

# Insight Into



November / December 2022

*“He giveth snow like wool: He scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes” (Psalm 147:16).*

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**Meditation • The Need for Salvation  
Serving Two Masters • Timothy  
The Wonder of Christmas  
Jesus and the Woman of Samaria  
Humbly and Wisely • A “Great” Man**

# Insight Into

## General Information

*Insight Into* is the official youth periodical of the Netherlands Reformed Congregations in the United States and Canada.

As a Reformed magazine, *Insight Into* seeks to promote the knowledge of the truth and to give biblical guidance to young people in their daily lives.

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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

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### *Meditation*

by Rev. H. Hofman ..... pg. 1

### *The Need for Salvation*

by Rev. F. Bakker..... pg. 3

### *Serving Two Masters*

by Rev. P. van Ruitenburg ..... pg. 4

### *Timothy*

by Rev. M. Romeyn ..... pg. 6

### *The Wonder of Christmas*

by A. H. .... pg. 8

### *Jesus and the Woman of Samaria*

by Rev. George Hutcheson ..... pg. 10

### *Humbly and Wisely*

by Rev. Thomas Brooks ..... pg. 12

### *A "Great" Man*

Submitted ..... pg. 14

With Quotations from Matthew Henry,  
Martin Luther, John Calvin,  
John Trapp, Augustine, Rev. Arthur W. Pink,  
and Rev. Jonathan Edwards.

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# MEDITATION

## Advent

***“And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son: And he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed”*** (Genesis 5:28-29).

Rev. H. Hofman

Lamech in this passage is a different person from the cruel husband of Adah and Zillah, who bore the same name and of whom we read that he slew a man who wounded him and a young man who hurt him (Genesis 4:23). It is noteworthy that Lamech in the scriptural quote above speaks about the curse of the Lord, *“because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed.”* Apparently, this God-fearing man was busy with this cursed ground! It bothered him. He met cursed ground every day when he would wipe the sweat from his face and also observed how his wife brought forth children in sorrow (see Genesis 3:16-19). This made Lamech different than many of his fellow citizens of whom God saw that *“every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually”* (Genesis 6:5).

As Advent approaches, consider the cursed ground for our sake, but consider also this: There was a man named Lamech who went over the world burdened with that curse. He mentions the curse emphatically when he received a son. Lamech knew something of the depth of the fall, the depth of sin. He saw the results of it and was grieved. Yes, Lamech was part of this same fallen world *but found no satisfaction in it*. How is this with us, approaching the Advent season? Lamech saw the emptiness of everything around him.

When the Lord by His Spirit teaches something of that which sin has brought about, natural light(s) become inadequate, insufficient, and deficient. In light of personal guilt, I then can't blame the cursed ground any longer, but then I am confronted with the fact and burdened with the guilt; I must own the cause of the curse. Then the sweat of Lamech's face caused tears in his eyes and truly nothing of that cursed ground could entertain him or comfort him in any wise.

Is there some recognition in the life of this God-fearing Lamech? Remember that Lamech was of the godly lineage of Seth. It is the line of Enos, of which we read that in his days men began to call upon the Name of the Lord (Genesis 4:26). It is the line of Enoch, who walked with God. Observe the marks of this walk, of the choices which were made. The Lord often works in the generations. Do you know what it is, in the days of your youth, to walk in such a way?

In the second part of this verse we read that the Lord visited Lamech with the birth of a son. By God's sovereign grace, Lamech was given to look further than his work and toil and the cursed ground when he took up his little

son Noah in his arms. Every childbirth is a wonder of God. At God's time Lamech receives a son. The child receives a name with a rich meaning. In the name "Noah," Lamech expresses his hope and faith. *"This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed."* Noah means "rest," or "settle down." With Noah in his arms, the heart of Lamech revives, rejoices, and is lifted up on high. Rest is the absence of activity, temporarily laying down of work, and the ceasing of toil. Lamech may for a moment look beyond the toil and work and the curse of the ground. His eyes are lifted up, and he may look for a moment at the comfort there is in store and available in the gift of this child. Did Lamech think that Noah was the promised Messiah? It is possible, but we do not know. One thing is certain: We see what the outgoings of his heart and faith were busy with.

In the commencement of Advent we may know so much more than Lamech. *"This same shall comfort us."* By faith the Church may look for the promised Messiah who came in the fullness of time. To what are your eyes turned?

By faith the eye of such a child may also look at Him, the Lord Jesus Christ, who came to give rest, yea, to comfort them and to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion concerning their work. He came to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Therefore, *"arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee"* (Isaiah 60:1)!

My dear young friend, do you know something of that waiting, that longing for the coming of the Redeemer unto Zion? The Holy Spirit makes room for Him, by showing something of that curse which rests upon all that is of us. Throughout all ages there have been those Lamechs, who, with Simeon, waited for the consolation of Israel. Do you know something of this Advent faith? When Simeon saw the Christ Child, he took Him up in his arms, blessed God, and said: *"Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation"* (Luke 2:29-30). Or are you still satisfied with your expectation in what a broken world can offer? Is your rest in your work, with the toil of your hands? Can you find life in the cursed ground of your own work? Do you expect to find the solution in your studies and in the advancement of mental capacity and understanding?

May I point you to Lamech's expectation? *"This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil."* Christ took the curse upon Himself. He became a curse for cursed ones. Has the Holy Spirit showed you your sin, and the guilt, the curse of sin? He became the curse-bearer. The ground is cursed for our sake, but for God's children the curse is removed for Christ's sake. This Same shall be called Jesus, that is Saviour. He will bring true rest and restoration. The Restorer of the breach also calls out today: *"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"* (Matthew 11:28). Bow before Him while there is yet room in the ark of safety, Jesus Christ. Remember, the preaching of Noah lasted long, for 120 years. But there came an end. One day the door of the ark was closed. Today then, if you hear His voice, harden not your heart.

# The Need for Salvation

*“Give unto us therefore a possession among the brethren of our father”* (Numbers 27:4b).

Rev. F. Bakker

The Lord caused the history of the daughters of Zelophehad to be recorded for others. It was intended for the church of the Old Testament, but also for the church of the New Testament. Their account is especially intended for those who feel they are left out. They are the spiritual orphans who believe salvation is possible for everyone else but not for them. They cry out that they are lost, and it seems that all the evidences of God’s favour are dispensed to others, while they themselves are left out. The Lord knew that they would consider that salvation was impossible for them. Was this distress not worked by God Himself? That is why the same God gives comfort when He records the answer to this request of the daughters of Zelophehad.

Now the important question is whether we have become spiritual orphans. By virtue of our birth, we are not like that. We would rather have an earthly inheritance than a spiritual inheritance. We prefer a place of earthly favour rather than one of heavenly favour. By nature, we have no delight in any spiritual inheritance. That is why we do not rise up with the daughters of Zelophehad to do violence to the kingdom of heaven. That is because we have false rest. We think all is well with us because we rest on some notion of universal grace. Still others say, “We ourselves can never do anything to gain salvation.” But none of these joins in with those who petition God for a crumb of God’s favour. They do not ask for an inheritance with God. When it really comes down to it, this is worthless to them. They do want a place in heaven, but what is heaven without God? Surely you cannot be an heir of an unknown God, can you? Are you also one of these people? Then it is high time that you face the reality of your totally depraved condition. You are spiritually dead and that is why you have no desire for an inheritance with God. Death cannot desire; death has no need; death cannot wrestle; death does not plead. Oh, awake, you that sleep, and arise from the dead, before you soon have to say, “God was willing, but I was not willing.” Then it will be too late. Then the land of promise will have already been divided forever. Then you will knock at the door of the heavenly Canaan, but the answer will be: “I never knew you. I never saw you alone before My presence, pleading for a place of grace.” Will you, a son or daughter of the new dispensation, be one of these? Has it never been proclaimed to you? Wake up, before your eternal inheritance is in the kingdom of darkness, *“where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched”* (Mark 9:44).



# Serving Two Masters

Rev. P. van Ruitenburg

One of the most common topics Christ addressed on earth was “money and goods.” We hear from His mouth not only that we must seek God’s kingdom first and that money is not the most important thing, but also that it is one or the other. Grace cannot go hand in hand with being the slave of your money. Those who are controlled by money have not yet understood what life is all about, or do not want to see it. We “*cannot serve God and mammon,*” said the Lord Jesus literally in Matthew 6, verse 24. No one knows where the word “*mammon*” comes from, but most agree that it must be the name of the money idol, the god of wealth and materialism.

Why can’t they go together? Surely, we can be hard workers who want to make money, and at the same time go to church. Read the Bible? Well, the Lord Jesus means that if a person is truly driven to make money, he cannot be driven in the things of God. A slave could not follow the orders of two masters. One says this and the other that. He listens to the one or the other. That is how God wants our hearts and wants to do everything for us. If Christ is our life, death will be eternal gain. That was the problem with many Pharisees in Christ’s time. They were dogmatic, strong, and rigid in doctrine, precise in their lives, but at the same time under the power of money. When Christ talked about God and mammon, they also immediately understood that it was about them, and they began to apologize. How is it with us? Is the shine already off the money? Does it do much less, and do the things of God weigh much more now? Whoever loves the world is lost with the world.

What is the heart of the matter? It is where our heart lies. We are either seeking God or the things of the world. We are either friend or foe.

“*So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God*” (Luke 12:21).

*“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Matthew 6:24).*

*“Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (James 4:4).*

*“Those who have the new Jerusalem in their eye must have the ways that lead to it in their heart.”*

~ Matthew Henry (1662-1714)

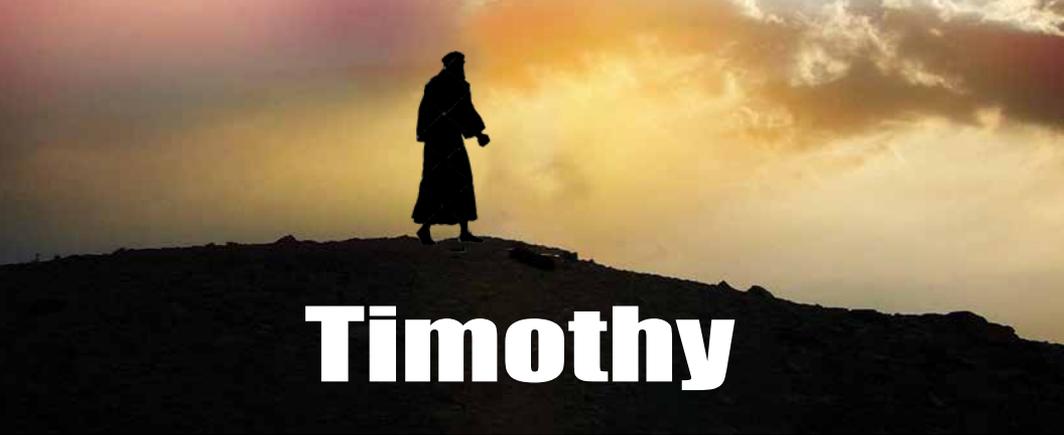
*“The root of religion is the fear of God reigning in the heart, a reverence of His majesty, a deference to His authority, and a dread of His wrath.”*

~ Matthew Henry (1662-1714)

*“God creates out of nothing. Therefore until a man is nothing, God can make nothing out of him.” ~ Martin Luther (1483-1546)*

*“It is a genuine evidence of true godliness when, although plunged into the deepest afflictions, we yet cease not to submit ourselves to God.”*

~ John Calvin (1509-1564)



# Timothy

Rev. M. Romeyn (1913-1971)

The Apostle Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 3:15, “*And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*” The knowledge of the Holy Scriptures is very important for all of us. The purpose of the Holy Scriptures is to make us “*wise unto salvation.*” To know the Scriptures is a great privilege. So many people have lived and are living upon earth, who have never heard about the Word of God. This means that many were and are without the means of salvation, but there is a great responsibility connected to this privilege. The blessing for Timothy was not only knowing the Scriptures, but the greatest blessing was that he was made “*wise unto salvation.*” The purpose of writing to you is, with the help of the Lord, your personal salvation.

As parents, it is our obligation to do everything possible concerning this urgent matter. We promised at the time our children were baptized to help or cause them to be instructed therein, to the utmost of our power. Supported by this promise, we ask kindly all the help and assistance possible for our young people. We are living in a modern world, and we are so occupied by worldly things, the work or the business of the father, the household of the mother, the education of the children, the drawing of the world, etc. We are so inclined to forget the most important for our children, which is the salvation of their souls. According to our nature and our time, we have so much against us, and so little for us. We all need help, parents and children, and this can only be acquired by our prayers.

The father of Timothy was a Greek married to his mother Eunice, a Jewish lady. His grandmother was Lois. According to the historical writers,

his mother and grandmother were converted from Judaism to Christianity. The Apostle Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 1:5, “*When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.*” Timothy himself was converted under the preaching of the Apostle Paul. The apostle wrote in 1 Timothy 1:2, “*My own son in the faith.*” The name Timothy means “worshipper of God.” We know from Scripture that Timothy and his labours have been a great blessing to his fellow man and the church. The knowledge of the Scriptures has been much comfort for himself and a great help to carry out his commission. The knowledge of the Scriptures made him “*wise unto salvation.*” May the Lord bless all of you, my friends, to gain more knowledge of the Bible, too. Above all, that it may also make you “*wise unto salvation.*”

## QUESTIONS

1. What does the name Timothy signify?
2. What were the names of his mother and grandmother?
3. What nationality was his father?
4. How do we know that Timothy was converted under the preaching of Paul?
5. For what reason did Paul circumcise Timothy?

*“Where your pleasure is, there is your treasure; Where your treasure is, there is your heart; Where your heart is, there is your happiness.”*

~ Augustine (354-430)

*“Be careful what books you read; for as water tastes of the soil it runs through, so does the soul of the authors that a man reads.”* ~ John Trapp (1601-1669)

# The Wonder

Behold, what love to fallen man  
The Father doth bestow,  
In sending His Beloved Son  
To sinners here below.

Oh, sovereign and eternal grace!  
Oh free, electing love!  
For God the Father sent His Son  
From realms of bliss above!

With God, who is his Holy Judge,  
The sinner's reconciled,  
For Christ the Saviour, humbled low,  
Became a little Child.

With eagerness the Saviour came  
To fill God's holy law;  
No jot or tittle left undone,  
For Christ obeyed it all.

“Lo, now I come Thy will to do,  
The Book declares of Me;  
Thy law is ever My delight,  
With joy I'll honour Thee.”

See there He lies in Bethle'm's crib,  
The Lord of all the earth;  
Though rudely laid within the stall,  
Yet angels 'nounce His birth.

His earthly frame in swaddling wrapped,  
Our nature He took on,  
His Godhead for a while concealed,  
Yet here lies Isr'el's Dawn.

To shepherds, who in darkness sat,  
Came angels in a throng,  
Proclaimed in heavenly chorus great,  
The Saviour's birth their song.

“In David's town the Saviour's born,  
As King He'll never cease;  
Glory to God who reigns on high,  
On earth be ever peace.”

# of Christmas

With joy and gladness in their hearts,  
The shepherds rose as one,  
“We’ll hasten unto Bethlehem  
To see this thing that’s done.”

See how they kneel in rev’rent awe  
Before the Holy One;  
And tell abroad the wondrous things,  
Praising what God has done.

The filthy stable of my heart  
With all the stench of sin,  
Can never be a fit abode  
For Christ to enter in.

Could there be hope for such a one,  
Who’s sinned it all away?  
Yea, what a hope there lies in this:  
Christ in a manger laid!

My soul must tremble at the thought  
Of love so deep, profound;  
Like shepherds, also kneel in awe,  
For this is holy ground.

Laid in the manger, meek and mild,  
Yet Lord of all the earth;  
Oh, who can fully comprehend  
The Saviour’s matchless worth?

May now the wonder of the birth  
Of Jesus Christ, God’s Son,  
Cause every heart to worship Him  
Who has the vict’ry won.

Unending glory, boundless praise,  
To all eternity;  
To God the Father, and the Son,  
And Spirit; One in Three.

- A. H.

# Jesus and the Woman of Samaria



***“But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth”*** (John 4:23-24).

Rev. George Hutcheson (1615-1674)

1. The reformation of the worship of God was reserved for the days of the gospel and to be brought about by Christ. Therefore He says, *“The hour cometh, and now is,”* when this change shall be. He says, *“now is,”* either because it was instantly approaching at His death, or because He was even now beginning this reformation by His ministry.

2. They who profess to be worshippers of the true God ought to worship with humble and affectionate reverence, and with subjection and submission to Him, considering His majesty and their own vileness. For the word rendered *“worshippers”* implies so much, being a similitude taken from dogs fawning and casting themselves down at their master’s feet.

3. Albeit all who profess the true God, and are not avowed atheists, will have some sort of worship, yet all of them will not be found true and approved worshippers, either for matter or manner. Therefore, some are called *“true worshippers”* by way of distinction from others.

4. The true worship of God under the gospel does not consist in the external pomp of ceremonies and observances, but is spiritual, simple, and substantial; for they shall *“worship the Father in spirit and in truth,”* not in carnal shadows. Even if they were God’s own ordinances, yet they did so take up the attention of worshippers (through their own weakness) that often they did not mind this spiritual worship. How much more may it be expected that, the more external pomp there is of men’s devising, the less spiritual truth there will be?

5. It is not sufficient to make one an approved worshipper that they do not multiply rites and ceremonies, but their worship must be chiefly inward, flowing from grace, engaging the heart in God’s service, and from

the breathing and influence of the Spirit; not resting on an external form of lawful worship, or any bodily exercise about it. So much also are we taught from this that worship must be “*spirit*,” or spiritual, for the manner of performance as well as for its nature in itself.

6. God also requires in a worshipper not only to avoid formality--which is but a deceitful, hypocritical show of worship--but to study sincerity and straightness of heart, not dealing negligently, or for personal advantage in God’s service; for worship must be “*in truth*.”

7. It is the Lord’s will and appointment alone that can give a being to true worship, and to this must all our reasonings about this matter be subject. And therefore His enjoining of spiritual, substantial, and sincere worship should commend it to His people. So much does the subjoining of this reason teach, “*for the Father seeketh such to worship Him*.”

8. All the true worship that God gets is of His own seeking and procuring, and having wrought it, He takes pleasure in it. So much also may His seeking such to worship Him imply, that He sent Christ to make a conquest of spiritual worshippers and seeks them as those He delights in.

9. God in His nature is a most pure and simple substance, free of all mixture and composition, and infinite in perfections; and He is to be conceived of spiritually, avoiding all carnal and gross conceptions. For so much are we taught: “*God is a Spirit*,” infinite above angels or spirits of men, who yet are the most simple, pure, and perfect of creatures.

10. The right way of worshipping God is when men study to do what is most agreeable to His nature, which is most pleasing to Him. And men who know Him cannot but see that it is not carnal and outward performances that please Him, but what is performed in inward sincerity and real substance. So much this second point, confirming the former, teaches: “*God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth*.”

(These are the “doctrines” or lessons, as edited, that Rev. Hutcheson draws from this verse, in his *An Exposition of the Gospel According to John*.)

“*Grace can neither be bought, earned, or won by the creature. If it could be, it would cease to be grace.*”  
~ Rev. Arthur W. Pink (1886-1952)

“*Grace is but glory begun, and glory is but grace perfected.*”

~ Rev. Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758)

# Humbly and Wisely

*“Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Christ”* (Ephesians 3:8).

Rev. Thomas Brooks (1608-1680)

Ministers must preach Christ *humbly* as well as faithfully: *“We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake”* (2 Corinthians 4:5). Paul does not deal in compliments, but he spoke as it was, for there are no greater servants than those that are servants to the souls of men for Jesus’ sake. So John the Baptist was very humble in the exercise of his ministry: *“He must increase, but I must decrease”* (John 3:30).

Luther used to say that “a minister must take heed of bringing three dogs into the pulpit: pride, covetousness, and envy.” The friends of the Bridegroom must not woo for themselves but for the Bridegroom. Dispensers of the gospel are the Bridegroom’s friends, and they must not speak one word for the Bridegroom and two for themselves, as has been the trade of many weak and worthless men.

It is the greatest glory of a minister in this world to be high in spiritual work and humble in heart. Vain glory is a pleasant thief; it is the sweet spoiler of spiritual excellences. Paul was very humble in exercising his ministry; none were so high in worth as he was, and none so low or humble in heart. Though he was the greatest among the apostles, he accounted himself less than the least of all saints. Yes, he counted it not only his duty, but his glory, to be a servant to the weakest saints: *“To the weak became I as weak”* (1 Corinthians 9:22), and *“Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?”* (2 Corinthians 11:29).

As they are to preach the Lord Jesus Christ humbly, so they are to preach Him *wisely*. *“He that winneth souls is wise”* (Proverbs 11:30); and indeed the greatest wisdom in the world is necessary for winning souls to Christ. He is wise that wins souls, or he that catches souls, as a fowler catches birds, or a fisherman catches fish. There is a holy and heavenly craft required in winning souls to Christ: *“Nevertheless, being crafty,”* says the apostle, *“I caught you with guile”* (2 Corinthians 12:16). He

speaks of a holy and heavenly craftiness.<sup>1</sup>

It is written of the fox that, when he is very hungry and can find no prey, he lies down and feigns himself dead; and so the fowls light upon him and then he catches them. Paul, hungering after the welfare of the Corinthians' souls, makes use of his heavenly craft to catch them. There is a great deal of wisdom required to hold out Christ unto the people, not only as something good, but as the greatest good, as the choicest good, as the chiefest good, as the most suitable good, as an unchangeable good, as an independent good, as a total good, and as an eternal good. Christ must thus be held forth to draw souls to fall in love with Him, and to work their hearts to run out after Him.

Wisdom is required to answer all the cavils and objections that keep Christ and poor souls apart. Wisdom is required to take souls off from all false foundations that they are apt to build on; wisdom is required to present Christ freely to souls, in opposition to all unrighteousness and to all unworthiness in man; wisdom is required to suit things to the capacities and conditions of poor souls, to make dark things plain and hard things easy. Ministers must not be like the one who gave straw to the dog and a bone to the ass, but they must suit all their discourses to the conditions and capacities of poor creatures, or else all will be lost: time lost, effort lost, God lost, heaven lost, and souls lost forever.

~ Taken, with editing, from *Works of Thomas Brooks*, Volume 3.



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<sup>1</sup>If one soul is more worth than a world, as Christ has told us, they must be wise who win souls for Him.

# A “Great” Man



*Submitted*

We often speak of a “great” man, and then we mean someone who has surpassed others by far in the field of science, the art of war, or in politics, etc.; and we are assured that not one shall deny that special talents which lead to extraordinary achievements can be of great value. But there have also been gifted men, who have brought more misery upon mankind than blessing, and then we think about a man such as Napoleon Bonaparte. We may ask, however, is greatness of soul, a deep sympathy for those who are in distress, and a readiness to immediately help the poor and less fortunate, not much greater than this? Naturally, you will say. And, if both go together, we may certainly speak in our social life of a great man or woman. The most important thing is not to honour such a person as a god, and this is so often the evil in which we are drawn along. God alone should receive all the honour. An instance of such a combination of talent and virtue as mentioned above, we will now relate.

It happened many years ago in an American city, in Philadelphia. It was a bitter cold winter day that a gentleman walked quickly along the streets of the city. He apparently made haste so that he would not be exposed to the cold, cutting wind no longer than was necessary. We believe that somewhere a cozy, heated room awaited him. But why did he suddenly stop and not seem to mind the cold anymore. A boy approached him, and with a trembling voice and tears in his eyes, he asked the gentleman for a gift. The lad did not look sick; he was neatly dressed, and it seemed he was well taken care of. He must have been about twelve years of age. It could be noticed that he did not belong to the common beggar children, of whom there were so many in the large cities during those days. No, apparently there was a special cause for this begging. A child, or possibly a family from the middle class, was in great need. In a few moments, these

thoughts passed through the mind of this gentleman as he viewed the lad more accurately, but silently. Then he spoke kindly, and said: “But my good boy, how did it happen that you have had to begin begging? You certainly have not done this before, and why are you so very sad? Come, tell me all about it.”

“Oh, Sir,” is the answer, “my mother is so sick, so very sick. If no doctor comes to see her, she will surely die. And we have no money to pay a doctor, at least not now anymore. Some time ago we did. My father used to earn much money. He was a salesman, Sir, he was so nice, and so good for us.” At this point the boy broke out into sobs.

“Did your father die?” asked the gentleman gently.

“Yes, Sir, one of father’s servants deceived him and made him totally poor. Then father was very much grieved and sorrowful because mother, my little brother, and I could not live anymore as formerly. From sadness my father became very sick and after some time he died. That is what the doctor said.”

Softly, the lad went on speaking, and it seems that they both do not feel the cold anymore. “After a while mother, my brother and I moved to an attic room. Mother went out to do sewing at the homes of rich ladies, but she did not get very much work, because most of the ladies already had a seamstress. And last week mother got sick, and she is in bed and cannot sew at all now. Oh, Sir, I am so afraid that she will die, just as my father!”

Interrupted by his sobs from time to time, the poor boy finished his sad account. The gentleman, filled with compassion, looked down upon the little fellow. This was the truth; he could see this clearly. For a few moments he stood quietly thinking. Then he took out his purse and gave the boy a coin. “Go quickly now to a doctor. Here is some money,” he said. “But first tell me where you live.”

“The last house on this street, Sir; turn left at the corner.”

After he had thanked the generous donor, the boy ran away with many tears of gladness in his eyes, and the gentleman forgot his warm room and was soon ascending the old unpainted attic stairway in the house to which he had been directed. Groping about in the dark hallway upstairs, he found a door. When he had gently knocked at the door, a soft voice said, “Come in.” The visitor now opened the door and found himself in a small, simple room. The room was neatly furnished and very clean. At one side of the room stood a bed, upon which a young woman laid. The

sick patient looked unusually pale. Apparently through sickness and cares, she was very thin and completely exhausted. A little boy of about six or seven years sat on a chair beside her bed. With both of his little hands he held the thin hand of his mother, while he wept softly. Struck by this scene, the strange gentleman approached the patient and asked her about her condition. Thinking he was a doctor, she answered all of his questions fully. Finally, she said: “Oh, doctor, if I must die it is through grace that I do not fear death, but I am so troubled about my poor children. What shall become of them; they are yet so young. It is for my dear boys’ sake that I would like to be well again, if it is God’s will.”

“My good woman,” said the gentleman whom she fancied to be a doctor, “you can surely with God’s help be cured of this sickness. I will write a prescription for you, and I believe that the remedy which I shall prescribe for you will help to give you back your lost strength in not too many days. At the same time, may you trust in the great Physician, who is a helper at all times. If it is necessary, then I will write another prescription for you later.”

The gentleman wrote something upon a sheet of paper which he had taken out of his portfolio. Then he laid the paper on the table, spoke a few more kind words to the sick mother, gently stroked the curls of the little boy with his hand, and left the home. Only a few moments after he had left, her oldest boy came home with a doctor. The sick woman was now very confused.

“Are you a doctor, sir?” she asked in amazement. The doctor also looked at her with surprise. “But a doctor has just been here a few moments ago, and he has already written a prescription. It is on the table.”

The doctor walked to the table and picked up the “prescription.” He had hardly glanced at it when he began to smile.

“Yes, my dear woman,” he said, “you have received a very good prescription from a very good doctor. I think that my services shall not be needed here very long. Just listen a moment. On this paper is written as follows: ‘I grant to the possessor of this statement a fixed pension till her death.’ And underneath it is signed, ‘George Washington’.”

It was quiet in the sickroom. Then the doctor



resumed and said: “Such prescriptions I cannot write. And with God’s help, the one I will write should not be needed very long. I will prescribe something for you that is stimulating and strengthening, and I hope that you will soon recover.”

Then the doctor parted from the trio and clattered down the dark stairway again. And the sick mother? Before she knew it, she sat straight up in bed, so that her boys began to jump about the bed for they believed that mother was getting better again. She did this out of sheer gladness, however. She could now buy good food to strengthen her weak body, and this could be done promptly, for her son showed her the money which the kind gentleman had given him. The gentleman, she understood clearly now, was the same one who had visited her. Consequently, it was George Washington, the President of the American Republic, the “greatest” man of that land; and that great man had sat at her bedside in all simplicity and talked with her.

For a while she pondered about the great things the Lord had done; it was all so wonderful. It seemed too miraculous. She felt that the Lord had taken a heavy burden from her soul. He had remembered her in mercy and not forgotten her great need. He had inclined the heart of her boy to do that which he had done, although she blushed over it in shame. However, she saw and believed that the Lord directs all things, this instance also. Together she and her children thanked God for this wonderful deliverance.

When the young mother was completely recovered from her illness, she requested to be admitted to the President. This wish was granted, and for a considerable time he spoke with her. The good impressions he had of this woman was thereby strengthened, so that he decided to give his regular attention to this family. In later years he also paid the tuition for the schooling of the boys, and the mother was wonderfully relieved of any financial cares.

Is not this an example of a really great man, who reckoned with God and his neighbour? *“Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble”* (Psalm 41:1).

*“While all men seek after happiness, scarcely one in a hundred looks for it from God.”*

~ John Calvin (1509-1564)