

# *the* **Banner** *of Truth*

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The Official Periodical  
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United States and Canada

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Cross-Bearing After Jesus

*For our young readers...*

Sorry, I Can't Help You  
Kindness



*"The flowers appear on the earth ..."* SONG OF SOLOMON 2:12a



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In all our publications, the Netherlands Reformed Congregations aim to remain true to inerrant Scripture and its Reformed heritage as expounded in the denomination's doctrinal standards: the Belgic Confession (1561), Heidelberg Catechism (1563), and Canons of Dordt (1618-1619). The Netherlands Reformed Congregations are also in agreement with the Westminster Standards (1640s): the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms. The Netherlands Reformed Denomination in the United States and Canada consists of twenty-seven congregations and approximately 11,000 members. Our sister denomination in the Netherlands has 152 congregations and a membership of approximately 107,000. The North American churches have established a mission post and congregation in Loma Alta, Bolivia, South America.



## Meditation

### The Burial of Jesus

Rev. H. Hofman, Kalamazoo, MI

***“Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came. And went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus”*** (Mark 15:43).

Good Friday is the message of Christ’s death, and it is also a message of *salvation*, meaning that the salvation of the Church, as merited by Christ, will now have saving power in the life of all those that are given to Christ by the Father. The bold action of Joseph of Arimathea is an example of a precious fruit upon the labours of Christ. In Joseph’s craving the body of Jesus, we notice something of Lord’s Day 12 of our Heidelberg Catechism where the true Christian is described as one that confesses Christ’s name and presents himself a living sacrifice of thankfulness to Him.

Notice: the dead body of Christ is craved or coveted. It is the blessed body of the Son of God as smitten by the justice of God. It is the sacrifice of God, the ultimate price for sin, the ultimate atonement provided by God Himself. There lies the Shepherd, now smitten of God, but it is also that same God who will turn His hand upon the little ones. Who are the little ones? They are such who cannot redeem their brother, nor give to God a ransom for themselves or another, but the redemption of their soul is precious. Their eyes need to be opened for the way in which this must be accomplished. Let us see how this took place in the man mentioned in the text.

*Joseph of Arimathea*, who was this man? Until now we had never heard of him and after this, we will hear nothing further about him. With the deceased body of Jesus in the center, this honourable counsellor named Joseph steps forward. In a way, he becomes the funeral director. Would you not have expected the disciples, the Boanerges, or the Peters to have undertaken this task? No, not now. Out of the shades of darkness, as it were, appears Joseph of Arimathea, just for a moment. All four evangelists mention his bold actions. Matthew mentions that he was rich and a disciple of the Lord Jesus. Mark speaks of him in the above text. John points out that he feared the Lord *secretly*, for fear of the Jews. Luke relates more of Joseph’s spiritual condition; he himself waited for the kingdom of God. Much remained covered in his godly life and walk because of fear of the Jews.

Let us not be rash in condemning Joseph for this fear. We live in opposite times today, it seems. The boldness with which things are spoken of ought truly to concern us more. Not all talk is real; consider that next to Joseph’s fear. Scripture relates beautiful things of this man’s spiritual

life—a life often explained in the strife with which souls must contend. You can read of this in the psalms: *“Plead my cause, O LORD, with them that strive against me”; “they be many that fight against me”; “man would swallow me up; he fighting daily oppresseth me.”* God’s people are converted by Him but unconverted in themselves—possessing everything yet missing everything; dying yet behold they live; poor but made rich. *“Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body”* (2 Corinthians 4:10). Therefore, their walk is biblical; they are needy sinners. They long for solutions, but they cannot grasp them themselves; they need help. Undertake for me Lord, for I am oppressed.

The time has now come, right at the moment when the Lord has died. *“Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favor her, yea, the set time is come.” “He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.”* Right now, with Jesus’ death, the work of God flourishes in Joseph, not any earlier...is it not remarkable? When Jesus was *alive* Joseph did not dare, but now that He has died...look! Hear! When Jesus has paid the price and commends His Spirit into His Father’s hands, all fear of the Jews is taken away, and Joseph boldly steps forward. Amazing! When the cause and the honour of Jesus is cut off for good, Joseph demands it back—for Him! Although all seems to have become a failure, Joseph’s faith takes courage—takes hold of a fully paid sacrifice. *“I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about.”*

Dear reader, right now, Jesus has paid the price fully and satisfied all the demands of God’s justice; He is no more to be found in the hands of enemies but carried in the loving and caring hands of faith. Here is the blessed fruit and blessed exercise with the message of Good Friday. Fear must now depart because in faith there is no fear. The fruit of Good Friday causes Joseph to esteem the reproach of Christ greater than riches and to choose to suffer affliction with the people of God. The snare breaks and Joseph escapes, an immediate fruit upon the labour of Christ. Even in His death Christ draws His people to behold the beauty of the Lord. Here, Christ sees the travail of His soul, and God divides Him a portion with the great while He is with the rich in His death.

The fruit of Christ’s suffering and death, the full payment of it, flows over into a liberty whereby all fears are overcome. Many waters cannot quench that love; neither can the floods drown it. Mark the element of boldness. Here is a real disciple of Christ. Love overflows. What is there to

celebrate with a dead body of Jesus? Come, listen for a moment to the message of Christ's death; Jesus has died and now indeed Satan's head is bruised. "Alleluia"; salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the LORD our God and the Lamb that sitteth upon the throne. If Jesus has died, then God's justice is now fully satisfied; there is nothing between Father and Son anymore. Then righteousness and peace have kissed each other; is that not a reason for rejoicing? If Jesus has died, all is finished, everything is paid, and God's wrath against sin which is shown in its fiercest form is appeased. Now God who perfectly hates sin can love the sinner in His Son Jesus Christ.

My dear friend, Pilate does not grasp all this like many others, even today. All we read is that he marveled if He were already dead. Pilate, is there nothing more to say? Is this often not the case when people react to someone's passing away? 'Now, already?' Statements like these are poor in content, empty and void of anything real. My friend,

if the message of Good Friday is merely met with statements like those of Pilate, we miss the application, blessing, and fruit altogether.

Finally, "the body of Jesus buried," meaning placed in the vestibule of death and in a beautiful comparison—God's waiting-room. "*For Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.*" The burial of Christ belongs to His Mediatorial work. The grave of Christ assures me that Christ's payment is real and complete. In the grave is buried the body of sin. The handwriting of my sin was against me. That handwriting lies now lower than the cradle of Bethlehem, lower than the curse of the cross; it lies in the dust of death, never to return. In this waiting room for Christ lies also the promise for and of a *risen* Saviour, and may God grant the blessing of it on Easter: "*O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*" □

## Easter Instruction from Christ Himself

*Rev. J.J. van Ekeveld, Zeist, the Netherlands*

***"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?"*** (Luke 24:26).

Who better can give instruction concerning the mediatorial work of Christ than Christ Himself? It was He who gave that instruction to the travelers while they were going from Jerusalem to Emmaus. They did not belong to the disciples but to the circle of Jesus' followers.

The name of one of the travelers was Cleophas; we do not know the name of the other. In any event, they were children of God who were bound to the Saviour. They felt great sorrow; Jesus had been crucified and was buried. These men missed Jesus and children of God understand each other in their missing. Suddenly, a Stranger appeared who asked them what they were talking about and why they were so deeply sorrowful. They declared unto Him all that was in their heart. How wondrously the Saviour can draw out what is in their heart so that everything is poured out before Him. Everything which lived in their heart concerning Jesus, how He had been delivered to be crucified three days ago, they told all to this Stranger. Now their hope had been destroyed. They summarized all their sorrow and hopelessness with the words, "We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel" (verse 21). Certainly, there had been the message from the women, and some of the disciples had gone to the grave, but Him they did not see (verse 24).

Then Christ opened His mouth to instruct them. That is

the work which He enjoys the most, to instruct sorrowful sinners who walk about with so many unanswered questions. He first rebuked them saying, "Oh fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken." Isaiah said, "For He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was He stricken" (Isaiah 53:8). How blind we are to the priestly work of the Saviour. There are sinners whose sins have been uncovered and who in sincere sorrow have turned unto the Lord, who have on occasion received some encouragement out of God's Word in their hopeless condition but who do not understand the Mediatorial work of the suffering and dying Christ.

Do you know what the problem was with the travelers to Emmaus? They were not strangers of the prophetic ministration of Christ, but they did not understand anything of His priestly work. In a certain sense it was like Peter who had confessed Jesus as the Christ who had the words of eternal life. That is how it was with all of the disciples. They had learned to understand the power of the Word in the prophetic ministration; that is what had united them to Christ. However, when He began to speak of His suffering and dying, Peter was the spokesman for all of them when he said, "Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee." It was no different with the travelers to Emmaus. With the dying of Jesus their hope had vanished.

Now pay attention to the instruction of the Saviour. "Must not Christ have suffered these things?" He *must!* Why? He must do the good pleasure of His Father wherein

the entire plan of salvation was thought out. It must be so because of the holy justice of God which required satisfaction. It must be because the guilt had to be paid for and sins reconciled. It must be so to prepare the way whereby guilty sinners could be reconciled with God. It must be so, for God's attributes had to be glorified. That is why the cross was necessary. That is why Christ had to be laid in the grave. That is also why the message from the woman was that He was alive. "Must not Christ...so enter into His glory?"

The way to the crown was via the way of the cross. That was the way Christ had to go. That was the instruction which Cleophas and the other man received. They received instruction out of the Scriptures about the priestly work of the Saviour. There is a desire born in the hearts of God's people to be instructed out of the Scriptures. Thereby their hearts and their eyes are opened for the substance of His mediatorial work. Their eyes were opened under the breaking of bread so that they knew Him. Then they no longer saw Him, but their hearts "burned within them." They returned to Jerusalem with blessed joy and wonderment to meet the brethren and to rejoice with them.

What do we need? We need the prophetic ministration of Christ to learn what we have become through sin, to learn what it means that God wants His justice satisfied. Then all grounds whereupon we build fall away, for who can stand before a holy and a righteous God? We also need the prophetic ministration of Christ to understand His priestly work in His bitter suffering and death. Christ *must* go that way. He must suffer that which was the due reward of His people. He had to be numbered with the transgressors in order to save transgressors. He had to enter death so that those who were guilty of death should live. Easter preaches

unto us that the Father was completely satisfied with the sacrifice of Christ, that the guilt of God's people is erased out of God's book, that Zion will be saved by justice, that He is risen for our justification. This is the Easter instruction which the travelers received from that great Prophet on their way to Emmaus.

Their hearts began to burn when receiving this instruction, burning with love toward Him whose love for sinners was so great. The way to learn to know Him as the King of Easter, as the Resurrection and the Life, is by way of dying. On the way to Emmaus all of the travelers' expectations regarding Christ had to die.

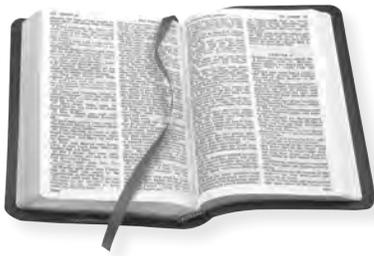
All grounds outside the priestly work of Christ must be destroyed. From our side nothing remains but our lost condition and death. The eternal wonder lies in the Easter instruction out of His mouth, "I live, and therefore thou shalt live." How precious He becomes and how blessed is the salvation that is then tasted. "To you therefore who believe, He is precious." What the King of Easter has obtained is for all of God's children, but the comfort of it can only be savored inasmuch as we may embrace this benefit with a believing heart (A. 60, Heidelberg Catechism). What does Easter mean to you? How often have you heard the Easter message? Has your heart ever burned within you because of His speaking? Oh, pay close attention to the King of Easter. He has conquered death. Shall He not be able to take death out of your heart? Oh, seek Him in His Word, for He instructs sinners out of the Scriptures. The call to come unto Him is still heard, and there is still room at His school. For whom? "For fools and slow of heart." □

## Curatorium Announcement

On June 5, 2019, the Curatorium of the Netherlands Reformed Theological School hopes to meet in Grand Rapids, Michigan. At this meeting, the Lord willing, both Student H. de Leeuw and Student J. R. Slingerland will receive their examinations. The Curatorium will also hear those who have received an attest from their consistory, concerning the dealings of the Lord with their soul, both personally and with respect to the sacred ministry. If a consistory is given freedom to grant an attest to one of their members, they should notify the clerk of the Curatorium, who will forward a request for information. The applicant should also forward his own request to the clerk, asking to be heard at the Curatorium meeting in June. Vacant congregations should seek the help of their moderator in all these matters, and all information should be submitted as soon as possible. We ask the congregations to remember the Curatorium in prayer as the matters are weighty. May the Lord Himself watch over us as a denomination and gladden us with a token of His undeserved favor.

On behalf of the Curatorium,  
Rev. J. den Hoed, *chairman*  
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## Bible Study

### The Life of Isaac (1)

Rev. C. Vogelaar, Clifton, NJ

Based on Genesis 21:1-3

The people of God are pilgrims. We read in 1 Peter 2:11, “Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.” A stranger is one who lives in a country other than his fatherland. There he has his work and his house, so he may stay there for years, yet he will know that this is not his home country. The people speak a different language and have other customs. A pilgrim is one who may travel through a strange country as a visitor. He may admire the beauty of nature and see works of art or advanced technology, but he is a traveller through this land that does not belong to him. The patriarchs were also pilgrims with no abiding place though there was a marked difference between them. We can see this difference in Abraham, the father of the faithful, in whose life was revealed the power of faith, while in the life of Jacob, we see the trial and wrestling of faith. Both patriarchs had a life with many experiences of trial and deliverance.

Of Isaac, we don't read so much. It seems that, in general, his life did not have as many heights and depths as that of the other two patriarchs. Yet, he was also a man of faith. In him we do not see so much of the power of faith, like Abraham, or the trial of it, like Jacob, but there is clearly evidence of the submission of faith. We read of him in Genesis 17:17&19 that he was promised to Abraham and Sarah. In chapter 21, we read that a wonder has taken place in Abraham's tent.

#### Isaac's birth

The LORD visited Sarah. Sometimes, this visiting indicates that God comes to execute His judgments upon a disobedient people. Sometimes, however, it speaks of a visiting in love and mercy. Here in chapter 21:1, it is a visit which will cause great joy. Is it not the prayer of pilgrims in the wilderness, “Visit me with Thy salvation”? Such a visit will drive away the darkness, will strengthen the weak, and will gladden the heart of those who are grieving. It is the Lord, it is Jehovah who remembers His oath and keeps His covenant word. This is not the covenant of works but the covenant of grace.

“And the LORD visited Sarah as He had said.” This was as a song of hope in the life of a barren woman. A child will be born, the child that had been promised in Genesis 17:16, “And I will bless her and give thee a son also of her; yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her.” God always keeps His word.

Balaam said, “God is not a man, that He should lie, neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? Or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?” Although the fulfilment of the promise goes through impossibilities, not one of God's words will fall to the ground. His word will be confirmed.

Oh, what gladness this child gives. His name is an expression of it. Already in chapter 17:19, the Lord had said, “And thou shalt call his name Isaac.” The name Isaac means laughter, or laughing. How fitting this name is.

1) When Abraham received the promise, he fell upon his face and laughed. It is something incomprehensible, a wonder to him.

2) Of Sarah, we read that she laughed in distrust and unbelief, Genesis 18:12, “Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying after I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?” She denied and said, “I laughed not,” for she was afraid.

3) Isaac himself was mocked and laughed at a few years later by Ishmael.

4) It is a fitting name because from Isaac's seed would come the promised Messiah, who, when revealed to God's people as their Redeemer, fills their hearts with unspeakable joy and gladness.

“And the LORD did unto Sarah as He had spoken.” According to His eternal decree, His counsel will stand, and He will do all His pleasure. At the set time of which God had spoken, the child is born as a token of God's almighty power and faithfulness.

#### God's works shown

How clearly we read that God glorifies Himself in the birth of this child. It is His work that we see in it.

A) Isaac is a child of God's promise. The Lord had already said in Genesis 12:2, “And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great: and thou shalt be a blessing.” This happened when Abraham was called to leave his country, his kindred, and his father's house to travel to an unknown country. God showed that He knew of Abram. No, it was not Ishmael who was the son of promise. He was the son of calculation, of human planning and efforts. It was Isaac from whom the Messiah would be born. How this promise was tried in the years that followed! Abram said in chapter 15:2, “Lord GOD, what will Thou give me seeing I go childless?” And in verse 3, “Behold to me Thou hast given no seed: and lo, one born in mine house is mine heir.” But no, the Lord says, “This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine

own bowels shall be thine heir.” However, in chapter 16:1, we read, “Now Sarai Abram’s wife bare him no children.” How must the mockers have said, “Abram, where is now your God?” Mockers will also speak in the life of God’s children and say, “It was all imagination; it was something you made up yourself, otherwise, that which God promised would take place.” Does not the Lord always lead His Church in ways in which all human expectations are cut off? The reason is that they might learn that nothing is impossible with God.

B) Isaac is also the child of a divine miracle, for, from a human perspective, this could not happen anymore. Yet we read in Genesis 18:14, “Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed, I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.” God still performs wonders. Is not the new birth a wonder that can never be understood? It is a wonder when an enemy becomes a friend, when one who has no desire to walk in God’s ways receives a love to do God’s will, even if it goes against his flesh to follow Him.

C) Isaac is also the child of God’s good pleasure. When the Bible says, “And the Lord did unto Sarah as He had spoken,” this means, as He had appointed, ordained, ordered. It all happened according to His counsel, “at the set time,” at the time of which God had spoken to them. It was not because Isaac was better or more qualified, or

because he had special merits. “Thou hast not chosen Me, but I have chosen you.” It was only because it had pleased the Lord. This is the only reason that this child of God’s promise, of a divine miracle, will also be a pilgrim who must travel in the way the Lord has appointed for him.

Isaac is a type of One greater than he, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Son of God’s promise, Genesis 3:15. This promise was fulfilled at God’s time when it seemed to be utterly impossible. Christ is also the Son of a divine wonder. He was born from a virgin. He is a Rod out of the stem of Jesse. His birth took place in the fullness of time when enemies reigned over Israel. He is the Son of God’s good pleasure. Did not the angels sing about it? “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.” And the Father testified of Him, “Thou art My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.”

The rejoicing in Abram’s tent was profound, but how great is that miracle when this promised Child whose name is Jesus is revealed to the soul of a waiting people. In Isaac’s life we will see the leadings of the Lord with a pilgrim. Christ was as a stranger on earth, in a howling wilderness. In Him we see also the holy submission to the will of His Father. In Him, all the families of the earth will be blessed. He will make His people who mourn because of their sins to rejoice in Him. □

*(To be continued)*



## *From Our Inheritance*

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### **Cross-Bearing After Jesus**

*Rev. L. Rijkse (1902-1969)*

***“And as they led Him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus”***  
(Luke 23:26).

What happened to Simon of Cyrene on the morning of Jesus’ crucifixion did not initially please him. The other evangelists relate that “they compelled him.” Simon’s entire being resisted such an obligation. He had come from afar to celebrate the Passover feast at Jerusalem, and with the carrying of the cross behind this condemned One he would become impure, and he would not be able to participate in the feast at the temple. He would also be marked for the rest of his life; his reputation would be tarnished, and, in addition to that, instead of going to Jerusalem, he would be going farther away from the city. This certainly could not be the way to the honor and glory of the Lord for this pious Israelite who wished to serve the Lord according to the law.

He does everything possible to resist doing this against his will, but his opposition is fruitless; the enemies of the Lord Jesus compel him, that is, force him. Even though they are blind to it, they are the feeble means to bring this beloved of the Lord behind Jesus and to lay the cross upon him so that he will carry it while following Jesus. Here is the fulfillment of the prophesy which Jesus Himself exclaimed, “I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with Me” (Isaiah 63:3a).

Oh, what painful suffering He had to endure as the Substitute for His people whereby He was forsaken of all men. The people of Israel with their High Priests and Scribes had rejected Him and called out “Crucify Him.” Judas had betrayed Him, and His disciples had all left Him, yea, even Peter had denied Him. His holy countenance was spit upon and buffeted, and His holy back was painfully scourged, causing deep furrows; no matter how many times Pilate had to declare Him not guilty, yet He was delivered to be

crucified. Now, while suffering indescribable pain, He was led away to Golgotha. The soldiers, fearing that He would not be able to reach the place, grabbed Simon of Cyrene, coming from the country, who not agreeing to do so, is compelled to carry the cross after Jesus.

There cannot be found even the least cause in any person wherefore Christ has given Himself willingly for such suffering and dying on the cursed cross. How His eternal love in the fulfilling of the good pleasure of the Father unto the glorifying of His godly attributes and the blessed restoration of all His people shines forth—yea, His love to all His favored people for whom He entered death and thereby fulfilled the Word, “The zeal of Thine house has eaten Me up.” His name is, therefore, Jesus, that is Saviour. He is a complete Saviour to which man cannot nor is willing to add anything, yea, even shows himself an enemy of being saved by grace through Christ, who had to go in such a way to effect salvation.

Simon of Cyrene wished to serve God through the works of the law and to go to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover according to the Old Testament servitude to the law. Therefore, when he is suddenly grabbed by these soldiers and obligated to take the cross of this condemned One upon himself and follow after Him, all hope and expectation which he had of his visit to Jerusalem is taken away. In place of going to Jerusalem, he goes farther and farther away.

In addition, according to the law, he has become unclean because he has come into contact with the cross. His reputation is ruined since by carrying the cross he is marked for the rest of his life. Oh, how a person seeks his life in a broken covenant of works and seeks to receive peace while in the breach in our covenant head Adam we have brought ourselves under the sentence of death; therefore, through the works of the law no flesh shall be justified in His sight. How blessed are those who, by means of the irresistible operation of the Holy Spirit, have been cut off from the servitude of Jerusalem and through grace are brought to follow Jesus, to take up His cross and follow Him.

It is necessary for us, just like Simon of Cyrene, to learn by the discovering grace of God that we can never obtain in a legalistic Jerusalem what is necessary for our life and eternal happiness. From our side it is completely lost, and with all our offerings the veil remains closed; it is indispensable in this life to be brought to follow Jesus and through uncovering grace to learn to understand who the “Man of sorrows” is. It is necessary to gain communion with Him and to learn to follow Him and carry the cross behind Him.

Although Simon may have sunk away when the cross was laid upon him and all courage escaped him, and there was no longer any expectation of celebrating the Passover

in Jerusalem, what a comforting wonderment must have dawned upon him when following Jesus he realized with an opened eye of faith that the only “Paschal Lamb” upon whom all the offerings were directed, now goes before him to willingly give Himself as an offering. In Israel, the high priest had to approve of the paschal lamb. Now, however, when the truly only Paschal Lamb was brought unto him, he had called out “Away with Him.” Also rejected by the Sanhedrin, delivered to the highest judge, Pilate, He was condemned to the death of the cross and went out to be slain. Even though rejected by the Jewish people, He was ordained by the Father and given to His people, and for that He gave Himself willingly.

With one offering, Christ perfected all those who go to God through Him. How precious He becomes to those who learn to know something of this secret of salvation. What wonderful ways the Lord uses to have His people share in His grace by the communion with Christ and in this way, receive their life out of death. Rough, indifferent worldlings such as Simon of Cyrene are sometimes used as

insignificant means in His service. On the other hand, what is also seen is the irresistible power of the Lord, which is necessary for each person, whether pious or wicked as totally lost in Adam, to live in the grace of God which is in Christ, that blessed substitutionary and guilt-assuming Mediator. By nature, we are enemies of the cross of Christ and refuse to become saved with

the loss of our own work and life. Yet, it is necessary for each one, in order to live in comfort and to die in peace, to be brought to follow Jesus and to gain communion with Him. Along with that following belongs the cross. The Lord Jesus said to the rich young ruler, “Go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up thy cross and follow Me” (Mark 10:21). And, “If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me” (Matthew 16:24).

Everyone, who through the beneficence of the Holy Spirit has been translated from death unto life, receives a cross upon his pathway. The one has a visible cross, the other a hidden cross while another may have to bear a shameful cross. The cross may be heavy, yet the Lord never places too great a cross. How much strength flows into the soul when it is understood that it is only the wood of the cross of Christ which he has to carry, and he cannot add anything of value to it—yea, that He carried the heaviest cross when He carried the wrath of God for the sins of such ones so that they would never have to succumb under it.

Oh, what a comforting secret of salvation, of eternal salvation, is revealed to the soul who, along with the murderer on the cross, through the discovering grace of

*Everyone, who through the beneficence of the Holy Spirit has been translated from death unto life, receives a cross upon his pathway. The one has a visible cross, the other a hidden cross while another may have to bear a shameful cross. The cross may be heavy, yet the Lord never places too great a cross.*

God, learns to justify God and condemn himself. When he must call out that he himself is worthy to be hung on the cursed cross, to sink away eternally—what a wonder that coming to Golgotha the cross is taken away, and Christ is hung there in his stead. He calls out, “I for you or otherwise you would have had to suffer the eternal punishment.” Oh, what an eternal wonder salvation then becomes. That secret of salvation can never be put into words but can only be revered in holy adoration. In Christ alone God receives the honor and the Church her salvation.



## *Doctrinal Studies*

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### **The Five Points of Calvinism (5)**

*Rev. A.A. Brugge, Lethbridge, AB*

#### **4. Irresistible Grace**

##### **Introduction**

**I**rresistible grace (or efficacious grace) is the doctrine which teaches that the saving grace of God is effectually applied to those whom he has determined to save (the elect) and, in God's timing, overcomes their resistance to obeying the call of the gospel, bringing them to faith in Christ.

It is to be distinguished from prevenient grace particularly associated with Arminianism which teaches that the offer of salvation through grace does not act irresistibly in a purely cause-effect, deterministic method, but rather in an influence-and-response fashion that can be both freely accepted and freely denied.

##### **History**

Fourth-century Church Father Augustine of Hippo taught that God grants those whom he chooses for salvation the gift of persevering grace, and that they could not conceivably fall away. This doctrine gave rise to the doctrine of irresistible grace (*gratia irresistibilis*).

According to Calvinism, those who obtain salvation do so, not by their own “free” will but because of the sovereign grace of God. That is, men yield to grace, not finally because their consciences were more tender or their faith more tenacious than that of other men, but rather, the willingness and ability to do God's will are evidence of God's own faithfulness to save men from the power and the penalty of sin. Since man is so corrupt that he will not decide and cannot be wooed to follow after God, God must powerfully intervene by drawing the sinner to himself. In short, Calvinism argues that regeneration must precede faith.

In contrast, Arminianism argues that God's grace through Jesus Christ stirs up a willingness to know God and respond

Now the question to each of us is whether we have already through grace shared in this benefit. Without a cross there is no crown. No, cross-bearing is not the grounds of salvation even though it is closely connected to the way of salvation. He who remains a stranger to it will sink away forever under the wrath of God, for there is no life outside of Christ but an eternal condemnation of the soul. □

to the gospel before regeneration; it is how God intervenes that separates Calvinism from Arminianism.

Calvin says of this intervention that “it is not violent, so as to compel men by external force; but still it is a powerful impulse of the Holy Spirit, which makes men willing who formerly were unwilling and reluctant” (Commentary on John 6:41-45).

John Gill says that “this act of drawing is an act of power, yet not of force; God in drawing of unwilling, makes willing in the day of His power: He enlightens the understanding, bends the will, gives a heart of flesh, sweetly allures by the power of His grace, and engages the soul to come to Christ, and give up itself to Him; he draws with the bands of love. Drawing, though it supposes power and influence, yet not always coercion and force: music draws the ear, love the heart, and pleasure the mind”

No one can be saved unless he is first drawn by God (John 6:44). Irresistible grace does not teach that God's calling cannot be resisted for a period of time, but that this resistance will ultimately be overcome. For this reason, a better term may be effectual grace, signaling that God's intentions will have their intended effect on a person's life. We cannot thwart the will of God to save us.

In short, this is the belief that all who are called by God to believe in Jesus will be saved. In John 6:37 Christ states, “All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out,” and in John 6:39, “And this is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.” God's sovereign election is not contingent on our response; those who are called by Him will ultimately obtain justification and glorification (Romans 8:28-30).

## 5. Perseverance of the Saints

### Introduction

Perseverance of the Saints (also referred to as eternal security or as once saved, always saved) is a teaching that asserts that once persons are truly “born of God” or “regenerated” by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, nothing in heaven or earth “shall be able to separate (them) from the love of God” (Romans 8:39) resulting in a reversal of the converted condition.

Calvinists maintain that God selected certain individuals before the world began and then draws them to faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. They believe that when Jesus said, “No man can come unto Me except the Father which hath sent Me draw him” (John 6:44), Jesus was saying that men had to be drawn to Him by God before they would believe and that He only draws those to Him whom He had chosen. Calvinists have long taught that when the Apostle Paul wrote, “God hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world” (Ephesians 1:4), he was indicating that God actually chose believers in Christ before the world was founded, not based on foreseen faith but based upon His sovereign decision to save whomever He pleased. According to Calvinism, God begins a good work in only those He chooses and then continues it. They attempt to prove that with the text from the book of Philippians where the Apostle Paul writes, “He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6).

The doctrine of Perseverance of the Saints is distinct from the doctrine of Assurance, which describes how a person may first be sure that he has obtained salvation and an inheritance in the promises of the Bible including eternal life. The Westminster Confession of Faith teaches about Perseverance of the Saints in its Chapter 17 and on Assurance of Grace and Salvation in its Chapter 18.

### History

Church Father Augustine of Hippo taught that those whom God chooses to save are given, in addition to the gift of faith, a gift of perseverance (*donum perseverantiae*) which enables them to continue to believe, and precludes the possibility of falling away.

Arminianism teaches that salvation is conditioned on faith; therefore, Perseverance of the Saints is also conditioned.

The traditional Calvinist doctrine of perseverance is articulated in the Canons of Dordt (chapter 5) and in the Westminster Confession of Faith (Chapter 17).

If you have been justified before God you cannot lose your salvation. Once a person is truly saved, this salvation is eternally secure. In speaking about his sheep, Jesus taught that “no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand” (John 10:28-29).

Rather than having to hold on to our salvation, the Bible teaches that when a person believes in Christ, he immediately obtains an eternal life (John 5:24; 6:47) that cannot be lost (John 10:27-28; Romans 8:31-39). Those who do appear to permanently fall away from the faith were never true believers (1 John 2:19).

Since we all struggle with sin, we can take comfort in this doctrine. As John MacArthur has stated, “If you could lose your salvation, you would.”

### Conclusion

The Five Points of Calvinism, or Doctrines of Grace, are merely summaries of what the Bible teaches about salvation. We do not revere these doctrines because they were taught by John Calvin but because they are found in Scripture.

These five points also serve as a helpful introduction to the beliefs of Reformed Theology. Although some of these doctrines can seem difficult at first, I would encourage you to continue to look into these truths. Our main concern should be conforming our theology and morals to what the Scripture teaches. It is my conviction that Reformed Theology best captures the truth of God’s Word in these and many other areas.

### Calvinism has its footing not in the Reformation of the 1500s but in the very pages of Scripture.

One of the forefathers wrote: “I have my own private opinion that there is no such thing as preaching Christ and Him crucified unless we preach what nowadays is called Calvinism. It is a nickname to call it Calvinism; Calvinism is the gospel and nothing else. I do not believe we can preach the gospel if we do not preach justification by faith, without works; nor unless we preach the sovereignty of God in His dispensation of grace; nor unless we exalt the electing, unchangeable, eternal, immutable, conquering love of Jehovah; nor can I comprehend a gospel which lets saints fall away after they are called and suffers the children of God to be burned in the fires of damnation after having once believed in Jesus. Such a gospel I abhor.” □

*(This installment marks the end of this series.)*

A man’s free will cannot cure him even of the toothache, or a sore finger, and, yet, he madly thinks it is in his power to cure the soul.

— Augustus Toplady



## *Biblical Exegesis*

### **The Angel of the LORD (3)**

*Rev. C. Hogchem, Aalburg, the Netherlands*

*In many portions of Scripture it appears that the Angel of the LORD is truly God, but there are two texts that specifically refer to Him as God's Son, the second Person in the Godly Being; they are Exodus 23:21 and Isaiah 63:9.*

**J**ehovah testifies of the Angel of the LORD, who revealed Himself in Old Testament times in a human body or in a different manner; "Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way (...) for My name is in Him" (Exodus 23:20&21).

With "My name" is meant the name *Jehovah*, God's greatest name. Now the LORD says of the Angel of the LORD—only of Him and of no one else—those wonderful words, "My name is in Him." That is to say—He is of the same essence as I am. No matter who I am, He is the same—He is Almighty God with Me, His name is also Jehovah (see Exodus 13:21). The Angel of the LORD is God's Son, who together with the Father and with the Holy Spirit is the true and eternal God. He is differentiated from God, but, at the same time, He is God Himself and one with Him in name, might, deliverance, blessings, praise, and honor. Centuries later He would say of this mystery, "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30). When Phillip asked Him, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us," He answered him, "Have I been so long with you, and have you not known Me Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" (John 14:8&9).

#### **The Angel of God's countenance (or before God's presence)**

In Isaiah 63:9 the Angel of the LORD is called the Angel of the presence of the LORD. Of Him it is stated that He has saved His people. That can, of course, not be the work of a created angel but only of Christ, God's Son, the promised Messiah.

What is meant by God's presence? In Scripture the term refers to God Himself. That is especially true when He reveals Himself. When He sets His countenance against someone, then He reveals Himself as an enemy in wrath and enmity. David, however, prayed, "LORD, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us" (Psalm 4:6b). The man after God's own heart desired to share in the communion of his covenant-God; he desired to bask in the light of His friendly countenance. The Angel of God's presence, that is, He, is how He revealed Himself to the people of Israel. By His hand He delivered them out of Egypt and gave them His law upon Mount Horeb. By Himself He had led and carried them through the

wilderness. The Angel was their Deliverer and their God (Isaiah 63:9). He was the same who centuries later has spoken that majestic and unfathomable gospel message, "All things are delivered unto Me of My Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomever the Son will reveal Him" (Matthew 11:27).

#### **A gradual revelation**

When the Angel of the Lord appeared in human form to the men of Emmaus, then He revealed Himself in a gradual manner. Who knows better than He that even the most holy are in and of themselves weak, small, sinful, and full of fear? If He had immediately revealed Himself unto them, they would not have been able to bear it, but He came to them and first spoke in a friendly manner. Only after a period of time they understood with holy awe who He was.

Abraham thought that three men had come, a master with two servants, otherwise he would not have begun preparing a meal. When he addresses the foremost of the three men as "Lord," he means nothing more than a gentleman (Genesis 18:3; see also marginal note #5).

Gideon also addressed the Angel of the Lord who was sitting under the oak at Ophrah by saying "Oh my Lord..." The wife of Manoah did not know that it was the Angel of the LORD, but did say, "There came a man of God unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible."

#### **The Judge of the entire earth**

When we carefully read the chapters which speak about the Angel of the LORD, there can be no doubt that the Angel of the LORD is the Son of God. We read further in Genesis 18 that it *is* the LORD who has appeared unto Abraham (verse 1).

The Man appears to know that Sara had laughed (verse 13). In verse 25, Abraham calls Him the Judge of the entire earth, and in verse 27 he comes before Him in the greatest humility. In the last sentence of this chapter is written that the LORD departed when He had finished communicating with Abraham (verse 33). That the other two men were ordinary angels is apparent in Genesis 19:1: "And there came two angels to Sodom at evening..." Abraham has also not called them LORD. If he had done so, you can be assured that they would have refused to be called by the name of God (Revelation 19:10). In Judges 6:14, the Angel of the LORD is called *The LORD*, but that was

hidden for Gideon. He says to the Man, “Oh, my Lord...” but in verse 22 he fears to die because he had seen an Angel of the LORD face to face. For who shall see God and live? Then, however, Gideon receives insight about the meeting, for the meal which he has prepared was changed into a sacrifice. No, Gideon will not perish but abide before God in the Angel of the LORD, the promised Messiah. He could not have received a more favorable token (verse 17).

The Angel had promised him, “Surely I will be with thee (verse 16). I with thee—not only personally but also as judge. Have not I sent thee? I will be with thee, I the Angel of the LORD, God’s Son.” Certainly, the strife must still be

begun, but Gideon could see through faith upon that Hero and Mediator. Then he built an altar and in holy joy and full of holy awe said, “The LORD is peace” (verse 24).

*The Lord's right hand is high exalted,  
Jehovah's strong and mighty hand;  
The vaunting enemy He halted,  
And made His chosen ones to stand.  
I shall not die but live before Him,  
And all His mighty works declare,  
That all may joyfully adore Him  
Who in His loving kindness share. □*

*(To be continued)*



## *Church History*

### **Selcart** (28)

**(An historical account of the persecution of the Churches Under the Cross)**

*W.J.D. van Dijk*

### **Before the Council of the Inquisition**

As Cors entered the hall, he noted a number of men, sitting upon a slightly raised podium. The members of the Inquisition council included the priests whom we have met before, all clothed in white, surrounding the General of the Inquisition in Holland. Other members were clothed in ornate robes. To the right and left of these important men were councilmen and aldermen, as well as mayors and sheriffs. A sheriff took his place next to the prisoner while the officers stood behind Cors.

Cors looked about him calmly and noted many men of importance who had been invited to help pass judgment on him, the prisoner. Most of them were mentioned by name, but we will forego that since they have been forgotten with the passing of the years. Suffice it to say that they all considered themselves very important, and they also wanted to stay in the good graces of the Inquisition.

Cors’s face exuded calm and peacefulness. He drew his strength from the words of his Saviour who had said, “But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost” (Mark 13:11).

Upon a motion by the General of the Inquisition all small talk ceased, and there was complete silence in the great hall. The public prosecutor, Mr. Reynier Brunthus, stood up and began to speak.

“Honorable, wise, providential, and discreet Sirs, it is well known to all of you that his most Christian majesty,

Charles the 5th, Catholic king and extender of the German nation, Lord of the Netherlands, was pleased on the 29th day of April, in the year of our Lord, 1550, to proclaim statutes to eradicate all sects and errors which have risen up against our holy Christian beliefs and the ordinances of our Mother, the holy Church. It is also known by you that there has been more and more of an increase in various sects and how the poison of heresy has spread through the dissemination of the writings of the apostate monk, Martin Luther, the writings of Oecolampadius, Zwingli, Bucer, and Calvin, all of whom are heretics and prophets of evil and false sects, and how their errant doctrines have found root outside of our Holy Church.

“You all have been witnesses of the blasphemous breakdown of our sacred images and the rebellion which it has awakened among these heretics, and it is our holy calling that in this land, and especially within this city, to root out these heretics who are so dangerous for our country and our church. Our Lord and King Phillip—may God lengthen his days—has therefore commanded our mighty governor not only to enforce the ordinances of Charles the 5th but also to reinforce them further and has given us the command, as you well know, to examine all those who are suspected of heresy and afterwards turn them over to the judge where according to the customs of the nation they are to be heard and judged.

“This man,” here the prosecutor pointed to Cors Stevens, “standing before you, after many admonitions, disputing, and attempts in a fatherly manner to mend his ways, has been found to be a stiff-necked heretic, who has not only

spread the sand of heresy with both hands but has also held gatherings in his home in Naaldwijk, has had children baptized, and has celebrated Holy Communion with his unclean hands, which are all atrocious sins. His accuser, his landlord from Naaldwijk, has affirmed these charges under oath and they have also been confirmed by many who live in this village. He has already been kept a prisoner in jail for some time, and we may rejoice that the torture which we have applied with care, and also the many discussions which Pastor Harmensz and other brothers have had with the prisoner have not been without effect; he has retracted many of his errors.”

Cors, who had listened quietly to the proceedings, could not contain himself upon hearing these falsehoods so that he called out, “That is a lie.”

The hearers were distracted for a moment, for they were accustomed to hearing the accused deny the charges against them. The prosecutor then continued, “Therefore, a merciful punishment can be recommended as a righteous judgment. Upon the basis of the second article of the aforementioned ordinances, I am demanding for the prisoner Cors Stevens, farmer from Naaldwijk and self-

proclaimed deacon of the congregation under the cross, death by means of the sword.”

At that moment the Inspector General of the Inquisition asked the secretary to read the article. We will not include all of the details in this lengthy article, but we can summarize that when a person was found guilty, in addition to the sentence of death, all of his worldly goods were confiscated, and any documents which he may have signed and executed were declared null and void. Cors, who had not understood all of the words which were read, grasped that he had been condemned to death with the sword.

At the end of the reading, the Inquisitor General stood up and pronounced, “In the name of the most Christian Majesty and upon the orders of the highest and mightiest governor, I hereby remand Cors Stevens, of late living in Naaldwijk, who calls himself a deacon, to the justice of his district, declaring him guilty of heresy and demand that he be put to death with the sword.”

Then, all of the members of the church stood up and following a young boy, carrying a large cross, exited the room via a side door. □

*(To be continued)*



## *From Other Publications*

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### **Perhaps You Will Think About It**

Taken from *The Friendly Companion*

**M**y thoughts sadly wandered yesterday morning as I sat in the house of God while the minister was preaching his sermon. Do your thoughts wander under the sound of the gospel? What if the messenger of the Most High was sent down to close God’s house and to seal the mouth of His minister? A solemn thought; is it not enough to make us anxiously attentive to every word that is spoken?

*Perhaps you will think about it!*

A short time ago, I kneeled down in a hurried manner to offer up my morning praises and petitions at the throne of grace, and after a few words, hastily rose to pursue some worldly object which absorbed my attention; my conscience smote me and told me that I had offered an affront to the

Lord. Do you ever hurry over your prayers? What if the Holy One should issue forth an unchangeable mandate, “Henceforth shall your prayers find no favor at His mercy seat”? What an overwhelming thought. It seems to make a throne of grace exceedingly precious.

*Perhaps you will think about it!*

The other day I looked at my Bible as it lay on the sideboard, and I thought to myself how much I neglected it. Do you ever neglect your Bible? What a lesson it would be if an angel were sent down to seal the leaves, even for twelve months.

*Perhaps you will think about it!* □

Eternity to the godly is a day that has no sunset;  
eternity to the wicked is a night that has no sunrise.

— Thomas Watson



## Questions & Answers

### Questions from Our Readers

Rev. H. Hofman, Kalamazoo, MI

**What is meant when it is said from the pulpit “those that are nigh” and “those that are afar off”?**

Having just finished writing the meditation about Joseph of Arimathaea being a disciple of the Lord Jesus, secretly, for fear of the Jews, I consider the above-mentioned question a good example of those that are “afar off but brought nigh.” This is, indeed, often mentioned in prayer or in sermons. Therefore, read the meditation in conjunction with my answer to this question. I believe Joseph of Arimathaea was a soul who much of his life had stood afar off but was brought nigh to Christ through His death. The blessed saving power of Christ’s death became evident in the fact that he boldly came to Pilate and craved (coveted) the body of Jesus. The matters whereof we speak deal with steps in grace and degrees of faith by which a sinner embraces the benefits of Christ.

The expressions *nigh* or *afar off* are easily traceable in the Scriptures. Regarding the latter, we read in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican (Luke 18:9-14) that the publican was standing afar off and “would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven.” Here the Lord Jesus movingly paints the picture of a soul who has no rights, no claims, and no boldness of himself. His place is in the dust. What a precious place to be, actually. I fear that we live in a time that this self-loathing on account of one’s own sin and unworthiness is becoming rare. Standing afar off did not make the publican worthier of going home justified. Neither does it mean that the publican was farther removed from the availability of that atoning fruit to which the sacrifice in the temple pointed. On account of a heartfelt self-knowledge he considered himself *unworthy* of its blessing. Often people that stand afar off are looked down upon because they are presumed to have only unbelief or are simply ignorant of their blessings and privileges. The contrary may actually be the case. A soul standing afar off may very well have genuine exercises of faith but lack *liberty* to make use of the blessings proposed. This lack is

often fueled by deep impressions of one’s own unworthiness and sin. Would the Lord have mercy upon such a one as I am—one who has deserved to be cast away forever? Standing afar off can also be caused by deeply tried faith. Sometimes God’s dearest children are most tried. It is good that in prayer and in the preaching, attention is given to such souls. They need help. They need to hear their name mentioned. They need to be brought nigh.

Indeed, standing afar off may also be taken more literally as in Ephesians 2:13&17 where Paul speaks of the Gentiles versus those who are citizens of God’s kingdom. “*But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes (once) were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.*” “*And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.*” Here Matthew Henry explains that those that are afar off are like the prodigal son in the far country; unconverted sinners remove themselves at a distance from God, and God puts them at a distance: “He beholds the proud afar off.” He also points to the wonder of the access that lies in the work of the Holy Spirit and the work of Christ whereby a heart is given to come, strength is granted to come, and grace to serve God acceptably is given. May you, dear reader, know something of that? If so, you can never look down upon the lowly or those afar off. You will likewise remember and pray for them. Grace makes a soul humble. The Lord “hath respect unto the lowly: but the proud He knoweth afar off” (Psalm 138:6).

How was Joseph of Arimathaea made nigh, brought nigh by the blood of Christ? After his bold action his faith certainly was not ashamed, but we read nothing more of him. Brought nigh was nevertheless the blessed portion of this man afar off. May such breaking through of faith be seen in our churches. ◻

Please send your questions to Rev. H. Hofman, 112 Pratt Road, Kalamazoo, MI 49001, or [hofman@premieronline.net](mailto:hofman@premieronline.net).

We are only safe when we wisely make use of all good advantages that we have access to. By going out of God’s ways we go out of His government, and so lose our good frame of mind, and find ourselves overspread quickly with a contrary disposition. When we draw near to Christ (James 4:8) in His ordinances, He draws near to us.

— Richard Sibbes



# Timothy FOR THE YOUNG

## Sorry, I Cannot Help You

Taken from *The Friendly Companion*

It was the practice of Mr. Lavater to read several chapters of the Bible each morning and then select from them some particular passage upon which he might meditate during the day. One morning, after reading Matthew 5 and 6, he exclaimed, "How difficult to make a choice of any one portion here," but asking the Lord's guidance, he set about the day's duties. At dinner time his wife asked him what passage he had upon his mind for the day. "Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow from thee turn not thou away," was the reply.

"And how is it to be understood?" asked his wife.

"Why, these are the words of Him to whom belongs all that I possess," relayed Mr. Lavater. "I am but a steward."

Lavater continued in his diary: This appeared to me to be so clearly the meaning, not only of this but other passages in the same chapters, that I replied with more than usual warmth. My wife made no reply other than she would lay it to heart as well. I had scarcely returned to my study after dinner when an aged widow was shown into the room.

"Forgive me, my dear sir," she said. "Excuse the liberty I am about to take; I am really ashamed, but my rent is due tomorrow, and I am six dollars short. I have been confined to my bed with sickness, and my poor child is nearly starving. Every penny that I could save I have put aside, and tomorrow is rent day." Here she opened a parcel which she held in her hand, and said, "This is a book with a silver clasp, which my late husband gave me on the day we were married. It is all I can spare of the articles I possess, and sore it is to part with it. It is not enough, and I do not see how I can repay you, but, dear sir, if you can, do assist me."

"I am sorry, my good woman, I cannot help you," I said, and putting my hand in my pocket, I accidentally felt my purse, which contained about two dollars. These, I said to myself, cannot get her out of her difficulty. She needs six; besides, even if I could, I need them for another purpose. Turning to the widow, I said,

"Have you no friend, no relative, who could give you this money?"

"No, not a soul, and I am ashamed to go from house to house; I would rather work day and night. The reason that I came to you was because people speak of your kindness, but if you cannot help me, please forgive my intrusion. God, who has never forsaken me, will surely not turn me away now in my sixty-sixth year."

At this moment my wife entered the room. I was ashamed and vexed. Gladly would I have sent her away, for my conscience whispered, "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away." My wife came up to me and said with much sweetness, "This is a good old woman, and she has certainly been ill of late; help her if you can." Shame and compassion struggled in my darkened mind.

"I have but two dollars," I said in a whisper, "and she needs six; I will give her a trifle and let her go."

Laying her hand on my arm and smiling in my face, my wife said aloud, "Give to him that asketh, and of him that would borrow from thee, turn not thou away."

I blushed and with some vexation, said, "Would you give your ring for the purpose?"

"With pleasure," she replied, pulling off her ring.

The poor widow was either too simple or too modest to notice what was going on, and she was preparing to leave when my wife told her to wait in the lobby. When we were alone, I asked my wife, "Are you in earnest about the ring?"

"Certainly," she said, "How can you doubt it? Remember what you said at dinner time? Oh, my dear husband, let us not make a show of the gospel; you are generally so kind, so sympathizing; how is it that you now find it so difficult to help this poor woman? Why did you not give her, without hesitation, what you had in your pocket? Also, have you forgotten there are yet six dollars in the desk and that the quarter's money will be paid to us in less than eight

days?” She then added with much feeling, “Take no thought for your life—your heavenly Father knoweth.”

I kissed my wife while tears ran down my cheeks. “Thanks, a thousand thanks, for this,” I said, and turning to my desk, I took out the six dollars and opened the door to call the poor widow. Everything seemed to darken around me as I thought I had been so wrong and forgetful of the omniscience of God as to say to her, “I cannot help you.” Oh, thou false tongue, thou false heart. If the Lord should mark iniquities such as these, O Lord, who shall stand? “Here is what you need,” I said to the woman. At first she seemed not to understand, and thought I was giving her a small sum, for which she thanked me and pressed my hand.

When she saw, however, that I had given her the full amount, she could not find words to express her feelings. “Dear sir,” she said, “I cannot pay you back; all I have is this little book, and it is old.”

“Please keep your book and the money, too,” I replied,

“and thank God, not me, for I deserve no thanks after having refused you in the first place. Go in peace and forgive an erring brother.”

I returned to my wife with downcast looks, but she smiled and said, “Do not take it too much to heart. You yielded to my first suggestion, but promise me so long as I wear a gold ring on my finger (and you know I have several besides) you will never allow yourself to say to a person in similar circumstances, ‘I cannot help you.’ I do not of course include idlers and those who prefer to live by begging.” Saying this, she fondly kissed me again and left me to myself, whereupon I at once sat down and wrote this account in my diary to humble my deceitful heart. I then read over the chapter which I had read in the morning, alas, with too little effect and felt more and more ashamed and convinced that there is no peace of heart where principle and practice differ. Dear Lord, send Thy Holy Spirit into this poor heart of mine, “Cleanse Thou me from secret faults.”



## Bible Stories for Little Ones

### **The Story of Joseph** (9)

(Genesis 45:15-28 and Genesis 46-50)

Joseph was overjoyed to see his brothers again. When the brothers realized that it really was their brother Joseph, they could not wait to travel back home to give their father the good news. When they left, Joseph gave them many things to take with them, and he also sent chariots so that they could bring their father back to see him. When they arrived home, they told their father, “Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all of the land of Egypt.”

Jacob could not believe this shocking news even though the brothers told him everything that had happened to them. Then they showed Jacob the wagons which Joseph had sent. Finally, Jacob could believe it. He then offered a sacrifice of an animal without blemish upon the altar to show his gratitude to the Lord. God promised him that He would be with him when he went to Egypt and said, “I will make of thee and thy seed a great nation.” Jacob said to his sons, “I will go to see Joseph before I die.”

Jacob knew that the Lord would be with him as he travelled to Egypt. He took his entire family with him, all his children, and even all his grandchildren. Joseph could not wait for his father to come to him, so he went out in his chariot to meet him. Their

meeting was a very happy one, and they both cried tears of joy. Joseph took his father to see Pharaoh who offered to let him live with his family in the best part of Egypt, in the land of Goshen.

After some time Joseph heard that his father was going to die. When he went to see his father, he brought his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim with him because he wanted his father to bless his sons. When Joseph brought his sons to his father, Jacob said, “I did not think that I would ever see you again, but now God had given me to see your sons also.” Jacob put his hands on the heads of the two boys to bless them. As he did so, he crossed his arms so that his right hand rested on the head of Ephraim and the left on the head of Manasseh. Joseph tried to make his father change his hands so that his right hand would be on the head of Manasseh who was the oldest. Jacob said, “I know, my son, Manasseh will be great, but Ephraim will be greater.”

Is that not similar to another story you have read? Do you remember when blind Isaac blessed the two sons of Jacob? Also, at that time, the younger received the greater blessing.

Jacob then blessed all of his sons. We will not repeat all of the blessings, but there was a special one which we should repeat. When Jacob came to Judah, he cried out, "Judah thou art the one!" The Lord Jesus would be born as a descendant of Judah. Judah had promised to take Benjamin's place if anything happened to him. This is what the Lord Jesus would do when He came to earth; He would suffer for the sins of His people so that they could be saved.

Jacob wanted to be buried in his own country, so Joseph and his brothers brought him back to the land of Canaan where he was buried in the cave of Machpela where Abraham and Sarah and Isaac

and Rebecca were buried. When Joseph's brothers returned to Egypt after the funeral, they were afraid that Joseph would deal harshly with them for what they had done to him. Joseph, however, told his brothers not to worry. He told them that it was God's plan that he would come to Egypt to keep many people alive.

Joseph asked his family for one special favor. He told them that God would have them return to Canaan at His time. He made them promise when they returned to take his casket, containing his bones so that he, too, might be buried in the land of Canaan.



## Bible Quiz

### Kindness

Dear Boys and Girls,

I stood in a long line at the check-out registers and tried not to look at the time. I knew, though, that I had little time left before I had to be finished in order to be able to pick up the children at school on time. A woman several carts ahead of me rolled her eyes and sighed. Couldn't Aldi have opened more registers, so the line would not be so long? I rubbed my little boy's head and said softly, trying to reassure myself, "Almost there, buddy, you're being a good boy..."

The woman directly in front of me turned around and glanced at us. When her turn came to place her items on the belt at the register, she pulled her cart to the side. "You go ahead," she offered, motioning. I looked at the few items in her basket and the mound of food crammed into my cart.

"Oh, that's okay," I assured her, "I have so many things..."

The woman smiled and shook her head. "No, you go," she insisted. "You have a baby..."

Gratefully, I pushed my cart ahead of hers. "Thank you, I really didn't think I'd make it to school on time to pick up my kids." My heart felt a bit lighter at this unexpected kindness. I nodded my thanks again, and the woman's dark eyes shone back as if to say, *It's alright. This is what we're supposed to do.*

After paying, I quickly began to bag all my groceries. Another customer was next to me, bagging hers. She looked up. Her gray eyes held a determined look.

"I'll be finished in a minute, and then I'm going to come and help you," she declared, looking at my overflowing cart. Together, we finished bagging my groceries. I looked at my watch. "Thank you." I heaved a sigh of relief. "I'll be just on time to school now."

The kindness offered by these two ladies had warmed my heart. I loaded my groceries into the car. An elderly man stopped and looked hesitantly at my empty cart. "Would you like my cart?" I asked. He nodded and began to fumble in his pocket for the quarter that I would have received if I returned the cart to the store. I shook my head. "No, go ahead," I urged, happy to be able to pass along a little kindness myself. "Just take it." As I drove off to school, I thought to myself, *Kindness spreads.*

I am sure that your parents have raised you to be kind to others. There are several examples of kindness in the Bible, also. Think of David who was so kind to Mephibosheth. Boaz was kind, too, in his dealings with Ruth. This kindness made both Mephibosheth and Ruth feel humble and glad. They did not feel that it was something they deserved. It made them very thankful. When Paul and the other prisoners were shipwrecked, the natives of the island where they washed ashore were also very kind. They built them a fire with which to warm themselves.

There are texts in the Bible which speak of how kindness spreads. One kindness led to another kindness in return. Listen, for example, to what David said, "I will shew kindness unto Hanun the

son of Nahash, as his father shewed kindness unto me.” We read that kindness can mean to give someone something or to speak to a stranger, but we even read that God’s people consider it a kindness when another person reproves them in love and tells them where their mistake lies.

The Bible goes further than that. God’s Word speaks of being kind as a command. It is not something you *may* or *should* do. It is something you *must* do because the Bible tells us: “Put on...kindness...” (Colossians 3), “Add...brotherly kindness” (2 Peter 1), and “Be ye kind one to another” (Ephesians 4).

Kindness spreads, but so does unkindness. How do you treat others? If you whisper a few spiteful words or send a quick nasty message about another person, do you know that your words will spread to another, and another, and yet another person? Do you say bad things about others? What if you could spread kindness, instead? You cannot take unkind words back once they spread, but kind words that spread, you do not ever *have* to take back!

Most of all, the Bible speaks of God’s kindness. It is merciful. It is great. It is everlasting. You will find some of these texts below in the quiz. Again, and again, the great God of heaven is slow to anger, putting away his wrath, and He promises through Christ, “with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee.” Can anyone understand how great His merciful kindness is? It is everlasting, unchanging, and unbreakable to those who are His. What a wonder it would be to belong to those people to whom He is so kind. Ask the Lord if He will grant you in your heart what was promised when you were baptized as a little baby: “His covenant bonds He will not sever...”

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Joseph requested of the butler in prison, “But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this \_\_\_\_\_.”

2. Eleazer asked the Lord to give him a sign to show him who would be the one to be his master’s son’s wife. “And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant \_\_\_\_\_; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master.”

3. Joel admonishes, “And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for He is gracious and merciful, \_\_\_\_\_ to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth Him of the evil.”

4. Jonah is not in agreement with God’s merciful sparing of Nineveh when he says, “I pray thee,

O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and \_\_\_\_\_, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.”

5. Paul instructs the Colossians, “Put on therefore, as the \_\_\_\_\_ of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering.”

6. In 2 Samuel we read, “And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father’s sake, and will \_\_\_\_\_ thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.”

7. In Psalm 119, we read, “Let, I pray Thee, Thy merciful kindness be for my \_\_\_\_\_, according to Thy word unto Thy servant.”

8. Boaz said to Ruth, “Blessed be thou of the LORD, my daughter: for thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, \_\_\_\_\_ as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich.”

9. We read of God’s great mercy in Nehemiah, over against the rebellion of the people. “And refused to obey, neither were mindful of Thy wonders that Thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and \_\_\_\_\_ them not.”

10. David asked, “Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God \_\_\_\_\_ him? And Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son, which is lame on his feet.”

11. In 2 Samuel we have an example of kindness being returned. “Then said David, I will shew kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father shewed kindness unto me. And David sent to comfort him by the hand of his servants for his father. And David’s servants came into the \_\_\_\_\_ of the children of Ammon.”

12. When Paul and the other prisoners were shipwrecked, the people on the island of Melita were very kind. “And the barbarous people shewed us no little kindness: for they \_\_\_\_\_ a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold.”

13. Psalm 31 tells us, “Blessed be the LORD: for He hath shewed me His marvellous kindness \_\_\_\_\_ a strong city.”

14. David’s kindness is mentioned again in 1 Chronicles 19, where we read, “And David said, I will shew kindness unto Hanun the son of \_\_\_\_\_, because his father shewed kindness to me. And David sent messengers to comfort him concerning his father. So the servants of David came into the land of the children of Ammon to Hanun, to comfort him.”

15. "Naomi said unto her daughter in law, Blessed be he of the LORD, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the \_\_\_\_\_. And Naomi said unto her, The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen."

16. In Isaiah we read that the Lord says, "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee, \_\_\_\_\_ shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee."

17. Corinthians gives us a definition of love, which includes kindness. "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity \_\_\_\_\_ not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up."

18. "And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's \_\_\_\_\_?"

19. Paul exhorts the Ephesians, "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's \_\_\_\_\_ hath forgiven you."

20. The Lord speaks in Isaiah of His lovingkindness to His people. "\_\_\_\_\_ a little wrath I hid My face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer."

21. Rahab asks the spies, "Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token."

22. Peter writes, "Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience

\_\_\_\_\_ ; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity."

23. In Psalm 141 we read of how the psalmist considers it a kindness if he is corrected. "Let the \_\_\_\_\_ smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities."

24. In 1 Samuel, Saul is lenient with the Kenites because they showed kindness. "And Saul said unto the Kenites, Go, depart, get you down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them: for ye shewed kindness to all the children of Israel, when they came up out of \_\_\_\_\_. So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites."

25. Paul writes to Titus, "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man \_\_\_\_\_...Which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

26. David speaks well of the men of Jabeshgilead because they buried king Saul. "And now the LORD shew kindness and truth unto you: and I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this \_\_\_\_\_."

27. Take the first letter of each of your answers from #1-26 and place them on the line to form words from Psalm 117. \_\_\_\_\_

### For the Younger Children

28. Use the secret code found on the next page and write the message.

Answers to previous quizzes were received in January from:

Janice Aleman (5)	Michah Driesen (2)	Lindsey Knibbe (2)	Hailey Stoutjesdyk (2)	Ross Vander Waal
Susanna Aleman (6)	Michelle Driesen (2)	Whitney Knibbe (2)	Nigel Stoutjesdyk (2)	Arianna Verhoef (2)
Benson Bakker (3)	Sam Driesen (2)	Ella Koedam	Colin Ten Hove	Caleb Vogelaar (2)
Alicia Baum	Toby Driesen (2)	Rebecca Krygsman	Aaliyah Timmer (2)	Matthew Vogelaar (2)
Alaina Baum (3)	Weston Ekema	Sarah Krygsman	Drake Timmer (2)	Brandon Vrieselaar (2)
Alicia Baum (3)	Geralyn Engelen	Kendan Maassen	Maurice Van Garderen (2)	Brianna Vrieselaar (2)
Julie Baum (3)	Kariena Engelen	Jenna Maljaars	Thirza Van Garderen (2)	Kyra Vrieselaar (2)
Anabelle Berkenbush (3)	Shawn Engelen	Kaelyn Maljaars (2)	Emmalyn Van Garderen (2)	Noah Vrieselaar (2)
Alyssa Berkenbush	Trevor Engelen	Lydia Mol	Lydia Van Manen (3)	Jonathan Wesdyk (2)
Kaylee Berkenbush	Anika Engelsma	Olivia Mol	Rosalee Van Manen (3)	Laura Wesdyk (2)
Rachel Berkenbush	Kayla Engelsma	Rachel Mol	Jozias Van Ravenswaay	Rebekah Wesdyk (2)
William Berkenbush (3)	Adrian Groenendyk (3)	Teddy Mol	Naomi Van Ravenswaay	Arthur Wisse (2)
Jenina Blom	Benjamin Groenendyk (3)	Lydia Nieuwenhuis	Ellie Van't Zelfde	Gertrude Wisse (2)
Marissa Blom	John Groenendyk (3)	Deanna Okken (2)	Jennifer VandeBruinhorst (2)	Joanna Wisse (2)
Riley Blom	Garrett Hoogendoorn (2)	Justin Okken (2)	Alivia Vande Hoef	Lane Wisse (2)
Hayley Bosch (2)	Kate Hoogendoorn (2)	Kirstin Okken	Leah Vande Hoef	Leah Wisse (2)
Garret Bouman (3)	Luke Hoogendoorn (2)	Jayden Overbeek (4)	Micah Vande Hoef	Neveah Wisse (3)
Nicholas Bouman (3)	Weston Hoogendoorn (2)	Alec Post (2)	Joshua Vande Lagemaat (3)	Tonia Wisse (2)
Stephanie Bouman (3)	Andrew Hoogmoed	Hunter Post	Cornell Vande Stroet (3)	Bethany Ymker
Derek Brouwer (2)	Jolina Hoogmoed	Nate Post	Jessa Vande Stroet (3)	Carissa Ymker (4)
Maya Chase (2)	Alia Kelderman	Nicolas Post (2)	Lydia Vande Stroet (3)	Heidi Ymker (2)
Aleah Dale (2)	Christa Kerkhoff	Andrew Remijn	Raelene Vande Stroet (2)	Jacalyn Ymker
Nathan Dale (2)	Derik Keurhorst (2)	Alex Rozeoom	Esther Vanden Broek (3)	Janna Ymker (5)
Bryce De Blicke	Dwayne Keurhorst	Gavin Spaans (2)	Gerrit Vanden Broek	Marceil Ymker
Kendra De Blicke	Stephanie Keurhorst (2)	Jacob Spaans (2)	Ian Vanden Broek (3)	Paxton Ymker (2)
Cody Driesen (2)	Serina Klyn	Tucker Spaans (2)	Treana Vanden Broek (3)	Quentin Ymker (2)
Kacie Driesen (2)	Ashley Knibbe (2)	Amara Stam (2)	Art Vander Waal	Shauntae Ymker
Evan Driesen (2)	Courtney Knibbe (2)	Isaac Stam	Elaina Vander Waal	





# Letters to My Young Readers

Welcome to our new members:  
Jenina Blom, Micah & Evan Driesen, Serina  
Klyn, Lydia Nieuwenhuis, Jozias & Naomi  
Van Ravenswaay, Brianna Vrieselaar, and  
Raelene VandeStroet.

Thank you, everyone, for sending me your  
pictures of Saul and David and other Bible  
stories. You did a wonderful job.

Love,  
Aunt LenaBeth



**Heidi Ymker**

Thank you for your puzzle picture, Heidi. I found  
fifteen men hiding in the cave. Am I right?

**Esther Vanden Broek**

Thank you for your letter, Esther. No, I don't have anyone who  
is in Grade 2, but I have someone in Grade 3 and in Kindergarten,  
and I do have children who love to play with Lego like you. I'm sure  
you enjoy taking care of your nieces and nephews. How wonderful  
that you can read so many words already. Perhaps you can read  
this verse: "Seek ye the Lord." That is so important, isn't it?

**Benson Bakker**

Yes, we've had snow too, Benson, and sometimes  
it is very cold. I'm sure it was delicious drinking hot  
chocolate after you played outdoors. No, not one  
of my chickens died from the cold winter, thankfully.  
I did have to wait quite a while, though, before the  
temperature was high enough to transport new chicks.  
Sometimes the roads have been slippery; then we  
should always remember to thank the Lord for keep-  
ing us safe. I did receive your answers, wishes, and  
notes, Benson, thank you. That is a beautiful favorite  
verse you have. Pray often that that Word will become  
a lamp for your feet and light for your path.

## News & Announcements

### Church News

#### MINISTERIAL CALLS

##### Extended:

To Rev. J. den Hoed of Franklin Lakes,  
New Jersey, by the congregation of Lynden,  
Washington.

To Rev. A.H. Verhoef of St. Catharines,  
Ontario, by the congregation of Covell Avenue,  
Grand Rapids, Michigan.

##### Accepted:

By Rev. J. den Hoed of Franklin Lakes,  
New Jersey, to the congregation of Lynden,  
Washington.

### Obituaries

BEYER, Jacob – Age 79, February 21, 2019;  
Picture Butte, Alberta; Wife – Johanna;  
Children – Jannie & Jan Rijkse, Evert & Jannie  
Beyer, Gert Beyer, Hennie & Gerard Klok,  
Ton & Edith Beyer, and daughter-in-law  
Anja Veenvliet; 30 grandchildren, 21 great-  
grandchildren; extended family in the Nether-

lands; predeceased by sister-in-law Bep Van de  
Zandschulp and brother-in-law Jan Van Ginkel.  
(Rev. E.C. Adams, Job 22:21&22.)

VELDHUIZEN, Jan (John) – Age 83, February  
27, 2019; Norwich, Ontario; Wife – Jennie;  
Children – John & Jane, Henk & Petra Veld-  
huizen; Brother – Jack & Cathy; Sister-in-law –  
Jannie Veldhuizen; 12 grandchildren, 1 great-  
grandchild; predeceased by sister Betty,  
brothers Albertus and Evert, sisters-in-law  
Jannie, Cindy, Marj, and brother-in-law Marty.  
(Rev. E. Hakvoort, Hebrews 9:27&28.)

VISSCHER, Leonard Peter – Age 80, January  
29, 2019; Chilliwack, British Columbia; Wife –  
Susan; Children – Peter & Elizabeth Visscher,  
Cathy & Mike Roffel; Siblings – Joe & Celia,  
Red & Lucille, Corrie, Jane & Bob, Nella &  
Frank; 5 grandchildren, 4 great-grandchildren;  
predeceased by brother Peter Visscher and  
brother-in-law Jake Dekker. (Rev. P. van  
Ruitenbun, Psalm 130.)

### Bèka Community Inclusion Program Employment Opportunity

Bèka Community Inclusion Program (Chilli-  
wack, British Columbia) is a program for adults  
with special needs. The goal is to provide inte-  
grated daily activities in the church, school, and  
wider communities, with emphasis on biblical  
lifestyle and our Reformed doctrine. We are  
looking for someone to take the full-time lead  
role in developing and running this program.

#### Required qualifications:

- Be a confessing member in good standing  
of the NRC or RCNA
- Degree/Diploma/Certificate in the  
Community Social Service field or  
equivalent education and training
- Direct support experience of individuals  
with developmental disabilities
- Strong interpersonal, organization, time  
management, and computer literacy skills

If you are interested, please contact  
Marianne Luteyn (kmluteyn@telus.net), or  
Jacoline Klaassen (jacobaklaassen@gmail.com).

## ■■■ Hope Bay Bible Camp

The Chilliwack NRC hopes to host the annual young adults' retreat on Pender Island, British Columbia, on May 23-25, 2019, D.V. We welcome all post-secondary young adults to attend for a time of learning, fellowship, and exploration of the beauty of Pender Island. Pastor Van Ruitenburg and other speaker(s) yet to be determined will provide topics and Bible studies. Registration is open until May 6, 2019. The cost is \$115/single and \$165/married couple to be paid online at the time of registration. Accommodations for the following weekend can be arranged for out-of-town guests. For further information and registration, go to [www.bnrcyouth.com/registration](http://www.bnrcyouth.com/registration).

## ■■■ Farewell Service for Rev. Brugge

In view of his accepting the call from the congregation of Doetinchem, the Netherlands, Rev. A.A. Brugge hopes to preach his farewell sermon to the Lethbridge, Alberta, congregation on Wednesday, April 10, 2019, at 7:00 P.M. There will be an open house at the church to say goodbye to Rev. Brugge on April 11, 2019, from 7:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M.

## ■■■ New Book Available

### *Give Me Your Heart*

**A book of daily meditations for children**  
(Ages 8 and older) by Rev. D.W. Tunier

By means of this daily book of meditations, you will read a small portion of the Bible every day. The Lord uses His Word to teach and convert His children and often does this when they are young. In this book you will read about those who feared the Lord in their youth, and what a blessing that is. There are also examples, however, of those who did not fear the Lord, and the fearful consequences. Various histories taken from the Old and New Testament are explained as well as a number of themes, such as the psalms, prayer, God's house, traveling, or autumn time. At the end of each meditation you will find a verse to sing from a psalter.

This hardcover book (ISBN 1-93625-29-4) is available from Early Foundation Publishers, [orders@EFpublishers.org](mailto:orders@EFpublishers.org), or call 269-372-4517. Suggested retail price, \$17.95

## ■■■ Erratum

In the March *Banner of Truth*, the address published in the anniversary announcement for John & Evelyn Fluit was incorrect. The correct address is 707 18th Place. We regret this error. —Ed.

## ■■■ Education

CALVIN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, COALHURST, ALBERTA, anticipates several vacancies for the 2019-2020 school year and welcomes applications from qualified teachers interested in any position, including:

- Elementary teachers
- Secondary teachers (especially in high school English language arts and social studies/history, though other specialties are also invited).

We would be grateful to welcome applications from competent, versatile, and dedicated teachers of any grade/age level who also have a love for the truth which is according to godliness and who are members of the NRC or a closely related denomination. All applicants must be eligible for Alberta certification. Should the Lord incline your heart to apply, please submit a cover letter with your résumé or CV to [office@ccschool.ca](mailto:office@ccschool.ca). For more information about the vacancies, available immigration supports, or the application process, please contact the principal, Marc Slingerland, at 403-381-3030 or [marc.slingerland@ccschool.ca](mailto:marc.slingerland@ccschool.ca).

EBENEZER CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, SHEBOYGAN, WISCONSIN, would like to receive applications for a full-time, multi-grade, elementary teaching position for the 2019-2020 school year. We are a very small school with limited enrollment. The ability to instruct and interact with children across a range of ages throughout the school day and to work independently without daily oversight (the schoolboard acts as principal), as well as good organizational and interpersonal skills, will help the successful applicant experience the special task of teaching in our small school. Interested applicants are asked to contact Andy VanStelle at 920-452-1967 or 920-946-1711 or [amvanstelle@excel.net](mailto:amvanstelle@excel.net).

MOUNT CHEAM CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, CHILLIWACK, BRITISH COLUMBIA—We ask that those who are interested in teaching consider MCCS. Applicants must hold or be eligible for BC certification and subscribe to the faith identity of the MCCS Society and the Reformed Congregations in North America, which is based on the KJV and the Three Forms of Unity. Wages vary depending upon experience and post-secondary education. Inquiries should be addressed to the principal, Mr. Jan Neels, at [jneels@mccs.ca](mailto:jneels@mccs.ca). Please send your application, along with supporting documentation, to the principal, Mr. Jan Neels, at [jneels@mccs.ca](mailto:jneels@mccs.ca), and to the board secretary, Mr. Eric Van Maren, at [ericv@vanmarengroup.com](mailto:ericv@vanmarengroup.com) or mail it to 48988 Yale Road East, Chilliwack, BC V4Z 0B2.

NETHERLANDS REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, CORSICA, SOUTH DAKOTA, is seeking applicants to fill a full-time teaching position for grades 3-5 starting in August 2019. The applicant should be highly self-motivated, versatile, and a member of the NRC who loves the old truths and paths. For more information on this position please contact the school board president, Mr. Ken Van Brenk, at 605-732-4296. Applications should be sent to 26684 390th Avenue, Stickney, South Dakota 57375.

NETHERLAND REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, POMPTON PLAINS, NEW JERSEY, is in need of a part-time Spanish teacher for the 2019-20 school year. Qualified individuals are encouraged to contact Tim Mol at 973-204-5677 or Mr. John Van Der Brink at 973-628-7400. If you know someone who may be interested in this position, please let him/her know it is available.

NETHERLANDS REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, ROCK VALLEY/SIOUX CENTER, IOWA, is a Pre-K through 12th grade school (435 students) serving NRC students from Rock Valley, Sioux Center, and Sioux Falls. We are seeking applicants for a music teacher to begin at any time. The focus of the position would be instrumental (5-12 band/orchestra) along with other opportunities in K-12 music. In addition, we encourage applicants for elementary teaching positions. Please contact the principal, Mr. Daniel Breuer, at 712-476-2821 or [dbreuer@nrscia.org](mailto:dbreuer@nrscia.org) for further information.

PLYMOUTH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN is accepting teaching applications for openings in the elementary school and possible openings in the high school for the 2019-2020 school year. Interested K-6 applicants should send or email their resumes and/or questions to Mr. Nathan Bleeker ([nbleeker@plymouthchristian.us](mailto:nbleeker@plymouthchristian.us)). Interested 7-12 applicants should send or email their resumes and/or questions to Mr. James Bazen ([jbazen@plymouthchristian.us](mailto:jbazen@plymouthchristian.us)).

PROVIDENCE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN, welcomes inquiries from teachers interested in teaching in our K-9 school. Please contact our principal, Tom Kwekel, at [tom.kwekel@gmail.com](mailto:tom.kwekel@gmail.com).

REHOBOTH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, NORWICH, ONTARIO, is a kindergarten through grade 12 school located in small-town Norwich, Ontario. We have an enrollment of almost nine hundred students. We offer academic, vocational, and special education programs to meet the diverse needs of a large, supporting Reformed community. As continued

Anniversary and other announcements will be placed upon request. A donation for their placement would be appreciated. For consistency, size is limited. Please send your request to the managing editor, Dr. E. Nieuwenhuis, whose address is shown inside the front cover. Requests for placement should be made **by the first of the month prior to the month of publication.**

growth is expected, we anticipate a range of unique teaching and employment opportunities well into the future. We are currently accepting applications to fill teacher and paraeducator openings at various levels for the 2019-2020 school year. We welcome those interested in joining our committed and supportive team to contact Mr. John Heikoop, the director of school operations, to discuss employment opportunities or to submit a cover letter and resume. He can be reached by phone at 519-863-2403, ext. 223, or by email at [director@rcsnorwich.com](mailto:director@rcsnorwich.com).

TIMOTHY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, CHILLIWACK BRITISH COLUMBIA, has the following ongoing need—secondary/middle school teachers who are excited about teaching and have a particular love for the hearts of young people. If you are such a teacher, please apply to join our team. Applicants need to be certifiable to teach in British Columbia. For certification requirements and more information regarding the above positions and/or an application form please do not hesitate to contact either the principal, Mr. Doug Stam, at 604-794-7114 or [dstam@timothychristian.ca](mailto:dstam@timothychristian.ca) or the school board president, Mr. Wim Neels, at 604-858-8834 or [wimneels@timothychristian.ca](mailto:wimneels@timothychristian.ca).

### To All Candidates for Teacher Positions

Please visit [advertising.nrcea.education](http://advertising.nrcea.education) for an up-to-date listing of job openings in NRCEA schools as well as links to the school websites for more information about the positions and the schools. When accessing the job bank on the NRCEA SharePoint, please use the following:

User Name:

**[advertising@nrcea.education](mailto:advertising@nrcea.education)**

Password:

**Schooljobs!**



## Current Events

There is a strong push in some states to greatly expand the availability of late-term abortions. New York has passed a law permitting a woman to pursue an abortion for the entire length of her pregnancy; Illinois and Vermont are considering similar measures. These laws also remove much of the protection which had been guaranteed to healthcare givers who have a conscientious or religious objection to abortion.

— *Christian News Network*

Catholic Social Services located in the city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, has been caring for foster children and placing them in homes for nearly 100 years. In spite of the great need for good foster homes, a directive has been issued by the city government stating that unless Catholic Social Services endorse same sex marriages, that the relationship between the agency and the city is at risk of being terminated. The agency stated that they will not oblige as to do so is inconsistent with their ministry.

— *CBN News*

In a meeting held in St. Louis, Missouri, on February 26, 2019, delegates of the twelve million-member United Methodist Church rejected a proposal to allow same-sex marriage and LGBT clergy in their denomination. Much of the opposition was voiced by conservative members from Africa and the Philippines where the denomination has a large presence. There is fear that the vote will lead to a split in the denomination as well as discussions regarding what to do with clergy who are openly gay or lesbian. The church's official position states that homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching."

— *Nashville Tennessean*

A local high school in New Jersey, which since its organization has provided white gowns for girls and purple gowns for boys at graduation, announced that from now on the gowns will all be of the same color for both sexes so that those "who have difficulty identifying with a specific gender" will not feel discriminated against.

— *AFA News*

A United States senator from Texas recently severely criticized one of his fellow senators from New Jersey for interrogating a judicial nominee about her religious and moral principles. The nominee was asked whether she believed LGBT relationships were immoral or if homosexuality was a sin. After the nominee stated that she would follow the precedence of the Supreme Court in her judicial role, the senator from Texas reminded his colleague from New Jersey that Article VI of the Constitution states that there shall be no religious test for any public office.

— *www.christianheadlines.com*

A country whose flag includes a golden cross is saying no to God more and more. Swedish officials now admit they are taking intentional steps to limit expressions of religion. Recently, officials banned citizens from being able to register license plates having religious connotations. Mikael Anderson, press officer for the Transport Agency, stated, "We deny any words that we believe can cause offense. Among other things we say no to everything that has any religious connotations no matter which connotations." A man who was denied his Christian license plate is taking a peaceful approach to the situation, emphasizing, "As a Christian, you should not make war on those who make decisions in this country; instead, we must pray for them."

— *CBN News*

Recent studies in the Netherlands have shown that approximately 100,000 citizens per year are leaving the church—that is approximately 276 per day. In England, the Episcopal Church has sent out a directive to its congregations stating that it is no longer necessary to have two services on Sunday. There is time for everything except God!

## Christ Dying

Jesus, the Saviour! — yes; 'tis He!  
Victim of wrath, lo, where He hangs,  
Nailed with contempt on yonder tree,  
The Lord of life in dying pangs.

Hark, how the bursting thunders groan!  
See, the swift lightnings flash around!  
The startling rocks their GOD bemoan,  
And sighing nature heaves the ground.

O'er all that fills the lucid sky,  
Darkness her dismal mantle rolls;  
And terrors upon terrors fly  
Round the sad world to both her poles.

Nature, all trembling, fled the scene;  
Man, only man, obdurate stood;  
Nor felt the keen distress of sin,  
In tears divine, and groans, and blood.

But cease my soul, cease to deplore!  
Salvation flowed as JESUS bled;  
Then, wrapt in wondering love, adore;  
And lift in praise thy drooping head.

— Augustus Toplady