

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

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The Official Periodical  
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*"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing,  
bringing his sheaves with him." PSALM 126:6*



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## Meditation

### A Saviour for Those Who Are Lost

Rev. A.F. Honkoop (1921-2008)

(Translated from *De Saambinder*)

**“For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10).**

The words of our text were spoken by the Lord Himself after Zacchaeus, one of the chief publicans, was so richly favored by Him. He said, “This day is salvation come to this house.” By means of cords of eternal mercy and of incomprehensible love for sinners, Zacchaeus was drawn unto Christ. It was not of himself that a burning longing arose in his heart to see Jesus, but it was the fruit of the work of God’s Spirit in his heart.

By nature, there is no one who seeks Jesus or who is looking for a Surety for his guilt and a Saviour for his soul. The wonder of salvation lies herein—that the Son of Man (and this is for the accomplishment of God’s eternal good pleasure) has come to seek and to save that which was lost.

We all are lost. In Adam, in whom we have fallen, we all lie without exception, lost before God—not only those who are outwardly like a sinful, thieving Zacchaeus but also they who are above reproach in their walk. Unless we are born again, we are children of wrath, and we are outside of the glory of God.

The Son of Man seeks that which is lost, even though there is no one who seeks Him in truth. He is the first. He seeks a sinner in the hour appointed by Him, in the time of His good pleasure. What and who we are does not stand in His way. He seeks those whose names are written in the Book of Life. It does not matter whether we are pious or wicked. He seeks and calls us with His making-alive voice and draws us with the cords of His love. It is a stumbling stone to the Pharisees and scribes and a rock of offense to many that Jesus does not ask if we are pious, religious people, but that He is only fulfilling the will of His Father. He wishes to save wicked sinners who have forfeited everything. For Him, no sinner is too wicked or has sunk too deeply.

This is what becomes the wonder for people that learn to know themselves by the discovering light of the Spirit as corrupt and unclean sinners. The resulting glorification of God’s grace in our heart is because we begin to experience our lost state before God. It is that we learn to know ourselves as depraved sinners, lying under the curse of the law, and because of our original and actual sins, we are totally condemnable.

From our side, all expectation is cut off. Improvement is impossible, and we who have learned to do evil, can never more do any good. All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. The sinner who is discovered to his own condition must call out, “Lost, eternally lost!” and that sentence is righteous. Then it is Jesus’ time to reveal that wondrous secret of salvation to the soul, that He is come to save that which is lost. To save, that is to say, to reconcile a sinner

with God and to restore communion with Him. Oh, that wonderful administration by Him—He wishes to have communion with sinners. There is not one who is too wicked or who has sunk too deeply. He Himself is willing to call them and to invite them. He has that eternal righteousness whereby He calls lost ones in Adam. He testifies, “Ho, everyone that thirsteth,

come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.” Oh, that that people who experience themselves as being lost, would take their refuge to Jesus. May their eyes be opened for His willingness. Then we would no longer wander about outside of Him but take our refuge unto Him, to be saved by Him out of free grace.

Oh, sinner, let Jesus save you. Let Him wash you and sanctify you. Be ye reconciled to God. He has everything which is needed for this life and for your salvation. □

*By nature, there is no one who seeks Jesus or who is looking for a Surety for his guilt and a Saviour for his soul. The wonder of salvation lies herein—that the Son of Man (and this is for the accomplishment of God’s eternal good pleasure) has come to seek and to save that which was lost.*

What a mercy to have a religion of the right kind! What a very great mercy to have a religion of the right kind! What an extraordinary, great mercy to have a religion of the right kind!

—William Tiptaft



## Bible Study

### The Life of Daniel (7)

Rev. C. Vogelaar, Clifton, NJ

#### Daniel 4:1-19

The Lord has wonderfully shown His power in preserving the lives of the three young men in the fiery furnace into which King Nebuchadnezzar had cast them. This has made a deep impression on the king. He even makes a decree that every people, nation, and language, which would speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego would be cut in pieces and their houses would be destroyed. What a confession he makes when he says, "Because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort." It seems that Nebuchadnezzar has learned a lesson, but, sad to say, he has not. This appears in what is recorded of him in chapter 4. The history that is mentioned in this chapter is given to us in Nebuchadnezzar's own words, but by divine inspiration it has been placed in the book of Daniel where this history comes to us as a warning—he who exalts himself in his pride, as if he is a sovereign ruler, will be brought low and humbled.

In verses 1-3, Nebuchadnezzar introduces his report of what took place by mentioning that this is his original proclamation. He mentions the author, that is he himself, then the address unto all people, nations, and languages. After this, he gives a common salutation, "Peace be multiplied unto you." He mentions the purpose of his writing, that is to show the "signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me." He speaks highly of this God, "How great are His signs! and how mighty are His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation." We would say, this king seeks to give the honor to the God of Daniel. However, that does not mean that there is a true conversion of heart. We can make beautiful confessions when the heart is not changed or renewed, but it is a temporary impression or condition. How necessary, then, to examine in our own heart whether we have truly been humbled before the Almighty God and seek to honor Him.

#### The dream

When Nebuchadnezzar is at rest in his house and doing well in his palace, he has a dream which makes him afraid. What an unexpected disturbance of his peacefulness. How sudden our rest can be disturbed by unexpected events. Man lives in a vain show, the Bible says, and believes the lies that the devil is speaking to him. The rich fool expected to have rest for many years and enjoy his goods and riches, and so Nebuchadnezzar also expects to continue his long reign over his mighty dominion for many more years. Then

this dream troubles him. He asks the wise men of Babylon to be brought in that they might make known the interpretation of the dream. These wise men are the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, the soothsayers. Nebuchadnezzar tells the dream to them, but they do not make known the interpretation thereof, till at last, Daniel comes in before the king who describes the dream.

He dreamed that he saw a tree in the center of the earth, which he perceived as a wide extended plain. This tree was of such an enormous height and size that the top of it reached to the heaven. It is clear that this tree represented Nebuchadnezzar himself, for how mighty he was. He reigned in Babylon over most of the then-known world. The tree grew and was strong. This signified the extent of his kingdom; he was admired or talked about in wonderment for his greatness by all the nations of the earth. The tree had everything in it that was pleasant to the eye and was good for food. The leaves of it were fair. This points to the pomp and splendor of Nebuchadnezzar's court. The tree was not only pleasant and wonderful to look at but was also useful because it served as protection for the beasts of the field and the fowls of heaven. So it was with King Nebuchadnezzar. Like the tree, he was protector over many princes, great ones, and all his subjects on earth. However, this protection does not give safety. When the storm of God's judgements and wrath go over the earth, also in our days of much fear and uncertainty because of the sickness caused by the virus, we need a safe hiding place. Of that Refuge we can read in Isaiah 32:2, "And a Man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." How blest are they who are driven to Him who is this hiding place.

Then Nebuchadnezzar saw a watcher and a holy one come down from heaven. This was a holy angel of God who came and cried aloud the tremendous judgment coming upon this tree. No matter how high or how strong it may have appeared, it would fall when the time was there, which was God's appointed time. How clearly we see that worldly wealth and prosperity are at best very uncertain things. Therefore, do not seek for that which so soon can be taken away, but seek, according to Proverbs 8, "durable riches and righteousness." Seek for treasures in heaven where thieves do not break in and steal and where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt. God's children are called in God's Word, trees of righteousness that are planted in the house of the LORD. They shall bring forth fruit even in old age and shall not be cut down nor shall their leaf wither.

There in the dream the tree lies, having been cut down. However, the stump of it is left in the earth. In judgment, God will remember mercy, but the kingdom shall be firmly kept in bonds of iron and brass. "In the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth." In verse 15, a transition is made from the tree to Nebuchadnezzar, who is represented by it, and now the dream is no longer speaking of a tree but of his person and of what would happen to him. It is sure and certain that what will happen is portrayed here, verse 17 says, "This matter is by the decree of the watchers." This denotes the solemnity of this judgment upon Nebuchadnezzar. "And the demand by the word of the holy ones." God's suffering people had long groaned under the heavy yoke of Nebuchadnezzar's tyranny and God graciously gave an answer to their request. He would humble Nebuchadnezzar so that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men.

### Interpretation

The wise men from Babylon could not give the interpretation. Thus, Daniel is brought in. The king has some high expectation of him, for he says, "For the spirit of the holy gods is in thee." This shows that he is still clinging to his idol gods. Daniel is troubled, not because he is not sure about the meaning of the dream, for this is clear enough to him. Nebuchadnezzar is an ungodly man, but we see love in the heart of Daniel for his king, and he realizes that tragic things will come upon him for whom he has respect. Daniel implies in his answer to the king that he would rather see these judgments come upon the king's enemies. However, Daniel is faithful to his calling. He does not weaken the truth. He does not speak of peace, and no danger. He does not bring a message of pleasant things. Nebuchadnezzar has become very mighty. Many monuments have been erected to his honor. Babylon has become a powerful city. Huge walls of one hundred fifty feet high and ninety feet wide surround it. There are at least one hundred gates of brass and also many towers which are eight stories high. The north part is the actual royal residence which is also surrounded by three walls. Therein is located the magnifi-

cent palace with the hanging gardens which were famous in the world of those days.

Nebuchadnezzar has fought many battles in about forty years and is known as the greatest general of his days, but when man exalts himself, God will show that He is the Ruler of the earth. Daniel begins his interpretation. He says that as for the flourishing tree, "It is thou, O king." He shows the king his present prosperous state as is pictured in that huge tree that reached to heaven. Then he also mentions the judgments that will come upon him. He will not only be deposed from his throne but be driven from man. Being deprived of his reason, he will dwell with the beasts of the field, eat grass like oxen, and be wet with the dew of heaven for seven years. Then he will know that the Most High God reigns and after this, his kingdom will be restored to him again. The Lord will show mercy.

### Loving warning

Daniel does not say it was the king's own fault. He has no delight in what will happen. He gives him humble advice. He urges him to break off the course of sin that he is in, to repent, and reform his life, breaking off iniquity "by righteousness." God was so patient and longsuffering with this king. So He is with us, with our nation, with our churches. We read of Christ that He wept before Jerusalem in Luke 19:42: "Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." Daniel sought the king's welfare. May the Lord enable His servants as ambassadors of Christ to plead with the people, be ye reconciled unto God. Young and old, the clouds of God's judgments are hanging low above us, but there is a way of escape. Isaiah 55:6, "Seek ye the LORD while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near." There is forgiveness with Him that He may be feared. In the midst of all the turmoil in the world, people of God, may we believe and find rest in the sure knowledge that God reigns over the affairs of the world, also over the current circumstances, and that our lives are in His hands. May we be given to bow before Him. □

*(To be continued)*

Take every word as spoken to yourselves. When the Word thunders against sin, think thus: "God means MY sins." When it emphasizes any duty, "God intends ME in this." Many put off Scripture from themselves as if it only concerned those who lived in the time when it was written, but if you intend to profit by the Word, bring it home to yourselves. A medicine will do no good unless it be applied.

—Thomas Watson



## *From Our Inheritance*

### **Where Can We Find the Grace of Days Gone By?**

*Rev. W.C. Lamain (1904-1984)*

(Translated from “Een Handvol Geitenhaaar,” Uitgeverij Gbr. Koster, Barneveld, 11/2010)

The above words are found in the old rhymed version of Datheen, Psalm 89:19. In 1863, nearly one hundred years ago, the Lord took up His faithful servant Rev. Ledeboer into eternal glory. Also, in him it was confirmed that the name of the righteous shall serve as a blessing. The name of this minister is still spoken of among the people who love the truth. I have had the privilege in the early years of my ministry to have met several of them who had attended the catechism classes conducted by Rev. Ledeboer.

Rev. Hellenbroek said upon the death of Rev. Wilhelmus á Brakel that he thundered with his voice and that lightning shone forth in his life. We may also, with complete confidence, testify the same of Rev. Ledeboer, this faithful servant of the Lord, who still speaks long after his departure from this life. Old friends in Benthuisen could speak with reverence and joy not only about the grace which the Lord had magnified in the life of this minister but also about several occurrences taken from his daily life. We will mention a few of them.

The purpose of my writing is not to glorify a person but to show how richly this deceased minister was endowed with grace for grace out of the fullness of Christ, what an intimate, experiential life he enjoyed, and what a close life he had with the Lord.

There was a time that he had to catechize little children. That afternoon he was not in a right frame. What a person was and remains became visible. (His character was also depraved and did not always serve him well.) One of the little ones attending the catechism class received freedom and took the initiative to ask the minister if it were necessary to start the class in such a manner. The minister was so touched by the question that in the same moment he became guilty before the Lord and before the little children. He and all the children bowed their knees together, and he begged for a blessing from the Lord. There was such a deep impression in that afternoon that the minister was listened to with extraordinary attention. God's grace was glorified, and the minister's true humility made a deep impression upon those young children's hearts. When that old man told me this story, (he was then already in his late eighties) the tears rolled down his cheeks. In that place Rev. Ledeboer might be as a child, and for such the kingdom of heaven is opened. Oh, how this puts us to shame. Our biggest failing is that most of the time we stand so far above the children, or that we place ourselves so far above them. The reason that there is so little impression and respect can be laid at our door most of the time.

Let me relate another incident. Rev. Ledeboer was often busy traveling because the care of many congregations and places lay upon both his heart and his shoulders. He traveled throughout the entire country, but from time to time he was also at home to care for his own congregation. There was in that congregation a carpenter's helper to whom his soul was intimately bound. It happened at one time that the minister sent a note to the helper's boss to send him home so that he could speak to him about the ways of the Lord. The minister also included a further message. "I will pay you for the hours that he is not working for you; please place it upon my account."

When we cannot miss the Lord, then we cannot miss each other either. "I believe in the communion of saints." What a sad picture there presently is of God's Church. Everything lies broken as bones at the mouth of a grave. I hardly dare to write down how it is now, in general—speaking against one another, writing critically of one another, and even preaching critically of each other. There is no desire to meet each other, there is a trying to avoid each other or break off contact with each other, sighing about each other, oppressing one another, suspicious of one another. It still reverberates in our ears what one of our unforgettable, beloved ministers once expressed after we had been together, namely, "Now we may still meet one another, we are still able to do so, and we want to meet each other, but the days will come that we will no longer be able to do so, and also that we no longer want to do so. To not be able to meet one another is bad, but to no longer want to do so is worse."

In all things it has become apparent what man is, even God's people when they are not in the right place and what the results are when we grieve and quench God's Spirit. It is a blessed time when we may love God and the brethren. When is the practice, "Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (Psalm 133:1)? Of course, there must be an inward uniting in the work of God in order to enjoy unity with one another. It is a great difference if we "take" each other or that we have been given to each other. The Truth states, "Let your moderation be known unto all men," but it is not possible to live with everyone. Paul had received the testimony in his conscience, and then all is well. Between Paul and Silas there also came differences. Oh, our flesh is so depraved, and when our character intervenes, then we are unable to tolerate anyone. In addition to that, the devil also seeks to foster differences and misery. Yet, we never read in God's

Word that they have trampled upon each other; the respect and the trust that it was the work of God remained.

When there is a true union as a result of the union with Christ, then there is also love and prayer for each other. When that is the case, then all ranks and standings fall away. It did not hinder Rev. Ledebor to speak of the ways of the Lord with a poor carpenter's helper. In Christ the Church is one. When there is life, there is also a desire to be with one another. If we can save it all for ourselves, the portion is but small. In Psalm 34:4, David also needed God's people. It is a pleasant life when there may be unity and trust among those who have set their countenance toward Zion (Jeremiah 50:5). That is where God's Spirit is present; there the Lord commands His blessing. There God's Spirit descends, and the first fruits of heaven are tasted. All pride comes from us; humility, however, comes from God.

Oh, friends, when we think of instances such as we have written about, then shame should cover our faces. Could we fully and rightly understand how far we are from those days and could the breach in Joseph truly be pain and sorrow for us? Oh, that the grace of days gone by would yet be granted unto us. To receive a desire for that, however, then we must first know something of that grace internally. People without grace, even though their confession is ever

so pure and legalistic, never have any need for grace. If in our life we have never bowed before God, there can never be any desire for grace.

In the second place, even though we may have experienced something of that life in practice, God Himself must uncover the immediate missing of it. Even though we may be converted to God, yet we can still be so wrong, so proud, so loveless, so hard, so unfeeling. We are prone to become something with grace received. When the Lord withholds and restrains His discovering light, then we see more faults in others than in ourselves.

Another matter is that when there is no income, then we cannot disburse anything either. That is also one of the reasons that there is so little need for one another. If it may still be true, "They were sent gifts from day to day," then there is substance to speak about. Every benefit which God's people receive out of the Covenant of Grace brings along with it its love, life, and fruits. It is necessary that we look at that very closely. Grace humbles, and the love unites. I shall not expand upon it any further but I have a desire to end with some lines out of Psalter 290:5; (Psalm 106): "Let me behold Thy people's good And in their joy rejoice; With Thy triumphant heritage Let me lift up my voice." □



## *Doctrinal Studies*

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### **Separating Preaching** (3)

*Rev. A. Moerkerken, Capelle a/d IJssel, the Netherlands*

Where do the roots of separating preaching lie? Now that we have attempted to put into words what separating preaching is, we would like to trace from where this form of preaching comes. In the course of the history of the church, has preaching always been separating? Do we find separating preaching back in Holy Scripture? Do we find it with the church fathers, with the Reformers, with the men of the Nearer Reformation? Where do we find it nowadays? Do our creeds point to the necessity of it? These are far too many questions to answer in the brief compass of a series of articles such as these. We only want to mention a few points. As far as Holy Scripture is concerned, we pointed to a few evidences of Scripture in what was written before. The question of how the apostles in their letters have addressed their congregations we hope to deal with when a few of the objections that are levelled against separating preaching will be considered.

Now we still want to remind the reader how the prophets have preached. Did they not separate? Already we drew

attention to the "woe" and the "well" which Isaiah, on God's behalf, had to proclaim to the wicked and the righteous (Isaiah 3:10&11). Everyone who knows the prophets, somewhat, will have to agree that in their speaking they drew the great dividing line with seriousness and faithfulness, but they have done more. They were thoroughly aware of the different encampments in which Zion can dwell. On God's behalf they were enabled to encourage the broken reed, those tossed with tempest and not comforted. On the other hand, they also thoroughly knew the different forms in which unbelief manifested itself among their hearers. We think that they very definitely have put both the "great" as well as the "nearer" separation about which we wrote in the foregoing articles, into their prophecies.

Christ Himself has preached with separation. He knew that there were two kinds of hearers among His audience. He knew of the different encampments of His children, and He addressed the unbelievers regarding the nets in which they were snared. We already pointed to the faith to which

He compared His church with ten virgins, of whom five were wise and five were foolish. Nevertheless, we do have to be careful here if we set the preaching of Christ as an example for that of His servants. His servants, namely, are missing something which He possesses in a perfect manner—the gift of knowing the hearts. Because he possesses this gift, often in His preaching on earth, He turned Himself directly to one of His hearers to address him concerning the state in which He was for eternity. We miss the gift of omniscience, and for that reason the preaching of God’s servants shall never be able to stand on the same line as the preaching of their most high Prophet and Teacher.

In passing we must point to one thing yet. More than once people have used the parable of the tares on the field as an argument against separating preaching. Then they appeal to the well-known word of the householder who replied to the question of his servants whether they have to go and gather up the tares: “Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them” (Matthew 13:29b). Then they blame those “heavy” ministers with their separation, they continually run the danger of weeding the wheat instead of the tares. Just recently we came across such a train of thought in a church paper. However, then they do miss the point of Christ with this parable and the point of separating preaching. Christ’s intention with this word is none other than to leave the final judgment up to Him who will presently send the reapers. Separating preaching does not claim (let it be said once again!) the judgment upon individuals; even less is it the intention of separating preaching to pull out the tares and to burn them, but—with the Lord’s blessing—to cause the tares to become wheat. As far as preaching concerns as it has been brought in the course of the centuries, the reader will understand that we cannot give an extensive overview of this.

Generally speaking, we can say that in the course of the centuries the sacrificial event of the mass increasingly began to take the place which belongs to preaching. The place which the pulpit still occupies in most Romish church buildings, namely in a corner, illustrates this, while the altar has a central location. Although more has been preached in the Middle Ages than we usually assume, it must still be said that they made up a very dark time for preaching. The preachers allowed themselves to be deluded into either barren and unfruitful theological splitting of hairs, or to a morality preaching in which man’s free will was openly taught. That the preaching of that time lacked the rightly separating character needs no argument.

The great turnaround began with the Reformation. Preaching was the chief means by which God was pleased to work the miracle of church reformation in Europe. During the time of the reformation inconceivably much has been preached. People came up to hear God’s Word in church buildings, in secret places, in homes, in the open field, and so many more places. Often people were willing to travel far and went through a lot of effort in order to

listen to the sometimes-lengthy sermons. In July 1566, for instance, the field preacher Pieter Gabriel preached a four-hour long sermon for an audience of approximately five thousand people. More than two thousand sermons of Luther have been preserved, and of Calvin is known that he ascended the pulpit four times a week in Strasbourg and in Geneva twice on Sunday and every other week each work day once. To the question whether Calvin separated in his sermons or not we hope to come back later.

That our Reformed fathers attached great value to the right preaching is evident from the fact that passages about preaching appear in, by far, most of the acts of the old synods of the sixteenth century. One can trace for himself in the *Kerkelijk Handboekje*, how they spoke about preaching at Embden in 1571, at Dordrecht in 1574, at Dordrecht in 1578, at Middelburg in 1581, at The Hague in 1586, and especially at Dordrecht in 1618-1619. At these synods they dealt especially with issues such as the allowed length of a sermon (no longer than an hour, determined at Wesel, 1568 and Dordrecht, 1574), the subject matter for the sermon, and the question regarding the lawful ordination of the ministers of the Word. Do our confessions also deal with the question of how the ministers should preach? Even though our confessions do not provide homiletical lectures, we may, indeed, observe that preaching is mentioned a few times. We can point to Lord’s Day 31, where upon the question: “How is the kingdom of heaven opened and shut by the preaching of the holy gospel?” the answer is given: “Thus: when according to the command of Christ, it is declared and publicly testified to all and every believer, that, whenever they receive the promise of the gospel by a true faith, all their sins are really forgive them of God, for the sake of Christ’s merits; and on the contrary, when it is declared and testified to all unbelievers, and such as do not sincerely repent, that they stand exposed to the wrath of God, and eternal condemnation, so long as they are unconverted: according to which testimony of the gospel, God will judge them, both in this, and in the life to come.”

Two things in this answer strike us especially. In the first place, that the authors of our Catechism acknowledged that the great line of division between believers and unbelievers of which we spoke earlier, runs right through the congregations. They were evidently not of the opinion (and this in distinction with many in our time), that a preacher has to consider his congregation as consisting purely of God’s children. In the second place, the fact has to strike us immediately, that Ursinus and Olevianus make a further separation between “unbelievers” and “such as do not sincerely repent.” According to the explanation of the Catechism by Ursinus with the latter deceivers and hypocrites are meant. According to the authors of our Catechism these people evidently had to be addressed in the preaching and be excluded by this key of the kingdom of heaven “so long as they are unconverted.” On this basis it does not seem too bold to posit that the authors of the Catechism were of the opinion that preaching has to be separating in

the sense meant by us, and that also the so-called nearer separation must be brought into preaching.

Guido de Brès speaks in similar fashion in the Dutch Confession of Faith when he begins to speak of “hypocrites, who are mixed in the Church with the good, yet are not of the Church, though externally in it” (article 29). When he speaks a moment later about the pure preaching as the first mark of the true Church, he certainly has had in mind that this pure preaching must also have an eye for the necessity to discover those hypocrites, thus must be separating. Our Canons of Dort state about preaching that by the ministry of messengers, men “are called to repentance and faith in Christ crucified” (I, 3). Moreover, that the promise of the gospel “together with the command to repent and believe, ought to be declared and published to all nations, and to all persons promiscuously and without distinction; to whom God out of His good pleasure sends the gospel” (II, 5). Our fathers say in the Five Articles as well that as many as are called by the gospel, are unfeignedly called, and that the fault of man’s impenitence may never be sought in the gospel, nor in Christ who is offered in the gospel, nor in God who calls by the gospel, but in those who are called (III, IV, 8, 9).

It is striking to read how our fathers then proceed to separate among those who are not converted: “Some of whom when called, regardless of their danger, reject the word of life; others, though they receive it, suffer it not to make a lasting impression on their heart; therefore, their joy, arising only from a temporary faith, soon vanished, and they fall away; while others choke the seed of the word by perplexing cares, and the pleasures of this world, and produce no fruit...” (III, IV, 9). Indeed, they knew how to separate among the unregenerate. Likewise, they knew how to separate on the other hand among God’s children. If we want to read about the standings in the life of grace, we only need to open the Canons of Dort. We read, for example, that the elect, in due time, “though in various degrees and in different measures,” attain assurance (I, 12), and whoever delves into the sixteenth article of the first head of doctrine will notice how fittingly our fathers knew how to separate according to the state and standing of the souls. With the foregoing we have attempted to show briefly that separating preaching, as we sketched it earlier, is according to Scripture and Confession. That is where its roots are. ◻

*(To be continued)*



## Guidance

### Commentary

*Rev. G. Clements, Gouda, the Netherlands*

#### ***“My black skin does not bother me.”***

(The following article has been translated from *De Saambinder*. Although the article is directed primarily at its Dutch readership, it also contains instruction for our North American readers.)

*The history of the United States is characterized by a conflict between the races. In the foregoing days there has again been an increase in protests as a result of the rough treatment of a black man by a white policeman which resulted in the black man’s death.*

The protests have also carried over to the larger cities of Europe. The anger of the black community is undoubtedly the result of the centuries’ long social and economic inequality between black and white. The beginning of this inequality goes back to the slave trade of the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Dutch merchant men have also made money in the commerce of human lives. Our merchant ships shipped as many as six hundred thousand people from Africa to North and South America.

It is a black mark upon our country’s history. With an eye toward what took place, we dare not say that the worldwide protests are not a concern of ours.

#### **Fort Elmina**

Most of the slaves came from West Africa. The coast of Ghana had sixty-seven different forts from which the black people were shipped. The most important fort was named Elmina, which means “mine.” The fort was originally built by the Portuguese in order to control the trade in gold. The Dutch West India Company conquered the fort in 1637, and the “gold mine” evolved into a “people mine.” Above the dank, airless slave cellars a little church was built upon which was written the well-known words from Psalm 132, “For the Lord hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for His habitation, This is My rest forever.”

In the Netherlands the thoughts about the slave trade were mixed. The Classis of Walcheren had already spoken unequivocally in 1628. “It is unbecoming and not Christian to steal and sell human beings.” It was especially the

followers of Voetius who had serious objections regarding this trade in people. He condemned the slave trade as a very serious sin and cruelty. Smijtegelt in his explanation of the catechism stated that those who stole and sold fellow human beings deserved to be put to death. "He who steals a human being, shall certainly be put to death" (HC Lord's Day 42). They appeared to be, however, lonely voices in the desert.

### The curse of Ham

The executives of the merchant companies wanted to make money and dismissed the objections as "futile scruples" and "ministers' questions." They defended themselves by basing their actions upon the curse of Ham. That curse, they believed, had manifested itself in the black color of the skin and the subordinate position of the African people.

The named ministers did not support this position. "All people fall under the curse of sin," Rev. Udemans stated. We are all slaves. "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." (John 8:34). According to Udemans the curse of Ham must be explained spiritually and not bodily. The differences which God makes between people is not because of their external characteristics. No people should exalt themselves because of their external qualities. God, according to His good pleasure, sends His Word to whom and when He will.

### The necessity of missions

Instead of the horrible merchandise in slaves, Gisbertus Voetius pointed to the necessity of mission work among the poor people. It was a thorn in his side that the merchant companies were interested only in monetary gain and not in the winning of souls. As the first Reformed missionary-

theologian he has addressed his thoughts in "A Tract Dealing with the Planting and the Planters of Churches." In this tract, Voetius especially draws attention to the "uncivilized people" who live in a deeply fallen state away from a Triune God. They seek their salvation in idolatry and immorality. The purpose of mission work is their conversion and the eternal salvation of their souls. Its ultimate goal is to the honor of God. All means must be used to attain this goal.

The slave trade has never enriched our nation. From the mid-seventeenth century our country suffered severe financial losses. No other country has suffered so much financial ruin from the slave trade, but we did not listen to the rod and who has sent it. Our country was the last European nation which officially did away with the slave trade. In this respect, England was the leader while the Netherlands followed later in 1863.

The results of the slave trade are again felt in the eruption of violence. The only way to see an end to this conflict between the races is that black and white may together bow before God's Word. Differences in the color of a person's skin are not considered by God. Individuals from every nation, race, people, and language are standing before God's throne. They have washed their long white robes in the blood of the Lamb. An African once wrote to people who mocked him because of the color of his skin,

*My black skin does not bother me;  
Even though it is despised by some.  
Although I am black and reviled,  
I am sprinkled with the blood of Christ.  
When soon I will be laid in the grave,  
I will eternally shine above.*

(loosely translated) □



## Media Use

### A Fearful and Overwhelming Onslaught from the Powers of Darkness

*NRC Synodical Modern Media Committee*

*(This article is Part 4 in a series by the NRC Synodical Modern Media Committee on the dangers of pornography.)*

In the past several issues of *The Banner of Truth*, we have drawn your attention to the dangers of pornography: its addictive nature, its negative impact on relationships and marriages, and its spiritual impact. Some readers may read these things, look at their own lives, and feel despair. In this article we hope to share some ways of breaking a pornography addiction and removing this sin from our

lives. In this article we will address the necessity of prayer to God who can keep us from temptation and, consistent with the need for prayer, begin addressing the necessity of preventive measures.

#### Prayer is essential

The first and most important thing in preventing and fighting pornography is a praying life. We do not need only an outward praying life but real spiritual prayer. You might say, "By nature, we cannot pray." That is true, but do we say

this because of a personal, real, heartfelt religion or because the expression sounds pious? Or do we say this because the need for real prayer is bound upon our heart and has become our true need before God? When the disciples experienced that they were not able to pray as they should, a need entered their heart, and they went to the Lord asking Him, “*Teach us to pray.*” One of the prayers He then taught them was “*Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*” This request was necessary not only in those days but is also today because of the many temptations surrounding us.

The Lord is still the same, yesterday, today, and forever, and He is still able to teach by His Word and Spirit how to pray and for what to pray. At Pentecost, He sent His Spirit, the Spirit of prayer and supplication to the earth and into the heart of sinners. Even if we do not know how to truly pray, we must still ask the Lord to keep us from evil. Prayer is such a mighty weapon against sin. When Martin Luther was tempted by the devil and by sin, he started to pray and sing. Our psalters are prayers, too. If there is one thing the devil cannot tolerate, it is prayer and psalter-singing.

In our prayers we confess our inability and our dependency on the Lord. The father of the lunatic boy asked in his need, “I believe; help thou mine unbelief.” When David found himself in the prison of temptations, he asked “*Make haste, O God, to deliver me; make haste to help me, O LORD.*” Friends, if we make this request our prayer, then we must also consider the other side of the coin. If we pray, “*Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,*” we must not bring ourselves into temptation either. Otherwise, our prayer is nothing more than a mocking of God. Therefore, we need to watch and pray—watchfulness regarding temptation, not just prayer alone is necessary.

How can we do that? In the next article we hope to describe some practical steps towards improving watchfulness and resisting pornographic temptations.

### **Prevention is essential**

From a parental perspective, a key consideration is this: the vast majority of young people now view pornographic

material on smartphones—including the young people of our communities. One of the reasons porn addictions are increasingly difficult to break is because they are beginning at younger and younger ages and occurring when the brain is in key stages of development. (As we discussed in an earlier article, pornography rewires the brain.) A key preventative measure to spare our children from this addiction is to delay giving them a smartphone for as long as possible, at least until they have a driver’s license.

Many parents harbor the mistaken belief that once their children have a smartphone, they can still control their behavior and ensure responsible usage. In reality, it is nearly impossible to completely lock down a device (although there are very important steps that can be taken), and statistics indicate that 71% of teens hide their smartphone activity from their parents. In our Reformed schools, many students admit that the reason they want a smartphone is not to communicate with adults (parents or employers), but rather to engage in social media and other digital behaviors. These devices are unnecessary and dangerous. All previous generations survived without them, and children and early teens—despite how badly they want smartphones—do not actually *need* them.

Providing children with a smartphone is providing them with a device that functions as a portal to the totality of human sexual depravity as it exists online. The majority of young people, boys and girls, now view pornography. The majority of them have seen things (grotesque sexual violence among other perversions) that previous generations could not have imagined. To give them this opportunity and this temptation at an age when we would not trust them with the right to vote, consume alcohol, or possess a driver’s license makes no rational sense. When adults have been asked whether they could have withstood the temptation of readily available sexual material throughout their teen years, at all times and in all circumstances, those who know themselves are generally willing to admit that they would not have been able to stand strong consistently. Why do we, then, expect this of our children? ❑

## **A Prayer for Today**

*President George Washington, June 1783*

**A**lmighty God: we make our earnest prayer that Thou wilt keep the United States in Thy holy protection; and that Thou wilt incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government, and entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another and for their fellow citizens of the United States at large.

And, finally, that Thou wilt most graciously be

pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility, and pacific temper of mind which were the characteristics of the divine Author of our blessed religion, and without a humble imitation of whose example in these things we can never hope to be a happy nation.

Grant our supplication, we beseech Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



## *For Young and Old*

### **Storms of Life** (2)

*Author Unknown*

(Translated from "The Friend of Old and Young")

One day while they were having breakfast, Mary said to her son, "Carl, even though the Lord determines all of our paths, we still should use the means. Today we will go to Mr. Vroon and ask him for advice."

When mother and son were brought in to see Mr. Vroon, he greeted them in a very friendly manner with these words, "Well, well, this is quite a coincidence, since I was just thinking about Carl and what would become of this young man, and I thought to offer him a position in my office, that is, if he is interested."

Carl was overjoyed; his desire was fulfilled without him doing anything towards it. The poor young man did not know how many tears and sighs awaited him although they would be a blessing to him; he also did not know what a lovely sun was hidden behind those dark clouds and what a sweet calm awaited him after the terrible storms which pass over his still young head.

Carl found himself quite at home in the offices of Mr. Vroon, who liked the young man more and more, which was noticed with disdain by the other clerks. He was constantly in the immediate presence of his boss and benefactor whose office was separated from the other clerks. The behavior of the young man was exemplary, and Mr. Vroon saw in him a reliable and useful member of the business for the future; also, Mr. Vroon's wealth made it possible for him to be helpful to Carl.

On the one hand, all these circumstances were a source of joy to his mother, on the other hand she noted with concern that the impressions which Carl seemed to have in the past appeared to become fewer and fewer. She noted that her child was a moral and ethical person, yet an avowed enemy of God.

When at the end of the week Mr. Vroon totaled up his assets in order to close his books, Carl always had to help him, which would serve to his instruction. His benefactor noted with pleasure the capability of the young man to whom he had become bound as if he were his own son.

When the young man had been employed there for two years, something took place which would lead to a very sad situation for him. On a certain day, when he was making up the accounts, he noted that a \$100.00 bill was missing from the heavy iron chest which was used to store the receipts. He was not bothered so much with the loss of the \$100.00 but the inability to balance his books which upset Mr. Vroon greatly.

Already as a young boy Mr. Vroon had been a saver and had diligently taken the money which he saved and hidden it in secret places. When he became an adult and followed his father in the business, he still continued to do that, for from time to time he would take some of the cash from the strong box which he then secretly hid so that later on he could give it to someone in need. We would say how foolish this was for someone who had so many riches, but this was a weakness of Mr. Vroon and it in no way made him untrustworthy.

The week passed by; Mr. Vroon was somber, and Carl was withdrawn, for although it had not come up in his thoughts that his benefactor would suspect him, yet the appearance of wrong doing fell on him since he was the only one who was close to the money. It appeared to Carl that the other clerks also suspected him of theft.

In the week that followed, the misery increased. In tallying up the receipts for the week, there again was a shortage, and it was even twice as much as the previous week. Mr. Vroon became angry and looked with stern eyes at Carl, who stood there with a stricken and pale face. He was the first to break the silence and said, "I hope my benefactor does not think that I am guilty of theft?"

Mr. Vroon remained silent for some time, and then he suddenly called out, "No Carl, I do not at all suspect you, but I do not know what to think."

The other clerks whispered amongst each other so that Carl readily understood that they suspected him of theft.

To be brief, the number of shortages in the cash box increased, and there was not one week which went by, that either a larger or smaller bank note was noted to be missing. Even though Mr. Vroon closely monitored Carl's work, he could not find any reason to suspect him of wrongdoing; on the other hand, he had to say, "No one but Carl can be the thief, for he is the only one who has the opportunity to take the money." He changed his manner of doing business somewhat, and in this way removed any possibility of Carl coming near the money.

How much Carl and his mother suffered under this suspicion of wrongdoing can well be understood. More than once she visited Mr. Vroon who always assured her that although he could not understand what was going on, he could not harbor any suspicion of Carl. □

*(To be continued)*



## Questions & Answers

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### Questions from Our Readers

Rev. H. Hofman, Kalamazoo, MI

In Matthew 23 the Lord Jesus talks about the scribes and Pharisees and how they liked to be called 'Rabbi' as a respectful title. Then Jesus goes on to say: "be ye not called Rabbi ... or father, or master ..." and that "he that is greatest among you shall be your servant," etc. Why is it the custom in our churches to call our ministers "Reverend"? It seems the Lord Jesus warns against that sort of a thing here.

Thank you for asking a question I am often wondering about myself, but then from the opposite side of the equation you are asking it. I would like to slightly change the question into "why not?" My question would be why an ecclesiastically examined, approved, and ordained minister may or should *not* be called "Reverend." If I am not mistaken I have noticed an increasing hesitancy and even opposition to the use of the title Reverend or Pastor, even among some in our own churches.

Some scrutiny of this seemingly frivolous and fruitless debate will quickly bring to light that it has to do with either a supposed, suspected, or presumed pride by the clergy, on the one hand, "Who does he think he is?" and a critical spirit of condemning anything in church that is tradition or custom, on the other hand. Some also think that Scripture is on their side for avoiding the title of Reverend and that Pastor is more proper and biblical. I consider this a *trend*.

My first objection to this trend is a *grammatical* one. Grammatically, in my opinion, the use of pastor followed by the last name is the same as addressing a medical doctor with physician. Who would ever say, "Physician, will you help me?" Would it not be more proper to say, "Doctor, will you help me?" In this case, physician is the profession, and it would be proper to address a physician as doctor, right? I think no one would have issues with this statement. Neither do we ever say, "Lawyer, I need your legal counsel." Rather, we would say, Mr. (last name) ... I need your help." Likewise, there is grammatically nothing against the use of Reverend for an ordained minister of the gospel. When filling out a form for whatever purpose and asked my occupation, I will put down pastor. When I am addressed, just like any other title of respect, the word Reverend is proper. It refers to nothing more and nothing less than a title, obtained after formal ministerial training, ecclesiastical examination, and ordination. The public opinion about this person as a person is not the determining factor here. A lawyer is still Mr., a physician is still Doctor, and a teacher at a university is still Professor.

My second objection to this trend is a *scriptural* or *exegetical* one. Often, Psalm 111:9 as translated by the KJV

is used to strongly object to the use of Reverend. This objection seems to be voiced in the question that is asked as well. This text reads: "*holy and reverend is His name.*" Is it then not terribly out of place, yes, even blasphemy to use a name that is exclusively attributed to the Lord? The answer here is emphatically "no." If the Hebrew word used here would refer to a proper name of the Lord, like Jehovah, God, the Almighty, etc., then yes, this would be the case, but here the word reverend is an adjective and not a noun. Biblical scholars point out that the Hebrew root word "yr" signifies terror, to be afraid of, to be awed by, to honor, or worship, but in the Hebrew this term is not used exclusively for the Lord! The Israelite, for instance, was to fear (respect, honor) his parents (Leviticus 19:30). Both Moses and Joshua had been feared (revered, honored) by the Israelites (Joshua 4:14). It is clear that the word used here in no wise refers to a title attributed to the Lord alone but merely is descriptive of the *name* of the Lord. Additionally, let us also note that in Psalm 111:9 reverend and holy are joined together. So, is it true, then, that holy should never be used to refer to man? When Paul calls the elect of God holy (Colossians 3:12), is he taking the Lord's name in vain? I think the answer is clear.

My final concern against the trend is an emotional and more *subjective* one. At the time of writing the answer to this question, our country is being ravaged by lawlessness and anarchy. All form of authority, whether law enforcement or any of the powers that be, seems suddenly to be under scrutiny and even subject to mutiny. What a fearful time we live in, my friends! On top of all the restrictions and changes, as well as the confusion and world-wide fear due to COVID-19, we are witnessing a total loss of respect for authority. Let us be fearful of such a spirit! No, I am not saying that calling a minister pastor is biblically wrong or a sign of similar rebellion. Neither is the use of Reverend blasphemous or presumptuous.

I do in this context have a question though. Is there not also among us a silent, quiet quest for change taking place? Is the very issue at hand not indicative of something deeper? Is it not because in our day the offices in the church are more and more degraded to mere *functions*? Is there not also among us a languishing respect for authority? It is not difficult to elaborate this concern with examples—not to mention the trend for more popular or contemporary language on the pulpit because our young people would not understand "pulpit language." When the door is thrown open in this direction, it is fearful to notice how fast the *essence* follows at the tail end of the *form* that is thrown overboard.

When searching for an answer upon the matter in question, I decided to check online as well. As office bearers we sometimes do well to do this because this is the avenue many young people take whether we like it or not. Unfortunately, this is also where you will find the very reasons for questioning custom and traditions. To my dismay I found many statements which spoke in a derogatory manner about the title of Reverend. The word was basically associated with *clerical pride* and therefore to be completely *avoided*. I became saddened when I read some of the statements. May our walk as office bearers be humble and respectful, never giving offense that the ministry be not blamed. Have we as office bearers given cause for offense? This personal question may never be avoided! Pride indeed is a horrible sin and does not pass by office bearers either. Such contemplations, however, may not take away the fact that what is honorable in the Lord's sight must be treated honorably by man. I think this is something we all should take to heart. See the many references of Scripture as

quoted in the Forms for Ordination of Ministers of the Word and Installation for Office Bearers in the back of the Psalter.

Finally, years ago I heard out of the mouth of a brother in the ministry in the Netherlands something that left an impression on me. This minister had obtained a PhD in theology. I asked him why he did not use the title of Dr. in the congregations. He answered, "The title of Doctor I received from man; the title of Reverend (Dominee) I received from God. I therefore prefer to use the latter." I think this puts the whole issue in the right light. For this brother, Reverend was indeed a divine honor but sovereignly bestowed upon an unworthy, humble man. □

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

## Meditation

*J.C. Philpot (1802-1869)*

***"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions"*** (Psalm 51:1).

This psalm is very suitable to the wants and feelings of every sensible sinner, for it is not necessary to have committed David's sin to have a measure of David's repentance and confessions, and of David's desires, breathings, and supplications. "Have mercy upon me, O God," he says, "according to Thy lovingkindness." To ask God to have mercy upon us is one of the first cries that a convinced sinner puts up to God. It was so with the publican in the temple; and where it is sincere, God will certainly hear it, "according to His lovingkindness," for He is full of love and kindness to poor, mourning sinners. How the psalmist also begs of the Lord to "blot out his transgressions according unto the multitude of His tender mercies." As our sins in thought, word, and deed are a countless multitude, of which everyone deserves hell, we need "the multitude of His tender mercies" to blot them out. We may

see the stars in the sky, the sands on the seashore, the drops of dew on the grass, the waves rolling upon the beach; but both our sins and God's tender mercies exceed them all. How He shewed these tender mercies in giving His dear Son to suffer, bleed, and die for miserable sinners; and how we need all of these tender mercies to pity and to pardon us and our transgressions. How earnestly David begged. "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." It is only the washing of God Himself that can wash us through. If we could shed an ocean of tears it would not wash away one sin; but the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. In order to make us know this, the Lord shows us and makes us feel the guilt and makes us feel the burden of sin, and that we can do nothing to put it away. Pardon must be His own free gift, and that, every sensible sinner is made to feel.



## Current Events

### The Importance of Celebrating July 4 in the United States

In light of all the social upheaval we are currently experiencing, should we still celebrate the 4th of July? Absolutely. The 4th of July is about far more than parades and picnics. Independence Day is about defining who we are as Americans. The Declaration of Independence is America's "reason for being." Dr. Richard Land answered this question by telling a story of a debate in which he was involved. He referenced what Abraham Lincoln said in the Gettysburg Address, that the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, is without question the defining document of what America is and, more importantly, what she stands for, and what she aspires to be. The Declaration mentions God and appeals to the "Supreme Judge of the world" as well as a "firm reliance in the protection of divine Providence." On every 4th of July weekend, let us resolve to tell young people the story of America's founding in 1776.

—*ChristianPost.com*

### U.S. Supreme Court Favors Certain Rights of Religious Employers

Conservative-leaning faith leaders and their allies cheered this month as the Supreme Court issued a pair of rulings that protected certain rights of religious employers. The court upheld the Trump administration's allowance for a broad religious or moral exemption from the Obama-era Affordable Care Act's requirement that employers' health insurance plans must provide free contraception. Also, the court rules that certain employees of religious organizations cannot sue for employment discrimination upholding ministerial exception precedence. The overall result of these cases significantly limits the government and courts in how much they can intrude on the internal affairs of religious organizations. It is hoped that this does not give leeway to faith-based organizations to make employment decisions without concern for true discrimination.

—*WashingtonPost.com*

### Hong Kong Christians May Soon Face Persecution

Christians in recently democratic Hong Kong now fear religious persecution from China's Communist Party. A new law ends Hong Kong's autonomy and any hopes that the pro-democracy protesters will be listened to. The national-security law passed on June 30 by China's Standing Committee supersedes Hong Kong's legislature. For China's Communist Party, this measure was necessary to guarantee stability after more than a year of protests in Hong Kong. In mainland China, Christians who defy the Chinese government's attempts at control of their churches reportedly face persecution, arrest, and detention. Underground churches are destroyed and crosses burned. It is feared that this is what awaits Hong Kong Christians.

—*NationalReview.com*

### California Governor Bans Singing and Chanting During Worship

A California church with campuses in Corona, Pasadena, and Irvine, filed an emergency request with a federal judge on Saturday seeking a temporary restraining order halting the enforcement of Governor Gavin Newsom's ban on singing and chanting in places of worship. Other organizations are responding in kind. Recent guidelines issued by the state discourage singing or chanting indoors, for any religion, due to fears that it increases the spread of respiratory droplets, thus increasing the risk of spreading COVID-19 among a crowd. The church maintains

that these guidelines unfairly target places of worship over other institutions because Newsom supported protests over police brutality which included protestors chanting without masks during the pandemic.

—*ABC7.com*

### Some Positive Things Have Happened in 2020

2020 has been a hard year. Has anything good been happening? Family Policy Alliance lists some of the things for which we are grateful in 2020. In New Mexico, a bill that was poised to codify abortion up to the moment of birth was defeated after believers of all denominations joined together in opposition. This is widely celebrated as the greatest victory in modern history for New Mexico's pro-life movement. In Georgia, major resources were spent to lobby for large gambling expansions, but pro-family conservatives rallied enough opposition and the bill was pulled at the last minute. The state of Idaho became the first state in the country to pass a law to disallow boys, who identify themselves as girls, to play in girl sports. The Supreme Court struck down what is called a "Blaine Amendment," an antiquated law that prevented faith-based schools from being part of inter-district school choice programs simply because they are faith-based. There are several other good things on the list for 2020.

—*FamilyPolicyAlliance.com*

### Christians and Conservatives Not Sufficiently Politically Active

A Baptist pastor, who is also a researcher of religion and politics, has completed a study which suggests that atheists are more politically active than any other religious group. For example, one study showed four in ten atheists contact public officials and donate money to a party. It is the same as those of Jewish faith but is much higher than most Christians in the study. Agnostics usually trail atheists but only by a few percent. The level of education of the participant did not make a difference in how politically active they were. The political party they were affiliated with, however, did. For like groups of people, Democrats are more politically active than Republicans. In 2018 these differences became more severe. 2018 was a year in which Democrats had the minority in both the House and the Senate and did not hold the White House. Could this be the reason the Democrats gained a majority in the House of Representatives and took some seats in the Senate in 2018? The 2018 elections had the highest voter turnout. How will these statistics affect the next general election?

—*ReligionInPublic.blog*

### Iran Not Treating Christians According to Its Own Constitution

As Christianity continues to spread around Iran, Christians continue to live in worry of persecution, arrests, and imprisonment. Iran's own constitution states that: "The government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and all Muslims are duty-bound to treat non-Muslims in conformity with ethical norms and the principles of Islamic justice and equity, and to respect their human rights." Yet, despite its constitution, the actions of the Iranian government reflect a very different philosophy. Christians are being oppressed into silence, as preaching Christian doctrine or leading others to salvation could lead to being arrested and charged as an enemy of the state. Christian converts have been sentenced to years of wrongful imprisonment. The ACLJ and ECLJ are taking action to pressure Iran to honor not only its UN charter, but its own constitution.

—*ACLJ.org*



# Timothy FOR THE YOUNG

## **The Confession of Faith (9)** **Article XVIII: Of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ**

*Rev. A.M. den Boer (1929-2004)*

The previous article ended with the “mother promise” as given by the Lord in Paradise, that the Messiah would come in the fullness of time. In this article and several of the following ones, the fulfillment of this promise is shown. Articles 18 and 19 speak of the Person of the Mediator and Articles 20 and 21 speak of the work of the Mediator. They are, therefore, articles of the greatest importance, and it is our wish that the Lord may guide us in writing and reading so that it may be to His honor and, under the administration of the Holy Spirit, to the salvation of our souls.

Our present article states what we believe of the incarnation of the Lord Jesus, based upon God’s Word, and it also combats the views of heretics. We have previously discussed the Fall and its terrible consequences for the entire human race. We, and all of mankind, have come into the greatest misery, and it is impossible for us to deliver ourselves. This is difficult for many to accept, but it is the truth which we can find in God’s Word. God also has decreed a way that the elect would return to the Lord.

How could this be done? Christ gave Himself from eternity as a Surety of the covenant for His people, as the Father required that He assume the human nature and give perfect satisfaction for His violated attributes. The Son was willing to do all that the Father required, also to come to this earth. We read it in this article; “We confess, therefore, that God did fulfill the promise, which He made to the fathers, by the mouth of His holy prophets, when He sent into the world, at the time appointed by Him, His own, only begotten and eternal Son.”

After that first promise in Paradise, many other prophecies followed which gave a clearer picture of the coming Messiah. First, it was the seed of the woman, then later the parents of Noah spoke of the Comforter, then it was told that He would be born out of the loins of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jacob pointed to Judah, Moses called him a prophet, David

waited for his Great Son who would sit on his throne. Isaiah saw Him in His priestly office, but also that He would assume our human nature, for he said, “Unto us a Son is given.” Bethlehem was made known as the birthplace. In this manner more and more was revealed of the coming Deliverer or Redeemer.

Throughout all of these ages there had been people who were waiting for Him, longing that He might be born in their time. For four thousand years the “world” waited and waited. It seemed that the Lord had forgotten His promise, but this was not true. It had to become “the fullness of time,” as all things should be fulfilled in Him—the time, the circumstances, the place, the condition of the country, His person—in everything God’s Word had to be fulfilled.

The fullness of time was the time which had been set by the Lord. Had that not been foretold by Jacob, that before the Shiloh would come, the scepter would not depart from Judah, and the Lawgiver from between His feet? This meant that Israel would still be a nation in the fullness of time, which was fulfilled; it soon came to an end however, in the year 70 A.D. The prophet Haggai had at the time foretold when the foundation of the temple was laid, that it would not be as nice a building as the one Solomon built, but that this temple would have greater glory because the Redeemer would enter into it. This was also fulfilled.

Daniel saw that Christ would come when the 70 year-weeks would be ended. A week has seven days, and seventy weeks 490 days, meaning that 490 years would pass by from the exile unto the fullness of time. Then God sent His only begotten Son, and showed His incomprehensible love toward sinful creatures. How great was also the love of Christ to leave His glory and to descend to this cursed earth, full of enmity and sin, to restore the attributes of His Father and, at the same time, to merit in a way of obedience the salvation of His church. This is the

revelation of God's free sovereign pleasure, which is the only reason of Christ's coming on earth.

It is no wonder that the apostle exclaims, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift." Even the angels sang of it; "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

From the beginning of the New Testament Church there have been those who deny the incarnation of Christ. Some do not believe in the Godhead of Christ, and others speak doubtfully about His body, His human nature. For many it is difficult to comprehend that the Mediator should be very God and real righteous man at the same time. This is not so difficult if we keep in mind that the second Adam, namely Christ, was to perform what the first Adam did not do. The Lord required of Adam that he keep the law, and therefore Christ had to keep the law. "This do, and thou shalt live." The Lord also warned Adam that if he ate of the forbidden fruit, he would be punished with the threefold death. Because he sinned, it was necessary for the Mediator to give satisfaction for His people. God's justice required that the same nature that had sinned should be punished, and therefore Christ had to be the man. If He Himself

had sinned, then He would have to pay for His own sin, and therefore He had to be a righteous man.

How could the holy, divine nature of Christ be united with an unholy human nature? That was impossible. It was not, however, enough that Christ was real righteous man, but He should also be very God. Why? Because a mediator who was only a man, although righteous, could never bear the wrath of God, could never give an eternal value to his work, could not lay down his life nor take it up again, could not say, "It is finished," and could not apply his merits to the hearts of the elect. When we consider all of these things, then we will understand that the Mediator must also be very God.

Such a Mediator we need, and I hope that among my readers there are found those who have been longing for the coming of Christ in their heart. It is a great wonder when the Lord has revealed Himself in our life, but He always has to be the first again. Therefore, that longing remains with the Church. How wonderful are the ways of the Lord, both in His coming upon earth and in the hearts of His children. May it also happen to you!



## *Bible Stories for Little Ones*

### **The Ten Commandments (1)**

(Based on Exodus 19-31)

What would you do if you knew a king was coming to your home? You would probably be very busy preparing for his coming. You would make the house as clean as possible and would wear the very best clothes that you have. I am sure you would be very excited about his coming.

The children of Israel were also waiting for someone to come. They were not waiting for just a man, no, they were waiting for a visit from God. They were waiting for the God who had created the heavens and the earth. God, the great God who could destroy them with one word, was coming down from heaven to talk to them.

The children of Israel were very busy getting ready for the Lord's visit. God had told them that they were to wash their clothes and make everything ready. God would be on the top of the mountain, and all of the people had to come together at the foot of

the mountain. God had told Moses that none of the people were to touch the mountain, for if they did, they would be killed. They were not allowed to go up onto the mountain or to touch it.

When the day came, all of the people had gathered together at the foot of the mountain. You may wonder how many people were standing there. Although we do not know the exact number, the Bible tells us that 601,730 men entered the land of Canaan. That number does not include women and children. It is likely that there were over two million people present at that time around the foot of the mountain. We can hardly imagine such a large number of people. Maybe your mom or dad can help explain this number to you. If you still remember, the Lord promised Abraham that the number of his seed would be like the sand at the seashore, and the stars of heaven. We all know that we cannot count them

because they are so many. We can see here how the Lord's promises are always fulfilled at His time.

All those people heard a great, loud noise. It was just like a loud thunderstorm. Have you ever been in a bad thunderstorm? It is often said that the thunder in a storm is the voice of God. It gives us a little idea of the greatness of God and how powerful He is. It is not wrong to be afraid in such a storm.

There was terrible thunder and lightning all over the mountain. A trumpet sounded, and a thick cloud covered the mountain. The people were very much afraid. They knew that these loud noises meant that God was on the mountain. They knew that if they touched the mountain they would be killed, and that is why they shook and trembled.

Then God spoke to Moses and told him to go up onto the mountain. The people all stayed below and waited until God's voice was heard, giving them rules by which to live.

I am sure you also have some rules at your house. Maybe you have to be in bed at a certain time, or you have certain chores which you have to do before you can go outside to play. If you do not do them, then you may be punished.

Everyone has rules. Your father and mother have rules as well as you. Your father has rules at work or when he is driving his car. We need rules so that we can live with each other peacefully.

Do your parents give you rules to be mean? No, they give you rules because they love you, and they want you to be safe.

That is why God gave the children of Israel rules. He loved them and wanted them to obey Him. We call these rules the Ten Commandments.

I can see some of you smiling because you have heard of the Ten Commandments. You hear them read every Sunday in church. God gave the Ten Commandments to the people of Israel, but He also gave them to us.

Can you remember what some of them are? Someday, I hope you will be able to memorize them and know them all. You probably remember that God tells us not to steal, to kill, or to work on Sunday. God also tells us to worship Him alone, to use His name only in a good way, to honor and love our father and our mother, not to lie or tell stories about others

which are not true, and to be happy and satisfied with what we are given, without wanting other people's things.

Are we able to obey the Ten Commandments perfectly? No, we are not. Some people think so, but they are wrong. That is why we must always ask God to forgive us our sins which we have committed against Him.

The people of Israel were so afraid when they heard all of the thunder and saw the lightning and smoke on the mountain that they said to Moses, "Please have God speak to you, and then you can tell us what God said. We will listen to you, for we are too scared to stay here any longer."

Moses told the people not to be afraid, and then he went back up onto the mountain. God spoke to Moses for a long time, and He gave Moses many other laws for the people of Israel. They were not

laws which we need to obey today. They were what were called ceremonial laws, which gave instructions on how they were to serve the Lord. Other laws were what we call civil laws, something like the laws we have in our cities. They were meant only for the people of Israel.

When Moses came down from the mountain, he told the people all that God had said unto him. The people answered him, "All that the Lord has said, we will do." Moses wrote down all that God had said, and then he went back up the mountain with some other men. Later these men returned, but Moses stayed on the mountain for a very long time, alone with God. God told Moses that He

wanted His people to build Him a special kind of church. It would be a church that the people could take with them when they moved from place to place. It was to be called a tabernacle. In the tabernacle was to be placed the Ark of the Covenant. The Lord told Moses exactly how He wanted it made.

Then God gave Moses two tables of stone on which He had written the Ten Commandments. The commandments were written by the finger of God. When God had finished giving Moses all of the rules for the people, Moses went back down from the mountain. There he saw a horrible sight!



# Bible Quiz

## Chariots



Dear Boys and Girls,

How did people travel in Bible times if it was too far for them to walk? Well, often, they rode on donkeys, mules, and camels, and sometimes on horses. Joseph sent wagons to fetch his father, brothers, and their families. There were also chariots drawn by horses. Joseph was honored when he was allowed to ride in Pharaoh's chariot. All the people had to bow to him. Naaman traveled in a chariot to be healed of his leprosy. The eunuch was also riding in a chariot when he was reading the book of Isaiah and Philip was sent to explain it to him.

Most of the time, though, we read of chariots in war. There were heavy, wheeled carts referred to as chariots, but there were also very lightweight, two-wheeled chariots which were used mostly in battle. Pharaoh's soldiers came in chariots to pursue the Israelites, but the Lord took off their wheels, and the soldiers drowned in the Red Sea. The Canaanites fought with chariots and so did the Philistines later on. This made fighting very difficult for the Israelites. The more chariots an army had, the more powerful they were.

Solomon developed chariot forces for Israel, making chariot cities at Hazor and Megiddo, at Gezer and at Baalath, and at Tamar in the Arabah. He had fourteen hundred chariots in his army, and he used them to protect Israel against the Aramaeans, Philistines, and Edomites. Later, Ahab had an even bigger chariot force of two thousand chariots.

The Lord used a chariot of fire to bring Elijah up into heaven. When Philistines surrounded Samaria where Elisha and his servant were, God surrounded the whole mountain with horses and chariots of fire to protect them.

We do not have chariots and horses nowadays; we drive cars, instead. I wonder how often the Lord's sparing hand is over us and we do not even know it. Perhaps there have been times when your dad or mom had to jam on the brakes to avoid another car, but there are also many times which we may never know about in which the Lord has spared us from harm.

This past week, we had some very rainy days, and we heard and saw many accidents. One day, three people were killed in a car crash. A few days later,

a father of two little girls was killed when a dump truck behind him could not stop. The highway where this happened was closed the whole day. If you were on the other side of the divider, you could see policemen walking around with serious, drawn faces.

On the Sunday morning after that, it was very quiet on the roads, and it was raining again. Suddenly, we came upon a traffic jam, and as we pulled into the line of cars going into one lane, we could see a big tractor trailer standing sideways across three lanes, a divider, and another lane of the highway. The rain poured down, firetruck lights flashed, and a crane was being positioned into place. On the way home, there were more flashing lights as police cars pulled up to a car which had spun around to face the wrong direction. When arriving home on such days, one feels relieved and thankful that he or she was not in an accident as they were.

Yet, there is more than that. Not only were we spared, but we also were allowed to gather around God's Word on that Sunday. Many, many others were not. Boys and girls, do you see how the Lord cares for us and gives us so much? He protects you when you travel, He gives you many things in life, but He also gives you a church to go to every Sunday. Have you ever wondered why—why YOU may go and hear God's Word? What do you do with all that the Lord gives you?

\* \* \* \* \*

Complete the crossword on the next page.

### Across

1. Whose father was being buried when a great company, including chariots and horsemen, came along to the mourning and burial? (Genesis 50)
5. To whom did the king say, "Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host"? (1 Kings 22)
7. Who was the captain of the host of Syrians who was slain along with forty thousand horsemen and the men of seven hundred chariots? (2 Samuel 10)
8. When Joseph made ready his chariot, whom was he going up to meet? (Genesis 46)
9. What did God take off the Egyptians' chariots? (Exodus 14)
10. Of a thousand chariots, how many did David reserve? (2 Samuel 8)



Answers to August's "Water" quiz:

- |                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Everlasting       | John 4:14         |
| 2. Season            | Psalms 1:3        |
| 3. Pastures          | Psalms 23:2       |
| 4. Brooks            | Psalms 42:1       |
| 5. Thirsteth         | Psalms 63:1       |
| 6. Provided          | Psalms 65:9       |
| 7. Showers           | Psalms 72:6       |
| 8. Watersprings      | Psalms 107:35     |
| 9. Wind              | Psalms 147:18     |
| 10. Lepers           | Matthew 11:5      |
| 11. Preaching        | Matthew 12:41     |
| 12. Nations          | Matthew 24:1      |
| 13. Hear             | John 8:4          |
| 14. Faith            | Romans 10:17      |
| 15. Word             | 1 John 2:5        |
| 16. Earth            | Genesis 1:10      |
| 17. Creature         | Genesis 1:20      |
| 18. Vessel           | 1 Kings 17:1      |
| 19. Woman            | John 4:7          |
| 20. Drink            | John 4:10         |
| 21. Revelations 21:6 |                   |
| 22. Revelations 22:1 |                   |
| 23. Athirst          | Revelations 22:17 |
| 24. Word             | Luke 4:4          |
| 25. Keep             | Luke 11:2         |

Answers to previous quizzes were received in May from:

- |                          |                           |                              |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Clay Bakker 1            | Charity Hup 1             | Ashton Timmermans 3          |
| Alaina Baum (6) 3        | Derek Hup 10              | Austin Van Den Top 5         |
| Andrew Baum (3) 3        | Justin Hup 10             | Caleb Van Den Top 5          |
| Julie Baum (5) 5         | Evan Kaat (3) 4           | Collin Van Den Top 4         |
| Anabelle Berkenbush 14   | Logan Kaat 1              | Lydia Van Manen 17           |
| William Berkenbush 14    | Olivia Kaat (4) 14        | Rosalee Van Manen 15         |
| Eryn Bisschop 6          | Shane Kaat 1              | Kaiven Van Middendorp (5) 14 |
| Sara Bisschop 7          | Claire Kelderman 3        | Konner Van Middendorp (5) 14 |
| Britni Blom (2) 14       | Stephanie Keurhorst (6) 9 | Jozias Van Ravenswaay (2) 15 |
| GaryJon Blom (2) 6       | Ashley Knibbe 16          | Naomi Van Ravenswaay (2) 15  |
| Jenina Blom (2) 13       | Brennan Knibbe (2) 11     | Brett Van Velthuisen 2       |
| Lawrence Blom (2) 7      | Caylea Knibbe (2) 24      | Kason Van Velthuisen 2       |
| Marissa Blom (2) 14      | Courtney Knibbe 16        | Trent Van Velthuisen 2       |
| Martena Blom 16          | Donovan Knibbe 13         | Taylina Van Wingerden 1      |
| Willem Blom (2) 9        | Jarynne Knibbe (5) 16     | Alivia Vande Hoef 15         |
| Kyle Bouman (7) 7        | Lindsey Knibbe 16         | Micah Vande Hoef 12          |
| Nicholas Bouman (6) 9    | Lydia Knibbe 10           | Jake Vande Stouwe 8          |
| Stephanie Bouman (7) 9   | Nathan Knibbe 12          | Jonah Vande Stouwe 8         |
| Kaylee Den Boer (2) 4    | Quinton Knibbe 11         | Wyatt Vande Waerdt 2         |
| Sarina Den Bok 10        | Sienna Knibbe 8           | Heidi Vandenberg 12          |
| Thomas Den Bok 11        | Whitney Knibbe 16         | Helen Verhoef 5              |
| Cody Driesen (2) 12      | Rebecca Krygsman 14       | Shara Verhoef 5              |
| Kacie Driesen 12         | Sarah Krygsman 16         | Caleb Vogelaar (2) 6         |
| Sam Driesen (2) 10       | Lydia Mol 12              | Matthew Vogelaar (2) 6       |
| Toby Driesen 12          | Madeline Mol 3            | Brandon Vrieselaar (5) 14    |
| Kaylynn Ekema 14         | Olivia Mol 8              | Brianna Vrieselaar (5) 14    |
| Julie Geuze 1            | Rachel Mol 8              | Kyra Vrieselaar (5) 14       |
| Ronna Geuze 4            | Teddy Mol 12              | Noah Vrieselaar (5) 14       |
| Kyal Grisnich (2) 7      | John Murphy 7             | Jadon Weeda 1                |
| Logan Grisnich (2) 8     | Marielle Neels 11         | Jonathan Wesdyk 12           |
| Taryn Grisnich (2) 4     | Colin Overbeek 1          | Nathan Wesdyk 9              |
| Kari Groen 9             | Jayden Overbeek (6) 14    | Rebekah Wesdyk 12            |
| Kurtis Groen 9           | Lauren Pannekoek 6        | Alisha Wessels (4) 22        |
| Allene Groenendyk (3) 12 | Gabe Post 4               | Anthony Wessels (2) 12       |
| Ruben Groenendyk (3) 13  | Collin Rozeboom (2) 5     | Johanna Wessels (4) 14       |
|                          | Logan Rozeboom (2) 15     | Arthur Wisse (2) 13          |
|                          | Mindy Rozeboom (2) 15     | Emily Wisse 2                |
|                          | Trina Rozeboom 3          | Joanna Wisse (2) 13          |
|                          | Ale Rus (3) 11            | Lane Wisse (2) 12            |
|                          | Jessa Rus (4) 14          | Tonia Wisse (2) 13           |
|                          | Kaela Rus 2               | Allyson Ymker (2) 10         |
|                          | Lakia Rus (2) 3           | Cameron Ymker (2) 14         |
|                          | Bethany Spote 11          | Heidi Ymker 14               |
|                          | Esmee Sweetman 3          | Paxton Ymker 10              |
|                          | Megan Taylor (2) 9        | Shauntae Ymker (2) 14        |
|                          | Renee Taylor (2) 4        |                              |
|                          | Colin Ten Hove (2) 11     |                              |
|                          | Esther Teunissen (4) 13   |                              |
|                          | Aaliyah Timmer 11         |                              |
|                          | Drake Timmer 12           |                              |

**13 Bibles were sent to Bolivia this month.**



Please send your answers to the address shown below:

Aunt LenaBeth  
180 Jacobs Road, Newfoundland, NJ 07435  
E-mail: [auntlenabeth@gmail.com](mailto:auntlenabeth@gmail.com)

# News & Announcements

## Ministerial Calls

### Extended:

To Rev. G.M. de Leeuw of Grand Rapids (Beckwith), Michigan, to the congregation of Nobleford, Alberta.

To Rev. H. Hofman of Kalamazoo, Michigan, to the congregation of Sioux Center, Iowa.

### Accepted:

By Rev. G.M. de Leeuw of Grand Rapids (Beckwith), Michigan, to the congregation of Nobleford, Alberta.

### Declined:

By Rev. H. Hofman of Kalamazoo, Michigan, to the congregation of Lisse, the Netherlands.

By Rev. A.T. Huijser of Sliedrecht, the Netherlands, to the congregation of Lethbridge, Alberta.

## Obituaries

DEKOK, Kelsea Laurina – Age 3 months, August 15, 2020; Picture Butte, Alberta; Parents – Kyle & Laurie Dekok; Grandparents – John & Cathy VanderWaal and Rick & Mary Dekok; Great-grandparents – Ken & Margaret Both, Pamela VanderWaal, Huib & Jannie Dekok, and Elizabeth VandeBruinhorst; Great-great-grandmother – Laurina Engelsman; predeceased by great-grandfathers John VanderWaal and Evert VandeBruinhorst. (Rev. E.C. Adams, Ecclesiastes 3:14.)

KLOK, Jannetje (nee Vandenberg) – Age 80, August 5, 2020; Picture Butte, Alberta; Husband – John; Children – Peter & Marianne, Betty & Cornell de Kok, Henrietta & Andre de Kok, John & Cheri, Jeanette & Andrew Beusekom, Nellie & Adrian Sinke, Ed & Marieke; 56 grandchildren, 110 great-grandchildren; Sisters – Teunisje & Willem Slingerland, Hennie Van Hierden; Sisters-in-law – Corrie Ouwendorp, Eefje Ruiters, Maasje & Isaac Kruijt, Cootje Van Beek, and Bertha Klok; predeceased by great-granddaughter Alysha Roth, brother Hendricus Vandenberg and sister Eefje Van Eck. (Rev. E.C. Adams, Ecclesiastes 7:2.)

VAN ESSEN, Elske – Age 94, August 8, 2020; Picture Butte, Alberta; Husband – Hendrick (deceased); Children – Wendy & Gerrit Bakker, Gerrit Van Essen, Andy & Rhonda Van Essen, Evert & Edith Van Essen, Wilma & Kees Oskam, Henk Van Essen, Lourens & Peggy Van Essen, and Elske & Fred von Hardenberg; 41 grandchildren, 61 great-grandchildren; predeceased

by daughter-in-law Tina, grandson Edwin, 2 brothers and numerous sisters and brothers-in-law. (Rev. E.C. Adams, 1 Kings 8:37.)

WALLET, Barend (Brian) – Age 85, August 13, 2020; Norwich, Ontario; Wife – Johanna (deceased); Children – Ed Wallet, Ernie & Jacqueline, Gary & Rita, Wendy & Bart Veldhuizen; 11 grandchildren, 25 great-grandchildren; 3 sisters; 5 sisters-in-law, and 5 brothers-in-law; predeceased by 2 brothers, 1 sister, 8 brothers-in-law, and 5 sisters-in-law. (Rev. E. Hakvoort, Psalm 100:5.)

## 150th Anniversary of the Beckwith Congregation of Grand Rapids, Michigan

The Lord willing, on Wednesday, October 28, 2020, at 7 P.M., there will be a commemorative service in the First Netherlands Reformed Congregation, 1261 Beckwith NE, Grand Rapids, Michigan, to remember the Lord's faithfulness and mercy toward us for the past one-hundred-fifty years. This service will be combined with a Reformation Day service.

## 70th Wedding Anniversary

Our dear parents, grandparents,  
and great-grandparents,

**David C. & Alberta Timmer**

commemorated their  
70th wedding anniversary  
on September 1, 2020.

*"Let my mouth be filled with Thy praise  
and with Thy honour all the day"*  
(Psalm 71:8).

6669 West H Ave.  
Kalamazoo, MI 49009

## 60th Wedding Anniversary

The Lord willing,  
our dear parents, grandparents,  
and great-grandparents,

**Martin & Edith Vlietstra**

hope to commemorate their  
60th wedding anniversary  
on October 7, 2020.

May the Lord care for them in the future  
as He has done in the past.

*"O give thanks unto the LORD, for He is good:  
for His mercy endureth for ever"*  
(Psalm 107:1).

1929 Airport Road  
Mansfield, MO 65704

## Education

CALVIN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, COALHURST, ALBERTA, anticipates several vacancies for the 2020-2021 school year and welcomes applications for qualified teachers interested in any position, including:

- Elementary teachers
- Middle School (grades 6-8) teachers
- Secondary teachers (especially in high school English language arts and social studies/history, though teachers for other specialties are also invited)
- Learning support/Special Education teacher
- Trades/shop teachers (construction, cabinetry, mechanics, welding).

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 resumé or CV to [office@ccsschool.ca](mailto:office@ccsschool.ca). For more information about the vacancies, available immigration supports, or the application process, please contact the principal, Mr. Marc Slingerland, at 403-381-3030 or [marc.slingerland@ccsschool.ca](mailto:marc.slingerland@ccsschool.ca).

EBENEZER CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, SHEBOYGAN, WISCONSIN, is in urgent need of a teacher for the 2020-2021 school year. We have a very small, multigrade classroom school. Certification is not required for this position although it would be helpful. Currently, the school board acts as principal with further oversight by the consistory. May this position and our need be bound upon someone's heart to come over and help us. Any questions regarding this position and all interested applicants, please contact Randal Teunissen at 920-828-0225 or e-mail, [rdteunissen@yahoo.com](mailto:rdteunissen@yahoo.com).

NETHERLANDS REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL POMPTON PLAINS, NEW JERSEY

### ADMINISTRATOR NEEDED

The School Administrator will strive to direct the school according to the Word of God, the Three Forms of Unity, the Constitution of the Netherlands Reformed Christian School, the policies of the NRC School Board, and the regulations of the New Jersey Department of Education.

The primary duty of the Administrator is to maintain productive relations with the school board, students, faculty and staff, parents and Community.

The successful candidate should have the following qualifications:

- A strong desire to promote the spiritual and temporal welfare of the students;
- A clear vision of the purpose of Christian education and a desire to see it maintained in our present day;
- Be a male NRC member in good standing with a solid knowledge of the Scriptures and Reformed doctrines;
- Have a bachelor's degree or higher in Education with a willingness to consider additional education as necessary;
- Be willing to travel as necessary for educational conferences;
- Have good written and verbal communication skills and the ability to relate to people in all social capacities.

For more information, or to apply for this position, please email [nrcs\\_office@nrnsnj.org](mailto:nrcs_office@nrnsnj.org), contact John Van Der Brink at 973-628-7400, or contact Tim Mol at 973-204-5677.

NETHERLANDS REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, ROCK VALLEY/SIOUX CENTER, IOWA, is looking to fill openings for the 2020-2021 school year. We have openings in grades 7-12: math and/or science, English/language arts, literature, church history (grade 8-9), and part-time computer technology.

Some of these positions could be combined depending upon qualifications and experience. We are also seeking a music teacher to begin at any time. The focus of this position would be instrumental (grades 5-12 band/orchestra) along with other opportunities in K-12 music. Please contact the principal, Mr. Daniel Breuer, at 712-476-2821 or [danbreuer@nrnsia.org](mailto:danbreuer@nrnsia.org) for further information. Visit [www.nrnsia.org](http://www.nrnsia.org) to learn more about our school. Log in to the main site by registering as a new user and wait for approval.

PLYMOUTH CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL, GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN, is accepting applications for possible openings for the 2020-2021 school year. Interested 7-12 applicants should send or email their resumés and/or questions to Mr. James Bazen, [jbazen@plymouthchristian.us](mailto:jbazen@plymouthchristian.us).

PONATAHI CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, NEW ZEALAND

#### ADMINISTRATOR NEEDED

Our long-standing principal is nearing his retirement and is considering his future. We are seeking expressions of interest for a successor. Please check out the exciting information about our school, church, and local community by visiting our school website at [www.ponatahi.school.nz](http://www.ponatahi.school.nz) (vacancies). For further information, please contact the Ponatahi Christian School Board of Trustees via email at [come2carterton@gmail.com](mailto:come2carterton@gmail.com).

REHOBOTH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, NORWICH, ONTARIO, is currently accepting applications for an elementary leadership position, either as principal or a vice principal with the potential to assume a principal role in the future. We also continue to welcome applications from elementary and secondary teachers, or inquiries about our locally developed teaching program for those with a bachelor's degree. Please visit our website at [www.rcsnorwich.com](http://www.rcsnorwich.com) for more detailed information, or contact the director, Mr. John Heikoop, at [director@rcsnorwich.com](mailto:director@rcsnorwich.com) or 519-863-2403, ext. 223. Please submit cover letters and resumes to [hr@rcsnorwich.com](mailto:hr@rcsnorwich.com).

### 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!**

## Hope is the Hamstring of Faith

*John Flavel (1628-1691)*

Coming to Christ implies a hope or expectation from Christ in the coming soul. If it have no hope, why doth it move forward? As good sit still and resolve to perish where it is as come to Christ if there be no ground to expect salvation by Him. Hope is the hamstring of faith; it cannot move to Christ except it be satisfied at least of the possibility of mercy and salvation by Him. Hence, it is that when believers in Christ are struggling with their doubts and fears of the issue, the Lord is pleased to enliven their faint hopes by setting on Scriptures such as, "Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out." This puts life into hope, and hope puts life into industry and motion.

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.**

### ■ ■ ■ *The Banner of Truth* in Audio Format

Monthly copies of the articles which appear in *The Banner of Truth* are available on MP3s and CDs for those who have reading difficulties such as poor vision. These MP3 files are produced by a committee in Norwich, Ontario, with the support of the Norwich consistory, and they make the MP3 files available to the consistories of the end user. The consistories then distribute the MP3s and CDs which are provided at no cost to the end user.

To arrange for a free subscription, contact Mrs. Leona den Dekker at 519-403-5178 or [ldendekker@rcsnorwich.com](mailto:ldendekker@rcsnorwich.com).

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## Vanity of Life

(Based on Ecclesiastes 1&2)

The evils that beset our path  
Who can prevent or cure?  
We stand upon the brink of death  
When most we seem secure.

If we today sweet peace possess,  
It soon may be withdrawn;  
Some change may plunge us in distress,  
Before tomorrow's dawn.

Disease and pain invade our health  
And find an easy prey;  
And oft, when least expected, wealth  
Takes wings and flies away.

A fever or a blow can shake  
Our wisdom's boasted rule;  
And of the brightest genius make  
A madman or a fool.

The gourds, from which we look for fruit,  
Produce us only pain;  
A worm unseen attacks the root,  
And all our hopes are vain.

I pity those who seek no more  
Than such a world can give;  
Wretched they are, and blind, and poor,  
And dying while they live.

Since sin has filled the earth with woe,  
And creatures fade and die;  
Lord, wean our hearts from things below,  
And fix our hopes on high.

— *John Newton*

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