this before we hire them, and we will be careful of this after we hire them throughout their teaching career. The school boards have an important duty here. The moral character of the teachers will, in large measure, set the moral tone of the school.

Thirdly, to maintain the proper moral environment of our schools there must be the presence of discipline. A strict, rigorous, loving discipline. A discipline consistently administered by the teachers. A discipline supported by the school board and by the parents.

When all of the instruction of our school is God-centered, and when the love and fear of God are stirred up in the hearts of the children, then we will have achieved our purpose in Christian education. Then all the cost, all the sacrifice, all the hard labor will have been worthwhile. For then, God will be honored. And then our children will have been equipped to live in His world to His glory.

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**PARENTS' CORNER**

Are your children readers — avid readers? Or are they drawn more to computers, video games, and television sets? As you well know, those are questions of no little consequence. They're addressed in the following article by Sue Looyenga, mother of three aspiring little "bookworms" at Adams Street Christian School.

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**Encouraging Reading in the Home**

Imagine your family being offered round-trip travel tickets to be used as desired for life. These tickets could be used to transport the entire family to a chosen destination anywhere in the world or each individual in the family could choose to travel alone at his own whim. Who would be so foolish as to turn away an opportunity such as this?

And yet, as fantastic as this offer might sound, it still cannot rival the opportunity that families have to read together, but which they often turn aside. Reading
together or alone can not only transport us to faraway places, but can also bring us into other time periods, both past and future. A book can even convey us into the mind of another person, so that we can view the world through his eyes.

But reading as a pastime for the family and its members has all too often in our day been replaced by other activities of little or no lasting value. Countless hours are wasted by families attracted to the instant gratification — the quick thrill, the quick laugh, and the quick “solution” to life’s problems — offered by an ever-increasing number of television channels. Video games lure many others before their flashing screens to while away the hours in pursuit of elusive imaginary characters or munchable dots. Even the home computer, while proving worthwhile in many ways, has taken many an avid reader from his books and placed him before yet another screen. Our world of vast technological advances is proving to be a contributor to the premature death of many an aspiring “bookworm.”

But reading need not become a thing of the past in our homes. Indeed it must never be allowed to become that in our Covenant homes, for we, more than any others, need to read. First and foremost, our God has revealed Himself to us in a written Word. That alone is reason for us to want to read and for us to desire our children to read also. We also have a rich legacy of historical Christian literature that must never be neglected because it reveals God’s unfolding Plan throughout the ages of the church and brings us the rich truths of God’s Word as they have withstood the onslaughts of the centuries past. And, finally, God has used the pens of both godly and ungodly writers to bring us to a better understanding of the world in which we live, so that we might become better aware of our place in it and God’s plan working within it.

Because of the ever-increasing sinfulness of our world, the depravity of man, and the blasphemy of his tongue and pen there is much literature that is unfit for our sensitive, regenerate hearts to partake of. Even among so-called Christian literature the Truth is often perverted and distorted. So then, it is most important that we become not only readers, but discerning readers. It will do us no good to decry the abominations that appear on television and theater screen while allowing the same to appear in our homes in printed form. We must become aware and make our young children aware of what constitutes worthwhile literature, lest we do our families greater
harm than good in bringing books into our homes. Always our choices must be made with the glory of God foremost in our minds.

Gladys Hunt, in her book *Honey For a Child's Heart*, lists some of the ingredients of a good book, that is, a book that not only is morally sound, but also has the qualities good writing should have. First of all she begins with the theme of the book, or idea behind it. It must have quality or it will, she states, result in a "flabby story." Books that are themeless prove also to be incoherent and rambling in their style, and usually fall flat in the first few pages. And just as important as the theme is the plot, because, being the design or "why?" of the story, it holds the book together. If the author is skillful, his plot will bring meaning to the story and to its characters, and add depth to the idea of the story. And, finally, the conclusion of the story is also significant, for it sums up the entirety of what the author has said and leaves us with something to think about. Mrs. Hunt sums up the greatest quality of truly good books with these words: "A sense of permanent worthwhileness surrounds really great literature. Laughter, pain, hunger, satisfaction, love, joy — the ingredients of a human life are found in depth and leave a residue of mental and spiritual richness in the reader." These criteria make it somewhat easier to select reading material that will benefit our children and ourselves.

How then do we encourage reading in our homes? First of all, by being an example to our children. If we do not read, they most likely will not find pleasure in reading themselves. And the kind of literature that we choose will affect their choices also. If our reading is limited to worldly human interest magazines and trashy novels of the sort found near grocery store check-out lanes, we'd better not expect their tastes to run to literature of any higher caliber. Secondly, we must introduce our children to good books at an early age. Most of us already have a beginning in doing this at our family mealtime devotions, but we can go far beyond this by reading other stories to them and applying the Scriptural principles that they already know to the new-found knowledge of God's world and the creatures within it. In beginning at an early age, we can help them grow in their understanding of their place within God's world and broaden their world and life view. This is according to the instruction of God Himself in Deuteronomy 6, where we are commanded to teach His commandments, statutes, and judgments to them in our households.
as we walk by the way, when we lie down and rise up. And last of all, we must show an interest in the reading that our children do, for that is the very best encouragement a child can have. We should familiarize ourselves with their special interests and help them to choose good books that they will enjoy. Then we can encourage them to broaden their horizons, perhaps reading an old favorite of our own childhood to them. By discussing what they have read with them and reading to them — even to our older children who can read by themselves — we share in their interests as well. And by discussing with them what we have been reading, whether it is the Scripture passage of our personal devotions or another literary passage, they will sense our enjoyment and be encouraged to continue with their own reading. In this way families are drawn together by the bond of mutual love for that which is worthwhile reading.

What are some good books? Following are listed some of our own family favorites. Also included are a few of my own favorites for those with older children, as ours are mainly limited to the young readers’ bracket. I’m sure many teachers could add to the list and so could the many parents who find snuggling up with a child and a good book one of life’s most blessed experiences.

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BOOK LIST

Gertrude Hoeksema, *Come Ye Children: A Bible Storybook for Young Children*

Garth Williams, *Baby Animals*

Margaret Wise Brown, *Good Night Moon*

Marjorie Flack, *The Story of Ping*

Beatrix Potter, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, il. by author

Ezra Jack Keats, *The Snowy Day*

Eric Carle, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*

Richard Scarry books, *What Do People Do All Day*, *Best Word Book Ever*, *Cars and Trucks and Things That Go*

Lois Lenski, *Policeman Small*

Robert McCloskey, *Make Way for Ducklings*, *Blueberries for Sal*

Don Freeman, *Corduroy*

Clarence Anderson, *Billy and Blaze* and other books in the series

James Marshall, *George and Martha*

Marie H. Ets, *Play With Me*

Hans A. Rey, *Curious George*, look for other books in this series

Gene Zion, *Harry the Dirty Dog*

Dr. Seuss, *Horton Hatches the Egg*, *The Sneetches* and other stories

Claire H. Bishop, *Five Chinese Brothers*

Munro Leaf, *The Story of Ferdinand*

Bernard Waber, *Lyle, Lyle Crocodile* and other books in the Lyle series

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PERSPECTIVES IN COVENANT EDUCATION
Peggy Parish, *Amelia Bedelia*, a series, also *Granny and the Indians*
Else H. Minarik, *A Kiss For Little Bear, Little Bear*, and other bear books
Norman Bridwell, *Clifford, the Big Red Dog*, a series
Arnold Lobel, *Frog and Toad Are Friends*, and other books about Frog and Toad
Philip D. Eastman, *Are You My Mother?*
Rebecca Caudill, *The Best Loved Doll*
Carolyn Haywood, *B is For Betsy* and other Betsy/Eddie books
Michael Bond, *A Bear Called Paddington*
A.A. Milne, *Winnie the Pooh*

For Readers in Intermediate Grades
E.B. White, *Charlotte’s Web*
Laura Ingalls Wilder, *Little House in the Big Woods* and all the series of books by this author
Beverly Cleary, *Henry Huggins, Socks, Ramona and Beezus*
Dorothy Canfield Fisher, *Understood Betsy*
Mary Norton, *The Borrowers* and others in the series
Lois Lenski, *Strawberry Girl, Houseboat Girl, Cotton in My Sack*
Marguerite De Angeli, *The Door in the Wall*
Carol Ryrie Brink, *Caddie Woodlawn*

Hugh Lofting, *The Voyages of Dr. Doolittle*
Frances Hodgson Burnett, *The Secret Garden*
Louisa May Alcott, *Little Men, Little Women*
Kenneth Grahame, *The Wind in the Willows*
Johann D. Wyss, *Swiss Family Robinson*
Anna Sewell, *Black Beauty*
Johanna H. Spyri, *Heidi*
Sydney Taylor, *All-of-a-Kind Family*
Doris Gates, *Blue Willow*
Astrid Lindgren, *Pippi Longstocking, Pippi’s other stories*
Eric Knight, *Lassie Come Home*
Meindert De Jong, *The Wheel on the School, Hurry Home, Candy*
Mary Mapes Dodge, *Hans Brinker or The Silver Skates*
Marguerite Henry, *Misty of Chincoteague, Stormy, Misty’s Foal*, and other horse stories
Walter Farley, *Black Stallion*
Norton Juster, *The Phantom Tollbooth*
Kate Douglas Wiggins, *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*
Helen Keller, *The Story of My Life*
Walter D. Edmonds, *The Matchlock Gun*
C.S. Lewis, *The Narnia Chronicles*

Older Readers
Scott O’Dell, *The Hawk That Dare Not Hunt By Day*
Esther Forbes, *Johnny Tremain*
There are in life many questions which cannot be set to rest simply by declaring one view “right” and another “wrong.” In education too there are issues with which teachers and boards and school societies must struggle in their efforts to provide the best for their children. Take, for example, the matter of school organization. Should we have K-8 elementary schools, and 9-12 high schools? Or will we serve our children better by retaining our K-9 and 10-12 setup? Two veteran educators take a look at that question, from different points of view, in this issue’s “Viewpoints.” Mr. John Buiter, long-time teacher and principal at Hope Protestant Reformed School, argues convincingly that it’s time “to break the old mold.” Mr. Cal Kalsbeek, on the other hand, relying on his own experience both as principal at Adams Street Christian School and now