



# CONTENDER

*"contending earnestly for the faith..." Jude:3*

## CONVENTION! WHAT A BLESSING!

What a blessing the Convention has been to the Free Reformed Churches of Australia. There was a choice to make, go to the convention or go to the beach. Go to the convention with people of the Church or take a self chosen path. The fact that so many young people choose to go to the Convention gives much reason for joy. The event was well organised and focussed on studying the scripture rather than on entertainment. God will certainly use these efforts for His glory and for the upbuilding of His Church, it is for these reasons that we can say that the Convention is a blessing to the Free Reformed Churches.

This is certainly a high note on which to finish my work in Contender. In the past we have reflected on certain activities surrounding Congresses that caused a certain amount of sadness, however from my meager position I observe a shift. A shift that is positive and good.

So what is this shift that I am speaking of?

Well it is this, those who chose a sinful life, who quietly organise sinful parties do not occupy centre stage. The minority do not drag the majority down. Young people are now painfully aware that they need to be careful not to allow Church friends to lure them to parties, clubs or pubs where they cannot serve God. They are painfully aware that they have to be careful even in the Church who they chose to be with. Young people are aware that they must seek each other out in faithful service of the Lord. The shift is seen in that the minority is not given the opportunity to set the agenda by organising parties and other activities where parents are not welcome. Young people actively seek out friends and life partners who are faithful and do not just have the status of "Church Member". Parents and Church members must support these young people in providing places where they

can entertain themselves and have good fun.

There will always be those who want to organise their clandestine activities to subvert the activities of the faithful majority, however, young people now know that there will be sinful parties and activities organised by the minority, and they faithfully chose not to go to them, instead they seek out other faithful members in positive entertainment and relationships. As can be seen from the Study weekend and Convention it is the healthy activities of the majority that are chosen by so many young people. This is reason for much joy and encouragement.

■ **Tim Houweling**

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**MAGAZINE FOR THE YOUTH OF THE  
FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF AUSTRALIA**

# EDITORIAL

Contender is in excellent shape! The editorial team consists of a dedicated and enthusiastic group focussed on producing Contender once every four weeks. There are a whole range of measures that have been introduced to guarantee this production cycle is maintained. For our part we will maintain this cycle, but for your part we would like to receive your contributions. The next Contender will focus on smoking. We are not focussing on those struggling to give up smoking, but primarily on young people who consider smoking to be acceptable for a Christian. If you have any contributions please send them in.

This will be the last Contender I will produce. Mike TenHaalf has accepted the challenge of being the

Editor in Chief. It is not an easy task, but it is a joyful task. I wish Mike God's blessing, I know that he is more than capable.

For my part I thank those who have spoken words of encouragement, who contributed time to being part of the editorial team, and those who wrote articles.

I would also like to thank those who sent in criticism. I would like to say that your criticism was always considered but not always responded to as you often forgot to include your name or address.

May I wish the present team God's blessing in your endeavours to produce not just a Christian magazine but a Reformed magazine.

■ **Tim Houweling**

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## CONVENTION 2001... REFLECTIONS

On the 4th of January 2001 the big event to which Free Reformed youth Australia-wide (+) had been eagerly awaiting finally arrived.

Convention 2001 - a great opportunity for Christian fellowship and interaction with youth of the same faith. The event promised five days of challenging discussion and Christian entertainment, and indeed God certainly blessed the event, granting all participants a large banquet of spiritual food and much enjoyable socialising.

We were privileged to have international guests in our midst, including a speaker from our Canadian Reformed Sister Church. The talented Rev. Stam took the opportunity to come to Australia and speak to us on the topic of Bold Love. Everyday, excluding

Sunday when we attended the worship services,

Rev. Stam addressed different aspects of Christian love:

Love as a calling

Love as a gift

Love as an experience

and Love as a triumph

The topic of bold love was explored as follows.

Rev. Stam delivered a speech to us in the Armadale Church building. Afterwards, refreshments were served- then discussion proceeded. This took place in two parts at the School. First we discussed the topic and speech, then changed rooms and each participant reported on the previous discussion. Back at Church Rev. Stam discussed any questions that were brought up. This system of discussion was new and thanks to the good cooperation

of everyone it proved to be a very beneficial way

to discuss Christian topics.

As to the content of the speeches and our discussion this is what we discovered...

### **Love as a calling - 1 John 4: 7-21**

Rev. Stam focused on 1 John 4:7-21. God is love (4:8,16) and He shows His love to us sinners (a marvel! John 3:16). We are, therefore, called to love God and our neighbour (Matthew 22:36).

One discussion question asked 'How do you assure someone that God loves them (thinking of those believers who have committed a sin they consider God will not forgive)?' Rev. Stam suggested we first find out why that person believes that God doesn't love

them -is it because of sin (i.e. they want to continue in their sin) or a lack of faith? From there we may address the situation better, with prayer and Biblical witnesses (i.e. reading the Word).

### **Love as a gift - 1 Corinthians 13**

To receive love, we must stand in the flow of God's love which involves attending Church physically and spiritually. Love is the most excellent way to serve God (1 Cor. 12:31). We also looked at love's characteristics.

We dealt with the question 'is love an emotion?'. Rev. Stam described love as a gift, the fruit of the Holy Spirit, a spiritual power, a motivator. He said love does have emotional aspects but 'emotion is not the measuring stick of love'.

### **Love as an experience - Romans 12:9-21, 13:8-14**

Love has power. It affects us all and it must show. We're different to the world in that we reflect the love of God. People see this but they should not get the impression that we are better, different - yes, but not better (a point Rev. Stam brought up again in the recent meeting on 'Covenant and the preaching' Tues. 23rd).

We looked at the different words for love. Agape (a-gap-ay) has Christian usage, it's love from a heavenly source. If our agape is running out we need to turn to God. Rev. Stam also briefly mentioned sexual love- a beautiful gift of God, so misunderstood today.

Have you heard the saying 'love is give and take'? Rev. Stam brought this up and highlighted

the wrong attitude that it may produce. He said a better and more correct version is 'love is give and RECEIVE'. Love is a debt. No one owes us love that we may 'take' it. Our duty is to love God and our neighbour (Mt. 22:37-40). Our attitude in giving love must NOT be to take love. There should be no 'hidden agendas' (Rev. Stam) in our love. It must be genuine (Rom. 12:9 RSV).

### **Love as a triumph - Romans 8: 28-39 & Ephesians 3: 14-21**

Love conquers all. Looking forward we know that there will be total love but now we image a reflection of that love. Christ's love was so powerful that He went through hell for us sinners. Thus we should be rooted and established in love (Eph. 3:17). The triumph of love can be seen in biblical examples, especially between Paul and Mark (look up Acts 15:36-40, esp. vs. 39; then read 2 Tim 4:11). By having peace with God we may love others.

### **The Social Aspect**

Convention was also a great time to socialise informally and through various activities. There were many, many youth who attended during the weekend. On the busiest day (Saturday) I believe there was 201 participants, excluding committee members! From the metro. area the numbers reached around 140 and about 17 from Albany attended. It was fantastic to have over 20 Tasmanians participating and 7 others from overseas! What a great time to visit Western Australia- when the youth get

together!

Everyday after the morning speech and discussions we could engage in exciting social events. There were 'photography pursuits' in the form of a photo car rally, 'watery pursuits' at Madora Bay and the Armadale Aquatic Centre, 'musical pursuits' on Sunday night singalong, 'culinary pursuits' at Bridgeleigh, trading pursuits with a peg rally and who can forget the Production Night! The Tasmanians, as they called themselves, apparently had a previous reputation to live up or down to and thus deserve a mention here. Whatever their reputation was, they had our attention and I think they delighted us all with their production. Through it, they promoted being imitators of Christ, working together in all situations (bold love!) and enjoying it.

Altogether Convention 2001 was a great event. Let us look with gratitude to our Heavenly Father who gave this exciting opportunity to gather as youth from near and far to study His word. We also give many thanks to all those people who organised this fantastic event. Countless hours were spent by committee members and many others to make this massive event a possibility.

May we as youth take with us the many memorable moments from Convention 2001 and continue to show Bold Love toward God and our neighbour.

### **References**

Holy Bible, Rev. Stam's speeches (4, 5, 6 & 8 Jan 2001), Convention 2001 flier & official program.

■ **Jacinta Pleiter**

# The calling to Christian Love (1 John 4)

Talk 1 - Thursday 4 January 2001

Love is not first an emotion or an option, but a calling. We will focus on the character and extent of this calling. 1 John 4 is the foundation passage of Scripture to be used for the theme "Christian Love". We find the word 'love' in verse 7, where the people of God are called "Beloved" or "Dear friends" (NIV). This means that God loves us; church people are beloved of the Lord.

John writes, "Beloved, let us love one another..." (verse 7). Note how John says, "Let us" and not, "You must". The people of God are not being forced to love each other against their will, but they themselves are taking up their responsibility to do so. The people of God are coming to the conclusion that they should be loving one another. They are facing their responsibility and taking up God's command: "Let us love one another."

The fact that we have a calling to love one another is because

God first of all loved us. John 3:16 states, "For God so loved the world..." The word 'so' demonstrates

a degree of how much God loved the world. The word 'world' means the created entity that he had made, including its beauty and order. He wanted to redeem the world because of the love that He had for the world. He would redeem it by His Son - "That's my love."

Who are we called to love? In Matthew 22:34-39 God has told us, 'You shall love God' (the first commandment). The second commandment is like it (that is, of the same quality), "You shall love your neighbour". This means that we should also love our neighbour in like manner.

Let's look at the character of the calling to love one another. God is love (1 John 4:8). This means that God's very existence has to do with love. Even in His righteousness and holiness, God is love; this is the central concept of the Bible.

God made a covenant with us and it is a covenant of love. For why would God make a covenant with you at all if He did not love you? The covenant is based on love. God did not love us

because we were so good, but while we were yet sinners.

Love is an action word - you have to do something in order to love. Love is also reciprocal - it needs to come from both sides. Yet between God and us, it is different, for

God is Almighty and He can make us love him. He loves us and says, 'How can you not love me?' He therefore expects actions of love from us. Think of when Jesus spoke with Peter after Peter denied Jesus three times. Jesus did not ask, "Why did you not do this and that for me?" Instead he asked, "Peter, do you love me?"

We can not buy love, earn it or pay for it. It comes from God and it flows to us. Do we love God? We say we love God and therefore we act from our love. God said He loved us. He proved it - He sent His Son. We may need to clear the garbage from our lives in order to help ourselves reciprocate God's love.

■ Shalina Bergsma

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## Love as a Gift

Talk 2 - Friday 5th January 2001

God shows love to us his children, as His great gift to us. By sending His Son as a sacrifice for our sins, he demonstrated this love. As John 3:16 says: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only beloved Son that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

The ways in which we receive this love is to study the Scriptures and search out how God has commanded us to live. We need to stand in the flow of the love of God and so receive the grace of Christ.

The people of Corinth were arguing about the greatest gift. Some said it was healing, others prophesying and the most important gift for many was the speaking in tongues. Speaking in tongues was a sign to these people that God was speaking to them. They were of the opinion that when you speak in tongues you are supposedly communicating with God and His Holy Spirit. But these gifts mean nothing at all unless motivated by God and His love.

In 1 Corinthians 13 is a beautiful description of what love is, and what it does. "Love is the most excellent way." Rev Stam then said that in the Free Reformed Churches we are strong

on traditions and that this is usually a good thing. But if despite keeping all the traditions perfectly, there is no love, you have nothing at all and it does not benefit you in any way!

In this chapter Paul speaks both to the individual and to the communion of saints. In the communion of saints love is needed for all the members. You may have differences of opinion, you may not always get on with everyone, but we are commanded to love one another and this is something we must strive for.

It is important to be gentle with one another. Familiarity breeds contempt. It can happen that when you know one another so well that you are no longer gentle. This is

wrong. We must always be gentle.

Love is not rude. Rudeness does not have a place in love. We must focus unselfishly on the other person and seek the other's well being. When someone has something to say, listen instead of already thinking up a reply.

1 Corinthians 13 uses the word ALWAYS. This means something important. Always trust. How difficult do we find it to trust some of the time? But we must trust always, all the time!

Love will never end but will continue forever. Faith, hope and love are the attributes that the last few verses of this chapter dwell on. In the new heaven and the new earth we won't need faith and hope because all will be perfect. But the greatest of these is love and this attribute will remain forever! We will walk with God and the rest of the saints in perfect love! We will love God and each other, as we have never done before.

■ **Stephanie 't Hart**

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## **Love as an experience (Romans 12:9-21, 13:8-14)**

*Talk 3 - Saturday 6 January 2001*

**H**aving explained the source and character of love, Rev Stam's third speech focused on the power/effect of God's love in us. He began by saying that we cannot be effected by God's love and not have it show. People should recognize that we are different. If not, self examination is required. If however people do comment that we are better, our response should be that we all are sinful - any good is the result of God working in us.

Rev Stam then went through the three types of love described in God's Word:

- ◆ 'agape' - love of God that comes into us through Christ;
- ◆ 'philia' - love of men to fellow men, (which is not necessarily from God); and
- ◆ 'eros' - sexual love.

With regard to 'eros' Rev Stam referred to Song of Solomon which celebrates monogamy (one wife, as opposed to Solomon's harem) and teaches that this type of love is a beautiful gift of God, but should not be awakened till it fits/pleases (SoS 3:5) - ie. till marriage.

During the talk Romans 12:9-21 was followed to show how our love is to be directed in practice to the communion of saints and the wider society we live in. The talk included much worthwhile practical advice, for example that we can begin by focusing our love on one neighbor and then build from their.

Finally we were taught how true love ('agape') is not self seeking or designed to get something in return or having

hidden agendas. Love is not "give and take" but "give and receive". The talk, to a very appreciative audience of 200 youth, was concluded with reference to Jesus' display of love in washing his disciple's feet (John 13).

■ **Andrew van Burgel**

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## **The triumph of Love (Romans 8:28-38; Ephesians 3:14-21)**

*Talk 4 - Monday 8 January 2001*

Love must triumph in our lives. If it doesn't we will be unable to show love to others.

In Romans 8 Paul begins by focusing on the future (18-27). This future focus must also influence our lives today. Our lives here on earth must begin to reflect the life in heaven. Verses 28-39 tell us that we cannot be separated from God's love. Nothing on earth or in heaven is able to do that. Verse 29 gives a sequence of God's loving grace working in our lives. Foreknowledge -> predestination -> calling -> justification -> glorification. God's work is complete.

How should we respond to this (31)? Paul responds by stating his conviction that nothing can separate us from God's love. He calls us more than conquerors in verse 37. We have a complete triumph. There can be no enemy come-back. The enemy is completely destroyed.

This love has to come out in our lives. In Ephesians 3:14-19 Paul addresses the whole congregation urging them to let this love come out. We need to be rooted and established in love (17) in order to bring forth fruit. We need to know Christ's love, a love that surpasses human knowledge.

Let's look at a few examples to illustrate this.

◆ Joseph's relationship with his brothers (Gen 45 and 50). Despite what they had done to him, Joseph did not hate his brothers.

◆ Jonathan and David's friendship. After Saul and Jonathan's deaths, David weeps for them (2 Sam 1). In 2 Sam 1:26 he says that Jonathan's love was more wonderful to him than the love of women. This does not indicate a homosexual relationship, but rather indicates a depth of love forged between two men.

◆ Paul's relationship with Barnabas and Mark. In Acts 15:36-41 Paul and Barnabas disagreed about whether or not to take Mark along. They even parted as a result! Yet Mark's name appears later in some of Paul's letters. In 2 Timothy 4:11, Paul actually wants Mark!

Thus the triumph of love means that we are able to put the past behind us and to love people today.

■ **Willimein Kleyn**

## CANADIAN PERSPECTIVE OF CONVENTION 2001

**W**ow! I don't think there's a better way to put it. The people, the food, the events and the organisation of it all was fantastic. Coming from Canada, which is now experiencing "milder" temperatures, the location couldn't have been better either. By the way, I was going to ask whether "slip, slop and slap" was the state's slogan, but I never had the chance. Anyway, it was great meeting new and old friends and re-learning some of the Australian lingo (I'm proud to say I used to live in Tassie) in a convention setting.

It is truly amazing how the Lord gathers, defends and preserves His people over time and throughout the world. I found this convention to be a testimony of God's great love for His people.

This was first of all evident in the overall atmosphere that the convention radiated. One in which we could openly discuss our personal faith lives. And secondly, that this was done in the light of God's word. The list of issues we touched on would be too long to list but the answer often came down to acknowledging what the power of love can do when we stand in the stream of God's love.

Thanks for the invite, and if any of you ever come through Canada be sure to stop in Winnipeg. And take that Australian accent with you, cause we love it! If you ever need a place to stay send me a quick e-mail at jasperjonker@usa.net I'll make sure you're looked after. Other than that, wishing you all God's love in 2001.

■ Jasper Jonker

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## SOUTH AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE OF CONVENTION 2001

**E**verybody loves fun... and that's exactly what was encountered at Convention 2001. Young and older got together from far and wide (and close-by) to form a loving unity where fun was boldly experienced. Of course fun was not the heart and soul of it all, without spiritual food all would have been in vain.

Rev. Stam's highly inspirational speeches left a mark on us all I'm sure! We

will always remember him as a bold speaker with a good sense of humour and his great 5-minute (later adapted to 4 minute) 'gossip rule'!

We, as South Africans, certainly felt at home among the gum-trees. It was great to meet so many people and do so much together in the course of one week. What is still a puzzle is why so many people laughed when we climbed up on stage! I thought our lines were of a rather serious tone, yet everybody seemed to take it as a joke... (I'm glad you enjoyed it, 'cause it took something to get up there!)

From inspiring speeches to upbuilding discussions. From photo clicking to selling golden pegs. From super tubes to swimming pools. From soccer-matches to beach walks. From food to

drink... convention was highly enjoyable.

I end with the words of our Jeug Sentrale (our youth committee): On behalf of the youth of the Vrye Gereformeerde Kerk at Pretoria, we would like to pass on our hearty greetings. Although we are not able to attend your convention in person. (apart from two ex-Australians) we live together with you in our thoughts and prayers. We wish you a successful, educational and upbuilding time during which you may praise and worship our God and Father. (We believe this was certainly achieved).

We hope to be able to build up greater contact with you in the near future, so that we may strengthen and support each other in the good fight of faith.

With Christian greetings,  
Gerrit Kamphuis, JS-chairman and Wilma Lubbinge, JS-secretary.

Thanks goes to the organisers of the convention for a great success, but above all thanks goes to our God and Father for the contacts we could have.

■ Cornelis Kleyn

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## TASMANIAN PERSPECTIVE

**T**he chairman of the convention committee stated in the official program that this convention should be "exciting in the spiritual and social sense." It can be said that this was certainly the case.

As youth of Tasmania we traveled to Western Australia with a variety of expectations. What are they really like over there? How are we going to react to each other? Do they realise that we only have one head??

For the Tasmanians the word "convention" meant that we would be presenting the much anticipated production. After endless discussion and seemingly unproductive practices, our production was over and done with before we knew it. With this success behind us we looked forward to the rest of the convention with stress free outlooks!

Over all the members of the Launceston and Legana congregations will be glad to know that there was at least one convention

couple..... At this rate, according to my calculation, it will take a further 26 conventions over the next 104 years before the current Tasmanian youth will have all found partners. It seems that at the next convention we will have to work harder!!!!

On a more serious note, the speeches conducted by Rev Stam made us more aware of the responsibilities we have and the love we must show to help each other grow in Christ. As youth of the Free Reformed Churches we may be separated in distance, but we cannot be separated from the love of God. Let us then continue in this love, especially now that we have formed friendships and the gap between Tasmania and Western Australia does not seem quite so significant.

We'd like to thank the committee for all the work they put in, we all had an awesome time and hope we can match your professionalism in 2003, the Lord willing.

# LOYOS

*“Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart ... For the Lord your God is God of gods ... the great God ... who shows no partiality nor takes a bribe.”*

Deuteronomy 10: 16 & 17

## ***No pretenders in the covenant of God.***

**W**hen we deal with this part of Deuteronomy we have to, in the first place, look at what Moses says about the Lord in verse 17. There he says that He is the God of the Covenant. It states: 'The Lord your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome'.

Moses says this as reason for the call from verse 16: 'circumcise the foreskin of your heart and be stiff-necked no longer'.

Israel lives out of God's election, from God's choice to be His people. Moses spoke about this in verse 15. 'The Lord delighted only in your Fathers, to love them; and He chose their descendants after them, you above all people, as it is this day.'

Based on this, the Heidelberg Catechism deals with God's election in Lords Day 21 when it deals with the Church. In this election, as specified in other parts of the bible, the Lord is always free. God does not need Israel. Moses purposely stresses this in verse 14: 'Indeed heaven and the highest heavens belong to the Lord your God, also the earth with all that is in it'. The Lord wants to be the Covenant God! But He is not forced to this in any way. He is not forced as if He would be in need of us. Later, the apostle Paul will also deny this when, in Athens, he speaks about the Only and Living God. There he explains that God does not let Himself be worshiped with men's hands, as though He was in need of something (Acts 17). In the Old Testament the Lord has always spoken in the same way. We can read about this in the Psalms. For instance in


Psalm 50 where the Lord speaks about the sacrifices of Israel: He is not in need of them. This is what Moses stresses in our text when He names the God of the Covenant: the God of gods, and the Lord of lords, the great, mighty and awesome God. He is incomparable. No idol is anything in comparison with Him. He is God from eternity till eternity far above all earthly Powers. Other gods, pretend gods, created by us, need their followers in order to stay alive, or to stay in their pretend life. But for the Living God this is different. He bound Himself to us, but He is not bound by us like a slave. If this was the case than we could do whatever we like. Then we could adjust our lives in whatever way we like. And in the meantime God would be our 'dear Lord'. But this is different for the Only and True God. He chose His people to be His people. This is His unbound mercy. That is why the strong call for true repentance is: 'circumcise the foreskin of your heart'. This literally means, don't close your heart off for your God so that the source of life is blocked off. For the sources of life are not first of all blocked by an economic drawback or by financial difficulty; no, from within us the hardened hearts need to be broken. And our proud neck needs to learn to bow in obedience, just like Israel learnt this on their way through the desert.

We, in the new dispensation, are no less addressed in this text. Also to us the Lord says: 'circumcise the foreskin of your heart'. We in the last days are called upon even stronger. It is not automatically good when you are 'in' the church. And we don't sit well automatically when we sit in church. To the Lord only the circumcision of the heart is important.

The God with Whom we have to deal is not only the God of the unforced election, He is at the same time the righteous, the impartial God.

The second half of verse 17 deals with the impartiality of God. There we find the words: 'who shows no partiality nor takes a bribe'. This verse motivates the call to God's people in verse 16: 'circumcise the foreskin of your heart'. God's impartiality is a strong motive to call Israel to live as the Israel of God. The words about God's impartiality are remarkable in this context. Therefore Moses also gives it a central place in the text. That is how he emphasises it. But is this right? God is, as we have said, the God of election. He has chosen this one nation Israel, from among the other nations to be His people. In the New Testament it even states: 'He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world' (Ephesians 1:4). But, you may wonder, is the election of God not the greatest partiality? Is God not a very biased God in taking on the one person and not the other?

On the contrary, partiality is the caricature of God's election. God chose us to be His Israel, to be His people, to be His congregation. Yet the Lord tells us that the cause for election is not in us, nor in our qualities. We should not be proud of ourselves as believers. But at the same time the Lord says: remember! now I have chosen you I will pay close attention to you. For, it is as Paul says, God has elected us that we should be holy and without blame before Him' (Eph 1:4). He has chosen us and made us His Israel in order that we would be the Israel of God, in order that we should show this in the world. He through free favour has become our God. He has become such in our Lord



Jesus Christ. This does not mean that He will overlook certain things of us. No because the Lord has elected us we should be so thankful that we want to serve Him. Now the Lord has chosen us to be His people, we should also live as His people.

An illustration can be drawn from the time of Alexander the Great. He was one of the greatest military generals who ever lived. Alexander the Great conquered almost the entire known world with his vast army. One night during a campaign, he could not sleep and left his tent to walk around the camp-grounds.

As he was walking he came across a soldier who was asleep during guard duty - a serious offence. The penalty for falling asleep on guard duty was, in some cases, instant death; the commanding officer would sometimes pour kerosene on the sleeping soldier and light it.

The soldier began to wake up as Alexander the Great approached him, the young man feared for his life.

"Do you know what the penalty is for falling asleep on guard duty?" Alexander the Great asked the soldier.

"Yes, sir," the soldier replied in a quavering voice.

"Soldier what is your name?" demanded Alexander the Great.

"Alexander, sir"

Alexander the Great repeated his question: "What is your name?"

"My name is Alexander, sir," The soldier repeated.

A third time and more loudly Alexander the Great

asked, "What is your name?"

A third time the soldier meekly said, "My name is Alexander, sir."

Alexander the Great looked the soldier straight in the eye. "Soldier" he said with intensity, "either you change your name or your conduct."

Now that the Lord has chosen us to bear His name let us also live according to that name. Let us live as God's elected covenant children. Otherwise we'd better change our name.

■ **Hans van der Jagt**



# CONTENDER

## Aim:

Romans 12:2 teaches all of God's People:

*"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may be prove what is good and acceptable and perfect will of God."*

This magazine will encourage it's readers to earnestly contend for the faith, and to think and act Biblically, in the good traditions of the Church of all ages. It's basis is God's word, as the Church confesses in the Three Forms of Unity. It is intended for the younger members of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, and is produced in co-operation with the Una Sancta. Subscription to the Contender is automatic with subscription to the Una Sancta.

It is not meant to be exclusively for unmarried members who still attend the Youth Bible Study Clubs, but for all those who fit within the loose parameters of the 16 to 30 years of age.

## Editorial Board

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The Contender cover page is one inspired by a most biblical prophecy as well as incorporating an also well known piece of Australian flora: The Gum Tree.

Based on Isaiah 11:1 "There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots." The design reflects God's continued care for his people; also his people in Australia.

As David's ancestry seemed to be fading into oblivion, (the stump), God raises up a branch; the lineage of David from which the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ was born. His birth, and also His death, do spell the end of sin in this world, the end of struggles with sin. We must earnestly continue to contend for the faith, supporting and encouraging each other in all spheres of life so that we live in greater service to Him. For who are we to receive such grace?

■ **Russel Bergsma**