

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

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

*In this issue...*

“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

Waiting for Rain

In Conflict with Our Confession of Faith

*For our young readers...*

Jephthah

Free



*“He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth.” PSALM 72:6*



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|---|--|
| Meditation<br><b>“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”</b> 195<br><i>Rev. P. van Ruitenburg</i>         | Reflections<br><b>The Song of a New Heart</b> (5) 204<br><i>Rev. J. den Hoed</i>   |
| Bible Study<br><b>The Life of Moses</b> (10) 196<br><i>Rev. C. Vogelaar</i>                           | <b>The Life and Dying of Mientje Vrijdag</b> (2) 205<br><i>B. Roest</i>  |
| A Word in Season<br><b>Waiting for Rain</b> 198<br><i>Rev. A.H. Verhoef</i>                           | Questions & Answers<br><b>Questions from Our Readers</b> 206<br><i>Rev. H. Hofman</i>  |
| For Young & Old<br><b>Election—Calling—Coming</b> 199<br><i>Elisha Coles</i>                          | <b>Current Events</b> 207  |
| <b>What Election Is Not</b> 199<br><i>Adapted from September 1987 Banner of Truth</i>                 | TIMOTHY – for the Young<br><b>The Confession of Faith</b> (33) 208<br><b>Article XXX: Concerning the Government of, and Offices in the Church</b> (continued)<br><i>Rev. A.M. den Boer</i> |
| Doctrinal Studies<br><b>The Fruits of Holy Baptism</b> (4) 200<br><i>Rev. G. Hoogerland</i>           | Bible Stories for Little Ones<br><b>Jephthah</b> 209<br><i>Submitted</i>   |
| Contemporary Issues<br><b>In Conflict with Our Confession of Faith</b> 201<br><i>Rev. W.C. Lamain</i> | Bible Quiz<br><b>Free</b> 210<br><i>Aunt LenaBeth</i>  |
| Commentary<br><b>The Man Born Blind</b> (6) 202<br><i>Rev. H. de Leeuw</i>                            | <b>Letters to My Young Readers</b> 213   |
|   | <b>News &amp; Announcements</b> 214  |
|   | Back Cover<br><b>Joy and Peace in Believing</b> 216<br><i>John Newton</i>  |

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## Meditation

### “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

Rev. P. Van Ruitenburt, Chilliwack, BC

What was your first thought when you read the title of this article? This is the question the jailer rushed to ask Paul and Silas as we read in Acts 16. If we go back in the story, Paul and Silas had been thrown in jail by the local rulers because Paul, in the name of Jesus Christ, had commanded the spirit of a demon-possessed girl to come out. The masters of this girl were very upset about this because she was making them a lot of money by foretelling events for people. With no real evidence, they captured Paul and Silas and brought them in front of the local rulers where they were beaten, shackled by their feet, and thrown into the inner part of the prison which likely had no windows.

How would you react if this happened to you? How will you react if this happens to you in the coming years? Christian persecution is already starting in the Western world. We know how Paul and Silas reacted. Verse 25b says that “Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.” They were confident in the Lord that He would take care of them, and they did not shy away from people hearing that. It is interesting how the Bible adds that the other prisoners heard them. It is a lesson for us never to be ashamed to pray or sing in public.

We now come to the part of the story where this article started. Paul and Silas were singing, and in verses 26-30 we read: “*And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one’s bands were loosed. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*”

That is amazing! The jailer must have been listening to the songs and prayers of Paul and Silas and also wanted to know that peace and joy. What must I do? How would you answer this question?

Read what Paul and Silas say in verse 31: “*And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*” Yes, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. If I did not know about this story, I think I would not have guessed

they would say that. We can learn from this. Maybe you would have said, “Read your Bible and pray that the Lord will work in your heart one day,” but Paul and Silas go right after the heart, although they did not leave it there. The following verse says, “*And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.*” In other words, they explained the Bible to them and, likely, what “Believing on the Lord Jesus Christ” meant.

What does that mean for us today as unconverted persons? The key word here is “believe.” Follow me here—in the original Greek this word is “pisteuó.” That word comes from the word “pístis” which means “faith” and that came from the word “peithō,” which means to “persuade” or “be persuaded,” to “affirm” or “have confidence in.”

True believing in the Lord Jesus is not simply a decision of the mind like your decision to buy a car. Believing in Jesus is interpersonal; it is part of your very being. For

example, young people, when a person falls in love with a girl or a boy for who they are and not for what they have, it is not something changeable. When a person feels love, desire, and affection for a girlfriend or boyfriend, he cannot change those feelings. He can pretend to not like or like a person, but the feelings deep inside are not something he can control.

The same is true for biblically believing in Christ. If you only

want to believe so that you can have what the Lord offers, like keeping you from going to hell or attaining more peace, you do not actually believe. If you are found by Him and believe in Christ for who He is as a Saviour for your sins, then you love Him as a person. That is a true faith with confidence, and now you can know you are born again. John 3:16b says, “*whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*” The proof of this believing is shown in the fruits of the Spirit. You will start to hate sin, and you will start to love the Bible. This does not, by any means, mean that you will no longer sin as we read from Paul in Romans 7:15a: “*For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not.*” The key is that the desire of the heart has changed.

Now let me be very clear—not believing in Christ is not a neutral activity. As people we are doing one of two things; we have either received Christ by grace or we are actively rejecting Christ. No matter how serious we are, if we have

*Now let me be very clear—not believing in Christ is not a neutral activity. As people we are doing one of two things; we have either received Christ by grace or we are actively rejecting Christ. No matter how serious we are, if we have not believed in Christ and are unconverted, we are actively rejecting Him, and that is very serious.*

not believed in Christ and are unconverted, we are actively rejecting Him, and that is very serious. We read in 1 Corinthians 16:22, “If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.” Anathema means “cursed” or “destined for destruction.” Not loving Christ is not needing Him and, rather, despising Him. Being cursed is a fitting and deserved punishment for those who will not follow Christ, and there will be no exceptions. If there is anything that Christ despises, it is to be unloved.

Are you seriously minded and religious? Do you love the law but not the Saviour? Do you love the good traditions and the sound doctrine? That is good to hear! However, we read: Let him be cursed who does not love the Lord Jesus Christ. To the non-Christian, or more commonly said, unconverted friend, do you know why the apostle spoke such harsh words? It is to warn you, to shock you. The Lord is pleased to let you hear about the curse so that you may receive a blessing. I pray it causes you to repent from your sins, flee to Christ, and believe in Him as your only hope.

What is the lesson if you are a true Christian and have, by God’s grace, believed? Let us refer to the story of the jailer. Acts 16:33&34 says: “And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them

into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.”

A key word here is “rejoiced.” Do you know of true sorrow and of this humble joy? Have you ever rejoiced this way? When was the last time you rejoiced in the fact that Christ gave himself on the cross to take God’s wrath for a wicked one like you? People of God, Christians, rejoice in His free grace. Speak highly of the Saviour in prayer but also to your family and friends; tell of the joy you have or have had in Him. If you have been neglecting this, acknowledge your sin to God and admit that you left your first love.

Seek to know more of the Lord Jesus Christ. In particular, seek deeper insight into His passion and death. He experienced hellish agonies to save sinners with no love for Him, to save enemies of God. He gave His blood and died on the cursed tree. The last word in 1 Corinthians 16:22 is Maranatha which means “Come, Lord.” The apostle reminds us of His second coming and shows how urgent this matter is. The Judge is coming! Thy Kingdom come! That kingdom will come and what love there will be from God and for God.

“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

“And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.” □



## Bible Study

### The Life of Moses (10)

Rev. C. Vogelaar, Clifton, NJ

**“Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians”** (Exodus 14:30a).

God’s leading with Israel was mysterious. Why did He lead them about through the wilderness instead of straight to Canaan? It was His wisdom.

- a) They were not prepared to fight the Philistines.
- b) He also wanted them to discover their enmity—often they were rebellious against His leadings.

When Pharaoh heard about the strange way the Israelites were taking, he said, “They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in.” The Lord told Moses He would harden Pharaoh’s heart and that he would pursue the Israelites. However, the Lord would be honored in Pharaoh, “That the Egyptians may know that I am the LORD.”

#### Miraculous deliverance

As the Lord had told Moses, Pharaoh did, indeed, pursue the Israelites, and when they saw that Pharaoh marched after them, “they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel

cried unto the LORD.” Israel was fearful, and they not only cried unto the Lord but also accused Moses by saying, “Wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt?” What an unthankful people they were. The Lord had clearly shown His power in the plagues, but they seemed to have forgotten this. Now they were closed in on all sides—behind them the Egyptians, mountains and walls beside them, and the water before them. Yes, the Lord would glorify His power in a miraculous way.

Moses prayed, but the Lord told him to act. He would fight for them and they should hold their peace. “Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD” (verse 13). It is not easy to stand still, that is, to surrender unconditionally unto the Lord and His leading. However, unconditional obedience is required: “Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward” (verse 15b). All Moses had to do was lift up his rod and stretch out his hand over the sea. The Lord would make a path where there was no way. Are there those among us who know of such a way of impossibility,

of a miraculous deliverance? The God of Israel, who will manifest His power, has not changed.

### **A sure deliverance**

The Lord takes care of His own honor: “And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten Me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen” (verse 18). The angel of the Lord went behind Israel. The pillar of cloud stood behind them. As a consequence of this, it was darkness to the Egyptians, but light was given to Israel. God Himself would be their Protector, a Shield against all the anger and attacks of Pharaoh. Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, “And the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.” God’s faithfulness was evident. He would not alter what He had promised. Oh, that His people would not grieve Him more by their unbelief and distrust. When the Egyptians, in the morning of the new day, went into the same path as Israel, the waters returned and Pharaoh and his host were drowned in the Red Sea. This was a just punishment of God, as the marginal notes say, for the Egyptians had thrown the little ones of Israel into the water and drowned them. It must have been fearful for the Israelites to see how God manifested His power in the destruction of their enemies.

### **God-glorifying deliverance**

The children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea, but that same path of deliverance for Israel became a grave to their enemies. What a warning, also for us! We wear the sign and the seal of the Covenant of Grace in holy baptism which speaks of a God-glorifying deliverance. For some, however, it will forever testify against them, while for others, it is the sign and the seal of their deliverance by the blood of Jesus Christ. We may sit under the same preaching, hear about that one way, that only way of salvation, and be urged to flee to Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, but what a difference if we perish in unbelief and enmity.

At the shore on the other side of the river were now people delivered by the Almighty power of the Lord. They did not deserve this. They were also stiff-necked and rebellious. The true Israelites must have walked through the path with astonishment, adoration, and worship, but also with shame because of their unbelief. We read in Psalm 106:8-9: “Nevertheless He saved them for His name’s sake, that He might make His mighty power to be known. He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it was dried up: so He led them through the depths, as through the wilderness.” God will be glorified in His one-sided, free, and sovereign work. That is the hope, also, for those who must condemn themselves because of their doubting the Lord’s word and promise. Christ is already on the other side of the river. He is on the shore, but one day His entire Church will stand there, and all the Egyptians will be conquered. In chapter 15, we read that the children of Israel sang the song of praises.

Israel was commanded to go forward, but my unconverted friends, you should not go forward in the way that you are traveling; stop and consider where you are going. What are you seeking in life? A high position? A beautiful career? More pleasures? This world passes by and the lusts thereof. Turn yet from your evil way! The end of all God’s enemies is portrayed in these Egyptians. Harden not your heart as Pharaoh did. God’s ordinances, also baptism, will not save you. The same water that was a wall around Israel was a grave for the enemies.

People of God, you still must say, “Draw me, we will run after Thee.” Your way often goes through impossibilities. Why would you be fearful to go the way that God shows you? If God be for us, who will be against us? Ask the Lord for the strengthening of your faith. We read in Hebrews 11:29a, “By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land.” No, God’s true believers will not boast about what they have done. Their deliverance will be God-glorifying. His name and His work alone will be praised. ◻

*(To be continued)*

## **God’s Sovereignty**

*J.C. Ryle (1816-1900)*

**O**f all doctrines of the Bible none is so offensive to human nature as the doctrine of God’s sovereignty. To be told that God is great and just, holy and pure, man can bear; but to be told that “He hath mercy on whom He will have mercy,” that “He giveth no account of His matters,” that it is “not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy”—these are truths that natural man cannot stand. They often call forth all his enmity against God, and fill him with wrath. In short, nothing will make him submit to them but the humbling teaching of the Holy Ghost.



## A Word in Season

### Waiting for Rain

(Rev. A.H. Verhoef, St. Catharines, ON)

(Written and published in the August 2012 issue of the Ontario Church News)

***“And they waited for me as for the rain; and they opened their mouth wide as for the latter rain”*** (Job 29:23).

In Job 5 we read that Eliphaz the Temanite admonished his friend to seek unto God and unto God to commit his cause. Why unto God? He “doeth great things and unsearchable; marvelous things without number.” Also, He “giveth rain upon the earth, and sendeth waters upon the fields.”

What if the Lord does not give rain upon the earth? If the waters are withholden by Him? Then the fields are dry, the plants droop, the grass turns brown, the pastures languish, the corn withers, the grain shrivels up; even the trees cast their leaves and shed their needles. Oh, then the ground cracks open, and the beasts of the field and the cattle seek for water.

It is dry in many places, very dry. We read, and we hear about drought and threatening crop failures. Our eyes can also see it, sometimes close by. Here and there it is also true what the LORD said in Amos: “I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered.”

However, even if our eyes see it, does our heart observe it? Do we feel God’s hand in all these dealings? Do we hear the rod and Who hath appointed it? Must we not learn that we are so dependent on Him for every blessing? For every drop of rain? While we have forfeited the smallest drop? With all our efforts and knowledge and technology we cannot make the crops to grow, we cannot bring an abundant harvest into the barn, nor can we cause the rain to come down with favour from heaven.

Pause now and examine, all of us, for even the king is served by the field—and presently so many fields are dry and may not yield a single bushel. Have we been humbled under this all? Have we broken with sin and sought righteousness? Do we not call God’s righteous judgments upon us with all the Sabbath-breaking, with all the taking of the LORD’s Name in vain, the countless slaying of the fruits of the womb, the crying sins of immorality, adultery, indecent dress, stealing, murdering, lying? Is there an end to the long list of our awful transgressions? We have forgotten the Name of our God and unto the idols our hands spread abroad. What idols? Money, possessions, the foolishness of sports, fashion, worldliness, drunkenness, empty pleasure, and most of all, self. We have forsaken the Lord, and we must return unto Him, confessing our guilt and iniquity, supplicating for mercy.

Let us not be mistaken: the sins of the world are sins found in the church, in our families, and in our hearts. The judgments begin at God’s house. How many neglect the means of grace and waste the time of grace. How many travel on vacations, in summer or winter, and stay in places where there is no truth for our soul to be heard. How we squander the best time of our life to remember our Creator, not realizing we are going to our long home. Where is the reverence in God’s house, also in our dress? Do we not realize we are appearing before God’s holy majesty? Where is the bowing under the Holy Word of the Lord? Who still takes heed to the admonitions? What pride and presumption flourishes in our hearts. Is it not a sign of hardening? Where is the respect for the offices? Where is the high regard for God’s true people? The fear of offending the Lord and even His little ones? Is not the difference between the church and the world fast disappearing? And truly, who weeps on account of all these things? Who has true sorrow of heart? Who has become guilty? Who has learned to smite upon his thigh with Ephraim and become ashamed?

Many people wait for the rain and also for showers. There are congregations where prayer services are held because of this dearth. Indeed, we should ask the LORD for rain and for the latter rain. May He graciously be pleased to grant relief, but who waits for God? Who waits for His speech to be dropped upon us? For His words to be spoken in our heart? For the Spirit’s blessed operations in our own soul, among our children and youth, in the churches? Who waits for His quickening and reviving work? Is not the field of the church so dry? So barren?

How many of the few true Zionites are also drooping and languishing? No, we must not despise what the Lord, in His undeserved goodness, still has given, but the living Church, in general, is so far from the right place. Where is the practice of godliness? The tender communion with the Lord? The sitting at the Master’s feet for the one thing needful? The upright walk? The broken heart and contrite spirit? The need for God by day and by night? The seeking of the things which are above, there where Christ sitteth? The outgoings of the heart unto the only Saviour? That going with access in the new and living Way unto God the Father? Who can still testify: “Christ, Who is my Life”?

Job said, “And they waited for me as for the rain; and they opened their mouth wide as for the latter rain.” He spoke of the respect the people formerly had for him and their desire to hear him speak to show his favour. Oh, that this may be wrought by God’s Spirit among us,

experimentally. Then we hear the Lord Himself speaking: “And they waited for Me as for the rain; and they opened their mouth wide as for the latter rain.” This is the chief blessing we need, the most necessary waiting.

Let us then seek to bow our knees and try to find the inner chamber. May we be brought low before God’s countenance, may there be a waiting, an opening of our mouth, a panting after the living God, having forfeited all.

Let us beg the Lord for humbling grace so that as unworthy beggars we may come to Him, asking not only for rain upon the parched fields and for showers when He has given some but especially for the sake of Christ Who thirsted, that the LORD would grant: “I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring.” □



## *For Young and Old*

### **Election – Calling – Coming**

*Elisha Coles (1608-1688)*

(Taken from the February 1966 issue of *The Banner of Truth*)

The doctrine of particular redemption should not be taken as a discouragement to weaken the hopes of any in their coming to Christ for salvation any more than Luke 13:24 should keep men from striving: “Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.” On the contrary—which also was Christ’s intent in telling us so—it should quicken our diligence and speed in going to Him lest the door be shut, which is certainly open while He calls. Suppose the worst; suppose, I say, that your interest in redemption is only general, that is, for temporal mercies, even that deserves all you can do and more. What criminal, lying at his prince’s

mercy, would not think himself obliged to spend the time of his reprieve in his prince’s service, especially considering that even that service shall have its reward? Why will you shut out yourself? No man is namely exempted, and **for any to exclude himself is to sin against his own soul and to be a second time guilty of destroying himself.** Put it upon trial; you can lose nothing by venturing but lose all without. Who can tell but your name may be written on the High Priest’s breastplate, as well as Reuben’s or Judah’s? Besides, you have no way to prove it but by going to see, which never any in good earnest did but they found it even so. □

## **What Election Is Not**

(Adapted from the September 1987 issue of *The Banner of Truth*)

- Does not discourage convicted sinners but welcomes them to Christ. “Let him that is athirst come” (Revelation 22:17b). The God who convicts is the God who saves. The God who saves is the God who has elected men unto salvation. He is the same God who invites.
- Does not discourage prayer. To the contrary, it drives us to God, for He it is who alone can save. True prayer is the Spirit’s prompting and, thus, will be in harmony with God’s will (Romans 8:26).
- Is not a respecter of persons (Romans 9:18-24). Fame, wealth, wisdom, position, etc., did not cause God to have respect for some and elect them (Job 34:19). All being ungodly, none could have been saved had He not shown grace to some.
- Is not a hindrance to gospel preaching but assures the gospel of success (Isaiah 55:11; John 10:27).
- Does not destroy man’s “will.” The will of man is his desire, wish, or choice. His choice is sin. Man “freely” chooses sin, but by God’s grace the elect freely choose Christ (Psalm 65:4, John 6:44).
- Is not against missions but gives the foundation for missions (John 6:37, John 17:20&21).
- Does not make God unjust. His blessing of a great number of unworthy sinners with salvation is no injustice to the rest of the unworthy sinners. If a governor pardons one convict, is it injustice to the rest (1 Thessalonians 5:9)?
- Does not destroy man’s responsibility. Men are responsible for whatever light they have, be it conscience (Romans 2:15), nature (Romans 1:19&20), written law (Romans 2:17-27), or the gospel (Mark 16:15&16). Man’s inability to do righteousness no more frees him from responsibility than does Satan’s inability to do righteousness. □



## Doctrinal Studies

### The Fruits of Holy Baptism (4)

Rev. G. Hoogerland, Kruiningen, the Netherlands

#### The Adoption as Children

*Christ is the Tree of Life. This Tree is always bearing fruit, even from month to month as we read in Revelation 22. The leaves of that Tree are for the healing of the Gentiles. One of the branches of that Tree is Holy Baptism which He Himself has instituted.*

We have already considered several different fruits which are exhibited to us on the low hanging branches so that we may enjoy them. The bride says, “His fruit is sweet to my palate.” Let us once more look to this branch for a precious fruit.

Our Form for Holy Baptism says that “God the Father has adopted us for His children and heirs, and therefore will provide us with every good thing, and avert all evil or turn it to our profit.” We again emphasize that this precious fruit can only be enjoyed through true saving faith. It is provided for His favorites. It leaves such a sweet taste when this fruit is eaten with a spiritual mouth.

Through grace “for Christ’s sake, adopted by the Father”—we, who by nature were children of the devil and children of wrath, who provoked Him and who did not seek to be a child of God. Yea, we even slapped Him in His face. Think of Manasseh, Saul of Tarsus, Augustine, yourself. Is it possible for such to be adopted as His children? That is an eternal wonder. For that, Christ had to be cast away into the darkness which lasted for three hours upon Golgotha. For that, He had to enter death. How can we ever fathom this?

#### Fatherly care

Perhaps you will say, is not that a benefit reserved for God’s confirmed people? Then the Holy Spirit must reveal Himself in our lives as the Spirit of adoption as children whereby we call out, “Abba, Father.” May I then ask you, have you not experienced the Fatherly keeping, care, instruction, and chastisements in your life? In a normal family, are only the adults truly children? Or are the babes and infants also children?

The children are also heirs—heirs and fellow heirs with Christ, so Paul writes in Romans 8:17. We who have sinned

away everything, who have spoiled and cast away the precious riches which God had given us—and then made heirs of Christ? Heirs of everything, “For all things are yours ...and ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s” (1 Corinthians 3:21b&23). An heir is rich. No matter how poor you may be in your estimation, “I know your poverty...” John wrote to the congregation of Smyrna, “but thou art rich” (Revelation 2:9).

#### Cared for and protected

A child and heir is cared for and protected by the father. That is also what the heavenly Father does. He cares for all that is good. Just look, child of the Lord, at what you have for daily and spiritual life. How many blessings! They come from the same Fatherly hand. Every crumb of bread found on your table, all of your clothing, the chair whereupon you are sitting, and the bed whereupon you sleep—they all come from His Fatherly hand.

What about the evil? The adversities, the crosses, the sorrows? Let us read once more from the Heidelberg Catechism, Lord’s Day 9 “...that He will make whatever evils He sends upon me, in this valley of tears, turn out to my advantage.” Therefore, also that cross—adversity—comes from His hand. He sends such in His wisdom; He determined it in His eternal counsel. He considered it necessary and beneficial for you. In the second rhyme of the Apostle’s Creed, we sing (loosely translated):

*He sends me all the good which is necessary,  
Also the evil which I come across upon earth.  
He graciously turns it to my welfare.  
His omnipotence will always keep me;  
He swore this to me as my covenant Head;  
And is willing to do so as my Father.*

Open then your eyes at the administration of Holy Baptism and look with wonderment at the drops of water. Think of your own baptism. There, all of these benefits are applied to you. God the Father testifies and confirms it. Is it not sad that we draw so little comfort from this, that we are so often dissatisfied under the blessings, and that we grumble under our cross? □

*(To be continued)*

That Christ and a forgiven sinner should be made one, and share heaven between them, is the wonder of salvation; what more could love do?

—Samuel Rutherford



## Contemporary Issues

### In Conflict with Our Confession of Faith

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

(Taken from the book *Pastoral Letters* by Rev. W.C. Lamain)

*Dear reader, the temptations of today come in different forms and with greater variety, but they are not less dangerous than the ones mentioned in this letter. It was written so many years ago but must also be applied today to many things, especially Online TV and video apps on our smart-phones. TikTok, Amazon Prime Video, Netflix, Youtube and all such things quickly become our idols! They pollute our minds, and as is warned about below, they are entertainments that are “drawing our generation away from the reading, meditation, and regard for the Truth.”—Ed.*

Beloved Congregation:

The wiles of Satan are becoming increasingly greater the older the world gets, the nearer the end approaches. Everything shows plainly that Satan has only a short time left. He is doing everything in his power to draw people away from God and from His Word. Even the great technological and scientific developments of the men of today are used by the Prince of Darkness to further his ends. He finds a ready response in our own heart because by our deep fall in Adam we have admitted the whole world into it.

Fully aware of this, our fathers have always taken a firm stand with regard to any new development which they were convinced was in conflict with the Word of God. Often these inventions have several so-called points in their favor in the opinion of the world and even of many “Christians.” However, our fathers were not afraid to “call a spade a spade.” God’s Word and only God’s Word must always be our standard, also in the conflict with the “spirit of the times,” which lifts its head boldly day by day and constantly continues to gain ground.

Well, then, whenever the world offers us a new invention, especially one that is particularly attractive, we must remember that the powers of darkness invariably try to employ it to draw us away from the true religion and to destroy us according to both soul and body.

Deeply conscious of this melancholy fact, our consistory feels impelled to warn our people concerning one of the new developments now being offered to the public, namely, television. I fully share their concern and am, therefore, eager to bring you this message.

Congregation, it is an undeniable fact that television brings the world right into our own home. It has been very correctly stated that the general public is eager to see everything which appears on the screen and has developed an extreme fondness for watching boxing matches, plays, ballets, etc., on the television. When we have a television set, we have the theater right in our own house.

In a recently published book about television by Professor Edward Cornell, the objections against television are stated, but also the so-called “good” which comes from it is explained. He writes that it is an excellent form of recreation for the entire family, that we can attain to a better knowledge of God’s Creation in this way, etc., but he concludes that the keys should be kept by the parents.

We have no need at all for such advice and enlightenment. Like our fathers, who were always definite in their statements, we today take a firm stand regarding anything we consider contrary to God’s Word. In this connection the consistory and myself heartily endorse the declaration made by our last Synod on this subject and have accordingly decided to inform each one of you about this Synodical statement by this means.

The declaration reads as follows:

“The Synod condemns the use of television in the home, judging it to be in conflict with the Word of God and with the confession of faith made in the presence of God in the church. The Synod judges unanimously that rigorous measures must be adopted to cope with the conformity to the world as regards television, since it can lead to nothing other than great detriment to the family. The consistories are to admonish with patience and forbearance, but upon continued failure to heed their admonition to proceed with censure.”

Compare this statement with the equally emphatic declaration of our fathers in Lord’s Day 35 of our Heidelberg Catechism with regard to the images in the Roman Catholic Church:

“We must not pretend to be wiser than God, who will have His people taught, not by dumb images, but by the lively preaching of His Word.”

If we are to condemn image-worship from the bottom of our heart, we must further condemn the use of television in our homes. The man of sin is revealing himself more and more, and people’s consciences are being seared as with a hot iron. Television programs recognize only the public’s craving for pleasure and entertainment, without any regard to what God’s Word declares, without any regard to the needs of sinful man in a state of misery, and without any regard to the brevity of the precious time allotted to man in his day of grace.

I repeat, modern inventions are controlled by the powers of darkness, drawing our generation away from the reading, meditation, and regard for the Truth, thus destroying man according to both soul and body.

People in whose heart the fear of God is found, and who have any respect at all for the Truth of God, will heed the testimonies of God. I hope this word of caution will make a deep impression in the heart of everyone, young or old, parents as well as children. Parents, soon we shall have to appear before God, and children, you too, to give an account of everything you have done whether it was good or bad.

I sincerely hope the prayer of David may be or become yours, as wrought in your heart by God's Spirit: "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken Thou me in Thy way" (Psalm 119:37). Do not reject the advice and admonitions of those who watch for the welfare of your soul in accordance with God's Word. Come faithfully to the house of God and attend the preaching and reading of God's Testimonies. Never permit your place to be vacant without a valid reason. Search and study the Scriptures, and do not spend your valuable time watching television. Boys and girls, shun the paths of unrighteousness; seek the Lord and His strength. Do not tread on the heart of your father and mother, but always accept their warnings and reproofs in humility. Parents, let us always be mindful of the promise we made at baptism, a promise to which God will one day refer again.

*I hope this word of caution will make a deep impression in the heart of everyone, young or old, parents as well as children. Parents, soon we shall have to appear before God, and children, you too, to give an account of everything you have done whether it was good or bad.*

Think these things over very carefully. It always seems so hard to be different from the rest, but remember, it is always pleasant to be right! Talk these things over, parents and children. It is my duty to shield and guard you against the dangers which beset you. Even more than the radio, television simply usurps still more of your precious time, time which is needed for preparing for eternity and not for watching programs which are all too often unprofitable, foolish, and sinful. When your friends invite you to join them or ask your children to come over for a television program, tell them what our position is. Show them this letter if you wish. Feel perfectly confident that our viewpoint is scriptural, and let them be the ones to prove that their actions conform to their profession, if they think they can.

I pray the Lord that He may bless and sanctify this message to your heart so that you may be given to walk in the ways well-pleasing to God, and so it may never be necessary for your consistory, whose office it is to take the oversight of the church, to employ the key of Christian discipline. □

Ever seeking your welfare,  
Your minister,  
Rev. W.C. Lamain



## Commentary

### The Man Born Blind (6)

Rev. H. de Leeuw, Franklin Lakes, NJ

*"...Is not this he that sat and begged?" (John 9:8b)  
...but he said, I am he..." (John 9:9b).*

The blind man has made the journey to the pool of Siloam. He came there through obedience by faith which God had planted. The life of faith is a life of strife, yet it is a strife because of faith. The apostle could say, "I have fought the good strife." So, the blind man in his way going to the pool reveals his given faith. True faith will be exercised to receive the benefits and embrace the Mediator. Then strife ceases for the moment, and faith may look beyond the human impossibilities and the reasoning provoked by unbelief. The Lord will lead His chosen inheritance through these ways.

He washed in the pool of Siloam, and now the Bible says he "came seeing." What a change! What he never had seen

before he now can see. Before his healing it was dark; everything was under the obscurity of darkness. When the Bible says here that he came seeing, it is the wording to describe what the Lord had done in his life. Notice that in one text it says, "he went" and "came." The Lord Jesus had given instruction; he obeyed and went, but now also it says that he returns. However, he returns as one seeing. That returning was with joy. It lies so close together—the blindness and the sight, the darkness and the light, the "he went" and "he came." The power to change is God's power. May it therefore serve to encourage those who experience their blindness, who have to say, "I have no sight; I miss my sight." Here it lies so close together. The Lord needs only one word in the strife of faith for all to change. Maybe there is a reader who says, "I have sat so often under the means but have no sight and light; it remains so dark."

In this miracle you can see how circumstances changed so remarkably for a blind one! Yes, also for my dear unconverted reader, the sovereign power of the Lord is such that it can change one from one moment to the next. He was blind from birth, but on that particular day, known from the stillness of eternity, a blind one received sight!

Seeing describes a new activity for this man. He never had seen before; now he sees the houses, the trees, the water, etc. He also sees something else; He sees himself. This miracle contains something which, I hope, we all may consider. We all, to some extent, have had remarkable things happen in our lives. Some will be able to speak of remarkable deliverances when there were financial difficulties or when there was great need for help in other matters. Others have experienced remarkable healing or recovering mercy. Others will be able to say how wonderfully the Lord provided for them in certain situations that came up in their daily life. So the list can go on of how often we are helped by the Lord. Often, in the moment, we acknowledge that it was the Lord who helped. However, when we recall the events to other people, then that part is not said because God was only a helper to get us out of the situation. We speak much of the events and how all went, but God is left out. Then we take the honor ourselves which was due to the Lord. This reveals that with all that we receive we have not received a true view of ourselves and of the wonder.

The former blind man reveals something of a deeper lesson in this healing, a lesson which the Lord is going to teach by bringing forth a question from his neighbors. The lesson is one in humility. He must own who he was; he must acknowledge where he was found. Whenever the Lord exalts grace in a sinner, He exalts it by the fruit of humility.

The neighbors see him also; they ask amongst themselves, "Is not this he that sat and begged?" They talk about his former life. Begging in Israel was a shameful work; it was a work of desperation. Now that is used to identify him.

We are proud creatures; we do not want to remember our shame; we cover it. Here it is uncovered! Blessed people who are uncovered by the benefits. That the blind man can now see is a token of God's undeniable power, but he must be brought back to where God found him. He must admit who he was.

Dear reader, we are enemies of this. We love to talk about the benefits, but then God is not honored. May the Lord uncover us, too; it will go through a way of owning who we were. God's true people never forget where God found them, and that is used so they cannot stand an inch above their fellow man. The former blind man acknowledges that he was the beggar but as one who is healed. Then, in God-given humility, this man can say what the Lord has done for him. Do you see how this man is given to testify? Not as a converted individual but as the former blind beggar. The words which he now is going to speak will reveal the wonder of that one-sided, divine truth that the Lord Jesus stated at the beginning of this miracle: "I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."

Dear reader, do we speak of benefits? What comes across in that? Does it mention God as a helping means for us to be delivered from embarrassing or distressing circumstances in our life? Or do the benefits leave in our life the fruits of humility—benefits by which we must own who we were, where God found us? How unfit we were for service to God; we were on our way to eternal destruction without God and hope in the world, but He came with divine power to stop us. My dear reader, then you will not speak of the benefits which mentions God as a helping means but as the Source of the benefits. That life will receive lessons through whom the Lord can grant saving benefits, not just through God, but through God and Man in one Person, Precious Immanuel! ◻

*(To be continued)*

## The Conversion of Joseph Irons

(Taken from the July 1961 issue of *The Banner of Truth*)

The Lord brought Joseph Irons to a saving knowledge of divine things soon after he left home at the age of sixteen. His hearing of Mr. Alphonsus Gunn, an able servant of Christ, was the means the Lord used. In speaking of this circumstance, Mr. Irons has said: "And while listening to that eloquent and truly faithful preacher of the gospel—I being a stranger to Christ, to myself, and the minister—the Spirit of the Lord directed the arrow into my conscience and brought me to a saving knowledge of divine truth; before a rebel, now a repenting sinner. Oh, that day, that hour, that preacher I shall never forget."



## Reflections

### The Song of a New Heart (5)

Rev. J. den Hoed, Lynden, WA

***“Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee”*** (Isaiah 12:6).

**I**n that day I will sing unto Thee.” There are many lyrics in the world. They convey only one message: let us sing; today we live, tomorrow we die. Yes, that is truth, tomorrow we die, and when we only have the song of the world in our heart then in dying that will stop. Often it becomes a groan, and when we pass into eternity it becomes a cry of anguish. Think of the rich man in hell... There are also many religious songs; we sing them in church. These good words convey the message of eternal life, but are they sung without a new heart? Then also they will one day stop, and in our dying they will become a testimony against us. The Lord will say, “Why were you always satisfied to sing those words without a new heart?”

“Cry out and shout.” Why does the prophet have a longing desire to cry out and shout? He may remember how the anger of the Holy One was like a burning fire in his heart. He may remember the time that he stood before the breach between God and his soul. There he saw only a righteous, holy God, and a sinking away sinner. He may remember how for the first time those spiritual eyes were opened, and through the lattice of God’s Word he saw a way opened for a sinner to be saved. Yes, for the first time he heard the Song of a New Heart. I will praise thee, I will praise the Lord. Thou wast angry with me. Oh, what a wonder—the anger of the Lord is turned away. How?

“Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion.” Then, when those burning eyes rest upon that Saviour, they know how He is ever at the right hand of the Holy Father. There He pleads the cause of His Zion. There He ever points to that sacrifice which flowed out of those five wounds upon Golgotha. Truly, Zion is bought with such a precious price.

Here below, God’s people are but travelers through the wilderness. Again and again, a faithful Saviour gives them to experience the storms upon the way, times when it all becomes dark, and in those dark nights all they see is the anger of a just and righteous God. They dare not believe that His anger was ever taken away; they see the breach, but they cannot see the Saviour. Then the devil has an easy

way with them, and they wander on a dark journey until it pleases the Lord to again open those poor, burning eyes, and they again see Him, the Redeemer, the Deliverer of Zion.

They long to cry out as one of the inhabitants of Zion, “Great is the Holy One of Israel.” Oh, what a wonder when those poor eyes again see Him at the right hand of the Father. Yes, only because of Him is there a Zion. In self they are deeply sunken sinners, dead in sins and trespasses, but in Him they are the Zion of God. Through Him they want to cry out that He is the Holy One. Here below they may know that at times, but hereafter, when through that Saviour they come home, they will be with Him forever, never to miss Him anymore. There they will always cry out, “How great Thou art, the Holy One of Israel.”

What a wonder that will be, dear friend, when one day we may belong to Zion—when Zion will be in heaven, clothed upon with white robes, robes made white in the blood of our Saviour. There Zion may sing forever about the great love that sought and saved such a wretch. I know that here below, upon this wilderness journey, the Zion of the Holy One often walk with fear and darkness. Then they have no more than a whisper. Oh, Lord, I dare not sing; I dare not praise; I dare not shout. I am afraid that the Song of a New Heart cannot become my song.

All of Zion as they journey here below can only sing when the Holy Spirit makes known the words and melody in their heart. The wonder is that, at the right hand of the Father, the Holy One has never sent any of those crying beggars away. Time and again, He calls unto them, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Is there anywhere else you can hang your wretched condition? Anywhere else you can hang your lost self? Your sinful self? There is nowhere else, but by the grace of God, you may entrust all your impossibilities to that precious Saviour and His finished work. Then, there comes a time when you begin to learn the Song of a New Heart. There, all the praise and all the love is for the Holy One of Israel. “For great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.” □

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

I was but a pen in God’s hand, and what praise is due to a pen?

—John Bunyan

# The Life and Dying of Mientje Vrijdag (2)

*B. Roest of Scherpenzeel, the Netherlands*

(Translated from the Dutch, published by bookstore P. Stuut, Rijssen, the Netherlands, 1977)

Oh, Mientje Vrijdag was as a watered garden when she related how that between God as a righteous Judge, the Mediator and Surety Christ Jesus came forward, and that she was reconciled with a holy and righteous God in Christ. She was cleansed in His blood. She could own Him as her Saviour and Deliverer as well as her blood Bridegroom. All her sins were washed away eternally and reconciled. Then she was often above all things here below. When she spoke about this, she could experience completely Lord's Day 1. The Father gave her the Son, and the Son brought her to the Father as Surety. Then she could testify with such feeling: "But now no more shall Israel wait, no more the Gentiles lie forlorn, lo, the desire of nations comes." The Father received her out of the hand of the Surety. In this way she received a place in the heart of God the Father. The Spirit sealed and testified with her spirit that she was a child of God. So, she had as her portion all that the Mediator had merited, and she was very young when she was given to lose herself in a Triune God as her covenant God. Oh, how she could speak so respectfully about the three godly Persons. All of God's people and all of His servants could testify of that. I can only stammer about her way and her life. She had a homecoming in the heart of the Father. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it" (Revelation 2:17b).

Oh, that life as a child of God is so precious, and what makes the matter even more excellent is that she also was endowed with the grace of humility and simplicity. She was low in self-abasement, active through faith as a fruit of the ongoing discovering and uncovering of self. The Father had brought her to Christ by His Spirit with all of the benefits to be administered and kept—yea, to live out of Him and through Him. Without the Lord she could do nothing. Through grace she understood that "the lower by the ground, the closer to the covenant" and to live out of that eternal covenant through the administration of Word and Spirit. In this manner she had lost the ground in all things. She also had the ability to draw out her path in the way of sanctification. In that she was very evangelical by working outside of herself.

She was united in marriage to Jan ter Haar, a child of the Lord. They were a God-fearing couple. They were bound together with double bonds—to each other and a Triune God. Her husband was also very privileged upon the way of life. Together they served to the honor of God. They lived very happily for several months, but sadly her husband became ill and died after a short illness. His life was broken

down because of bleeding from the lungs. Upon his sickbed, which became his deathbed, he was able to freely and joyfully testify of the hope he had for eternity. His sickbed was heavenly. With much room and joy, he left this earth and was taken up to his heavenly home.

I have heard much about it from our beloved Mientje during her lifetime. Just a short time ago they were confirmed in holy marriage by Rev. van Neerbosch who used Lord's Day 9 as the basis of his message. She received this message as a passport for her married life from her heavenly Father. This would be of such a benefit to her in the tribulations which would come as such a young widow in this vale of tears and sorrows. Her husband had departed only a short time ago when a baby boy was born. He is now already thirty-two years old. Oh, what an eternal blessing it would be if the Lord would have mercy upon him by arresting and converting him. Then there would be a walking in the footsteps of his godly parents. Oh, that the separation would not be an eternal one. He has not known his father, but the mother often warned her son and bent her knees to pour out her heart and her sorrow. Oh, son of such parents, and you children of such parents, what will your end be when missing this salvation. Also, my offspring, and the offspring of all of God's children, one day you will see them glorified at God's right hand in that great Judgment Day.

Oh, that your heart would be filled with holy jealousy. Call out mightily to the God of your parents. Walk through grace in their footsteps. Soon we will come together before the awesome Lord Jesus and His exalted throne. The Son of Man will send out His angels and they will gather together all those who vex Him and those who commit iniquity. He shall cast them in the fiery oven where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Then the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Oh, children, turn to the God of your fathers. Who knows what may happen? He could turn unto you out of free and sovereign grace and grant you the benefit bestowed upon your parents. Now they are above, delivered and joyful in God. Do you still think of all of their warnings, prayers, and upbringing? That will all come back to you...but I digress. Those blessed souls are eternally happy. In the next issue, we will return to the life of Mientje. □

*(To be continued)*

One drop of Christ's blood is worth more than heaven and earth.

—Martin Luther



# Questions & Answers

## Questions from Our Readers

Rev. H. Hofman, Beckwith, Grand Rapids, MI

**We hear so often of the need for the conviction of sin by the Holy Spirit. Can you give an explanation of what this exactly means? Does this always happen before true conversion?**

The doctrine of salvation—with a difficult word called soteriology—is the doctrine that studies the deliverance of man. There are many texts in Scripture that make it clear that the deliverance of man consists of a liberation of the greatest evil (sin) and a bringing to the highest good. Christ emphatically taught, “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Luke 5:32). In Ezekiel 36 we read how the Lord Himself will work the knowledge of what sin is: “Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and your abominations” (36:31). In the Psalms we read how the poets struggle with sin as their greatest burden. To mention more, we read that those who were converted at Pentecost were pricked in their heart on account of a saving conviction. From these and many more text references it is clear that conviction of sin cannot be missed. Man in his natural state misses the saving knowledge of this conviction because he is dead in trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1).

What is this conviction? Perhaps it is best to describe this with the words of the Heidelberg Catechism, Lord’s Day 33, where it speaks of the true conversion of man: “It is a sincere sorrow of heart that we have provoked God by our sins, and more and more to hate and flee from them.” Paul calls this a godly sorrow (2 Corinthians 7).

It is a very important question—does this always happen with conversion? My answer is: most definitely. The Lord first gives knowledge of our misery and corruption before there will be knowledge of deliverance. As is the case with all that the Lord teaches His children—if it is well—there is an increase in the grace and the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, so there is in misery, deliverance, and gratitude.

The question might arise whether this necessary conviction ever reaches perfection in the life of God’s people. I know that many serious-minded souls struggle with the question whether the knowledge of sin must reach a certain

level (or depth—if you would). Instead of measuring here, I would rather ask where it has led or brought you. Again, from our Heidelberg Catechism I would like to show two reasons why I believe it does not reach perfection. First, consider that a threefold knowledge is necessary to know the only comfort in life and in death. Yes, our Catechism shows the knowledge of these three things chronologically, and in this order: misery, deliverance, gratitude but never as a “station” or “goal” that is reached, like a train that arrives on its final leg of a trip. On the contrary, as after Lord’s Day 52 the minister starts over again by preaching on Lord’s Day 1, we are taught that the knowledge is repetitive and ever deepening: it must be taught and learned over and over again. We see this further confirmed in Lord’s Day 44, question and answer 115: “First, that all our lifetime we many learn more and more to know our sinful nature...etc.”

Can this knowledge of sin ever be “good” or “deep” enough?

*Can this knowledge of sin ever be “good” enough or “deep” enough? I believe Satan uses this as a trap to keep sinners from coming to an end with self and bowing before God in Christ. Ultimately, it is not the knowledge of sin that is the ground for mercy. In other words, God does not show mercy because there is a certain knowledge of sin. He shows mercy because He is sovereignly moved in Himself. May that be evermore discerned!*

I believe Satan uses this as a trap to keep sinners from coming to an end with self and bowing before God in Christ. Ultimately, it is not the knowledge of sin that is the ground for mercy. In other words, God does not show mercy because there is a certain knowledge of sin. He shows mercy because He is sovereignly moved in Himself. May that be evermore discerned! Always remember, salvation does not rest upon the justification of the believer for his faith’s sake

but solely upon the justification of the ungodly for Jesus’ sake. No sinner is ever saved because he has sufficient knowledge of his sin. May the Lord work mightily by His grace! Scriptural conversions take place according to God’s divine counsel and work. May sinners be shown who they are and what there is to be found in the unsearchable riches of Christ. It is Christ who makes Himself suitable, necessary, and indispensable in the way of salvation and reconciliation with a holy and a righteous God. He makes Himself known in such a way that a sinner cries out, “He is altogether lovely.” Dear reader, what think ye of Christ? □

Send your questions to Rev. H. Hofman, 2339 Deer Trail Dr. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505, or hofman@premieronline.net.



## Current Events

### Bethel NRC Refugee Committee News

Bethel NRC Refugee Committee (Chilliwack) is disappointed that it had to stop sponsoring a second persecuted Christian family we have been trying to sponsor. We have been working with them for over three years, but it appears this door has been shut. After several rejections and appeals, the Canadian embassy still did not feel that the family provided enough proof of persecution or need for refugee status.

We pray that the Lord will continue to sustain the family, and that He will provide opening for them to receive refugee status elsewhere.

Thank you for your prayers and support for this family. God has used our congregation for a short time to help them, and we trust that that has not been wasted. The committee has moved forward with reviewing and selecting an alternate family to sponsor. After hearing of the difficulties with the Thailand embassy, we have chosen a Kurdish/Syrian family currently living in Zahle, Lebanon, where the father works as a church worker in a Baptist congregation. In 2014, the mother was encouraged to go to a church to receive food and supplies. At first, she just went for the food but the more she heard the gospel, the more she began to put her faith in Jesus. When the whole family began attending church, their Muslim neighbors noticed and threatened to kill them, forcing them to leave that city. Please pray for the committee as we navigate through this new sponsorship that all may go smoothly and timely. Also, please pray for this new family that they may be protected and supported, and Lord willing, may come to Canada soon. On a note of thankfulness, our first sponsored family has recently become Canadian citizens.

—Taken from a recent Bethel NRC bulletin

### Nigerian Government Silent as Militants Kill Farmers in Rural Communities

Radical terrorists in Nigeria's fertile state of Plateau recently killed a number of Christian farmers in rural communities. The Christian farmers, who were about to harvest Irish potatoes, unexpectedly found themselves gathering the dead bodies of their loved ones instead.

The Fulani militias armed with AK-47s and machetes attacked the Christian villagers on a Sunday night. Other villagers were ambushed while going to their farm. These same stories have long repeated themselves in Christian communities across Plateau State in at least five other areas. According to a pastor in the community, "the attack was carried out within ten minutes and seven lives were lost just like that." Others were wounded. A community leader said the Nigerian government is not willing to listen to the plight of Christians in Nigeria, leaving them to the mercy of gunmen.

—Persecution.org

### Hmong Christians Suffering Daily Persecution in Vietnam

Hmong Christians in the Nghe An province of Vietnam are suffering from severe persecution. According to sources, officials in the province are trying to create "Christian-free zones" where they are able to operate "with no conscience or humanity," as if the religious freedom violations were occurring in a country other than Vietnam, where such acts are not legal. Other forms of persecution come from within their own communities. Most Vietnamese follow traditional animist teachings, and many who convert to Christianity from the traditional faith face

rejection and even persecution from their family members and communities. Authorities pressure animist relatives of Christian converts to drive Christians from their homes and exile them. The only hope these Christians have of rejoining their communities is if they renounce their new faith. Leaders from churches have appealed to government authorities for intervention and support. The Vietnamese government has not responded to any of their pleas for assistance.

—Persecution.org

### Christian Convert from Islam Killed in East Uganda

Three men reviling a convert to Christianity for leading Muslims to Christ in eastern Uganda killed him on Sunday, July 3, a witness said. He was slain with a sword in a swamp. He was forty-seven and is survived by his wife and five children. He had just left an evening worship service. "The killers were condemning him for converting Muslims to Christianity," a witness said. "We hid ourselves in a thick bush." The witnesses were able to recognize the three assailants. His pastor said, "[Many] mourn the death of their beloved convert from Islam who had been going from one church to another testifying about how he converted to Christianity...his testimony was an encouragement to many Christians in my church...we have lost a dynamic evangelist." Police arrested one assailant who told police, "We warned him to come back to our religion...but he turned a deaf ear—we're proud of killing him." The other two assailants are being hunted. This was the latest of many instances of persecution of Christians in Uganda. Uganda's constitution and other laws provide for religious freedom, including the right to propagate one's faith and convert from one faith to another. Muslims make up no more than twelve percent of Uganda's population, with high concentrations in eastern areas of the country.

—ChristianHeadlines.com

### Macedonians Unite to Resist Radical Gender Ideology

Two years ago, the Macedonian Ministry of Education announced a new law to "combat violence" and "promote equality" in education. Unbeknownst to the Macedonian people, the true purpose of the reforms was to undermine parents and implement radical gender ideology in government schools. Due to the limited understanding of its deceptive contents, the education law passed without a fight. A small group of Macedonians became aware of these developments shortly after the passage of the law and mobilized to protect the right of parents to guide their children in sensitive matters and to shield them from gender ideology. Unfortunately, it did not stop with the new education law. Last year, a bill to allow individuals to falsify their "sex" on documents to use their preferred "gender identity" was also proposed. Several websites announced that members of parliament would soon be voting on this bill using an accelerated procedure to ensure swift passage. This was the breaking point. In an exciting series of events, several likeminded parents and organizations battling gender ideology in the country were connected and formed a coalition. This small group took off like wildfire. After two full days of phone calls, contacts and meetings, it was announced that the bill was being withdrawn. The coalition experienced their first victory. Certainly nothing can stop a group of concerned parents once they are mobilized to take a stand to protect their children and families.

—FamilyWatch.org



# Timothy FOR THE YOUNG

## **The Confession of Faith** (33) **Article XXX: Concerning the Government of, and Offices in the Church** *(continued)*

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

Last month we have read something of the differences there are in our days with regard to the authority of the churches. The government in other churches was explained in brief, but no doubt you would also like to know what it is in our denomination. Our form of church government is called The Reformed or Presbyterian System.

The Reformed churches do not claim that their system of church government is described in every detail by the Word of God, but they do assert that its fundamental principles are directly derived from Scripture. Let us briefly review its history. In the Old Testament times, the authority was given by the Lord to the father, who was priest in his house. After the law was given, much authority was placed in the hands of the priests and Levites, and later, after the exile in Babylon, the Sanhedrin drew much power to itself.

In the New Testament church Christ gave much authority to the apostles, and later, according to the will of God, the offices of shepherd, elder, and deacon were developed. According to the Reformed view, Christ has given the authority to the office bearers who rule on His behalf. The institution of the local church went out from Christ who called the believers to a regular church life. The apostle wrote to those Hebrews who were persecuted, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is."

The Reformed principle of church government can be found in the Church Order. In this article of our confession, we read: "We believe, that this true Church must be governed by that spiritual policy which our Lord has taught us in His Word; namely, that there must be ministers or pastors to preach the Word of God, and to administer the sacraments." Calvin originally made a difference between ministers and shepherds, but the synods which were later held

have taken these two names as one and the same office. In fact, the office of minister is not different from that of elder, as Paul said, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the Word and doctrine." In those days some of the elders defended and preached the Truth, while the majority took care of the church government.

The special task of the ministers is to preach and to administer the sacraments. There is not a more important work than to be called by the Great Shepherd Himself and to be qualified by Him to tend the flock of God. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace." It is necessary to be called to this office. In our days many become ministers without a calling to this office. In most of the churches anyone can become a minister, but practice shows us that it is not a solution, and God's Word clearly states that we must be called as was Moses.

In our denomination we have the Curatorium which listens to the candidates for the ministry on behalf of our churches. This begins and ends with prayer, asking for God's leading in the decision to be made. I do not say it is perfect, but we feel it is the best way for this while seeking the honor of God and the welfare of the church. Especially when we see all of the vacant congregations, we must realize the great need. We hope this may be bound upon the hearts of many, especially those who have learned to pray.

This article also speaks of the elders, or presbyters, which means eldest. "Also elders and deacons, who, together with the pastors, form the council of the Church." The apostles preached and took care of the poor, but then Acts 6 describes how seven deacons were chosen. Elders with the minister have the oversight of the church, but the elders must also oversee the minister in his doctrine and life.

Some wish to infer from Romans 16:1 that women have been deacons in the church. This would be a contradiction with God's Word which says that women are to be silent in the church. No, these women did not have an office in the church, but we believe that there were those who served the church. Today we might call them social workers, or midwives and nurses, who worked for the deacons and helped the sick and needy.

At times you hear wrong thoughts about the office of deacon as if it were not so important. It is said that an elder must be converted but as deacon this is not necessary; he must only be a respected person in the congregation. According to God's requirement, none may be unconverted, and that is also applicable for a deacon. The third question in the form of ordination of elders and deacons reads, "Whether ye promise, agreeably to said doctrine, faithfully, according to your ability, to discharge your respective offices, as they are here described?" "Do ye also jointly promise to walk in all godliness?" Further in the form we read: "Be ye all with one accord faithful in your

offices and hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience, being good examples unto all the people."

How necessary it is for the churches to receive men as described in that form. We often pray for ministers, and it truly is a great need, but is it not the same for other office bearers? We should not forget this in our prayers, and we hope that the Spirit of prayer may give this in our midst. "That by these means the true religion may be preserved, and the true doctrine everywhere propagated." It is necessary that the whole consistory realize this, and that all must be done with the help of the Lord.

We must not forget what we have to do with men who also have shortcomings. When we know ourselves, then we can be patient with others. Our article concludes with these words: "By these means everything will be carried on in the Church with good order and decency, when faithful men are chosen, according to the rule prescribed by St. Paul in his Epistle to Timothy."

May the Great Office Bearer, Jesus Christ, remember us in His mercy and grace.



## Bible Stories for Little Ones

### Jephthah

(Based on Judges 10&11)

Gideon had died, and the Israelites had forgotten the Lord. Enemies had come and invaded the land of Israel. God had sent more judges to save His people. The Bible does not tell us much about them, but again the Israelites forgot God and returned to idols. Over and over this happened. Finally, the Ammonites came and ruled Israel for eighteen years. Then the children of Israel again cried unto God for help.

Hear what God said: "Did I not deliver you from the Egyptians, the Amorites, and five other enemies? Every time you cried, I heard and delivered you, but afterwards you turned aside from serving Me. Each time you forgot Me and served other gods. I will NOT deliver you anymore. Go to all those gods whom you have served. Go to Baal, to Ashtaroth, and to all those other gods whom you thought were so special. Go and ask them for help."

Would God really say "no" and stop helping His people? In speaking to them in this way, God was again showing them how wrong they had been. God

had told the people over and over and OVER that if they would leave their idols and worship HIM, He would keep them safe from their enemies. Yet, again and again they had gone the wrong way. They had worshipped false gods.

When the people heard God's words, they became very sorry for their wicked ways. They knew they had done wrong. They knew that those idols could not help them; only God could. So, they prayed saying: "We have sinned; do with us whatever seems good to Thee because we deserve it, but, please, just save us this one time." Then they put away their idols and worshipped the Lord.

Again, we will see how willing and merciful the Lord truly is to those who turn unto Him for their help. Jephthah, a brave man of Israel, was a leader of a small group of men. Because of that, many Israelites thought Jephthah would make a good captain of their army against the Ammonites who were so troublesome to them. However, there was

a problem. Jephthah had been pushed out of his own home and made to live far away. His own brothers had done it because his mother was not their mother. Because Jephthah was not their full brother, these men hated him and had made him leave. Now they were at his door, asking him to come back to be the captain of their army.

“You made me leave home!” cried Jephthah. “Why are you now coming to ask me for help? If I go with you and God helps me drive the Ammonites out of the country, will you let me stay and be your leader?”

“Yes, we promise we will,” the men said. So, Jephthah went with them.

Jephthah was wise. First, he tried to make peace by talking with the king of Ammon. When that did not work, he decided to fight with them. Before Jephthah took his army to the battle, he prayed to God for help and said: “Oh God, please help me win this war. If I do win, I promise that I will give unto Thee the first thing that comes through the doors of my house to meet me.” Jephthah promised to offer to the Lord whatever it would be.

Jephthah did, indeed, win the war, and as he hurried home, he was thinking of his promise to

offer to God the first thing that came from his house. What do you think happened? It was his only child, his daughter, who came out with music and dancing; she was so happy to see him safely home from the battle, especially since the enemy had been defeated. On the contrary Jephthah was not happy. “O dear daughter, you have made me very sad. I promised God to give Him the first thing that came from my house, and—it was you.”

“Father,” the girl told him, “If you promised that, then you must do it.” How wise she was.

Does this mean that Jephthah really offered his daughter on an altar and burned her as a sacrifice to the Lord? We hardly think so. We know that it was against the law of God, given to Moses, to kill people as a sacrifice to the Lord. Nevertheless, Jephthah did indeed give her up to God as he had promised, by giving her to the service of the Lord. This meant that she would never be married, but she would work in the service of the Lord for the remainder of her life. Jephthah and his daughter gave God the honor for all that He had done for Israel. That is really a blessed place to be, is it not?



## Bible Quiz

**Free**

Dear Boys and Girls,

Hidden in the tall grasses at the edge of the field, six small bunnies lay curled up together in a soft nest of their mother's fur. The mother rabbit had carefully covered her babies with some dry bits of grass and leaves before hopping off for the morning. She would come back at noon to feed her babies, but it was best if she left them alone as much as possible. If she stayed with the nest all day, she would attract attention to her babies, and then what would become of them? Coyotes, dogs, birds of prey, and other predators would only be too happy to find a nest full of tasty rabbits. Mother rabbit was better off only coming to the nest a few times a day. It was a rabbit's way.

Something stirred in the nest. Several bunnies were awake, and one bold little one did not appreciate

being tucked away under the leaves. He wanted to see the world although he knew from his mother's actions that he ought to stay in the nest. He wanted to be free! The bold little bunny squirmed out of the nest. After all, he was seventeen days old. In just four more days he would be ready to live on his own anyway. So why did he always have to stay in that boring nest? Freedom was just a few hops and jumps away...

After only an hour had passed, the bold little rabbit was running desperately for his life. A fox was close on his heels, and he was quite sure he had just crossed the path of a snake, too. If only the rabbit had stayed where his mother wanted him, he would not be in such trouble. Now, instead of being care-free, he was just inches away from being captured; in the clutches of the fox, he would lose his freedom and his life.

What is freedom? Some think that freedom is being free to do what you want. Hasn't that idea come up in each of your hearts, boys and girls? Haven't there been times when you thought, "If only Dad wouldn't be so strict," and, "If only Mom would let me...?" Always remember that if you obtained your wish to do as you like, it would not make you happy.

Sometimes when children grow to be teenagers, they rebel against the rules so much that they do things they are not allowed to do. They wish to be free...but if parents were unable to hold them any longer, and worse, if God were to let them go, they would end up in nothing but trouble. Because of that wish to "do what I want," some young people have ended up being an alcoholic, being injured in a motorcycle accident, losing their job and their savings, etc. Such a person is actually bound and not free. He is bound to his sin, his need to drink, or other things. He needs to be freed from his addiction or his trouble.

Others think of freedom as the opposite of oppression and war. The people in the war in Ukraine are not living in freedom. Some think of freedom as living in a home free of worry—the refrigerator is full, the driveway has two reliable cars, the propane tank is full to run the heat, and so on. When you see photos of poor people in third world countries, persecuted Christians far away from us, or sick children in hospitals, you feel sorry for them and think, "Why?" When you compare this to your own freedoms and comforts, you might think, "Why not me? Why may I have freedom?"

That is truly something to consider because we do not deserve any better. When we wake up on a Sunday morning and try to think of which day it is, we might think, "Oh, it is Sunday today; today we have to go to church." However, should it not be a wonder that we are FREE to go to church?

Yet... are we free? Or are we slaves? Slaves of what? Slaves of sin. Slaves of the liar who we believe. Slaves of our own inclinations. No, we are not imprisoned or in refugee camps where we are forced to stay; yet, we are slaves. The worst part is that we are WILLING slaves. We do not try to become free of the bonds which bind us. UNLESS the Lord shows us how miserable we are and shows us true freedom, we do not mind being a captive of sin, Satan, self, and the world.

What is true freedom? Freedom is the result of someone being stopped—someone who becomes a subject of King Jesus, a possession of Jesus Christ. Yes, as a subject of this King, he must obey and serve Him, but this service is such a delight that it

is not at all a burden. He is only sad that he cannot do it better! There is a verse about this King he serves which tells a little of how good He is:

*Thou are coming to a King,  
Large petitions with thee bring;  
For His grace and power are such,  
None can ever ask too much.*

These subjects of King Jesus believe the truths of God's Word, and this keeps them free from mistakes and false teachings. Through Christ, they are able to be made free from the guilt and the filth of sin. They ask for this often.

Those who follow this King receive light on the path to go on instead of walking in a darkness of sin towards destruction. They are sad when they slide backwards on this path and sin against the King. For them, complete freedom will one day be when they are in heaven where there will be no more sin, no more tears, and no more temptation.

Will you be there?

\* \* \* \* \*

By whom were each of these people imprisoned or enslaved?

1. Peter \_\_\_\_
2. Paul & Silas \_\_\_\_
3. Israelites \_\_\_\_
4. Samson \_\_\_\_
5. Joseph \_\_\_\_
6. New Testament Christians \_\_\_\_

- a. Philistines
- b. Saul of Tarsus
- c. Egyptians
- d. Romans
- e. Pharaoh's wife
- f. Romans

From what were the following people freed by the Lord Jesus?

7. The woman in Luke 13:11 \_\_\_\_
  8. The man in Mark 2:4 \_\_\_\_
  9. The men in Mark 4:35 \_\_\_\_
  10. A little girl in Mark 5:23 \_\_\_\_
  11. The beggar in Mark 10:46 \_\_\_\_
  12. The boy in Mark 9:17 \_\_\_\_
- a. The sickness of palsy
  - b. An infirmity that bowed her down eighteen years
  - c. death
  - d. A big storm
  - e. Blindness
  - f. Deafness, dumbness, and lunatic fits

Fill in the blanks.

13. "Stand fast therefore in the \_\_\_\_\_ wherewith Christ hath made us free." (Galatians)
14. "And ye shall know the \_\_\_\_\_, and the truth shall make you free." (John)
15. "If the \_\_\_\_\_ therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." (John)
16. "Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of \_\_\_\_\_, being bound in affliction and iron." (Psalm 107)

### For the Younger Children

17. Fill in the missing letter in each text. Then place these letters in the blank of the last text to complete it.
- Romans 6:7 – For he that is dead is fr\_\_\_\_ed from sin.
  - Romans 6:18 – Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of ri\_\_\_\_hteousness.
  - Romans 8:32 – He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also free\_\_\_\_ give us all things?
  - Romans 8:2 – For the law of the S\_\_\_\_irit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.
  - Hebrews 2:15 – And deliver them who through fear of dea\_\_\_\_h were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of \_\_\_\_\_, from the house of bondage.

### For the Older Children

Fill in blanks.

18. "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of \_\_\_\_\_, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Romans 8).

19. "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of \_\_\_\_\_ into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Romans 8)

20. "Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the \_\_\_\_\_" (Galatians)

21. "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in \_\_\_\_\_?" (Galatians)

22. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the \_\_\_\_\_ of bondage" (Galatians).

23. "Turn you to the strong hold, ye \_\_\_\_\_ of hope: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee" (Zechariah)

\* \* \* \* \*

Answers to August's "Queens" quiz:

1. I. Jezebel
2. D. Queen of Sheba
3. O. Vashti
4. L. Esther
5. IDOL 1 Kings 15:13
6. It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts, and of thy wisdom:
7. Wisdom 1 Kings 10:4
8. Queen 1 Kings 11:19
9. King 2 Kings 10:13
10. Desire 2 Chronicles 9:12
11. Golden Esther 5:2
12. Women Psalm 45:9
13. Countenance Daniel 5:10
14. Greater Matthew 12:42
15. Candace Acts 8:27

Answers to previous quizzes were received in July from:

Clay Bakker 15  
Britni Blom (2) 34  
Jenina Blom 27  
Lawrence Blom 21  
Martena Blom (2) 13  
Tiffany Blom (2) 8  
Jaxon DeKorne 8  
Juliette DeKorne 9  
Kaylee Den Boer (2) 13  
Allison Ekema (2) 5  
Kaylynn Ekema (2) 33  
Kyal Grisnich 17  
Kynlee Grisnich 2

Logan Grisnich 19  
Taryn Grisnich 15  
Kari Groen 25  
Kurtis Groen 26  
Kate Hoogendoorn 19  
Weston Hoogendoorn 13  
Joey Koenen 7  
Lydia Koenen 9  
Jakayla Loedeman 1  
Kari Mans 13  
Abraham Mol 3  
Madeline Mol 13  
Olivia Mol 22

Teddy Mol 28  
John Murphy 26  
Andrew Murphy 6  
Marielle Neels 21  
Blake Pannekoek 16  
Lauren Pannekoek 28  
Alex Rozeboom (2) 8  
Nevaeh Rozeboom 9  
Tessa Spaans 5  
Amara Stam 4  
Megan Taylor (4) 26  
Maurice Van Garderen 30  
Emmalyn Van Garderen 32

Sadie Van Lagen 1  
Nicholas Van Liere 2  
Lydia Van Manen 34  
Rosalee Van Manen 31  
Kaiven Van Middendorp (2) 35  
Konner Van Middendorp (2) 35  
Brett Van Velthuisen 13  
Kenna Van Velthuisen 5  
Kason Van Velthuisen 15  
Trent Van Velthuisen 12  
Taylina Van Wingerden (2) 12  
Wyatt Vande Waerdt 3( ) 20  
Aubrey Vanden Berg 15

Heidi Vandenberg 30  
Kristen Vandenberg 17  
Allysa Ymker 4  
Allyson Ymker 21  
Cameron Ymker 27  
Lauren Ymker (2) 12

**12 Bibles were sent to Bolivia this month. The total is now 595—thank you, boys and girls!**

Key to numbers following names:

- Numbers in parentheses represent how many quizzes person answered in the month being reported.
- Numbers without parentheses indicate how many quizzes person has completed toward earning Bibles for Bolivia.
- Solid box indicates person has earned a Bible in the month being reported. Each time six quizzes are completed, another Bible is sent to Bolivia.



# Letters to My Young Readers



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Please send your answers to the address shown below:

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

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## Necessity of Prayer

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

***“He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the Lord”*** (2 Kings 4:33).

The story of the Shunamite woman is well known to young and old. It speaks about the prophet Elisha who was standing in the power of faith. It was in answer to his prayer that the Lord gave a son to the Shunamite woman. In this chapter we read that unexpectedly the Lord took the child away. The child had gone with his father to the field at harvest time. When he did not feel well, he was brought back home, and in a few hours his breath was gone.

We see how the mother acted in those most difficult circumstances of her life when she had to miss her child. She laid that child on the bed of the prophet Elisha who often sojourned in her house in the special room which they had built for him. Then she went to the prophet and laid the question before him, “Did I desire a son of my lord?” (2 Kings 4:28). No, she never asked for that child, although it was the desire of her heart. Now we see that the prophet came to her house and found the dead child in his room. He entered the room, closed the door so that he would be alone with the dead child, and began to pray. He began to wrestle at the throne of grace, until the Lord would give deliverance.

Do we not see, congregation, the power of prayer and how that for the Lord nothing is too wonderful? Do we not find the same need in Zarephath where a widow had also lost her son while the prophet Elijah was with them? We see how he also prayed to the Lord. Then we must say that these two men were asking such great things of the Lord, and therefore they wanted to be alone. They wanted to be in solitude, that, as it were, they were separated

from the world and all their attention could be given to a holy prayer unto the Lord.

When we see these two servants of the Lord, Elijah and Elisha, how they prayed, compare it with our prayers, congregation. Are there not many reasons that we must be ashamed? Do we not often close our eyes and fold our hands only out of custom? I know that it is a good custom and is according to the institutions of the Lord if our parents have instructed us in this way. However, if it is only out of custom, and we repeat so many times the same needs, and most of the times are speaking only about the temporal needs we have, then we do not think about the most important thing in our life. So many times we pray thoughtlessly, using certain terms, while nothing is felt of it in our heart.

When we think of the prayer of the publican and we hear the prayer of the Pharisee, on what side do we stand, my hearers? The Pharisee also served the Lord when he was praying, but he was not seeking the glory of God. He was praying only so that he would be seen by man. We know that those Pharisees received a wage on their labor because they were honored by man. The people said that they were such religious people, but the Lord did not hear them. How different it was with the publican, because he went home justified rather than the other.

True prayer in great need, even when it is not heard by man, and even when we are not praised by man for our prayer, the Lord will hear for Christ’s sake. Do we personally know such communion with the Lord in our prayer, in our supplication?

## News & Announcements

### ■ Obituaries

ENGELSMA, David G. – Age 75, July 25, 2022; Grand Rapids, Michigan; Wife – Beth; Children – Dave A. & Cindy, Aimee & Eric Boluyt, Christopher & Heather, Alice & John Schelling, Andrea & Roshawn Gillon, Nathan & Christina, Angela & Tylor Joseph; 35 grandchildren; Siblings – Mary & Dirk Knibbe, Daniel & Sharon, Janet & Paul DeVisser, Ted & Nancy, Tom & Deb; Brothers-in-law – Dick & Marilyn DeVisser, Tim & Ruth DeVisser. (Rev. H. Hofman, Psalm 37:37.)

SPAANS, Steven (Stubby) – Age 39, July 22, 2022; Rock Valley, Iowa; Wife – Stacy (nee Brantsen); Stepchildren – Makinsy Brantsen, Jordan Brantsen; Siblings – Brenda & Marty Erickson, Laurie & Dan Van Schouwen, Barry & Kristen; Sisters-in-law – Rachel, Denise & Steve Boer; Parents – Larry & Bonnie; Mother-in-law – Hermina Borman; Grandmother – Hermina Van Veldhuizen; predeceased by brother Les and father-in-law Don Borman. (Rev. J.J. Witvoet, Luke 13:5.)

ZOMER, Sophia (nee Roskam) – Age 86, July 28, 2022; Sioux Center, Iowa; Husband – John; Children – Henry & Roxy, Annette & Kip Maggert, Connie & Gywen Hoogendoorn, John & Stacy, Lorinda “Sue” & Randy Techen, Dale & Myra, Kathy & Doug Van Beek, Calvin & Amber, Jolene & Walt VanderWaal; 39 grandchildren; 30 great-grandchildren; Sister – Hilda & Jake Van Voorst; Sisters-in-law – Harriet Roskam; Bea Roskam-Nydam. (Rev. H. Hofman, Mark 8:35&36.)

### ■ New from Bible Truth Books

*From Weaver to Preacher*—by M.H. Karels-Meeuse. John Warburton (1776-1857) was the son of a poor weaver in England. Like his father, John became a weaver, but the Lord had another task laid away for him: to become a preacher of the gospel. In his eventful life, John and his family experienced much poverty and many wonderful deliverances. He wrote about these in his autobiography, *Mercies of a Covenant God*. For children ages 10-14. Respectfully illustrated, hardcover, 129 pages, \$14.75.

*Pilgrim's Progress*—Christian's Journey—by A.C.H. van Vuuren. Historically, the only acceptable children's edition of *Pilgrim's Progress* has been the much-simplified *Pictorial Pilgrim's Progress*. Mr. van Vuuren's book nicely brings Bunyan's work to readers ages 10-15. It is divided into fifty-five chapters, each with an accompanying psalter, an explanation, and comprehension questions. Respectful illustrations by Mr. Adri Burghout have been added and nicely compliment the book. The book is well-translated and published by the John Bunyan Stichting in Barneveld, the Netherlands. Hardcover, 288 pages, \$20.00.

*Story Treasures, Volume 2*—by Mr. Adrian Stoutjesdyk. The second collection of stories compiled by the former principal of the Mount Cheam Christian School in Chilliwack, BC. Paperback, \$11.45.

*O Lord, Be Thou My Helper True*—by the Grand Rapids Netherlands Reformed Choir. The choir's 2022 Psalter CD has now been released. \$13.00.

*The Divine Protection*—by the Asaph Choir of Rock Valley/Sioux Center/Sioux Falls. The Asaph Choir's 2022 Psalter CD has also been released. \$15.00.

Please note that the prices above do not include postage.

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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.**

### 25th Wedding Anniversary

On August 28, 2022,  
our dear friends,

#### Student & Mrs. Peter Kleijer

were given to commemorate their  
25th wedding anniversary.

*“I will abide in Thy tabernacle for ever:  
I will trust in the covert of Thy wings. Selah”*  
(Psalm 61:4).

3692 Sunrise Lane NW  
Walker, MI 49534

### 45th Wedding Anniversary

On August 10, 2022,  
our dear parents, and grandparents,

#### Rev. & Mrs. A.H. Verhoef

were privileged to commemorate their  
45th wedding anniversary.

*“Because the LORD our God is good,  
His mercy is forever sure;  
His truth at all times firmly stood,  
And shall from age to age endure”*  
(Psalter 268:4).

1142 Lakeshore Road West  
St. Catharines, ON L2R 6P9

### 60th Wedding Anniversary

The Lord willing, on September 21, 2022,  
our dear parents, grandparents,  
and great-grandparents,

#### Jacobus & Margaret Willekes

hope to commemorate their  
60th wedding anniversary.

They were united in marriage by the late  
Rev. M. Heerschaap with the following text:

*“In all thy ways acknowledge Him,  
and He shall direct thy paths”*  
(Proverbs 3:6).

38 Heather Hills Drive  
Oak Ridge, NJ 07438

### ■ The Banner of Truth in Audio Format

Monthly copies of the articles appearing in *The Banner of Truth* are available on MP3s and CDs for those who have reading difficulties such as poor vision. These MP3s are produced by a committee in Norwich, with the support of the Norwich consistory, who make the MP3s available to your consistory. Consistories distribute the MP3s and CDs which are provided at no cost. You may contact Mrs. Tillie Lamain at 616-242-0291 or blamain@netscape.net to arrange for a free subscription or to discontinue receiving *The Banner of Truth* on CD.

Dear reader, the need is great. If you have an education background, please take a moment to consider the many positions available across our congregations.

### Administrators Needed

**NETHERLANDS REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, POMPTON PLAINS, NEW JERSEY.** 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.

Relocation expenses and financial incentives will be discussed upon inquiry. For more information or to apply, please contact Tim Mol (education chairman) at 973-204-5677 or email [timjmol@yahoo.com](mailto:timjmol@yahoo.com), or John Van Der Brink (administrator) at 973-628-7400 email [nrcs\\_office@nrcsnj.org](mailto:nrcs_office@nrcsnj.org).

**TRINITY REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, SUNNYSIDE, WASHINGTON,** welcomes applications for an administrator/teacher 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 Maaïke Van Wingerden at 509-840-0437 or email [trinityrcs@embarqmail.com](mailto:trinityrcs@embarqmail.com).

### Teachers Needed

**CALVIN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, COAL-HURST, ALBERTA,** invites applications from middle and/or high school teachers for the 2022-23 school year, D.V. We would be thankful to hear from versatile and dedicated applicants to enable continued provision of Christian education to our youth. All applicants must be members of the NRC or a closely-related denomination, and eligible for Alberta certification. For information about positions available, 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 2022-23 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. For 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 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. Inquiries should be addressed to the principal, Mr. Jan Neels, at [jneels@mccs.ca](mailto:jneels@mccs.ca). Please send your application, along with supporting documentation, to Mr. Jan Neels and to the board secretary, Mr. Toby de Rover, at [tobyderover@gmail.com](mailto:tobyderover@gmail.com).

**PROVIDENCE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN,** is inviting inquiries from qualified teachers interested in teaching in our small Christian school. We presently have openings at the elementary level. For more information, please contact our principal, Tom Kwekel, at [tkwekel@pskzoo.com](mailto:tkwekel@pskzoo.com) or 616-644-2661.

**NETHERLANDS REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, POMPTON PLAINS, NEW JERSEY.** We have openings in both elementary and junior high grades for the 2022-23 school year. Qualified applicants require a teaching degree and an earnest interest in teaching in a Christian school and must be a member in good standing of one of Netherlands Reformed congregations or a denomination with similar teachings.

To apply, please see our school's contact information in the Administrators section.

**REHOBOTH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, NORWICH, ONTARIO,** is welcoming applications for both elementary and secondary teaching positions for the 2022-23 school year. One particular area of need is a French teacher at the elementary and, potentially, high school, grade levels. We continue to 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 about available positions, or contact the interim director, Mr. Andy Stubbe, at [director@rcsnorwich.com](mailto:director@rcsnorwich.com) or 519-863-2403, ext. 223. Submit cover letters and resumé to [hr@rcsnorwich.com](mailto:hr@rcsnorwich.com).

**TIMOTHY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, CHILLIWACK, BRITISH COLUMBIA,** is looking for teachers who are excited about teaching and have a particular love for the hearts of young people. We have an urgent need for primary teachers but would also consider/encourage secondary and intermediate grade-level applicants. If you are such a teacher, please apply to join our team. Applicants need to be certifiable to teach in British Columbia. For information and/or an application form, please contact either the principal, Mr. Doug Stam, at 604-794-7114 or [dstam@timothychristian.ca](mailto:dstam@timothychristian.ca), or the school board president, Mr. Wim Neels, at 604-858-8834 or [wimneels@timothychristian.ca](mailto:wimneels@timothychristian.ca).

### To All Candidates for Education 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!**

## Luther's Care for His Wife and Children

*Martin Luther (1483-1546)*

Luther had this passage in his last will and testament. "Lord God, I thank Thee, for that Thou hast been pleased to make me a poor and indigent man upon earth. I have neither house, nor land, nor money to leave behind me. Thou hast given me a wife and children whom I now restore to Thee. Lord, nourish, teach, and preserve them as Thou hast me"

## Joy and Peace in Believing

Sometimes a light surprises  
The Christian while he sings;  
It is the Lord who rises  
With healing in His wings:  
When comforts are declining,  
He grants the soul again  
A season of clear shining,  
To cheer it after rain.

In holy contemplation,  
We sweetly then pursue  
The theme of God's salvation,  
And find it ever new:  
Set free from present sorrow,  
We cheerfully can say,  
E'en let th' unknown to-morrow  
Bring with it what it may.

It can bring with it nothing  
But He will bear us through;  
Who gives the lilies clothing,  
Will clothe His people too:  
Beneath the spreading heavens,  
No creature but is fed;  
And He who feeds the ravens,  
Will give His children bread.

Though vine nor fig-tree neither  
Their wonted fruit shall bear,  
Though all the field should wither,  
Nor flocks nor herds be there:  
Yet God the same abiding,  
His praise shall tune my voice;  
For while in Him confiding,  
I cannot but rejoice.

—John Newton