of close observation: If you want to understand how nature works, get out of your armchair, go look, and write down what you see.

Microscopes also changed humanity's very conception of the world. Imagine looking closely at some familiar object and suddenly realizing it is utterly different from what you had thought – like, say, a piece of paper that had tiny, previously unseen machines on it to actively fasten ink into place. That's how the first microscopists felt when they examined what they had thought were simple insects and discovered alien, compound eyes; bizarre mouthparts; and specialized structures such as the pollen sacs of bees. What had been familiar creatures of field and forest were suddenly a complete mystery.

At least insects had been known before, even if not in the detail now revealed. But completely new classes of beings were soon discovered – microorganisms, or *animalcules* in Dutch microscopist Antonie van Leeuwenhoek's coinage. He seemed even more impressed with them than David had been with himself.

“From all these observations, we discern most plainly the incomprehensible perfection, the exact order, and the inscrutable providential care with which the most wise Creator and Lord of the Universe had formed the bodies of these animalcules.”

The deeper science peered, the more sophisticated life became.

Despite those amazing initial discoveries, the use of microscopy fell out of favor for the next century and a half. Historian John Wootton has argued that, even though animalcules would turn out to be the cause of much human disease, the medical profession of the age, worried that those upstart microscopists would trespass on its turf, wielded its influence to discourage the use of the instrument.

MODERN DAYS

Commencing late in the 18th century, the Industrial Revolution led to a general increase in wealth and leisure time, including time needed to pursue questions about life. Micros-

copy was revived, and the study of biology never turned back.

Yet the basic questions remained what they were in David's day: How did they (then eyes and muscles, now cells and the nucleus) work? What were they made of? How did they get here? Mid-19th-century microscopes were reaching their limits, but the profound depths of life had yet to be plumbed. For biology to continue to progress, scientists needed better ones. Gradual, cumulative improvements came over the decades, including better lenses, oil immersion, and – with the invention of the electric light – better illumination for ever-smaller, harder-to-see samples. Many other tricks would be added in the 20th century, including the use of lasers and fluorescent tags to make regions of the cell more visible.

In the meantime, other branches of science pioneered nonvisual techniques for the study of life. In 1828, a discovery by German chemist Friedrich Wöhler jolted the world. He had heated ammonium cyanate in a flask and was astounded to find it produced urea. That wasn't supposed to happen, because ammonium cyanate is an inorganic chemical and urea is a biological waste product. Wöhler's work was the first to show that inanimate matter could give rise to something from life, and it shattered the distinction science had made between life and nonlife. What's more, if life is made of chemicals, then chemists, too, could study it. That birthed the field of biochemistry. It wasn't long before the cell was shown to be composed of immensely complex, discrete chemical substances – enzymes, proteins, nucleic acids, carbohydrates, lipids, vitamins, and more – all with myriad, specific, critical roles to play.

That threw a monkey wrench into the struggle to visualize biology. The foundation of life consists of enormously complicated, working molecules. And that required enormously complicated working microscopes. Happily, physics came to the rescue. Late in the 19th century, J.J. Thomson discovered the electron. Decades later the electron microscope (EM) was invented, and its use blossomed after the Second World War.

EM detected many intricate features of the cell that common light microscopy had missed. The same nucleus that had

appeared to be a featureless black blob was now seen to have window-like portals. (Later work would show them to be elaborate, tightly regulated tollgates, where only substances that carry the right molecular “ticket” are permitted to pass.) In a classic EM photo, a single molecule of DNA was caught spilling out of a punctured virus – one long gossamer thread of information.

It would take another half century, until the early 2000s – the dawn of cryo-EM – when improved optical equipment and massive computer power allowed scientists for the first time to visualize some molecular machines in exquisite detail. One of those machines was ATP synthase.

DISCERNING A PURPOSE

By now, the scientists assembled before Dr. John Walker had run out of patience. The man had just held forth for nearly an hour on this miracle of biological architecture. Elegant and complex, precision-engineered, multiplied daily in the billions across the biosphere and on which the entirety of life depends. Finally, during the Q&A period, a questioner asked him directly: How could a mindless Darwinian process produce such a stunning piece of work?

Walker’s entire reply (paraphrasing): “Slowly, through some sort of intermediate or other.”

Far out of earshot I muttered two simple words: “Game over.”

If a Nobel laureate who has worked on one of life’s most fundamental systems for four decades can’t give an account of how it supposedly arose through a series of lucky mutations and natural selection – despite knowing its innermost workings in spectacular detail – then it’s reasonable to conclude no such account exists, and the effort to find one is a snipe hunt.


And yet, almost all evolutionary speculation proceeds in the teeth of that hunt. If it’s any consolation, Galen’s theory of blood did ultimately collapse. It only took 1,400 years. While we wait, how do we account for molecular machines? If not Darwin, who or what? Whether it sits well with our modern clerisy or not, David had the

basic answer three millennia ago: He, his eyes, and his ATP synthase all were purposely made, planned by an intelligent being.

How could a former shepherd, ignorant of nearly all biology, beat 21st-century scientists to the punch? Easy. Recognition of the work of a mind doesn’t demand uncovering obscure details that can’t yet be seen – it only requires grasping the relationship in what already can be seen. The dictionary defines design as “the purposeful arrangement of parts.” So to perceive a mind’s work – a design – we need only see that some parts are arranged for a larger purpose. That’s crystal clear in ATP synthase, thanks to the work of John Walker and others. But even with just his unaided vision, David could see the purposeful arrangement of his fingers, bones, and muscles.

Designs – purposeful arrangements – aren’t in doubt just because the composition of their materials is unknown. Ancient Greeks could easily recognize a purposely sculpted statue even though they had no knowledge of the chemical composition of its stone. On the other

hand, the functioning of an obviously designed system might rely on even more sophisticated, not-yet-understood arrangements. A child can quickly perceive that the exterior of her cell phone is designed, but she would need to study engineering principles before understanding all the phone’s mechanisms.

The same goes for life. The visible parts that dazzled David are purposefully arranged, and so are the hidden and microscopic parts undergirding them that took millennia of scientific progress to comprehend. Thanks to the stunning progress of science, we now know that it’s fearfulness and wonderfulness all the way down. 

This originally appeared in the October 8, 2022 issue of WORLD magazine (WNG.org), a fantastic biweekly Christian, American, news magazine that publishes “sound journalism, grounded in facts and Biblical truth.” This article is reprinted here with their permission. Dr. Michael Behe is a professor of biological sciences at Lehigh University in Pennsylvania and a senior fellow at Discovery Institute’s Center for Science and Culture (Discovery.org).

Coaldale Christian School is inviting applications to fill the following positions:

Elementary Teacher

Duties to commence March 13, 2023

This position will start as a Grade 2 maternity relief position, with anticipated vacancy(s) in the 2023/24 school year.

Elementary Vice Principal

Duties to commence August 1, 2023

High School Teacher

Duties to commence August 1, 2023

Strengths in English and Social Studies would be an asset for the high school position.

Applicants need to have a B.Ed and be a member of a Canadian Reformed Church or one which we have ecclesiastical fellowship with.

CCS is a growing K-12 Reformed School with over 200 students in beautiful Southern Alberta, offering Prairie town living in an amiable community of believers. We are 15 minutes away from the historic city of Lethbridge (pop. 104,000), and 2.5 hours from the heart of the Rocky Mountains. \$400,000 gets you into an established neighbourhood, with new subdivisions to select from. 330+ days of full sunshine comes free.

Inquiries may be directed to:

Principal Jeff Van Raalte: (403) 345-4055; jeff.vanraalte@coaldalecs.com

Applications may be sent to Chair of Personnel Committee,

Rob Van Middelkoop: vanmidr@gmail.com
www.coaldalechristianschool.com





by Marty VanDriel

HOW SHOULD CHRISTIANS VIEW CLIMATE CHANGE?

Chatting with the Cornwall Alliance's Dr. Calvin Beisner



This is an overview of a recent episode of Lucas Holvliuwer and Tyler Vanderwoude's Real Talk podcast. Real Talk is a bi-weekly podcast of Reformed Perspective featuring great conversations on everything from propaganda to pornography, and if you haven't checked it out already, you really should. And you really can, at RealTalkPodcast.ca.

Is climate change real, and if so, how should Christians think about it? How should we take care of God's creation in a way that still allows us to use its resources for the good of the crown of creation, mankind? Lucas Holtliuwer recently sat down with Dr. Calvin Beisner, founder and national spokesman for the Cornwall Alliance for the Stewardship of Creation (CornwallAlliance.org), to talk about these and other issues.

Dr. Beisner summarized the Cornwall Alliance's work in a memorable tagline:

"Our work is to defend the planet from the people who are trying to defend the planet." More formally, it is a network of about 70 Christian theologians, natural scientists, economists, and other scholars educating for Biblical earth stewardship, economic development for the poor, and the proclamation and defense of the good news of salvation by God's grace.

THE CLIMATE IS ALWAYS CHANGING

Beisner started with a summary of how the earth's climate is constantly

changing: daily of course, with high and low temperatures, seasonally each year, and also in decades-long cycles driven by different ocean tides and oscillations. Geologists are certain the earth was significantly warmer than today for a few thousand years prior to Christ's birth, as well as during periods of the Roman empire, and of the Middle Ages. During multiple cooling periods over the last 2,000 years, glaciers have covered much of the world in ice before receding again over centuries.

“We’re in an ice age now, although most people don’t realize it, and that’s because Greenland is covered by ice for the most part, and Antarctica is covered also.... All of these [periods of cooling and warming] happened entirely naturally: there were no SUVs running around burning diesel, and so the human influence had essentially nothing to do with those.”

Beisner points to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 1992 as one of the first times that the phrase was re-defined to mean changes driven primarily by human activity, especially the emission of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

CHANGE, BUT NOT CATASTROPHIC

He believes that mankind’s activities do contribute to climate change, but to a very small degree, and that modern technology has an enormous net economic and life-sustaining benefit to human beings that is worth the relatively small effect on the climate.

Beisner made the case that the alarmist language and dire predictions of today’s environmentalists do not come from actual scientific climate studies, with their measured tones and scientific language. Rather, these reports are summarized by government bureaucratic appointees, and they tend to push more alarmist mentalities than the reports themselves.

When you deny the Creator, you begin to worship the creature instead of the Creator... You elevate the earth to the supreme concern

“Crisis, danger, catastrophe, existential threat; [these terms are not in the reports. But they get added] by environmentalist activist organizations, and by the mainstream media, and by politicians because that’s the kind of language that can get people on board for spending trillions of dollars to solve a problem, whereas, if you speak in very measured moderate scientific terms, you won’t get that kind of support.”

WARRING WORLDVIEWS

Holtvliwer asked if Christians in general were less worried about climate change because of the worldview of those who were sounding the alarm. Beisner agreed that non-Christian views such as pantheism, materialism, and animism are prevalent in the environmentalist movement, and contribute to the dangerous error warned about in Romans 1.

“When you deny the Creator, you begin to worship the creature instead of the Creator... You elevate the earth to the supreme concern... Paul tells us what happens when you do that. God gives you over to a reprobate mind, professing yourself to be wise you become a fool, and you fall into all kinds of different errors, both intellectual and moral... I think that’s a large part of why... there is a great deal of really shocking folly in much environmental thought.”

SEEING BABIES AS BLESSINGS

From a Biblical perspective, we are called to “fill the earth and subdue it” (Genesis 1:28).

“Rather than seeing the earth as delicate, but nurturing, we see it as robust: very tough, very resilient, self-correcting. But, dangerous, unless subdued, unless mastered, and that means that instead of trying to minimize our impact on the world, we don’t maximize it, but we optimize it... to enhance the fruitfulness and the beauty and the safety of the earth for human well-being as well as for the glory of God.”

Dr. Beisner pointed out that human deaths from natural catastrophes have actually dropped 95% in the last one hundred years – during the exact period that mankind’s impact on the climate is the greatest it has ever been. Why is this? Man’s prosperity and technological advances have allowed us to build safer homes and businesses, to heat and cool our dwellings, and to travel long distances in relative safety. So, rather than decry the slight impact we have had on the planet’s climate, we should encourage the development of greater wealth, of even safer structures, and of other means by which humans can live long and productive lives.

The current rate of warming, stated Beisner, is much lower than often portrayed, and may actually have positive effects on our ability to farm more efficiently in larger areas of the world:

“The benefits of this sort of warming are going to outweigh the risks! There may be some problems here and there, but I think it will be much less expensive to adapt to those than to try to control them.”

BIGGER PROBLEMS

“So should the church not be concerned about climate change, because there are bigger problems?” asked Holtvliwer. Beisner believes that,

“there are going to be some problems that come with human-induced climate change, and that we should be aware of those, and we should be trying to deal with them by mitigation... or by adaptation.”

Beisner laid out some likely scenarios as sea levels and temperatures are likely to rise in the coming decades and centuries, but put these in the context of human adaptation as has been the case in the past. In short, there is nothing new under the sun, and part of our mandate as God’s creatures is to subdue the earth, to use its resources in a responsible manner as stewards of creation.




The current rate of warming, stated Beisner, is much lower than often portrayed...

According to Beisner, the Cornwall Alliance does not advocate government subsidies for alternative energy sources such as wind and solar. Although there is a place for this type of energy use, the tax dollars of citizens are better used in the limited role that government should play, and the free market should be allowed to work out what energy sources are the most efficient and economical over time. “Nuclear, large-scale hydro, fossil fuels (such as) coal, oil and natural gas would far outstrip wind and solar not just now but for decades, possibly generations, to come.”

TO DIG DEEPER

Dr. Beisner also gave his opinion on the work and writings of Danish author Bjorn Lomborg, expressing his support for most of Lomborg’s views, but disagreeing with the responsibility of government to incentivize alternative energy sources. In the rest of the podcast, Holtvluwer and Beisner also discussed the overall idea of environmental conservation, and touched on the situation faced by farmers in the Netherlands – who are dealing with new government restrictions on the use of vital fertilizers – along with their protests.

Overall, this is a very helpful podcast for Christians who wish to think Biblically and reasonably about climate change and environmentalism, and well worth the 90 minutes of listening. You may even find yourself rewinding and pausing, as you look up statistics and the Cornwall Alliance website for confirmation of the data and studies cited. “Real Talk” is published twice per month and can be found at ReformedPerspective.ca, RealTalkPodcast.ca, YouTube, and many podcasting platforms. 

BJORN LOMBORG: ANOTHER ONE-EYED MAN

What Christians like about a Jordan Peterson, or a Ben Shapiro isn’t simply their courage – it’s their wisdom. What these non-Christians are most often getting in trouble for are positions that line right up with what God teaches in His Word. Whether it’s Ben defending the unborn or standing up, at least in part, against same sex “marriage,” or Peterson defending the reality of absolute morality, or refusing to be forced to call a guy in a dress a gal, these men aren’t afraid to just say what’s actually what.

But at the very same time, they aren’t Christian, and that’ll have them spouting nonsense too, whether it’s Peterson talking about lobster evolution, or Shapiro repeatedly taking God’s name in vain. Their wisdom goes only so far, precisely because they follow God only so far. But, as has been said, in the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king. They might have only the one eye open to God’s truth, but that makes them far more sensible than the majority that has both eyes clenched shut.

And that brings us to Bjorn Lomborg, a homosexual atheist who has closed his eyes to God’s existence, and His requirements for sex. But he, too, does have one eye open to at least one of God’s truths, which is precisely what makes Lomborg’s brand of environmentalism so much better, and more helpful, than what’s on offer from the rest of the world. He recognizes that Man is the pinnacle of creation. He doesn’t state it that way, but he lives it out, evaluating environmental policies, not simply on how they are intended to help the Earth, but on what impact they’ll have on people, and particularly the poor.

It’s because he has that foundational truth in his toolbox, that Bjorn Lomborg’s *False Alarm: How Climate Change Panic Costs Us Trillions, Hurts the Poor, and Fails to Fix the Planet* (2021, 321 pages) is incredibly encouraging. As Lomborg notes in his introduction, “we live in an age of fear – particularly a fear of climate change.”

As a Christian I’m not as worried about the catastrophic sort but I will say that the constant barrage of panic in all our media outlets can be wearing and worrying, even when I know better. So while I wouldn’t agree with Lomborg on much – he’s far more trusting of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports than I am – what I appreciate is that he knows we can’t help the planet at the expense of the people on it. Using the very same IPCC reports as the fear-mongers, he shows how they don’t speak of the world ending in 12 years, or anything like it. Rather than facing a catastrophic situation, we are facing a manageable one.... but one we can greatly mismanage to the harm of millions of the poorest if we continue to panic.

So if you, too, are getting worn down by the constant drumbeat of certain doom, I’d highly recommend *False Alarm*, though I would also encourage even more skepticism (or, rather, discernment) than that offered by the author.

– Jon Dykstra



"What needs reforming today?"

CONTEST WINNERS

Being "Reformed" is more than just a label that comes with going to a particular church – it is a calling to daily orient our lives towards our Lord Jesus Christ. In that spirit, we challenged you to make the case for something that needs reforming, not in the time of Luther 500 years ago, but here and now.

We want to thank the many of you who took the time to share your ideas with passionate and beautiful essays, with pictures and cartoons, and with stories. It isn't always easy to share our work publicly, so we thank you for your courage, and for the gift of your creativity.

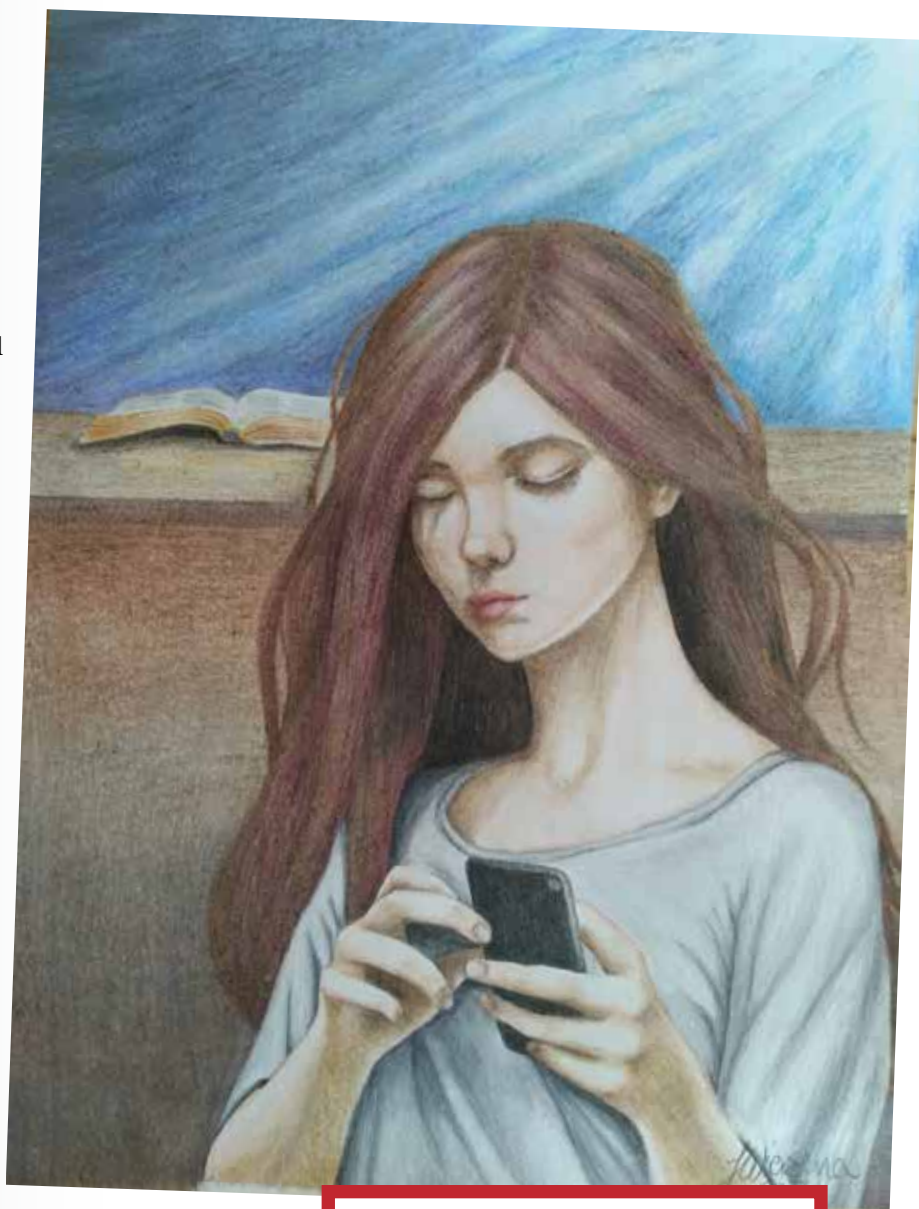
Some very persuasive cases were made about our observance of Good Friday and Sunday, on divorce and remarriage, the problem of biblical illiteracy, how we should dress in church, and even *RP's* choice to give a prize for the winners of our contests! There were lots of intriguing pieces to choose from.

In determining which ones to pick as winners and to publish, two things in particular were noticeable. The first is in keeping with a story told about G.K. Chesterton that the *London Times* asked him to write on the similar topic of "What's wrong with the world today?" to which he supposedly replied:

*Dear sir,
I am.
Yours, G.K. Chesterton*

So, to begin with, we were considering, who is the finger being pointed at? Jodocus van Lodenstein, the pastor credited with the origin of the Latin *Semper Reformanda*, or "always reforming," slogan coined it while thinking of how best to lead his congregation in a *personal* reformation. So, who needs reforming? Are we including ourselves in this?

Our second consideration was, is the case being made in a way that will resonate? Which entries are most able to reach our stubborn hearts, which tend to avoid listening to pointed, relevant challenges? We think you'll agree that the winners of both the adult and youth categories did this particularly well. – *RP*



ADULT CATEGORY
WINNER!

Jessica Wiersma
***Cellphone*, 2022**
Color Pencil Sketch



ADULT CATEGORY
RUNNER UP

7 EDUCATION THESES TO BE NAILED TO CHURCH DOORS TODAY

by Yvonne Harink

The Reformation of 1521 commonly suggests a picture of Martin Luther nailing a piece of paper with 95 theses or arguments to a church door, thereby asking for an open debate on issues dear to his heart. Today the issue of indulgences is not relevant, but there are many other practices that the unbelieving world, and even the church, is confused about.

While someone might be able to formulate 95 theses on a variety of topics, I believe the education of our children is the most important at this time, and I humbly submit just 7 statements.

1. Children are persons. They did not evolve but were created by our triune God on the sixth day. God created male and female, in his own Image, and He Himself breathed the breath of life into them. Each person is completely unique, created by God for a specific calling and purpose. No person can realize his true identity until he comes to a relationship with his heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit.
2. Ever since the Fall, mankind has sought to save himself through finding knowledge (the knowledge of good and evil). God offers salvation to mankind not through knowledge, but through a living relationship with God Himself. Understanding only comes through faith.
3. God entrusts children to the care of parents who are responsible, and most suited, to be the ones to train and disciple their children to the best of their ability. God established families as the first training ground for children.
4. Churches should assist and encourage parents in the training of their children. The Bible doesn't give this mandate to governments.
5. Modern humanism has created a new "church" in the form of the public education system. As John Dewey, the father of the system has stated, "teachers are the priests of the religion of humanism." This priesthood undermines the priesthood of all believers as taught in Scripture. If we are to have a new Reformation, it is important that this monopoly is broken, and that education is given back to parents, who should be able to shop in the free market for the schools, tutors, apprenticeships, and training opportunities of their choice.
6. There is no neutrality in education. Martin Luther predicted: "I am afraid that the schools will prove the very gates of hell, unless they diligently labour in explaining the Holy Scriptures, and engraving them in the hearts of youth." He also said, "I advise no one to place his children where the Scriptures do not reign paramount."
7. As Reformed Christians we have been blessed because of the courage of our forefathers, who were among the first to understand that they had to pull their children out of the state-run schools. Now, we need the courage to debate that this issue is more complex than having our "own" schools, or homeschooling our children. We need to ask God to show us how to rebuild the ruins and bring the Story of God's love to a desperate world.



THE MOST POPULAR DRUG

by Nicole Van Dyke

Imagine being so dependent on a substance that you cannot start your day without it. You prioritize the intake of it by scheduling it into your day. You will detour on your way to work just to get it, maybe even at the consequence of being late. Your brain will not work until you get it. You literally cannot function without it. What comes to your mind? Perhaps surprisingly, what I am referring to is caffeine.

Did you know that caffeine is the most widely consumed drug in the world? It is an addictive stimulant and is classified as a psychoactive drug (alongside nicotine, meth, and cocaine). Are you aware that it only takes 3 days of regular consumption of caffeine to build a dependence?

I am not a coffee drinker, but a few years ago I found out about a low sugar, caffeinated hot beverage in a variety of delicious flavours (white chocolate peppermint, chai tea, dark chocolate salted caramel etc.). I never liked the taste of coffee, and it seemed counter-intuitive to force myself to learn to like it. I was eager to try this new drink out. “I won’t use it much,” I thought. It will give me energy after a long night with a sleepless baby or it can help keep me awake after the odd night shift. Well, it wasn’t long before these exceptions became the norm. I was drinking it every day, sometimes multiple times a day. I found myself thinking about the delicious warm hug in a mug. I couldn’t wait to get the baby down for a nap and the toddler busy with an activity so I could sit and have my “well-deserved” pick-me-up. It was arguably the best part of my day. I was noticeably more irritable on the days I didn’t get my fix and if I felt overwhelmed or anxious the first thing I would turn to was my kettle. I even started getting headaches without it. In no time at all, I was dependent.

The Heidelberg catechism describes idolatry as:

“having or inventing something in which to put our trust instead of, or in addition to, the only true God who has revealed himself in His word.”

The phrase “to put our trust in” can also be described as “relying on,” “depending on,” or “to put hope in.” Let’s look back at the first paragraph. Reread it and instead of coffee, think of God. Here comes the big question. Should we be dependent on anything aside from Him? When we are tired, stressed, anxious, sad, doubtful, angry, confused, irritated,

foggy... what are we going to for help? Who or what are we depending on or putting our hope in?

Weaning off the caffeine was unpleasant. My body was having withdrawal symptoms: headaches, irritability, fatigue, and trouble concentrating. When I was “caffeine-free,” I decided something needed to change. Every time I felt a strong emotion, I was going to do my best to open my Bible. Isaiah 55:1-2 describes God’s invitation to feed on the free gift of His Word,

“Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and you will delight in the richest of fare.”

God wants us to go to Him! The comfort, clarity, patience, and motivation that comes from reading His Word and praying for His help is so much more enduring than a momentary cup of caffeine and doesn’t come with a crash later.

Of course, there are people who may have an entirely different experience with coffee. Maybe you can function perfectly fine without it and just enjoy it occasionally. However, from the symbols and phrases that are around us, I have a feeling I cannot be alone. There is a reason mugs have “Coffee before talkie,” “Caffeine-loading,” “But first, coffee” and many other silly sayings. It’s relatable because it’s true.

Caffeine is the example I chose to use but perhaps you can identify with being dependent on something different. Ask yourself: What do I look forward to most in my day? What do I go to when I am anxious or overwhelmed? What am I prioritizing or making time for in my day? Perhaps it’s food, social media, video games, exercise, tv, nicotine... fill in the blank. Test these things regularly to see if you can go without. And continually do so. I still drink my caffeine beverage. But inevitably, I will notice the habits of dependency creeping in and know it is time for a break. We are god-making factories and our sinful nature loves to depend on everything but Christ. Let us be people of one God and sing with David, “Lord, you alone are my portion and my cup; you make my lot secure” (Ps. 16:5).

God, please reform our violent hearts

by Joseph S.

Steve walks warily down the street

Peeking inside a house to make sure it's safe, I slowly enter and look around.

Machine guns ready to go

I lower my gun, a common revolver, when I see the coast is clear and run over to the crate in the corner of the room. Popping it open I find a nice amount of gold, and more importantly, an epic machine gun.

I exit the building ready for battle, the clacking of my keyboard keeping time with Queen's *Another One Bites the Dust* beating in my headphones. Seeing a spot with good cover I head over, preparing to exchange bullets.

"Ralph, come up for dinner!" my mother calls down the stairs.

"I'm busy right now!" I yelled back. I've lost too many games to supper time interruptions.

"Right, this second!"

Sighing, I resign myself to the loss of the match and drop my headphones on my desk. I trudge up the stairs, and, letting the basement door swing loudly shut behind me, take my seat at the dinner table.

Everyone else is there, so as I sit down my dad begins to pray: "Our Good and Merciful God, thank you for such a wonderful day. Thank you for the delicious food in front of us and the great community you have surrounded us with. We pray for those who've had a rough day; we pray that you bless them. Today, especially, Father, we pray for peace. Please reform our violent hearts and bring warring factions to peace. Amen."

"Amen" is echoed around the table, and we start to eat.

The food really is delicious, mom's killer spaghetti and meatball recipe. As we eat, my father speaks, finding a break in my sister's incessant monologue about who-knows-what. "The reason I prayed for peace is because there was something quite disturbing on the news today."

My sister stops talking and she and my mom watch dad as he continues. I devour a meatball.

"Around noon today, there was a shooting in a school in Texas. Robb Elementary School, I think it was. Anyways, 21 people died and 16 were injured. The story really is quite disturbing."

"Oh my!" mom exclaims covering her mouth. My sister's bubbly mood is immediately subdued. "Really?" she whispers, shocked.

"I'm not sure on the finer details," my father says. "To tell you the truth I didn't have the stomach for it."

This tomato sauce really hits the spot; my stomach will be content tonight. The conversation continues as I help myself to seconds.

"That's horrible," my mother speaks aloud as she processes the information. "It makes me so scared for you two kids. How could anyone... such young kids – I don't know what to say"

"That is so sad," my sister says, staring at her plate.

"I'm finished," I announce. "That was great mom! May I be excused?"

Mom seems lost in thought, but dad

looks at me with sad eyes. "If you've had enough to eat and you don't wish to participate in the conversation, you may go."

"Great, thanks!" I respond, already heading down to the basement. I descend speedily, jumping the last five steps and landing all the way at the bottom.

My computer is as I left it, and putting my headphones back on, I settle into my chair and join a game. I have a great start, landing right on top of another machine gun, though this one is of the legendary rarity. Feeling lucky, I decide to storm a house.

Out of the doorway the bullets rip

Running through the door I immediately spot someone with their back turned to me in the corner. I open fire and they crumple to the ground before they realize what's happened.

Another one bites the dust

I scoop up the dead player's dropped items, and startle as two players enter behind me. Without thinking my finger drops on the trigger, my mouse's right click, and an explosion of bullets later, they, too, land in a heap on the floor.

And another one gone, and another one gone

I truly am unstoppable this game. I might even reach an all-time high kill count. I walk out of the building, and too late hear the rat-a-tat-tat behind me. My screen fades into darkness.

Another one bites the dust

Joseph S. is 16 years old.



EVANGELISM: our timing or God's?

by Keziah Z

One area that needs reform in our day is our perspective on the process of evangelism. It is easy to slip into the mindset that evangelism involves a quick and not overly inconvenient process in which we share the Gospel with someone. We can fall into thinking that we can invite someone to church, and voila! They should be easily convinced and converted. For those of us who have grown up in Christian homes, learning Bible stories from our earliest years onward, we can easily develop the expectation and assumption that the Gospel should quickly take hold in other people's hearts. It makes sense to us, so it should make sense to them too! However, this is often not the case.

When sharing the good news of Christ's life, death, and resurrection, we often do not consider the pressures that Satan is exerting to persuade a person to not believe the Gospel. Satan can also work doubt in a person's mind by causing them to view the Gospel as untrue or irrelevant. There is spiritual warfare taking place, and Satan does not want to lose his hold on them.

Another major influence on a person's beliefs is family members and friends. If a non-Christian shows interest in Christianity, they will often be criticized, shunned, or even excluded from their family or friend group. We need to understand the pressures a non-Christian we are witnessing to may be facing and ask God for patience.

There is also a cost to accepting Christ as Savior and Lord. Since Satan is working hard to discourage a person from believing the Gospel, we should not expect them to immediately embrace the Gospel. Though we desire a quick conversion, we should not expect it. We should expect that it may take some time for them to consider the cost – something Jesus instructs people to do. In Luke 14:28 Jesus asks, "For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?" For many people, becoming a Christian means implementing drastic life changes, including cutting off ties with friends, family, and former lifestyles.

Not only should we not place time constraints on a person we

are witnessing to, we should also not place them on ourselves as we witness. We cannot change a person; we need to allow God to work in His timing and allow the Holy Spirit to soften someone's heart. Just because a person does not quickly accept the Gospel does not mean they are not considering its truth. It can take months, or even years, for the Holy Spirit to work in a person's heart and for them to come to Christ.

Additionally, we must never give up hope in our evangelism. Many people – like the thief on the cross – have come to faith in their dying moments or final days. If someone does not readily accept the Gospel, we should not stop sharing it with them. Love for the lost will compel us to be patient and to persevere in witnessing with our words and actions. In 1 Corinthians 13, the first word Paul uses to describe love is patient. If someone has a listening ear, God has kept the opportunity open for us to keep sharing the good news of salvation with them.

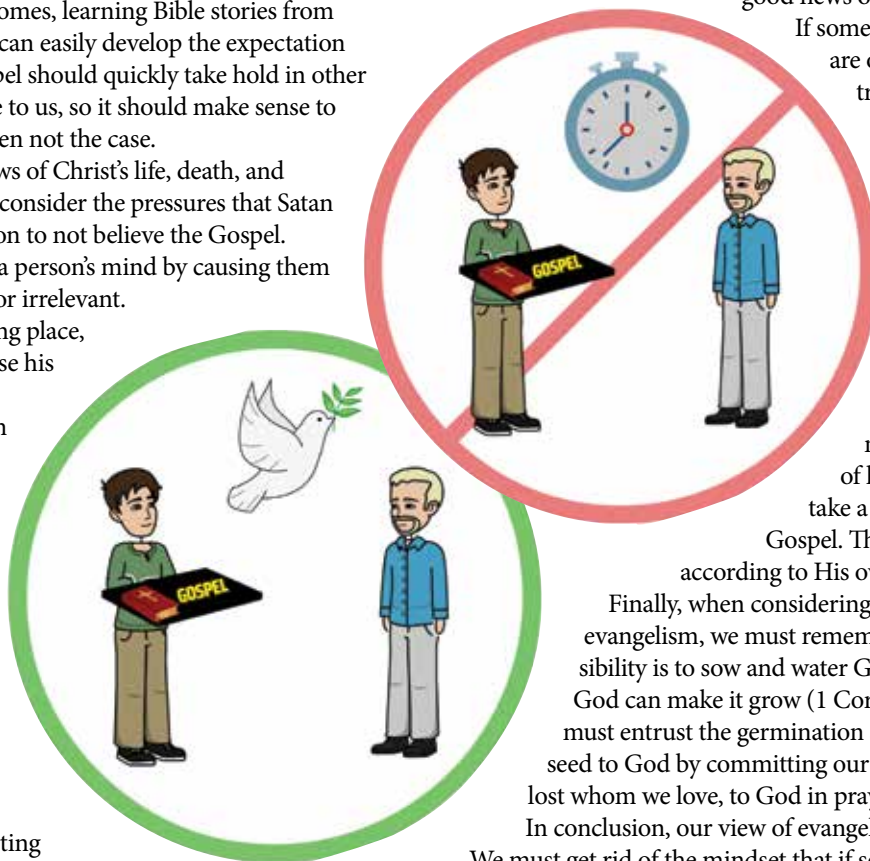
If someone's ears are opened and they are trying to understand, keep going! Keep sharing the good news! Just because we may have been sharing the Gospel for many years, does not mean we are wasting our time. The Holy Spirit is not bound by our idea of how long it should take a person to accept the Gospel. The Holy Spirit works according to His own timing.

Finally, when considering our perspective on evangelism, we must remember that our responsibility is to sow and water Gospel seed, but only God can make it grow (1 Corinthians 3:6-7). We must entrust the germination and growth of the seed to God by committing our labors, as well as the lost whom we love, to God in prayer.

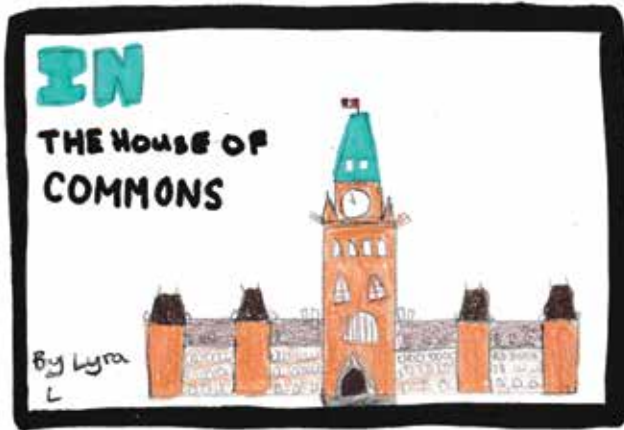
In conclusion, our view of evangelism needs reform.

We must get rid of the mindset that if someone does not quickly come to Christ we are wasting our time. Be faithful in witness. Don't give up. Allow the Holy Spirit to work in His own time. It can take people years, even decades to come to Christ, and many come to faith when they are near death. If someone has a listening ear, we must keep sharing the Gospel with them. Do not limit God. Do not let your impatience hinder your love for the lost.

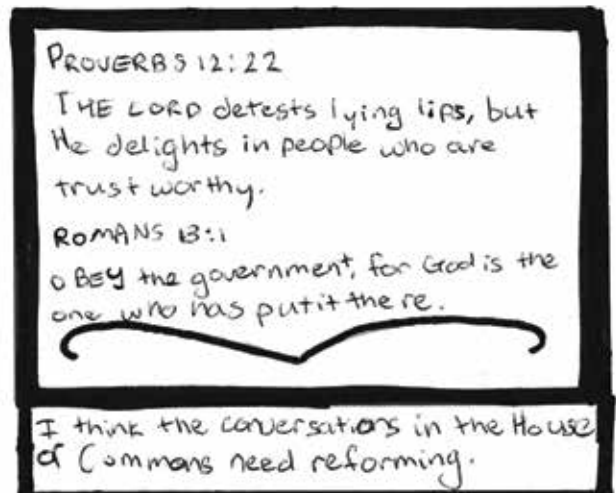
Keziah Z. is 16 years old.



YOUTH CATEGORY
RUNNER UP



Lyra L. – 13 years old



Olivia W. – 11 years old

Owen T. – 14 years old.



AS A CHRISTIAN
WHICH ONE DO YOU CELEBRATE?

To learn more about Christ



Come and

EXPLORE

Tommy's Temptation



The snow lightly fell outside the frosted window as Tommy and Oma made their way to the kitchen with the load of groceries from the car. Once everything was unpacked, Oma put on her apron and began the process of making her delicious raspberry cake, Tommy's favourite. She brought out the flour and the sugar along with some of the other ingredients she needed, and began to assemble the batter on the kitchen island.

Tommy grabbed the whisk from the counter. "Can I stir this up for you, Oma?" he asked. Cooking with her was the highlight of their time together. He loved spending time in the kitchen listening to her singing, or telling stories of her childhood, or laughing at silly jokes out of the joke book. And he loved to be helpful.

Oma brought the raspberries out of the fridge and placed them on the counter. "Now, now, Tommy, don't be eating any raspberries just yet. We need to make sure we have enough for the cake. If there's some left over, then you can have as many as you like." And she gave him one to tide him over.

Just before they were about to finish the batter with the raspberries, the doorbell rang and Oma wiped her floury hands on her apron and went to answer the door.

There the raspberries sat, staring at Tommy. Or, rather, Tommy was staring at the raspberries. *Oma wouldn't notice if I just had one*, he thought, *just one*. He checked over his shoulder towards the front door. Oma was busy chatting. His hand shook as he snatched a raspberry out of the bowl. It tasted so good.

A minute passed and Oma was still busy at the door. The raspberries were calling out his name; at least it seemed like it to Tommy. *Oh, what's another one*, he thought, *surely one more won't hurt the cake*. Tommy grabbed one, and then, before he knew it, another... and then another!



Head on over to reformedperspective.ca/kids to download this colouring page!



But the next one tumbled out of his fingers and landed right on his white t-shirt. Panicking, Tommy leapt off the island and bolted to the sink. Grabbing a wet cloth, he scrubbed at the stain, hoping he could make it go away. But it just got worse.

Oma heard the commotion in the kitchen and said goodbye to her guest and came into the kitchen. "Sorry, Tommy, that was just my neighbour. Now, where were we?"

Tommy's back was turned to her, his heart thumping in his chest. He knew he shouldn't have grabbed the raspberries, but they were so good, so tempting, and it really hadn't been very much. Maybe if he just sat on a chair she wouldn't notice the stain.

But Omas are very keen to the ways of their grandchildren and Tommy was not one to sit on a chair, especially not so quietly. "What's going on Tommy?" she said, stepping closer. He crossed his arms over the stain in order to hide it.

"Nothing."

Oma bent down by the chair and looked at Tommy. The bowl of raspberries caught her eye. And the red stain on her grandson's lips.

STOP & discuss: What has Tommy done? What would you do if you were Oma?

"I'm fine; let's just make the cake," said Tommy, tears welling up in his eyes. He felt so guilty but he just didn't know what to do. *Oma will be so upset, he thought, It will be best if I just don't tell her and if she doesn't notice the stain on my shirt.* Oma stood up from beside him and began to add the raspberries to the cake batter. She glanced at Tommy. Tommy noticed and bent his head.

"Oh," she said, as if to test him, "That's odd, there's not quite enough here." She did a quick stir and looked at Tommy again. Tommy broke down and started crying. He knew that she knew.

"Oh, Oma. They were just so tempting and I didn't want to stop myself because they tasted so good. I'm so sorry, I shouldn't have eaten them!" Tommy sat on the kitchen chair, tears falling down his cheeks, "And look - I've stained my new shirt - Mom will be so disappointed!"

Oma put the batter into the pan and placed it into the oven. "Come here, Tommy, I want to share something with you." He went to her and sat on her lap by the kitchen table. She pulled out her Bible and flipped through its pages. Her finger settled on Isaiah 1:18. "Can you read this for me, Tommy?"

... flip the page to keep reading!



He blinked through his tears and read,

"Come, let us settle the matter," says the Lord. 'Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.'"

He looked up at his Oma. She was softly smiling down at him. "Tommy, dear, you did a sinful thing, taking the raspberries when I told you not to, and then made it worse by hiding it from me. But, you did confess it to me and said that you were sorry, so I forgive you." She looked out the window at the falling snow. "Do you see the snow outside, Tommy?" He looked out and nodded. "Do you see how white it is? The verse you just read spoke about how our sins are red as scarlet, or in this case, red as raspberries. But when we confess our sins and bring our humble hearts to the Lord, he takes the stain of our sin and washes us as clean as white snow!"

Tommy felt his heart warm, and he looked up at his Oma. "How do I tell God about my sin, Oma? Don't you think He will be disappointed, like Mom with my shirt?"

"No, dear," she said, pulling him tight on her lap, "God loves you so much that He sent his son Jesus to take your sins on his shoulders, including this one, and when you come to Him in prayer and tell Him you are sorry, He forgives you out of his great love for you."

Tommy immediately bowed his head and prayed to God to forgive him for eating the raspberries and for lying to his Oma about it. When he finished praying, Tommy smiled. "I feel much better now, Oma. I love you."

"I love you, too. Now, I figure that since you're sorry and you have God's forgiveness, a little bit of oxi-clean and the stain on your shirt can be taken care of, too."

Oma treated the stain, washed and dried his shirt until it came out perfectly white. "White. Just like the snow," she said.

"And our sins!" said Tommy.

The raspberry lemon cake came out splendidly, and Oma gave Tommy two slices. "This is called grace," she said. "Maybe I'll get to explain that next time."

The End





INGREDIENTS

- 1 ½ cups all purpose flour
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp table salt
- ½ cup salted butter, melted
- 2 large eggs
- 1 ½ cups cottage cheese
- 2 tsp almond extract
- ½ tsp lemon juice
- 12 fresh raspberries

Serve warm with a good dollop of ice cream on top!

Oma's Raspberry Cake

DIRECTIONS:

- Preheat oven to 350°F. Generously grease a 9x9 baking dish and set aside.
- In a bowl, whisk ferociously together the flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt.
- In a separate bowl, whisk together the melted butter, eggs, cottage cheese, almond extract and lemon juice. It is good if the mixture has a lumpy character to it.
- Add the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients. Mix expressively with a spatula.
- Gently fold in the raspberries, being tender with them.
- Lovingly spread the batter evenly into the cake pan.
- Bake 45-50 minutes or just until a toothpick comes out clean and tidy.
- Allow the cake time to peacefully rest prior to serving. About the length of an afternoon nap (15 minutes).

Can you find the 10 differences between these two pictures?



Eight of the raspberries meant for the cake have disappeared! Can you flip through the magazine and find them all?



UNSCRAMBLE

- ooldeblr _____
- iah sai _____
- reirebarsps _____
- snwo _____
- oirnmcs _____
- eactrs l _____
- mt yom _____
- kcea _____

Need the solution? Turn to page 2!

100+ WORDLESS WONDERS

for creative kids, wanna-be readers, and reluctant ones too

by Jon Dykstra

If you can remember waaaay back to when you first learned to read, what probably sticks with you is that feeling of triumph. It takes a lot of work, a lot of sounding out of all those letters before a kid can turn them into words and sentences. No wonder then that when we first pull it off, kids everywhere can't wait to get home and regale mom and dad with tales of how "Pat and Matt found a cat."

For that excitement to last kids will have to be introduced, not simply to reading, but to books worth reading. That's a real challenge early on because long before kids can read the simplest of sentences they've already been introduced to complex stories. Whether it's Bible readings at the dinner table, audiobooks in the car, a picture book on the couch with Grandma, or *The Wilderking Trilogy* read by dad at night, non-readers are already refining their literary palate years before they enter school. That's why, after the initial triumph that comes with reading those first few dozen "Pat and Matt" books all on their own, it's not unusual for a first grader to get frustrated by just how boring these simplified stories are.

That's where wordless, or near-wordless, books can be intriguing supplements to their boring early readers. With great wordless books, kids can continue to develop their love for good stories, even when their reading skills aren't quite there yet.

And the very same features that make them a help for early readers can make them a go-to for struggling readers too. We can encourage a child to keep at it by feeding him stories that are way more exciting, but which deliver their content in a manner that's more accessible.

Then there are the preschoolers who desperately want to be grown-up just like their older siblings and do what they do. Wordless books are a treat that they can "read" too, maybe with a little help from their dad at first, but then afterward they'll be able to read the story to Grandma all on their own!

In addition to pre-readers, early readers, and struggling readers, there's one other pint-sized demographic that can really benefit from this genre. If you have an artistically-inclined child, it can be eye-opening to them to see just how much can be said simply by the way a

scene or a character is drawn. Some of these books include lushly detailed, full-color pages that a child can pour over for minutes at a time. Other pictures amount to just a few well-placed lines. What a fascinating contrast for a creative kid to explore!

But the best reason to read any book? Simply because it's great. Wordless books often operate like a joke, with the bulk of the book as the mysterious setup, and the last few pages, a punchline that makes the rest of it clear. That means they'll be at their funniest when mom or dad is along for the adventure, to help puzzle things out. You might have to show your kids the ropes, teaching them how to follow the visual cues, but once you go through it with them the first time, they'll be equipped to return to it repeatedly and enjoy it all on their own... or even "read" it to a younger sibling.

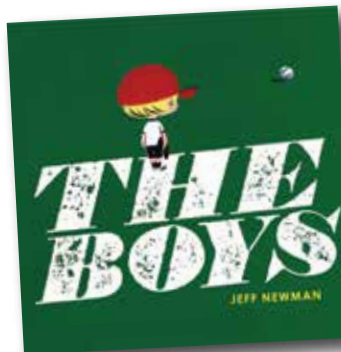
What follows are a half dozen of my wordless favorites, all of which should be available at your local library. The complete list of more than 100 can be found at ReformedPerspective.ca/wordless, or by scanning the QR code at the end of this article with your phone.

THE BOYS

by Jeff Newman

2010 / 40 pages

Simple but brightly colored pictures make this a fun one to figure out – I had to flip back and forth through the pages a few times, so your kids will likely need you alongside to think things through. But you'll both enjoy this gentle story of a boy, newly moved to the neighborhood, and the elderly "boys" that he ends up befriending. He wanted to play baseball but couldn't get invited to



play with the other kids. The elderly gents were more welcoming, so he started hanging with them...and humorously, starts acting like them, in dress and habits. These gents know a boy has to be a boy, so if he's going to follow their lead, then they are going to show him what it's like to play like a boy. It's sweet, with a happy ending for all... which for these gents means getting back to sitting on their bench and watching those other "boys" play ball.

THE LION AND THE MOUSE

by Jerry Pinkney

2009 / 40 pages

When a tiny mouse disturbs the naptime of the King of the Beasts, the King seems intent on having a quick snack. But instead, after some back and forth with the tiny petitioner, the lion lets the mouse go. Why? Readers already familiar with this Aesop's tale will remember that the mice have pledged to help the king if ever he is in trouble. But in Pinkney's almost entirely wordless version because there are only a few squeaks, one owl screech, and a lion's roar, what the mice have promised isn't as clear. But no worries, we can follow along well enough. Then when hunters trap the mighty lion in a net, it is the mouse that comes to the rescue, chewing through the rope to set the lion free. The moral of the story? Even the strongest among us will eventually need help too.



THE BOY AND THE AIRPLANE

by Mark Pett

2013 / 40 pages

A boy gets a toy airplane as a present and an errant throw results in the plane getting stuck on the top of a roof. We then get to see him try everything from a ladder (too short) to a lasso, to a pogo stick, to try and recover his plane. When nothing works the boy settles on a long-term strategy that, while it will require patience, is sure of success: he plants a seed and waits for it to grow into a mighty tree that will be tall enough for him to climb and recover his plane. I am not going to spoil it here by telling you the end, but it is sweet and completely satisfying. The sequel, *The Girl and the Bicycle* (2014), is every bit as good and ties up ends you didn't even know were loose from the first book.

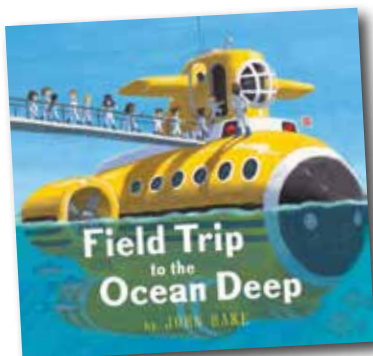


FIELD TRIP TO THE OCEAN DEEP

by John Hare

2020 / 40 pages

A child on a class field trip to the ocean floor gets separated from the group when he goes off to see a sunken pirate ship. While the class's submarine searches for him, he gets to meet ocean floor animals, share his photos with them, and meet



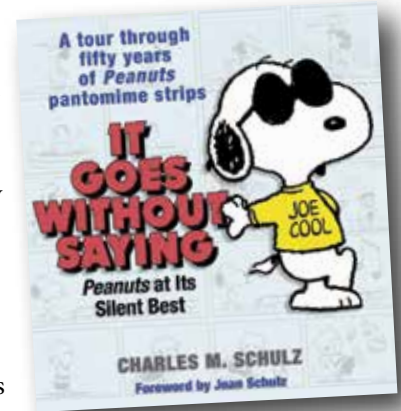
what might be a plesiosaurus who poses for him. A fun, quirky, bright, wordless adventure.

IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING: PEANUTS AT ITS SILENT BEST

by Charles Schultz

2005 / 160 pages

Over 50 years Charles Schultz sprinkled *Peanuts* with a liberal dose of "pantomime" strips. This has been a fun one for my kids to dip into, enjoying pages at a time, but it isn't really the sort of book you'd read front to back. As clever as these wordless strips are, 160 pages is too much of a good thing at one go. If your kids like this, they might also enjoy *Garfield Left Speechless*. It doesn't have the same charm – Garfield is sometimes meanspirited in a way that Snoopy never is – but it has some of the same slapstick creativity.

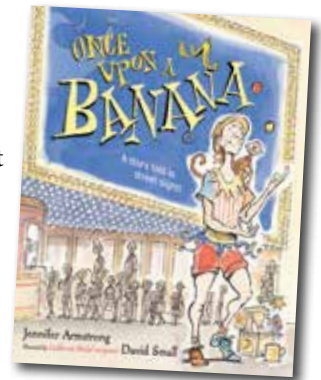


ONCE UPON A BANANA

by Jennifer Armstrong

2013 / 48 pages

When I first brought this home, I gave it a read to all three of my girls. After I was done our youngest daughter, all of three years old, was off on her own "reading" the book to herself. It's been a family favorite ever since. The story is one big chase scene, with monkey owner chasing monkey, and then grocer chasing monkey owner, and then some dogs join the chase, and a skateboarding judge, and a mom, and her baby in its stroller. Oh, and there's a big garbage truck in the mix too. It's crazy and frantic with loads to look at on every page. **RP**



To access the full 100+ wordless reviews, open your phone, start up the camera app and then point it at the QR code below. It should automatically send you to the article. On older phones it isn't always automatic, so then you can either enlist your kids for some tech support or type ReformedPerspective.ca/wordless into the address bar of your browser.



RP'S 52 IN 22 CHALLENGE FINALE

3 gents, 1 book a week, for 1 year

Three gents started the year by setting a challenge to read 52 books by year's end. And if that wasn't a task on its own, two of them decided to write a book too:

- *A Christian Citizenship Guide: Christianity and Canadian Political Life* by André Schutten and Michael Wagner
- *How in the World Did We Get Here?* by Jim Witteveen

This, now, is the finale for the challenge, and once again space doesn't allow for a listing of all the books tackled over the challenge's last couple of months, so these are just a few highlights. The tally below takes the challenge through mid-December – when this issue headed off to the printer – so be sure to check out the complete list, and the final tally at ReformedPerspective.ca/52. You can also find it on RP's social media channels – MeWe, Facebook, Instagram, and Gab – under the hashtag #RP52in22

THE TALLY TO DATE

The lawyer – André Schutten: 42
The minister – Jim Witteveen: 52
The editor – Jon Dykstra: 50

THE LAWYER – ANDRÉ SCHUTTEN

I thoroughly enjoyed reading *Rembrandt Is in the Wind: Learning to Love Art Through the Eyes of Faith* by Russ Ramsey (2022, 256 pages) and not just because my wife is an artist (though the book did spark some great conversations!). Ramsey opens the book with a chapter on the three transcendentals – truth, goodness, and beauty – and how they relate together, how they are attributes of God, and how beauty is essential for applying goodness and truth for the benefit of others (it's a profound chapter!). He then works through nine great artists, starting with Michelangelo and working his way toward the 20th century. With each artist, he examines their life and their works, with a special focus on a single piece. And in each chapter, either through the artist's life or work, Ramsey tells us a parable of sorts, a way to see and appreciate their art through the eyes of faith. Ramsey is a great story-teller, and the book felt more like an anthology of

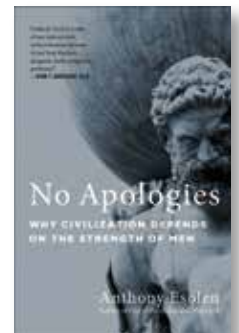
short stories than an art history book or theology of art text. Highly recommended, whether you are an art aficionado or an art ignoramus.

If you're looking for a cheeky spoof of pretentious literary critics, you'll enjoy Frederick Crews' *The Pooh Perplex* (2003, 164 pages). It is written as a casebook for a university English class and contains 12 chapters, each written by a different adherent to a particular school of literary criticism, all of whom evaluate or critique “one of the greatest

literary works ever written,” that being *Winnie-the-Pooh*. The fictional chapter contributors include a committed Freudian, an angry Marxist, an overzealous Christian, an Aristotelian, and more. Crews' book – in a funny and exaggerated way – shows us an important truth: that some with the strongest biases are the most blind to them.

No Apologies: Why Civilization Depends on the Strength of Men by Anthony Esolen (2022, 204 pages) will be dismissed by many as “toxic masculinity.” It's those critics who really should read it. I'll be

honest with you: there were times reading this book that I felt a bit uncomfortable, wondering if Esolen was going too far. But when I stopped to think why I felt uncomfortable, I couldn't disagree with him from a biblical/creational or historical perspective; my emotional discomfort was due to cultural factors or pressures. Indeed, Esolen does not hold back: men build civilizations, and men should not apologize for that. This book is a say-it-as-it-is, courageous, passionate defense of men as men. Men are created very differently from women. There are many differences, but the biggest (and most obvious) difference is that of physical strength. We should celebrate and not loathe that difference! Esolen shows with a mul-



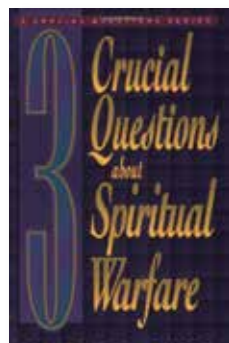
titude of examples how men built buildings and transportation networks, cleared ground and explored continents, created great works of art and invented great technological developments. But the book is not a defense of machismo: men ought not to swagger and boast. But neither should they cringe and cower. Esolen tears down many modern feminist denigrations of masculinity and calls men to use their strength for the common good. I recommend it to high-school-aged men. I dare women who are wary of toxic masculinity to read it too, and after completing it, to let me know what you think.

Perhaps it's bad form or poor taste to include a book here that I co-wrote, but I did read this book this year (many times!) and so I've decided to include it. *A Christian Citizenship Guide: Christianity and Canadian Political Life*, by André Schutten and Michael Wagner (2022, 256 pages) is a readable book, written with a grade 10 student in mind. The first chapter covers Christian influences in Canada's history, often overlooked or taken for granted today by most political commentators. The second chapter covers our constitutional history in England from the time of Robin Hood and Bad King John to the Glorious Revolution of 1688 (and why that matters to Canada and the government we have). The third chapter covers some more legal history in Canada, and explains how the government in Canada works at the federal and provincial level. The fourth chapter covers the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and explains some of the more significant sections in it, particularly as it relates to issues and concerns that Christian citizens might have. The fifth chapter covers the issue of human rights, and shows how Christians should reclaim this concept. The sixth chapter explains how the big idea of sphere sovereignty can help us think through political issues, and the final chapter encourages the reader to be politically engaged as a faithful citizen.



THE MINISTER – JIM WITTEVEEN

The subject of spiritual warfare is not one that appears to receive a great deal of attention in Reformed circles. Of course, we do not deny the reality of spiritual warfare, but it may be that we don't focus much attention on the topic in order to avoid the kind of unbalanced approach that we all too often encounter in other theological traditions. But our reticence to devote much time to studying the topic of spiritual warfare can lead to a very real neglect of this important aspect of the Christian life and worldview. Clinton E. Arnold's *3 Crucial Questions About Spiritual Warfare* (1997, 224 pages) is a good starting point for those who do have questions about this issue. Arnold (who is the dean at the Talbot School of Theology) discusses the following

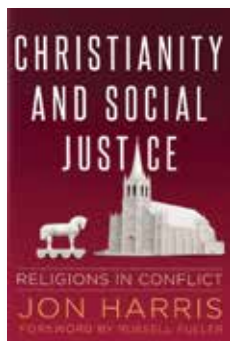


three questions: "What is spiritual warfare?," "Can a Christian be demon-possessed?" and "Are we called to engage territorial spirits?" While the third question may not be as "crucial" as the first two, Arnold's exploration of the nature of spiritual warfare and the possibility of demonic influences in believers' lives in the first two parts of the book is very helpful. His conclusions may challenge your own presuppositions on these subjects, but Arnold does an excellent job of basing his responses to these questions on the teaching of Scripture. He avoids speculation, while at the same time highlighting the importance of spiritual warfare in the believer's life. For Christians who live in a culture which views angels and demons as quaint holdovers from a bygone era, as figures attributed to primitive superstition and little more, it is easy for us to (perhaps inadvertently) neglect the spiritual world in practice, while holding on to its reality in our confession. For this reason, I recommend this book as an effective antidote to the rationalistic tendencies of our age.

This book's subtitle says it all, and throughout *The Victim Cult: How the Grievance Culture Hurts Everyone and Wrecks Civilizations* (2021, 316 pages), Canadian author Mark Milke makes a powerful case for his thesis – "grievance culture," the culture in which everyone has become a victim of someone or something outside of themselves, leaves no individual, and no civilization, unscathed. The cult of victimhood is a disaster on a personal and on a societal level, and Milke does an outstanding job of defending his titular claim. The grievance culture, Milke writes, goes back to the time of Cain and Abel, when Cain declared himself to be the victim, despite his role as aggressor and murderer. Adolf Hitler's political program was built on victimhood; the Rwandan genocide was the poisonous fruit that grew from grievance culture roots; and, writes Milke, the victim cult cannot be limited to only one side of the political spectrum. Milke makes the compelling argument that Donald Trump has himself ridden the wave of the victim cult mentality in his own political career. How has the cult of victimhood become so entrenched in our day? Milke offers possible answers to that question that include: 1) many people have indeed been victimized, leading "victim thinking" to become entrenched; 2) elites often seek to divide people and lead populations down the path of the victim cult in order to serve their own agenda. Milke argues that none of these arguments can completely explain the "why" of the entrenchment of grievance culture. The explanation that Milke offers is compelling; grievance culture has become so powerful because of the widespread belief in man's perfectability, and the belief that civilization itself is the problem, combined with a third pernicious influence: "the suicidal self-loathing of a mainly Western class of intellectuals and academics." Milke proposes solutions, and offers positive examples of groups that have refused to fall victim themselves to the victim cult, as well as positive steps that all of us can take to avoid being taken in by this powerful and destructive ideological movement.



In *Christianity and Social Justice: Religions in Conflict* (2021, 146 pages) Jon Harris begins with a brief overview of the history of the social justice movement, before moving on to a more in-depth evaluation of the ideology behind the social justice movement in the light of current events. I found Harris's explanation of "Standpoint Theory" – the theory that makes the claim that only certain groups can have a genuine understanding of certain issues, while those who do not share their experience cannot truly understand – to be particularly helpful. Harris's discussion of the dangers of unquestioning acceptance of the dominant narrative is also particularly insightful. Harris explains, "The first step in fighting against the social justice movement is understanding what it is. That is the primary purpose of this book. The second step is loving others and telling the truth." *Christianity and Social Justice* certainly meets the goals that Harris set out to achieve.



The Case Against the Sexual Revolution (2022, 216 pages) is, on the one hand, a powerfully-argued book. Louise Perry rightly argues that the Sexual Revolution has been an overwhelming disaster on any number of levels. However, Perry holds to evolutionary psychology, which obviously runs counter to a Biblically-formed worldview. But that an evolutionary psychologist can rightly argue in favor of monogamy within marriage, argue against "hookup culture," and recognize the dangers of pornography, is fascinating to consider in the light of Biblical wisdom. According to Scripture, living wisely means aligning your life with God's created order. The Lord created the world in wisdom, governs it in wisdom, and his moral law shows us how

to live a life characterized by wisdom. To put it very briefly, God's way works! And because God's way works, the evidence of history proves that monogamy within marriage is, pragmatically speaking, the basis of a successful, well-ordered society. Restrictions on sexual expression protect human beings (especially women) from abuse and a great deal of pain. And I could go on. So it's not surprising that an evolutionary psychologist has also come to these kinds of conclusions. However, Louise Perry's erroneous starting point

can only take her so far. I would recommend this book only to the discerning reader, with a warning that, given the subject matter and the worldview of the author, it does make for some rough reading at times.

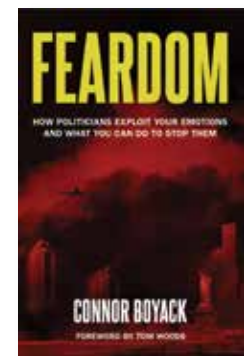
THE EDITOR – JON DYKSTRA

Ten years back, anyone who would have spoken about the forces already in play that would soon have our public schools teaching boys can get pregnant, would have been dismissed as a nut. What Pastor Jim Witteveen shares in *How in the World Did*

We Get Here? (2023, 183 pages) about an "open conspiracy" among the power-hungry will at first sound so outrageous as to be unbelievable too. But make no mistake, this is fact, not fiction. Chapter by chapter, he highlights ideologies and organizations that would seem to have little in common: global warming catastrophists, sexual hedonists, the public school system, overpopulation proponents, evolutionists, Big Tech, and Big Government. They are united, though, in their arrogance that they know – and God does not – what is best for all the rest of us. While their utopias differ, the route forward is the same for them all: a quest for more and more power so they can implement their vision. And, as Witteveen details, these ideologies and organizations are grabbing hold of the reins of power. Thankfully Witteveen also shares a way forward for God's people: many opportunities exist to faithfully honor and obey our Lord as we contend with the forces marshaled against us. *How in the World... Will be a slap upside the head to the many sleepy Christians who haven't yet recognized we are in a battle. Timely and much-needed, what Witteveen has given us is made all the more valuable for its brevity and accessibility – everyone should read this, and most everyone will be able to. Order it at the author's website Dan1132.com.*

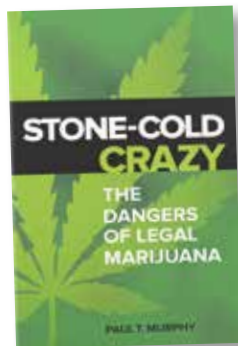


Though it was written years before COVID, Connor Boyack's *Fear: How politicians exploit your emotions and what you can do to stop them* (2014, 160 pages) is certainly relevant to the lockdowns. US president John Adams once wrote, "Fear is the foundation of most governments." Politicians have used voters' fear – of climate change, terrorism, fiscal collapse, and viruses too – as justification for the State to come to the rescue. And at what cost? Well, the measure isn't simply in dollars, but also in lost freedoms. Terrorism and climate change brought government intervention on an enormous scale, which got bigger still with COVID. The bright side? As the author notes, this is nothing new, and it might not even be as bad today as in the past, when even a historical luminary such as Abraham Lincoln threw some of his critics in jail simply for being critics. Boyack is Mormon, and clearly libertarian, which means he's generally Judeo-Christian, and more hardcore about small-government than most *RP* readers. But, regardless of where readers stand, the point he is arguing – that politicians and government officials are using fear to push us – isn't a partisan position, but more a matter of verifiable history. How, then, can we inoculate ourselves against such manipulation? Boyack has a few suggestions, and the point he most strongly emphasizes is one we can certainly agree with: to follow the Golden Rule, treating others,



including those on the opposite side, as we'd like to be treated.

Rev. Paul T. Murphy is both a Reformed pastor and, as he notes in his introduction, a reformed drug user, both of which add to the credibility of his *Stone-Cold Crazy: The Dangers of Legal Marijuana* (2021, 29 pages). This is more booklet than book, but it is an important one, highlighting how the four big arguments for legalization all fall short: 1) marijuana isn't medical, in that it has never gone through the same evaluation as other medical drugs, 2) it doesn't need to be made legal to end the mass incarceration of marijuana users as there is no such mass incarceration, 3) legalizing won't eliminate the criminal black market for it since legal weed is much more expensive, and 4) states won't get a tax revenue windfall from legalization because marijuana use also comes with costs for the State. Murphy notes that Christians might be able to support decriminalization – making it a fine rather than a crime – but as he quotes John Stonestreet, “Legalization says a lot about the worldview of our culture – one in which the State wishes to aid and abet the inability of people to deny themselves any pleasure. That’s called state sponsored hedonism.”



This would be an important read for church councils, and its small size makes it one that parents could read along with their teens.

I've read bigger books on this topic, but I don't know that I've read any better. Barry Cooper's *Can I Really Trust the Bible? And other questions about Scripture, truth and how God speaks* (2014, 83 pages) nails all of the most pressing questions, whether they're about how the Bible came to be, what the Bible says about itself, whether the Bible is culturally outdated, and whether it's circular reasoning to defend the Bible using the Bible. The bigger books might be the go-to for dealing with hardened skeptics (F.F. Bruce's *The Canon of Scripture*, Ken Ham and Bodie Hodge's two-volume *How Do We Know the Bible Is True?*, Neil R. Lightfoot's *How We Got the Bible*, etc.) but for the honest enquirer, Cooper's concise overview will be perfect. This is, as another reviewer put it, the book I wish a younger me could have been able to read.



After writing 10 books about rabbits with swords in his Green Ember kids' fantasy series, S.D. Smith has now teamed up with his 16-year-old son, J.C. Smith, to start a new story in *Jack Zulu and the Waylander's Key* (2022, 292 pages). Jack Zulu is a kid with serious athletic potential, the best at everything he tries. But we learn right off he isn't full of himself, and is best buds with Benny, a decidedly average athlete, whose parents own the local pizzeria. That's where Jack has been spending a lot of his

time, after his police officer father was mysteriously killed, and now that his loving mother has been stuck in the hospital slowly losing her cancer battle. If that sounds like a sad set-up, well it is, but this is a kids' story, so the Smiths lighten things up with loads of comic relief, including Jack's crush on the popular, but also level-headed Michelle. I loved the dialogue between the two friends as Jack gets tongue-tied, or caught up in a coughing fit, or just generally does something to embarrass himself in front of her.

“There are,’ Benny reasoned... ‘different ways we could look at tonight’s events. Blame could be passed around. Or, we could just get you out of town on the next bus. You could change your name and join the circus. I think we both know that returning to school is off the table.’ ‘It was pretty bad,’ Jack sighed and rubbed his face. ‘It started bad,’ Benny said, ‘then got much, much worse.’”

That's some fun dialogue. And that isn't even when the story gets exciting. Echoing Lewis's wardrobe, Jack Zulu discovers a doorway to another world, the Waylands, and a quirky mentor, and a possible way to help his mom. This book has some real strong points, including when Jack is coerced into agreeing to do whatever the winged evil guy tells him to do (or his friends will be killed). Afterwards his quirky mentor notes that if you promise to do something bad, then it would be bad to keep that promise. Such a simple and straightforward answer – I love it! Another really fun quirk: Benny visits the Waylands, and tells his parents about it – a kid being totally honest with his parents? When'd you last read that in an adventure book? The authors are Christian, which comes out in other ways too, including passing mention of God, and prayers to Him. There is some magic, pretty minimal and on par with what you'll find in Narnia; this story is more about sword fights and bravery and knight-ish type stuff, and friends just being loyal friends to one another. I'll say I didn't love the end – the solution to their dilemma was a total surprise to me, so either I missed some foreshadowing, or that wasn't the best resolution. But the journey was fun and I'll certainly be picking up the sequels!



For the complete listing of nearly 150 book reviews, you can scan the QR code below with your phone's camera app, or you can visit ReformedPerspective.ca/52.





&



**INTERCONTINENTAL
TRUCK BODY**

support the great work of the Reformed Perspective Foundation:
"Equipping Christians to think, speak, and act."

We're Hiring!

Are you looking for a great place to work?
Excellent benefits, profit sharing, and a positive workplace environment?
We're hiring for our purchasing, design, and sales teams, and for our production facilities.

APPLY TODAY!



B.C.

5285 192nd Street,
Surrey BC, V3S 8E5
(on the Surrey-Langley border)

Nathan VanSeters, GM
email: nathan@itb.ca



Alberta

1806 11th Street,
Coaldale AB, T1M 1N1

Randy VanSeters, GM
email: randy@itb.ca



1385 W Smith Rd,
Ferndale WA, 98248
(between Lynden & Bellingham)

Marty VanDriel, GM
email: marty@trivan.com

From left to right:
Mark Penninga
(Executive Director),
Bruce DeBoer (Chair),
Lucas Holtvlüwer, Jon
Dykstra (Editor), Aubrey
Vandergaag,
Sharon de Boer
(Secretary),
Marty VanDriel
(Treasurer).



OUR CORE PURPOSE...

Forty-one years ago, a group of courageous men and women took a big step of faith. They started a Christian social-political magazine. In the editorial of their first issue of *Reformed Perspective*, C. Poppe, the chair of the board, shared their reason for proceeding with this ambitious task:

“This desire is born out of repeated requests by concerned Christians, among whom many parents, who are daily faced with the un-Biblical and humanistic approach to life of the media and secular institutions of learning. But the difficulties in realizing the publication of such a periodical always seemed to be greater than our conviction to go ahead. No longer is this so. The tremendous influence of the daily events and of secular thought on young and old urges us to proceed now. We must be prepared to take our stand over against the deluge of misguided information which threatens to weaken the moral fibre of our Christian families and to erode our Christian identity.”

Since that first issue, over 400 more have followed, with hundreds of authors writing thousands of articles about current issues, all rooted in the unchanging basis of God’s Word, and

from a Reformed theological perspective. Several times the organization came very close to closing its doors. But by God’s grace, the work has continued.

I shared the 1982 editorial with the current board of RP when we met for our annual face-to-face meeting in mid-November. At this board meeting we also set aside time to nail down a core purpose, core values, and priorities. It was beautiful to witness how the original vision of 1982 was still being executed fully and faithfully in 2022. This is evidence of God’s grace and providence.


The “un-Biblical and humanistic approach to life” and “deluge of misguided information” has grown substantially since 1982. Eyes are more open to it now, especially after the last two years. And technology has allowed it to spread its tentacles further into our homes and lives. The need for a faithful response is even greater today, and that isn’t likely to change until Christ returns.

We have been blessed with churches in Canada where God’s Word is faithfully proclaimed, Sunday after Sunday. His Word hasn’t changed. But our world has changed a great deal in recent decades. It remains a pressing challenge to translate and apply Sunday’s preaching to the issues we deal with from Monday to Saturday. That’s why, at the November

meeting RP’s board settled on a basic but important core purpose:

“Applying Biblical truth to the issues of our time.”

It reflects the editorial from 1982, and is as necessary in 2022 as ever.

New media outlets have sprung up in recent years to address the “deluge of misguided information,” but few, if any, have done so from the hope and firm basis of the Gospel. We thank God for revealing His will to us. Let us hold on to Him without wavering. 

Teach me, O LORD, the way of Thy statutes; And I will keep it to the end. Give me understanding, that I may keep Thy law and observe it with my whole heart. – Ps. 119:33-34

Mark Penninga is the Executive Director of Reformed Perspective. To support the work of Reformed Perspective scan the QR code below with your phone to go to RP’s donation page, or visit ReformedPerspective.ca/donate.





CALL TO ACTION

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!



Send in your submission to admin@reformedperspective.ca, including your first and last name, before February 14, 2023 and we will select the best and publish them in the next issue.



WHAT LESSON SHOULD WE LEARN FROM COVID?

As Proverbs 15:22 says, "Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed" so let's share – in 100 words or less – one lesson we shouldn't forget from COVID.

SHARE YOUR LOVE STORY!

Valentine's Day can be shallow and sappy... but true Christian love is something to cherish and celebrate. So in 400 words or less, share a true story about what Christian love looks like in action.

