

Perspective

Newsletter of the Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship
Volume 13, No. 6 — November/December, 1979

A Meditation on Advent in the Wilderness

by Brian Walsh



M. Cupido

Have you ever wondered why the gospel of Mark doesn't bother with the details of the angels, Mary, Joseph, the wise men and the manger when it begins to proclaim the ministry and passion of Jesus? Why does Mark (probably the earliest gospel) begin with John the Baptist in the wilderness, with all of Judea and one lone Galilean coming to be baptized in the Jordan? (1:1-11) It probably has something to do with why Mark wrote his gospel in the first place.

Mark's gospel was called forth by a crisis confronting the Christian community in Rome after the great fire of 64 A.D. Everyone suspected that crazy emperor Nero had started the fire, so in

order to allay suspicion Nero found a scapegoat in this new sect of Christians. After all, they were known to be anti-social because they refused to come to community feasts held in honor of assorted idols.

The persecution that followed was appalling! Christians were torn apart by wild dogs and lions, they were crucified, and they were used as human torches to light up Nero's evening garden parties. It is in response to this crisis that Mark wrote his gospel. His task was to express the meaning of the Christian faith and discipleship in the context of suffering and martyrdom. Jesus' call to 'pick up your cross' had become a cruel reality in the lives of these believers, and Mark wrote to give them hope and comfort.

For Mark, the Old Testament motif of the wilderness was pregnant with meaning for his situation. That is why he begins his gospel in the wilderness, with the promise of a messenger who will prepare the way for a second exodus, leading to the final deliverance of God's people from all oppression (1:2-3). There is a sense of hope in the wilderness that comes through in this gospel, a memory of Israel's exodus experience when God was leading His young people by the hand.

Mark knows that the prophets viewed the wilderness as the place of renewed love, discipleship and obedience (see Hosea 2:14-20). In the wilderness God's people must depend on Him to meet their every need. It is also, however, a route of exodus, a passage-way to a promised land flowing with milk and honey. In Mark's gospel, Jesus begins His battle with Satan in the wilderness (1:12-13) and finally defeats Satan on a cross which is outside of the city (15:22-47). Christ Himself often retreats to the wilderness in order to pray and reaffirm His Sonship (see 1:35, 1:45, 3:7, 6:30-32, 6:46, 14:32-42). As God fed manna to the children of Israel in the wilderness, so also Christ feeds the multitudes when they come to Him in the Galilean wilderness (6:33-45). Christ here fulfills the prophecy that the Messiah will feast with His people in the wilderness (Is. 25:6-9), and also gives us a foretaste of the great future banquet where the bride of Christ will finally be united with her husband (Rev. 19:7).

We could sum up Mark's pastoral message to his people in the following way:

Jesus says, 'You who are persecuted for my sake, follow me. Follow me through the wilderness where I will do battle with Satan, where I will heal your wounds and cast out your demons, where we will have meal-fellowship together, and where you, the New Israel, will affirm your sonship and obedience to Yahweh your God. Follow me to Jerusalem and my death. Follow me without fear to Galilee and my resurrection.'

Mark tells the people that following Christ is a wilderness experience. But he also tells them that they will receive a reward for their labors. They will inherit the earth, reclaim the whole of creation which at the time seemed to be so firmly in the control of Nero.

What about us, though? Can Mark's gospel speak to us this advent season? I think it can. We too live in the wilderness, 'between the times.' In our land there is still injustice, oppression and lack of the knowledge of God. We sacrifice our northern lands and peoples to the national idol of 'economic growth.' Universities teach that the way to salvation is by means of scientific analysis and exploitation. Greed and materialism characterize the market place. Simply stated, we Christ-followers want to live wholesome and obedient lives before the face of the Lord, but we come up against oppressive agents of the kingdom of darkness wherever we turn. Yet Mark tells us that the Lord leads us in our pilgrimage through the wilderness and assures us of the hope of the fulfillment of the Kingdom. It is with this hope that we pray:

*Lord, you have drawn us into the wilderness,
you have called us and we have followed,
and you have been good to your word.
you do feed us,
our wounds are being healed,
our demons are being cast out,
and yes, we already taste the first fruits of your graciousness.
but Lord, we still are in a wilderness.
we see death,
we see life which isn't wholesome or rich,
we see poverty,
we see a lack of trustfulness and love,
and we have tasted enough of the goodness of your creation
to know that it is not as it should be.*

*So Lord, on the basis of your covenantal love
and faithfulness we cry out to you.
will you keep us from making golden calves like Israel did on their exodus?
will you cast down and destroy the idols that we have been carrying all along?
will you once and for all make this very wilderness into a
land flowing with milk and honey?*

*Lord, this good creation is our inheritance,
you've promised us that.*

*but idolators are running roughshod over it,
and it hurts us so.*

*Lord, you are always good to your promises,
we will always believe that
and we will always remind you of it.*

*We know that our husband will come to restore all of creation,
and we wait for him in service and in hope.
Amen. Come soon Lord Jesus. Maranatha.*

The staff of the AACCS and ICS thank you for your support throughout this past year and wish you the blessing and shalom of the Kingdom this advent season.

Breakthrough in ICS doctoral program: cooperative agreement with the Free University by Robert VanderVennen

A new way has just been opened by which Institute students may work for the Ph.D. degree in philosophy. Talks between the ICS and the Philosophy Department of the Free University of Amsterdam have led to an official cooperative relationship between these two institutions. The possibility now exists for a student with an M.Phil. degree from the Institute to apply for acceptance into the cooperative doctoral program, and after four or more years of study to be awarded the Ph.D. degree by the Free University. This arrangement was approved by the AACCS Board of Trustees at its latest meeting.

Although the Institute has had a doctoral program for five years, we have been hearing increasingly from the academic community that the Institute is too small to award an accreditable doctor's degree by itself. University officials have come to recognize, however, that the Institute awards a solid, acceptable master's degree. It is important to us that both the master's and the doctor's degrees be well accepted.

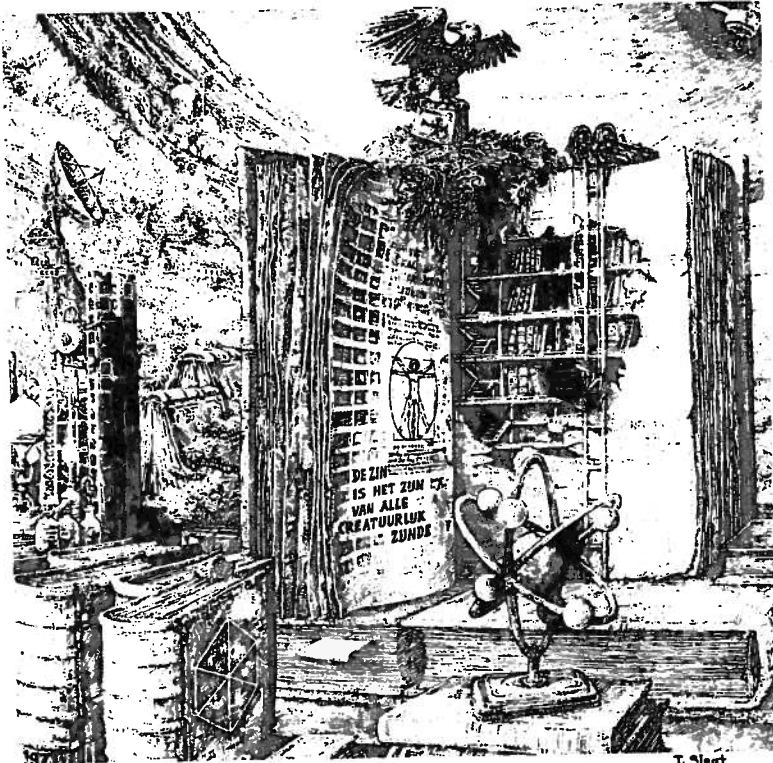
The Institute's concern about the public acceptance of the doctor's degree was expressed at a three-way meeting of the Institute, Calvin College and the Free University, a meeting held to talk about how these three institutions could work more cooperatively. Representatives of the Free University encouraged the Institute to talk with its Central Interfaculty, which serves as the university's philosophy department.

Perspective newsletter (USPS 355-530) is published bi-monthly with an extra issue in January by the Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship, 229 College Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5T 1R4.

Authorized Second Class Postage paid, to the USA and Territories, mailed from the AACCS Foundation, 1677 Gentian Drive S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49508. All other copies mailed under authorized Second Class privileges from Toronto, Ontario. Send all address changes and other inquiries directly to AACCS, 229 College Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5T 1R4.

Correspondence and personal conversations led to the Institute's writing a 33-page formal proposal to the Central Interfaculty. This proposal was personally delivered by Hendrik Hart of the Institute, who explained its features and rationale to the members of the Central Interfaculty. Their response was a positive one, and the next step will be to work out the implications of this new agreement for individual students.

This is the way the program will work. A student who has received the Master of Philosophy degree at the Institute at a high level of achievement may apply to be accepted into this doctoral program.



An artist's view of the Free University and its library (used by permission of the F.U. library)
of the dissertation is to take place in Amsterdam, and the degree is to be awarded by the Free University.

He or she will need the approval of three Senior Members of the Institute. The student will then undertake two more years of full-time study at the ICS, ending with a comprehensive examination. Upon passing that examination the student may apply to the Free University to be exempted from the University's predoctoral examination (the *doctoraal examen*) in philosophy. If that request is granted, the student will be admitted to a *promotie*, which means that what remains for the Ph.D. is the writing of an acceptable dissertation and its public defense.

The dissertation research and writing are done under the supervision of a member of the Central Interfaculty (who then becomes the *promotor*), with the joint supervision of a faculty member of the Institute (who then becomes the *co-promotor*). The public defense

The fact that one Institute student, Lambert Zuidervaat, has already been accepted by the Central Interfaculty as a student for the Ph.D. degree indicates that the Free University is ready to put the program into practice even though some of the details have not yet been worked out. (Lambert has been accepted on the basis of his work at the Institute, his later research in Germany, and an academic colloquium held at the Free University.) He is writing his dissertation on problems in the musical aesthetic theory of T.W. Adorno, and is now in his third year of study in Germany with people at the University of Berlin who have specialized in Adorno's work.

The cooperative doctoral program is a course of study in interdisciplinary philosophy, and as such it includes work in both general philosophy and the philosophy of academic disciplines. Its aim is to develop scholars who can become independent and creative members of the academic community, competent to teach others, philosophically knowledgeable, and ready to contribute creative insight to learning.

Following the M.Phil. degree at the Institute, the student must spend at least two further years of study at ICS working on one major and two minors within the field of philosophy. The major and minors are chosen from the following:

General Philosophy: Systematic Philosophy, Epistemology/
Philosophy of Science, History of Philosophy,
Philosophical Anthropology

Philosophy of Special Disciplines: Philosophy of History,
Philosophical Aesthetics, Philosophical Theology/Philosophy
of Religion, Political Theory/Political Philosophy,
Philosophy or Theory of Economics



Lambert Zuidervaat,
first student ad-
mitted into new
doctoral program

The student must show ability to read at least two languages other than English, languages which are appropriate to the doctoral study.

Two or more years of research and writing the dissertation will be needed after the student is accepted into the Free University program. At least one year of that work will normally take place in Amsterdam.

Although a cooperative system has been established, in many ways the path of study of each person in this program will need to be worked out individually. This is especially true since the regular way a student progresses to a Ph.D. degree at a Dutch university is rather different from the North American way. Crucial to the Dutch way is that initially the student talks informally with one or more of the faculty's professors to find out which of them might supervise the research and writing of the dissertation. After the potential supervisor and the student have come to a workable understanding, a number of matters will need to be decided between them, such as the area for the research, the clear definition of the program to be investigated, a time schedule, possibly a rough outline of the dissertation, and the like. As the work proceeds the student will consult with his professor from time to time, especially to discuss with him or her the chapters of the dissertation as they are written. After a considerable amount of work has been done on the dissertation, and it seems to both of them that it will very likely be completed satisfactorily, their relationship will be formalized into that of a *promotor* and a *promorendus*.

It is possible for a graduate of the Institute to undertake Ph.D. studies at the Central Interfaculty of the Free University at an advanced level, even if the student does not qualify for exemption from the *doctoraal examen*. This is the case with Harry Anastasiou, who has just completed the M.Phil. degree at the Institute. Harry has not taken the two years of study at the Institute following the degree, which is a requirement of the new program, but he does have an M.A. degree in the History and Philosophy of Science from the University of Toronto. Because his university degree program does not have as much philosophical content as the Institute's program, Harry will need to take the Free University's *doctoraal examen*, but his study requirements leading up to that examination will be reduced.

This kind of academic connection is a very concrete form of accreditation, especially since the degree is actually awarded by a university with a good international reputation. We are very happy to be able to offer this kind of route to a doctorate to students who qualify for it. We are thankful to the members of the Central Interfaculty of the Free University, who are being very helpful in working out the specific details of the relationship. We believe that this is a notable step forward in the advancement of Christian scholarship in North America.

Dr. VanderVennen is Executive Director of the AACCS.

A report from the AACCS Board of Trustees

by Henk Van Andel



Henk Van Andel: "It's not a simple task"

It is not a simple task to be a trustee. Robert Greenleaf in his booklet "Trustees as Servants" states that trustees are members and representatives of a constituency "*whose trust they hold for an institution.*" Given the fact that the AACCS trustees live in various far-away parts of this continent, and meet only twice a year for a few days, it is indeed difficult to exercise this responsibility in a meaningful way. This was again evident in this fall's board meeting, where the trustees were asked to deal with several important issues facing our Association and Institute. It must be said that without the excellent preparations and briefing on the part of the administrative and academic staff, the trustees would indeed have had great difficulty in fulfilling their task.

The trustees were pleased to welcome in their midst Dr. Theodore Plantinga, newly elected member of the board from the Niagara Peninsula region. His active participation in the meeting was much appreciated, and it is clear that he will be able to make a good

contribution to the board.

Although the agenda of the meeting contained many items, space does not permit a detailed account of each one here. I will therefore limit this report to the most important issues.

On the question of staffing, it has become apparent that Bernard Zylstra needs to spend a good deal of his time on his duties as Principal of the Institute, and consequently is not able to do as much research and teaching in Political Theory as he could in previous years. In order to fill the need created by this situation, the board approved the part-time appointment of Dr. Paul Marshall for two years, starting in 1980. Marshall attended the Institute himself from 1971-72. He is now employed by the Committee for Justice and Liberty Foundation in Toronto.

Marshall was appointed to teach and direct research in Political Theory at ICS one or two days a week; the details of the arrangement still need to be worked out. His credentials for this part-time position are impressive, and his appointment has the enthusiastic backing of both the Institute staff and the Board of Curators. (A more extensive report on Marshall's appointment will appear in the next issue of *Perspective*.)

For some time now a vacancy has existed on the Board of Curators, the body responsible for the academic affairs of the Institute. The trustees were therefore pleased to act on a recommendation from the Institute staff and the curators to appoint Dr. John Van Dyk from Iowa to the Curatorium. Van Dyk, who teaches philosophy at Dordt College, will certainly be a helpful addition to that body.

In general, the trustees received good reports about the Institute's academic work. Although student enrolment remains somewhat disappointing, the quality of the students is very high. A successful summer seminar was held under the



Dr. Theodore Plantinga, new
AACS trustee

leadership of Dr. Peter Schouls, Curator and Fellow of the Institute. An extensive report on this seminar was given in the last issue of *Perspective*. It should be noted that this kind of event, apart from being very instructive for the participants, also contributes to making our Institute more widely known and a more integral part of the larger academic community.

It is disappointing that our Worldview program, which was very successful in its first year of operation (1978-79), unfortunately attracted only two new students this year. Because this program requires a considerable investment in time and effort on the part of Hendrik Hart, who is in charge of the course, the board decided that a minimum of five students is needed for the course to be offered in 1980-81. A concerted effort in student recruitment for this one-year program will be made this winter and spring.

Apart from these more routine matters, the Board of Trustees addressed itself to two important questions, both of which relate to the future of our Association in general, and to the future of the ICS in particular.

The first of these concerns the procedures that we should follow in planning for the future. The Executive Director, Robert VanderVennen, presented the board with a detailed document, "A Perspective for Planning," in which he analyzed the current status of our Association, the goals that we might adopt, and the strategy to be employed to reach those goals. Space does not permit me to reproduce here the details of the document; those who wish to study it are welcome to request a copy.

The result of the board's discussion of this paper was the adoption of a number of specific proposals. In particular, it was decided that, as a first step toward the construction of a new master plan for the 80's, there will be an evaluation of the academic strengths and limitations of the ICS. This evaluation is to be directed by the Board of Curators with the assistance of outside consultants. Several programs of study will be subjected to a critical review. The relationship of the ICS to other colleges, universities and seminaries will be studied with a view to strengthening our ties with these institutions. Finally, the student recruitment program, promotion and fund raising, and general administration of the AACS and ICS will be evaluated, again with the help of outside consultants.

It should be understood that these evaluations are not proposed because the board is dissatisfied. On the contrary, it is evident that a great deal has been accomplished. Nonetheless, the board feels that good stewardship demands that from time to time our programs are critically evaluated, so as to determine their strengths and weaknesses; it is hoped that in 1980, on the basis of these evaluations, we will be able to formulate new medium- and long-range plans for the AACS and ICS.

Another important issue that the trustees dealt with was the assessment of some differences of opinion existing among the Institute staff, differences related to the practical working out of our Christian academic calling. Although perfect agreement on all issues is neither possible nor desirable in a healthy institution of learning, there was concern that some staff members consider the differences important enough to be a potential hindrance to the

healthy, constructive development of the institution.

For this reason the Board of Trustees invited the ICS Senior Members to join its meeting for a discussion of these differences and their assessment of their importance. The board was pleased to note that the staff is united as far as basic religious "foundational" questions are concerned. It became evident that there are differences of opinion about the implications of these basic beliefs for the various problems one encounters in academic work and for the personal lifestyle of a Christian. The trustees also noted, however, that there is a genuine desire on the part of the Institute staff to work with unity of purpose and action, and that they are taking steps to assure this. The board fully supports the staff in its initiatives to strengthen its unity, and is confident that the Lord will show us ways to overcome these difficulties.

The trustees adopted a new budget for 1980 which represents an increase in income and expenditure of about 8% over the 1979 budget. It is obvious that this figure barely covers the inflationary increases we all face, which means that no expansion of the Association's activities is foreseen at this time. We are grateful that the rental situation at 229 College Street has greatly improved, and that for all intents and purposes our building is now 100% occupied. Nevertheless, the Association will need the very generous support of its constituency in the coming months to avoid ending the current year with a sizeable deficit. The board earnestly asks our supporters to rise to the occasion, as they have in the past, so that in this way the Lord will provide the money needed to continue the important task set before us.

Dr. Van Andel is a member of the Board of Trustees representing Region 8, which covers Eastern Ontario and the rest of Eastern Canada.

Institute offers winter course on biblical study

How often have you wished you could understand just a bit more clearly the passage of Scripture you read at the supper table or at your Bible study group? Have you ever wondered whether the different types of writing in the Bible should be read in different ways too?

A course of six evening sessions will be held at the Institute February 14 to March 27, in which Dr. James Olthuis and Dr. George Vandervelde, both Senior Members in Theology at ICS, will try to help people deepen their own way of reading the Scriptures, and the way they apply it to their lives. The course will deal with the principles involved when we make connections between what the Bible says and how we live. Some of the themes and principles that will be discussed are: biblical authority, the Word of God, creation, church and kingdom, male and female, flesh and spirit. Also, these themes will be examined more specifically in one or two books of the Bible chosen by the registrants themselves.

The course will be offered on Thursday evenings, from 7:30 - 9:30 p.m. Registration fees are \$30 for all six sessions (\$45 for married couples and \$20 for students). Watch for more information in local bulletins.

Who did you say Plotinus was?

by Evelyn Kuntz Hielema



Sue Bower: "The work I do here is making major changes in who I am"

What is the point of studying the history of philosophy at the Institute? In a nutshell, it's this.

The university has become the leading institution in our modern age. It gives the direction to our culture. Modern man has been well trained to follow science meekly wherever it wishes to lead. At the root of this situation lies a philosophy so deeply grounded that it has almost become a religion, a philosophy which teaches that Reason, Logic and Science will bring us Freedom, and that as we become better scholars we become better people.

What has brought about such a distorted belief? What religion drives men and women to come up with such a philosophy? If we could understand that, we would be a long way toward understanding our own culture. If we have the desire to bring the gospel to such a world as this, we need to dig so deeply that we take hold of the very root of secular culture and twist that out of the ground. Only then can we bring true healing.

Al Wolters works in the history of philosophy at the Institute. It is his task, along with his students, to study the history of learning, to expose the religious roots that form culture. In one sense, Wolters admits, "My actual work is far removed from people's daily lives." On the other hand, his work can be seen as a study of the history of human thinking, thinking that sometimes humbly submits itself to God, but that in most cases seeks to become equal with God. And that, certainly, is not so distant from our lives.

This year Wolters has three students on his study team: Susan Bower, Bob Rogers, and Kiyotaka Doi. All three have very particular and determined reasons for having come to the Institute.

Sue Bower grew up in the state of Maryland. For the past four years she has attended Chatham College, a private women's college in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, from which she graduated last May with a combined major in philosophy and psychology.

Throughout her four years at college Sue fought, with the encouragement of others, to maintain the integrity of her Christian faith. Although Chatham is a very liberal college, and therefore tolerant of a variety of faiths and opinions, a strong spirit of rationalism and an often harmful dose of feminism provided enough basis for religious conflicts.

In her philosophy courses she sensed a large gap. "When we studied a philosopher, we would always be taught to ask: 'What do I think of this? How can I relate to what he says?' rather than 'How does this philosophy affect our culture today? How has it formed us?' The religious motives of a philosopher were kept at a distance. They weren't considered to be very important."

In her last years at Chatham Sue experienced a spiritual battle going on within her between rationalism and her Christian faith. With the help of people like Pete Steen, Christy Wauzzinski of the Coalition for Christian Outreach, and some of the women in her Christian fellowship on campus, Sue began to discover how one's Christian faith can give direction to learning. She considers her study at ICS a way of building on that foundation.

"I'd love to teach philosophy at the college level some day, but even if I don't, the work I'm doing here is making major changes not only in the way I think, but in who I *am*. It allows me to let go of some of the ways of looking at things that I picked up from the secular world."

Bob Rogers, now a second-year student at ICS, grew up in Pennsylvania. For two years he studied at the Florida Institute of Technology, hoping to go into engineering. Then he broke his neck in a surfing accident, spent a year in a hospital, and emerged in a wheelchair. He decided to go to seminary then, and entered Kent State University with that goal in mind. In 1976, Bob graduated from Kent with a B.A., but rather than enrolling in a seminary, he decided to come to the Institute. Now in his second year, he is working toward the M.Phil. degree in philosophy.

Bob states his reasons for coming to ICS very pointedly. "When I was at Kent, I studied philosophy and almost got sucked in. I nearly lost my faith there. All the kids I grew up with have renounced their faith. That's my sole reason for coming to ICS to study the history of philosophy. I want to go back and do something about the situation there."

A Christian student studying at a secular college today has three choices, says Bob. "He can get sucked in by what he studies. He can join a Christian fellowship group that meets once a week to sing and pray, and for the rest just attend classes, pay attention, and realize that he's being attacked without knowing what to do about it. Or he can try to develop a perspective that will help him to attack what he's learning."

At Kent there was one professor, Dr. Robert Swierenga, who helped Bob and seven or eight other Christians work for that last choice. He started the Radix Christian Workshop, a group that met once a week to discuss their faith as it affected their studies. Peter Doan, who studied at ICS for two years and is now finishing his M.Phil. thesis, was part of that group as well.

Swierenga showed those students that it is possible for one Christian professor on a secular campus to guide and redirect the lives of students who might otherwise have lost their faith. With that knowledge spurring him on, Bob is determined to return to a university to teach philosophy, and to help Christian students in their studies.

Kiyotaka Doi was born in Himeji City, Japan, and was raised in a deeply Buddhist and Shintoist tradition. He studied economics for four years at Kwansei Gakuin University, a school established by Methodist missionaries. He was also very active for many years in Kendō, a traditional Japanese fencing sport which, he says, "is very good for your health and your spirit. It teaches you to discipline yourself."

He enjoyed studying economics because it seemed so very practical, but at that time Kiyotaka was not a Christian, and, he says, "I always felt something lacking. Economics didn't give me a spiritual basis." He began to turn away from economics and the special sciences in general. "I came to think about my life," he explains. "I needed something to rely on, something that could support me." He turned to philosophy, thinking that it could give him the



Bob Rogers: "All the kids I grew up with have renounced their faith"



Kiyotaka Doi, raised in a Buddhist Shintoist home, found Christianity to be "something I could rely on"

insight and spiritual base he was seeking.

At the same time, Kiyo met a friend who is a reformed Christian. He suggested that Kiyo attend a church and read the Bible. The first contact Kiyo had with Christianity was his attendance at the Sonoda Reformed Church, and "it all seemed very strange to me. It was a completely new experience." In 1972, on Christmas Day, Kiyo was baptized.

Christianity gave him the spiritual base he had been looking for. Now he was no longer sure what purpose philosophy could serve. But one of the professors at his university, Sumito Haruno, a reformed Christian who is also well versed in the reformational tradition (he was the first to translate Dooyeweerd's *In the Twilight of Western Thought* into Japanese), told Kiyo about the work of the Institute. He also met Masuo Miyazaki, a graduate of ICS, and Eiichi Yamamoto, a fervent supporter; from them he learned that the Institute is a place where one can study philosophy from a Biblical perspective.

Kiyo hopes to finish his studies at ICS, if his situation and finances permit, and then to return to Japan to teach philosophy. In a way, he would love to stay in Canada. "The country and the weather here are beautiful," he says. "And the living conditions are so much better. Life here seems to be guaranteed by the government. In Japan you have to struggle to maintain life. The main interest of the common people there seems to be to increase your commercial territory."

Still, Kiyo is committed to returning to Japan. "Two big problems in Japan are the strong Buddhist and Shintoist tradition, and the influence of Marxism. In Japan, only one per cent of the people are Christians, and most of those are students and professors. The common people are rarely introduced to Christianity. And in the universities, Marxism is beginning to take hold, often replacing Christianity." He wants very much to try to help out in that difficult situation. Kiyo is also hoping eventually to trans-

late some of the reformational literature into Japanese.

These three students, together with Wolters, form the history of philosophy team at ICS this year. Their main topic of study is the rise of "synthesis thinking" and its impact on our Christian tradition. "Synthesis" is the marriage of Christianity with Greek thought. It results in the idea, for example, that it is our reason, our intellect, which shows that we are God's image-bearers. The Greek philosopher Plato formed many of the basic ideas, philosophers who came after him combined his ideas with Christianity, and somehow, Wolters explains, "almost all orthodox Christian thinking during the past 1700 years has been based on neo-Platonic ideas."

Wolters has had a particular interest in a philosopher named Plotinus. When he graduated from the Free University of Amsterdam, he wrote his doctoral thesis on Plotinus. Plotinus was one of the thinkers who took Plato's ideas and tried to fit them into Christianity. A bit more than a century later, Augustine read Plotinus' writings and was deeply impressed and influenced by them. Through Augustine, the church father who overshadows the whole history of Western Christian thought, this "synthesis" thinking came to influence the orthodox Christian faith.

Next year Wolters will follow up this course in synthesis thought with a course in "anti-synthesis." Those two courses follow an alternating cycle, and form the core of the history of philosophy program at ICS.

The course in anti-synthetic thinking focuses on the recovery of Calvinistic orthodoxy in men like Kuyper and Bavinck, and goes on to study the works of Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven who, on that basis, tried to break with synthesis thinking in working out a Christian philosophy. This is especially clear in their early writings; Wolters is working at translating some of those early works, and hopes to publish the translations in the future.

In addition to these two courses, Wolters' students are required to do a large amount of reading to supplement the class lectures.

Wolters explains that the history of philosophy course complements the other programs at ICS very well. "Every Senior Member at the Institute is interested in the history of his discipline. But for nearly every discipline, if you go back two or three hundred years, the history of the discipline becomes inseparable from the history of philosophy. So, really, I study the historical roots of everyone's field."

C.T. McIntire studies the philosophy of history at the Institute. He and Wolters, therefore, have some shared problems and interests. They are both concerned, for example, with the question "What do you have to take into consideration when you study another person's ideas? How does our reformational life-view mold the way we study other philosophies?"

Wolters also shares some interests with Henk Hart, who studies systematic philosophy. Because Hart's main job is to organize and systematize a positive reformational philosophy, and Wolters' job is "the study of everyone else's philosophy," they build on each other. Hart cannot formulate ideas without knowing how people in the past have dealt with the same issues. And Wolters cannot formulate opinions about other philosophers unless he has a clear idea of reformational principles.

Wolters' special interests fall at opposite ends of a scale: he loves to do very detailed work (like deciphering the Greek writings of Plotinus), and he is fascinated by some of the very broad questions and issues that the history of philosophy must deal with. Out of those two very different interests comes the satisfying result of having "a clearer vision of what is very important and non-negotiable in our philosophy, and what is not so crucial. In a way, it helps me to relativize our own philosophy. At the same time, I have gained an appreciation of both the historical and the Biblical roots of the reformed tradition."

Evelyn Kuntz Hielema is secretary of the AACS.

CDC announces new publications



Jean Olthuis and Harry Fernhout, authors of new CDC books

The Curriculum Development Centre has just published two new books to help Christian teachers. One is a manual for teachers who use *Joy in Learning*, the CDC guide for an integrated curriculum in the elementary school. The other is a Bible study book on I and II Kings, written by Harry Fernhout.

Teaching with 'Joy': Implementing integrated education in the classroom was written by Jean Olthuis in response to teacher requests for a concrete way to work with CDC's earlier publication *Joy in Learning*. Jean has conducted many workshops in which she offers practical suggestions on teaching an integrated curriculum; this

book of 180 pages is partially a response to the questions and comments she has received in these workshops.

The book is a how-to-do-it manual for teachers, working with the student activities in *Joy in Learning*. It also includes new material on physical education and a section to help teachers understand the social-emotional growth of children. This is a good book for members of education committees of Christian schools to read and discuss together--this would be one way of fostering communal growth in the school community.

Fernhout's book, *Of Kings and Prophets*, is the second of four books in a series which will cover the unfolding drama of God's redemptive work with His Israelite people from exodus to exile. (The first book in the series was Don Sinnema's *Reclaiming the Land: a study of the book of Joshua*.) The book was written both as a teacher's guide and as a guide for Bible study groups. The activities for students are organized under three headings: covenant renewal, response of the kings and prophets, and the failure of the kings.

The aim of this 283-page book is to enable us to see ourselves as part of a living tradition that can guide us into the future. Yahweh's covenant and the human response, largely one of unfaithfulness, result in the firm warning of I and II Kings. Yet God's covenant love does not end only with judgment; there is also the hope of a new beginning. This approach places this study book firmly in the tradition of the popular, newly-translated Bible study series *Promise and Deliverance*, published by Paideia Press.

The work of the Curriculum Development Centre, and therefore the publication of these two new books, is partially financed by the AACCS. The books can be ordered from the Curriculum Development Centre, 229 College Street, Toronto, Ontario M5T 1R4. *Of Kings and Prophets* is available for \$5.50; *Teaching with 'Joy'* for \$5.00.

ADDITIONAL PUBLICATIONS INCLUDE:

Reclaiming the Land, a study of the book of Joshua	
student edition	\$2.50
teacher and study group edition	\$3.00
Joy in Learning, an integrated curriculum for the elementary school	\$17.50
The Number and Shape of Things, an integrated math curriculum for the elementary school	\$12.50
Education and the Public Purpose, three essays on moral and religious education in Ontario	\$2.50



De Graaff talks about his sabbatical year

by Evelyn Kuntz Hielema



Arnold De Graaff: "The Scriptures allow us to ask the key questions"

A phrase that is floating around the Institute a lot these days, one which you'll probably be hearing more often in *Perspective* during the next year, is the phrase "anthropological model." It's an important phrase because, simply defined, it means "a view of what human nature is like." Some people believe human beings are animals with reasoning powers, others see them as partly mortal and partly divine, and yet others consider them to be created by God in His own image--but whatever you believe about human nature, it is bound to make an impact on how you study subjects like history, economics, biology and psychology.

Arnold De Graaff, who teaches psychology at the Institute part time this year, has just completed a year's sabbatical leave in which he concentrated very closely on that subject. He has been fascinated by the topic for many years, for a number of reasons:

1) An anthropological model is basic to the theory of any theologian, any psychologist, indeed to the theory of any scientist. If you know how a person answers the question "What, or who, is a man or a woman?", says De Graaff, you have your finger on the central thrust of that person's thought. On the other hand, if you try to study a person's thought but never dig into his or her assumptions about human nature, you will never get beyond the fringes of his or her thought.

2) By coming to grips with a writer's anthropological model, you can, De Graaff explains, "be at the same time more critical, and more appreciative of his work." If you have understood what makes writers tick, what drives them, what assumptions they are working with, you will be able to see their real insights, and at the same time more clearly see their real weaknesses.

3) We, as Christians, ought to be especially well-equipped to deal with the nature of a man or a woman, De Graaff says, because the Bible is our guide for knowing which questions to ask. "The Scriptures allow us to ask the key questions, questions that seem to do greater justice to an author's writing." This does not mean the task is simple for Christians; although we are guided by the Scriptures in our approach, we need to return to them again and again to let ourselves be corrected.

4) "We have a rich tradition to build on." De Graaff, together with James Olthuis, has made extensive use of the writings of reformed thinkers like A. Janse, S.G. De Graaf, Herman Ridderbos, G.C. Berkouwer, Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven, as well as leading biblical scholars in Germany and North America. In addition, he explains, "Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven have provided us with some unique *tools* for approaching this issue." He believes that the Institute has something unique to offer in the study of this topic.

5) It is particularly important for Christians to develop their own anthropological model, because many of the sciences today are saturated with the mechanistic, rationalistic view of human nature. "The sciences are begging

for a more human model to work with." De Graaff adds that there are many others today also exploring anthropological models. This means that there is an openness to new approaches; it also means that as Christians we are called to help fill that need.

6) It is important for a place like the Institute to have a useable, open-ended working model of human nature. "We need to develop a model general enough to be helpful for all the human sciences, including sociology, political science, psychology and physiology," De Graaff points out. There is a good possibility that next year's interdisciplinary seminar at ICS will deal with anthropological models--that would allow everyone at the Institute to test, and to build on, the working model that Olthuis and De Graaff have been refining, and to apply it in their different fields.

7) De Graaff has found his study to be especially helpful in his counselling practice (which occupies him two days a week). "The Biblical view of human nature helps you to see the fulness, the wholeness, of a person," he says. "It helps you to see that a person's emotional, spiritual and physical health are all tied together." The practical usefulness of his theoretical work is especially important to De Graaff. "It's not my style to concentrate just on the theory. I have to be able to use it, and to know that it is useful for others as well."

Last year the AACS published a set of readings edited by Olthuis and De Graaff; it is entitled *Toward a Biblical View of Man*, and includes essays by Ridderbos, Berkouwer, Von Meyenfeldt, Dooyeweerd, Fernhout and Olthuis. During his sabbatical year, De Graaff wrote two papers which give an overview of psychology and psychotherapy. The first has been duplicated in mimeograph form by AACS (entitled "Psychology: sensitive openness and appropriate reactions") and is ready for publication in the joint book being prepared by the entire ICS staff on Christian perspective in the different disciplines. The other paper is to be discussed by the ICS staff soon, and will then be revised and prepared as an ICS academic paper.

De Graaff has been working on a paper that explores the view of human nature used in the writings of Carl Rogers, a well-known American psychotherapist. He is also working on a paper that will outline the contours of a Biblical view of human nature. This is the most difficult one, he admits, but also extremely important, because "our own understanding of the development and structure of the human personality serves as the *criterion* for evaluating the positive and negative aspects of other models."

During the last two years, De Graaff has also participated in a seminar on anthropological models, led by Olthuis, in which the models are checked out and tested very carefully. "Right now, for example, we're reading Martin Buber's *I and Thou*. We have an idea of the model of human nature that he is working with, and are now testing it carefully in his writings to see if it checks out with his more elaborate explanations, and to see if it really helps to understand Buber better."

De Graaff's sabbatical year was not a smooth one for him personally--in his relationships with his family and with his church, as well as in his personal emotional life, there were traumatic and difficult occurrences. He explains that "despite much sorrow about brokenness and the pain of changing and healing, I was able to find joy and excitement in my work, and the things I discovered from my studies in turn gave me a larger perspective that helped me to understand and deal with the events in my life."

Staff changes



Rita Vander Veen,
new AACCS develop-
ment secretary

The AACCS/ICS offices have undergone some changes in staffing during the past two months.

Sylvia Jones, who served as Institute secretary for a year, has taken a new position in the communications department of 100 Huntley Street, a Christian television ministry based in Toronto. Her gentleness and cheerful dedication are already being missed. Besides her hard work for eight (rather demanding!) senior members, and her typing and organizing for the administration of Institute affairs, Sylvia taught us a lot about living a joyful life before the face of the Lord.

Dorothe Ellens, who worked as development coordinator in the AACCS office with Marcia Hollingsworth for almost three years, has taken over Sylvia's position. Although the AACCS administrative staff is sorry to lose her, we are glad that she has not moved farther away than across the hall. The deep concern she has shown for her work and for the people around her will certainly be carried over in her new position.

We are happy to welcome Rita Vander Veen to our AACCS staff to take Dorothe's place. Rita graduated from Toronto District Christian High School in 1973, after which she had experience in a number of different positions. In 1976 she took a medical secretarial course, and since then has worked as a medical secretary in a doctor's office in Toronto. Her work in the AACCS development office will include sending out receipts for donations, keeping records, being in charge of sending out ads and ordering supplies, taking pictures for *Perspective*, and generally serving as assistant to Marcia Hollingsworth in a variety of tasks.



A message from Marcia

We approach the end of the year with the prayer that God will continue to provide for our needs. Our income in the last five months has sometimes seemed like "the widow's oil"--there has been just enough to pay our monthly bills, although not enough to reduce our shortage of \$82,000 from the first months of the year when our donation income is always low.

With our normal expenses for November and December, we will need \$145,000 in donations before the year end. No one person can provide that amount alone, but God has shown in the past that we can do it together. The following will give you an idea of the kind of financial help we need before the end of the year. Please consider what your part can be.

We need:	5	people to give	\$3,000 - 10,000
	20		\$1,000 - 2,000
	35		\$ 500 - 900
	75		\$ 125 - 400
	300		\$ 55 - 100
	600		\$ 25 - 50

IN TOTAL: We need 1035 people to
give \$145,000.

(In 1979, 800 people gave \$103,400.)

Towards a Christian economic theory

*a three-week course at the Institute
taught by Dr. Bob Goudzwaard*

An intensive three-week economics course is being offered at the Institute for Christian Studies, January 7 - 25, 1980, to be taught by Dr. Bob Goudzwaard of the Free University of Amsterdam.

Although intended for graduate students in economics and related fields, the course is also open to persons involved in social action organizations. During the first two weeks of the course, Goudzwaard will contrast the major modern economic theories with the basics of a Christian worldview, and will explore the need for alternative directions in economic theory. During the last week, Goudzwaard will pay detailed attention to some contemporary economic problems.

For information and an application form, write to the ICS, 229 College Street, Toronto M5T 1R4. The fee is \$75 (\$35 for full time students).

Special, Extra Gift

Have you ever wished that you could make a **Special, Extra** gift to us?

We have some ideas you may like.

☐ Do you know that you can make a revocable trust agreement gift? You make a gift, and if you need it back, we will return it without questions asked.

☐ Do you know you can make a life-income gift? You make a gift, and we will pay you an income for life.

☐ Do you know you can make a gift in your will? Planning and proper documentation make it a real possibility for many people.

We are co-sponsors of Christian Stewardship Services. CSS works with and for us in these gift areas. Please contact CSS at 455 Spadina Ave., #210, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2G8 (416) 598-2181 for more information. Their services are free, confidential, and without obligation.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

From the edge of the Pacific

News items from Nick Loenen, our Western Representative in Vancouver, B.C....

• A series of four lectures held in both Victoria and New Westminster this fall has resulted in the formation of local groups wishing to study further how Christians can effectively present a public presence and witness, especially in political life. A similar but interdenominational group has been started in Abbotsford, B.C., under the chairmanship of Gordon Dykstra.

• In October, Dr. C.T. McIntire addressed public meetings in Victoria, New Westminster and Seattle. He discussed the reality of change and the need for Christians to seek to direct change into channels that bring true healing to our society and culture. McIntire spoke simply and forthrightly about the concrete reality of sin in the way we shape our culture. In addition, he met with faculty members of Trinity Western College and Regent College, and addressed a class at Regent. He shared with these groups the work he is doing at the ICS and was encouraged by their favorable response.

• In November Nick Loenen led a discussion with an Inter Varsity group at New Caledonia College and spoke there at a public meeting on "Should a Christian be a capitalist or a socialist?"

AACS/ICS news

* *Hearing and Doing*, a collection of essays written in honor of Dr. H. Evan Runner by several of his former students, has just been published by Wedge Publishing Foundation. Dr. Runner has provided dynamic Christian leadership to many generations of students, instilling in them an awareness of Jesus Christ's total claim on their lives and their scholarship. In his own lively and charismatic teaching style, he exposed the sinfulness of our humanistic and pragmatic society and pointed the way of Christian discipleship. The first draft of these essays was presented to Dr. Runner on the 25th anniversary of his professorate at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, and his 60th birthday. The book is available for \$14.95 (hardcover, about 450 pages), and can be ordered from Wedge Publishing Foundation, 229 College Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5T 1R4. (Please add \$1.00 for postage & handling.)

* Dr. Stanford Reid visited the Institute on November 9 to give a lecture for students and staff on "Christian social action in 18th and 19th century England." The lecture drew on Dr. Reid's many years of research and teaching of this subject, and it helped those who attended to understand an important area of social action about which many of us are poorly informed. Dr. Reid is Emeritus Professor of History at the University of Guelph, Ontario.

* SOUTHERN ONTARIO CAMPUS MINISTRY ACTIVITIES

- Brian Walsh has been speaking to a number of Inter Varsity Christian Fellowship groups on assorted campuses this term. On September 19 he addressed the group at the University of Toronto on the topic "Being an authentic person at the university." On September 20 and 27 he spoke to the I-V group at Erindale College (a suburban campus of the University of Toronto) on the topic "Testing the spirits at the university." Brian has also been helping the Erindale group in the general planning of their program for the year. On November 8 he was in Guelph, speaking on the biblical doctrine of sin and the problem of legalism in the church. "Christian perspective in scholarship" was his topic on November 25 in a talk given to the Christian Reformed student fellowship at Queen's University in Kingston.
- Al Wolters spoke to a group of mostly university students in London, Ontario, on October 31. Rev. Jack Westerhof, a campus pastor at the University of Western Ontario had organized the group. Wolters' talk, entitled "Is scholarship worldly?", led to a discussion on the possibilities of a Christian approach to the various academic fields.
- In October, Hendrik Hart led two seminars on the topic "Science and Certainty" for campus groups at the University of Waterloo and the University of Guelph. He also addressed an Inter Varsity group at the Erindale campus of the University of Toronto on two evenings in early November. Using I John as background, he spoke there on the theme of love.
- Robert VanderVennen attended the Jubilee Reception of Inter Varsity Christian Fellowship on October 15, celebrating the 50th anniversary of IVCF work in Canada. Several persons were present who were active in starting the work in Canada fifty years ago. Featured speaker was C. Stacey Woods, Canadian General Director of IVCF from 1934 to 1951. The AACS is developing closer relations with IVCF in its campus ministry, especially through the efforts of Brian Walsh and Nick Loenen.

- * On October 31, George Vandervelde spoke for a group of 20 ministers of the Presbyterian, Reformed and Christian Reformed denominations in Guelph, Ontario. The purpose of the day-long meeting was to explore the Biblical understanding of man in a world which, though largely hostile to God, is yet claimed and directed by God and which will some day be transformed and renewed into the new heaven and the new earth.
- * On the weekend of October 19 and 20, an AACS conference was held in Wilmington, Delaware, with George Vandervelde as speaker. The group of participants was small and very diverse, including a Korean pastor, a law student, a computer technologist--about 35 participants in all. Vandervelde's topic was "Sojourners or Settlers." After a lecture on the theme of Christian hope in a world largely without hope, the conferees discussed the meaning of our expectant hope for Christ's coming as it affects our attitudes and actions today.
- * "Sex and singleness" was James Olthuis' topic for the Logos club of the Yorkminster Park Baptist Church in Toronto on November 4. Needless to say, the topic proved to be of great interest.
- * During November, James Olthuis is conducting four Sunday morning adult seminars for the Yorkminster Park Baptist Church. His topic is "Growing with your children."
- * On October 2, James Olthuis lectured in the Calvin College lecture series. His topic "Personal growth and societal renewal" sparked much discussion and was well received.
- * Ken Van Wyk, part time student working for the M.Phil. degree at the ICS, is general chairman of the annual convention of the Christian Association for Psychological Studies to be held in Toronto April 24-27, 1980. Featured speakers at the convention will be Hans Selye, internationally known authority on stress, and Wolf Wolfensberger, who is well known for his work with the mentally retarded. Also scheduled to give papers are Arnold De Graaff and James Olthuis. The convention is expected to attract several hundred Christian psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, pastors, nurses and doctors from all over the U.S. and Canada. For information about the convention write to Ken Van Wyk at Christian Counselling Services, 44 Eglinton Ave. W., Suite 709, Toronto, Ontario M4R 1A1.
- * The current issue of *Philosophia reformata* (Volume 44, No. 2, 1979) contains an article by Hendrik Hart entitled "On the distinction between creator and creature: Discussion of a central theme in N. Wolterstorff's 'On Universals.'"
- * It seems that the two books edited by C.T. McIntire, giving a Christian perspective for the study of history, are difficult to get in bookstores, especially in Canada. If you wish to buy a copy of one or both of these books and your local bookstore is out of them (both are published by Oxford University Press), you can now order them from AACS.

For the payment enclosed, please send me:

- ___ copies of *God, History and Historians*, edited by C.T. McIntire, @ \$7.95 paperback
- ___ copies of *Herbert Butterfield: Writings on Christianity and History*, edited by C.T. McIntire, @ \$12.95 hard cover

(Please add 75¢ postage and handling)

Name _____
 Address _____

ORDER FROM: AACS

229 College St.
 Toronto, ON M5T 1R4

Perspective newsletter (USPS 355-530) is published bi-monthly by the Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship, 229 College Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5T 1R4. Tel. (416) 979-2331.

*Address Change Requested
Return Postage Guaranteed*

ISSA 0384-8922 Authorized Second Class Postage paid to the USA and Territories, mailed from the AACS Foundation, 1677 Gentian Drive S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49508. All other copies mailed under authorized Second Class Mail Reg. No. 2091, Toronto, Canada. Send all address changes and other inquiries directly to AACS, 229 College Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5T 1R4.

Walsh and Valk receive the M.Phil. degree



*Brian Walsh with his
advisor James Olthuis*

Two students have graduated from the Institute with a master's degree in philosophical theology in the past two months. John Valk was examined on September 14, and Brian Walsh on October 5. Both passed this close scrutiny of their work, and were officially awarded the M.Phil. degree at the AACS Annual Meeting on October 27.

John's thesis concentrated on the work of Mircea Eliade, a contemporary religious thinker who has done extremely important work in the study of comparative religions. Brian's work was an in-depth study of the thought of Wolfhart Pannenberg, a German theologian who has been significant in rediscovering the importance of eschatology (the study of future things) for Christian theology. Both John and Brian made much use of the categories they learned from James Olthuis, testing these categories out on Eliade and Pannenberg to determine their usefulness.

Junior members not only must pass the scrutiny of their mentor (main advisor) at the Institute, but each junior member must submit his or her thesis to an outside examiner. If this person lives too far away to be present at the exam, he or she submits a written evaluation, often with questions which are then included in the oral exam. The outside examiners for John and Brian were extremely appreciative and positive about their work.

John is continuing his studies at St. Michael's College in Toronto, and Brian has committed himself to two years of work at the Institute, teaching and organizing Christian perspective classes on university campuses in Southern Ontario. Brian also spends time

corresponding with students who inquire about the study programs of the Institute, and works closely with them until the time that they are accepted to study at the ICS.



*John Valk speaking at
AACS Annual Meeting*

Institute for Christian Studies Institutional Repository

ARTICLE: 19791306

TITLE: Perspective: Newsletter of the Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship

AUTHOR: Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship

ISSUE DATE: December 1979

TYPE: Journal

SERIES/JOURNAL: Perspective; v.13, no.6

KEYWORDS: Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship, Institute for Christian Studies, advent, meditations, doctoral program, free university, Ph.D., Lambert Zuidervart, students, A meditation on Advent in the wilderness [Gospel of Mark], anthropological model, Arnold De Graaff

NOTES: Breakthrough in ICS doctoral program: cooperative agreement with the Free University,

CITATION FORMAT: Perspective. Toronto, ON: Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship, 1979.

dc.creator: Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship

dc.contributor: Walsh, Brian J.

dc.contributor: Vandervennen, Robert E.

dc.contributor: Hielema, Evelyn Kuntz

dc.title: Perspective: Newsletter of the Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship

dc.date.issued: 1979-12-31

dc.date.accessioned: 2011-05-10

dc.type: journal

dc.format.mimetype: application/pdf

dc.language.iso: en

dc.subject: Humanities

dc.subject: Institute for Christian Studies--History

dc.subject: Bible. N.T. Mark--Meditations

dc.subject: Institute for Christian Studies. Conjoint Ph.D.--History

dc.subject: Vrije Universiteit te Amsterdam. Conjoint Ph.D.--History

dc.subject: Philosophy--History--Study and teaching

dc.subject: Institute for Christian Studies--Students

dc.subject: Theological anthropology--Christianity

dc.rights: Copyright, Institute for Christian Studies, all rights reserved.