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Christian Educators Journal

Editorial

What Is a Christian Perspective

Bishop's Cafeteria in Des Moines, Iowa, remains indelibly in my memory, for that is where I first learned that it is risky to make choices on the basis of what meets the eye. On one of our family's annual one-day outings, my parents decided to expose their daughters to city dining. Hoping to please a variety of appetites, my father led us into Bishop's. I was totally unprepared for the responsibility of choosing my lunch from the array of meats, salads, bread, jellos, fresh fruits, and desserts that stretched out before me.

At home our choices were usually limited to whether we were having a hard or soft egg or whether we were eating our potatoes with or without gravy, but at Bishop's the choices seemed unlimited. To this day no one in the family will explain just how we landed an additional tray of food at our table. We do know, however, that it was impossible to eat all that we had taken.

Quite a few years have passed since that memorable meal, but sometimes I feel as if I am back at Bishop's Cafeteria—except the chicken legs and fruit bowls have been replaced with rows of educational supplies and curricular theories. From this educational cafeteria I must select that which promotes Christian teaching as I perceive it.

In early classrooms materials were extremely restricted, but today we have numerous educational provisions. Unused textbooks, some never having felt a student's touch, sit on storeroom shelves because they have been judged unsuitable or outdated. Film, book, and supply catalogs arrive almost daily in our mailboxes, urging us to order items that will make our classrooms buzz with learning. At educators' conventions hundreds of suppliers display and dispense their educational offerings. Classroom cabinets and closets nearly burst with filmstrips, multicolored paper, and educational games while AV rooms are stashed with tape recorders, record players, movie projectors, videotape machines, and computers. We are indeed rich.

Along with all that educational gear, we possess a wealth of learning theories. In addition to our professional magazines, we are offered seminars and extension courses that expose us to new educational research and learning theories. Within our own classrooms we find, in the prefaces of our collection of textbooks, a variety of philosophies of education.

Sometimes I wonder if we are wise enough to sort through all the possibilities and come up with a wholesome Christian curriculum. It is doubtful, of course, that very many modern day Christian educators would choose to return to the limited options of simpler days. Since that is not even an option, it follows that every Christian educator is responsible to know and to live out his or her understanding of a Christian perspective.

A number of Christian educators, including the former CEJ editors, have extensively discussed and explained their understanding of a Christian philosophy of education. In recent years we have had access to the writings of Nicholas Wolterstorff and N.H. Beversluis. Christian Schools International's *Principles to Practice* presents a general unified curriculum policy as well as statements of educational philosophy in separate disciplines (art, Bible, language arts, music, science, social studies). Some of the writers of this issue's articles have developed their curriculums on the basis of CSI's guidelines. Others take exception to these policies. In either case, these writers are grappling with an understanding of Christian philosophy. The effort is encouraged by the purpose statement of this magazine.

Yet many teachers, parents, and school board members have only a vague perception of the vision that compelled some of our forefathers to set up covenantal Christian schools. Teachers who are themselves products of Christian education may quite naturally assume they are teaching Christianly, but unless they can clearly state their Christian philosophy, they can easily fall into one of two trends: (1) educate so as to protect or isolate the student from the secular world, or (2) educate to outdo public school graduates in an economically-oriented society.

Textbooks promoting both of these philosophies are available and used by Christian school educators. Isolationist type textbooks appeal to some Christian educators because these textbooks appear to be safe, free of controversy, comfortable. But such protection from the world is deceiving because it is impossible for the Christian to fulfill Christ's mandate to serve Him without confronting the world. Secular textbooks published by well-established publishers can also be deceiving. Beautifully illustrated, thoroughly researched, and broad in scope, these textbooks are designed to produce higher scores in nationwide testing so students can eventually climb higher on the social or economic ladder of success. Such success is usually man-centered, and once again the mandate to serve is threatened. If Christian school teachers are part of the supposed 85 percent of teachers who teach from textbooks during 95 percent of the time spent in class, then those teachers must know what makes teaching Christian before they even open the textbook and read the preface.

I am frequently amazed that the early founders of covenantal Christian schools were so *convincing* as well as so *convinced* of their vision of Christian education. They saw the church, the home, and the school as all contributing to the development of their image-bearing children, and thus of their Christian community.

# of Education?

Perhaps their commitment was easier to honor than is ours. Perhaps they were driven by a need to maintain their religious heritage in North America. Surely they had fewer distractions than we have today, so they devoted more time to reading about and discussing their religious heritage.

Any of us today who is competent to teach, however, is surely capable of thinking through a basic philosophy. Perhaps the word "philosophy" connotes a study of irrelevant theories that we think are too difficult to understand. Perhaps we ourselves have failed to teach the importance or the meaning of philosophy by failing to clearly state what we mean.

John Van Dyke states in his CEJ article on this topic (February/March, 1982) that by failing to include philosophy in the Christian high school curriculum we deny all who do not go to college an opportunity to reap its benefits, yet we expect them to acquire a Christian philosophy of life. In the light—or perhaps the shadow—of his comment, we who educate might be the ones responsible for an inability in our Christian community to articulate our philosophy. Furthermore, we who teach are apparently failing to write or to tell our students and their parents how our textbooks, our self-written units, our teaching methods, our classroom arrangements, and even our methods of discipline reflect our belief in a need for Christian community, in the responsibility to serve, in the command to develop and respond to all parts of God's creation.

We need to express to our students, both by word and by model, that Christ is Lord in our lives, and that means serving Him. We need to exercise the creative ability of God's image in ourselves as we think of ways in our individual lessons, from kindergarten and upward, to say and show that each uniquely created being among us has a worthy contribution as a member of Christ's Body.

When we clearly know beforehand what is God-pleasing for the Body, we will be better equipped to avoid the educational choices that confuse our purpose or detract from the unity and strength of the whole Body.

LVG

The Chalkboard

David W. Chapman

The relationship between the chalkboard
And myself
Has grown rather strained of late.

I, pounding away daily at the blankness,
And the board
Refusing to retain anything past the hour.

Even the chalk rebels
And will forever be straying,
White powder settling unseen
On my hands and clothes,
Mingling with sweat to a paste.

What wonder then if students
Will not suffer like blank tablets
To be filled with my scribbling,
But insist on leaving their traces on me
Like the chalk which comes off in my hand.

Roy DeBoer

"The Social Studies Classroom —A Place to Develop Effective Speaking"

With this article Mr. DeBoer continues his discussion of integrating language arts skills in the social studies classroom, a natural place, he thinks, for teachers to help students to develop those skills. In the previous issue he discussed strategies for teaching listening skills, this time he focuses on speaking.

One area of language arts that can be given significant attention in the junior high social studies classroom is speaking. Social studies teachers need only look at the content of their courses to see that a clear-cut relationship exists between the study and practice of speech and social studies. Whether social history, economics, geography, political science, or current events, social studies involves the examination of issues, trends, events, and people that provide a wealth of subject matter which can be used to stimulate good oral communication.

Although it is true that students do participate orally in many social studies classrooms, the nature, extent, and educational value of that participation may vary widely, depending on the approach of the individual teacher. Social studies teachers who have mastered questioning strategies in which their students must go beyond simple yes or no answers are already taking a significant step in helping students to improve their ability to speak. There are, however, at least two additional components of speech education that can be used effectively in the social studies classroom.

One of these elements is group discussion. In using group discussions social studies teachers can devise strategies that give their students the opportunity to define specific issues, collect and record data, and present and appraise the data which has been collected. When students know that they will be making oral presentations open to the evaluation of their classmates, they will prepare more thoroughly and consequently reach higher levels of achievement.

To promote good discussion, teachers must establish and enforce rules to insure courtesy. They must provide opportunities to speak for all who wish to do so. They must insist that all participants speak loudly enough to be heard, and they must work to avoid unnecessary repetition. Not only can these rules provide students the opportunity to practice oral expression, but they also help to establish habits of orderliness and reflection essential to responsible communal action. Students will see that collaboration can yield results that may be superior to individual thinking because in group discussion there are larger numbers of ways to look at a problem, larger numbers of suggestions for solving a problem, and larger numbers of effective criticisms of each proposed solution (Walter T. Petty and others, *Experience in Language*, Allyn and Bacon 1973).

The other important method for students to practice good oral communication is formal speech, both informational and persuasive. Not only can this experience provide students with valuable practice in public speaking but it can enrich the social studies curriculum and encourage students to probe into topics a bit deeper than they might otherwise do. However, social studies teachers in the junior high who wish to involve their students in public speaking will have to spend time teaching their students some of the elements necessary to construct and present good speeches.

Teachers will have to point out, for example, some of the elements of good oral style—that good oral style is more personal than formal writing and permits the generous use of the first and second personal pronouns; that good oral style, unlike formal writing, takes advantage of contractions so that speaking takes on the characteristics and rhythm of conversation; and that good oral style makes use of devices of repetition such as forecast, summary, and restatement. Finally, teachers need to instruct their students in the use of rhetorical questions as a transition tool and as a device to maintain interest.

Social studies teachers in the junior high can make good use of informational speeches. Short research projects on the conditions of life in Colonial America can, for example, culminate with students presenting speeches on a variety of topics ranging from architecture to religion. Such a lesson, allowing one or two students to become specialists in a given area of Colonial life, can be used to show students that speaking with others about our particular expertise is an art that requires careful and thoughtful use of language if communication is to be effective.

Persuasive speeches are also useful in the social studies classroom. Students will need to understand that persuasion is the act of influencing people through oral, motivational appeals. They must be

taught to use devices such as parable and analogy, and they must learn to use words, examples, and statistics in a fashion that does not destroy the integrity of their speech. Once the students grasp the use of these techniques, persuasive speeches can be valuable alternatives to written assignments.

While these are only two of many possible ways to integrate speech into the social studies classroom, teachers who use them will become effective teachers of public speaking. Those who are willing to accept the challenge will also discover that their students' abilities to comprehend and respond to the difficult concepts and precepts found in social studies instruction will be increased.

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NOTICE
Media Review Columnist

The CEJ Board is eager to revive the Media Review column which last appeared in Volume 21. Any potential column editor with a special interest in media is encouraged to send an inquiry to:

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World Views in

It's Monday morning, Lucid Christian High.

Quietly we enter the back door of classroom 23 and unobstrusively sit down at the back. It's period 2, Science 9A, Mr. Van't Rad conducting. He has already started the lesson.

"...obviously use water in lots of different ways. OK? Now for one of your assignments, I'll have you read section 8:1 in your texts and summarize in point form the main uses of water. I'll give it to you on the overhead in a few minutes.

"Now. Properties of water. Or better yet, H_20. Now we're getting into the real science of water. Now, you've already learned a lot of properties of water in previous years, and I don't need to teach them to you again. But you've got to know them and have them handy, so I've summarized them for you on this overhead and I'd like you to copy them down in your notebooks.

"Notice that one of these properties is that water has a boiling point of 100°C. We're going to take a closer look at that property, and first we need some data. So, when you've finished copying this down, go to your lab stations and do experiment 8:1 on page 156 of your textbook. Make sure that you record the temperature carefully to the nearest half-degree, and exactly every thirty seconds. Any questions?..."

We watch the students work quietly and busily for a few minutes. Then, surreptitiously, we slip out the back door and quietly into room 24. Ms. Harris is officiating in Science 9B. A student is talking.

"...furnace went on the blink. All the water pipes in his basement busted. Boy was he ticked off!"

"Can you explain why or how that happened, John?"

"Well, water expands when it freezes, so that's why it busted the pipes."

"Why does water expand when it freezes? ...Anyone? ...None of you is quite sure? Then that's another question we can try to find the answer to." (She jots it down on the blackboard.) "Can you think of any other ways in which we use water, or in which water affects us or the creation?... Cynthia?"

And Cynthia replies. After another fifteen minutes of dialogue, Ms. Harris draws things together.

"We've learned two main things today. First of all, we use water, and water affects us and the rest of creation in a marvelous variety of ways. Second, we've seen some of the properties of water and discovered that we have quite a few questions about them yet.

"Now, I have two assignments, each one focused on one of these main ideas we have learned. The first is a picture poster on the uses of water; the second is an assignment that is partly experiment, but mostly research on the properties of water and some of the questions we have raised. You may choose either one of them, and in a day or two, we'll share the results with each other."

As Ms. Harris goes on to describe the two assignments more fully and answer students' questions about them, we slip out the back.

From these fragments of two lessons, we can see that students are being presented with quite different messages about how we (ought to) view the world and about what the world is like. In this article, I argue the following points:

1. We all have world views and they are important.
2. All teaching communicates world views.
3. We generally transmit world views via a hidden curriculum.
4. Our textbooks regularly project unchristian world views and we may be doing the same in our teaching.
5. We can reshape our teaching to help our students build a Christian world view.

What do we mean by the term "World View" and how do world views function in people's lives?

Herman Proper

Science Teaching

The concept of world view is similar to other concepts common in reformed Christian circles such as world and life view, perspective, or Blamire's "mind." (See note.) By world view, I mean a *network of basic ideas* about the makeup of our world and about how we can know about it. Ideas in a world view may be held consciously or subconsciously, but even an unexamined world view answers such fundamental questions as: What is prime reality? Who are we and what is the meaning of our existence? Does God exist, and if so, what is He like? How do we come to know all this? These ideas may be of different character such as beliefs, notions, attitudes, feelings, and opinions, and they form a network—a more or less coherent whole. A world view is thus a map in our minds of what the world is like and what our place in it is.

Like a map, our world view orients us and we steer by it. We can identify a number of ways in which it functions:

1. It *charts the direction* of our lives. It influences the goals we set, the choices we make, and thus the experiences we have. It is a shortcut to making decisions. (It is, of course, not the only influence and it is conceivable that we "sin" against our world view.)

2. It *structures our interpretation* of our experience. It is the thought framework that orders our experiences, relates them to each other, and assigns them their relative importance and meaning. To illustrate, my world view causes me to almost totally ignore the sports pages of the newspapers but to scan or read articles related to science. That's due not only to my interests, but also to my notions of my task as science teacher and to what's important for Christians in society.

3. A world view has *explanatory power.* It provides answers to some questions directly. To other questions it indicates what procedures are allowable in finding answers, what sorts of answers are allowable, and what sorts of backing the answers need. For example, people with a Christian world view will not look to science to answer the question "Why is there pain?", and they will not accept the answer "Pain evolved as a mechanism to protect the organism from harm."

4. Finally, a world view *acts as glasses.* It shapes what and how we see people, things, and events, and how we treat them. It leads us to ask some questions, but to ignore or be unable even to think of others. Even in science, our "paradigm" is our "time-tested and group-licensed way of seeing." We see what we have been taught to see, what our world view allows. (What science teacher has not struggled to help students *see* and draw cells through a microscope!)

It seems almost a truism that all teaching expresses one's world view. If that is so, *how* does it show? Well, let us return to the examples with which we began.

Mr. Van't Rad's comments imply the following: Scientific knowledge is better than everyday knowledge; real knowledge comes from the textbook either in the form of facts or "recipe" experiments; what scientists tell us is the way the world really is. Ms. Harris' lesson, on the other hand, implies the opposite: our everyday knowledge is as real as our scientific knowledge; we can get real knowledge ourselves by exploring the creation; different ways of learning can be equally valid; the picture we build of the world in science is limited and one-sided.

Perhaps the teachers are not even aware that such implications can be reasonably drawn from these segments. If those same messages are projected to the students day after day, their world views will be significantly affected. Regrettably, those messages are *hidden* from the students, implied or assumed, but not openly stated or discussed.

At times, we talk openly with our students about our beliefs, our stand on issues, the meaning of what we do. However, studies have shown that most of the time, world view messages in both curriculum materials and teacher talk are hidden. In science teaching, important messages are given about the nature of reality, the status of scientific knowledge, the relation between faith and science, etc.

Three unchristian perspectives common in science teaching are mechanism, scientism, and evolutionism.

Evolutionism, the dominant perspective in every non-Christian biology text, is the view that all living creatures are related as direct descendants of one distant population of cells which arose spontaneously from non-living matter. Although described openly, this view is presented as fact, not interpretation. Its basis is not presented and alternatives are never discussed. Thus its true status and character are hidden from students.

Scientism is the attitude that science is "*the* true and ultimate way to solve the problems of nature and man." Science alone gives reliable knowledge. Textbooks commonly present the scientific method as the best or only reliable way to gain knowledge. Other ways of knowing are commonly not presented. Mr. Van't Rad's lesson tends toward scientism.

Analysis of textbooks has shown that mechanism is the world view projected most often in some biology textbooks. Such diverse phenomena as heredity (DNA), digestion (action of enzymes), plant tropisms, and human thinking processes are all analyzed and explained in terms of discrete particles moving through space. Aside from being an illegitimate interpretation, the material is presented not as an interpretation, but as *the* way it *is*.

What a powerful claim these texts make: these are the FACTS and you can believe them because *WE* said them!

Though hidden, such messages are not incidental, but systematic and pervasive. They add up to a powerful world views message which our students often take up without examination and without even the realization that they *are* absorbing world views.

I assume that one of our aims in a Christian school is to have our students build a *Christian* world view. Each person's world view will be in its details unique, but in its broader outline shared with a community. The students must build their own world views —we may not indoctrinate that into them.

Therefore we must present students with other world views and help them to examine their own also; we are fully conscious intellectually only when we are aware of our own world views and why, in the light of other options, we hold them. We teachers must then be critically aware of our own world views and those projected by the materials we use. Given such aware teachers, what sort of teaching will help students build a Christian world view? I'd like to suggest seven characteristics of such teaching.

1. *Teach broad creation-based content.* Our content is often based heavily on what scientists have learned and textbook writers have neatly packaged for us. Our students ought to read God's world for themselves, interpret it, and compare their interpretations with scientists' interpretations.

2. *Broaden our life-skill focus.* Our present courses usually aim to prepare for further courses. More important is to prepare students for their roles as decision-makers and citizens. They will need to make sense of advertising messages, media reports, government policies, product claims, environmental issues which have science or technology content, and they will need to judge those claims. What world views shape those claims?

3. *Teach for thinking.* Students need to practice such skills as comparing, interpreting, looking for assumptions, deciding. They need to be able to compare conceptual schemes along with their assumptions and implications.

4. *Teach for epistemological awareness.* Constant questions for students ought to be: How do you (they, the texts) know? What support is given for a claim? What beliefs provide a basis for it? Such teaching will help develop a mind-set that does not accept knowledge claims uncritically.

5. *Use an appropriate manner of teaching.* This includes such features as learning what the students already know so you may educate *their* minds. Make students active learners, responsible to a degree for what and how they learn. View students as collaborators (though unequal) and give them the observations to organize. Allow for students' intellectual independence by exposing the basis for knowledge claims so students may exercise their judgment.

6. *Teach world views.* Every knowledge claim is rooted ultimately in some world view. We need to show that all reporting is explanation and that a variety of modes of explanation is needed to account for the diversity of creation. Thus mechanistic explanations are best for some phenomena but very limited or inappropriate for others. No one mode can explain everything in creation. Therefore a satisfactory and Christian world view will allow for a variety of explanations.

7. *Expose religious roots.* Every world view derives its strength and motive from some religious root. There is some final authority that gives it its own internal truth and validity. As P. Hirst states (*Philosophical Analysis and Education*), for some, rationality is "the final court of appeal in *all* human affairs." For a Christian, this religious root becomes the core by which we judge a world view and accept or reject it.

The students must build their own world views — we may not indoctrinate that into them.

We do teach world views, perhaps unaware of what world views we at times project. We can modify our teaching so as to make our students more aware of world views and their functions in our lives. Thus our teaching can contribute to helping our students build a Christian world view.

Is there one final authoritative world view? I think we will not reach it, if there is—on earth we will always see everything through a glass darkly. Let us not lead our students to assume that they have the TRUTH and can now shut their minds. Let us always keep our hearts and world views open to the judgment and correction of God's Word.

NOTE: This article is based on a longer paper available from the author. It has complete documentation.

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Robert L. Van Wieren

Problem-Solving in Math Education

When in the winter of 1981-1982 our faculty Curriculum Committee decided to revise our math program we realized it would take more than simply buying new books. Looking at the sample copies of math books sent to us by the major publishers, we discovered that little had changed in the textbooks from the time our eight-year-old series had been published. As a result we called in Dr. Grayson Wheatley, a Christian professor of math education at Purdue University, who could understand our ideas of reforming all of education for our Lord.

Dr. Wheatley spoke to the faculty and Education Committee of the Board encouraging us to work into our math curriculum a heavy emphasis on problem-solving. By problem-solving he meant far more than the traditional word problems at the end of a chapter in a math text. He meant real creative problem-solving, or using the skills the child has at that particular time in his/her education to solve problems, without judging method or efficiency. His ideas included an end to "spoon-feeding" by a teacher. His goal was to make problem-solving fun, but also challenging and systematic. He felt that specific problem-solving strategies should be taught so the child had some tools to tackle a problem without having to go to the teacher. Dr. Wheatley said if we made problem-solving an integral part of our math curriculum, with a large number of manipulatives, and taught specific strategies for problem-solving, our pupils would be excited about problem-solving, our standardized test scores would go up not only in problem-solving but also in computation skills, and our parents would love it. His plea was to make math meaningful. He meant to show the child, by way of problem-solving, why math was important to study.

It sounded good. But we were too sophisticated to be taken in by the catchy excitement of a slick-talking professor pushing his latest brainstorm. We had lived through "new math." How could we find time in an already too-full curriculum to teach problem-solving? We all knew we had to drill frequently to get computation skills into our pupils' heads. We knew how difficult it was to even "get through the book" without adding problem-solving. We also knew what our kids thought of problem-solving—everything from a groan to a verbal "Yuk."

We asked Dr. Wheatley for proof that his method would work. One of our goals for changing math was to increase our standardized test scores; could he produce evidence that his method would accomplish this? He could and did. He gave us several books and articles he had written and left us with a promise of help if we needed it.

In the next month our faculty read much and talked a lot about integrating problem-solving into the math curriculum. We convinced ourselves it was the only way to go. We even felt it could be a stepping stone in the development of a math curriculum from a Christian perspective. A plan for adoption of a new program was developed and we got to work.

As we looked at the textbooks again, we were reminded of our initial discovery that not much was new under the sun. No book available emphasized problem-solving. It was time to develop our own curriculum, suitable to our own needs, and to buy all the relevant supplementary material available before we ran out of money. We bought the math series we felt was the best and began writing our own curriculum.

Two teachers, Beth Lageveen and Donna (Buteyn) DeKryger, and I worked for a good portion of the summer developing a new curriculum guide which would incorporate problem-solving into our mathematics curriculum. Dr. Wheatley helped us through the beginning stages. By the final draft, we had developed a curriculum which incorporated our objectives and requirements.

1) We developed a rationale for teaching mathematics from a Christian perspective.

2) We required that each teacher of math teach problem-solving at least once every five days.

3) We set up a two-week period at the very beginning of each year for teaching problem-solving strategies. We were *not* going to bore the pupils with drill and practice and review of the previous year.

4) We identified all problem-solving materials we had acquired.

5) We gave each classroom teacher a pre-test and a post-test to administer to the appropriate class for the first quarter to determine if the strategies for problem-solving were being learned and used by our pupils.

6) We gave specific suggestions and ideas for teaching seven specific problem-solving strategies: a) Find a Pattern, b) Make a List, c) Guess and Test, d) Draw a Diagram, e) Break into Parts, f) Use Resources, and g) Choose the Operation.

7) We required that each teacher *must* complete the entire textbook. The Curriculum Guide included a lengthy pacing chart to guide the teacher in completing the text in one hundred-twenty days. We identified each objective to be taught and listed the level of mastery to be attained for that objective at that specific grade level. We found many pages to be unnecessary and we marked them as optional material. Finally we did away with the excessively lengthy review at the beginning of the school year.

Even though the statement of rationale took on its final shape after the rest of the curriculum guide was written, it was discussed throughout the writing of the guide, and the first draft was written before the guide was completed. We

feel the study of rationale is a key starting point in teaching mathematics from a Christian perspective, therefore, it is printed here in its entirety as it was printed in the Curriculum Guide.

A Christian education must consist of more than a systematic Bible study, chapel on Wednesday, and a singing of praises to our Lord each morning. These things are good. However, these alone do not make the education in our Christian school Christ-centered.

One major consideration in developing curriculum programs from a Christ-centered perspective is to determine Biblically who man is and, therefore, who the child is. Christians believe that man is created by God in His image. That image, though stained by sin, is so important to our Father that He sent His Son to redeem that image. This image-bearing aspect of man cannot be dissected or studied in isolation because man is a totality—a whole being body and soul.

Because man is a totality, a being whose physical, emotional, spiritual, social, mental aspects all work together and affect each other, we cannot separate one of these aspects from the other without doing damage to the idea of the image-bearing aspect of man. We must recognize this as Christian teachers. The behaviorist over the past twenty years has segmented man into individual parts and studied each of those parts. Unfortunately, without putting those parts together again, he has attempted to educate youth. He has attempted to do this while ignoring the fact that there is a spiritual side to learning as well as a physical, emotional, and social side.

Over the past twenty years, following the lead of the behaviorists, textbooks have segmented man. They have taught that if we follow simple rules of cause and effect (stimuli-response), we can teach a child anything. To be educated is to have the right set of rules and facts so the task at hand can be accomplished. Man's spiritual side had nothing to do with education. It became the domain solely of the church while it was ignored by the school. In addition, education became "neutral." It was simply facts divorced from any religious presuppositions or basis.

We, however, have set ourselves a lofty goal—to educate the whole child in the same manner that Jesus' growth is described in Luke 2:52.

> And Jesus increased in wisdom (mental, analytical, common sense) and in stature (physical) and in favor with God (spiritual), and man (social).

Simple stimuli-response situations are not fully educating a child.

Yet that is what mathematics education has become. If the right stimuli (rules, drills, facts) are placed before the child, the correct responses (answers) will result. One single aspect of man is extracted and taught and this is called mathematics education. In modern math teaching, problem-solving is no more than answering problems placed at the end of a chapter. The right stimulus is put in and the correct response comes out.

When Christian educators first took a look at the curriculum, they found that placing it under the Lordship of Jesus seemed relatively easy, except for math. Math teachers had endorsed the behaviorists' dissection of man and began to believe that math was simply a set of rules and skills to be memorized. Rules and skills were "neutral."

Interestingly, the age of communications, electronics, and computers is fast freeing us from the bonds of behaviorism. People must be able to think beyond a conditioned response and solve problems in a creative manner. As Dr. Grayson Wheatley has said:

> A computationally based curriculum is ineffective in developing the total skills necessary for success in today's world. Automation of production is resulting in the demand for workers who can reason and make decisions, not just perform repetitive tasks. It is important that we provide students with the skills that will be important for living and working in the future.

Mathematics education is once again drawing together the various aspects of man and viewing him as a totality. For math to become a meaningful discipline for children to study, it must have a reason, an application, a usefulness. If math can be used, it has meaning and the child sees a reason to study. Computations have been performed at a stimulus-response level with no thought for the particular needs of the child.

The problem-solving approach to mathematics is changing all that. Children are using math in very real life situations. They are not being restricted and bound by rules, but are using rules and strategies to solve problems in ways that are meaningful and relevant. With the problem-solving methods of math instruction man is being knit back together. All aspects of his being go into creative problem-solving. He is working as a total human being. In other words, he is not being attacked spiritually. His image-bearing quality before his Creator remains intact. He is a whole.

As Christian educators we must work hard to find ways to place the math curriculum more fully under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Problem-solving is just a beginning. Using manipulatives effectively is another area. We have only begun to see how Jesus Christ can be the Lord of math in the same way we have so long believed He was Lord of the rest of the curriculum. If we truly recognize and find ways to honor the child's image-bearing qualities before his Lord, we will begin to see the reformation of this once "neutral" aspect of the curriculum to its religious aspect under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

We began the 1982-83 school year with inservice training for all math teachers by the members of the committee who wrote the new curriculum. We taught the teachers how to teach problem-solving. We also began the school year with a letter to all the

parents of our school explaining to them how we were going to teach math and how the teaching would differ from the methods used before.

More than a year has passed—our first year of making problem-solving a major emphasis of our math curriculum. What did our end-of-the-first-year evaluation show us?

First of all, our kids love problem-solving. In fact, they beg for it, and if it is cancelled for a week they want to know why.

Secondly, our parents are excited about the change. They have told us that math has been exciting for their children this past year. But more importantly, the parents view what we are doing as meaningful to their children's math education. It is more than drill and practice because now there is real meaning to the drill and practice. Many parents also feel that problem-solving is a vital skill for this fast-moving computer age, in which their children are growing.

Finally, what did it do to our standardized test scores? We were surprised. Math soared upward to the 80th percentile and matched the rest of our pupils' scores in the other subject areas. On the problem-solving section of the test our pupils jumped 7 percentile points. We also found that Dr. Wheatley was correct—our pupils' scores jumped 14 percentile points on the math computation section of the test.

One year may be too soon to evaluate the total effectiveness of our math program's problem-solving direction, but we do know that math has become meaningful and fun to our students and they have a reason to learn. We feel we have made at least a beginning in reforming this once "neutral" area of the curriculum for our Lord.

Robert Van Wieren is administrator of Lafayette Christian School, Lafayette, Indiana.

Should Church and State

By asserting through various decisions that religion must be kept totally separate from public education, from government, from civic responsibility, and from science, the United States judiciary has adopted the religion of secular humanism. In its broadest sense, secularism refers to the dividing of life into two separate, mutually exclusive realms, the sacred and the secular. The sacred, presumably, is that domain where God has influence and legitimate place. For many persons, some well-intended but misguided Christians included, God is limited to the eternal or other-worldly realm. For them, God is transcendent, but certainly not imminent. God has nothing to do with the nitty-gritty affairs of this life. When Christ ascended forty days after Easter, He went to heaven to await our autonomous decisions to join Him in eternity. Such theological stances have contributed to this sacred-secular dichotomy and give fuel to the current renderings of the Supreme Court.

An integral part of our Protestant theology is the concept of the Kingdom. Jesus Christ claimed repeatedly, and Christians of all ages have readily affirmed, the He was and is the King of the universe. When Christians acknowledge Christ as King, they are honoring not a limited monarchy, reduced by constitutional restrictions, but an absolute sovereign. They serve a risen Lord who demands undiluted allegiance all the while they live as citizens in a nation which threatens to impose severe restrictions and limitations on that worship.

In late twentieth century America the vast majority of persons have come to assume that, of course, church and state should be separated. Ever since 1947, when Justice Hugo Black wrote the majority opinion for the Everson Case, the phrase "wall of separation between church and state" has become progressively ingrained into the fabric of American jurisprudence. During the 1960's that notion convinced a majority of the Supreme Court to outlaw prayer and Bible reading in the public schools, as well as the posting of the Ten Commandments on classroom walls. Since those early decisions in the Engel and Abingdon cases, the courts of the United States have become extremely skittish about any kind of government action which permits or even vaguely promotes religious activity.

We complicate the matter and we perpetuate this assumption when we fail to know our nation's history well and when we no longer bother to pack our words with the clear meanings historically ascribed to them. If we no longer study history carefully and no longer use our dictionaries, we are as guilty as those men and women who sit on the bench and interpret the laws for us. We, as well as they, have put God into ever smaller and smaller boxes. We, too, perpetuate myths where intelligence and common sense ought to prevail.

In diagram form, according to the contemporary American myth, the relationship between church and state would look as follows:

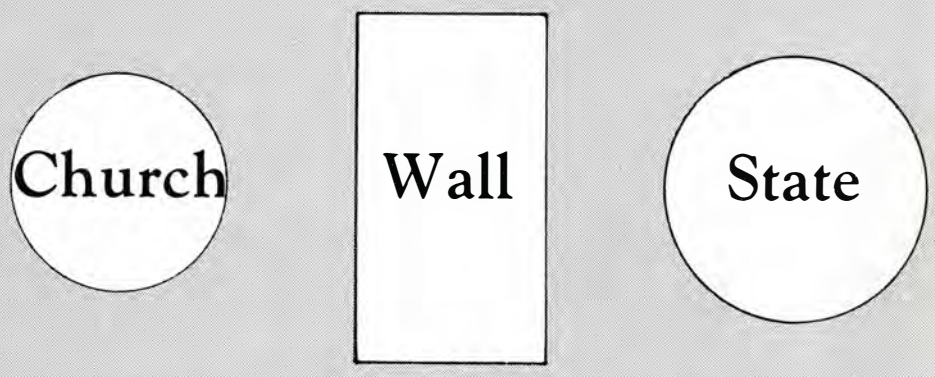


Fig. 1. The Wall of Separation. Although this phrase appears nowhere in the First Amendment or in the Constitution, Justice Hugo Black inserted it into the majority opinion of the Everson Case in 1947. He borrowed it from a Jan. 1, 1802 letter which Thomas Jefferson wrote to his political supporters in the Danbury Baptist Association.

When confronting such an image, the least that we could do would be to ask for a definition of terms. What do you mean by the church? What do you mean by the state? We could also ask appropriate and necessary questions about "that wall of separation". *Who* put it in place? *Why* was it placed there? Was that presumed wall *intended* by the *founders* of our country? Does such language appear in our constitution or in any of our laws?

Such questions are legitimate and essential, but the answers to them will have to wait, at least for now. The first order of business, it seems to me, is a definition of terms, for if we don't know the meanings of the words we use, we have no business using them. When I check a dictionary I find that the word "church" means: "The collective body of Christians; any body of worshippers; a religious society; the building in which worshippers gather." When I check the history of theology, of which "the church" is a vital and significant element, I find

Be Separated?

that our creeds, our catechisms, and our confessions all describe the "church" as the body of Christ, those people who are chosen of God, or the Bride of the Savior.

The "church" is and always refers to people. The church is God's people, your parents and mine, you and I. *We* are *the church*. Pastors, elders, deacons, organists, ushers, and choir members all help to form it, but they, too, are people.

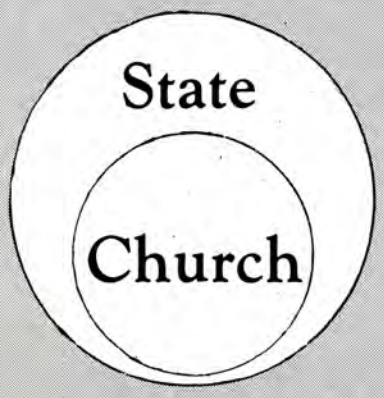
When I check with Webster concerning the "state," I find a similar kind of answer. The "state," says the dictionary, is "a political body; any body of people occupying a common territory." When I check books on political science or civics, I find there, too, that the state is identified as people who live in a specified territory and who are responsible to the same laws and the same government. Illinois, for example, is a *state* only because it is inhabited by a number of people who agreed to band together and live together with a common set of laws and common officers to make and enforce those laws. Before there were people in this territory there was no state. If we all left for California, the state of Illinois would no longer exist. We are the state, you and I collectively, just as you and I are the church.

But some may object. The state, they would assert, is not the average citizen, but that which makes up the government. The mayors of our cities, the governors of our states, the city councils, and the justices who sit in our courts, they are the state. Such an argument should have some credence, but we ought not to stop with those few individuals, for there are numerous offices and officers who help to comprise the state. We should add to that list all of the legislators and their assistants, all the policemen, the sheriffs, the meter maids, the firemen, the public health staff, the probation officers, the security force at the jails, the highway repair crews, and a host of others besides. In any listing, though, we ought not to forget the teachers, administrators, secretaries, and bus drivers of our public schools, for they are legally and historically agents of the state.

However long the above list of officers and state agents might become, one fact ought to be readily obvious. We are still talking about *people* whenever we talk about the government. Your relatives, your neighbors, you and I make up the government. The state is not a disembodied monster or a super-human entity which resides lifeless beneath some silver dome or crimped into a manila folder in some bureaucratic jungle. No, the government and the state, as Webster so clearly points out, is a collection of persons, of which you and I are part.

If you and I are the church, and if you and I are also the state, then it would seem apparent that *you* cannot be separated from *you*, and I cannot be separated from *myself*. We *as citizens* cannot be separated from us *as the church*, even if we attempt to commit ourselves to a sustained program of intellectual schizophrenia.

In reality, the church cannot be separated from the state. This presumed wall of separation between church and state is a figment of someone's imagination, a thought which remains a thought and cannot become reality. But let me also assert loudly and clearly that the two are not synonymous. The two terms cannot be equated, even though you and I are significant parts in both. Let me illustrate with another diagram.



In the above illustration, the church is within the state, a part of it, but not equal to it. The state includes all those who live in it, both those who are members of the church and those who are not. Within the church are only those who are the elect of God, the called out ones who are redeemed by the blood of Christ. That is *reality*. The church is within the state, but not identical to it.

On a parenthetical note, we might wish that every citizen of the state were also a member of the church. If we really took seriously the Great Commission, we would be doing much more to expand the church. The *ideal* situation would exist when everyone of our fellow Americans came to know the Lord and to live for Him. But that will not realistically happen, and a further discussion of it at this juncture would take us far afield.

Before we close our minds, though, to that possibility of a church that is almost coterminous with the state, let us conjecture something for just a minute.

Suppose that the President of the United States, in his constitutional concern for "our general welfare", looked across this vast land and took note of all the strange religions, heresies, if you will. Suppose, further, that after much serious discussion and many prayers, the President, with the full backing of Congress, called and convened a special national

Synod to resolve the matter. I should remind you here that it is quite proper to pray in the White House and in the halls of Congress, even though it is illegal in the public classroom. Assume, though, that the President and the Congress selected the best Biblical scholars in the country, paid all their expenses, and employed them for as long as necessary. Their task would be to draft a creed or a confession that was a comprehensive, accurate summary of Scriptural teaching so that all the citizens might be able to distinguish the true from the false religion. Conjecture even farther. Presume that Congress then took their document under serious study, debated it, and finally approved it by majority vote. They then had it printed and circulated throughout the country with the strong endorsement that everyone accept it as their personal confession of faith. Strange scenario, is it not?

Would you subscribe? Would you say, "Yes, I am willing to accept such a creed?" Most of us, I presume, would have some difficulty with such a procedure. Some of our churches, in fact, might even distribute petitions to impeach the President. Certain denominational leaders might even go so far as to put on their political shoes, march on Washington, and demand that those citizens whom we elected to office stop assisting us with the work of the Great Commission. That would be ironic, but strange things do happen in this mixed bag we call America.

In the event that you haven't guessed it by now, most of the historic creeds of the Christian church were formed in exactly the fashion just described. The earliest example of such a national and international statement of faith is the Nicene Creed, drafted at the request of the Roman Emperor Constantine in 325 A.D. We, along with almost the whole Western branch of the Christian church since that time, accept it and proclaim it as ours without so much as a twinge of conscience.

Since the Reformation, an almost identical procedure was followed in the drafting of the Lutheran's Augsburg Confession and their Formula of Concord, the Anglicans' and the Episcopalians' Thirty-Nine Articles, the Germans' Heidelberg Catechism, and the international Canons of Dort drafted at the Synod of 1618-1619. The last major synod of such a sort, called into session by the English parliament, produced the Westminister Confession as well as the Larger and Shorter Catechisms.

The church is within the state, but not identical to it.

When we willingly and knowingly adopt any one or any number of these creeds, we are saying, in effect, that it is and has been historically permissable for a king or a president or a legislature to utilize their offices for the general welfare of the church. We are implying that part of the duty of elected and appointed officials is to guard the gospel and to protect those citizens who are the called of Christ.

Should any have doubts about such assignment of responsibilities, note what the Belgic Confession has to say concerning the duty of government officials:

> Their office is not only to have regard unto and watch for the welfare of the civil state, but also to protect the sacred ministry, that the Kingdom of Christ may thus be promoted. They must therefore countenance the preaching of the Word of the gospel everywhere, that God may be honored and worshipped by every one, as He commands in His Word.

It may sound peculiar to our cultural-

ly conditioned hearing, but according to our confessions, it is the duty of our mayors, our governors, our legislators, and our courts to protect the church and to guard her sanctity. By a complicated combination of political pressures and unfounded judicial precedents, that right and responsibility have been stripped away or seriously undermined.

As Christians, we need to analyze critically the myth of church-state separation which has become so widely believed in our culture. We cannot permit the parade of judicial decisions which denies the right of collective prayer in the public school or the teaching of creationism in the classroom. As concerned citizen-church members, we need to be informed and active in local and state government, unashamed of the Gospel and always aware that Christ's commands take precedence over civil liberties.

In the immediate future, we will have to focus much of our attention on the question of the relationship between the church and the state. As the rivalry between the Christian school movement and the secular public school system increases, that issue will come repeatedly to the fore. As the quest for financial support for these competing institutions grows in intensity, the secular humanists will increasingly turn to the courts and judicial precedent to drive Christianity into individual areas of influence. Because of that conviction, we need to focus our attention on that badly misunderstood issue of the relationship between the church and state.

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Gerald Van Spronsen

A Reply to Dr. De Jong

The problem under analysis in Dr. De Jong's paper is the current relation between church and state. It is appropriate that he remind us to be faithful watchmen in the ever changing ties of church and state.

Dr. De Jong formulates two models of church-state relations. The first, which he appropriately rejects, he calls secular humanism. He defines it as. . ."the dividing of life into two separate, mutually exclusive realms, the sacred and the secular." De Jong argues that secular humanism has become the philosophy or religion of our land. Adherents of this philosophy are intent on driving God from national honor and recognition in insidious ways. Our judiciary, De Jong maintains, is best characterized by this secular humanism. Of particular concern to him are the apparently successful efforts of the judiciary to drive God from our educational institutions.

De Jong proposes an alternative model for viewing church-state relations which I have labelled "sacralism" a la Verduin. Christian sacralists support the creation of structures and laws through which the true God will be made known and sinners brought into submission to Him. Thus De Jong discusses a church that is coterminous with the state. His model places all of life in society under the absolute sovereignty of Christ as Lord and King. Of course the Bible predicts the day is coming when every knee shall bow. The problem however—and this De Jong circumvents—is to what extent Christians, when given the opportunity must obligate all mankind to bow the knee. Unfortunately his analysis at this point gives way to his sacralist ideology and his words become the language of a tract.

The Bible suggests that the state and church are general and special gifts respectively and each must ideally be free to exercise authority in their respective spheres. History documents that both state and church have periodically usurped the other's authority. Under both conditions the church has paid a dear price.

Article 36 of the Belgic Confession in its original form (De Jong cites an expurgated version) is clearly part of a sacral model. The author of the Belgic Confession, Guido de Bres, was intent on convincing Philip II of the Netherlands that the folks of Reformed persuasion were supporters of his reign, unlike the Anabaptists whom de Bres detested and called seditious. Reformed churches have made repeated substitutes to the wording of Article 36 because it taught that which could not be supported by Scripture. It, for example, committed the state to removing false worship from the church and society. This erroneously assigns the state's sword to a sphere reserved for the church.

Reformed Christians have increasingly come to reject the sacral model of De Jong and Article 36 in favor of a religious freedom or pluralist model. The pluralist maintains that societies characterized by a multiplicity of religions must allow each member to freely exercise his or her religion. The Christian pluralist holds that man's response to the Gospel must be done under conditions of freedom; the government's task is to protect that freedom. The Holy Spirit leads and convicts; He does not use the state's sword to coerce. Recent U.S. judicial decisions reflect a commitment to the pluralist model through operationalizing church-state separation guided by the constitution and precedent. Let us be thankful that the constitution and precedent work in our behalf in the prevention of judicial arbitrariness in church-state matters so familiar in, say, Latin American courts. Let us be thankful too that we may use the judicial for redress when our rights are compromised.

Christian pluralists do not find a sinister force lurking behind the decision banning prayer and Bible-reading from our public schools. Prayer is the chief part of thankfulness which we as Chris-

A Bus Driver's Meditation

David W. Chapman

O Lord, they did not tell me
That I would have to drive
the bus on snowy days
That my grinding gears would
send titters through the bus
That there would be chewing
gum in the aisle.

O Lord, I did not know
That the gas gauge would not
work
That the battery was past
retirement
That the inspection sticker
was long expired.

O Lord, I was not made
To hear all 202 of *My Favorite Jokes and Puns*
To endure the smells coming
from the back of the bus
To settle all the quarrels of
the day.

But tell me, Lord, was it You?
That made Pamela thrust the
rumpled paper in my hand
Of the stick man beside the
yellow bus
And the words, "I love you,"
on the back.

And, yes Lord, I will drive
the bus again tomorrow.

tians are obligated to return to God. Public schools can recite prayers; they cannot pray. The recitation of prayers is blasphemous. Bible-reading is communion with God, the Christian's method for learning His whole counsel. Public school Bible-reading is done to instill some vacuous morality. But knowledge of the Bible does not equal morality; the devil knows Scripture well.

One technical point: De Jong writes that when we adopt a creed written at the behest of a civil magistrate, we are legitimizing the right of the state to write creeds for the church. Surely he jests! This is clearly a non-sequitur. The church's acceptance of an historical creed does not obligate it to accept the legitimacy under which the creed was written. The church affirms the two natures of Christ as formulated by the Council of Chalcedon in 451. But the church must ask forgiveness for the infighting and vote-buying which surrounded Chalcedon. In Isaiah 10 God uses Assyria to chastise Israel and then punishes Assyria for her brutality and haughtiness. So too the Holy Spirit may use less than ideal conditions for the furtherance of His church. But we are not permitted to embrace such conditions. The final outcome may not be used to legitimize the means.

Christian educators alert to the lessons of history will give thanks for a healthy wall of separation between church and state.

(A similar sinister force was seen some years ago as the Sunday-closing laws were repealed. Presumably we could make a good civil and logical case for the benefits to society of Sunday-closing. But we could not make such a case based upon the first table of the law any more than we could for obligatory baptism—the custom for many decades in Protestant Europe. Sunday observance and baptism are regulations for Kingdom citizens and as such neither appropriate nor warranted in the political sphere.)

Christian educators alert to the lessons of history will give thanks for a healthy wall of separation between church and state. Though not without error, the pluralism model has provided principles and created structures which facilitate a plurality of religions yet promote a unity in collectively working toward national goals of peace and justice.

Gerald Van Spronsen is an agribusinessman and former professor of sociology of religion and education.

Idea Bank

William Hendricks

Self Acceptance Scars

GOAL: To help pupils accept scars they may have received through accidents as well as understand how to treat peers who have scars.
MATERIALS: Information about scar tissue; how it is formed and why it is important.
PROCEDURE: Note with your class that nearly everyone has had accidents of one kind or another that have caused scars. Discuss the miraculous process of skin growth and the way that cuts, scratches, and even severe wounds can heal. Note that scars are not painful, that they tend to grow less obvious as a person grows older, and that they stand for something that is now past. Should we worry about scars? No. Should we worry about what people think when they see scars that we may have? No. Should we ridicule others who may have scars? No.

Rather, we should be thankful for the healing that caused them.

Scars often tell a story of self sacrifice: a father may have scars on his hands because he saved his child from a fire; a policeman or fireman may have a scar because he helped someone in trouble; a serviceman may have a scar because of a wound received when fighting for his country; Jesus had nail scars in His hands and feet to show that He died on the cross to save others; someone in your school may have a scar because of injuries received while helping others also.

To make pupils less self conscious about the scars they may have, you may wish to give them opportunity to show their scars and tell how they were received.

Relate to a creative writing lesson in which pupils tell about their scars or the scars of others and how they have grown accustomed to them and have come to accept or ignore them.

William Hendricks is in the Education Department at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Profile

She's tall, lithe, and animated. She talks easily, laughs often, and loves life. She's Nel van't Wout, and she's from New Zealand.

I first met her at a Christian Teachers Conference in Tasmania. She was the only New Zealander there, but in fact her lone presence pretty much represented the whole Christian school movement in that country. We talked a bit then about her teaching and administration responsibilities and about her hopes to come to the U.S. for more education.

Eventually it became possible for her to come, and since Nel van't Wout has been at Calvin College, I've learned much more about this pioneer in Christian education from that far-away, South Pacific country.

Nel never expected to be a pioneer really, though she already wanted to be a teacher while still a young girl. That desire was intensified when she read an ad in *Trowel and Sword*, the church paper, for qualified people who loved the Lord to consider teaching in Christian schools. Nel was still in high school then, but she felt strongly that the Lord was calling her to prepare for such Christian service. At the time, the Christian school movement was just getting underway in Australia, and teachers were urgently needed. In fact, as recently as 1968, Australia had only three or four Christian schools. Nel was eager to make her contribution; thus, after high school graduation, she entered Dunedin Teachers' College to begin her training.

One condition of a free education at a Teachers' College is at least two years of teaching at a state school. Nel taught 5-9 year-olds for two years at a very small country school. After that she was eager to become involved in Christian education. That took her to Christchurch where she taught in a small interdenominational school. But the ads in the *Trowel and Sword* persisted

Nel van't Wout

and persuaded Nel to apply for a position in the parent-controlled Christian school of Perth, Australia. That school too was still in its infancy stage, with all the challenges and frustrations that stage implies. For four years Nel contributed her zeal and her talent, meanwhile accumulating and clarifying her convictions about the priorities in distinctively Christian education. Then she took an extended working holiday in the Netherlands. It was while she was there, teaching English at a girls' school, that the call came.

The year was 1975. Since the 1950's, many Dutch immigrants had tried to carve out a new life for themselves in Australia and New Zealand. Much of their energy and meager financial resources had initially gone into the building of churches. Only gradually, in fluenced by the persistent promptings o some ministers, did an awareness of th need for Christian education begin t emerge. That awareness finally culmi nated in an association for the estab lishment of parent-controlled Christia schools, and later in a classroom tha would constitute New Zealand's firs Christian school of a mainly Reforme character and parent-controlled. Th place was Silverstream, near Wellingto

It was to that place that Nel van Wout was called. She accepted th challenge with both fear and faith She was excited about returning t New Zealand, excited about further in volvement in Christian education, bu also apprehensive about the respon sibilities that waited.

How large those responsibilities woul be she soon discovered when she arrive about a week before the school year wa to start. Waiting for her was a new bu unfurnished classroom and a list o twenty-five children. There were no cu riculum materials, no equipment, n consultants, no articulated philosophy o Christian education or statement o school policy. There was only the com munity's good will and pledge of suppor

As a true pioneer, Nel took charge And in time, after much soul searching deliberation, and hundreds of decisions some basic convictions about Christia education began to take visible form.

Nel believed not only in parent-con trolled but also in parent-involved Chris tian education. She persuaded parent to help build equipment for the class room and playground, to become leader of special interest clubs, to teach specia classes like the cooking class, to coac some sports like soccer; for many th school became truly a family project tha cultivated a caring and enthusiasti spirit.

Nel believed that Christian educatio must honor each child as a unique crea tion in Christ. Thus she made it her tas

to become thoroughly familiar with each student; to visit their homes, to discover strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes, needs and potential, past experiences and performance. She tried to create a bond with each, to model to each a spirit of personal interest and concern and contagious enthusiasm. And then she set out to make learning active and exciting for each, to bring out hidden potential, to encourage curiosity and originality. The bare classroom was transformed into a stimulating and flexible place for all sorts of learning. There were moveable flat-topped desks and group tables; large, colorful carpet squares on the floor; a library area with soft, comfortable pillows; a low table for writing; a listening post with multiple outlets for listening to mostly student-made tapes of radio plays and readings of popular books; a science area with equipment, a sink, and experiment cards for various levels of difficulty; and many other striking features that communicated an imaginative approach to education and a serious attempt to have each student in this multi-grade classroom experience joy in learning.

She fostered such joy not only through books and within classroom walls. Frequently Nel would lead her class on nature excursions, helping them to observe detail, to discover new and exciting facets of God's creation, and to respond in awe. And students would cultivate their own gardens in the school grounds. They would grow plants and flowers and care for them. They would beautify the grounds with shrubs and flowers, and the classroom with a colorful variety of self-grown plants along window sills and hanging in self-made baskets from the ceiling. And they would feed and care for and learn about a variety of animals: chickens, a pet lamb, rabbits, a stray duckling, white mice, a gold fish. Besides these were the creepy, crawly beasties on the nature table inside the classroom, including caterpillars, ants, and spiders. The school was small, but learning encompassed God's whole world. Obviously, Nel believed that education best takes place in a stimulating atmosphere. Stimulating but relaxed, too, in an informal environment where no premium is placed on regimented conformity, where individual differences and needs are respected and encouraged, where young learners are nurtured who become increasingly more responsible as self-learners. Nor was there a rigid subject-oriented schedule for each day. Time was spent regularly, of course, on basic subjects and skills. But sometimes a special class project might take up several days, like the time the whole class became involved in making a huge undersea mural. They used seaweed, they painted wrecks and lost treasures on the walls, had papier mache fish and crabs dangling from the ceiling, and engaged in a variety of group and individual activities that included research and creative writing.

Clearly, the curriculum as Nel conceived of it, was not limited to textbooks (of which there were few, anyway) or simply the three R's. Christian education, she believed, must nurture the whole child. Hence the program she developed included special interest classes, health education, and such physical education activities as gymnastics, folk dancing, bush craft, swimming, and a variety of other sports. It also included a superbly-equipped playground, the product in part of the students' own planning and labor, featuring a treefort with lookout and rope ladder, a sand pit, jungle gyms, a playhouse complete with dress-up clothes, a climbing tree with a rope to swing across a creek, and all of this enclosed by a fence colorfully painted with Maori designs by students who had done research on early Maori culture. There was little reason for any pupil of the Silverstream Christian School to get bored. And Nel tolerated no wasting of time. It was a community of boys and girls who with their teacher learned and enjoyed to work, to play, and to pray together.

And that is how Nel van't Wout wanted it. One of her strong convictions about Christian education is that a classroom must become a practicing Christian community. Such a community, says Nel, is characterized by acceptance of each other's uniqueness, by mutual respect and trust. The teacher will not allow herself nor her pupil to degrade or humiliate anyone. The teacher will not model favoritism but genuine Christian love for all. Moreover, in such a community its members will use their talents not only for self advancement but also to enhance the growth of others. Thus older students would often help younger students, the able would teach the less able, and each would regularly be assigned such special responsibilities as scissor counter, waste basket deputy, librarian, first aid, coffeemaker, visual aid specialist, and visitor host. Or take the non-reading eleven-year-old who through Nel's encouragement began to help the seven-year-olds and became motivated to learn what he had hated, so that before long he was regularly reading stories to the five-year-olds. Or the capable but socially insecure student who gained the respect and friendship of his classmates when, placed in charge of the science area, he prepared the scientific experiments for the others and eventually assumed a leadership role in a small science club. And the students were always encouraged to make themselves available for the larger community needs as well. Occasionally the whole class would become involved in a community service. Christian education, then, not only as preparation for the life of Christian service in the community, but also as present practice among students and adults; Christian discipleship, Nel believed, need not and may not wait till graduation time.

Well, Nel van't Wout's pioneering years at Silverstream were taxing but rewarding. She saw the school flourish and soon expand to an enrollment of some sixty pupils. Community support and interest grew, and similar associations started in other places in New Zealand. At this time a couple of other Christian schools have started; others are in the planning stage. And there are some small beginnings in developing curriculum materials. In all of this Nel's advice and experience have often been helpful. But perhaps the greatest ex-

citement to her as a Christian teacher has been the challenge to reach and affect the mind, the attitudes, the faith commitment of her pupils; and the greatest reward has been to see those pupils grow in interests, in curiosity, in the will to learn, in skills and social grace, and especially in faith and love.

Soon Nel will return to New Zealand, fortified by a liberal arts degree and an MAT in Language Arts. The Lord will surely have a place for her; who knows, the call may come to start yet another school. And with educators like Nel van't Wout, the cause of Christian education in New Zealand will be well served.

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An Art Teacher's Plumb Line
Guidelines for Art Teachers and Their Employers

When faced with the problem of evaluating or hiring an art teacher, administrators frequently ask for standards by which to judge. Guidelines presented for a Christian school include specific criteria requiring a Christian philosophy of art and suggest that the teacher must observe the principle of servant leadership. This article attempts to compile characteristics peculiar to Christian school art teachers as a checklist for art teachers and their employers.

To define art in a paragraph when philosophers have written books on the topic is folly. Accordingly the perspective given here is limited, but to evaluate an art teacher for curricular implications, a basic understanding of the term art is required.

In his book *Art In Action*, Nicholas Wolterstorff, of the Philosophy Department at Calvin College, proposes the thesis that "works of art are instruments and objects of *action* whereby we carry out our intentions with respect to the world, our fellows, ourselves, and our gods. Understanding art requires understanding art in man's life" (1980, 3). He says that looking at and thinking about art on the wall or in a museum is only one of many ways art is part of our lives (Wolterstorff 1980).

All people, primitive tribes included, have used art to express an idea, to worship gods, to beautify their bodies or to honor a dignitary (Grosse 1894). While many people see art as a luxury, it is the observation of anthropologists that art has always been a necessity even in societies where only a meager life exists (Firth 1966). We, too, use art in many ways. We parade the returning hostages and space travelers in convertibles; we design churches, build pottery, sculpt statues and compose paintings.

Western man has often been blinded to an understanding of the whole of art by a narrow definition of art as high art—that art cloistered in museums for only the upper and middle classes to look at and think about.

Without knowledge of art history there would be no basis for judging students' art or for organizing an art program. What does this mean for the qualifications of an art teacher? As in any discipline it implies *knowledge* of what art is, how man uses art, and whether the teacher incorporates these things in her teaching. "It is important that those who design a program have a clear understanding of the arts. Effective programs start from a grasp of what the arts are about and a strong commitment to them" (Hausman 1980). Knowledge of the discipline has not in recent years always been required of art teachers.

A change in philosophy has led to curricular changes required for the teacher. Some art programs present studio art only. During the 1960's and 1970's, the role of American and Canadian art education expanded to include an approach to art history which includes aesthetics and art in society (Barkan 1965; Chapman 1978; Feldman 1974; Eisner 1972). The change implies that we are not teaching every student to become an artist; rather each student is viewed as a potential connoisseur of art. Therefore, art teachers are required to have a teaching knowledge of art history. Already everyone does at some level respond to visual aspects of the environment. It is essential that art studio and art history are taught as interrelated.

A reformed Christian perspective of the arts in education as defined by Christian Schools International states that God calls man to know, enjoy, and evaluate the visually aesthetic art of the masters, primitive tribes, the environment, architecture and in everyday, utilitarian objects (Bonzelaar, Buiter, Kuipers, and Wolterstorff 1982). Art exists in these different forms: a school classroom, a granite cathedral, a hand-crafted piece of metal jewelry, a television special or commercial. Art teachers then consider problems in visual areas which students will encounter before and after graduation like the cultural meaning of art and visual quality in our environment.

All teachers are expected to *articulate* God's call by communicating the importance of their discipline to the community in which they work—in and out of school. But for an art teacher this takes on a unique form. This includes displays of students' art accompanied by explanatory statements to educate fellow faculty, the administration, and non-art students to the purposes of the art program. Furthermore, this includes circulating exhibitions using children's art or art from other groups. The public address system, the school newspaper and bulletin boards are all tools the art teacher uses to educate the whole community.

. . . the excellent art teacher models what he teaches by being an active artist excelling in at least one art medium.

Not only must the art teacher know about art in our heritage and commu-

nicate the importance of art to the community; the excellent art teacher models what he teaches by being an *active artist* excelling in at least one art medium. Lansing advances the idea that art teachers must be active artists because it is unlikely that anyone can teach persuasively without the certainty and conviction that comes from personal accomplishment (1976 15). The teacher who shows art thinks of himself as an artist who teaches. Art *exhibitions* of the teacher's own art also demonstrate a teacher's enthusiasm all the while educating the public and challenging the teacher simultaneously. Demonstrations of an art process by teachers of students often attract public attention, educate and inspire.

To be *inspiring* is a chief attribute of a good teacher. The teacher who gives students a sense of mystery and excitement about art and wins their confidence is likely a good salesperson. That same person gains the respect and cooperation of other faculty, and this enthusiasm spills into the community outside the school.

"What makes Meg a good teacher?" I asked Tim, her complimentary student. "She *pushes* us," he said. "Like when she fires her pots at school we can see them. David wants to be a potter like Meg, and I think some day he is going to be a *professional* as she is. He works on the wheel every free hour he can."

This "pushing," as Tim calls it, repeatedly surfaced in an *advanced* level high school class I observed. "You can produce a masterpiece," was the teacher's stimulus to the Clay II students. "You are mature now and don't have to feel so in love with every pot that you can't hear some criticism of it." This challenge to be professional stimulates both students and the teacher herself.

Kadushin, in a study of professional self-concept at the Julliard and Manhattan School of Music, showed that a professional self-concept was dependent on professional experiences students had while in school (1966). If students acquire skills necessary for *continuing their own education*, they should have opportunity to practice these while in school. Adams and Kowalski state, "Giving students 'artist experiences' includes professionally related activities which could have major socializing results, i.e., to display work, to win awards, to have one's own show and to have a job utilizing artistic abilities (1980 32). These authorities support the importance of making mature students aware of professional standards.

Art teachers have a unique way of knowing students from what they make and from casual conversations during studio time about life's big issues. Art teachers have the ability to interpret meaning *with* students in their art. This often opens students' feelings to art teachers. This precarious position ought not to lead teachers to become psuedo-psychologists and to make diagnoses of deep-seated personal problems. On the other hand, it does permit a teacher to be a good listener and in some cases to suggest professional counseling. "Students talk with me about drinking, drugs, and abortion," said Mrs. Grand, a Christian school art teacher. "The boys are concerned about fathers' roles in out-of-wedlock pregnancies." Group conversations about moral issues and Christian values sometimes occur in a natural way in art classes which also require a sensitive, committed Christian teacher who is able to give direction at strategic times. Shared-time, public school art teachers who are not Christians would be out of place in such circumstances.

The basic qualities of an art teacher deal with the content of what he teaches. The Christian art teacher's perspective on education affects other areas also.

Beyond teaching content and curricular activities are the teacher's *personality*. Research shows that the greatest number of items administrators included in instruments used to evaluate teacher performance relate to the teacher's personality (Wood and Pohland 1979).

What personality characteristics are desirable in the art teacher? A teacher who has a positive self-concept and finds delight in her work is likely to be a good teacher. In turn, a good teacher provides models for students to follow. She is capable of honest and reasonable objectiveness and self-appraisal (Linderman 1980). "The best teachers I have known have one thing in common," said Hoffa; "they enabled me to transcend myself, to do more than I thought myself capable of doing..." (in Linderman 1980, 29).

A teacher is geared to facilitate human interaction. He listens and understands through *openness* and, as Eisner suggests, learns about the likes and dislikes of students by including them in planning (1972). Students in this teacher's classes know they are there to develop their own skills because the teacher tells them so in many ways. Teachers of quality, for example, give students all sides of a question and allow them to formulate their own views—together or individually. By expecting responsible behavior, by sharing the planning of activities, and by respecting students' work as art, the instructor creates trust.

A good teacher works towards *self-discipline* in decisions about the students' art and in personal behavior. When students learn to think divergently and seek their own solutions to artistic problems, and when they learn to evaluate their own art and to listen openly to criticism of others they discover some of what helps them transcend themselves. Freedom of movement and maintenance of the art studio and equipment also re-

quire self-direction and responsible behavior.

Good teachers are *resourceful and flexible.* This adaptability grows out of already existing facts, ideas and skills referred to above. There is a sense in which the capacity to be "creative" is related to the store of skills, images, and ideas that are provided (Hausman 1980). Pasteur once said, "Fortune favors the prepared mind." The flexible teacher provides learning appropriate to the individual student involved (Hoffa 1980). The teacher is "open to new experiences, free from crippling restraints and impoverished inhibitions, independent in thought and action" (MacKinnon, 1962 69). This is the vision and spirit we need in art teachers.

Flexibility also grows out of the knowledge and enjoyment of working in a variety of areas. Not only is breadth in art media important, but being in touch with breadth in life is what counts. "I became a real art teacher when I pitched ball for the faculty team," asserts one art teacher. Furthermore, teachers in art know and enjoy other fine arts and integrate them with visual arts.

While organization is necessary, *compulsive neatness* may lead to inhibition. Neatness for its own sake may prevent a child from experimenting and the teacher from reaching individuals. On the other hand, no standards of organization and direction in art classes suggests the teacher is nothing more than a chaotic supplier of materials.

A noteworthy teacher is not a *dictator.* She does not touch-up students' art, expect students to fill in mimeographed outlines, or ask students to mimic her. In a study Gaitskell found that pupils who had been teacher-directed in this way resorted to drawing bird houses and other things they had done before instead of being able to draw about an experience they had visiting a firehouse. The influence of a ten-day experience was still seen two years after this research (1964).

Questions Of An Art Teacher

What do you include in your definition of art?

What do you do to communicate this to your students? The community in school? The community outside of school?

What have you recently done in art professionally?

What art history do you teach? How?

How have you related art in the classroom to art in the community? Society? To art in other disciplines?

What have you done to exhibit students' art? Your own art?

How do you inspire students to create art that is an expression relevant to their lives?

What is your purpose in educating your art students?

What do you do to create open communication with your students? Do your students dare to challenge ideas? Your ideas?

How do you include students in planning art activities?

How do you encourage students to carry their education/art into their life after graduation?

How do you encourage students to be self-disciplined?

What has been your involvement in professional art organizations? What have you recently read about art education?

Recently I spent several weeks observing a Christian high school art teacher who could give positive responses to each of these questions. It was easy to evaluate this teacher as committed to his students and their education in a way that says quality education is essential if it is to be Christian education. Teachers not properly educated or certified would find it difficult to attain this level of professionalism as a gardener for God.

*Male and female gender are used in alternating paragraphs in this article.

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Asylum

There was happiness in the faculty room of Omni Christian High School on this Wednesday morning. The Omni Eagles had, on the night before, pulled a major upset in the basketball world, edging favored St. Alfonso High in a hard-fought contest for the regional championship. Coach Ren Abbot (better known by the staff as Rabbit) was trying hard to be modest, but not so hard that he wouldn't talk about the game. "We out-quicked them, that's what we did," he burbled. "When we turned on that fast break, and when Petie took charge of the boards, why, they didn't know what hit 'em." He took a gratifying sip of coffee from his styrofoam cup and then added, "Petie has good hands." He took another sip and announced with authority, "That's where it's at."

"Well, I'm glad for you," said Bob Den Denker, "although I must say, I'll be glad when this March madness finally stops. It's pretty hard for people to concentrate around here with all this basketball fever. But. . . congratulations, Rabbit," and he playfully socked the coach in the biceps.

However, John Vroom, Bible teacher, was neither happy nor playful. "How can you talk about all these games and frivolity when our necks hang in the balance around here? It's almost contract time—and who knows how many of us the board will ax, now that the petitioners are on the loose. You may be selling shoes next fall." He was looking at Bob Den Denker.

"That's right," said Steve Vander Prikkel. "And maybe there'll be a new principal. I guess the only one who is safe around here is Rabbit, now that he is winning basketball games. But some of us are in danger of losing our livelihood. I am getting sick of this fickle business."

Den Denker grinned understandingly. "I am too, Steve, but things aren't all that bad. There are good people on the board, and most of the parents have a lot of good sense. Vigilantes aren't going to destroy Omni Christian High.

"Winners and Losers"

Did you hear what happened Monday night?"

John Vroom stopped chewing his jelly doughnut so that he could hear better. "What? What happened?"

"Well, John, you should have a pretty good idea—you were called in last week, right?"

John Vroom quickly bit into his pastry, avoiding Bob's question.

"Anyway," Den Denker continued, matter of factly, "several more were investigated Monday night, including Dr. Rip and my wife and me. Want to hear about it?"

It was as though E.F. Hutton was speaking. Ginny Traansma, Matt De Wit, and others eagerly leaned in Vroom's direction to hear the latest scuttlebut.

"Well, I guess they gave Rip a hard time. Jeff Ellesley—you know, the editor at Leerman Books—asked him if the whole staff subscribed to professional journals. Poor Rip had to tell Ellesley that most of us don't even read **CEJ** regularly. And then they asked him about all those pop and candy machines in the hall. Dr. Lemke, the chairman, told Rip that all that junk food was wrecking the health of our students."

John Vroom had just torn the wrapping off his Milky Way. Now he quietly dropped the candy bar in his brown bag while Den Denker continued.

"For another thing, they put the heat on Rip for lax discipline. They wondered why Bernie Smutz was still in school, after all the trouble he has caused. And then somebody asked Dr. Rip what contributions he had been making to his profession outside this school since he got his degree."

"What did they ask Lucy?" breathed Ginny Traansma expectantly. "How did they handle that?"

"How did they handle *what*, Ginny?" questioned Den Denker, grinning ever so slightly.

"Oh, come on, Bob, you know what I mean—about her being, uh, being pregnant and all that," stammered Ginny.

"Oh *that*!" Bob grinned broadly now. "Well, Gin, they didn't have to *ask* if she was pregnant. But some did wonder why she had not quit before the start of this semester, and what kind of influence a pregnant teacher might have on impressionable students, and that sort of thing. But Dr. Lemke didn't let them get very far with that. Lucy turned the tables on them, anyway. She can pretty much finish out this semester before she's due, but she asked the Board for a maternity leave for the fall semester. And I guess that wrinkled a lot of foreheads."

Vroom had been fingering his Milky Way, but now he looked at Den Denker and, with sarcasm dripping, asked, "And what will you do with the kid the second semester—take 'em along to school?"

The conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Principal Peter Rip. He walked directly up to coach Abbot and extended his hand, "Congratulations, Ren. I understand the boys played a fine game, and you deserve a lot of credit, a lot of credit. We're all really proud of you, we really are. I'm, uh, sorry I couldn't be there myself, but I had to, uh, attend to other urgent matters." And he headed for the coffee urn.

Steve Vander Prikkel met him there. "Dr. Rip, how do things look for next year, with all this unrest and stuff? Can you tell us anything? Do you anticipate any changes, like, uh, for yourself or so?"

Peter Rip turned red but forced a sheepish smile. "Steve," he answered, "in my business one must always be ready to make plans. You know about the longevity of administrators in Christian schools lately." He paused ominously. "I have been approached by a number of schools during the past few years, and I am looking into other possibilities. I never did consider Omni to be my final resting place, so to speak." And then he added mysteriously, "I'd rather you didn't noise this abroad, but there is a distinct possibility that I may be invited to join the Education Department of one of our Christian colleges." He looked from face to face to see the effect of that blockbuster. "As I said, keep it mum."

"Does that mean that the Board is putting pressure on you, or what?" came from Matt De Wit.

The principal waved his hand as though to dismiss the very possibility. "Oh, no, nothing like that, uh, exactly," wavered Rip. "We just had another little meeting last night, and as I said, I'd rather have gone to the basketball game. But first things first, you know—first things first." Rip headed towards the door, his full coffee cup left behind by the urn. "Almost time for class," he announced over his shoulder. And then his eye caught Ginny Traansma. "Oh, Ginny, Bernie Smutz will not be in your class next hour. He'll be in my office." With that, Rip left.

Principal's Perspective

About That Book You're

Some one wrote that when his child said her first word, he and his wife declared a celebration, called in friends, and praised the Lord. They were so awed by the mystery of how a child learns to talk.

I'm not sure how that all turned out and if they, at a later date, wished they could celebrate her talking a little less on occasion.

Be that as it may, it is equally as marvelous when a child learns to read, is it not? What a beautiful thing that can be; what potential is being developed within that person; how mysterious and marvelous that the wisdom of the ages will soon be available to that youngster. Praise God for that!

Sadly, in our present world to which Christ has not yet chosen to return in all His power, this great gift of reading is also a gateway to trivia, trash, and even trauma.

One need only to read the scandal sheets thrust before one's eyes at nearly every grocery store and feast upon such mentally stimulating attractions as: "How John F. Kennedy Planned His Own Death"; "Grace Is Alive (Grace Kelly, wife of Prince Rainier of Monaco)"; "Why U.S. Women Love Arab Sheiks" (can't be money - must be their turbans); "Men Don't Like Women"; "Why More and More Stars Are Taking It All Off" (before they shower no doubt?); "Hiding A Sizzling Sex Secret"; and "The Necklace Murder." All of these are "top secret" of course. Where else would you expect to find secrets?

Right along with our wholesome bread, bologna, and bananas for our nourishment there is this trash which, if mentally ingested, will surely cause spiritual dyspepsia of long duration.

Certainly the option is not to keep our children from learning how to read when we see these dangers of introducing our children to the wonderful world of books.

But options there are. Christian education is certainly one. High on its list of priorities is to teach children *how* to read with *critical, Christian discernment.* In keeping with the age and maturity of the student, Christian teachers must lead the student into understanding what an author is saying, what a newspaper is reporting, what an advertisement can do to one's thinking.

All teachers are teachers of reading to some degree of course, but it seems to me that the mantle of responsibility falls most heavily upon the 5th through 12th grade teachers. This responsibility increases for the teachers as students ascend the scale in academic maturity.

A good place to begin to weigh this responsibility is at the feet of Jesus to hear His caution in Matthew 18:6 about causing a child to stumble. There is a danger that literature teachers (and I love them) can become somewhat intolerant of a person who criticizes the appropriateness of a book list selection, story, or novel. The teacher may very well be able to handle a variety of literary selections. He should be. That is what he is trained to do and that is why he is hired to teach in the Christian school.

But therein lies the danger. Pardon me if I point out the obvious, but it is exceedingly important to know the maturity of your students, academically, mentally, emotionally, and certainly spiritually.

Literature that may be appropriate and Christian educationally-wise for one student can well be dangerous for another.

Yours is the responsibility for the most part to know what can be handled in class under your guidance and what is appropriate on the open library shelf for any one to check out; what should be reserved for limited exposure and what should be banned (yes, banned) because it has no redeeming value and even worse, is dangerous to the student's mind and soul.

While the use of recommended lists in various English journals and library lists for schools are needed, endorsement by these selectors in no way guarantees the appropriateness for the Christian student's use.

CSI has some excellent guides to help in selecting literary works. Among them are Curriculum Resource Papers (#3) Teaching Literature Through Basic Themes; (#8) Dirty Books (this isn't a list of them, by the way); (#14) Books Worth Reading Aloud; and other helps which CSI is eager to send to help Christian educators make wise and discerning readers of those precious youth who people our reading and literature classes.

Administrators need to be aware of and to make available all the tools that can be used to help our teachers in this important and valuable Christian service.

It has been said by someone concerning the power of music, "Let me write your songs and I care not who writes your laws!" This may be an overstatement but it has some validity. It seems to me the same thing can be said about the reading habits and materials of today's youth who are tomorrow's citizens.

Basic to all of this critical Christian instruction in reading is the biblical perspective which also comes from reading, studying, listening, and practicing. It must be the perspective that shapes the conscience of our children so that their reading choices, even when alone, may ultimately serve to build them up for service of many kinds.

Even though there may be great concern to provide a wholesome diet of marvelous literature, conflicts of opinion will develop among constituents of the Christian school.

It is time well spent for the school to have a written policy on book selection (including text books) and a specific procedure for those who would challenge the school on the appropriateness of a particular literary selection. Our school developed both the above mentioned instruments by way of a committee consisting of board, faculty, administration,

Ben Boxum

Reading

clergy, and other community people.

There hasn't been roaring and sustained applause on every decision by all persons involved in a literary selection controversy, but it surely has allowed for time and opportunity to sit down and reason together as Christians must do when there are disagreements.

If interested in a copy of either or both written procedures, let me know and I will send the material post haste.

When your child comes home able to read, that's reason enough for a celebration of some kind. Certainly it is a cause for thanksgiving. We as Christian educators can provide much help to you and to the Christian community in this area.

Then, by God's grace we will hear, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." Those glorious words will make all our sometime frustrations pale into insignificance. Keep striving.

Ben Boxum is the superintendent of Lynden Christian School in Lynden, Washington.

Book Reviews

Donald Oppewal, editor

KING OF KINGS

by Arnold Snoeyink et al

Christian Schools International
Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1982
191 pp. second edition

Reviewed by Ary De Moor
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C.S.I. has published a good Bible studies book for grades seven or eight as part of its Revelation Response series. *King of Kings* (second edition) includes a student textbook, optional workbook and teacher edition. It deals with the life of Christ, the Gospels, Acts, various Pauline epistles and an introduction to archaeology. It is a good book because it teaches students *how* to read the Bible and it teaches their need to respond to it.

The 1973 edition of *King of Kings* was a step ahead in the development of Bible studies materials, but its attempts at prescribing student responses disqualified it for use with many teachers. The authors of the 1982 second edition have listened well to the input from the rank and file reader and developed a more suitable helpmeet for students and teachers.

The primary goal of Bible teaching is to enable students to read the Bible in a more proper and complete manner so that, as they grow and learn during their school years and as they begin their life's work in society, they can carry their Bible around as easily as they carry their lunch. Biblical insight is developed through biblical study and is confirmed through Christ-like response. *King of Kings* aids in developing Bible reading skills, such as: hearing the message of a particular passage, discovering how the details of the passage contribute to the message, realizing that a passage fits in numerous ways into the major biblical themes, and discerning and articulating the norms for daily life from them. The text and work sheets suggest a great variety of activities including study of specific passages, historical research, responsive readings, songs, map work, art work, discussion questions, clues to hidden meanings, stories, and memory work. These activities focus primarily on the centrality of Jesus Christ, the establishment of His Kingdom, and the fulfillment of what God has promised. The little foxes of moralism and intellectualism crippling the earlier editions have been put out to pasture.

The layout and format of *King of Kings* are also greatly improved for classroom use. The student text is compact, attractive and well-written. The optional workbook comes in tablet form allowing teachers and/or students to select activities without the feeling of having skipped part of the program. The teacher edition provides specific objectives and suggested answers to stimulate and focus the teacher's work.

With these varied resources and Bible in hand, teachers and students can plot their own course of studies rather than follow a programmed learning module.

Two questionable activities remain. Asking students to role play conversations of biblical characters beyond the words of Scripture and requesting classroom prayers in a strictly prescribed manner are still present in the second edition. As to the former, I have great difficulty in asking students to add to the clarity of the biblical accounts, which, as they stand are God's revelation to us. Any embellishment is a risky and perhaps confusing business. Requesting public prayers concerning faith and thanksgiving often pushes students too far too soon and may result in dishonesty in their attempt to please the teacher. The teacher edition suggests that these activities could be incorporated into regular class devotions and that teacher discretion is required. I am happy that these suggested activities are given a lesser role.

Teachers and students in the Edmonton Christian Schools have used *King of Kings* this school year and find it a very valuable and reliable tool. *Kingdom Beginnings,* another C.S.I. publication in this series, is also well-used. No textbook ever insures a good course; students and teachers do. But C.S.I. provides us with a much appreciated service. It is now our task to purchase, use, and advertise these materials so that together as Christian schools we can enjoy the fruits of our labour and look ahead to future publications and improvements.

KINGDOM BEGINNINGS

By Arnold Snoeyink *et al*

Christian Schools International, Grand Rapids 1982, 223 pp.

Reviewed by Rev. Galen H. Meyer, South Christian High School Grand Rapids, Michigan

The best thing about *Kingdom Beginnings* is that it is based on the sound theological assumption that the Bible is a book with a plot. It begins with God's initial creation of his kingdom at the dawn of time, proceeds with an account of God's persistent mercy after the fall of humankind to reestablish his kingdom through Christ, and ends with the assurance that the kingdom will appear in all its fullness at the end of time. The bare outline of this plot is clearly presented in unit three of *Kingdom Beginnings.*

After such a promising beginning, however, the book becomes a little disappointing in the units that follow. In the first place, *Kingdom Beginnings* never really defines the concept of the kingdom. I admit this is difficult to do. It is hard, for example, to distinguish between the kingdom of God "within" and the external reality of the kingdom. Yet it should be done if the student is to have a clear idea of what the kingdom is. In the second place, the book seems to wander away from its own purpose—which is the explication of the Bible's kingdom plot.

Consider unit seven called "A New Nation." This unit, about fifty pages long, covers the period in Israel's history from the Exodus through the Judges. More than half of these pages are devoted to a simple retelling of the Bible stories. Most of the remaining pages are filled with questions for the students to answer. I didn't even see the word "kingdom" mentioned in this unit. It was particularly puzzling to me why God's giving of the law at Sinai was not related to the notion of the kingdom.

After taking the student through a synopsis of Old Testament history, *Kingdom Beginnings* abruptly concludes with only two chapters based on the New Testament, the first of which focuses on Paul's letter to the Galatians. For some reason the book omits a consideration of the synoptic gospels —which actually revolve around the kingdom theme. The very purpose of Jesus' miracles, preaching, and redemptive mission arises out of his startling announcement, "The time has come... the kingdom of God is near" (Mark 1:15, TEV). It seems to me that an adequate treatment of the kingdom theme running through the Bible would demand a good look into at least one of the synoptics—perhaps Mark.

Though I concede this to be a minor criticism, I also wonder why *Kingdom Beginnings* begins with a unit on "How To Make A Decision." Such a unit, standing apart from the real subject

material of the book, leaves the reader with the impressions that a "how to" chapter about Christian decision making is really extraneous to the whole business of the kingdom of God. It is just something good with which to begin a semester of study.

Overall, *Kingdom beginnings* strikes me as thin soup which a good teacher can turn into a heartier broth. But why not begin with a more substantial offering in the first place, such as an earlier CSI publication by Frank Breisch called *The Kingdom Of God?*

BUILDING THE HOUSE: ESSAYS ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

by James A. DeJong and Louis Y. VanDyke

BUILDING THE HOUSE: ESSAYS ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

by James A. DeJong
and Louis Y. VanDyke

Dordt College Press
Sioux Center, Iowa 51250
1981, 153 pp.,

Reviewed by Burt D. Braunius,
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Tributes made to retiring scholars take a variety of forms. Often gifts are given. These may include such items as luggage, cameras, or watches. Few receive tributes which compliment their years of service as thoughtfully as this book. *Building the House* is a collection of essays by the colleagues of Nick Van Til to show appreciation for his twenty-six years at Dordt College as Professor of Philosophy and History. He was one of the original staff of five professors.

The book will be of particular significance to those who have known and studied under Professor Van Til. However, friends and supporters of Dordt, as well as the Christian Reformed academic community, will also appreciate its contributions.

Christian education is approached in this book with four kinds of essays: historical, theological, philosophical, and biographical. The titles for each essay follow. These are illustrative of the topical uniqueness and specificity of the book. The historical essays are: "Above Circumstances and Conditions: Convention Addresses of the National Union of Christian Schools" (L. Van Dyke), "Henricus Beuker and *De Vrije Kerk* on Abraham Kuyper and the Free University" (J. DeJong), and "Accommodation in the Balance: The Supreme Court, Establishment, and Church-Related Schools" (W. Nawyne). The theological essays include: "God's Covenant with His Old Testament People: Implications for Education" (W. Kobes), and "The Use and Implications of the Phrase 'in Christ' in the Writings of Paul" (J. Zinkand). There are two philosophical essays: "A Key Component of a Christian College Curriculum" (J. Van Dyke), and "Theology or Pistology?" (J. Vander Stelt). The final essay is biographical: "Let This Mind Be in You: The Academic Career of Nick R. Van Til (A. Koekkoek).

The strengths of *Building the House* lie in its contributions to selected areas of importance for Reformed, Christian education and in its appropriateness to the interests and career of Professor Van Til. The areas which were of greatest interest to this reviewer were on "God's Covenant" and "In Christ."

An implication of "God's Covenant" (W. Kobes) is identified as the idea of community. The individualism of our time must be counteracted with a call to corporate, communal, and conventional relationships. "The unity of mankind in serving God . . . is restored by the Grace of God . . . The Old Testament clearly affirms that individual responsibility must always be seen in the context of community faith" (p. 72).

The "In Christ" essay provides a stimulating follow-up to the "God's Covenant" article. Zinkand points out the relation of being in Christ to the covenant concept. "We are 'in Christ.' The 'in Christ' children of believers and all our 'brothers in-Christ' form a community, a family, owing allegiance and honor to Christ who has called us brothers. He has not only reconciled us, but the whole creation, to God. We agonize that men will not recognize God's claim on them and that creation appears under the curse of sin and pollution" (p. 96).

The final essay, "Career of Van Til (A. Koekkoek), provides a survey of his life and work. A memorable tribute is made through such statements as: "Van Til writes as a Reformed scholar concerned about a great variety of issues, but throughout there is a reiterated stress on the necessity and importance of being wholly and thoroughly Reformed" (p. 144).

Thank you, Dordt faculty members, for providing us with a reminder of the contributions of our brother Nick Van Til. Thank you, as well, for extending his work through this contribution of your own.