

Insight Into

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Insight Into

General Information

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

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MEDITATION

A Dependent Life

“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need”

(Hebrews 4:16).

Rev. J. Mijnders (1921-2021)

In our text, the apostle Paul speaks of going boldly. He includes himself when he says, “Let us.” No matter how tempted a person may be, the coming to God’s throne of grace must always be that which adorns his life. The life of God’s people remains a deeply dependent life.

The apostle speaks here of coming. Think here of the faithful coming of the Israelite with the guilt and sin offering to the sanctuary of the Lord. The experience of guilt and sin drove him, but also a true awareness of what the poet says: “There is forgiveness with Thee.”

So it is in our text. Coming to the throne of grace testifies an awareness of guilt, sin, and misery. If the throne of grace is to be rightly known and valued, it is necessary to be uncovered to our lost state. In coming to that throne and being before it, two things are always clearly revealed: the lost state of the sinner and salvation through Christ. Therefore, as shameful and condemning as the uncovering is of him who enters, so wondrous, delightful, and uplifting is the revelation of that throne of grace.

Here we see clearly that coming to that throne is an act of faith. Such an approach means: going out of oneself, renouncing oneself and looking up to Him, of whom chapter 5:9 says: “And being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him.” In Him and through Him, that coming becomes a bold coming.

- Suggested Reading: Hebrews 5



Our Bodies

By T. DeWitt Talmage

What right has any man or woman to deface the temple of the Holy Ghost? What is the ear? Why, it is the whispering gallery of the human soul. What is the eye? It is the observatory God constructed, its telescope sweeping the heavens. What is the hand? An instrument so wonderful that when the Earl of Bridgewater bequeathed in his will \$40,000 for treatises to be written on the wisdom, power and goodness of God, Sir Charles Bell, the great English anatomist and surgeon, found his greatest illustration in the construction of the human hand, devoting his whole book to that subject.

So wonderful are these bodies that God names His own attributes after different parts of them. His omniscience - it is God's eye. His omnipresence - it is God's ear. His omnipotence - it is God's arm. The upholstery of the midnight heavens - it is the work of God's fingers. His life-giving power - it is the breath of the Almighty. His dominion - "the government shall be upon His shoulder."

A body so divinely honored and so divinely constructed - let us be careful not to abuse it.

"If a preacher is not first preaching to himself, better that he falls on the steps of the pulpit and breaks his neck than preaches that sermon." ~ John Calvin (1509-1564)

The Young David Brainerd



By E. M. Bounds

One of the most sublime stories ever recorded in earthly annals is that of David Brainerd. No miracle attests with diviner force the truth of Christianity than the life and work of such a man.

A long, struggling day and night with consumption of the lungs, unschooled in the care of souls, having access to the American Indians, whose salvation he sought - for a large portion of time only through the bungling medium of a pagan interpreter - with the Word of God in his heart and his soul fired with divine flame, he fully established among the American Indians the worship of God, and secured all its gracious results.

The Indians were changed with a great change from the lowest bestowments of an ignorant and debased heathenism - to pure, devout, intelligent Christians: all vice reformed; the external duties of Christianity at once embraced and acted on; family prayer set up; the Sabbath instituted and religiously observed; the internal graces of religion exhibited with growing sweetness and strength.

David Brainerd was God's man - for God first, last and all the time. The omnipotence of grace was made known to others as it wrought the conditions of the heart.

The whole channel of his life was broadened and cleaned out for God's fullest and most powerful passage - so that God, with all His mighty forces, could come down on the hopeless, savage wilderness and transform it into His blooming and fruitful garden; for nothing is too hard for God to do.

It was prayer that gave his ministry such spiritual power. Brainerd's whole life was a life of prayer. By day and by night he prayed. Before preaching and after preaching he prayed. In the quest for the soul of the Indians, riding through the interminable solitudes of forests, he prayed.

On his bed of straw he prayed.

Hour by hour, day after day, early morn and late at night, he was praying and fasting, pouring out his soul, interceding, communing with God.

Jonathan Edwards says of David Brainerd, “His life shows the right way to success in the work of the gospel ministry. He sought it as a soldier seeks victory in a siege or battle, or as a man runs a race for a great prize. “Animated with the love of Christ and souls, how did he labor? Always fervently! Not only in word and doctrine, in public and private, but in prayers by day and night, wrestling with God in secret and travailing in birth with unutterable groans and agonies, until Christ was formed in the hearts of the people to whom he ministered.

“Like a true son of Jacob, he persevered in wrestling through the darkness of the night, until the breaking of the day.”

“For the fetus, though enclosed in the womb of its mother, is already a human being, and it is a monstrous crime to rob it of the life which it has not yet begun to enjoy. If it seems more horrible to kill a man in his own house than in a field, because a man’s house is his place of most secure refuge, it ought surely to be deemed more atrocious to destroy a fetus in the womb before it has come to light.”

~ John Calvin (1509-1564)

“We shall never be clothed with the righteousness of Christ except we first know assuredly that we have no righteousness of our own.” ~ John Calvin (1509-1564)

The Deceitfulness of SIN

By J. C. Ryle

*I*t is a point of most serious importance, and I venture to think it does not receive the attention it deserves. You may see this deceitfulness in the wonderful proneness of men to regard sin as less sinful and dangerous than it is in the sight of God; and in their readiness to extenuate it, make excuses for it, and minimize its guilt. "It is but a little one! God is merciful! God is not extreme to mark what is done amiss! We mean well! One cannot be so particular! Where is the mighty harm? We only do as others!" Who is not familiar with this kind of language? You may see it in the long string of smooth words and phrases which men have coined in order to designate things which God calls downright wicked and ruinous to the soul. What do such expressions as "fast," "gay," "wild," "unsteady," "thoughtless," "loose" mean? They show that men try to cheat themselves into the belief that sin is not quite so sinful as God says it is, and that they are not as bad as they really are. You may see it in the tendency even of believers to indulge their children in questionable practices, and to blind their own eyes to the inevitable result of the love of money, of tampering with temptation, and sanctioning a low standard of family religion. I fear we do not sufficiently realize the extreme subtlety of our soul's disease. We are too apt to forget that temptation to sin will rarely present itself to us in its true colors, saying, "I am your deadly enemy, and I want to ruin you forever in hell." Oh, no! Sin comes to us, like Judas, with a kiss; and like Joab, with an outstretched hand and flattering words. The forbidden fruit seemed good and desirable to Eve; yet it cast her out of Eden. The walking idly on his palace roof seemed harmless enough to David, yet it ended in adultery and murder. Sin rarely seems like a sin at its first beginnings. Let us then watch and pray, lest we fall into temptation. We may give wickedness smooth names, but we cannot alter its nature and character in the sight of God. Let us remember Paul's words, "Exhort one another daily, lest any be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."



The Difficulties of Unbelief

By Anchor

That there are some things hard to explain by those who believe in the inspiration of the Scriptures, we are quite prepared to concede. At the same time, any honest person must acknowledge that many difficulties of a generation ago have vanished, having been satisfactorily met by the spade and pick of the archaeologist, and the research of scientists and scholars. But what about the difficulties of unbelief? They are far greater than those of belief! Let us just suggest a few. Those who question the inspiration of the Scriptures, rejecting the orthodox view, must explain:

1. How is it that the Old Testament, one of the most ancient books, is always marvelously accurate when it touches scientific questions, whereas all other books a hundred years old, whenever touching such questions are full of glaring, and often foolish mistakes.

2. How is it that no references to historical events, historical characters, ancient customs, geographical and astronomical records abounding in the Bible have been proven incorrect.

3. How is it that hundreds of prophecies have been fulfilled to the letter, centuries after they were recorded. In this also the Bible is unique.

4. How is it that a book written by some 40 individuals whose writings ranged over about 1,600 years, could, when bound together, present one unique whole, whose unity of thoughts in doctrine and plan is evident to the most casual of readers, and is a matter of increasing wonder and admiration to the student. How is it that this unity has never been found in any other collection of literature. Contrast the Hindu Shastras.

5. How is it that writers such as Moses, David, Isaiah, John, Paul, Peter and many others, men of integrity and spiritual acumen, could claim that many of the words they used were God's words, and all were written

by inspiration, if in truth they had written them themselves apart from the control of the Spirit. The former claim is made by the writers between 3,000 and 4,000 times.

6. How is it that fishermen and others were enabled to succeed in portraying a perfect character (in the four Gospels), which accomplishment so many talented writers have attempted, only to fail.

7. How is it that the Law given to Israel millennia ago, worked successfully for centuries without amendment or repeal (Duet. 4:2); and finally, was used as a basis for British Law. During the reign of Victoria 650 Acts of Parliament were repealed, to say nothing of amendments!

8. Moreover, they must explain how it is that God honors all the promises in His Word when conditions are fulfilled, and when presented by those to whom they have been given. If they are not His promises, why does He honor them?

9. How is it that the words of Scripture have, in numerous cases, unaided by man's influence, completely transformed the reader, turning him from the ways of sin to a holy, clean and upright life. Has any other book done this?

10. How is it that its spiritual treasures are inexhaustible. Every year produces scores of volumes, thousands of sermons, and tens of thousands of articles - all of which seek to explore the unsearchable riches of Christ, and the precious truths and teaching found in the Bible. Can this be said of any other book?

11. How is it that the Scriptures are uniquely adaptable for translation into any tongue. All other books lose greatly by being translated and the value of many would be practically lost. There are over 800 tongues and dialects in which some portion of God's Word is now obtainable in print. Many of these add freshness and beauty to a multitude of passages.

"Hope for the best, prepare for the worst, and then take what God chooses to send!"

~ Matthew Henry (1662-1714)

Advice to a Lad Who Had Left Home

By Robert Murray M'Cheyne

M'Cheyne is best-known as a godly minister in Dundee. Before then, he was the assistant to the minister in Larbert, in central Scotland. He wrote this letter, now edited, in 1836 to a lad who had just left home, and so was no longer in the Larbert congregation. His first name began with a G. M'Cheyne speaks about the congregation as sad, probably because it was so large that the ministers could not get to know the people well. Every reader, when you can understand it, is strongly recommended to read M'Cheyne's life, which is available as a paperback. Also, perhaps when you are a bit older, you should read Memoir & Remains of Robert Murray M'Cheyne, which contains a lot more material, including other letters, and sermons.

You will be surprised to hear from me. I have often wished to know you better; but in these sad perishes we cannot manage to know well everyone that we would desire to. Now you have left your father's home and our ministry. Still my desires go after you, as well as the kind thoughts of many others. And since I cannot now speak to you, I take this way of expressing my thoughts to you.

I do not know in what light you look upon me, whether as a solemn and gloomy minister, or as one who might be a companion and friend. But really, it is so short a while since I was just like you, when I enjoyed the games which you now enjoy, and read the books which you now read, that I never can think of myself as anything more than a boy.

This is one great reason why I write to you. The same youthful blood flows in my veins that flows in yours; so that when I would persuade you to come with me to the same Saviour, and to walk the rest of your life "led by the Spirit of God," I am not persuading you to anything beyond your years. I am not the grey-headed grandfather; then you might answer all I say by telling me that you are a boy. No; I am almost as much a boy as you are; as fond of happiness and of life as you are, as fond of scampering over the hills, and seeing all that is to be seen, as you are.

Another thing that persuades me to write to you is that I have felt in my own experience the lack of having a friend to direct and advise me. I had a kind brother as you have, who taught me many things. He gave me a Bible and persuaded me to read it; he tried to train me as a gardener trains the apple tree on the wall; but all in vain. I thought myself far wiser than he was, and would

always take my own way. Many a time, I well remember, I have seen him reading the Bible, or shutting his bedroom to pray, when I have been dressing to go to some entertainment, or some foolish dance.

Well, this dear friend and brother died; and though his death made a greater impression on me than ever his life had done, still I found the misery of being friendless. I do not mean that I had no relations and worldly friends, for I had many; but I had no friend who cared for my soul. I had no one to direct me to the Saviour, no one to awaken my slumbering conscience, no one to tell me about the blood of Jesus washing away all sin, no one to tell me of the Holy Spirit who is so willing to change the heart, and give the victory over my passions.

I had no minister take me by the hand, and say, Come with me, and we will do thee good. Yes, I had one friend and minister, but that was Jesus Himself, and He led me in a way that makes me give Him, and Him only, all the praise. Now, though Jesus may do this again, yet the more common way with Him is to use earthly guides. Now, if I could supply the place of such a guide to you, I should be happy. All that I want is to be pointing out the way. This is what I so much needed myself; this is what you do not need to be without, unless you wish to.

Tell me, would you work less pleasantly through the day, would you walk the streets with a sadder step, would you eat your food with less gladness of heart, would you sleep less calmly at night, if you had the forgiveness of sins – that is, if all your wicked thoughts and deeds, lies, thefts and Sabbath-breaking were all blotted out of God's book of remembrance? Would this make you less happy, do you think? You dare not say it would.

But would the forgiveness of sins not make you more happy than you are? Perhaps you will tell me that you are very happy as you are. I quite believe you. I know I was very happy when I was unforgiven. I know that I had a great pleasure in many sins, in Sabbath-breaking, for instance. Many a delightful walk I have had, speaking my own words, thinking my own thoughts and seeking my own pleasure on God's holy day. I imagine few boys were ever happier in an unconverted state than I was. No sorrow clouded my brow, no tears filled my eyes unless over some nice story book; so that I know that you say what is quite true, when you say that you are happy as you are.

But is this not just the saddest thing of all, that you should be happy while you are a child of wrath, that you should smile and eat and drink and be merry and sleep soundly, when this very night you may be in hell? Happy while unforgiven! A terrible happiness. It is like the Hindu widow who sits on the funeral pile with her dead husband, and sings songs of joy when they are setting fire to the wood which she is to be burned. [This practice was made

illegal about the time when M'Cheyne was writing this letter.] Yes, you may be quite happy in this way, till you die; but if you have to look back from hell, you will say it was a miserable kind of happiness.

Now, do you not think it would give you more happiness to be forgiven, to be able to put on Jesus and say, God's anger is turned away? Would you not be happier at work, happier in the house, and happier in your bed? I can assure you from all that I have ever felt of it, the pleasures of being forgiven are as superior to all the pleasures of an unforgiven man, as heaven is higher than hell.

The peace of being forgiven reminds me of the calm, blue sky, which no earthly clamors can disturb. It lightens all labor, sweetens every morsel of bread, and makes a sick bed all soft and downy. Yes, it take away the scowl of death. Now, forgiveness may be yours now. It is not given to those who are good. It is not given to any because they are less wicked than others. It is given only to those who, feeling that their sins have brought a curse on them which they cannot lift off, look unto Jesus, as bearing all sin away.

Now I have no wish to weary you. If you are anything like what I was, you will have yawned many a time already over this letter. But if the Lord will deal graciously with you and touch your young heart, as I pray He may, with a desire to be forgiven and to be made a child of God, perhaps you will not take badly what I have written to you in much haste.

As this is the first time you have been away from home, perhaps you have not learned to write letters yet; but if you have, I would like to hear from you, how you come on, what convictions you feel if you feel any, what difficulties in the Bible puzzle you, and then I would do my best to unravel them.

You read your Bible regularly, of course; but do try to understand it – and still more, try to *feel* what it is saying. Read more parts than one at a time. For example, if you are reading Genesis, read a psalm also; or if you are reading Matthew, read a small bit of an epistle also.

Turn the Bible into prayer. Thus, if you were reading the first psalm, kneel, spread the Bible on the chair in front of you, and pray, “O Lord, give me the blessedness of the man...”. “Let me not stand in the counsel of the ungodly...”. This is the best way of knowing the meaning of the Bible and of learning to pray.

In prayer confess your various sins, going over those of the past day one by one. Pray for your friend by name, and your father and mother, and so on. If you love them, surely you will pray for their souls. I know well that there are prayers constantly going up for you from your own house; and will you not pray for them too? Do this regularly. If you pray sincerely for others, it will make you pray for yourself.

Path to Purity

By Terril D. Linttrell, in *Aim*

“Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; ... while they promise liberty, they themselves are bondservants of corruption...”
(2 Peter 2:14,19).

The Bible says that man by nature is “filthy.” His unregenerated heart is a den of unclean, dirty, wicked things. If you doubt this, carefully read Psalm 14 and consider that countless millions of copies of filthy, pornographic mag-azines and “paperbacks” are bought and read by the so-called “respectable” American public.

Sex is highly advertised as part of our society. Sensual sex is introduced into every situation, billboard advertisements, T.V. commercials, even down to cartoons for children in comic books and newspapers. It is used much and is freely exploited to sell anything from potato peelers to cigarettes to laundry detergents. Women are seldom presented as persons, but only as females, sex images!

The real problem lies in the fact that the moral aspect of sex is forgotten. There are those who proudly declare that they are free - liberated from all the old taboos. They corrupt themselves with the beastly and forbidden, never seeming to find what they thought they would. They boast of liberty, “while they themselves are bondservants of corruption.” They are slaves of lust. The wages of slavery to lust are very high: sheer torture, restlessness, and endless searching to find satisfaction, though never able to.

The path of purity has been obscured in recent years by the “sex craze” of our society. Instead of lifting up a standard against moral garbage, the

American public has embraced it, poisoning the minds of teenagers and those in the subteens by making it available in abundance. Teenagers don't have to sneak around to get it - it's everywhere!

Dark as the picture of the human heart is, and helpless as we are too sure ourselves, there is one, and only one, cure for this infection of a warped mind - the cleansing power of the blood of Christ Jesus applied by the Holy Spirit that can burn out the corruption of evil desires, purge away resentments and forbidden appetites, and purify the fountain stream of all of life.

The person who would walk in the path of purity needs guidance. Here are some suggestions.

1. **GUARD YOUR THOUGHTS.** Christ cautions us: *“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart”* (Matt. 5:27, 28). Paul exhorts: *“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things”* (Philippians 4:8). We must continually discipline our thoughts if we would keep pure. Pure people cannot harbor impure thoughts.

2. **DO NOT TOY WITH TEMPTATION.** Temptations will come - but shun the suggestions of evil. Refuse the filthy novel, the movie theater, the suggestive television programs, the unclean talk. Make sure your use of technology is pure in the sight of God. **Don't even listen to or smile at an “off-color” joke or remark.** Avoid friends who would pull you down into sin.

“When God intends great mercy for his people, he first of all, sets them praying.”

~ Matthew Henry (1662-1714)

A Conversation with Sam and Tom About Believing

Rev. P. van Ruitenburg

Part 2

Tom: We need to begin at the beginning. Our beginning is that we are spiritually dead and have no faith. We need to have our eyes open to see what we have done: we have departed from God and believing that you are okay does not help a bit; instead, it makes it worse.

Sam: Can you prove that from the Bible?

Tom: Yes. Read Luke 3:8, and begin not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to [our] father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

Sam: Can you simplify that? It seems that you are promoting unbelief.

Tom: No, I do not defend unbelief at all, but don't begin by telling yourself that you have been saved. A counterfeit of faith is also unbelief.

Sam: Is that all you have to tell us?

Tom: No, much more! Unbelief is sinful. Therefore, let us examine our hearts and see if there is a wicked way in us. Psalm 139:23-24 Search me O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: 24 And see if [there be any] wicked way in me

Sam: Don't you have anything encouraging to say?

Tom: Certainly. We can deceive ourselves, but the Lord will never deceive us.

Sam: Doesn't the Lord tell us that we must believe, Tom?

Tom: Must believe? What do you mean by that? Do you mean that faith is a necessity? It certainly is needed, but we cannot force ourselves to believe.

Sam: Do we not need to try hard?

Tom: Trying hard? No, the Lord is not pleased with duty-faith. Faith is a gift of God, and it should be genuine, not fake.

Sam: I thought that the Lord had done everything to save us, and that we now, from our side, must believe.

Tom: Well, Sam, we are called to believe sincerely and genuinely, but not by being coerced. By nature we don't even have the will to believe.

Sam: So, you are saying we cannot believe? I thought believing was easy.

Tom: In a sense, it is easy; in another sense, it is impossible

Sam: Elaborate on that, please.

Tom: I'll try. Let me ask you a few questions. Can you like a color on command? Can you force yourself to like a boyfriend or girlfriend? And another question: How much do I have to pay you to trust someone?

Sam: No, I cannot prefer a color on command, and I cannot like a girlfriend because my mother likes her. You trust someone or you do not. That trust cannot be purchased.

Tom: Right. And can we love God, believe in Jesus, based on a human command? No, we cannot.

Sam: That is clear. In what sense is believing not hard at all?

Tom: In a sense, believing is easy, namely when we are stripped of all our own efforts, have come to our wits' end, when the law condemns me and makes room in my heart to receive the revelation of the Lord Jesus. (but also opens my eyes for the Lord Jesus). Believing is the opposite of working hard and putting in much effort.

Sam: Could you prove this from the bible?

Tom: What about this Bible verse? Rom 4: 5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Sam: Can you explain that verse?

Tom: Abraham worked hard to get a son, but the Lord did not want him to work; He wanted Abraham to believe. Believing is the opposite of trying hard and working. (here is doing nothing). Blessed are they that stop working and start begging and are out of work. To become spiritually poor is impossible from our side, but all things are possible with God. I hope to talk with you again later.



God's Revelation of Himself in Creation (3)

Mr. S. Timmer

Having seen that creation shows God's omnipotence, orderliness, wisdom, personal dealings with man, and eternal being, we continue our study of God's attributes revealed in creation.

God is Holy and Perfection Itself

The perfection of creation is described in Genesis: "It was very good" (Genesis 1:31). A perfect creation requires a perfect creator. All the ecosystems in the world are in perfect balance. For example, note the perfect balance of the atmosphere with the water cycle and the perfection of the moon's rotation and revolution. The moon is called the "faithful witness in the sky," never wavering, never changing, always shining – and compared in scripture to God's covenant of grace (Psalm 89:34-37).

The Holy God is the Lawgiver

God governs His creation with laws, and all things (sadly, except for man) obey the laws of God perfectly.

For example:

- God's law of gravity: every object in the universe attracts every other object with a force proportional to their mass and the distance between them squared.

- God's laws of thermodynamics:

Energy cannot be created or destroyed but can change form. For example, work energy can be converted to heat energy, electrical energy can be converted to motion energy, and motion energy can be converted to electrical energy.

Disorder increases over time when a system is left to itself unless there is a constant input of energy to keep the system organized. Stars are wearing out according to God's unchangeable laws. Isaiah 51:6 states, "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be forever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished."

- God's laws of electromagnetism allow us to build motors, generators, transformers, and communication systems. For example, voltage applied to the primary side of a coil induces a precise voltage on

the secondary coil of a transformer. The ratio between the number of wires turns on one side of the transformer to the other side is the ratio between the voltages. Who causes the effect which controls voltages coming into our homes or offices? God, the Lawgiver.

- God's laws of chemistry: bond angles between atoms are fixed and unchanging. For example, in water, the bond angle between the hydrogen and the oxygen is exactly 104.5 degrees. This gives water its polar properties which affect things like the high heat capacity of water which helps keep the temperature of earth stable since it is mostly water. Water and all chemicals perfectly obey God, the Lawgiver.

- God's laws of biology: the laws of genetics describe how traits are passed from one generation to the next. As a small example, our Creator has made some genes dominant like the genes for blood type A and B, and some genes recessive like the blood type O. In all living things, God's laws govern and control every aspect of life.

What are some proper reactions when considering God's hand in creation?

- A humble sense of ourselves. When Job was given to consider God's hand in nature, his response was, "Behold, I am vile." He was humbled and given an impression of himself and of God. We are corrupt, without any good, yet God maintains our lives and every aspect of the universe. He is accomplishing His purposes.

- A pleading upon God to work powerfully and irresistibly in all men's hearts by His Holy Spirit. As God is the Almighty God of creation, so He is the recreator who commands us to seek Him: "I said not unto the seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain: I the LORD speak righteousness, I declare things that are right." God is able to turn hearts of stone into soft hearts, and He will do so until the end of time (see Ezekiel 36).

- A seeking to see God in all His creation. He is the Author, the First Cause, the Sustainer, who rules above all. This was the heart of the psalmist, "O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all" (Psalm 104:24).

- A heart of repentance. When Paul spoke to the Athenians about "the unknown God" who was giving them breath, life, and all things, he concluded with the words, "God ... commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30). Jesus has been exalted to the right hand of His Father to give this repentance to sinners (Acts 5:31).

Being Small

Rev. P. van Ruitenburg

We often appear strong in our own eyes. Then we think we can do everything ourselves and we don't need help. As a result, we then think that we deserve God's blessings. Who doesn't recognize that? However, that attitude does not fit in with quiet time. To be silent before God is to keep our mouths shut and to bury our noses in the dust. Those who imagine themselves in that way miss the blessings of quiet time.

The Lord likes to see the unworthy, the broken, the defeated, the unpretentious sinners, the beggars, the weak, the poor in spirit, the meek. Pretending doesn't help; it has to be real. And that is the work of the Holy Spirit. He takes away our own righteousness and melts our pride to make room for God's grace in Christ. How good the Lord is when you see how sinful we are.

Being close to God. The Lord is near to the broken-hearted. Trembling at His Word, says the prophet Isaiah, brings us closer to God. That sounds like an upside-down world, but that is how it goes. Quiet time is taking time to know yourself, to acknowledge your sins, and to tell God where He found you. Don't be too afraid to think about your sins. If all goes well, we can never get rid of who we are and remain, even after God has stopped us. And above all, is it not to the defeated that God sent His Son to fulfill the Law and to die on the cross? I would say: Be concrete. Don't forget the sins of your childhood. Let us humble ourselves under the hand of God. The more ballast the ship has, the more sail it can have. Without ballast, the boat will soon capsizes!

"But to this man I will look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My Word" (Isaiah 66:2).

"Though the LORD be high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly: but the proud He knoweth afar off" (Psalm 138:6).

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:3).

"And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13).

~ Translated from his book *Stil tot God*