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Perspectives in Covenant Education is a journal regulated and published semi-annually, in September and March, by the Protestant Reformed Teachers' Institute. The purpose of this magazine, in most general terms, is to advance the cause of distinctively Christian education as it is conceived in the Protestant Reformed community. More specifically, the magazine is intended to serve as an encouragement and an inducement toward individual scholarship, and a medium for the development of distinctive principles and methods of teaching. The journal is meant to be a vehicle of communication: a vehicle of communication, not only within the profession, but within the Protestant Reformed community and within the Christian community in general.

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EDITORIAL COMMENTS

By Agatha Lubbers, editor-in-chief

The managing editor once again reminds all subscribers who have not remitted their subscription fees that subscriptions to the journal are now due. We appreciate the generous support of many subscribers who give more than the subscription price. Because of publishing costs Perspectives would not be able to exist without these gifts.

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Many organizations have received notification concerning the continued need for financial assistance for our magazine. We are grateful for all such support in the past. If you are a member of an organization and you are seeking a place to make a contribution at the end of the year, Perspectives will be deeply assisted by your generosity.

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You ought to be on the lookout for the appearance of the monograph to be published by the Federation of Protestant Reformed Christian Schools. This monograph which contains the five speeches given by Rev. Engelsma at the 1975 mini-course will be of interest to both parents and teacher. Perspectives is publishing one of the speeches as an article in this issue.
SCRIIPTURE IN THE SCHOOLS

by Rev. David J. Engelsma

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.
—Psalm 119:105

Holy Scripture has a fundamental position in the Christian school. The presence of Scripture makes a school Christian; without Scripture, education cannot be Christian. The exclusion of Scripture makes the public education of today not only non-Christian, but also anti-Christian; it is the reason why God-fearing parents find the public schools unacceptable. With characteristic insight, Luther observed, “I greatly fear that the universities are wide gates of hell, if they do not diligently teach the Holy Scriptures and impress them on the youth” (An Open Letter to the Christian Nobility). God is present in and works by the Word, Holy Scripture. To banish the Word is to banish God, and to banish God is to invite the Devil. The necessity of Reformed, Christian schools, and specifically Protestant Reformed Christian schools, is the necessity of Scripture’s being present in the schools in their full, rich, uncorrupted power.

The presence of Scripture in the school is intimately related to the covenant-basis of the school. The activity of rearing covenant children in the nurture and admonition of Christ is only done by means of Scripture. The precepts of Jehovah which Deuteronomy 6 requires us to teach our children are given in Scripture. The nurture of the Lord spoken of in Ephesians 6:4 is prescribed and defined by Scripture, and the admonition of the Lord is found in Scripture. Our schools are an aspect of that which the Baptism Formula calls “bringing the children up in the aforesaid doctrine,” and this demands the use of the Bible. God, Whose work the rearing ultimately is, works through the Word and is the covenant-friend of the children in the Word. Therefore, for covenant education to take place, the Word must be present everywhere and always, and it must be present as that which reigns supreme.

Scripture as the Authority in the School

Presupposed is the historic, orthodox, Reformed doctrine of Scripture. Scripture is God-breathed, inerrant in everything it contains, clear, sufficient, trustworthy, authoritative. It is the Word of God, graciously given to us to be “a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path” (Psalm 119:105), a lamp also to our educational feet and light on our path in the schools.

That a speaker can safely presuppose this—and not have to argue this—before a group of teachers indicates what a strength there is, actually and potentially, in our Protestant Reformed Christian schools, how precious these schools ought to be to us, and how thankful we ought to be to God for them. Many “Christian” schools today are shot through with skepticism, i.e., unbelief, regarding the doctrine of Scripture; by virtue of this fact, they are Christian only in name.

The orthodox, Reformed doctrine of Scripture is the sine qua non for Christian education, as it is for the preaching of the gospel, the Christian life, and, in fact, every Christian activity.

The very existence of the school depends on Scripture. God-fearing parents read in the Bible the command to teach their children God’s words and bow to the authority of 2/PERSPECTIVES
the Bible. In fact, the mighty Word itself creates this submission and obedience in our hearts, and itself founds Christian schools, as it does also Christian homes and Christian churches.

Scripture defines Christian education. I agree with Waterink, that we may not define the Christian education of the school by quoting a certain text, e.g., II Timothy 3:17 (cf. Basic Concepts in Christian Pedagogy, pp. 37ff.). Nevertheless, we must be directed by Scripture in defining it, especially by those passages that explicitly treat of the upbringing of the covenant children. In light of these passages, we may define Christian education thus: "Christian education is the rearing of covenant children to spiritual maturity by believing parents through a capable fellow-believer. This is done, in the Christian school, by instruction in all aspects of God's creation in light of the revelation of Holy Scripture. Thus, the children develop and grow, so that they are able to live all their lives in the world as faithful, responsible friend-servants of God, in obedience to God's will and to the end of God's glory."

This accords with the description of Christian education by prominent Reformed thinkers. According to H. Hoeksema, "you will aim in your education at the perfect man of God, knowing the will of his God for every sphere of life and for every step he takes upon the path of life...; we define education...as the impartation to the child of knowledge regarding his material and spiritual relation in the world. (Standard Bearer, Vol. 3, p. 532). J. Waterink gives this definition: "the guiding of human beings in such a manner that they with their talents will be able rightly to serve God, their Creator, in the society in which they have been placed" (Basic Concepts in Christian Pedagogy, p. 110). C. Jaarsma offers this definition: "Christian education is the covenant task by which a child is brought up to maturity in the 'new obedience.' This task is to be realized along the lines of child nature as ordained of God" (Toward a Philosophy of Christian Education, with J. De Beer, p. 9).

Scripture informs all the instruction given in the Christian school (by "informs" I mean: 'give essence to, is the characteristic quality of'). It is the light of God in which we see light. Nothing is taught that conflicts with the Scriptures, and only that is taught which is in harmony with it. The Christian school will not teach evolution, including incipient evolution—the period theory and theistic evolution; will not teach communism; will not teach the inherent nobility and upward progression in history of mankind; will not teach the "liberal" doctrines of the right of revolution and the evil of capital punishment; and will not teach the identification of the Kingdom of God with the U.S.A.

As the light of God, Scripture is the foundation of every subject, controlling it, directing it, and explaining it, thus making what is merely true, the truth. How can history be taught unless it is grounded in and illumined by the Word that teaches a sovereign God; the centrality of Christ ("the fullness of time" — Gal. 4:4); the great war of the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of this World; the depravity of man; and God's judgments on sin? How can science be taught apart from the Word about creation; about the fall and the curse on man and his earth; about the flood; and about the wisdom and power of the Creator?

In connection with his criticism of the limitation of inspiration to the "religious-ethical" parts of Scripture, Herman Bavinck speaks of the relationship between Scripture and the other branches of knowledge: "From this, finally, the relationship in which Scripture stands to the other sciences becomes plain. There has been much misuse of the statement of Baronius, 'Scripture does not tell us, how it goes in heaven, but how we go to heaven.' Exactly as the book of the knowledge of God, Scripture has much to say also with regard to the other sciences. It is a light on the path

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and a lamp for the foot, also for science and art. It lays claim to authority in every area of life. Christ has all power in heaven and on earth. Objectively, the limitation of inspiration to the religious-ethical part of Scripture is untenable; and subjectively, the distinction between the religious (godsdienslige) aspect of the life of man and the rest of his life cannot be maintained. Inspiration extends itself to all parts of Scripture, and religion is a matter of the entire man. Very much of that which is recorded in Scripture is of principle importance also for the other sciences. The creation and fall of man, the unity of the human race, the flood, the origin of the nations and languages, etc. are facts of the greatest importance also for the other sciences. Every moment, science and art come into contact with Scripture; the principles for the whole of life are given in Scripture. Nothing may be done to minimize this” (Gereformeerde Dogmatiek, Vol. 1, “De Theopneustie Der Schrift” — my translation of the Dutch).

In this way, Scripture unifies all of Christian education; materially, this unity is the glory of the sovereign God. Bavinck refers to this vital function of Scripture in his Pedagogische Beginnelen: “(Scripture) orients man in the present world.... He who is instructed in the Scriptures rises to a height from which he surveys the great totality of things; his horizon extends itself to the ends of the earth; he knows his position as human being, because he views himself and all things primarily in his relation to God of Whom, through Whom, and to Whom all things are.”

The Word of God which we hold to be the authority in the school is not the “Word” of the A.A.C.S. (Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship). The A.A.C.S. pleads for Christian education ruled by the “Word of God” and criticizes almost all present and past Christian education for its being dominated by the church: “A church-controlled educational ideal has for centuries prevented scripturally directed Christian education from developing its own independent, distinctive manifestation” (“The Struggle for Christian Education in Western History” in To Prod The “Slumbering Giant,” p. 56). This criticism of Christian education prior to the arriving on the scene of the A.A.C.S. is another manifestation of this group’s overweening arrogance—no doubt, they are the people, and wisdom will die with them. We could forgive this arrogance, if it were only the obnoxious, personal trait of that school, but we must take it seriously because the root of it is their exaltation of themselves and their words above God’s Word, Holy Scripture, and, thereby, above God Himself. By their emphasis on the Word, they fool the unwaried. They do not mean Scripture, when they speak so strongly of the Word of God in education.

According to the A.A.C.S. itself, the Word of God that rules in the school is the “structuring and directing plan for creation” (“An Educational Creed” in To Prod The “Slumbering Giant,” p. 167). It is not the Scriptures, but a certain “Law-Word” that “holds for creation.” Really, the Bible has no place in the school at all. Its only role is a preliminary one, that of opening our eyes to the Word of God which holds for creation (To Prod The “Slumbering Giant,” pp. 30-33). In fact, the “Word” that the A.A.C.S. has in mind is the judgement concerning a particular aspect of God’s creation by the A.A.C.S.’s resident expert. This “word” is final and authoritative, at least until the resident expert informs us that this judgment has been superseded by a later one. It is not subject to the testing and authority of sacred Scripture, and, therefore, the resident expert is above the reach of the parents. He is the sovereign in his sphere, the lord and god in education. This is a tyranny and hierarchy that is commensurate with the “Reformational” thrust of the A.A.C.S., which indicates that “Reformational” not only has nothing in common with “Reformed,” but also is the sworn foe of “reformed,” the watchword of which is sola Scriptura. Rejecting the authority of Scripture in the school,
the A.A.C.S. stands for lawlessness in education. Although they cry, "Word of God, Word of God," they are only (as Barth said concerning the liberals, who did the same thing) saying, "Word of Man," very loudly.

There is the revelation of God in creation, His glorious Name and wonderful wisdom; believing scholars can and should search out the creation; covenant children ought to be taught the nature of the cosmos; however, this may not take place independently of Scripture, nor even alongside Scripture, with a glance towards Scripture now and then; but it must be done in strict subservience to the Bible.

The Authority of the Reformed Confessions in the School

Granted now that Scripture is the authority in Christian education, what about the Reformed creeds, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, and the Canons of Dordt? Do they have any place in education? Is their place that of an authority? That these creeds have an authoritative place in the school is taken for granted among us. I am sure that the constitution of the South Holland Protestant Reformed Christian School Association is representative of the constitutions of all our schools when it states: "This organization is based on the following principles: A. The Bible is the infallibly inspired, written Word of God, the doctrine of which is contained in the Three Forms of Unity, and as such forms the basis for administration, instruction, and discipline in the school" (Article I, "Basis"). But this is being challenged today.

It is worth noting that Dr. C. Bouma challenged the place of the Reformed creeds in Christian education long ago, in a speech to a convention of the National Union of Christian Schools. He did so with reference to the basis of the Free University, which speaks only of the instruction's being grounded in "Reformed principles." Bouma asked the schools to remove the Three Forms of Unity and to be content with the authority of "Reformed principles" (cf. 'The National Union of Christian


The A.A.C.S. opposes the use of the creeds as the authority in the school. "...the confession of the Church-institute (is) largely inadequate for the task of education..." (The Bible and the Life of the Christian, Groen Van Prinsterer Society, p. 109). "The confessions of a (denominational) institutional church should not take the place of a Christian educational confession since a school is a school and an institutional church is an institutional church.... To act as if a church creed can be a school creed is to confuse and mislead" (To Prod The "Slumbering Giant," p. 26). It calls for the composition of an "educational creed" and, in fact, has made one (for this "creed," see To Prod, pp. 167-170. Cf. also Hendrik Van Riessen, The University and Its Basis, pp. 54ff.) It is hardly surprising that the A.A.C.S. desires to remove the Reformed creeds from the school, since it rejects them even for the church (cf. A. DeGraff in Will All the King's Men, pp. 106ff: "Our confessions clearly reflect the age-old spiritualizing and narrowing of the Christian life. They lack a clear Kingdom vision." Etc.).

Reformed educators are questioning the use of the creeds of the church as creeds for the school. Donald Oppewal wants to take the reference to the "Reformed standards" in the constitution of the NUCS as only a reference to "Reformed principles," not the creeds, and suggests that the school and church ought to have
different creeds ("The Roots of the Calvinistic Day School Movement," pp. 27-29).

The reasons given for this opposition to the Reformed creeds are that the creeds are ecclesiastical, whereas the schools are not and must not be—"the schools must be free from the church!"; that the creeds are too restrictive; and, as far as the A.A.C.S. is concerned, that the creeds are out-dated and false.

Over against this challenge to the creeds, we insist that the creeds must be retained as authoritative for Christian education; to let them go would be to lose Reformed, covenantal education. The confessions are not an authority alongside Scripture, but the authoritative interpretation of Scripture for the Reformed faith—the Reformed interpretation of Scripture for all time. Submission to the creeds (need we be reminded?) is submission to Scripture. The creeds are not narrowly ecclesiastical, anymore than the Bible is, but are the truth for the redeemed, Reformed believer's entire life. They bind me and ground me, not only in church on Sunday, but also in my marriage and home; my labor and recreation; my life in the State; and in absolutely everything. They define and enlighten the Reformed world-and-life-view.

In the creeds are the "Reformed principles" that must permeate and control Christian education: the authority of Holy Scripture; the sovereignty of God; the creation and fall of man; the pre-eminence of the Christ; the antithesis; and the like. In them are vast riches for Christian education. What an impoverishment of education, to say nothing of the certain drift away from "Reformed principles," must result if these creeds are set aside and replaced with a modern "educational creed."

If Scripture is the authority in the schools, and, under Scripture, the Reformed confessions, parents, boards, and especially teachers must know Scripture and must know the creeds. The teachers must confess the creeds in a heartfelt way. Bouwman points out that the Synod of Dort required schoolmasters to sign the Formula of Subscription. Without going in the direction of church control, the essence of that action is necessary today.

Reformed, Christian education hereby distinguishes itself from non-Reformed, Christian education—to its salvation. We must not go in the direction of muting "Reformed" and trumpeting "Christian," and we must not, out of the conviction that insofar as we would do this, the full Christianity of our education would be compromised. There is a trend today to make what were Reformed schools colorless amalgams of many branches of Christendom. Especially are they changed into schools for "evangelical Christians," i.e., fundamentalists; Arminians; neo-Pentecostals; and others. Inevitably, the Reformed principles are excised from the schools. This is not to say that we may not accept non-Reformed pupils—every request for admission being carefully considered by the board and every case being judged on its own merits, but it is to say that it must be clearly understood that the school is Reformed, through and through, and that every child will be receiving such an education. Certainly, there may be no non-Reformed teacher, board member, or association member.

The freedom of the teacher in his work is circumscribed here—not hampered, but delineated. The binding authority of the creeds does not threaten genuine academic, pedagogical freedom. Law and liberty are not foes, but friends. There is freedom within the framework of the creeds, theoretically: freedom is the unhindered activity of a creature within the sphere marked out for it by God. There is freedom, practically: within the area marked out by the creeds, the teacher has room for grand, exciting, exhausting labor; and the creeds themselves free the teacher for this labor—free him from uncertainties, false directions, and toil for nought.

But there may be no transgressing these bounderies. This would be unfaithfulness
to the parents, who support and desire Reformed education. This would be a misleading of the children; teachers who peddle intellectual contraband while flying the colors of the Reformed faith are wretches, in a class with dope peddlers. Worse still, this would be disobedience to God. Whoever is opposed to the creeds should be put out; whoever is doubtful about them should leave.

**Scripture as the Content of the Instruction**

Scripture is the authority over the school, but is it also to be the content of the instruction?

Our answer must be a resounding “Yes,” for this is required by the covenant basis of Christian education. That Scripture be the content of the instruction is the requirement of all of the passages of Scripture that call for the teaching of their children by believing parents. Deuteronomy 6:6-9 requires parents to teach the children the law of God (“And these words...shall be in thine heart; And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children,” etc.). According to Psalm 78:1-8, fathers must teach their children Jehovah’s praises, His strength, and His wonderful works. Ephesians 6:4 says that the upbringing is to be an upbringing entirely in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. II Timothy 3:14-17 indicates that the development of a child into a mature man of God occurs by means of Holy Scripture. In harmony with this teaching of Scripture, the vow made by parents at the baptism of their children requires of them that they “promise and intend to see these children...brought up in the aforesaid doctrine, or help or cause them to be instructed therein....”

We may not adopt the covenant basis of education and then elide the content of the instruction stipulated in that basis, as if covenant education would still be possible. There must be doctrine in the schools, not classes in “the essentials of Reformed doctrine”—not in high school either, but doctrine, nevertheless.

An important question remains: how is Scripture to be the content? In a devotional way? As a subject in the curriculum, along with the other subjects? Or in another way?

The teaching of Bible in the school that we are contending for is not that devotions are held regularly or that Bible is a subject in the curriculum along with reading, writing, and arithmetic. This is not to say that the Bible should not be read for devotions, or even that it is forbidden to have Bible as a distinct subject; but it is to say that these forms of Bible in the schools do not constitute Christian education, are not the idea of Christian education. It is good to have devotions—Bible-reading with some remarks by the teacher, as well as prayer, but it is a mistake to suppose that this is the hallmark of a Christian school and the difference between it and the public school. Some think so. Witness the hue-and-cry over the banning of the Bible and prayer from the world’s schools. Were every public school to reinstate Bible-reading, it would be as godless as ever, and our objections would not be a whit abated.

As regards Bible as a subject, even though tradition weighs heavily against it and even though the present practice has good results, it would be in keeping with the idea of the Christian day school to drop Bible as a subject. Teaching Bible is not something that parents cannot do themselves, or ever may be unable to do themselves; it is, in fact, something that they should do themselves. It might be beneficial for parental exercise of their calling that parents knew that they, not the school, would have to perform this task. The teaching of Bible, as a distinct subject now, simply is the reason for establishing Christian schools and may hinder the accomplishing of the real purpose for the school as regards Scripture. The danger is that parent and teacher alike may be satisfied with the teaching of Bible as the fulfillment of the school’s mandate to engage
in Biblical teaching. Does this not express itself in the statement, “The most important mark on the report card is the mark in Bible”? It is also a danger that preparation of the Bible lesson and the actual teaching of Bible may curtail the time and effort that should be expended in the difficult task of Biblically teaching all the subjects in the curriculum.

However, we might as well be realistic. Historically, the Christian schools have always taught Bible, the medieval schools, the schools of the Reformation, the schools in the Netherlands, and our own schools. I have little expectation that Bible will be dropped. If it would be dropped, not only parents, but also the church would have to do more in the way of instructing in Scripture. If we continue the present practice, could someone please work at co-ordinating the teaching of Bible in catechism, in the Christian school, and in Sunday school? Only let it be remembered that the teaching of Bible in the Christian school does not exhaust the calling of the school to provide Biblical teaching and, in fact, does not yet touch the heart of this calling.

Scripture must be taught thus: as the foundation, light, and center of every subject. Scripture is to be worked into every subject, naturally and matter-of-factly, as the ground on which that aspect of reality solidly stands; as the light that illumines both the particular aspect of creation, so as to give it meaning, and the student, in regard to his knowledge and use of that aspect of creation; and as the core, or center, of the subject, thus unifying all the subjects. The teaching of Scripture in this way must not be conceived apart from the content of Scripture: the glorious God, Who must be feared and served by the redeemed man in the totality of man’s life (Biblically, the creation is—essentially and centrally and absolutely in every respect is—the revelation of the excellent Name of God, and the whole duty of man is to fear and obey Him!).

This should be illustrated. Take, first, the subjects that have to do with reading and writing, including grammar, literature, spelling, speech, and the like. They are grounded in the Word of John 1, the Word Who is eternally with God and eternally God, the Word Who lighteth every man that comes into the world, the Word Who became flesh in our Lord Jesus. Human words are not an interesting, useful, but accidental phenomenon; they are the reflection in His creation of the Word in God. At the center of these subjects is the reality of fellowship through communication, just as the eternal Word in God is the Word of fellowship in the Godhead. This leads on to the notion of truth in literature and the notion of beauty in speech. In the teaching of these subjects, the teacher must be guided by the Biblical doctrine concerning the Logos (Word) in God; concerning fellowship through words; concerning truth and beauty in man’s speech and writing—where God is praised and the neighbor is loved. According to the capabilities of the children, they must be shown these things. I dare say, the effect of such teaching will be a powerful strengthening of the children’s abhorrence of the filthy, violent, senseless pulp coming off the presses today and a powerful strengthening of their understanding of what words are for in the Church—sweet communion, not bitter strife, as well as the encouragement and preparation of the children to use and enjoy their gifts of reading and writing.

As for history, the ground, the meaning, and the center of that important subject are the Biblical doctrines of creation, providence, the fall, Christ and the Church, the rise and fall of nations by the direct hand of God, the temporal judgments of God, and the titanic, global struggle of the Civitas Dei and the Civitas Mundi. The meaning of history is Jesus the Christ, and the future of history is the Kingdom of Christ.

With regard to science, Scripture’s teachings of fiat creation, the fall and subsequent curse on the earth, the catastrophic destruction of the world that then was by a universal flood, and God’s orderly government of His creation (“laws of nature”)
are essential to the truth of science.

Such teaching of Scripture in the schools makes the instruction the truth, both in each subject and overall, and keeps it from being the lie. Such teaching makes the instruction Christian—not only "Godly," but Christian. Our schools are Christian, i.e., having to do with Christ, with Christ Jesus. They are centered around Christ! They are devoted to Christ! There is nothing there that is unrelated to Christ, or that is related in some other way than being on its knees to Him! For the message of Scripture is: God glorified in Christ! Man's whole duty, according to the same Scripture, is: fear God by believing on Christ, and obey God by bowing the knee to the Lord Jesus.

Such teaching is the task of the Christian schoolteacher. It is work, hard work—by the sweat of your face. God demands it; the Boards demand it; the parents demand it. The work of the teacher is not so much marking papers, as it is teaching Scripture thus.

But what exciting work! To see the truth, even though in glimpses and in a glass darkly; to teach others the Name of God above all other names, i.e., Jesus Christ; to do this, by the covenant grace of God, so that those so taught know God and bow to Him and serve Him; why, that is work for a prophet, a priest, and a king—the Christian schoolteacher.

This is a work of faith.

We must believe that the world is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. We must become like a little-child to see the excellent Name of the Lord in all the earth, to see the Spirit of God giving life and breath to every creature. It is good to read the Psalms as part of our preparation for teaching. The Israelite was not so naive as to be ignorant of the physical explanation of birth, but he was so full of faith that knew conception and birth to be the marvellous work of Jehovah (cf. Psalm 139).

We must believe that Jesus the Christ is not only the Savior of souls for the world to come, but also the One preeminent among all things and the Lord Whom it is wisdom to kiss in thinking, in working, in marrying, in history, in physical science, and in music.

We must believe that that most elegant book, "the creation, preservation, and government of the universe," can be read rightly only through the spectacles of Holy Scripture.

"Lord, increase our faith."

Implications for Everyday Instruction

Since this is the place of Scripture in the schools, Scripture will be brought in, openly, unashamedly, and often. There will not merely be passing references to the Bible, or even quotations of a text. now and then; rather, the teacher will get the Bibles out. read a passage or passages, and teach the passage, showing how the passage applies to the subject at hand.

Included on the tests will be questions that require the students to demonstrate their grasp of the relation of a subject, or aspect of a subject, to the Word, i.e., to God and His Christ.

The history class will probably begin with the reading and explanation of Genesis 1-3; Galatians 4:4; Ephesians 1:10; and Revelation 21. Throughout the course, the teacher will read and explain Daniel's prophecy on the rise and fall of nations; Ecclesiastes on the vanity of human life and culture apart from the one grace of Jesus Christ; and Revelation on the significance of war.

Romans 13 will be the heart of the civics course.

Ephesians 4:28, Matthew 6:19-34, and Luke 16:1-13 will be woven into the economics course.
Psalm 104 and Psalm 139 will be central in biology.

Even the athletics at school will be grounded in and directed by the Word. "Gym" and other forms of physical exercise will begin with a class of instruction on the body of the Christian (teaching that it is redeemed and sanctified by Christ—the temple of the Holy Spirit, not the despicable prison of the soul of Greek philosophy); instruction on the need for and benefit of exercise; instruction on the danger of the glorification of the body (the beauty of the female and the strength and prowess of the male) in light of such idolatry in our age; and instruction concerning the demand of God that competition, in sports as elsewhere, be tempered by love for the neighbor.

The danger that sound explanation of Scripture replaces thorough instruction of the material must be guarded against. It is not either/or, the one at the expense of the other, but good, solid, thorough teaching of the subject in light of Scripture.

To do this, the teacher needs to think Biblically, needs to be God-centered, i.e., Reformed, to the marrow of his bones. He must be Biblically and theologically competent. To paraphrase Paul, the teacher must be determined to know nothing except God in Christ. No more in the teacher's case than in Paul's does this mean the exclusion of all else; rather, it means that everything is taught as God's creature, and that every thought is brought into captivity to Christ.

This kind of school will bear fruit in young men and young women who fear the Lord and keep His commandments in their earthly lives and with their position and talents, and this is what God and we are after.

The contents of this article were first presented as a speech to teachers at a summer mini-course. The article will soon appear as one of five chapters in a monograph to be published by the Federation of Protestant Reformed Christian Schools. Rev. Engelsma is the pastor of the South Holland, Illinois, Protestant Reformed Church.

**EVOlUTION: ITS NATURE AND INFLUENCE**

by Roderick Kreuzer, Ph.D.

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The term "evolution" is a very familiar one. To many people, however, the background, nature, and influence of the theory of evolution are far less familiar. Therefore, this article has been written for the purpose of better acquainting the reader with this anti-Scriptural theory which has had an incalculable impact upon society during the past one hundred and twenty-five years.

Teachers, students, and parents frequently encounter various aspects of evolutionary thought presented either boldly or subtly. They can not escape it. For example, they may find it on the pages of textbooks or library books, on field trips, in museums, or in lectures.

It is hoped that the information presented in this article may prove helpful to teachers and parents in dealing with a theory that is both anti-Scriptural and unscientific. Perhaps it may be especially helpful to them in teaching the Biblical account of creation by an Almighty God or in discussing the creation-evolution controversy.

The theory of evolution ranks as one
of the most powerful philosophies molding thought during the last century and a quarter. That its influence has been great is evidenced by its almost universal acceptance. Evolutionary thought permeates much of American educational philosophy and public instruction. Most college and university science departments are dominated by those who espouse evolutionary thought. Museums of natural history depict life from the evolutionary viewpoint. Life and earth science textbooks almost without exception have an evolutionary thrust. In these textbooks evolution is often taught as scientific fact even though it is a theory. Furthermore, sad to say, the church world to a high degree has accepted evolution. Among liberal churches this is not surprising. However, even among more conservative denominations it has gained acceptance especially in the forms of "theistic evolution" or "progressive creationism."

What is the history behind this powerful philosophy?

Already prior to the time when Charles Darwin explained his theory of evolution, there were those who held various evolutionary beliefs. Among these were George L. Buffon (1707-1788), a French naturalist, who was opposed to the belief of a universal flood. He taught that the earth's history should be divided into several epochs. This gave rise to the "day-age" theory which maintains that the days of creation referred to in the book of Genesis were not twenty-four hour days, but rather long periods of time lasting for millions of years. Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802), the grandfather of Charles Darwin, held evolutionary ideas. He espoused the idea of the survival of the fittest. Jean Baptiste de Lamarck (1744-1829) was a French naturalist who promoted the idea of the inheritance of acquired characteristics. This is the belief that a change occurring in an organism could be passed on to its offspring.

Lamarck believed that these changes were brought about by the influence of the environment.

The development of the theory of evolution was carried on by two English naturalists, Charles Robert Darwin (1809-1882) and Alfred Russel Wallace (1823-1913). It was through the efforts of these two men, particularly Darwin, that evolution received far greater acceptance than ever before.

Charles Darwin was born in England and in 1831 at the age of 22 boarded the H.M.S. "Beagle," a sailing vessel, to begin a five year journey. He had become a naturalist and his intent on this long voyage was to collect and study the various plants, animals, and rocks along the coast of South America. After five years, Darwin returned to England. As he studied the specimens he had collected, he sought to determine how the many different species of living things had originated. The account of this long journey is recorded in Darwin's book The Voyage of the Beagle. Darwin continued to gather information for the next twenty years. As he did so, he was formulating a theory to explain how the various species of plants and animals originated.

At the same time that Darwin was carrying on his work in England, Alfred Wallace was working in Malaya carrying on investigations similar to those of Darwin and also developing a theory regarding the origin of the various species of plants and animals. In 1858, Wallace sent to Darwin a copy of an article which he had written for publication in a scientific journal. Upon reading the article, Darwin found that he and Wallace held similar views. The main thrust of their views was that through the years new species of plants and animals were continually appearing and that these species developed from older existing species. Darwin and Wallace mutually agreed to make known their findings and the theory they had developed. On July 1,
1858, Darwin and Wallace presented the results of their work and the ideas they held to the Linnaean Society of London. They proposed that a slow and gradual change in plants and animals occurs over long periods of time or in other words a process of evolution occurs among plants and animals.

Today, Darwin rather than Wallace is recognized as the founder of this theory. In fact, the name Darwin is synonymous with the theory of evolution. There are two reasons for this. One is that Darwin had spent a considerably longer period of time gathering information than Wallace had to support the theory. A second reason is that Darwin had developed the theory more fully than Wallace.

Darwin went on to further develop and promote his theory of evolution. In 1859, he published The Origin of Species. In this book Darwin explained the origin of a new species as occurring through a process of natural selection. What did Darwin mean by the term "natural selection"? Natural selection is the theory that "the plant or animal most suited to survive its environment will survive and reproduce offspring like itself, while the less well-adapted members of its species tend to die." From this definition we see that organisms are engaged in a struggle for life. The survival of those best equipped for the struggle is known according to evolutionary thinking, as the survival of the fittest.

A well-known illustration of natural selection deals with the long neck of the giraffe. Among the giraffe population there were those whose necks were longer than others. These were able to reach the higher leaves on the trees. In the struggle for survival, those giraffes who had shorter necks were not able to obtain as much food as those with longer necks and thus were not as robust and as a result they produced fewer offspring. The animals having longer necks passed this trait on to the next generation. The long-necked giraffes possessed a distinct advantage for securing food. Eventually the short-necked giraffes were eliminated. Natural selection then accounts for the survival of those giraffes having the longest necks.²

In addition to natural selection, there is a second tenet which is basic to the theory of evolution. This is a principle from the field of geology, namely, the principle of uniformitarianism. This principle was formulated in 1785 by James Hutton (1726-1797), a Scottish medical man, gentleman farmer, and geologist. That this principle is of utmost significance to most geologists is evident from the following quotation: "This is the great underlying principle of modern geology and is known as the principle of uniformitarianism....Without the principle of uniformitarianism there could hardly be a science of geology that was more than pure description."³

The doctrine of uniformitarianism teaches that the same processes that are operating in the present also operated in the past. This means that "...the processes which are now operating to modify the earth's surface have also operated in the geologic past, that there is a uniformity of processes past and present."⁴ This principle is often summarized in the statement that "the present holds the key to the past."⁵ Examples of these processes are erosion, sedimentation, radioactivity, glaciation, and volcanism.

We can look at glaciation to illustrate the uniformitarian principle. Glaciers deposit debris of a distinctive nature. This debris consists of rock fragments which vary in size from minute particles to huge boulders weighing several tons. These rock fragments are mixed through each other. The larger fragments are often found to be broken and scratched. The only known agent today that leaves this type of deposit is glacial ice. Today, one can find areas having deposits fitting the
above description, but where there are no glaciers present. One such area is the Kettle Moraine area of eastern Wisconsin. According to current geologic interpretation, it can be assumed that glaciers had existed in those areas in the past. Using evidence like this, geologists have developed what is known as “the glacial theory.” This theory states that “…in the past great ice sheets covered large sections of the earth where no ice now exists, and that existing glaciers once extended far beyond their present limits.”

The principle of uniformitarianism in essence does away with divine intervention and that which is miraculous. For example, it rejects the world-wide flood of Noah’s day.

Now that we have traced the history of evolutionary thought and discussed two of its basic tenets, a modern day definition of evolution should be presented. Sir Julian Huxley, the well-known British biologist and one of evolution’s chief protagonists, defines it as follows: “Evolution is a one-way process, irreversible in time, producing apparent novelties and greater variety, and leading to higher degrees of organization, more differentiated, more complex, but at the same time more integrated.”

The proponents of the theory of evolution have continued over the years to develop it. This is especially true with regard to its scope. Initially, evolutionary concepts were confined to the field of biology. Today, however, evolutionary thought is of an all-comprehensive nature. That this is the case can be seen from the expressed views of Huxley. He has stated the following: “The concept of evolution was soon extended into other than biological fields. Inorganic subjects such as the life-histories of stars and the formation of the chemical elements on the one hand, and on the other hand subjects like linguistics, social anthropology, and comparative law and religion, began to be studied from an evolutionary angle, until today we are enabled to see evolution as a universal and all-pervading process.”

At another point Huxley stated: “Our present knowledge indeed forces us to the view that the whole of reality is evolution—a single process of self-transformation.”

Other writers express views in particular areas which substantiate Huxley’s thinking. Victor Branford, at one time the chairman of the Council of the British Sociological Society, stated: “The master idea, which animated alike the initiator of sociology (i.e., August Comte) and his chief continuator (Herbert Spencer), was that of evolution….Independently of the writers of both Comte and Spencer, there proceeded during the 19th century, under the influence of the evolutionary concept, a thoroughgoing transformation of older studies like history, law and political economy; and the creation of new ones like anthropology, social psychology, comparative religion, criminology, social geography. It is from these sources that have sprung the main body of writings, investigations, research, that today can properly be called sociological.”

Henry W. Brosin, a psychiatrist, stated at the convocation of the famous 1959 Darwinian Centennial Celebration at the University of Chicago: “It is appropriate for psychiatrists and other students of mental disorders to pay homage to the work of Charles Robert Darwin and the theory of evolution, for without this work it is difficult to imagine what the state of our discipline would be like.”

With regard to the military and political ambitions of Mussolini and Hitler, R.E.D. Clarke has written: “Our own generation has lived to see the inevitable result of evolutionary teaching—the result that Sedgwick foresees as soon as he had read the Origin. Mussolini’s attitude was completely dominated by evolution. In public utterances, he repeatedly used the Darwinian catch-
words while he mocked at perpetual peace, lest it hinder the evolutionary process. In Germany, it was the same. Adolf Hitler's mind was captivated by evolutionary teaching—probably since the time he was a boy. Evolutionary ideas—quite undisguised—lie at the basis of all that is worse in Mein Kampf—and in his public speeches." 12

Will Durant, in writing about John Dewey who certainly ranks as one of the most influential American philosophers shaping modern educational theory and practice, has stated: "The starting-point of his system of thought is biological: he sees man as an organism in an environment, remaking as well as made. Things are to be understood through their origins and functions, without the intrusion of supernatural considerations." 13

Now that we have considered the all-encompassing nature of evolutionary philosophy, let us turn to the matter of evolution versus the Scriptures. Even though there are those who seek to harmonize evolution with the Scriptures by means of a "theistic evolution" or "progressive creationism," evolution and the Biblical account of creation are diametrically opposed. The following statement by Sir Julian Huxley, which expressed sentiments so characteristic of evolutionary thinking, clearly shows this: "Darwinism removed the whole idea of God as the creator of organisms from the sphere of rational discussion. Darwin pointed out that no supernatural designer was needed; since natural selection could account for any known form of life, there was no room for a supernatural agency in its evolution....There was no sudden moment during evolutionary history when 'spirit' was instilled into life, any more than there was a single moment when it was instilled into you....I think we can dismiss entirely all idea of a supernatural overriding mind being responsible for the evolutionary process." 14 This statement was made in 1959 in a televised panel discussion which was held just prior to the Darwinian Centennial Celebration at the University of Chicago. Another member of the panel was Sir Charles Darwin, the grandson of Charles Darwin the author of The Origin of Species. He gave wholehearted support to Huxley's anti-Biblical view expressed above.

One practical consequence of the hostility of evolutionists toward the Biblical account of creation—becomes manifest when the use of textbooks which present the Genesis account of creation is considered. They vigorously oppose the introduction of such textbooks into the classroom. A very recent example of this occurred in the Dallas, Texas, school system. The Dallas School Board was considering the use of Biology: A Search for Order in Complexity as a resource book in all high school biology classes. This textbook teaches that the most reasonable explanation for the actual facts of biology is that of Biblical creationism. This aroused a storm of protest. Evolutionists wanted nothing of the sort. Over their protests, however, by a 6-3 vote, the Dallas School Board decided to go ahead with adopting the book for use in the classroom. William Murchison, editorial staff writer for The Dallas Morning News, wrote the following in his editorial of Tuesday, February 1, 1977: "If it were evolution that was shut out of the schools, their nostrils would scent burning faggots, their ears would catch the sound of microscopes being trampled underfoot. As it is, when religion begs entry to the classroom, they run to bolt the door. A challenge to Darwinism? Shameful! Primitive! Unconstitutional!" 15

With regard to the whole evolution-creation controversy, it can be said that in recent years evolution has increasingly been coming under attack by those who hold to the Biblical teaching concerning creation. The Creation Research Society and the Institute for Creation Research are among the most active organizations
involved in these attacks. The Institute for Creation Research, dedicated to the promulgation of the Biblical teaching regarding creation and the exposing of the fallacies of the theory of evolution, sponsors radio broadcasts heard around the world. The Creation Research Society is an organization composed of over 400 scientists holding advanced degrees in the various fields of natural science. According to Dr. Duane T. Gish, Associate Director of the Institute for Creation Research and Professor of Natural Science, Christian Heritage College, "The primary purpose of the Creation Research Society is to carry out, or to encourage, Creationist research in the natural sciences, and to publish the results of such research. By Creationist research is meant research which proceeds from a belief in, and attempts to correlate with, special Creation." 16

We turn lastly and most importantly to what the Scriptures themselves have to say regarding creation. Throughout the Scriptures we find the truth repeated that God is the Almighty Creator of all things. Following are six verses from Scripture, three from the Old Testament and three from the New Testament, which speak of this truth:

Exodus 20:11: "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: Wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it."

Nehemiah 9:6: "Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee."

Isaiah 45:18: "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else."

Colossians 1:16: "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him."

Hebrews 11:3: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."

Revelation 10:6: "And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer."

In the light of these verses of Scripture, how empty and purposeless stands the atheistic theory of evolution.

Let us as teachers and parents of the Covenant, instructing children of the Covenant in the school and in the home, ever hold before them the glorious truth of the Scriptures that an Almighty, All-Wise God is the Sovereign Creator and Sustainer of the heavens and the earth and all that they contain.

CENSORSHIP IN LITERATURE

by Agatha Lubbers

The author presented the following article as a speech in October, 1976, to several sectionals at the Protestant Reformed Teachers Institute annual convention. The author teaches literature at Covenant Christian High School.

Introduction
The September, 1976, issue of Perspectives in Covenant Education contains an article, which I wrote, entitled "Creativity and the Reformed Christian Teacher." In this article I stated that an important topic related to creativity is "Censorship and Its Proper Role." During the spring of 1976 I had been assigned the task of making this presentation this morning for the P.R.T.I. Convention on "Censorship in Literature." I had never completely realized the enormity of this problem, nor had I been conscious of the reams of paper that have been consumed in discussions of the problem. As I sat down five days ago to prepare my presentation for this morning I attempted to see the last few roses blooming in the rose garden outside my study window but they could barely be seen because of the height of the stack of material lying on my desk related to this topic.

Most of the materials available on the topic which have been written in the past decade are not written from a specifically Reformed or even broadly Christian perspective. Pragmatic and humanistic principles prevail in the discussion of the problem. The so-called principle of academic or intellectual freedom is the touchstone most often selected to determine the direction of the argumentation on all sides of this sometimes seamy, certainly sensitive, and controversial issue.

As I pondered the topic "Censorship and Literature," I concluded that I have been in the business of censorship and certainly selection for several decades, but the enormity and the importance of the endeavor had never completely dawned upon me until I was forced to prepare for this sectional of the convention on "Censorship and Literature."

As I thought about the topic, I was forced to initiate a more serious and comprehensive inspection of my function as a teacher of Covenant children and adolescents in the Protestant Reformed community. I became immensely impressed with those passages of the inspired Word of God which appeared to shed light on this important function of mine.

Paul says in Philippians 4:8, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are
pure, whatsoever things are of good report; if there by any virtue, and if there by any praise, think on these things.”

In addition the inspired writer Paul says in Colossians 3:8, “But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.”

The apostle Peter teaches that we must have an attitude similar to that of Lot in godless and sex-obsessed Sodom. Peter says that Godly Lot was “vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked, II Peter 2:7.”

James, the brother of our Lord Jesus Christ, says to his fellow believers in the first century Christian churches, “Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, James 1:21a.”

The apostle John writes in the third epistle to well-beloved Gaius (perhaps an elder at Pergamum) and to all the churches and Christians of his day: “Beloved follow not that which is evil. (i.e. imitate not, or do not mimic the evil. AL) but that which is good. III John 11.”

In that well-known and much-loved Psalm which begins “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God” (or NO! GOD! AL), David writes, “They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no not one. Psalm 14:3.”

In addition to all these texts that cry out to the child of God from the Holy Scriptures come also additional profound but perspicuous Scriptural exhortations from the apostle Paul, who in many places reminds the redeemed Christian that he is in the world and that he cannot flee from the world but he nonetheless must not be of the world. He must be transformed and not be conformed to this world. Paul writes specifically about this position of the Christian when he says in I Corinthians 7:29-31, which I freely quote from various sources, “But this I say, brethren, the time is short: from now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none, etc...and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it.” Edgar J. Goodspeed translates this last section of verse 31 in his paraphrase as follows: “…and those who mix in the world, as though they were not absorbed in it.”

In the same general tone Paul also says to the Corinthians and to us all in I Corinthians 5:9-10, “I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company (i.e. be intimate, AL) with fornicators; yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world (i.e. not at all meaning the immoral of this world, AL) or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.”

I appears therefore that the task of the Christian censor of literature is clear-cut and specific. This task is not to be freighted with the academic free-thinking baggage of intellectual liberty, but is soundly rooted in the freedom which we have as believers in Christ—a freedom in Christ which is judged by the conscience of another, cf. I Corinthians 10:29. In all our life, including the censoring of literature we teach and in selecting the literature we read, we are called to discriminate as Christians and to please our neighbor for good to edification. Romans 15:2. In this way we do all things to the glory of God.

* * * * *

In order to understand censorship as it applies to literature and the reading we do or will permit our students to do, we should investigate at least four important questions.

1. What is the History of censorship?
2. What is the necessity for censorship?
3. What is the purpose for censorship?
4. How does one implement the censorship process?

It is my intention to survey these four questions. I shall devote the remainder of the time for this sectional to a general discussion of any of these four questions.
but particularly to the implementation of the censorship process—a question to which I will devote the least time in my formal presentation. I also invite discussion of any unanswered questions or disputable answers to questions in my presentation.

* * * *

1. The History of Censorship

Censorship of literature and the writings of men is obviously an old question. The Roman Catholic Church instituted the Index (i.e. the list of censored books) in the 16th century after the famous Council of Trent. That books were censored for their contents in the 16th and 17th centuries and even in later centuries in Europe is a matter of record. Censorship is really an old story and is not merely some late 20th century development. Socrates, Galileo, Luther, and Milton are only a few of the names of famous men whose ideas and writings have been suppressed as dangerous and heretical. In some cases it is true and in others it is not true.

In addition, there is an equally illustrious group of men who have defended the right to be heard. They are Socrates, John Locke, Thomas Jefferson, John Stuart Mill, and John Milton—a man who always was an antagonist of intellectual bondage.

There is of course a sense in which bondage of sound and correct ideas is fundamentally wrong! Martin Luther pinpointed it when he said, "I am persuaded that without the knowledge of literature theology cannot at all endure, just as heretofore when letters have declined and lain prostrate; nay, I see that there has never been a great revelation of the Word of God unless God has first prepared the way by the rise and prosperity of language and letters as though they were John the Baptists."

John Milton writes in his "Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing to the Parliament of England"—a speech he called the Areopagitica, concerning the suppression of ideas. He writes condemningly about the Council of Trent and Spanish Inquisition which he said brought forth those "catalogues and expurgating indexes, that rake through the entrails of many an old good author, with a violation worse than any could be offered to his tomb."

Milton continues in the same Areopagitica as follows: "Nor did they stay in matters heretical, but any subject that was not to their palate, they either condemned in a prohibition, or had it straight into the new purgatory of an Index. To fill up the measure of encroachment, their last invention was to ordain that no book, pamphlet, or paper should be printed (as if St. Peter had bequeathed them the keys of the press also out of Paradise) unless it were approved and licensed under the hands of two or three friars...

Milton continues as follows: "I fear their next design will be to get into their custody the licensing of that which they say Claudius intended, but went not through with." (The reference to Claudius by Milton is to the Roman emperor who supposedly was considering the granting of pardon to those afflicted with intestinal disturbances at the table. With this hyperbole Milton attempts to show to what extent censorship can go and how it can become ridiculous.)

Bear with me as I quote one more of these gems from the Areopagitica by Milton: "Solomon informs us that much reading is a weariness to the flesh, but neither he nor other inspired author tells us that such or such reading is unlawful; yet certainly had God thought good to limit us herein, it had been much more expedient to have told us what was unlawful than what was wearisome."

At this point Milton may be pushing the case a bit too far, but I think the point has been sufficiently made that early in history there was censorship and such censorship as existed and was practiced
was often incorrect.

The history of censorship includes the censoring of children's books. Only in recent times can one find a record of, or reference to censorship in children's literature. This is undoubtedly in great part due to the fact that the publication of children's literature is a recent phenomenon. A virtual plethora of such literature currently exists while this was not true in the past. Children and adolescents in the earliest days of book publishing and education read adult literature. No vast libraries or school media centers were filled with children's literature.

The 19th century records provide well-documented evidence of the suppression of certain books to protect children. Anthony Comstock is cited by Richard L. Darling in Elementary English, May, 1974, as one of the better-known censors of 19th century America. Comstock wrote as follows: "There is at present no more active agent employed by Satan in civilized communities to ruin the human family and subject the nations to himself than evil reading.... Vile books and papers are branding-irons heated in the fires of hell, and used by Satan to sear the highest life of the soul." Comstock persuaded the federal government to pass the Comstock Act which would begin using the postal department to suppress books. In the tons of books and magazines confiscated, however, there were no books which could specifically be called children's books because this act preceded the publishing boom of children's books.

Another agency in the 19th century for the protection of children was the American Sunday School Union. This organization set up standards for juvenile literature. Emphasis was on the moral and religious character of books although criteria concerning style and appropriateness for the growing mind of the child were also included.

It is reported that one of the most influential agencies to censor children's books in the late 19th century was the Ladies Commission on Sunday-School Books. In an article submitted to the Unitarian Review of June, 1874, the Commission described their work. They said they had examined 343 books, and had approved 82. They listed the most common reasons for rejection of certain books. Most of the reasons were literary—relating to style, structure, characterization, motivation, and stereotyped character and action, but many were condemned for their sensationalism, exaggeration of incident, lack of proper connection between cause and effect, (i.e. coincidence), "a startling and even horrible character of events," for "vulgar words" and "vulgar thoughts." The Ladies Commission suggested that writers for children take the advice of St. Paul in Philippians 4:8, with one word changed, "write on these things" rather than "think on these things."

During the 20th century the controversy concerning the legitimacy of certain books and the controversy over the practices of certain censors has proliferated. Richard L. Darling writing in the May, 1974 edition of Elementary English writes that although censorship of children's books is a 20th century phenomenon, "it is peculiar that there has never yet been a book for children declared illegal by a court of competent jurisdiction." (He wrote this prior to some later decisions by courts.) Darling continues as follows in his article: "The story of censorship of children's books and other reading materials is a tale of pressure groups, of illegal actions, of timidity, even cowardice among librarians and other educators, and of almost unbelievable prejudice and stupidity." One of the instances of this kind of prejudice cited by several journalists was that which occurred in Caldwell Parish, Louisiana. Librarians in this parish painted tempera diapers on the naked hero of the child's story book In the Night Kitchen by
Maurice Sendak, and published by Harper in 1970. In the Night Kitchen has been condemned by censors and book selectors because it celebrates childhood sexuality—or at least childhood sensuality. Some have called it a "masturbatory fantasy." Now it surpasses my imagination and understanding to know why such literature will be helpful to young children. In what sense is it proper for young children?

The cynical and antinomian opinions of Richard L. Darling, Dean at Columbia University's School of Library Services, New York City, and those of Mary Lou White, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio, who writes in the October, 1974, edition of The Elementary School Journal, University of Chicago publication, are the prevailing opinions of persons in positions of leadership today.

This kind of evidence prompts one to recall another of the famous phrases of the erudite but pious Martin Luther. "I am much afraid that schools will prove to be the great gates of hell, unless they diligently labor in explaining the Holy Scriptures, engraving them in the hearts of youth." This the schools do not do today.

I was surprised to read, however, in the course of my research an article appearing in the School Library Journal, February, 1973, p. 44, under the title "Sexuality in Books for Children: An Exchange" between Barbara Wersba and Josette Frank, the rather unusual but also ambivalent point view expressed by the matronly appearing Josette Frank, who is the director for Children's Books and Mass Media at the Child Study Association in New York. Permit me to quote at some length from her part of the literary exchange.

Josette Frank begins by saying, "There is nothing new about discussion of sex education for children. Books purporting to tell children the 'facts of life'—as it was then polite to call them—began appearing about the turn of the century."

Frank continues later in the article after indicating that "adults should make available books to the young and immature that will stretch the mind and spirit" the following: "Therefore when, in an otherwise conventional take, we come suddenly without warning, to an episode in which a 13-year-old girl teaches a boy the way of what she calls 'mating,' we wonder how this can profit the young reader. Is it information he or she needs or can use at this point in maturing? Is it an integral part of the story or is it dragged in for titillation? When we give this book, or others like it, to a young teenager, are we, in effect saying, 'Try it—you'll like it'?

Finally after expanding still further on this topic Frank writes: "I confess I am thinking in terms of shielding children from unnecessary premature, unhealthy sexual stimulation, beyond their present maturity and capacity to manage. Just when and how that capacity arrives cannot be defined for all children. Their exposure to sexual behavior in the omnipresent media most certainly hastens their information and their sophistication. Whether it hastens their maturity is an unanswered question."

Josette Frank concludes by saying, "Therefore I feel we adults—and this includes especially writers and editors—have a grave responsibility in recommending books to children's attention, to give them books whose positive value we believe in. I do not consider this censorship."

Although Josette Frank considers this selection and not censorship, it cannot be denied that when one selects certain books and denies others he is censoring certain things away from a child. There are those who would claim that this is un-American because is is anti-bill of rights behavior.

The history or direction of censorship in the past several years includes what has been happening in places like Drake,
North Dakota, where copies of the profane and obscene novel, *Slaughterhouse Five* by Kurt Vonnegut were summarily confiscated and burned in spite of the protestations of Mr. Severy, English teacher at Drake, and in spite of the dissent of Donald B. Veix who writes in an article appearing in the *English Journal* of October, 1975, "Teaching a Censored Novel: *Slaughterhouse Five.*" In the article Veix writes, "It grabs me. I enjoy teaching it."

The recent history of censorship also includes what has been happening in places like Kanawha County, West Virginia. The American Library Association reported in June of 1975, that its TNT list (Titles Now Troublesome) had grown from 11 to 30 in six months. The books on the list included: *Jaws, Rosemary's Baby, The Summer of 42, Slaughterhouse Five, The Exorcist, Jonathan Livingstone's Seagull.*

In New Hampshire legislators introduced a bill to impose a $1,000.00 fine or a year's imprisonment on any public school teacher who assigned books containing words the state defines as obscene. During the debate in the legislature, one opponent of the bill observed that the bill's provisions would mean jail for a teacher who taught Shakespeare or Chaucer. "That's right," snapped one of the sponsors. "And those books ought to be read in college, not before."

In Dallas, Texas, school officials have not waited for protests before banning books from the schools. The *Newsweek* of June 9, 1975, reports that *Jaws, Go Ask Alice,* and *North Dallas Forty* have all fallen short of the strict standards of a school board screening committee.

In Syracuse, Indiana, several parents recently forced their local high school to ban John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men.* They complained that it contains "cuss words."

School administrators in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, have given up an unexpurgated textbook called *Mass Media* and the *Popular Arts* because it includes excerpts from news stories about the Democratic National Convention in 1968—complete with four-letter expletives from the protesters in the now well-known Chicago fiasco.

Judith Krug, who heads the ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom, has an opinion to explain this spreading sentiment for censorship in the 70's. She says, "People feel helpless, and they find it easier to censor school material than it is to express what's really bothering them."

Krug continues, "They say, 'If my kid didn't read *Go Ask Alice* then the drug problem would go away."

We have undoubtedly written enough about the history of censorship to indicate that censorship has been and is a live issue. The Christian School is also involved in this procedure and ought to be. In 1971 the National Union of Christian Schools published a Curriculum Resource Paper authored by Henry Baron. It was entitled 'Dirty Books' in Christian Schools: Principles of Selection.

A consideration of this fact leads me to ask and answer my second question, "Why is Censorship Necessary?"

* * * * *

2. The Necessity for Censorship

In a review in the *Christian Educators Journal*, January, 1969, Gerda Bos of Trinity College discusses the 'Dirty Books' resource paper authored by Baron. Within the review by Gerda Bos can be found a statement which expressed the need for a study of censorship. Gerda Bos says, "A serious application of Henry Baron's proposals would result in better preparation for teachers, better education for students, and better relations between parents and teachers. These would all be significant consequences of a paper which sets out to suggest a program whereby parents, teachers, and boards may avoid the hassles resulting from the assignment of books which parents find objection-
able." That is an exceedingly pragmatic statement but expresses adequately the current felt need in the Christian schools for censorship and proper selection of books for children and adolescents.

Parents, teachers, and students are all members of the community of Christians denominated as the body of Christ. They are commanded by God to edify one another. When a teacher assigns a book or makes available to a student or a group of students a book, or other literary materials which are not acceptable to the parent there will be a conflict. When such conflicts occur the child suffers, the school system suffers, the body of Christ suffers, the whole Christian community suffers. That which is causing the trouble must be evaluated, critiqued, and perhaps censored. This is part of the selection process. The Scriptural principle which we stated earlier in this presentation, and which is to the point is that stated in Romans 15:1-3a by the Apostle Paul. "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please ourselves. Let everyone of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself...."

The necessity for censorship is dictated in the Christian community and the Christian school by the fact of sin and God's commands. Man's sinfulness has caused a total polluting of the products of men including his literature or his cultured responses to reality. Undiluted and unsophisticated common sense plus sheer classical decorum and Christian moral sensitivity makes censorship of much of that which is peddled as literature necessary. We cannot help but be repelled by what seems to be a virtual obsession with many modern writers. Dr. Tiemersma writing in an article entitled for "Adults Only" in the Christian Educators Journal, January, 1969, cuts with characteristic incisiveness into the problem; "So pervasive is the preoccupation with the purely biological functions of man," says Tiemersma, "with sex and perversion, with defecation and urination, that even non-Christian critics have begun to protest, if not in the name of decency, at least in the name of art."

Tiemersma's analysis of the current 20th century syndrome reminds me of a comment made by 18th century Samuel Johnson in his critique of the love theme which was so prominent in most or all of the 18th century dramas and plays. Johnson writes, "Upon every other stage (except Shakespeare's, AL) the universal agent is love, by whose power all good and evil is distributed, and every action quickened or retarded. To bring a lover, a lady, and a rival into the fable; to entangle them in contradictory obligations, perplex them with oppositions of interest, and harass them with violence of desires inconsistent with each other; to make them meet in rapture and part in agony; to fill their mouths with hyperbolical joy and outrageous sorrow; to distress them as nothing human ever was distressed, to deliver them as nothing human ever was delivered—is the business of a modern (i.e. 18th century, AL) dramatist. For this (i.e. the love theme, AL) probability is violated, life is misrepresented, and language is depraved. But love is only one of many passions..." This quote from the Preface to Shakespeare by Samuel Johnson serves to illustrate the simple fact that the same preoccupation with sex and lust only more pornographically and more naturalistically infects literature of the 20th century. Man does change—he becomes more sinful. Sin develops.

Dr. Tiemersma includes in "For Adults Only" a brief analysis of the 20th century reaction against Victorian prudery. He says this reaction may in some respects be a healthy one and that the "see no evil—hear no evil—speak no evil pose" of the 19th century might have contained more than the usual proportion of hypocrisy. Tiemersma also observes that neither culture nor morality seems
have been noticeably benefitted or improved by Dr. Bowdler’s expurgations of Shakespeare. “But,” says Tiemersma, “although Victorians and Christians have been frequently accused of playing the ostrich, one is tempted to ask in all seriousness whether society has gained measureably by pulling its head out of the sand and thrusting it into the chamber pot.”

The necessity for censorship in the school becomes all the more evident when one considers what has happened to literature for adolescents. Previous adolescent literature stayed at the low, somewhat sacharrine, and perhaps unrealistic and romantic level of A Touchdown for Old Swash High, or Class Ring, or A Pet for Cynthia, or Pirates of the Deep. Today’s literature written for the adolescent is more likely to mirror the real world of today’s young people—drugs, racism, school dropouts, divorce, sex, permissiveness, high school gangs. (cf. English Journal, November, 1972.)

I am not holding a brief for unrealistic and for romantic sentimental drivel. I am stating, however, that the quantity of today’s literature which rises no higher than the level of gutter language has so proliferated that knowledgeable censoring of literature is an absolute necessity.

***

3. The Purpose For Censorship

I come now to a short discussion of the purpose for censorship in literature.

Grace Huizing, editor of the Language Arts Department of the Christian Educators Journal in 1967, quotes the late Dr. Henry Zylstra, who quotes Professor Herbert Pottle. “We protect children from books that might cause trouble, as we keep certain kinds of food from them, but when they grow up they must decide by the testimony of their own lives and their own consciences. It was profoundly said by St. Augustine that all morality can be summed up in the injunction, ‘Love God and do what you will.’ The saying could as well take the form, ‘Love God and read what you will.’”

The point that is obviously being made is that young people and perhaps children, too, need not be cloistered not should they live in “ostrich-like” seclusion (and they don’t). Nevertheless, the young person must be mature enough to read the materials that they voluntarily select or those that are selected for him to read.

We do not espouse or support the Students’ Right to Read position of Kenneth Donelson, who has prepared recommendations in a little booklet which will handle citizen’s complaints about books and other materials used in the schools. He proposes a six-point program (which we have no time to consider now) in the February, 1974, issue of the English Journal for English departments to follow so that they will be prepared for the activities of the censor.

We do agree with Mary Lou White in an article in the Elementary School Journal, October, 1974, when she writes, “The ultimate threat of controversy is censorship, even though one of basic tenets of democracy is the individual’s right to read. When we place restrictions on this guaranteed right by censoring books in any form we deny the child not only his intellectual freedom, but his constitutional freedom.”

I maintain that children are not free to read whatever they please just as they cannot do as they please. Anarchy reigns in many a home and school for just that reason. Children like adults must learn to subject themselves to the plain and infallible teaching of the Word of God. In addition, children need guidance and they need a healthy reading diet—a diet which can best be determined for them by God-fearing teachers and parents who don’t wish to pervert and destroy the seed of the Covenant but wish to discipline and nurture that seed of the Covenant to the glory and to the praise of God.
Adolescents are certainly to be taught the errors of false philosophy and the error of pornography, but they also are to be protected and “sheltered” from the false philosophy and kinds of evils that are “humorously peddled” in the supposed seriousness of a perverted book like Slaughterhouse Five. When humor and supposed seriousness is used to peddle graffiti found usually on the walls of bathrooms, then our children are to be told that it is not necessary to read about that from which they have been saved and concerning which the apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians 5:12, “For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret;” and concerning which Paul said in 1 Corinthians 6:18, “Flee fornication.” In a discussion of a similar problem the Heidelberg Catechism says, “Since both our body and soul are temples of the Holy Spirit, he commands us to preserve them pure and holy: therefore he forbids all unchaste actions, gestures, words, thoughts, desires, and whatever can entice men thereto.”

There is only a short step between depraved realism, titillating naturalism, and the erotic literature of the porno pushers.

The purpose of our reading programs and our literature study programs is to produce mature Christian thinkers. They are not to be the “great gates of hell.” The purpose of our literature and reading programs is to instruct, to discipline, to educate and not to titillate and satisfy the passions.

This makes the teaching literature a battle.

This is the challenge.

In the world, but not of it means exactly that! In the world, but not of it means to crucify and mortify our old natures and thus walk a godly life.

I do not mean to propose that I think our young people are naive and should remain naive concerning the world’s ills. The Bible doesn’t do that to them, neither does literature have to be some kind of syrupy pabulum. I do mean to state, however, that the literature our young people read must be both enjoyable and instructive; but not seductive as much contemporary literature is under the guise of that well-known slogan, “It has redeeming social value.” That’s hogwash!

We must beware, therefore, lest we become laborers for and with Satan, the father of the lie, who is Belial, rather than being what we ought to be, “Colaborers together with all the holy apostles and holy men of every age of God in Christ.”

I am not promoting a Pollyanna-type literature, nor the Horatio Alger type of literature in which the good boy makes good in the world. Deistic and rationalistic morality must also be censored as being perverted and ill-bred.

I am advocating a healthy God-fearing censorship and selection of literature which I believe is the personal and collective responsibility of all who are involved in the instructing of the youth of the Covenant.

This all reminds me of a quotation I have used before and which appears on page 35 of the Literature Studies Guide, published by the Federation of P.R.C.S. in 1971. Leland Ryken writes: “I believe that the best criterion for what a Christian ought not to be reading is simply the test of enjoyment. The regenerated Christian cannot enjoy literature that delights in the portrayal of immorality, that attempts to arouse impure sexual thoughts, that trades in profanity, or that blasphemes the sacred things of the Christian religion. The Christian mind, I say, is repelled by all this because of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, and it can be trusted to stay away from such literature if it is allowed to follow the standard of Christian enjoyment.” I know that this kind of attitude creates problems too, but it is a healthy sound approach to the difficult area we are discussing. It fits with
Augustine’s, “Love God and do what you will!” Our task is to produce the discriminating reader through selection and censorship.

* * * *

4. Implementing Censorship

This leads me to the last topic for this paper and of this sectional. I should like to leave most of this for discussion purposes. I only wish to state that we can hardly to better than was done in the Principles for Selection and Censorship of Literature in the Literature Studies Guide, 1971. Here are those principles.

A. We select literature which provides insights into reality.
B. We select literature which demonstrates effectively literary form and literature which develops a discriminating reader.
C. We select literature which conveys the feeling of living in a different time and place.
D. We select literature which effectively provides an insight into the student’s own life.
E. We select literature which is appropriate to the intellectual, social, and emotional level of the covenant child.
F. We believe that the teacher must consider the spiritual maturity of the child in choosing works of literature for classroom use.
G. We believe that the teacher is primarily responsible for all materials selected in the literature class.
H. We promote the use of the writings of Christians, especially those writings which artistically show the conflicts of the Christian pilgrimage and the resolution on these problems by grace, the atonement through Christ.
I. We strive for balance by selecting from literature, all types (genre) of literature, writings from all periods, and writings of both Christians and non-Christians.

J. We reject some “literature” which is so evil that it is part of the things which “should not be once named among you.” (Cf. Ephesians 5)

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PHYSICAL EDUCATION

MUST EDUCATE

by John Zandstra

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"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Romans 12:1) (KJV)

What does it mean to be in a physical education class? To some it means "fun and games," while to others it means working out in the gymnasium on a regular basis. To children of farmers it may seem to be a waste of time; after all, they already have muscles. Others think of physical education as athletics or sports. Still others suppose that "a sound mind in a sound body" presents a dichotomy, by this they mean to say that the "sound body" has no bearing on a "sound mind."

Let us first examine what the Scriptures say. What do the Scriptures teach concerning physical education? How should a Christian view physical education? What is the Christian's responsibility with regard to the physical aspect of man? Who made this body? How important is our body?

The Bible gives us a fundamental directive for physical education. This is not explicit in the Scriptures but it is certainly implied. The Holy Scripture furnishes us with some guidelines when it comes to the importance and use of the body. In creation God made everything and everything He made was good (Genesis 1:31). Man is in that creation. Psalm 100:3 says, "Know ye that the Lord He is God; it is He that hath made us and not we ourselves; we are his people; and the sheep of his pasture." Genesis 2:7 tells us, "And the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Thus Scripture plainly teaches that God is the maker of our bodies. Therefore our bodies are important and, therefore, we do have a responsibility to our Maker. Romans 12:1 which I quoted in the beginning of this paper says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." In I Corinthians 6:19
and 20, Paul teaches us that we are not our own, but belong to God: "What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit which are God's." The body is a priceless possession for the Christian. It is written in Deuteronomy 6:5, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." And the very first question and answer of the Heidelberg Catechism teaches us; "that I, with body and soul, both in life and death am not my own but belong to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ."

From this we can see that the Scriptures and Confessions not only establish the importance of the body as such, they also teach us that it is an integral part of the image of God. The Scriptures also teach us that God gave us commands concerning the use of our bodies. There are many people today who do not appreciate many of the functions which belong to the human life. We are not machines that are set into motion without one division of life affecting the others. The intellectual division of life does not function against the emotional aspect of life, the spiritual sphere of life does not function by itself or against the other two, and neither does the physical aspect of life function independent of the others. Not one of these areas of life function apart from each other, they all are involved in life and thus in education. The body as far as a Christian is concerned, is not a working slave, or merely a machine; it is the property of God. We, as Christians should know the importance of the body and desire to use it as a tool with which to serve the Lord.

The body is a part of the total man who is created in the image of God. Children should be taught to value their body as a God-given possession. The task in a physical education program should be designed to educate each child in the proper use of his body throughout life. The care of the physical, as well as the spiritual body, is part of man's reasonable service to God! The physical education program must prepare each person to understand and meet his or her bodily needs. Physical education must help students make wise and intelligent decisions regarding the care and the use of the body. It should also help a student make wise decisions about how he will use his leisure time. We are living in a world of much wealth and everybody has leisure time. If we as teachers and parents do not direct our students in the right use of leisure time, they will fill that time with something of their own choosing. What a student chooses for himself may in time lead to trouble, if he is not duly instructed how to fill his spare time correctly.

The need for a physical education program in the Christian school has been questioned often. It is believed that children have plenty of opportunity to get exercise in their play. This was probably true in our earlier history. The culture of that day instilled into children the need to do physically exerting work at home and at school. But today's culture has changed. The working man's load has been cut down. The physical effort has been reduced. Technology has given us more leisure time. Children are not required to do demanding workloads because of our wealth. We also live in a community in which we have much broader horizons. We need to have in our physical education programs, programs that teach about fitness and the wise use of leisure time.

At this point I would like to say: Caution should be taken that the care and use of the body does not become an end in itself. We must truly glorify God with the body God has created, but we must also keep in mind I Timothy 4:8: "For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise
of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." Also Ecclesiastes 3:20: "All go unto one place, all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again." This puts our body into the right perspective quite well, and should warn us never to make an idol of our body.

Physical education, then, is not limited to the conditioning and training of bodies. We must not separate the physical education program from the spiritual, emotional and intellectual development.

Everyone needs recreation throughout all of life. Recreation can bear many forms, such as music, crafts and arts, reading and many others. Most recreation is of free choice. Recreation is one area in the life of man in which he is not always bound to do the same thing or at the same time, but as he feels the need or has the time. The choice is ours, and if we are like most people, we will enjoy those activities in which we have at least, some knowledge and competence. One of the values of our physical education should be that we provide the opportunity to attain skills and knowledge in healthful activities that can be used for recreation during our student's school years and for years to come. Knowledge is necessary for successful participation in games and sports.

Another important value in physical education is the psychological aspect. The student is subject to tension and emotional stress that result from hard labor in the class room. The physical education class should provide exercise that can release some of the frustrations and fears of other classroom activity. Aggressiveness often disappears when a person vigorously attacks the soccer ball, or football or any activity in which one might be engaged. A good hard game often relaxes a person so that he can once again participate in intellectual tasks of studies.

Another important value of physical education is the development of good conduct. Children must be taught good sportsmanship. This ethical conduct depends upon our and their religious commitment. We must teach fairness, honesty, and so forth. Games and sports demand outward signs of conduct that are observed by everyone who is playing or watching.

From these values and from our religious commitment to serve the Lord to the best of our abilities, we must and should see the need of physical education in our school. The goals of our physical education program should center around the importance of teaching creative ways to maintain health fitness and to develop the physical skills of the body. We should provide an intellectual opportunity to our students, so that they will know and understand the need of physical fitness, and healthful living habits.

Therefore, health also should be high on our list. We should direct our students how to make wise decisions for the use of leisure time. With this I would like to give a list of aims and objectives:

1) Provide a classroom in physical education which leads to maximum health and the normal growth of a student's body.

2) We should throughout the program give students reasons why we as Christians have to care for our God-given body.

3) We should strive to develop the highest physical potential in our students. (adequate strength, endurance, agility and speed)

4) Develop general coordination and motor skills needed for daily life. (e.g., walking, standing, lifting, pushing, dodging, running, climbing)

5) Improving the power of perception.

6) Develop the ability to perform in a variety of sports and games, at the same time developing appreciation for these in later life; use of leisure time.

7) Teach our children how to develop skills for the worthy use of time now.

8) Provide a means of social interaction where individuals can learn to know
and to understand the needs of other people.

9) Provide opportunities for students to lead, to follow, to share in responsibilities.

10) We should try to provide participation in activities which call for courage and determination, for this will build self-confidence.

11) We must set forth the reasons why and benefits of good proper fitness.

12) We must direct the moral aspect of a person in the right direction. (fairness, unselfishness, patience, good sportsmanship, etc.)

13) We also must be realistic in that, it must be fun, relax the student, and give the student the satisfaction of accomplishment. The student should be able to reach some achievement, though never separate from their spiritual growth.

14) We should stress the importance of proper healthful living habits, such as eating, sleeping, and so forth.

15) We should conduct conditioning exercises in our classes.

These are some of the aims and objectives that should be in our physical education program. In order for these to be met, a program has to have the proper facilities.

In conclusion, permit me to make a few general remarks. One of the newest threats to our spiritual life is the increase in leisure time. Next to the abundance of the material things we now have, leisure time is high on the list. What must we do with it? How ought a Christian use his leisure time? We as Christian teachers and parents must give direction to our children in the use of their leisure time. We must start that in our physical education classes. This is part of our God-given responsibility when we baptize them. We read the Baptism form the third question, “Whether you promise and intend to see these children, when come to the years of discretion, instructed and brought up in the aforesaid doctrine, or help or cause them to be instructed therein, to the utmost of your power?” And we answer, “Yes”!

We as Christian parents having made this choice must provide this education to the best of our ability. We must give them the knowledge to make wise and careful decisions regarding the use of leisure time. Physical education is a must in the Protestant Reformed Christian schools. It is the Christian’s moral responsibility to be concerned about physical education.

“It is the duty, then, of the interpreter and teacher of Holy Scripture, the defender of the true faith and the opponent of error, both to teach what is right and to refute what is wrong, and in the performance of this task to conciliate the hostile, to rouse the careless, and to tell the ignorant both what is occurring at present and what is probable in the future. If, however, the hearers require to be roused rather than instructed, in order that they may be diligent to do what they already know, and to bring their feelings into harmony with the truths they admit, greater vigour of speech is needed. Here entreaties and reproaches, exhortations, and upbraiding, and all the other means of rousing the emotions, are necessary.”

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