

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

June 2021  
Volume 87, No. 6

The Official Periodical  
of the Netherlands Reformed  
Congregations of the  
United States and Canada

*In this issue...*

The Necessity of the  
Holy Spirit

No Desire

Time Spent on Phones  
and Mobile Devices

*For our young readers...*

To College or University

Fruit

*"Who hath divided a watercourse...to satisfy the desolate and waste ground;  
and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?" JOB 38:25a&27*



Meditation <b>The Necessity of the Holy Spirit</b> <i>Rev. D. de Wit</i>	123
Bible Study <b>The Life of Daniel</b> (16) <i>Rev. C. Vogelaar</i>	124
From Our Inheritance <b>No Desire</b> <i>Rev. W.C. Lamain</i>	126
Media Use <b>The Time Spent on Phones and Mobile Devices</b> <i>NRC Synodical Modern Media Committee</i>	127
Doctrinal Studies <b>How God's Attributes Are Commonly Distinguished</b> (3) <i>Rev. J. Fraanje</i>	128
For Young & Old <b>A Wild Hunter Captured</b> (5) Taken from the history of the life of Titus Klose	130
Questions & Answers <b>Questions From Our Readers</b> <i>Rev. H. Hofman</i>	131
Guidance <b>To College or University</b> <i>Prof. A. Moens</i>	132

<b>Current Events</b>	134
TIMOTHY – for the Young <b>The Confession of Faith</b> (18) <b>Article XXIV: Of Man's Sanctification and Good Works</b> <i>Rev. A.M. den Boer</i>	135
Bible Stories for Little Ones <b>Balaam and Barak</b> (2) <i>Submitted</i>	136
Bible Quiz <b>Fruit</b> <i>Aunt LenaBeth</i>	137
<b>Letters to My Young Readers</b>	140
<b>News &amp; Announcements</b>	141
<b>Minutes of Classis Midwest Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 Meetings</b>	142
Back Cover <b>Hear, Gracious God, a Sinner's Cry</b> <i>Samuel Medley</i>	144

Cover Photo: Flowers blooming in arid ground | Public domain image

### THE BANNER OF TRUTH

Publication Number: (USPS 041-540)

Monthly, Official Publication of the Netherlands Reformed Congregations of the United States and Canada. Typeset (Archtype Graphic Solutions) at Pompton Plains, NJ; printed and distributed (AlphaGraphics) at Midland Park, NJ.

Subscription rate: \$30.00 in the U.S. and Canada, payable in U.S. funds; \$35.00 to foreign countries, payable in U.S. funds. Rates listed are for one-year subscriptions.

**Rev. J. den Hoed, Editor**

972 Hemlock Loop, Lynden, WA 98264  
Home: 360-354-0210 • Study/Fax: 360-354-0216

**Rev. C. Vogelaar, Assistant Editor**

14 Longview Drive, Towaco, NJ 07082-1540  
973-265-8632 • E-mail: revcvogelaar@gmail.com

**James Okken, Managing Editor**

3 Joseph Court, Hackettstown, NJ 07840  
973-809-2112 • Fax: 973-381-1483 • E-mail: jamesokken79@gmail.com

**John Sweetman, Subscription Manager**

11 Split Rock Road, Boonton Township, NJ 07005  
973-335-4679 • E-mail: nrcbannersubscriptions@yahoo.com

Copy for *The Banner of Truth* is due the 1st of the month prior to month of publication. All copy (including announcements, obituaries, anniversary notices, and ads) should be sent to James Okken. All announcements submitted for publication must be typed and are subject to editorial policy. Communications relating to subscriptions should be addressed to the subscription manager. Change of address should be forwarded to the subscription manager one month in advance of moving date. Please provide both new and old address.

Archived copies of *The Banner of Truth* (1934 to present) are available at Digibron.nl.

PERIODICAL: Postage paid at Mahwah, NJ

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to

*The Banner of Truth*  
11 Split Rock Road, Boonton Township, NJ 07005

#### Additional Denominational Sources for Printed Matter

Other denominational periodicals include: *Paul* (mission periodical), 377 Poldon Drive, Norwich, Ontario, Canada N0J 1P0; *Insight Into* (for young people), Rev. P. Van Ruitenburch, Secretary, 8920-3 Broadway Street, Chilliwack, British Columbia, Canada V2P 5W1; NRCEA School Journal *Learning and Living*, Plymouth Christian School, 1000 Ball Ave., Grand Rapids, MI 49505.

For a list of denominationally printed Reformed literature write to: Netherlands Reformed Book and Publishing Committee, Mr. Tom Fluit, 0-121 Leonard St. NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49534, or e-mail nrcbnp@gmail.com. For a list of Reformed material which embraces additional publishing companies, write to our discount book distributor: Bible Truth Books, P.O. Box 1290, Grand Rapids, MI 49501.

For free sermons write to: Treasured Meditations, P.O. Box 2753, Grand Rapids, MI 49501.

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



## Meditation

### The Necessity of the Holy Spirit

Rev. D. de Wit, Borselle, the Netherlands

(Translated from a recent issue of *De Saambinder*)

***“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His”*** (Romans 8:9).

In Romans 8, the Apostle Paul has placed flesh over against the Spirit. He speaks there about no longer walking after the flesh but after the Spirit. In verses 5-8 he explains what it is to be in the flesh. Then you will come to the realization of what is carnal. Marginal note 17 states that such a person with all of his understanding and senses seeks out fleshly or carnal matters. They point to Galatians 5:19-21 where the sins against God’s holy law are listed. To contemplate this is death; it brings a person to his end. It becomes apparent that it is enmity in not being in agreement with God’s law. Flesh cannot submit itself under the law because it is so corrupt. Just as the law says that something may not be done, flesh desires to do it. Romans 7 points to the fact that the desire to sin is awakened when the law says: thou shalt not covet. It is the law of sin and of death.

#### The law, the flesh, and the Spirit

The demand of the law, however, remains as well as the promises. Eternal life is promised upon perfect obedience to the law; because of sin, however, it has become impossible to fulfill this demand. Paul writes in verse 3, “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh.” How much opposition does the law place over against the sinner? How necessary is the uncovering work of God’s Spirit. By nature, we are so blind. In this chapter Paul writes about this Spirit, and a walk in accordance with it. He emphasizes in the second verse that this walk can never come forth out of the sinner himself. Flesh is powerless in this regard. It is the law of sin and of death; we do nothing but sin, and our walk only leads to death. The walk according to the Spirit requires the indwelling of God’s Spirit. That walk is worked by the regenerating Spirit who comes to live in the heart.

#### The Spirit of Christ

This great wonder has happened to those to whom Paul addresses his epistle, “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the

Spirit.” That Spirit renews the heart. This causes meditation upon the Spirit. It is the complete opposite of the reasoning of the flesh. That is enmity and death. The contemplation of the Spirit is life and peace. How is that possible? Paul has stated in verse 1 and 2 that the Spirit which makes alive is in Christ Jesus. God’s children are ingrafted by means of this Spirit and brought into the body of Christ. Now this Spirit is in Christ and God’s children. We could also say that this Spirit has made place in the heart for Christ. That is also why it is written in verse 10 that Christ lives in them.

It is this Jesus who was sent into the world by the Father in the likeness of sinful flesh. No, He has never walked according to the flesh. He has never either thought or committed any sin. There was never even a desire in His heart to commit sin. He is the spotless Holy One.

Now Christ has taken upon Himself the semblance of sinful flesh that was subject to the consequences of sin, even unto death. As Mediator He has suffered according to His human nature when He died and arose again. In this manner He has accomplished all in full obedience to the will of His Father. In this manner He has satisfied the justice of the law. He has completely fulfilled the demand of the law in the payment of the debt and the obedience according to the demand of His Father. He has received as payment from His Father forgiveness of sins and eternal life for His people as a reward for His holy walk.

#### The application by the Spirit

How great is the wonder that the Spirit of Christ makes place in the heart for Him. Everything is given by Him in the applying work which He has merited. How much comfort there is in the knowledge of Him who was dead but now lives. Yet, how great it also is to know that Christ is in us. How extensive and deeply dependent this all is upon the merits and the Person of the Holy Spirit. Paul writes, “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.”

This is written for a warning. Our own works do not foster communion with Christ. It is so important to be

*How painful it is when that Spirit uncovers what our works are and what our walk is—flesh, enmity, and death. It makes such a separation between God and our soul. Oh, what is it to know that we can never make things well by keeping the law, because sin has made the law powerless. This is where the guilt lies. He, who is placed before the justice of the law which must be satisfied, has such an anxious question for someone, yea, for a Mediator and Deliverer sent from God.*

(Quoted from portion found on next page)

among those who are “after the Spirit” (verse 5), denoted by the marginal notes as “those who have been regenerated by the Spirit of God.” How painful it is when that Spirit uncovers what our works are and what our walk is—flesh, enmity, and death. It makes such a separation between God and our soul. Oh, what is it to know that we can never make things well by keeping the law, because sin has made the law powerless. This is where the guilt lies. He, who is placed before the justice of the law which must be satisfied, has such an anxious question for someone, yea, for a Mediator and Deliverer sent from God. In Him the justice

of the law has been fulfilled. That is why the Spirit glorifies Him, not only in His coming but also in His death and resurrection, Christ in His states. In this manner He has satisfied God’s justice, and He also applies His merits.

The comfort lies in the application of His Person. Herein is heard the justice of the law. Upon the grounds of His merits, forgiveness of sins and the granting of eternal life is given to the poor sinner in whom Christ and the Spirit live. In this manner God receives the honor, and the sinner receives salvation. ◻



## *Bible Study*

### **The Life of Daniel** (16)

*Rev. C. Vogelaar, Clifton, NJ*

***“Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of Thy servant, and his supplications, and cause Thy face to shine upon Thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord’s sake”*** (Daniel 9:17).

The prophet Daniel had observed that the time had come in which to expect the end of the captivity. The prophet Jeremiah had spoken of this in Jeremiah 25:9-11: “...these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.” At the end of those seventy years the Lord would punish the king of Babylon and his nation. The first devastation of Jerusalem had taken place in 606 B.C. In the first year of Darius, the period of desolation is almost ended. Daniel did not behold the signs that the liberty to return to Judah had come; therefore, he turned to God in earnest prayer. In his prayer he made a confession of guilt, but he also pleaded upon God’s mercy. The poet says in Psalm 130:3, “If Thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O LORD, who shall stand?” This is the hope and pleading ground for unworthy sinners. Daniel wrestled with his God that He might turn to them in mercy and restore them. Daniel pleaded that the wrath and anger of God might be turned away from God’s holy city.

#### **The character of his prayer**

It was indeed a true prayer that Daniel brought before the Lord.

The character of this prayer was, first of all, *scriptural*. He studied the books, that is, God’s Word, and he pleaded upon what the Lord Himself had spoken in Scripture: “For thus saith the LORD, that after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good

word toward you, in causing you to return to this place” (Jeremiah 29:10).

He studied the *history* of his people. It is important that we know the history of the church in order to see who God has been in former years and that He does not change no matter how much the times may change.

His prayer was made with much *humiliation*, with sackcloth and ashes, repentance, and contrition.

His prayer was enthusiastic by expressing *zeal for God’s glory*. It was his urgent desire that God’s name might be glorified by the manifestations of His power and faithfulness. His prayer was very *intense*. “O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for Thine own sake.”

It was a prayer of *understanding* and *earnestness*. He brought his petition to the heavenly Majesty, and he knew what he needed, namely, forgiveness, and he continued with a request for restoration.

It was a prayer of *holy nearness*. Daniel could say, *O my God*. He is God; therefore, we must come to Him with reverence. He is *my God*; *my* implies that we may come close to Him. There is a climax in his prayer; there is confession. The people were ashamed, have sinned, were unrighteous, have rebelled, so there is absolutely no reason in them that the Lord would answer them. However, we read in Psalm 102:17, “He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.” It is the Holy Spirit who teaches undeserving sinners to plead with God by pointing to His own Word. Psalm 119:49 says, “Remember the word unto Thy servant, upon which Thou hast caused me to hope.” Such a pleading pleases the Lord. “Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men

like a flock” (Ezekiel 36:37). So Daniel came to the Lord’s throne of grace with honest, humble simplicity.

### The request in his prayer

What did Daniel desire of God? He said, “and cause Thy face to shine upon Thy sanctuary that is desolate.” We read in Numbers 6:25, “The LORD make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee.” The poet also asks this in Psalm 80:3, “Turn us again, O God, and cause Thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.”

He prayed that the Lord would cause His face to shine upon His *sanctuary*. That is the temple which is:

- 1) *Typical* of the Church of God.
- 2) *Unique*—there is but one building where the sacrifices were lawfully offered. God’s children have one God, one Lord, one faith, one baptism.
- 3) The fabric of *wisdom*, built by Solomon. The Church of God is a far more wonderful work of wisdom, infinitely superior than that of Solomon.
- 4) The results of *great cost*—immense wealth was used for it. Then Church of God, “ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold [...] but with the precious blood of Christ.”
- 5) The place of God’s *indwelling*—the Lord dwells by His Spirit by His Church.
- 6) The place of God’s *peculiar worship*—the Lord said to the Samaritan woman, God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.
- 7) The throne of *Jehovah’s power*—Christ’s power through the Holy Ghost still goes out from His Church.

This prayer is free from selfishness. He did not say “cause Thy face to shine upon me” but “upon Thy sanctuary.” Neither did he say, “Lord, send more prophets” or “raise up more kings” but only “cause Thy face to shine.” It is a prayer of great faith, for the temple is all in ruins, but if only the Lord will cause His face to shine upon it. The favor of God is not only a blessing but it is *everything*. It is a very comprehensive prayer, for if the Lord’s face shines upon His Church, then the walls will rebuild, the Church will grow, and there will be godly men serving Him in truth. Oh, may this also be the prayer for our days. We need God’s face to shine upon His Church, a Church which is in such a low

condition, divided, worldly, and often prayerless and far from the place it should be. If His face, undeservingly, would shine upon us, then His presence would be felt, and there would be life, true joy, and real peace whereby the Lord would be honored.

### The pleading ground of his prayer

The petitioner knew that there was no reason in him or his people that the Lord would answer. However, he had a firm pleading ground “for the Lord’s sake.” When Daniel looked to his own and the people’s righteousness, he realized there was no hope, but he asked that the Lord have mercy for His own sake.

He also said, “for Thy city and Thy people are called by Thy name.” It is Thy city. He pleaded this special relationship between them and the Lord. They were said to be Jehovah’s people as if he said, “Thy seal is upon Israel, it belongs to Thee.” The Lord had made a covenant and it is like Moses pleading in Numbers 14:13, “And Moses said unto the LORD, Then the Egyptians shall hear it, (for Thou broughtest up this people in Thy might from among them).”

We read also in Joshua 7:9, “For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth: and what wilt Thou do unto Thy great name?” What an earnest pleading there was in Daniel’s prayer. “Take away the derision, the scorn, for the heathens will blaspheme Thy name.” This cannot be done because of us. A poor sinner learns to know that all his rights are gone, but it is the Holy Spirit who teaches him to pray “Do it for Christ’s sake, for His covenant, for His righteousness’ sake.” He learns to plead “Have respect unto Thy covenant. Do it only because of the perfect work of the Mediator. It is Thy Church, and these are Thy ordinances and Thy servants; it is Thy Word, and these are Thy sacraments.” Such prayers will be heard. We read in Psalm 122:6, “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love Thee.” Also, Daniel’s prayer received an answer. There will be a rich word of forgiveness, and a promise of a great Deliverer, of the coming of the Messiah. God will save His people for the glory of His holy precious name which is to be praised. ◻

*(To be continued)*

O ye saints, how you should love the Word, for by this you have been converted ... Tie it about your neck; write it upon your hand; lay it in your bosom. When you go, let it lead you; when you sleep, let it keep you; when you wake, let it talk with you (Proverbs 6:21&22). You that are unconverted, read the Word with diligence; flock to where it is powerfully preached. Pray for the coming of the Spirit in the Word. Come from your knees to the sermon, and come from the sermon to your knees.

—Joseph Alleine



## *From Our Inheritance*

---

### **No Desire**

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

(Taken from a 1974 issue of *The Banner of Truth*)

By nature, there is no one from among the children of men who delights in the knowledge of God's ways. There was such a desire in the state of rectitude. Then man delighted in the law of God. In our deep Fall in Adam, we have not lost much, but we have lost *everything*. We have deprived ourselves of those gifts willfully and voluntarily wherewith God had endowed and blessed us.

In regeneration God's children again receive that which initially had been imparted to them in Paradise because the Lord has declared, "My desire is toward her." It has been His will and good pleasure, with retention and glorification of all His virtues in Christ Jesus, to glorify Himself in the salvation of sinners in their restoration into His blessed fellowship.

With His active and passive obedience, Christ has acquired that which we have lost. He has received gifts for men. He is not only the Obtainer but also the Applier of salvation. It is upon the basis of the righteousness of Christ that His children again receive a desire to fear the Lord and to walk in His ways through the ministration of the Holy Spirit. It is all God's own work. It flows forth from God, and it returns to God. Listen to the poet of Psalm 35, "Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour My righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of His servant."

Alas, this life is not always so active that God's people are able to sing like this all the time. At times the harps hang so high, and we often lie so deep in the pool of listlessness that even a complaint cannot come over our lips. At times we may be so low and so downcast.

At a gathering more than fifty-two years ago, I heard an aged child of God, who has already rejoiced before the throne for many years, say in his prayer, "Lord Jesus, make Thyself amiable once more." At that time, it sounded rather strange to me, but oh, it has been experienced in my own life. Ecclesiastes 12:1 is not written in vain nor without reason, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." The evil days are the listless days. It is a great mercy when initially and continually it may be within our soul, "I sat down under His shadow with great delight" (Song of Solomon 2:3b). It is a blessing when, regarding our state, a solution is found, and concerning the condition of our life, we may be filled with anxiety. Once more it is all the fruit and result of that which Christ has declared, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God" (Psalm 40:8a).

Then there is a desire to obey God's commandments, a desire to walk in His ways, a desire to practice God's statutes, a desire to walk in God's ordinances, a desire to glorify God, a desire to live a well-pleasing life unto God, a desire to hate sin and to live justly, a desire to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goes, a desire to walk in His footsteps and to be conformed to His image.

Alas, how our time is mostly characterized by the word which I wrote above this discourse—no desire. What a deadly calm there is everywhere. All the earth sits still and is still. The wise virgins have fallen asleep with the foolish (Matthew 25). Verily, the worst conflict is more profitable to God's people than the least carelessness. Listless times are unprofitable times—times when we condemn ourselves because we cannot condemn ourselves properly; fearful, because true fearfulness is lacking—no desire to seek God, no desire to know Christ, no desire to search the truth, no desire to go into the inner chamber, no desire to fight against sin. Oh, where shall I end? Is all this in a regenerated heart, all this with a person who has initially received grace? It cannot be described how far listlessness may extend itself, how far the inward life may sink away. We have instances of it in God's Word.

People who are strangers to that life condemn them and place them outside of it, and blot them from the book of converted people; they cast stones at them and condemn them. Oh, if those Pharisees could only look deep, deep into the heart of those people for whom they shrug their shoulders, they would soon cease with their wicked judgment. For, however far that true life is hidden, at the bottom of one's heart there is a grief and condemnation which is not known to self-righteous Pharisees. There is a sighing, calling, and crying to be delivered out of such a state.

No, they do not agree with their state; they walk on condemning themselves. They do not agree with this condition. All this is proof there is something different. Death feels nothing, and hypocrites are satisfied with themselves. Oh, they are so pleased with themselves; they only boast with themselves. They always have much and never lack anything. They know no want, no strife, and no condemnation. They have no knowledge of that which David sang in Psalter 389:4,

*My failing spirit see,  
O Lord, to me make haste;  
Hide not Thy face from me,  
Lest bitter death I taste.*

*O let the morn return,  
Let mercy light my day;  
For Thee in faith I yearn,  
O guide me in the way.*

A hypocrite can help himself, but God's people have to be helped. They become ever more dependent upon the influences of that dear Spirit. Warburton wrote to his son. "My name has been on the beggars' list for more than fifty years, and now in my old age I have to go down on my knees more often than ever before."

Yea, it becomes manifest, and it is confirmed that the Lord has left an afflicted and poor people who shall trust in His name (Zephaniah 3:12). In that confidence, that child-like humble confidence, those people are not disappointed. The Lord shall finish that which He has begun unto the day of Jesus Christ. In His own time, He revives those whom He has quickened. What a pleasant sensation that is when their soul is animated again, when the service of the Lord becomes an act of love again, when they may once again delight themselves in the Lord and their heart may go out because of His presence. This is when the Lord renews the face of the earth.

Finally, we are convinced, and we know that we have nothing of ourselves. When, in Ezekiel 1, the large wheel

began to turn, then all the others turned with it. How that characterizes itself in our day by great listlessness. Our heart should be filled with fear when we observe, in general, that everywhere there is no desire to search the truth. Alas, we need not put our head outside of our own door. How sad are conditions in our families. Let us commence with our own heart and home, and then we shall not be surprised that conditions in the visible church are so sad. It is a rare thing if a child has a desire to search God's Word; it is seldom that we find our boys and girls with a book to instruct them in the truth and that they are still interested in the history of God's church. How much is known, even outwardly and judgmentally of the fundamental principles of the truth? This is also one of the reasons why the preaching in church and instructions in catechism classes receive so little acceptance and so little interest.

Our generation hardly concerns itself anymore with the things that are necessary to know unto salvation. May we become the guilty one under all this. Also, in respect to this, judgment begins at the house of God. Oh, may the Lord grant us a change for the better. Lord, do arise once more and work with Thy Spirit so that we shall not sink away and return unto paganism.

God alone can work a change. □



## *Media Use*

### **The Time Spent on Phones and Mobile Devices**

*NRC Synodical Modern Media Committee*

Smart phones, as well as other types of mobile electronics, have become useful for accomplishing many tasks. These tasks include communicating in several ways—with words, pictures, emojis, video, and other formats. These devices are also useful for navigation (maps with GPS), accessing information, calculating, measuring, etc. Numerous tasks that required individual devices and mechanisms can now be completed by a phone set up with the appropriate apps. However, with so much information available through the Internet on a phone, a person can easily get carried away when one subject of interest leads to other relevant information that is also found to be interesting. Consequently, parents, as well as other adults viewed as role models by children, often give a child or young person the impression, when they spend an excessive amount of time on their phone, that this is considered "normal."

In view of these facts, we need to realize how important it is that parents do not let the use of their phones interfere with taking time to socialize with their children—the goal being that of edifying<sup>1</sup> them and thus seeking their spiritual,

as well as earthly welfare. Mealtimes, family projects, vacations, and other group functions should not be negatively affected by nonparticipation of family members who appear attached or addicted to their phones. These occasions should be used generously to teach exemplary and biblical priorities for living a life according to God's Word. We should always be mindful of the divine instruction for parents found in Deuteronomy 6:4-7 as well as throughout the scriptures:

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

1. Definition of edify: to instruct and improve especially in moral and religious knowledge; uplift, also: enlighten, inform (Merriam-Webster online dictionary).

Adults should also be sensitive to the detrimental appearance of using their phone and other mobile electronics as entertainment devices. This misuse can give the impression of being obsessed with entertainment and amusement. Rev. G.H. Kersten wrote the following prior to World War II (*The Night Visions of Zechariah*, Chapter 40, page 203):

The...rich and the poor...all shouted loudly, 'Let us eat and drink and be merry!' The standard of living soared higher and higher. Entertainment and amusement were considered indispensable necessities of life.

Church attendance decreased, and attendance at theaters, dance halls, and vanity fairs increased.

This description also applies to our times. Modern man generally practices a religion of having fun and not delighting in God, who is the only true and lasting happiness for a rational human being. The amount and intensity of fun in an activity is the yardstick by which modern man measures the attractiveness and desirability of an activity. Today, we have our modern media, distributed (and pushed) through the Internet and mobile electronics. These devices are often used to gratify the passion and obsession for entertainment and fun. Sadly, however, it seems that there is rarely anyone who heeds Christ's declaration in John 17:3, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Without this spiritual knowledge, worked by the Holy Spirit in our heart, there is no true, lasting happiness or pleasure. How important it is that we realize the folly of gratifying ourselves with the short-lived and temporary pleasures of this perishing world. During the first century, the Apostle Paul wrote something still applicable to us today, even with all the social, political, and technological changes that have occurred since his time. He wrote:

But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away (1 Corinthians 7:29-31).

By nature, our desires and priorities are evil. In light of the scriptural declaration that man is "dead in trespasses and sin" (Ephesians 2:1), and that the "carnal mind is enmity against God" (Romans 8:7), this evil should not surprise us. This fact shows how necessary it is that the Holy Spirit work a spiritual rebirth in each of our hearts. Without this rebirth, our desires and priorities, including those religious in nature, are not right or acceptable in God's eyes but are "found wanting" [lacking].

Starting with the spiritual rebirth, the Holy Spirit leads a person into the truth—the truth of our deep fall, of our actual sins, including the sins of our best deeds and of the righteousness and the offended justice of God the Father. The Father draws the sinner unto Christ, without which no man will truly come unto the Saviour (John 6:44). When the sinner is found in Christ, the Father's sword of justice can be put into its sheath, and he can behold the Father's reconciled face.

Let us not rest until we know what David, the man after God's own heart, knew when he wrote in Psalm 16:11, "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." The priorities in life of those that possess this desire of David will be clear and will include a discreet usage of mobile devices, including phones. A modern phone can be not only a wonderful servant but also a poor, evil master. □



## *Doctrinal Studies*

### **How God's Attributes Are Commonly Distinguished (3)**

Rev. J. Fraanje (1878-1949)

(Taken from the September 1971 issue of *The Banner of Truth*)

#### **Notes out of the catechism classes of Rev. J. Fraanje**

**W**e continue with Rev. J. Fraanje's instruction on God's attribute of Omnipresence.

He is an all-knowing and all-seeing God. Do you think about this, boys, when you are busy doing something evil and you say to yourself, "If father or mother just does not see this," that the Lord knows and sees even though you do it so very quietly? I am confident, if the all-knowing God were always in your thoughts, you would not sin so calmly and easily as you are doing now. Isn't that true? Now you try to hide all the bad things, as far as possible, from your

parents or others, but, remember this, if you hide yourself one hundred yards deep in the earth, the Lord knows exactly the unspoken thoughts that are in your heart. Nothing is hidden from His sight.

I once read about two boys who were planning to commit a serious crime. One of them said, "Where shall we do it so that no one will see it?"

"That is something we must think about," said the other. "Wait, I know a fine place where no one can see us."

"But won't God in heaven see us there, too?" said the first boy.

Then his companion became angry and said, “If you must talk that way, we had better not do it, because God is everywhere and, in that place, too.”

The all-knowing God arrested their consciences to such a degree that they dared not execute their plan. Although God knew exactly the evil intention that was in their heart, they were spared from doing the evil deed. Boys and girls, never try to seek a place to do evil where you think no one can see you because, as you remember, Psalm 139 says: “O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and my uprising, Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.” As soon as you are tempted to do something that no one should know about, remember this passage. Perhaps you may be spared from doing evil.

Do you know a better purpose for which to seek a hiding place? It would be a place to confess all your sins to the Lord, a place to pray that you may come to know how great your sins and miseries are, and a place to lament them. If it would happen that He would make you to feel your sins as they truly are before Him, there would be no small sins; they would all be great sins. Do you know why? Because the sins are done against a kind God.

Listen to me now. I shall try to make you understand how evil it is to sin against God. You know that we desire and do commit sins as soon as we are born. Isn't that true? It is because these actual sins are a result of our inherited original sin. How do we acquire original sin? Are we created with it? Of course not. No, we through our own covetousness and the tempting of the devil have deliberately committed the first sin. We are now so unfortunate that we find sin to be ever present with us. Before the Fall we carried the image of God. The image of God, which we possessed, consisted of knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, which means: we knew God; we had no guilt, and were holy. Through our first sin we lost that image and now carry the image of the devil. Can a person with the image of the devil be in heaven? No, the devil himself, because of his revolt, was thrown out of heaven.

What is necessary then? That we receive the image of God again, that is, that we are at peace with Him. That we become holy again through Christ, that our guilt be taken away so that we can, in Christ, be pure before God. Then we would have knowledge, righteousness, and holiness.

We see, according to the Word of God, that man carried the image of God in three different states. Can you tell me what they are?

*Answer:*

1. The state of integrity before the Fall.
2. The state of grace, when God converts a person and once again presents him His image
3. The state of eternal bliss—redeemed souls in heaven.

I hope that you eventually understand the divine attributes of God which were the subject of the few questions you have memorized. Then you will also discover what strength is comprehended in the Immutability of God, the fifth incommunicable attribute of God. “For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.” When the Bible reveals that God repented, is this not change? Hellenbroek made the answer so clear that we need not add much more to it. Our lesson states: This repentance in God is only a change in His work, not in His will and essence, Numbers 23:19a, “God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent.” When it is written that He changes places, that He comes somewhere and goes away again, it is but a change in the degree to which He shows His presence, not in the real presence itself.

So, we see plainly that God's incommunicable attributes are one and the same with His Essence. They are recognized by special features only to accommodate our manner of understanding. Oh, how precious all the attributes of God will become to you if God converts you in your lifetime because these attributes are God Himself. Also, you will become very conscious of how you miss God and His image even if you are ever so young.

There was once a little girl who was asked why she held God's people in such esteem and went to see them so often. “Oh,” she said, “these people have had something restored to them which I still lack.”

“What is that then?” they asked her.

“They have been restored into communion with the Lord,” she said, “and they know Him, and Christ has taken their guilt away; but I still carry the image of the devil and am not reconciled with God.”

May you also discover this and never have rest until, through grace, you are restored into God's favor through faith in Christ. □

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

What an awful thing to see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, and you yourselves thrust out. O, to be among the “thrust out.” What can be more awful? “... And they that were ready went in with Him to the marriage: and the door was shut” (Matthew 25:10).

—William Tiptaft



## *For Young and Old*

### **A Wild Hunter Captured (5) Or God's Great Mercy Related on a Particular Occasion in the Life of Titus Klose**

(Taken from *The Wonderful Providence of Almighty God Seen in the Lives of Young and Old, Series No. 10*)

“You mentioned a number of times in your sermon today that the Lord has no desire in my death; that He wishes to save me, a lost sinner; that Jesus came into the world to seek and to save all those that are lost. Oh, that is wonderful—but—beyond my comprehension; I dare not believe it,” Klose said. “That also distresses me. I need comfort and consolation; therefore, I come to you. Have pity on a poor, lost sinner, and if you have a good word for me, do not withhold it.” A stream of tears smothered the last words of the deeply affected young man. However, he was not the only one weeping, for Annear and his wife were also deeply moved, and it was a little while before they were convinced that that which had come to pass was really true and not a dream. At last, the mind and heart of the preacher’s wife were unburdened in thanksgiving to God who leads the blind along paths they do not know. The preacher soon found conversation with Klose wherein he wisely related the costly grains of eternal life which he needed at this time. The conversation lasted until late at night, for although the preacher was tired, the Spirit of the Lord refreshed his strength.

When the conversation was finally ended, Klose was invited to spend the night at the preacher’s home. After Klose had gone to his room, the preacher’s wife took her husband by the hand and looked at him with eyes filled with gladness. “I understand you,” said the preacher, “the Lord has made me ashamed in such a way that I shall never forget it. It is my desire to love Him who has had mercy on my weakness. It was my pride that desired a sign, and He has given me a sign which will make the whole countryside astonished. Now that I have received it, I feel myself deeply humbled. I have now learned to believe, and what must I do but lower myself in the dust that He to whom all honor is due may be glorified. ‘BLESS the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name.’”

The following day Klose remained with the preacher and thereafter visited him daily. Klose still had to overcome a great conflict with his former friends, who at first thought him a mad man, then a religious fanatic, and finally despised him completely. The Lord gave him sufficient strength to withstand this conflict. His complete change in life also brought about a complete change in his business habits. The ways and paths which were formerly open to him, were now closed and undesirable. On the other hand, his

desire for the things of the kingdom of God became so irresistibly strong that, like the Apostle Paul, he felt he should go and preach to others the words of eternal life in which he had found salvation. His father in Christ, the pious Annear, was his accommodating helper in the fulfillment of this desire. Among the missionaries which were sent by England to work among the heathens during the first ten years of the former century, Titus Klose, formerly the “wild hunter” of Stamford Hill, was one of the most famous and in his labors one of the most blessed...

See, my dear reader, the story told about a man who, as the second Saul of Tarsus, went about threatening and boasting, and by a wonder of Almighty grace was regenerated to a humble disciple of the Lord Jesus. From the above, it can be seen how freely God works. Whoever would have thought that Klose, that monster of unrighteousness, would preach the gospel? He did not want to be regenerated; he did not want to know anything about God or heaven but wished to serve Satan alone. “But I will,” said the Lord of Hosts, “that Titus Klose shall serve me. I will, that he shall be regenerated and that his will be reversed. Therefore, I set him in the ways of My willing people.”

Who can stand against the will of God? Klose could not. Can you, my dear reader? There are so many people who do not want to know about regeneration; yea, they would even hinder others from following the ways of God. Hence, they do not desire to associate with the so-called narrow-minded people who seek to be saved from the oncoming wrath. What is more honorable: to be honored by God or by the people? One matter should be our concern, and that is to be regenerated—not only to be converted from the tavern to the church or from the dance hall to the quiet family circle, for such a conversion is merely good for time and not for eternity. Have you changed from a foe to a friend, from an enemy to a disciple of Jesus? Have you come to know yourself as an unworthy, miserable, and doomed creature before the high and holy God; and has it become an impossibility for you to be saved, so that you can only cry for mercy? Well now, go to Jesus, for He alone is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and no one cometh to the Father but through Him. Oh, that it may please the Lord to pour out His Spirit so that through free sovereign grace many more lions may be made lambs in the fold of Jesus Christ. ◻

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



## Questions & Answers

---

### Questions from Our Readers

Rev. H. Hofman, Kalamazoo, MI

*What does it mean that we must lose our conversion?*

This, indeed, seems to be a contradiction. Why would we hear such a statement from the pulpit? Which servant of God would preach that a converted soul needs to learn such a thing? It seems to indicate a kind of apostasy from grace—reason enough to take a closer look at this expression. First of all, there is no such thing as losing conversion in the sense that a regenerated child of God can or needs to lose the grace of God. If that were true, God would cease to be God because with Him there is no variance nor shadow of turning. Scripture clearly demonstrates that the gifts and calling of God are without repentance, meaning—irrevocable (Romans 11:29). In Head V of the Canons of Dort, Article 3, we read: “Those who are converted could not persevere in a state of grace if left to their own strength. But God is faithful, who having conferred grace, mercifully confirms and powerfully preserves them therein, even to the end.”

It is obvious that something else must be meant here, and there is. Let us notice that the expression does not say: we must lose *faith*, or *grace*, but **conversion**. The matter has to do with further leadings in *grace*. I consider this expression pastoral wisdom and pastoral care. When the Lord opens the eyes of a sinner, that sinner often begins to work to please the Lord, and there are so many reasons to please Him. The Lord is so good for bad people, and He is so worthy to be feared. Moreover, that pure, undefiled love of God is shed abroad in the heart. Who, then, would not fear Him, serve Him, and love Him in return? Often though, during this time of first love, there creeps in, unawares, a secret living out of gifts which accompany that initial change. The sinner is often focused on and busy with *himself* even though the change is worked by the Lord. There is a secret, hidden enjoyment in the opening of the heart in prayer; there is sweetness found in bitter tears that are shed over sin, but with this fruit, slowly on, that sinner begins to feel good about himself. After all, he is not cold-hearted as so many others are... After all, he has such a tender conscience before the Lord, who is so near to him in the apparel of His Word.

Faith is in exercise, but what does his faith really embrace? Sometimes a more tried and exercised child of God will think, “This person believes more in his conversion than in Christ.” Such a condition, moreover, is often accompanied with a measure of being pleased with self and believing in the abilities of self. Therefore, from the workhouse, so to speak, there is much activity to please the Lord. In the end,

they think, the Lord ought to be pleased with such seekers, with such tender-hearted weepers. Think of Peter, when he boasted that he would die for the Lord. Would you agree that at that point Peter believed more in his conversion than in Christ? When the Lord shows something of His holiness and righteousness, such *converted* sinners secretly feel that they can pay all. If now such souls hear from the pulpit that it is necessary that they must lose their conversion, they will either not believe this at all and fight against it, or they will come into great straits and riddles. May God grant that it does not fall in their flesh because then much enmity can be the fruit.

Dear reader, it is great grace if one may lose his conversion or sink through his conversion. This is very painful but also very profitable spiritually. It means that through the exercises of faith, by the indispensable leading of the Holy Spirit, the Object of faith comes more to the foreground. In Paul’s letter to the Galatians, he speaks of being separated from his mother’s womb, called by grace, but also mentions a time when Christ was revealed in him (Galatians 1:16). He writes about being crucified with Christ (Galatians 2:20). He writes about being slain by the law (Romans 7:9). My friend, we can wonder what, then, happens to one’s conversion! Then nothing can stand before God but the spotless righteousness of Christ alone. All that is not Christ must go overboard. Salvation truly becomes what it is—a wonder that takes place not because I feel good about myself, not because I repented and believed, but because God in Christ was reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them (2 Corinthians 5:19). Then the *center of gravity* in that sinner, so to speak, shifts from his conversion and all the activities related to it, to that unmovable foundation which has been laid from all eternity in the good pleasure of the Father, in the shedding of the blood of the Son, and the sealing work of the Holy Spirit. Paul writes further in Galatians 2:20, “Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.”

Such souls can no longer live out of their conversion. It is no longer the ground of their acceptance with God. They can no longer live out of the supply of their faith, their tears, or their prayers but must have the Benefactor Himself. Such souls die to self but are alive to God. Paul writes: I die daily—as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things. It is comparable to the branch which now draws all the sap out of the vine. Previously, such souls could

draw from their conversion, so to speak, but Christ clearly said in John 15:2, “Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.”

In closing, I would like to mention that sometimes the question is asked if we should even use expressions like the above mentioned because they are not found in the Bible. To this I would answer that there are matters which we wholeheartedly believe and confess to be biblical, even though the words as such are not found in Scripture. Think only of the words *Trinity* and *Providence*. The words may not be found, but the matters certainly are! Thus, there are many expressions which are not verbally found in the Bible but are nevertheless scriptural. I strongly agree that such

statements or expressions must be explained. For those interested in personal or family study and discussion, I will provide additional similar expressions, along with a Bible text, to help you understand what could possibly be meant by them. If you still have questions, do not hesitate to ask for further clarification.

- the language of Canaan: Judges 12:6 and Psalm 81:5
- let a summer or winter pass over it: 1 Timothy 5:22a
- to die from hunger or die by the sword: Jeremiah 15:2-3
- becoming a greater sinner and doing less sin: Romans 7:24-25



Please send your questions to Rev. H. Hofman, 112 Pratt Road, Kalamazoo, MI 49001, or hofman@premieronline.net.



## Guidance

### To College or University

*Prof. A. Moens, Rhenen, the Netherlands*

(Taken from the June 1976 issue of *The Banner of Truth*)

For many young people who have passed their examinations, the time has come to make the decision that shall greatly influence their further life—whether to go to work or to college and which college or university to attend.

Already during the last years at high school, they have been shown in some detail the possibilities of the future and all other kinds of factors that can have a decisive influence, such as results of examinations, personal interests, and aptitudes. This is not the place to discuss all these matters. We want to mention just one matter, and this is that our young people shall not forget one thing when making their decision. The most important thing in their life is that they shall ask God, the Creator and supporter of their life—also in this way—whether the way they shall take is the right way and whether their expectation shall be only of Him, not of their intelligence, their achievements, or their abilities.

In the first place, let us say that it is a great privilege when the Lord has given us gifts and talents to be able to study successfully. It is a great privilege, but it also lays great responsibilities upon our shoulders. Just think of the university training of doctors, teachers, technicians, and engineers. For what reason do they, and many others, receive this education? Is it not, fundamentally, to be able to better serve God and our neighbor? Also, scientific research, the examination of what God reveals to us in creation, may serve to this end. It shall serve to this end if it pleases the Lord to grant us His light upon this work.

We emphasize that it may, for we must declare with sorrow that many of the products of science have not brought men closer to God, but rather have been ways and means to turn man away from God. Fallen man has used education more

than any other means to live in pride, self-assertion, and defiance of God. Or in self-will religion men have modified God's Word to live their life under either a modernist or a neo-reformed cloak. More than ever in these days we see that the spirit of revolution and wickedness is inundating our colleges and universities and that it is contributing to general worldliness, increasing immorality, and the undermining of authority of the Word of God.

Therefore, it is not strange that some parents with fear and anxiety see their children go to college. This is especially true when young people must leave home and lose daily contact with their parents and their environment. Considering the temptations from without and our evil heart within, is it any wonder that some of our young people leave the church in which they were baptized and brought up and grieve their parents either by completely breaking with the church or by following all kinds of self-will religions and movements, such as the Pentecostals and Jehovah's Witnesses? (Or in our days, neglecting religion completely and embracing the world? —*Ed.*) These matters are a cause of much grief to parents, consistories, and congregations. We find to our sorrow that these things happen. Hence, we must regard the feelings of those who under such circumstances have great objections to higher education. Yet, we may not keep our members and baptized members from it.

Is there not, especially in these days, a great need among our people for doctors and other college and university-trained men who wish to pursue their vocation under the authority of God's Word and according to the rule of God's Law, not only in our land but also on the mission fields or in other countries? Increasingly, there is a need in all areas

of life for graduates who wish to pursue their profession in faithfulness to the Word of God, albeit with sins and shortcomings. This means that we may not keep our young people, if they have the necessary talents, from receiving this education, but it is our high calling to guide them on their way.

What kind of guidance is needed? The reader may think *admonition and warning*. Indeed, we need not neglect that, but it is most important that we personally, in the family, and in the congregation, carry this matter before the throne of grace. It must be our constant prayer that our children and baptized members on their way through college or university may be kept from falling away and denying the truth, especially in this time when they must face so many things. We must pray that they will feel more strongly bound to their home church and not only that, but that their time of education may be a time of grace. By the working of the Spirit, may they especially learn to know God and also themselves.

The Lord grant that they remain with the truth and faithfully attend the church services and catechism classes. Both the parents and the consistory have the duty of notifying the consistory of a church in the college town or if there is any near it. To the prospective students we would say:

- If possible, join yourself to the congregation nearest to your college home.
- Faithfully attend worship services and catechism classes.

- Visit the consistory; in vacant churches visit the moderator or the pastor of another congregation in our denomination.
- Seek contact with other students in our circles. Senior students may be helpful in many cases.
- If there is a professor from our congregation in the school you are attending, seek contact with him so that by all these contacts you will soon be included in the circles to which you belong.

We would ask ministers and consistories in college cities to pay special attention to the students. (Dear students, when deciding which college or university you will attend, it is most important to make the advice of the above list the top priority. –*Ed.*) Finally, we would impress upon all students what we read in Daniel 1:8a, “But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s meat, nor with the wine which he drank.” Read this book and you shall see that the Lord confirmed this purpose but also what troubles it occasioned for Daniel and his friends. You, too, will experience that to live a life according to the rule of God’s Word, and the Lord grant you this desire, causes much struggle. We also read how the Lord saved Daniel and his friends, even from death, and that in a wonderful manner. May you thus begin your studies. This is our wish for you and, also, that the Lord may make you a blessing both in the church and in society. ◻

## The True Communicant

**T**he true communicant abhors himself, believes in Christ, and pursues after sanctification. The Lord says in His Word, “Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD Thy God.”

The Spirit of God convinces the elect sinner of sin, righteousness, and judgment. They are all made to sincerely sorrow after God because they have insulted and provoked Him to wrath by their sins. They have done that which is evil in the eyes of the Lord, which causes them to weep bitterly by night and day. True self-abhorrence is the fruit of the discovering light of the Holy Spirit. With God’s true people, sin begins to weigh as a burden too heavy to bear. They seek atonement for their sins in the blood of Christ. The true communicant therefore believes in Christ. Faith is a gift of God. No man can receive anything except it be given him from heaven.

Remembering the publican—how wretched this man felt! Sinful, ungodly, and self-condemned. He was oppressed and troubled on all sides. Does God permit him to perish in despair? No, there is still a way out, salvation is still possible. In what way? “God be merciful to me a sinner.” God may yet grant him grace. The devil obscures grace, but the Spirit of God glorifies Christ in the heart of a lost sinner. He also bestows grace by which the soul, totally helpless in itself, flees to that Christ.

For God’s true people, bare Scripture passages or stanzas from the psalms accompanied with emotional agitations, do not suffice—they need Christ. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Through Him alone God can be reconciled and pacified toward them. How fortunate for us when the Spirit of God constantly contends with us and turns us away from everything so that we may take refuge by faith to this precious Mediator, in whom all the treasure of wisdom and knowledge are hidden. How precious and valuable are the exercises of faith.

—*Rev. W.C. Lamm*



## Current Events

### Conservatives Denounce Rachel Levine's Confirmation

Conservative groups have denounced the Senate's confirmation of Dr. Rachel Levine to be President Biden's assistant secretary of health. Biden nominated Levine for the position, in part, because he would be the first openly trans-identifying individual to serve as a federal official. American Principles Project's President explained that Levine has openly and vocally advocated for allowing children to undergo sex-change procedures and that Biden and democrats fooled voters last fall into believing such an extreme position was not a part of their agenda. Family Policy Alliance's vice president for strategy released a statement saying that the confirmation was proof that the Biden administration was "driving a radical social agenda and continuing a hard left turn away from American families."

—*ChristianPost.com*

### Federal Court Upholds Banning Abortions on Babies with Down Syndrome

In April, the Sixth Circuit ruled against a lawsuit and injunction brought by an abortion facility, thus allowing Ohio to enforce the pro-life law. "Ohio Right to Life is elated that the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals has sided with life, and ruled against the fatal discrimination of babies with Down Syndrome," said the president of the organization. "The eugenic practice of singling out human lives for death because of a Down Syndrome diagnosis has no place in our society. This court ruling brings us one step closer to ensuring that vulnerable babies with special needs are not marked for death because of who they are. Every life is worth living and every precious and unique human being is worthy of complete protection under law." The organization also expressed further optimism saying, "a federal court affirming what we already know—that discriminatory abortions have no place in Ohio—could positively impact other states' legislative protections for people with Down Syndrome." In recent years other states also passed laws to protect unborn babies with Down Syndrome. However, many of them have since been blocked by judges.

—*LifeNews.com*

### India's Gujarat State Passes New Anti-Conversion Law

International Christian Concern (ICC) learned that the government of Gujarat, India, has passed a new law further regulating religious conversions and criminalizing forced religious conversions. According to the law, individuals seeking to change their religion, and religious leaders facilitating, will need to apply to the district administration 60 days in advance. ICC's regional manager said that ultimately, anti-conversion laws provide legal cover for radical nationalists to attack India's Christians and Muslims with impunity. He said, "With the expanded definition of allurements, it is hard to see how one could share their faith without risking legal consequences. With attacks on Indian Christians and other minorities continuing to escalate, the passage of another anti-conversion ordinance will only incite more religiously motivated violence."

—*Persecution.org*

### President Biden Moves to Undo Federal Ban on Abortion Funding

Biden's administration has begun the process of restoring family planning grants to abortion providers like Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA), which forfeited millions of dollars in response to Trump-era restrictions on family planning grants. While the rule hasn't been finalized, it represents a first step toward undoing a significant portion of the former administration's anti-abortion agenda. This will reverse the Trump-era rule which blocked Title X grants from flowing to organizations where abortion is a method of family planning. The Trump policy will remain in effect until it is formally superseded by the Biden rule, a process that can take months. Biden administration officials believe that exercising restraint now will increase the odds of the changes ultimately being upheld in court.

—*FoxNews.com*

### Christians in Eritrea Arrested in Prayer Meeting Raids

Two groups of Eritreans, totaling 35 Christians, were arrested in late March for holding prayer meetings. In the capital, Asmara, a group of 23 women had gathered for prayer when the army raided their meeting and took them to prison. Another 12 Christians were arrested at a prayer meeting in a house in Assab, southeast of Asmara, on the Red Sea. They were taken to a nearby prison where conditions are known to be harsh. The Assab prison holds many Christians, some of whom had been in prison for up to 15 years. However, about 180 Eritrean Christians imprisoned for their faith have been released over the past six months, leading to rising hope of change. The latest arrests have dashed those hopes. Eritrea is one of the world's most repressive countries where thousands of prisoners of conscience, including many Christians who don't worship in the state-allowed Christian churches, are imprisoned indefinitely without trial.

—*ChurchInChains.ie*

### India Recommended as a "Country of Particular Concern"

Christian activists are divided in their responses to the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom again recommending the State Department place India on its list of "countries of particular concern" for the worst violations of religious freedoms in 2020. For the second year in a row, they advise that the administration impose targeted sanctions on Indian individuals and entities for "severe violations of religious freedom." The report states, "In 2020, religious freedom conditions in India continued their negative trajectory. The government, led by the Bharatiya Janata Party, promoted Hindu nationalist policies resulting in systematic, ongoing, and egregious violations of religious freedom. In many cases, authorities did not prevent these abuses and ignored or chose not to investigate pleas to hold perpetrators accountable. This contributed to increased mob attacks and a fear of reprisal against those coming forward." A number of prominent Christians involved do object to this designation, while admitting India is "not perfect" and is "at a crossroads."

—*ChristianPost.com*

Christ hath crossed out the black lines of our sin with the red lines of His own blood.

—*Thomas Brooks*



# Timothy FOR THE YOUNG

## **The Confession of Faith** (18) **Article XXIV: Of Man's Sanctification and Good Works**

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

Articles 21 through 26 of our Confession of Faith speak about Christ and the benefits which He has merited for His Church. In His humiliation He merited these benefits, and in His exaltation, He applies them. These benefits can be divided into those given in this time state which are calling, justification, and sanctification, and those given after this life which are resurrection, the last judgment, and eternal life.

The article which we are presently considering speaks about sanctification which is a benefit in this life. It is the work of God's grace whereby those who He, for Christ's sake, adopts as His children are also renewed by His Spirit to be a people who find their greatest joy in His service and who desire to live according to His commandments. The word *sanctification* does not have an important place in the Bible; we find it only five times in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, however, the words *to sanctify* are often used. The word sanctification is described in God's Word as a walking in the paths of the Lord, a keeping of His institutions, the necessity to circumcise the heart, to deny ourselves, to take up the cross, to bear the fruit of conversion, etc.

We find the word sanctification only in the heading of the twenty-fourth article. That which in dogmatic terms is called sanctification is often referred to in the forms of unity as regeneration, renewal, quickening, raising to new life, etc.

What we have written above about sanctification is not to minimize it, for God's Word says without sanctification no one will see God. It is often explained completely incorrectly and misapplied. You then hear, "It is only out of free grace for Christ's sake that we are saved, and no merits from our side have any value. Christ is given to sanctification, also; therefore, we do not have to worry about it. It is all outside of man as is also the whole work of salvation. Even the perseverance of man is in God's hand." We may not deny this, but neither must we forget the responsibility of man for all of his deeds. You can feel the great danger which there can be in such a doctrine

when it is not explained correctly. The apostle has warned against those who taught of a continuing in sin that grace might become greater. Also, on the other side, he has warned against the danger of a loose life.

There is also another danger; that is when sanctification is emphasized to such an extent that we begin to seek our life in our good works. In this manner, in a good external life according to God's law, our works can become part of salvation. This we must also warn against so that we do not deceive ourselves. Sometimes we hear objections when the doctrine of Rome is condemned or the false doctrines of other churches are spoken against, but that is our duty. The Lord Jesus warned against the false doctrine of the Pharisees and scribes, and neither were the apostles silent about such things. The watchman is charged with warning against the dangers. This is also true of sanctification with its dangers on two sides.

True sanctification does not flow out of the will of man, but it is a work of the Lord. As Christ is the justification of His Church, so is He also given to sanctification and deliverance. He frees or delivers His children from the ruling power of sin over them and in them. In justification the guilt of sin is taken away; in sanctification the pollution of sin and the inner corruption is removed. Both benefits flow out of Christ.

The Lord calls His people to sanctification. This people have I formed to tell My praise; they have to become conformed to the image of His Son. We can find this in Ezekiel 36:26&27: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them." Paul taught the Corinthians that there cannot be sanctification without Christ, saying that he who is in Christ is a new creature.

You can now understand that sanctification is not only an external, blameless life, a faithful church

attendance, a confession, and a going to the Lord's Supper. The external keeping of God's commandments is commendable, and it is our duty, but it is not a foundation upon which to rest. We must also remember that justification, of which we spoke previously, is different from sanctification, but there is a close relationship, just as Rev. Hellenbroek explains it. When the question is asked, "Is there any difference between justification and sanctification?" the reply is "Yes: 1) Justification is an act without us; sanctification is within us; 2) Justification removes the guilt of sin and sanctification the pollution of sin; 3) The act of justification is complete, but sanctification, during this life, is not complete."

There have always been people who have tried to separate these two benefits. John Wesley viewed sanctification as a second change after justification. The Methodists explain it as a benefit given later. Some go so far as to say that a sinner who is regenerated and justified by the Lord, but is not sanctified,

is still lost. They explain sanctification as a moment that a change comes in our lives, and not as something which must be seen as commencing from the moment of regeneration. You can understand that this is not according to the Scriptures, and therefore must be condemned.

I have not come to the explanation of this article itself but hope to do this in our next article, D.V. Just one more remark about sanctification which is a renewing of the whole man. Why is this a subject so much neglected in our midst? Why do people not like to hear about sanctification? The reason, in the first place, has an historical basis; we came out of the church of Rome which makes a foundation of good works, which we reject. The second reason is that in justification man is passive, but in sanctification we are active under the leading of the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of sanctification. This we hope to consider more fully next time, D.V.



## *Bible Stories for Little Ones*

### **Balaam and Barak** (2)

(Based on Numbers 22)

King Balak was happy when he saw Balaam returning with his servants. Now he would be able to get rid of those strangers, those people who called themselves Israelites. Balaam could curse them, and then Moab would be safe from them.

"Why did you not come right away?" the king asked Balaam. "Did I not tell you to come? Remember, I can make you a very important person if you do what I tell you."

"Yes, I have come, but I will say only what God tells me to say." King Balak was a little bit worried when he heard what Balaam said. If only he would get rid of those strangers!

The next morning, Balaam and the king climbed a hill. There Balaam could see the Israelites, a very large group of people. They were the people King Balak had told him to curse.

First, the king and Balaam built seven altars for the Lord. On each altar they placed an ox and a ram which had been killed. Then Balaam walked away to hear what God had to say. The king waited eagerly. What curse would Balaam have for these people? He had heard that Balaam's curses always worked.

Then Balaam came back. The king listened as the words poured out of the prophet's mouth.

"King Balak told me to curse these people," Balaam began, "but how can I curse these people whom God has blessed? When I stand here, I can see a very large number of people who are going to be special. They are God's people. They will become so many that you will not be able to count them. I hope that when I die, I will also be God's child, just like the Israelites."

The king became very angry. "What are you saying?" he cried. "I told you to curse them, but you have blessed them altogether."

"Did not I tell you that I can say what God tells me to say?" answered Balaam.

King Balak thought for a moment. Maybe Balaam blessed them because he saw all of them. Maybe he thought that they looked so powerful that he dare not curse them. He would move Balaam to a different hill so that he could not see as many of the people.

The king and Balaam again built seven altars unto the Lord, and they again placed oxen and rams upon each altar. The offering was burned, sending up a sweet smell which rose to heaven, and again Balaam left the altars to hear what God had to say.

When King Balak saw him coming back, he held his breath. What would Balaam say this time?

“King Balak, listen to me. The Lord is not a person that He should lie. Has He said it and shall He not do it? Did He not bless the people already? He has blessed them, and therefore they are blessed. I cannot curse them!”

The king listened angrily as Balaam kept on speaking. He spoke nothing but wonderful promises about the people—not curses but blessings!

“That is enough,” cried the king. “If you are not going to say anything right, please do not say anything at all. Do not curse them, and do not bless them. Just leave them alone, for you are not doing any good at all.”

“Did I not tell you that I can say only what God tells me to say?” said Balaam.

“Okay,” said the king. “We will do it one more time. I will bring you to one more hill, and maybe God will let you curse them from there.” So, the king, Balaam, and the servants moved to another spot. Altars were made, and animals were sacrificed. Then Balaam began speaking again.

As soon as the king heard him speak, he wished that he had never asked him to come to this third place. This time it seemed as if Balaam were having a dream. His face was lit, and his eyes looked to heaven. Glorious things poured out of his mouth. On and on he spoke, and it seemed as if he would never stop.

“That’s enough!” cried the king. “I called you here to curse this people, and all you have done is bless

them. Now I want you to go home. I was going to make you very important and give you special things but not anymore.”

“Remember what I told your messengers when they came to get me?” said Balaam for the fourth time. “Even if you give me all the gold in your house, I cannot say anything except what God tells me to say.”

Then Balaam told the king something else about the Israelites. “They are going to destroy all of your people one day,” he said. “They will conquer all the people around here, and—the Israelites will grow stronger and stronger.”

Balaam even prophesied about the Lord Jesus coming forth from the children of Israel one day. Balaam was so full of the Word of God that he did not want to stop talking. After he had finished telling the king the words of God, they both returned to their homes.

We read about Balaam in several other places in the Bible. We read that later he led the children of Israel to sin with the women of Moab. In Numbers 31 we read that he was killed by the same people whom he had blessed, namely the Israelites.

How blessed it is when we are one of God’s protected people, for then no matter what the world may do to us, we are safe. Even if they curse us and hate us, if God is for us, we will be protected and safe even for eternity. Pray often for a new heart so that you may be one of those protected people.



## Bible Quiz

### Fruit

Dear Boys and Girls,

Kara finished her note with a flourish and put her pen down. “I am sorry I didn’t listen and do my chores while you were gone. I am sorry that I was fighting with Caleb when you got home. I know I wasn’t being helpful. I’m sorry, Mom. Love, Kara...”

Kara sighed with relief. There, that was finished. She folded the paper and hurried to find her mother. Mom was busy folding wash. Kara blushed a little. She was supposed to have folded that laundry this morning while Mom was doing the food shopping, but instead, she had started another book and bickered with her brother. Hastily, Kara pushed

the note into Mom’s hand. She did not offer to finish folding the clothes, though. It was almost done, anyway. She would curl up on her bed for a little while before supper because she was at such an exciting part in the book.

The next morning, Mom had to run over to a sick neighbor to bring some soup and sandwiches. “While I’m gone, please clear the table and do the dishes for me, Kara. I’d like to be able to clean the kitchen when I come home later.”

Kara nodded, but after Mom left, she shrugged. Should she pretend she forgot? Or should she see if she had some time left later after she finished making

her bead necklace? Quickly, Kara scampered up the stairs to get her box of beads. She thought back to yesterday, but it did not stop her from opening the box to work on her necklace. Caleb leaned on the table next to her, but his elbow hit the box, and beads rolled in all directions.

Kara exploded. "Caleb! Look what you did!" She knew Mom had told her how wrong it was to fight with her brother, but she didn't care. She was angry, and she did not even try to stop herself. With a quick swipe of her hand, she slapped Caleb hard on the back.

Caleb began to cry, and their older brother Lane walked into the room. "Come on, Caleb," he comforted. "You can come with me. I'll show you something really neat outdoors." In the backyard, Lane pointed to the small trees he had just planted. "Look, you can help me put fencing and netting around them to keep them safe from birds, deer, and other animals. Do you know which tree is going to have apples when it is bigger and which one will have pears?"

Caleb studied the two small trees carefully. They were about the same size, their bark didn't look different, and even the leaves seemed the same. No, he could not tell. His forehead was furrowed, but then his face lit up. "No, but it's okay," he said, looking at his big brother triumphantly, "because once the apples and pears grow on the trees, I will know which one is a pear tree and which one is an apple tree."

The Bible tells us that if someone truly wishes to obey the Lord out of love, he will try to run from sin and stick close to what is right. The Bible also tells us that the state of a person's heart can be seen in the way he lives. Just as two trees can look almost the same, but you can tell the difference by their fruit, so a person who is led by the Lord should show this in how he or she lives. Someone who is not led can preach or believe or talk of false things and live a life for his or her own satisfaction rather than to please God. People might *say* that they love the Lord, but where is the fruit to be seen in their life?

When someone receives a new heart, it does not stay completely hidden to other people. He might try to hide his tears; he might find a very secret little place to pray. He might try to act as normal as possible, but still, those who are close to him will think, "What is going on with him? Why is he different? He is so kind these days and so patient. He is quiet, too, and he is often reading books about the Bible."

Oh no, those who have been made sorry for their sins in truth, are not perfect—far from it. They mourn very often that they cannot please God as they ought. They are very sad that they cannot serve Him as they wish and cannot keep from sinning against Him. This itself is a fruit—this mourning itself is a proof that they *do* have a heart that has

been truly made alive by the Lord. A dead tree does not have any fruit. A tree needs to be alive to have fruit. In the same way, every person is born dead in sin and therefore cannot bear those fruits that God looks for—repentance, obedience, love, hungering, a struggling soul casting a look up to heaven. A soul needs to be made alive in order to bear these fruits. Some trees are taller, healthier, and heavier with fruit than others, and so there is a difference in God's children.

However, they have ALL been made alive so that they see against whom they have sinned. They do not say they are sorry and then purposefully sin again anyway, as Kara did. No, you can see that they are *truly* sorry. How can we see this? Well, when they bow their knees and confess to the Lord how sinful they feel, and when they beg for forgiveness and for a new heart, they believe that they deserve to be cast away. They know how worthy the Lord is to be served. They wish they would never sin again because it grieves Him. When the Lord shows them for a moment that He knows of them and will still have something to do with them, they bow even lower. They beg, "Lord, wilt Thou help me not to sin against Thee? Wilt Thou keep me?" This is a fruit that shows their repentance is real.

The Lord Jesus warns, "Beware...Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven." It is not what is on the outside of a person but what is on the inside. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." Someone can speak about the Lord, but if in his heart there is not a desire to do what the Lord wants him to do, then his speaking about the Lord is not enough. He is missing the fruit.

Fruits can be very small. Even a sigh of true contrition is a small fruit. A heavy heart because of missing the Lord is also a fruit that God Himself gives. The Lord looks for these fruits. If, one day, the end comes in a person's life, and there has *never* been any fruit, what happens then? John the Baptist preached about this when he said, "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."

*The utmost end of patience is at hand,  
'Tis much if you much longer here do stand.  
O hardened ground, you are a barren tree.*

—John Bunyan

\* \* \* \* \*

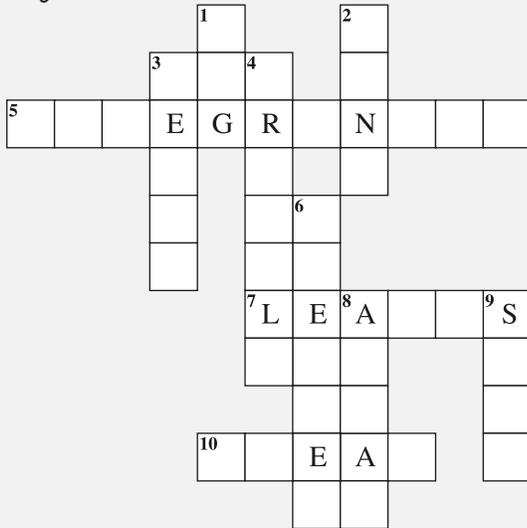
Complete the crossword puzzle on the next page.

**Across**

5. "The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languisheth; the \_\_\_\_\_ tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered." (Joel)

7. Mark 11: "And seeing a fig tree afar off having \_\_\_\_\_, He came, if haply He might find any thing thereon: and when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet."

10. The new, good land is described in Deuteronomy: "A land of \_\_\_\_\_, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey."



**Down**

1. John tells us, "Nathanael saith unto Him, Whence knowest Thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the \_\_\_\_\_ tree, I saw thee."

2. Isaiah 5—"planted it with the choicest \_\_\_\_\_, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes."

3. "And the trees said to the fig tree, Come thou, and \_\_\_\_\_ over us." (Judges 9)

4. Luke writes, "For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a \_\_\_\_\_ bush gather they grapes."

6. The butler in prison told Joseph, "And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand: and I took the grapes, and \_\_\_\_\_ them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand."

8. "another angel came out from the \_\_\_\_\_, ... and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth." (Revelation 14)

9. "And \_\_\_\_\_ tarried in the uttermost part of Gibeah under a pomegranate tree which is in Migron: and the people that were with him were about six hundred men." (1 Samuel)

**For the Older Children**

11. Where was the tree located of which God said, "Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die?" (Genesis) \_\_\_\_\_

12. What happens to trees which do not bring forth good fruit? (Matthew) \_\_\_\_\_

**For the Younger Children**

Use the words in the box to fill in the blanks.

grapes olive berries figs berries

13. James asks if a fig tree can bear \_\_\_\_\_ or if a vine can bear \_\_\_\_\_. (Chapter 3)

14. Isaiah speaks of a very small amount of fruit left: a few \_\_\_\_\_ and two or three \_\_\_\_\_ in the top and outmost branches. (Chapter 17)

\* \* \* \* \*

Answers to May's "Caught" quiz:

- 1. c
- 2. a
- 3. b
- 4. d
- 5. Simon, Andrew      Mark 1:16
- 6. Simon Peter      John 21:11
- 7. Jesus      Matthew 14:31
- 8. Simon Peter      John 21:3
- 9. When a hireling is caring for them because he will leave them.
- 10. He waits secretly and catches them in his net.
- 11. by flattering them
- 12. They set snares and traps.
- 13. unexpected, evil times
- 14. Pearls      verse 45
- 15. Gospel      verse 35
- 16. Righteousness      verse 33
- 17. Thence      verse 29
- 18. Daughter      verse 1
- 19. Face      verse 11
- 20. Soul      verse 19
- 21. Beauty      verse 4
- 22. Face      verse 8
- 23. Lions      verse 10
- 24. Peace      verse 14

Please send your answers to the address shown below:

Aunt LenaBeth  
180 Jacobs Road, Newfoundland, NJ 07435  
E-mail: auntlenabeth@gmail.com

Answers to previous quizzes were received in April from:

Anabelle Berkenbush 21  
 Eryn Bisschop **12**  
 Sara Bisschop 11  
 Britni Blom 19  
 Marissa Blom 19  
 Carly Brouwer 1  
 Derek Brouwer 19  
 Thomas Brouwer 19  
 Kaylynn Ekema (2) 22  
 Kyal Grisnich 13  
 Logan Grisnich 14  
 Taryn Grisnich 10  
 Kari Groen 13  
 Kurtis Groen 14  
 Linda Groenendyk 4  
 Ruben Groenendyk 17  
 Jason Groeneveld 3  
 Garrett Hoogendoorn 7

Kate Hoogendoorn 11  
 Weston Hoogendoorn **6**  
 Ale ander Knibbe 1  
 Brennan Knibbe 16  
 Caylea Knibbe 31  
 Donovan Knibbe (2) 15  
 Jarynne Knibbe (2) **13**  
 Meredy Knibbe (2) 2  
 Sheri Knibbe 4  
 Sienna Knibbe (2) **12**  
 Rebecca Krygsman (2) 22  
 Sarah Krygsman (2) 24  
 Abby Maassen 3  
 Noah Maassen 1  
 Madeline Mol 10  
 Olivia Mol 14  
 John Murphy 14  
 Emma Okken (2) **6**

Shannon Okken (2) 5  
 Blake Pannekoek 2  
 Lauren Pannekoek **12**  
 Andrew Remijn 15  
 Lauren Remijn 11  
 Logan Rozeboom (3) **13**  
 Mindy Rozeboom (3) 19  
 Micah Spaans 5  
 Tessa Spaans 3  
 Megan Taylor 13  
 Colin Ten Hove 14  
 Hannah-Jo Ten Hove 1  
 Aaliyah Timmer 15  
 Drake Timmer 16  
 Harley Timmer 20  
 Hunter Timmer **18**  
 Kadin Timmer **13**  
 Laurencia Timmer 11

Sierra Timmer 16  
 Wyatt Timmer 17  
 Ashton Timmermans 5  
 Maurice Van Garderen **13**  
 Emmalyn Van Garderen **13**  
 Lydia Van Manen 22  
 Rosalee Van Manen 20  
 Kaiven Van Middendorp (2) 21  
 Konner Van Middendorp (2) 21  
 Jake Vande Stouwe 10  
 Jonah Vande Stouwe 10  
 Wyatt Vande Waerd 7  
 Aubrey Vanden Berg 2  
 Heidi Vandenberg **18**  
 Kristen Vandenberg 4  
 Esther Vanden Broek 11  
 Ian Vanden Broek 11  
 Austin Van Den Top (2) 9

Caleb Van Den Top (2) **7**  
 Collin Van Den Top (2) **7**  
 Helen Verhoef 11  
 Shara Verhoef **12**  
 Jayden Weeda 8  
 Anthony Wessels (3) **13**  
 Johanna Wessels (3) 22  
 Allyson Ymker 15  
 Cameron Ymker 19  
 Julia Ymker (2) 5  
 Lane Ymker 1  
 Lauren Ymker (2) 5

**16 Bibles were sent to Bolivia this month. The total is 358!**



## Letters to My Young Readers

### Esther and Ian Vanden Broek

Thanks for your answers and note, Esther and Ian. I'm glad you enjoy having a quiz on Sundays, besides reading some books. What are your favorite books to read? Do you have a favorite Bible verse or psalter? How is school? Are you able to go every day, or do you learn from home or at home?

Welcome to our new members:  
 Meredy Knibbe, Hannah-Jo Ten Hove,  
 Carly Brouwer, Noah Maassen, and  
 Alexander Knibbe.



Love,  
 Aunt LenaBeth

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing.

—John 15:5

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, James Okken, 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. Consistories then distribute the MP3s and CDs which are provided at no cost to the end user.

You may contact Mrs. Tillie Lamain at 616-242-0291 or [blamain@netscape.net](mailto:blamain@netscape.net) to arrange for a free subscription or discontinue receiving *The Banner of Truth* on CD.

# News & Announcements

## ■ Ministerial Calls

### *Declined:*

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

By Rev. G. Van Maanen of Elspeet, the Netherlands, to the congregation of Covell Ave., Grand Rapids, Michigan.

## ■ Obituaries

DEN BOER, Johannes – Age 88, April 17, 2021; Chilliwack, British Columbia; Wife – Hilly (nee Van Oort); Children – Wim & Dorothy Den Boer, Margaret Lehmann, Andy & Angela Den Boer, Leonard & Cathy Den Boer, Peter & Fran Den Boer, Sonya Den Boer (fiancé Dale Bracken); 23 grandchildren, 31 great grandchildren; Sisters – Nel Visscher, Elsa Torfs, Mary Sterkenburg; Brother – Gary Den Boer; predeceased by an infant daughter, brother Leonard Den Boer, brothers-in-law Adrian Sterkenburg and Pete Visscher.

DEN HOED, Betty Riva (nee Van Grootheest) – Age 73, April 15, 2021; Rock Valley, Iowa; Husband – Arie; Children – Sharon & Edward Hup, Sheryl Knibbe, Sheila Top, Elizabeth & Fred Vanden Bogerd, Sharlene & Darren Bonestroo, Cornelia den Hoed, Arlen den Hoed, Gerald & Alyssa den Hoed; 21 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren; Brothers – Gerrit & Jeanette Van Grootheest, Albert & Grace Van Grootheest; Sister – Mary & Jim Van Surksun; Sister-in-law – Helene & Les Gayer; predeceased by her parents Gerrit and Henrietta Van Grootheest, brothers Ted and Harvey Van Grootheest, and grandson Jonathon Hup. (Rev. J. Witvoet, John 13:7 and John 21:18&19.)

TIMMER, David C – Age 96, April 18, 2021; Kalamazoo, Michigan; Wife – Alberta (nee Oudshoorn); Children – Marilyn Timmer, David & Sandra Timmer, Paul & Elizabeth Timmer, Debra & Tom Engelsma, Gary & Julie Timmer, Barbara & David Meeuwse, William & Vicki Timmer, Stephen & Joann Timmer, James & Joleen Timmer; 38 grandchildren, 88 great-grandchildren; Siblings – Nelson & Joanna Timmer, Cora DeBat, Leonard & Leona Timmer, Ardith Marie & John Polderman, William & Linda Timmer, Gerald & Pauline Timmer; predeceased by granddaughter Rachael Timmer, and brothers Henry, Arthur, and Adrian Timmer. (Rev. H. Hofman, Psalm 68:5&6.)

## ■ Young Adult/Post High School Youth Camp, Northern Michigan August 19-21, 2021

A three-day/two-night trip to northern Michigan is being planned by a joint Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo Committee under the oversight of the Grand Rapids Beckwith consistory. We are planning to stay in a beautiful lodge located in Boyne Falls, Michigan. On Friday we plan to drive to Mackinaw City and take the ferry across to scenic Mackinac Island. Rev. H. Hofman and Elder W. Greendyk hope to provide meaningful topics and discussions. For further information, please text 616-558-4316 or email [NRCMackinawTrip@gmail.com](mailto:NRCMackinawTrip@gmail.com)

## ■ Education

CALVIN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, COAL-HURST, ALBERTA, invites applications from teachers of any grade or subject specialty for the 2021-2022 school year, D.V. We anticipate several vacancies and would be thankful to hear from versatile and dedicated applicants to enable continued provision of Christian education to our children and young people. All applicants must be members of the NRC or a closely related denomination, and must be eligible for Alberta certification. For more information about any position at CCS, please contact the principal, Mr. Marc Slingerland at 403-381-3030 or [marc.slingerland@ccschool.ca](mailto:marc.slingerland@ccschool.ca). Should the Lord incline your heart to apply, please submit a cover letter, resumé or c.v., and references to [office@ccschool.ca](mailto:office@ccschool.ca).

EBENEZER CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, SHEBOYGAN, WISCONSIN, is in urgent need of a teacher for the 2021-2022 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).

MOUNT CHEAM CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, CHILLIWACK, BRITISH COLUMBIA, anticipates an URGENT NEED for the next school year with multiple openings for teachers both in elementary and secondary. Applicants must hold or be eligible for BC certification, and subscribe to the faith identity of the MCCS Society and the Reformed Congregations in North America, which is based on the KJV and the Three Forms of Unity. Wages vary

depending upon experience and post-secondary education. Inquiries should be addressed to principal, Mr. Jan Neels, at [jneels@mccs.ca](mailto:jneels@mccs.ca). Please send your application, along with supporting documentation, to Mr. Jan Neels and to the Board secretary, Mr. Eric Van Maren, at [ericv@vanmarengroup.com](mailto:ericv@vanmarengroup.com), or mail it to 48988 Yale Road East, Chilliwack, British Columbia V4Z 0B2.

NETHERLANDS REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, POMPTON PLAINS, NEW JERSEY.

### TEACHERS NEEDED

We have openings in both elementary and junior high grades for the 2021-22 school year. Qualified applicants require a teaching degree and an earnest interest in teaching in a Christian school and are a member in good standing of one of Netherlands Reformed congregations or a denomination with similar teachings.

### 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.

For more information or to apply, please contact Tim Mol (education chairman) at 973-204-5677 or email [tjmol@yahoo.com](mailto:tjmol@yahoo.com), or John Van Der Brink (administrator) at 973-628-7400 email [nrcs\\_office@nrcsnj.org](mailto:nrcs_office@nrcsnj.org). NETHERLANDS REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, ROCK VALLEY/SIOUX CENTER, IOWA, has openings for the 2021-2022 school year in elementary classrooms, special education, and secondary science, Language Arts, and/or computer technology. 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. Full or part time inquiries encouraged. Please contact the principal, Mr. Daniel Breuer, at 712-476-2821 or [danbreuer@nrcsia.org](mailto:danbreuer@nrcsia.org) for further information. Visit [www.nrcsia.org](http://www.nrcsia.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 SCHOOL, GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN, a K-12 NRC school, is accepting applications for a high school English teacher for the 2021-2022 school year. Interested applicants should contact the principal, Mr. Nathan Bleeker,

email [nbleeker@plymouthchristian.us](mailto:nbleeker@plymouthchristian.us) or phone 616-458-4367, to request an application or to ask questions about the position.

PROVIDENCE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN, invites inquiries from teachers interested in teaching in our small K-9 school. We presently have an opening at the elementary level. Please contact our principal, Tom Kwekel, at [tkwekel@pcskzoo.com](mailto:tkwekel@pcskzoo.com) or 616-644-2661 for more information.

REHOBOTH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, NORWICH, ONTARIO, is looking for a Director of School Operations. The director is the chief executive officer and educational leader of our school. He will strive to direct the school according to the mission, vision, and guiding principles of our Christian school, relying on the Word of God, the Three Forms of Unity, and the policies and procedures of RCS.

The director reports to Board of Rehoboth Christian School. Primary duties are:

- **Leadership**—The director administers the school internally through principals, vice-principals, curriculum co-ordinators and the office team.
- **Instruction and Curriculum**—The director is responsible for the implementation of the school's educational program.
- **Personnel**—The director is responsible for the supervision of all RCS personnel.
- **Students**: Along with the administration, the director is responsible for the education, safety and conduct of the students of RCS.
- **Operations**—The director provides oversight of all school operations, including the following of board policies and directives.
- **Communication**—The director represents RCS within our local community and to the public.

The successful applicant shall have the following qualifications:

- NRC male member in good standing with a solid knowledge of the Scriptures and Reformed doctrines.

- A strong desire for the spiritual and temporal welfare of our students.
- Good written and verbal communication skills.
- Strong management skills.
- An educational degree is strongly preferred, but not necessary for this position.

For more information, or to apply for this position, please email [schoolboard@rcsnorwich.com](mailto:schoolboard@rcsnorwich.com) or contact the RCS board president, Evert Veldhuizen, at 519-537-1139.

\*\*\*\*\*

We are welcoming applications for the 2021-22 school year and have several openings at the elementary and secondary levels. We also invite inquiries about our locally developed teaching training program for those who hold 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. Submit cover letters and resumes to [hr@rcsnorwich.com](mailto:hr@rcsnorwich.com).

TIMOTHY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, CHILLIWACK, BRITISH COLUMBIA, is seeking British Columbia certifiable elementary teachers who are interested in joining us in a motivating and exciting elementary learning environment. We present an interesting curriculum that focuses on knowing, doing, and understanding while including self-assessment strategies for learners. Teaching this curriculum through a Christian worldview requires teachers who thrive in a dynamic educational environment where they work together with a unified goal and purpose—education of the whole child as the Lord requires. If you are interested in joining us and are a member of a conservative Reformed denomination, please contact the principal, Mr. Doug Stam, at [dstam@timothychristian.ca](mailto:dstam@timothychristian.ca) or 604-794-7114 for more information and an application package.

TRINITY REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, SUNNYSIDE, WASHINGTON, welcomes applications for a teacher/administrator for our small school. We are an approved school for grades K-8 but currently have students in the lower grades. We have a four-day school week to allow for adequate preparation and administrative time for our multi-grade classroom. To apply or request more information, please contact the school board president, Mr. Arthur den Hoed, at 509-786-2354 or email [artdenhoed@gmail.com](mailto:artdenhoed@gmail.com), or Maaik Van Wingerden at 509-840-0437 or email [trinityrcs@embarqmail.com](mailto:trinityrcs@embarqmail.com).

### *Come 2 Carterton, New Zealand* PONATAHI CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

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).

### 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!**

## Minutes of Classis Midwest Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 Meetings

**The Classis Midwest meeting on October 14, 2020, was a continuing meeting with the concluding session occurring on April 14, 2021.**

The prayer service for the meeting of Classis Midwest was led by Rev. J.J. Witvoet of Rock Valley, Iowa, at the calling church of Grand Rapids–Beckwith on the evening of October 13, 2020. His text was Isaiah 27:2&3: “In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine. I the LORD do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.” The theme for the sermon was “The LORD’s Song to His Vineyard” with three points: 1) Composition of that song; 2) Dedication of that song; and 3) Consolation in that song.

The Classis Meeting convened on Wednesday, October 14, at 8:30 A.M. in the Grand Rapids–Beckwith church. On behalf of the calling church of Grand Rapids–Beckwith, Rev. G.M. de Leeuw opened the meeting with the singing of Psalter 348:1-3, the reading of Psalm 119:89-96, and prayer. A warm welcome was extended to all delegates, office bearers, theological students, and friends present. Rev. de Leeuw mentioned a few special memories within our Classis since the last meeting.

The credentials of the delegates were submitted, examined, and approved. The deacon attending was given the right to vote. The following officers were chosen to lead the meeting:

<i>President</i>	Rev. J.J. Witvoet (by approval)
<i>Vice President</i>	Rev. G.M. de Leeuw (by approval)
<i>Clerk</i>	Elder L. Teunissen (by appointment)
<i>Treasurer</i>	Elder W. Greendyk (elder from calling church)

The minutes of our last meeting held in Waupun, Wisconsin, on June 3, 2020, which everyone had received prior to this meeting, were approved and signed.

A letter was received from the Kalamazoo consistory acknowledging that they had forwarded seven different appeals to us for our consideration. The seven appeals will be addressed later in the meeting.

The documents relating to the departing of Rev. G.M. de Leeuw were presented and reviewed as appropriate. A Certificate of Dismissal from Classis Midwest was approved and signed at the meeting, and two copies were given to Rev. G.M. de Leeuw. Rev. de Leeuw then spoke a few words about his calling to Nobleford. He paraphrased a French saying, “to leave is to die a little bit,” when one must leave a congregation, a classis, and many friends, it is not easy. He wished everyone well. Rev. Witvoet spoke a few words to Rev. de Leeuw,

wishing him the Lord's indispensable blessing in all of his labors, especially in his new congregation. He thanked Rev. de Leeuw for his labors among us.

With the departing of Rev. G.M. de Leeuw, the moderatorships were revised and approved at our meeting.

There were no points submitted for consideration at our meeting.

A number of members from the Kalamazoo congregation had submitted appeals to be taken up by this Classis meeting. The appeals were submitted by the consistory of Kalamazoo in a letter dated September 16, 2020, as decided at their meeting on September 10, 2020. A request was also made in this letter to treat all the appeal information as confidential information. Due to the personal nature of the appeals, it was decided to close this portion of the meeting to delegates only, with the exception of the theological students. Classis decided, in accordance with the procedures established by Synod 1996, Appendix 23, Paragraph IV.B.4, to appoint a committee to assist the Kalamazoo consistory in working through the matters pertaining to the appeals before us. A committee was appointed. All matters pertaining to the different appeals will be considered confidential.

There were no church visitations conducted since our last meeting in June. There were no customary questions. The total expenses for Fall Classis Midwest 2020 were \$16,191.06. The collection taken at the Prayer Service was \$711.00, leaving a balance of \$15,480.06. This balance will be pro-rated to each of the congregations based on the percentage of the number of professing members.

This meeting of Classis will be a continuing meeting. The Classis committee appointed to deal with the matters pertaining to the appeals will work with the calling church of Grand Rapids–Beckwith in establishing the date of our continuing meeting. All the delegates for the continuing meeting will remain the same. The Continuing Fall Classis Meeting concluded in final session on April 14, 2021, in Corsica, SD.

Rev. J.J. Witvoet gave a few closing remarks. He thanked all the delegates for a peaceful meeting. May the Lord add His blessing. He asked Rev. G.M. de Leeuw to close the meeting. Rev. G.M. de Leeuw, on behalf of all present, thanked Rev. J.J. Witvoet for his leading of the meeting. He acknowledged those who prepared and served the delicious meal. He spoke a few words to the delegates; in so many things we are learning how not to do it. We are in school our whole life, but there is that perfect Church in heaven. There, there will be no more questions, no more sin, no more problems, but a perfect rest from all the cares of this world. He wished for all a safe journey home and closed the meeting with singing Psalter 345:1&2 and with prayer. All the Lord willing.

## Minutes of Classis Midwest Continuing Meeting

An Office Bearer's Conference was held on April 13, 2021, at 3:00 P.M. in the sanctuary of the Corsica Netherlands Reformed Church. Rev. J.J. Witvoet opened with singing Psalter 192:1&3. He then read Psalm 71:17-24 and opened with prayer. He spoke briefly regarding the life and the conversion of Theodore á Brakel, the father of Wilhelmus á Brakel, the author of *The Christian's Reasonable Service*.

On the evening of April 13, 2021, Rev. H. Hofman of Kalamazoo, Michigan, led a prayer service in Corsica, South Dakota, for the Classis Midwest meeting. Rev. H. Hofman spoke from Habakkuk 3:1&2: "A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet upon Shigionoth. O LORD, I have heard Thy speech, and was afraid; O LORD, revive Thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy." His theme was "The Prayer of the Prophet Habakkuk" with three thoughts: 1) The background of this prayer; 2) The contents of this prayer; and 3) The hope in this prayer.

The Classis meeting was convened on Wednesday, April 14, 2021, beginning at 8:30 A.M. in the Corsica church. Rev. J.J. Witvoet opened the meeting with the singing of Psalter 444:2&5, the reading of Matthew 28:16-20, and with prayer. A warm welcome was extended to all the delegates, office bearers, and friends present.

On behalf of the calling church of Corsica, Rev. H. Hofman mentioned a few special memories within our Classis since the last meeting, held in October 2020. The credentials of the delegates were submitted, examined, and approved. The following officers were chosen to lead the meeting:

<i>President</i>	Rev. H. Hofman (by rotation)
<i>Vice President</i>	Rev. J.J. Witvoet (by rotation)
<i>Clerk</i>	Elder L. Teunissen (by appointment)
<i>Treasurer</i>	Elder S. Johnson (elder from calling church)

The minutes of the last meeting, held in Grand Rapids–Beckwith on October 14, 2020, which everyone had received prior to this meeting, were approved.

A letter dated February 24, 2021, was received from the Rogersville Congregation informing Classis that they were withdrawing from the denomination of Netherlands Reformed Congregations. This letter was read with much sadness. After receiving the letter on February 27, the moderator had made contact with the president of the consistory. Their decision was final. This decision was made at their congregational meeting on February 24. Several members of the Rogersville Congregation have transferred their membership to the Rock Valley Congregation.

A verbal report of the Classis Midwest Youth Committee was given by Elder Steve Boluyt. Classis Midwest is not planning a youth day for this year. All Classis Midwest youth are invited to the Classis East Youth Day which will be held in Franklin Lakes, NJ, on Saturday, August 28, 2021, pending any restrictions pertaining to COVID.

The moderatorships remain the same except for the removal of Rogersville as a congregation.

The consistory of Corsica submitted a point asking Classis Midwest to give advice in regards to the practice of live video streaming a church service. When considering the sacredness of the church service should this not be considered an improper practice? Had there been any past decisions on this subject? The delegates from Corsica gave the background for this point. It was decided that our discussion should focus on the video streaming. Audio streaming has been used extensively in the time of the pandemic which we have all experienced. Previously, Synodical decisions seemed to only address the audio streaming of services. After considerable discussion, Classis Midwest agreed to the following statement: "Classis Midwest agrees that video streaming of church services should not be conducted because of the sacredness of such services." Classis further instructed both ministers to provide scriptural support and instruction regarding the sacredness of church services.

No further points were submitted for consideration at our meeting.

Church Visitation had been conducted in the following congregations: Corsica, Lansing, Rock Valley, Sheboygan, Sioux Center, Sioux Falls, and Waupun. All the written reports were read at our meeting. The Sioux Falls report was given verbally since the meeting had been held very recently and the report had not been drafted. No questions were raised regarding the reports.

There were no customary questions. The total expenses for Spring Classis Midwest 2021 were \$11,791.94. The collection taken at the Prayer Service was \$1,558.00, leaving a balance of \$10,233.94. This balance will be pro-rated to each of the congregations based on the percentage of the number of professing members as of 12-31-2020.

The next Classis meetings were scheduled. If a fall Classis meeting is needed, it will be scheduled for October 13, 2021. If no fall meeting is required, the next spring Classis meeting is scheduled for April 6, 2022. The calling church for the next Classis meeting is Grand Rapids–Covell.

Rev. H. Hofman gave a few closing remarks. When we are given to reflect on our meetings, they are imperfect. There are always things that we need to take to heart, but most of all, may the Lord's work continue in truth. How did the Lord Jesus Christ address the two men on the way to Emmaus? "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe." Did they argue? No, they submitted. What did they say? "Did not our heart burn within us?" That is that true work. They constrained Him. Why? They had a hungering and thirsting for that work. May the work of a Triune God continue. May He keep us.

Rev. J.J. Witvoet, on behalf of all present, thanked Rev. H. Hofman for his leading of the meeting. He acknowledged Corsica, the calling church, for their hospitality and those who prepared and served the delicious meal. He wished all a safe journey home and closed our meeting with singing Psalter 345:1&2, and with prayer. All the Lord willing.

—Submitted by Elder Larry Teunissen, *Classis Clerk*

## Hear, Gracious God, a Sinner's Cry

Hear, gracious God, a sinner's cry,  
For I have nowhere else to fly;  
My hope, my only hope's in Thee;  
O God, be merciful to me!

To Thee I come, a sinner poor,  
And wait for mercy at Thy door;  
Indeed, I've nowhere else to flee;  
O God, be merciful to me!

To Thee I come, a sinner weak,  
And scarce know how to pray or speak;  
From fear and weakness set me free;  
O God, be merciful to me!

To Thee I come, a sinner vile;  
Upon me, Lord, vouchsafe to smile;  
Mercy, through blood, I make my plea;  
O God, be merciful to me!

To Thee I come, a sinner great,  
And well Thou knowest all my state;  
Yet full forgiveness is with Thee;  
O God, be merciful to me!

To Thee I come, a sinner lost,  
Nor have I aught wherein to trust;  
But where Thou art, Lord, I would be;  
O God, be merciful to me!

To glory bring me, Lord, at last,  
And there, when all my fears are past,  
With all Thy saints I'll then agree,  
God has been merciful to me!

—*Samuel Medley*