

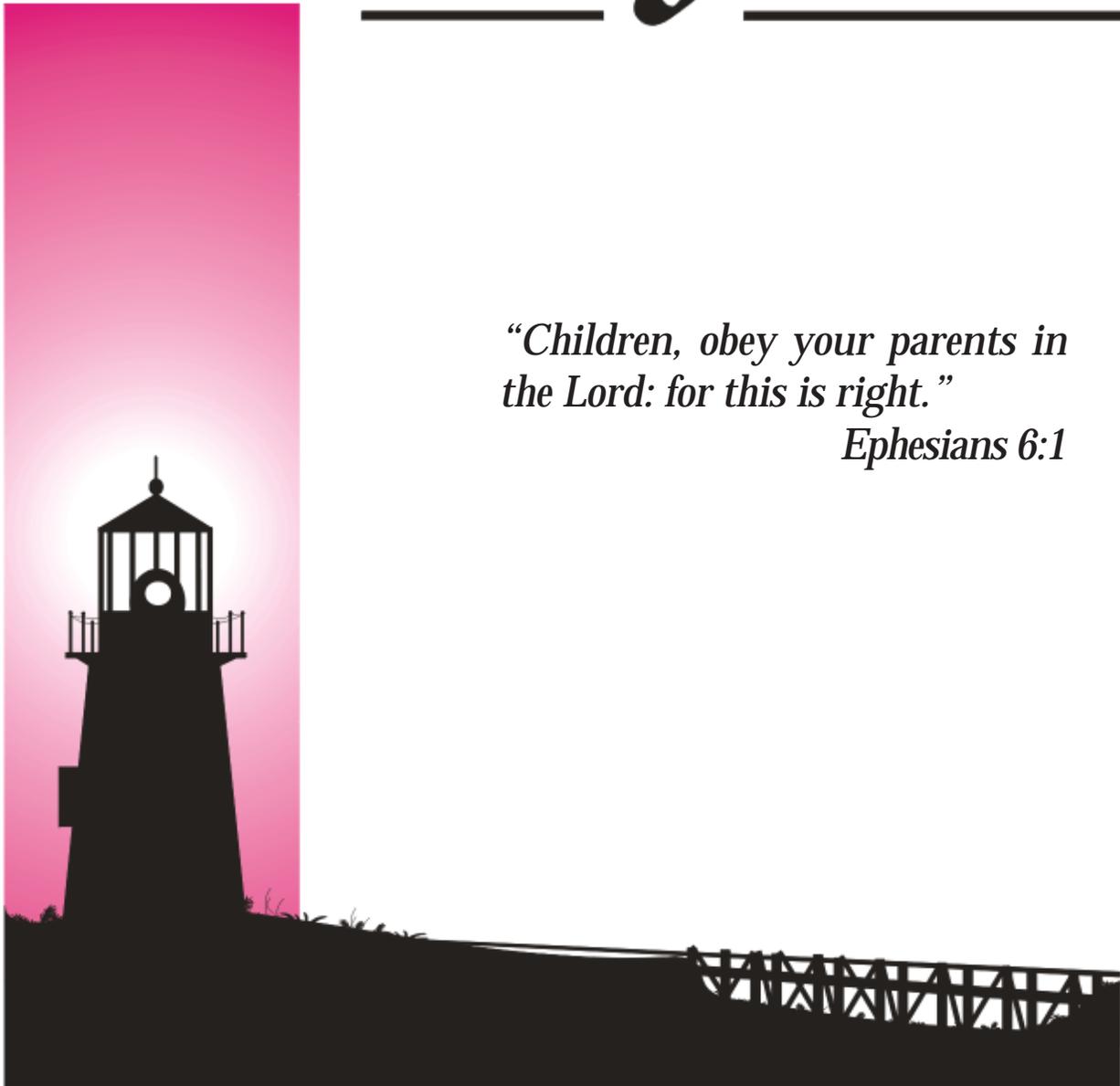
# Beacon Lights

February  
2004

Volume LXIII  
Number 2

*“Children, obey your parents in  
the Lord: for this is right.”*

*Ephesians 6:1*



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# The Authority Challenge

by John Huizenga



**F**ebruary the sixteenth is President's Day. Our president has at his disposal more power and resources than any other man in the world. Of the available candidates, the people of the United States have judged him to be the best suited to use this power for the good of the country and its citizens.

Would you like to have this power and authority? You would have the best possible protection against harm. You could unleash countless fighter jets, missiles, and tanks against the enemy. You would be known throughout the world as the leader of the most powerful nation. You would be able to buy most anything you wanted. Having power and authority to rule a nation is not as easy and thrilling as it may appear. Those who grossly abuse it may end up in a spider hole like Saddam. The forefathers of our country realized that great power will be abused, so they burdened the president with so many laws and checks against abuse that it becomes very difficult for him to use that power to do what he wants. It is not always so easy to obey and submit to authority, but it is arguably even more difficult to be in authority, especially if you are a child of God.

Sometimes we hear complaints that children today are more disrespectful and rebellious than generations past. If that is true, then I think that the heart of the problem may lie with those who are in authority, not with the rebels under that authority. We are all sinners. Those under authority will, by nature, rebel and despise authority. Those in authority will, by nature, abuse that authority and be reluctant to use it rightfully if it requires too much time and effort. Disrespect for

authority will always be a thorn in the flesh unless the use of authority itself is biblically grounded. Let me also make it clear at this point that a mistake in exercising authority is no excuse for disrespect. One sin is not corrected by another sin. Whether in or under authority, we are answerable to God alone.

The child of God who finds himself in a position of authority must realize that he has been chosen by God to receive a certain amount of power and the right to rule over a particular sphere of God's kingdom. Christ has been given power and authority to rule over all creation (Eph. 1:20-23), and Christ gives authority in various spheres to particular people. God says of Abraham in Genesis 18:19, "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." Abraham had the right and authority to command his children and his household. Having been given this sphere of authority, it was the duty of Abraham to make sure that all those within that sphere keep the way of the Lord. This work had been entrusted to Abraham and God knew the heart of Abraham that he would be faithful in the work.

The authority figure must understand that he makes demands and commands respect on behalf of God alone. This requires a thorough knowledge of God's word. He needs to have clearly before him the goals of God for those under his authority. If the elder avoids bringing God's word and instruction to the wayward because he wants to avoid stress and have a peaceful congregation, he is rebelling against God.

**Disrespect for authority will always be a thorn in the flesh unless the use of authority itself is biblically grounded.**

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God calls the elder to bring His word and never cease to watch for danger. If the parent wants her son to be popular and therefore relaxes the biblical requirements for friends and gives up devotional and family time so he can be in all the sports programs, she is rebelling against God. If the teacher demands that the students meet the various requirements for schoolwork and behavior simply because it makes teaching more convenient, without giving any thought to the spiritual growth of each student, he rebels against God. God demands of the parent and teacher that the child under his or her authority be taught the Word of God in every sphere of learning (Deut. 6:6-7), and his authority must be used for that goal only.

Authority figures stand as representatives of God. Those under authority are to learn something about God while submitting to that authority. God is sovereign, and submitting to authority teaches us that we must learn to do things that we don't necessarily want to do. We must learn to do it cheerfully without complaining, thinking of excuses, or delaying. Those in authority must not tolerate complaining, excuses, or delay when giving commands. He must be consistent and also exercise great wisdom to be sure that what he commands is what will be pleasing to God and not some frivolous goal of his own. Our sinful nature makes it essential that those in authority humbly confess before God the sin of using the power and authority of God to have others serve us rather than God alone.

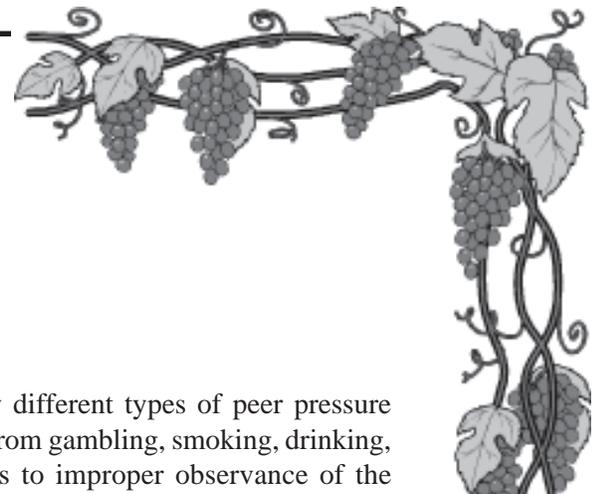
Exercising authority requires a great deal of wisdom, patience, and above all a love for God and His people. Every ounce of pride is stripped from the position of authority. This is what makes it so difficult to be given authority. It is so contrary to our sinful nature. Those in authority are called to be like God. They are given some sovereignty and need to use it with wisdom, patience, and love for the glory of God alone. It is easier to submit to authority because we are created to submit to God as the creature to his Creator. Having authority should make one tremble and cling to God for help and strength. Those under authority can be thankful that all they are required to do is submit.

We do not need to be eager for authority. Be content where you are and learn submission first. Learning to submit is essential for anyone who has any hope of exercising authority properly. All who are in positions of authority, do you fit the model of Abraham? Does God know you, that you will command all those under your authority to keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment? Authority is very humbling. We need to bow humbly to God to seek forgiveness when we fail. We may even need to ask humbly the forgiveness of those under our authority whom we have wronged with poor judgment or wrongly used for our own selfish motives.

“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears”  
(Acts 20:28-31). ❖

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## Fruitful Branches



# Peer Pressure

by Ryan Kraker

**T**he world is full of peer pressure, and everyone has experienced it. Often people do not even realize when they are facing peer pressure. There

are many different types of peer pressure ranging from gambling, smoking, drinking, and drugs to improper observance of the

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sabbath day. As Christians, we must beware of all types of peer pressure, and we must try to avoid bending to the pressure of gambling, smoking, drinking, and drugs.

As young people, we face peer pressure constantly. If some of us move away to attend college, we will face many temptations from the world around us. Some of this may come in how we observe the sabbath. Without our parents there to guide us, it may be easy to skip church on Sunday evening.

We might be tempted when watching our classmates or roommates using Sunday to finish a project or hanging out together, and we could feel the pressure to do the same thing. Even if our parents or friends are not there to see us, we must always remember that God is watching over us and sees our every move.

Proper Sabbath observance is to attend church every Sunday, and to attend both services, not thinking that going only in the morning will be sufficient. We are to fight the temptations to use Sunday for own pleasure and remember why God gave us this day. Exodus 20:11 tells us that “the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it.” By hearing the preaching of the Word, we experience spiritual growth and become stronger in our faith to be able to withstand temptations.

There is great temptation to buy lottery tickets, especially with the slower economic conditions we are living in today. By having this extra money, we could afford the same things our friends have. The lottery seems to be an “easy way” to make money. Lottery tickets are inexpensive and easy to purchase. They can be bought right at the gas station as we pay for gas.

Although it may seem like an easy way to make money to help pay for our expenses and our wants, it is

not putting trust in God to supply our needs. Matthew 6:19-21 states

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

We must not worry about getting treasures on this earth. We must set our sights on heaven and realize that our riches here will not do us any good in eternity.

Drug abuse is also a peer pressure that young people fall into. It is easy to become addicted to tobacco, alcohol, or drugs after a short period of time. Although many people may want to stop, the addiction to the drugs or alcohol may be too strong to quit. Every time people use these drugs, they are destroying the temple of God, which is their body. I Corinthians 6:19 states: “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?” Drugs destroy our body, and we may not use them.

With all these temptations around us, it is easy for a Christian to follow the way of the world. We must withstand the pressures we will face. We can only do that by praying that God will give us the strength to live for Him. ❖

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*Ryan is a member of Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church in Hudsonville, Michigan. He wrote this article as a senior writing assignment at Covenant Christian High School.*

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Story Time

# The Dinner Hour

by S. K.

**G**rowing up in my house, we had what was called the “Dinner Hour”. That’s mostly a thing of the past now. It was probably a thing of the past

then. My neighborhood friends down the street never experienced a dinner hour. On a good day they managed a dinner five minutes. I didn’t even bother going home

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during their dinner because they could eat quicker than I could walk home and back. But at my house the dinner hour earned its name.

There was a certain routine to it all. Dad got home at six o'clock, kissed Mom, washed his hands, stepped outside the back door, put two fingers to his mouth, and let go a whistle that raised the hair on dogs for miles around. It carried over the noise of the radio (that's what Mom called it—noise). It carried over the sound of the TV (which Mom called something else). It didn't matter if we were inside, outside, or under water. When Dad whistled it was time to head home. No one could claim ignorance. We were left without excuse.

The worst part about Dad's whistle was that all the neighbors recognized it. Mr. Stuit would stick his head out the window and say, "Supper's ready, boy." Mrs. Hansen would stop sweeping her steps long enough to point her broom handle in the general direction and say, "Better git on home now."

At home the baseball caps and gloves were heaped up at the back door as everyone scurried to their place at the table. We had eight chairs pressed around a kitchen table made for six, plus a high chair in the corner. Even in those days kitchens weren't built for nine.

Dad opened dinner with prayer which, as my friends pointed out, lasted longer than their dinner. Dad prayed for pretty much the same things every night. You didn't have to guess what was important to him—Mom, us kids, our churches and schools. When Dad prayed we sat square on our chairs and we didn't swing our legs. We folded our hands, bowed our heads, and closed our eyes. "Hallowed be Thy name" were more than words at my house.

Dinner was a time for talk, but mostly we younger kids kept quiet until Dad asked us something. And when he did ask, it was always the same thing, "What did you learn in school today?" Since I generally had no clue what I learned in school that day I tried to shrug. My little sister, who suffered no such memory loss, usually jumped in at this point. "He got in trouble on the bus, Dad."

Now I was in real trouble. But then I was no stranger to trouble. All I had to do was say something like, "Me and Billy were just messing around." The trick was to use his name. Say a name from school and Dad would scratch his head and start working out the family tree. "Billy who?"

"Billy VanderVender." I already knew what the next question would be.

"Now who are his parents?" I didn't have a clue who the parents of my friends were. But Mom would know. Then my behavior on the bus would be forgotten as Mom and Dad followed the VanderVender family back to someone old enough for them to know.

Eventually the topic would get back to school, and Dad would ask, "But I want to know what you *learned* in school today." If he was in the mood to press it he would ask what I learned in Bible class. In all the years Dad asked me that question I don't know that I ever answered it without help from Mom. Mom knew where I was in Bible. She'd say something like, "The crossing of the...," then I could jump in, "Oh yeah, the crossing of the Red Sea." Dad just shook his head.

You might expect that he would make a remark about the waste of tuition money he was paying, but he never did. Dad never complained about tuition, even though he didn't have enough money to do a lot of things. I always suspected that he didn't have enough money to do a lot of things that he didn't want to do anyway. We would say, "Hey Dad, how about going to Disney World this summer." He'd say, "We haven't got money for that." Or we would ask "Can we go to that pizza place with all the games?" "No," he'd answer, "Too expensive."

Dad had money to take us to Niagara Falls one year, but no money to get us into the wax museums when we got there. Another year he had money to take us to Mt. Rushmore, but no money to spend at the gift shop. But he always had money for tuition, and he always had money for school drives, and he never complained about either.

Dinner was finally coming to a close some fifty-five minutes after we had begun. Dad got the Bible out of the cupboard. The Bible we used at dinner was the size of airplane luggage. Pots and pans had to be rearranged on the table to make room for it. Dad read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and then back to Genesis. He didn't skip the sections of Old Testament law, he didn't skip the Song of Solomon, and he didn't skip the genealogies, though I believe there were times he made up the names as he went.

Dad closed with prayer the same way he had opened. He prayed for pretty much all the same things—Mom, us kids, our churches and schools. With Dad you always knew what was important. And a good dinner and some news about our day didn't change that a bit. ❖



# A Look at Weather Through the Spectacles of Scripture



by John Huizenga

Our bodies do not detect the gradual increase in atmospheric pressure, but as the clouds thin and vanish from the sky, the warm sun ushers in a new and cheerful mood after a dark and gloomy day. A cool steady breeze flows from the northwest bringing a beautiful summer day or a cold, bright, winter day. The barometric pressure climbs, steadies, and begins to slide down again as the wind calms, then picks up from the east, grows stronger, and shifts to the northeast. The moisture in the air increases as the pressure continues to fall. The sun ducks behind a thick blanket of clouds and those first snowflakes hurry by, gather, and begin to slide like snakes down the road. The moisture laden air releases its burden as the pressure continues to drop. The pressure reaches the bottom, begins to rise and the wind shifts again to the northwest as the snow slackens, stops falling, but continues to blow into drifts.

Day after day the blanket of air around the earth is rippling and swirling with activity. From our earthly perspective, the changing atmosphere produces an intriguing array of clouds, precipitation, and levels of comfort. We often hear the whole matter summarized as “good” or “bad” weather. From the perspective of a spacecraft orbiting the earth, we see the larger picture of the interaction of swirling air with temperature, pressure, and moisture as variations in the cloud patterns. It all moves so slowly; our minds can perceive the pattern of movement only when a video recording is put into fast forward. Then the patterns may remind us of the swirls and vortices left behind the paddle of a canoe.

Why do the clouds swirl so? The meteorologist will point us to the sun as the ultimate cause of all this swirling of air. The sun provides the energy to heat the earth and stir up the basic ingredients of weather: air and mois-

ture. These basic ingredients then behave in accordance with the following scientific laws: warm air rises above cooler air, rising warm air creates an area of low pressure, sinking cool air creates an area of high pressure, air will swirl in a counterclockwise rotation to fill the low pressure area (like water going down a drain), air will swirl in a clockwise rotation away from a high pressure area, water evaporates and “soaks” into the air, warm air can hold more water vapor than cold air, a drop in temperature or pressure will cause water to condense and fall to the ground. If you really want to start understanding weather, you would need to spend some time studying the above list along with some global geography. These principles are like the parts of a gigantic machine or the variables in a complex algebraic equation.

We can make these principles a bit more graphic if we think of the atmosphere like a giant transparent sponge that moves along the surface of the earth. As the sun beats down it drives water from the oceans, trees, soil,

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As with every other part of  
God’s creation, man may  
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of mystery.

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etc. and into the sponge. Warmth causes the sponge to swell and absorb even more water. As it moves and cools, the water condenses into clouds and is squeezed out over the land. Think of the low pressure like a void that needs to be filled. As the air swirls around, it is like hands reaching in and squeezing more moisture out of the sponge. Once the void is filled, the air is packed in, the pressure is high, and the sponge is left dry.

People try to predict the behavior of weather with careful observations compared with past behavior. Computers try to predict it by making a model of weather out of complex math equations, plugging in all the variables, and digesting a constant flood of data. As with every other part of God's creation, man may penetrate its mysteries more deeply every day, but with each new breakthrough, he finds a hundred more regions of mystery. The unbeliever sticks each new breakthrough like a feather into the hat of pride, while the believer takes another one out as he is humbled by the one hundred new mysteries of God's handiwork.

Without the spectacles of Scripture, the weather is bleak with a few sharp rays of selfish pride. The ungodly meteorologist looks at weather simply as an incredibly complex mechanism that has developed naturally out of the scientific laws and conditions that happen to exist on earth. They trace these laws and principles ultimately back to the principles that govern the atoms that make up the earth and atmosphere; which, they say, developed according to the scientific laws that

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The weather is like an everlasting piece of music which is played by trillions of air molecules and conducted by God Himself.

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governed the unfolding of the Big Bang; which comes from the big dark question mark of unbelief. Ungodly man demands to know what the weather will be like so he can plan his life accordingly. He enjoys the good without giving thanks, and shakes his fist at the bad.

Through the spectacles of Scripture, we see the glorious majesty of God. The weather is like an everlasting piece of music which is played by trillions of air molecules and conducted by God Himself. The music was

composed in the eternal council of God according to all the laws created by God. God constantly upholds and direct this masterpiece as every mass of air down to its individual atom obeys. Job recognized the wisdom of God in the weather. We read in Job 28:24-27

For he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven; To make the weight for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure. When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder: Then did he see it, and declare it; he prepared it, yea, and searched it out.

Elihu gave some further insight into the weather to teach Job more of this ongoing sovereign work of God. We read in Job 36:27-33

For he maketh small the drops of water: they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof: Which the clouds do drop and distil upon man abundantly. Also can any understand the spreadings of the clouds, or the noise of his tabernacle? Behold, he spreadeth his light upon it, and covereth the bottom of the sea. For by them judgeth he the people; he giveth meat in abundance. With clouds he covereth the light; and commandeth it not to shine by the cloud that cometh betwixt. The noise thereof sheweth concerning it, the cattle also concerning the vapour.

Again we read in Job 37:6-13

For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength. He sealet up the hand of every man; that all men may know his work. Then the beasts go into dens, and remain in their places. Out of the south cometh the whirlwind: and cold out of the north. By the breath of God frost is given: and the breadth of the waters is straitened. Also by watering he wearieth the thick cloud: he scattereth his bright cloud: And it is turned round about by his counsels: that they may do whatsoever he commandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth. He causeth it to come, whether for correction, or for his land, or for mercy.

God at times uses the weather directly to bring judgment and deliverance. The Flood destroyed the world that then was, and ushered in an entirely new pattern of weather that constantly reminds us God's wrath as well as his eternal covenant. God sent hail, thunder, and lightning to destroy Egypt. He sent an east wind to form a path in the Red Sea and bring quail for His people. As a reminder that He is in sovereign control of the weather, God at times will suspend the normal laws. He caused water to condense in a miraculous way to assure Gideon of His word.

Scientists may be able to explain why it rained on a particular day and predict the weather for tomorrow, but the believer sees through the spectacles of Scripture that the sequence of cause and effect was first in the eternal council of God. Upholding and directing the drop in pressure and condensation of water vapor is the almighty God commanding these things to be. "For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof" (Psalm 107:25). "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places. He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasuries" (Psalm 135:6-7).

Sometimes God makes clear the truth of His sovereign control over the weather by speaking His word for the weather through the mouth of a prophet. "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit" (James 5:17-18). "So Samuel called unto the Lord; and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel" (I Samuel 12:18).

God also reveals to us that the gentle shower that waters the earth is the providential care of God for the functioning of the world around us as He gathers His church from the ends of the earth. The showers of rain have no grace in them for the wicked. The showers only increase his pride and grease his slide into hell. "Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction" (Psalm 73:18). The godly give thanks to God for His care.

No matter how we look at the weather, we are called to praise God in all that we see. "Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our

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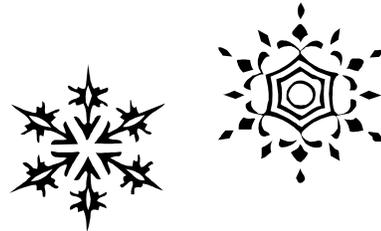
...sing praise upon the harp  
unto our God: Who covereth  
the heaven with clouds, who  
prepareth rain for the earth.

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God: Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains" (Psalm 147:7-8). "Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps: Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling his word" (Psalm 148:7-8). The weather is always with us. Get out and enjoy it. Feel its power. Study its inner workings and observe the patterns. In all that you do, give God all the glory due unto His name. ❖

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*John is a member of Randolph Protestant Reformed Church in Randolph, Wisconsin, and is editor of Beacon Lights.*



## The Reader Asks

# Question Request

**D**o you have a question that has been on your mind? Something that came up at school or during a discussion with friends or co-workers? You can be sure that there are many more people reading these words who have had the same question and are looking for answers just like you. Rev. Laning of Hope Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan is waiting to answer them. Don't worry, if you would rather your name was not published with your question, we will honor your request. We do, however, ask that your name and either your home or email address be included so that Rev. Laning can respond privately if need be.

Please send your question to:  
Rev. James Laning  
1550 Ferndale S.W.  
Walker, MI 49544  
E-mail: [jlaning@msn.com](mailto:jlaning@msn.com)

# Rev. Douglas Kuiper

by Rev. Douglas Kuiper

I was born October 17, 1969, in Grand Rapids, Michigan, to Clarence and Janice (Lotterman) Kuiper, the second of eight children, and first of five sons. My father is a life-long member of Hope Protestant Reformed Church, Walker, MI, and in that church I was baptized and raised. We lived in Wyoming, Michigan for the first 10 years of my life, at which time my parents moved to their current address on Riverbend Dr. in Walker, two buildings east of Hope church, with the Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School in the backyard, and Covenant Christian High School within walking distance. From these two schools I received my elementary and high school education, graduating from Covenant in 1987. I then graduated from Calvin College in 1991, and from our Protestant Reformed Theological School in 1995.

Soon after graduating from seminary, I was called to the Byron Center Protestant Reformed Church, which I served from November 1995 to November 2001. From December 2001 until the present, I have served the Protestant Reformed Church of Randolph, Wisconsin. I have the distinction of being the third Kuiper to serve as Randolph's pastor, for both Rev. Dale Kuiper and his father, Rev. Henry Kuiper, served here. No, I am not related to them.

Another distinction I think I can claim is that of being the Protestant Reformed minister to serve longest as a pastor before being married. I was a bachelor in the parsonage in Byron Center for 17 months. I had met my wife, Teresa Brands of Loveland, Colorado, the summer before being ordained. We had a long distance courtship until God brought us together in marriage in April, 1997. God has blessed me with a wife suited for me; has blessed us with four children, Daniel, Sarah, Ryan, and Jared; and has given me, through my marriage and parenthood, a better understanding of the joys, struggles, and even

trials of life which God's people all face in one way or another.

My spare time during the busy season might be taken up with my children, taking a walk or watching a college football game on TV. My favorite recreational activities are summer activities—family bike rides, tending a vegetable garden, gardening, and enjoying the town pool.



God begins preparing a man for the ministry of the gospel long before the man is conscious of it. While God prepared some of our ministers for the ministry by converting them from unbelief and ungodliness, and others by opening their eyes to see the apostasy in the churches in which they were raised, He prepared me for the ministry in the Protestant Reformed Churches by causing me to be born into the Protestant Reformed Churches, brought up in a godly home, catechized under faithful preachers (Revs. VanOverloop, Flikkema, and Slopsema), and taught

by godly and believing school teachers. Through these means, He strengthened my faith in Him, worked in me an awareness of the distinctiveness of the Protestant Reformed Churches, and worked in me a desire to maintain that distinctiveness by preaching the gospel.

As a youngster, the idea of being a minister did occasionally cross my mind. I wrestled with the internal call (or, it wrestled with me) most intensely during the summer before my senior year in high school (summer 1986). From that time on, I knew that I had to prepare for the ministry, and that if I was truly called, the Lord would bless those preparations. This wrestling process began when the late Mr. Dewey Engelsma, member of Hope Protestant Reformed Church and father to Prof. Engelsma, told me that he saw gifts in me that would be useful in the ministry, and encouraged me to consider that work. I remember meeting later with Prof. Hanko to

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discuss my inward struggle with the call. He turned on its head every argument I had why I might not really be called. At the time my pastor was Rev. Richard Flikkema, who in August of that summer accepted a call to the Covenant Protestant Reformed Church of Wyckoff, New Jersey. I remember knocking on his door as he was packing up his study to move, to discuss the matter with him. A few months later, I discussed the same matter with my new pastor, Rev. James Slopsema. Through these means, God convinced me that I must prepare for that work.

My period of wrestling with the consciousness of the call seems brief, in retrospect. Other men have wrestled much longer. I think two factors in this were that I still had to complete a year of high school before I could begin preparations in earnest, and that, while I wanted to go to college, I simply could think of no goal for my college education, other than to prepare for the ministry.

I enjoyed my years at Calvin College. They did have their dark side, in that they exposed me to many of the errors that characterize the Christian Reformed Church today. One of the sadder moments was to sit in a class at Calvin College, studying *Calvin's Institutes*, taught by a professor who was very critical of Calvin, and quite weak in his commitment to the Reformed faith generally. God used Calvin College to prepare me for the ministry, not only in that I received a good college education, but also that I saw firsthand how close to us errors of doctrine and life can be found. Furthermore, it helped me understand that the price one pays to defend the truth, and the courage one needs to do so, is at least as great, perhaps greater, for the one who defends it in the face of apostasy, than for the one who does so on a mission field, to the heathen.

The seminary years were also good years, and certainly valuable in preparing for the ministry. During them, I grew spiritually and intellectually ready for the work of the ministry. We can never be thankful enough for that institution, and the men who teach in it.

The most memorable event of my seminary years, however, was not the time I was *at* seminary, but the time I was *away* from it. Rev. Allen Brummel and I were the first students to spend 6 months on an internship, working with one of our pastors and congregations. Mine was the privilege of going to Doon, Iowa, to work under Rev. Russell Dykstra. The “hands on” experience of leading societies, teaching catechism, making and delivering sermons regularly, and doing pastoral work was most beneficial, as was observing how a consistory works.

Prior to the internship program, many a man, newly ordained into the ministry, and entering the consistory room for his first consistory meeting ever, was given the chairman’s seat and expected to lead the meeting with all the knowledge, wisdom, and expertise expected of our ministers. The internship program enables our students to begin their work with more than only a “theoretical” knowledge of how to be a pastor. My time in Doon was especially enjoyable because, while not having all the pressures of the work of the ministry, I felt I had all the joys—especially in the area of visiting the fellow saints. And being single helped—women were always willing to feed me! All too quickly, those six months ended.

Increasingly, I enjoy my work as pastor, and especially the work with children and young people. I am reminded from Jesus’ words in Matthew 18:3-6, that being pastor of children is a weighty responsibility. It is so, first, because the children are an example to the minister, with all his learning and authority and other gifts, of how one enters the kingdom of heaven. I must both teach them and learn from them. Second, the passage shows the greatness of Christ’s love for children in His church. This reminds the pastor that he must reflect that love in his dealings with these children. Thirdly, the passage gives this warning: “But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea” (vs 6). And yet how many pastors have offended the children of the church, have put stumbling blocks before them, by not teaching them the truth and law of God! This work, therefore, I take seriously, and all the more so when I realize that our children will have to fight battles more severe than we, and perhaps have to give their life for the cause of God in a way that we in America have not had to, to this point in time.

So one of the most rewarding things for me as a minister is to see such children grow in the faith, visibly live their faith, make confession of their faith and then marry in their faith.

I’ve been asked to comment on what things encourage me about our young people. The very fact that God continues to give children to covenant parents, and cause them to become young people, is encouraging. God is fulfilling His promises to save believers and their seed. And the fact that young people are interested in catechism, ready to discuss in Bible studies, eager to go to conventions (and other youth group activities) for the

right reason, is encouraging. Someone might point out that many of our young people aren't so interested in catechism, aren't so ready to discuss at Bible studies, and aren't so eager to fellowship with young people of the same faith. That has always been true of some young people in the church. Sometimes it is because even the adults in the church do not always have right priorities. But at the same time, many of our young people are interested in spiritual things. This is encouraging; and it manifests God's faithfulness.

It is true that each of our young people are sinners. This can be discouraging. But I am a sinner too, and my sins discourage me also. What is again encouraging, is that many of our young people have a true sense of sorrow for sin, a genuine desire to be right in God's sight and a delight in obedience to His law.

Again, what encourages me is that I have seen God mercifully chastise some young people who have not sorrowed for their sins, and delighted in obedience, until those young people are brought to true repentance.

Young people, let us all remember to govern our thinking, attitudes and behavior by God's Word. It is also our nature to think at times that God's Word doesn't apply to us for some reason, or that God's Word doesn't speak to the issue of dress, to the fads around us, and such like things. God's Word always sets forth principles by which we must govern all our life. And it reminds us not to be conformed to this world, but transformed (Romans 12:1-2). Young people, we can do this only by grace, I know; yet, so long as we seek grace to be led by God's Word, He will give it, and will bless us, by keeping us faithful to Him!

And I've been asked to give advice to men who are considering the ministry of the Word as their calling. To them I would say: pray every day for wisdom, patience, humility, love, and faithfulness. No pastor can do his work without these gifts; and yet, he does not have these gifts in him by nature. God alone gives them! ❖

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## God's Priceless Law

*The heav'ns declare His glory,  
The firmament shows forth  
The wisdom and the beauty  
With which God crowns the earth.*

*Each day our Father utters  
The speech His children hear,  
And night by night His knowledge  
Does constantly appear.*

*The sun His hand is guiding  
Its heat and light immense—  
Accomplishes His purpose,  
Shows His omnipotence.*

*God's holy law is perfect,  
The simple are made wise  
When they His precepts follow—  
Their prayers as incense rise.*

*God's testimony gladdens,  
His statutes all are right.  
His fear brings boundless virtue  
And cleanliness to light.*

*His judgments are more precious  
Than silver, jewels, or gold—  
Their taste, more sweet than honey,  
Their worth can ne'er be told.*

*His children heed His warning  
And strive His laws to keep  
In prayer and meditation  
Our shepherd leads His sheep.*

*Lord, our great Redeemer,  
Grant that our words may be  
Acceptable before Thee;  
Hear now our humble plea.*

Thelma Westra

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# Watching Daily At My Gates

By Chester Hunter

## **February 1 Read John 15:1-7**

On this Lord's Day we are reminded of the truth that the Church is Christ's. We also see that we are redeemed by Christ and find our spiritual life in Him. The result of being engrafted into Christ is that we bring forth fruit. This fruit is not of ourselves as we see in verses 4 and 5. Without out Christ we can do nothing. We heard Christ today. Now we must go forth and bring forth fruits of gratitude. Are we ready to do that? Is our life one full of the fruit of the Spirit? If it is not, we know that we will be pruned from the vine and cast into the fire. Let us abide in Christ and in His Word and let us walk by our faith. Sing Psalter 220.

## **February 2 Read John 15:8-12**

Children and young people, as you begin another week of school are you once more preparing to keep Christ's commandment to love each other? As you met your classmates this morning could they see that love that you have been commanded to have for them? Why must we do this? Verse twelve gives us the answer. We must love one another because Christ loved us. We show our gratitude for His love by our love for each other. This means that we love all of our classmates as the neighbor God has placed on our paths. This means that we do acts of kindness for them. Love is more than words. We must show our love by the acts of kindness that we do for each other. Let us love one another today and all week. Sing Psalter 24.

## **February 3 Read John 15:13-17**

We continue with our thoughts of yesterday that we are commanded to love one another. In these verses we find how great Christ's love was for us. He loved us so much that He gave His life for us. In doing so He chose us to be His friends. To be a friend of Christ is a wonder. We are polluted and full of sin. There is nothing good in us by nature. Christ is the spotless Lamb of God. Yet He chose us to be His friends. How do we pick our friends? Is it because of some earthly attribute that they might have? Or is it because Christ calls them friends? Let us show the friendship Christ has given to us and show it by our actions to each other. Let us obey the command of Christ. Sing Psalter 369.

## **February 4 Read John 15:18-27**

People of God, do you feel the world's hatred? Do your actions for the cause of Christ make you hated by those with whom you have contact? Rest assured that God will be with you. He will be with you even as He was with His Son. Facing the world's hatred is not a bad thing. Facing the world's hatred is part of the assurance that we feel of God's love for us. We must live in the knowledge that we are loved by our heavenly Father. In being loved by God we must endure the hatred of the world. Let us have peace in that the world hated Christ, but Christ loves us. Sing Psalter 92:1, 4 & 5.

## **February 5 Read John 16:1-7**

When Jesus died and was later taken to glory He left His disciples on this earth. But He did not leave them alone. He sent to them the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost. The disciples were a picture of all of Christ's church. He left us to go to heaven to prepare a place for each one of us. But He sent to us the Holy Spirit to help us in this life. Each of us, no matter what our age, can rest assured that the Holy Spirit is with us and will help us. Each of us, no matter what our age, can rest assured that Christ is in heaven preparing a place for us. Let us live our lives knowing we have the Comforter with us and that we have the comfort of Lord's Day One. Sing Psalter 203.

## **February 6 Read John 16:7-15**

The Comforter is also the Spirit of truth. This has great meaning for us. Jesus is the truth was the testimony of John 14:6. We read elsewhere in Scripture that we must walk in the truth. John, in his third epistle, states that "He had no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." Young people, do you walk in truth? Is it evident to all around you that the Spirit of truth is in you? Do you seek the truth daily? Do you seek the truth as you learn your catechism and attend Bible studies? We must walk in the Spirit of truth and live out of that truth. Let us pray that the Spirit of truth may be in us and may be working in us every day. Sing Psalter 391.

## **February 7 Read John 16:16-22**

Jesus speaks of two types of joy in this section. He speaks of the world's joy. This type of joy is found in earthly things.

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It may be a sporting victory, a financial gain, or some other such thing. He also speaks of the church's joy. This joy is in the glorification of Christ. This joy is knowing that Christ's victory over the grave was for us. This joy is not fleeting as the first is, but this joy is eternally preserved by God for His people. Which joy do you seek after, people of God? Young people are you joyful in Christ? Do you show that joy in whatever you do? Let us be spiritually joyful and let us live out of that joy at all times. Sing Psalter 317.

**February 8 Read John 16:23-27**

People of God, we are to be praying people. This means people of all ages. From the youngest child to the oldest saint, we must lift up our hearts in prayer to our heavenly Father. We must ask for those things needful for both body and soul. We can do this in confidence that our Father will hear us. Our earthly fathers may forsake us but our heavenly Father never will. We must pray without ceasing. Children, do you pray? Young people, do you pray; do you pray publicly? Fathers and mothers do you lead your children in prayer and teach them to pray? We can pray because our Father hears us. We must pray because He commands us. Sing Psalter 235.

**February 9 Read John 16:28-33**

We have a most comforting verse in verse 33. The disciples were being called to lead Christ's church in the face of persecution from all sides. They would be despised by those they knew as well as those whom they had never met. We, too, will be persecuted and despised because of our membership in the church of Christ. But in all of this, Christ promises us His peace. This is not the peace of the world. There is no peace in the world for God's people. We will have tribulation Christ tells us. But this tribulation will be nothing because by His death, Jesus has conquered this world. In our darkest trials Jesus will be with us. What more can we ask? Sing Psalter 327.

**February 10 Read John 17:1-8**

Before Jesus led His disciples out toward Gethsemane and toward Calvary, He prayed with them and for them. This is often called His high priestly prayer. It embodies much of what He would do for His people while in the hands of enemies. In the first part of the prayer, He prays for the Father to be glorified. This we must do as well. We must pray for God's glory. We must not pray for our glory, because of ourselves we have no glory. He then prays about the word that He has given us. This Word was Himself. It was the word of truth. What a blessed possession that word is! Let us use that Word daily to the glory of God. Sing Psalter 231.

**February 11 Read John 17:9-15**

Reread verses 9 and 15 again. What a wonderful thing that our Savior prays for us! He does not pray for everyone in this world. He prays for His sheep; those whom the Fa-

ther has elected from all eternity and given to Him. What more do we need than to have our Savior praying for us? He prays that God will keep us in the hollow of His hand. He prays that in this wicked world we may find peace and comfort and protection. He also prays that His joy may fill us. Let us emulate our elder Brother and make this our prayer as well. If Jesus could pray these words on the night before He went to the cross, can we not pray these words every day? Let us pray in the confidence that God will hear us because of Christ's intercessory prayer for us. Sing Psalter 339.

**February 12 Read John 17:16-26**

We are not of the world. These were Jesus' words about us to His Father. Do we live that way people of God? Young people, do you live a life that shows that you are not of this world? Are you full of joy while you live that sort of a life? Jesus prays an antithetical prayer. In that prayer He prays that we may live an antithetical life. We must stop and consider this often. We must make a prayer for the ability and desire to live this type of a life. The world will know us by our antithetical life. They will not like us for it, in fact they will hate us for that life. Read over this whole prayer often and ponder on its beauty and truths. Sing Psalter 343.

**February 13 Read John 18:1-9**

In beginning this chapter we begin Jesus' hour of trial. He suffered this hour for us. His hour was now come that He might be glorified and that we might have salvation. The soldiers come seeking Jesus of Nazareth. They seek Him not that they might find life in Him but rather to put Him to death. This was done that we might find life. Even as Caiaphas had prophesied only a week ago, one man would die for an entire nation. Even in His arrest we see His power. First of all we see His power as the soldiers fall to the ground. His word was power. Secondly we see His power as He endures this hour for our sakes. Let us give thanks to the Lord of our life and walk each day in His Word. Sing Psalter 47:1-4.

**February 14 Read John 18:10-14**

Once again we see the impetuous Peter who has forgotten His Lord's words about Him. Peter is still looking for a kingdom on this earth and is ready to fight for His Master. Yes, Peter loves Jesus dearly, but Peter has to learn that our ways are not God's ways. We are like Peter often. We, too, would take matters into our hands in order to bring about the kingdom of God that we want. How wrong of us that is! If we would be successful, there would be no kingdom. There will be no kingdom on this present earth. There is nothing that we can do and let us never forget that! Let us pray Thy will be done, and let us seek the kingdom that is not earthly but that is spiritual. Let us read God's Word and bow before it. Sing Psalter 47: 5-8.

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**February 15 Read John 18:15-27**

Peter has not only forgotten what His Lord has taught him for the past three years, he has forgotten what he has been told only a few hours before. Three times he denies Christ. Only when the cock crowed was Peter reminded of his sin and went and wept bitterly alone. We might be inclined to say how awfully Peter acted. But wait a minute! We are no better than Peter. We deny Christ every day. Each time that we do not walk in His ways we deny Him. Each time we choose to do something which we call fun but is actually sin, we deny Christ. We must listen to the crowing rooster in our mind and weep as we seek forgiveness from our Lord and Savior. Peter found forgiveness and so can we. What a blessing this is for us, the sheep of the one great Shepherd! Sing Psalter 47:9-11.

**February 16 Read John 18:19-27**

While Peter was denying His Lord, Jesus was being tried before the Sanhedrin. In our terms the trial was rigged. Caiaphas had pronounced the sentence a week ago. Now they were going through the motions to fulfill both the Jewish and Roman laws. Jesus was asked concerning His doctrine. It was not a secret. He was the Son of God come into this world to save His people from their sins. Do we proclaim this doctrine? This is the only true doctrine. To proclaim anything else is to go along with the Sanhedrin in its sham trial. Let us learn His Word, and let us be ready to use it at all times. This is the way Jesus would have us to go. Sing Psalter 184:1-3.

**February 17 Read John 18:28-32**

After being examined and mocked by both Annas and Caiaphas Jesus was turned over to the Roman governor Pilate. This was necessary in order to have Jesus condemned to death. Notice how the Sanhedrin makes a show of piety by not entering the Roman judgment hall in order to keep themselves pure for the Passover. In doing this they are walking the path God has ordained Jesus to go. They will have the ultimate Passover lamb slain not for them but for those elect God had given to Jesus. Do we make a show of piety when in effect we are killing Christ? People of God, we must see that only those elect lambs have been preserved in the blood of the Lamb. Let us walk in a way that is pleasing to God. Sing Psalter 184:4-6.

**February 18 Read John 18:33-40**

Pilate begins to examine Jesus to find out what He has done to make Him worthy of death. In his preliminary examination he begins to see that Jesus has done nothing wrong. Pilate is confused about the kingdom of which Jesus is speaking. Pilate does not know the truth because the truth is not in him. After understanding that Jesus has done nothing wrong, he offers a substitute to the Jews—the wretched Barabbas. This did not please the Jews and it would not give us salvation. Only the perfect Lamb of God can give

to us the peace that we need both in this life and in the life to come. Jesus must die to appease the wicked Jews and to save us from our sins. Sing Psalter 184:7-9.

**February 19 Read John 19:1-7**

People of God, is Jesus your king? Notice I did not say, “Have you made Jesus your king?” This is the false teaching of many around us today. We cannot make Jesus king. He is king. He is king by virtue of the fact that He is the Son of God. The Jews denied that Jesus was the Son of God even though there were so many proofs to the fact that He was the Son of God. The Roman soldiers began to mock Jesus because of the Jews’ unbelief. We must confess that Jesus is King. In doing so we must not give the world opportunity to mock our Lord and Savior. Sing Psalter 266.

**February 20 Read John 19:8-15**

Because Pilate could see that to condemn Jesus to death would be unjust, he began to find some way in which He could persuade the Jews to allow him to release Jesus. In doing so he was not only condemning himself but also the Jews as they chanted we have no king but Caesar. Yes, the Jews were wrong. Yes, Pilate was wrong. But what about us? Do we deny Jesus as we become friends with the world? Do we say we are friends with wicked men in order to despise Christ? We must be careful about such things. We must hail Jesus as our King. Why must we do this? We must do this because as our King He has wrought for us salvation. Thanks be to God for this unspeakable gift. Sing Psalter 262.

**February 21 Read John 19:19-24**

There is much significance in Pilate’s final acts toward Jesus. First of all, even though the Jews despised it, he placed the proper title above Jesus’ head. Yes, Pilate was showing his disgust toward the Jews, but God used him to proclaim the truth of the matter. Secondly, in delivering Jesus to the Roman soldiers and as they took the very clothes from His back, the Scriptures were being fulfilled bit by bit which would bring about our salvation. All of this was in God’s council. All of this was for us. Let us look to the cross daily knowing that we have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus from all of our sins. Sing Psalter 185:1-3.

**February 22 Read John 19:25-27**

In His human nature Jesus was the son of Mary. Simeon had prophesied shortly after His birth of the type of death Jesus was going to die. Mary now watched her beloved son being put to death. That Mary’s weeping touched Jesus we know as He assigns His beloved disciple John to care for her. Jesus was doing more here, however. Jesus was breaking those earthly ties which must be broken in order for us to have salvation. Mary was the virgin mother of Christ, but Jesus was the son of God and needed to go to His heavenly Father to prepare a place for Mary and for us. Jesus

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was a loving son to Mary. Jesus is a loving brother to us. Sing Psalter 185:4-6.

**February 23 Read John 19:28-37**

John gives to us a very brief summary of the hours Jesus spend that day on the cross. But each word is significant for our salvation. We see John showing to us those things which had been prophesied by the Old Testament prophets. The Holy Spirit inspired these words to John in order that John could use them in his preaching to make clear that Jesus was the Messiah. Jesus suffered both in His human and divine natures on the cross. His thirst was human as He hung during that day. But His thirst was also divine. He thirsted for His Father's love as He hung suspended between heaven and earth. His legs remained unbroken as the perfect lamb of God slain for us on that final Passover. Jesus died on the terms God had ordained. Jesus gave up the ghost because He had finished the work given to Him by His beloved father. Jesus died in peace so that we can die in peace. Sing Psalter 185:7-9.

**February 24 Read John 19:38-42**

Two men were affected by the death of Jesus. Joseph and Nicodemus had secretly confessed their Lord, but now with His death they are ready to confess Him openly. They would not let Him be cast aside like those who had no one to claim the body. Here too Scriptures had to be fulfilled. Read Isaiah 53 some time today and see how that chapter is fulfilled in this one. Yes, they loved Jesus. Yes, they now confessed their love for Jesus. Do we love Jesus? Do we confess our love for Him in spite of any opposition? Sing Psalter 187.

**February 25 Read John 20:1-10**

There is a period of silence drawn over Scriptures. We know nothing of the actions of Jesus' disciples and other followers from his burial until the discovery Sunday morning of the empty grave. It must have been a sorrowful time for them. Peter was left alone with his guilt. The women mourned because Jesus' burial had not been carried out to their satisfaction. Each of His followers must have wondered what next. But that Sunday morning became very busy after the empty grave was discovered! Peter and John did not believe the women and went to have a look for themselves. After seeing the grave they turn away, still not understanding what Jesus had told them about the third day. What about us? Do we really believe that Jesus arose from the dead? Do we show it in our daily activities? Do we celebrate His rising properly each and every Sunday? Let us reread the resurrection story and know that, yes, Jesus is risen from the dead! Sing Psalter 29.

**February 26 Read John 20:11-18**

John does not reveal each appearance of Jesus after His resurrection. But the ones which He shows are very significant. First of all, he treats the appearance to Mary Magdalene. This was Jesus' first post-resurrection appear-

ance. All the rest are embodied in it. Jesus appears to this woman out of whom He had cast seven devils. Mary loved her deliverer and His absence from the tomb troubled her. Jesus comes to her not merely to comfort her in her grief but to show her of her own resurrection. Mary and we must know of our own resurrection when Jesus comes again. It appears that Mary learns the lesson. What about us? Sing Psalter 28.

**February 27 Read John 20:19-31**

On the day of His resurrection Jesus makes several appearances. In today's reading we have two of them. First of all, we have the appearance to the ten in the upper room. John does not recount the disciples' fears but rather the work which Jesus was giving them to do. He sends them out with the Holy Spirit to bring the Word of the two-edged sword. They are the beginning of the church of all ages. Secondly he appears to Thomas. Thomas of the doubtful nature needs physical proof of Jesus' resurrection. He did not appear that Sunday because of his nature. But Jesus shows Him and causes him to believe. We are blessed in the faith given to us to believe without seeing. We have the Word which was made flesh and dwelt among us. Sing Psalter 176.

**February 28 Read John 21:1-14**

Jesus in the forty days after His resurrection continues to teach his disciples and the church about the work that they must do. In these verses we see that God's elect must be gathered by the preaching of the Word. This as well as other teachings of Jesus showed to the disciples what they must do as apostles. It is also instruction for us the church of the new dispensation. The Word must be preached. We may not all be preachers but each of us must cause that Word to be preached to the nations. This is our work of gratitude for the salvation wrought by Christ on the cross. Sing Psalter 362.

**February 29 Read John 21:15-25**

In the final verses of John's gospel, we read of Peter's confession. Peter had publicly sinned in denying His Lord. Jesus had appeared to Him and doubtless Peter made a confession of his sin to Jesus. But Peter needed to confess His sin before all of the disciples. This was necessary in order for Him to carry out the work he was ordained to do. In making Peter say that he loved Jesus three times before the other disciples, Peter and the disciples were assured of Peter's confession. Peter's work was to preach as is the meaning of the words feed my sheep and lambs. Peter would die in the work of Christ. But Peter would be received in glory. Let us confess our sins even before the church if necessary, and let us be ready to suffer persecution and even die if necessary for the sake of the work of Christ. Sing Psalter 141.

# Respect for Authority

by Rev. Robert C. Harbach

The fifth of the ten commandments enjoins, “Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee” (Ex. 20:12). The first five of these commandments follow the line of God’s unity, God’s spirituality, God’s holiness, God’s rest, and God’s authority. That last, to this modern world, is a stickler. Authority is not a popular note and, among the heedless, never struck. The so-called Now Generation never gives it a thought, any more than it does the past, which it deems worthless because it is dead and gone. The future has no hope, being totally unreal and abstract. The present is all that matters. Therefore, they want everything now. At the least, they want instant food-stamps and welfare; but ordinarily they want to begin married life in a completely furnished house and a job starting at the top. No wonder such humans do not care to hear the law of God! The fifth commandment requires facing the past (father and mother) in a covenant-rooted past. It faces us into present reality—honor them, a durative imperative present tense—keep honoring them. It points us to the future in referring to the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. But the main principle of the whole law which this commandment upholds is that of authority, God’s authority. This divine authority is so sovereign that it can never be hindered, not even where anarchy occurs. For nothing occurs but by the rule of Jehovah’s authority (Job 2:10; Eph. 1:11). What this law requires of *me* is “to submit myself to all in authority over me.” Therefore we now look at the *fifth commandment* as it demands respect of authority, from the point of view of, I. Its Authority, II. Its Flouting, and III. Its Promise.

So what we have to do with here is the principle of authority. This is rooted in the sovereign Lord, who is Lord of all. He authorizes all righteous legislation, all liberty, peace, and order. He is the sovereign source of all rule and right to rule! He is the Most High God, Ruler of heaven and earth, the Judge of all the earth. *God* is that; not man! God only has omnipotence, the power to

execute whatever He decrees. God only has authority, the right to enact His decrees. His might *does* make right! His word is law. His authority is holy, just, and good. God (and this goes for Christ in His divine nature) possesses all authority. To Christ, as God in the flesh, was all authority given. It was rightly and legally delegated to Him. With this divine authority He rules over all impersonal, inanimate creation, which has no will of its own. He rules over all personal beings, good and bad, with or without their will. He rules over all sin, evil, and wicked men against their will. He exercises *His* will, in spite of their will, or through their will. He said “All authority in heaven and in earth is given unto Me.” The authority of government is His. He is the Ruler of the kings of the earth (Rev. 1:5). The heads of government, presidents, governors, and mayors rule under the power of the Lord Jesus Christ. All political powers receive their authority from Christ whom God has given authority to be the Head over all things for the sake of the church. They all are answerable to Christ for the manner

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in which they govern and serve out their tenure. Christ the Lord will judge these national powers in the day of God according to the statutes of His law. The kingdoms of the world form the kingdom of our Lord Who reigns for ever and ever (Rev. 11:15).

God has delegated a subordinate authority to the officers of state. With this authority they have the right

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to rule. Magistrates and police are in a position of authority for the punishment of evil-doers and the protection of the law-abiding. In the church, authority is vested in the office bearers, in the Christian schools, the teachers have authority; in families, the parents. These all, with delegated authority, standing as they do in the office of believer, represent God. Therefore, to obey them that have the rule over us is to obey God, and to defy them is to defy God.

The foundation of this God-ordained authority is the family. The family is the child's first environment. The child does not need a different environment. A different environment for the child would be disastrous. The family is for the child what the waters are for the fish and atmosphere for the birds. The family is the child's first school where its most basic and fundamental education in the knowledge of God, creation, and life are begun. The family is the child's first church where it learns to worship the Lord and experience His salvation. The family is the child's first community in which it learns the elements of law and order and obeys the powers that be—father and mother. The family is the child's first vocation center where it learns to work and to progress in bearing the weight of responsibility.

“Honor thy father and mother.” God's Word is directed to children with the New Testament making appeal to them in, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honor thy father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise—that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.” (Eph. 6:1-2). Children are lacking in experience and in judgment, and so must be taught to obey their parents instantly and without question. Occasionally, an explanation and reason for the demanded obedience may be given at the time a commandment is issued. But usually, there will be no time, nor opportunity, to give reasons for obedience. So children must learn the habit of unquestioned obedience. Their life may depend upon it.

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[C]hildren must learn the habit of unquestioned obedience.

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Modern Red-socialist oriented public school teachers in my “home town” taught pupils that faithful obedience to parents is detrimental to their mental develop-

ment. They were taught, therefore, not to listen to their parents, but to break with their authority. They were told that education must be free, that is, anarchistic, free even of teachers, every one doing what is right in his own eyes. As a result of this educational philosophy, society is plagued with infantilism, a cry-baby philosophy according to which people grow up physically, but with a childish disposition, having the mentality of the soap-opera star to cry, scream, and rage when they are not instantly gratified.

This commandment is flouted when God's ways are mocked and scorned, which is what happens when a child is not brought up in the principles of this law. The child then assumes a self-importance, living by the criteria of self. Permissive parents then raise a juvenile tyrant. Permissively trained children do not want to be catechized; they would catechize their elders. Such children are headed for crime, promiscuity, illegitimacy, abortions, divorce, and broken homes of their own.

The flouting of this commandment erodes the family. Lawlessness and anarchy prevail in the home. Everybody eats at a different time. Each grabs what he wants from the “frig”, then goes and sits before the TV to eat. Each is interested only in doing his own thing. The music and art of this generation produce no skill, beauty, or harmony, only a spontaneous and unconscious piece of expressionism lacking in form and reason. In religion, entertainment replaces doctrine and preaching. Where the principle of authority is repudiated there is the extinction of family society and the rise of the pervert society, as in Sodom and Gomorrah. Then we have perverts in government, on the police force, and in the teaching profession. This leaves the family unprotected and nobody safe!

Failure in regard to this fifth commandment, in many places, results in a matriarchal society. Where men have mainly but two interests in life, food and gratification of their lusts, they care nothing for law and order, for regular employment or for any responsible office in society. These matters are left to the women. Men have abandoned their masculinity to become effeminate. They abandon their bastard children to their unwed mothers, who, in turn, leave them to their grandmothers. In such a decayed society women do not rule. They are too overburdened with double responsibility, a mother's and a breadwinner's; and with a double battle against the wolf at the door and the anarchist running loose.

The duty this command requires is not only that of inferiors to superiors, but of superiors (parents) to infe-

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riors (children). The authority of this law imposed on husband and wife requires them to have children, then to teach them obedience to authority. But parental authority does not make the rulers of the home lords of life and death with power to abort life. No one has the authority to commit murder. So parents are required to honor and respect the life of their children. They may not kill their babies with impunity, for abortion-murder is sin against the fifth and sixth commandments at the peril of a double death penalty.

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[P]arents are required to honor and respect the life of their children.

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The promise attached to this commandment is “that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.” This could not be, as some take it, a promise to nations. A number of Bible commentators hold this. But it just does not work out in history. Some say that the nation of Israel lasted about 1,500 years. Others say Israel’s history was much less. The Roman Empire continued for about 1,000 years. The kingdom of Babylon lasted for only 88 years. Western civilization has a history of 2,400 years. The Chinese go back as far as 3,000 year ago. This promise would then favor the heathen Chinese and the humanistic Western civilization. But the promise is not national; it is not “the land which the Lord *your God* giveth you.” It is more on a personal basis, “which the Lord *thy God* giveth *thee*.” Yet the promise is, indeed, to Israel, but not to Israel according to the flesh. It is to the spiritual Israel, the Israel of God, the elect church of the ages. To that redeemed Israel God had promised “the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee!” To them He said, “It is given to *you* to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them that are without, it is not given” (Mt. 13:11; Mk. 4:11). To them He said, “Fear not, little flock, it is your Father’s good-pleasure to give *you* the kingdom” (Lk. 12:32). But to the rulers of carnal Israel He had said, “The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof” (Mt. 21:43). To His disciples He said, “The meek shall inherit the earth.” So the promise is given, not to everybody, but to His own people. Nor is this promise of the fifth commandment (as five Bible commentators have

it) one of a long earthly life and material prosperity. For then it would only extremely rarely be fulfilled as good children do not always live long, and bad children rarely die young. The obedient do die young, and the disobedient do live long. What then? Is this, perhaps, a promise to “men in general”? No, that is not satisfactory, either; for the phrase, “men in general” has no clear, definite meaning. The promise is to mankind, to elect mankind. They are promised the land.

What land is this? God had promised Abraham and his seed the world (Rom. 4:13), not this world, but the world to come, that better, heavenly country (Heb. 11:16). the New Heaven and Earth. The earthly Canaan was only a type of the promised heavenly Canaan, and in that earthly Canaan they “confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims in the earth” (11:13). Therefore, the land promised them is strictly in the new creation. That is the way the patriarchal fathers understood the promise, too. Strangers and pilgrims we are with them here in this world. There, in the world to come we shall be at home. There thy days shall be long. How long? As long as possible—for ever! Therefore, this is the promise of eternal life in the New Jerusalem, or, as some hymns have it, in Emmanuel’s Land, in the land of fadeless day, in the city foursquare, in Zion the beautiful city of God, in Jerusalem the golden, in Beulah Land. So this promise is fulfilled in the kingdom of glory, in the glorified heaven and earth. That is where thy days shall be long on the earth. This promise then directs our eye by faith to the New Heaven and the New Earth where righteousness dwells, where righteousness is at home!

Christ Himself was subject to this fifth commandment law, and, therefore, subject to His parents whom He honored with His love and obedience; so the promise is also to Him that His days shall be long on the earth. For it is written of Him as Messiah, “the King. . .asked life of Thee, and Thou gavest it Him, even length of days for ever and ever” (Ps. 21:4). Therefore, He has the right to make the claim, and that in truth, “I am the First and the Last, He that liveth, and became dead, and, behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen” (Rev. 1:17b-18, Gk.). On the cross, He honored His heavenly Father and His earthly mother. “When Jesus, therefore, saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom He loved, He saith unto His mother, ‘Woman, behold, thy son!’ Then saith He to the disciple, ‘Behold, thy mother!’” In this way He provided for the future care of His mother. He was always subject to the authority of the Father. He prayed to Him, not My will, but Thine be done. Thus in

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the cross is the law of God fulfilled; and only the Christ of the cross, who kept the law for us, can give us grace to keep this law!

Amen. ❖

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*Rev. Harbach was a minister in the Protestant Reformed Churches from 1955 through 1979. This article is reprinted from the March, 1986 issue of Beacon Lights.*

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From the Pastor's Study

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# The Eighth Pointer on the Spiritual Roadmap: Obtaining and Using Our Possessions Rightly

by Rev. Doug Kuiper



*Thou shalt not steal.*  
Exodus 20:15

*Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.*  
Ephesians 4:28

Traveling down the freeway one day, I was looking for an exit ramp. I just needed to stretch my legs, run around the car a few times, and then I would be back on my way. To my relief, I saw signs in the distance that I knew meant an exit was coming up. But my relief turned to disappointment, as I saw this sign: "No freeway entrance this exit." In other words, if I got off here, I would have to take a detour to find another road with a freeway entrance.

Young people, that reminded me of what happens when we get off The Way of Thankful Obedience, onto any of the other roads or lanes that we have spoken of. We might think to ourselves, "I'll only be off for a moment, then I'll get right back on again." In fact, if we sin willfully, we will not find ourselves able or willing to live to God's glory again, unless we first acknowledge

and repent of our sin, and seek grace from Christ to live in obedience to God again.

So it is now with the exit to Stealing Street. It seems to intersect with The Way of Thankful Obedience often. Satan entices us so often to obtain or use our possessions in a wrong way, that we might think: "It's OK. If I get off on Stealing Street, I can get right back on The Way of Thankful Obedience again." But if we should actually get off, we find that, having stolen once...and gotten away with it...we think of other ways to steal...and actually do steal more often...and soon all we can think about is stealing.



Enticing us to steal is one more way in which Satan tries to prevent us from reaching our goal. So God, in His grace to His people, reminds us that we should not steal; and that if we should steal willfully, He will withhold from us the consciousness of His love and favor, until we confess our sin and turn from it.

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But how many opportunities we have to steal! As our Heidelberg Catechism reminds us in Lord's Day 42,

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stealing doesn't necessarily require a gun and a gang; often we violate the eighth commandment in many "small" ways.

I see my mother's purse. Think she would miss a couple of bucks?

I'm selling my car. Do I ask a fair price, or a price far beyond its real worth? And am I ready to tell prospective buyers that, although the car looks very nice, it needs brakes badly?

I'm working at my job, after school. The boss is gone home for the day. Do I slack off, take it easy, get by until closing with just the least amount of effort?

I've found \$100 lying on the sidewalk. Do I even make an attempt to find the rightful owner?

Dad gave me a dollar to put in the collection plate at catechism. Does it get in there?

I'm at a store, and I see a piece of candy that I want—can I sneak it without anyone seeing it?

To steal is to try to make someone else's possession mine, in a wrong way. The right way to obtain my boss' possessions (money) is to work hard for it. The right way to obtain merchandise is to pay a fair value for it. The wrong way is to take it without giving a fair value—whether that be forcefully, or sneakily. In fact, the words "steal" or "thievery" usually indicate a sneaky attempt, while the word "rob" indicates a more forceful attempt.



The child of God may not steal.

Nor may the citizen of the USA! Even the world recognizes that stealing is not good. We don't like it when others steal from us; so we should not steal from them. And, to protect our liberty and freedom, it is important that we not steal.

But the child of God has this additional reason: to steal is to show ingratitude for what God has given us.

For the fact is that God supplies all our material needs, everything that we need to serve Him on earth. He gives us food, drink, shelter, clothing, etc—in the amount that He wishes us to have. He gives these things either by work (we earn them) or gifts (we are freely given them). To some He gives much; to others little. But to all He gives what is necessary to carry out His purpose for our life.

This being true, to steal shows our discontentment with and ingratitude for that which God has given us. We want more—not for God's glory, but our own use. This leads us to plot how we can get more possessions, without putting forth energy or parting with our money.

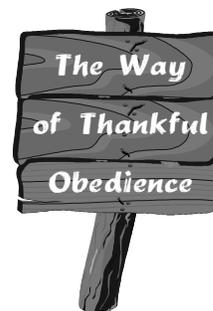
All this is fine, you say—but what if I truly *don't* have enough? First, remember that none who covet think they have enough. Only if we are content, by God's grace, will we ever say we have enough. Second, if in fact one is not able to meet one's needs by honest work, one must remember that for such instances God has provided our families or the deacons of His church to help us—and we must be ready to seek help from those sources.

But we may not steal. Gratitude to God for saving us in Christ will prevent us from stealing.



The eighth commandment also has positive implications.

First, we must be content with our possessions. Paul reminds Timothy that "godliness with contentment is great gain" (I Tim. 6:6), and then reminds him of the need to manifest that contentment in his life: "And having food and raiment let us be therewith content" (vs. 8). Timothy is reminded of these things, because as pastor he must teach the people to be content, and set a proper example in his own life.



Second, we must work according to our abilities and opportunities, to provide for our own needs. Not only does Ephesians 4:28, quoted above, teach this; but other passages as well, such as II Thessalonians 3:10: "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat."

Third, we must be ready to give of our possessions for the service of God and His kingdom, and for the needs of the poor. Jesus teaches this, when He speaks of the heathen seeking after food, drink, and clothing; and then tells His disciples "But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Luke 12:31). They may give freely to the causes of the kingdom, remembering that God knows what earthly things they have need of (vs. 30). Also Ephesians 4:28, quoted above, reminds us that we must be ready to give of our possessions for those in need.

Fourth, we must remember that our true riches are in heaven, and none can steal them from us! These are the riches of salvation that Christ earned for us on the cross, begins to bestow upon us now during our earthly life, and will bestow on us completely in the new creation. But those who steal in this life, without repenting,

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will have no such riches—for thieves do not inherit the kingdom of God (I Cor. 6:9-10).

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So, young people, what is your destination?

If it is your own pleasure in this life, and hell in the next, no doubt you will steal. Stealing Street will get you to your destination. If it is God's glory in this life, and heaven in the next, you may not steal; it is inconsistent with a thankful walk of obedience to God.

What if you have stolen? Is there an entrance onto The Way of Thankful Obedience again? There is!

It requires something of a detour, as we have noted before—we cannot get back on that way ourselves; but must use God's way. We must repent of our sins, and confess them, and steal no more!

I can think of a beautiful illustration of this truth, that the child of God who breaks the eighth commandment can certainly, in the way of sorrow and repentance, find forgiveness, and enjoy the pleasures of heaven. Two thieves hung on crosses. Both had willfully and blatantly broken the eighth commandment. But one repented! And to *him* said Jesus: "Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43).

For Christ died to save thieves!

How grateful I am—for indeed, I know my past thefts. Young people, are you grateful too? ❖

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*Rev. Kuiper is pastor of Randolph Protestant Reformed Church in Randolph, Wisconsin.*

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## Church History

# George M. Ophoff (13)

## On Common Grace\*

by Prof. Herman Hanko

*\*continued from the November issue.*

Not too many years after Rev. Ophoff began his work as pastor of the congregation of Hope Christian Reformed Church, he became actively embroiled in the common grace controversy. As we noticed already in another connection, the controversy over common grace had long agitated the church before it became an ecclesiastical issue at the Synod of 1924. And Rev. Ophoff had come to an independent conclusion on the issue while he was still a student in the Seminary. It is not our intention in this series of articles to go over the whole controversy as it led up to and was "settled" by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church when it adopted the three points of common grace in 1924. This material can be found in many other writings, particularly: "The History of the Protestant Reformed Churches" and "Therefore Have I Spoken." Furthermore, Rev. Ophoff himself played no active role in the history of the Synod. His views at the time of the Synod had not been publicly expressed and were not an issue at the Synod. The Synod did not deal with him and his views

when it formulated the three points, and Rev. Ophoff himself was not a delegate to that Synod. Rev. Ophoff enters the picture after the Synod was over.

He enters the picture with the publication of the *Standard Bearer*. (For those who are interested in the history of *The Standard Bearer*, the anniversary volume of this periodical can be consulted. A short history appears in the second issue of Volume 50, pages 32-34.) The *Standard Bearer* began publication in October, 1924, about three months after the adoption of the three points of common grace, but prior to the deposition of Rev. Herman Hoeksema by Classis Grand Rapids East. Rev. Ophoff was not among those who formed the original publication committee. According to the minutes of that committee, Rev. Ophoff joined the organization on October 27, 1924, and was immediately appointed to a position on the editorial staff. Nevertheless, his name appears on the masthead of the very first issue. He had, therefore, committed himself to the cause of the truth at the very outset of the movement.

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Rev. Ophoff's first article appeared in the second issue, dated November, 1924. A few quotes from it will give some idea of his own personal sentiments concerning the whole common grace question. It will, at the same time, show some of the characteristic spiritedness and total lack of fear which were to be such significant features of Rev. Ophoff's writings throughout the years.

In an article entitled "A Declaration," Rev Ophoff writes as follows:

And thus it happens that I, the undersigned, am of the group editing this periodical. The fact that I agree to serve upon the editorial staff of the "Standard Bearer" amounts to an admission on my part that I too reject the views and conception of things which the term common grace stands for. For me it is quite impossible to adhere to the principles embedded in the term common grace and remain on friendly terms with Scripture.

I am aware of it that he who has the audacity to deny common grace is regarded as disgustingly dense, inconceivably conceited and destructive. In the October issue of "Religion and Culture", page 69, Prof. Van Andel writes: "And that now some young American ministers of Dutch descent contend that this doctrine of common grace is not traditionally reformed. How little hold has the reformed truth had on some of us that they do not feel that they are undermining the very foundations of Christian that is Calvinistic Theology, ethics and philosophy." You see, the huge mental and spiritual denseness and the inconceivable conceit of the deniers of common grace staggers the brother. We are ramming in pieces the very foundations of Calvinistic theology, ethics and philosophy.

No doubt we should have trembled in our boots when this monstrous accusation was hurled our way, I suppose for the purpose of terrifying our souls. And I suppose we ought to have blushed when our friend let us see how blunted our receptive and assimilative faculties are. Yet we did not blush, neither did we tremble. And why not? Because we are too hardened and insensible to blush? No. Because our nerves are of steel so that nothing shocks us? No. We were not disturbed because we had no guarantee whether or not the professor was simply seeing things again. This happened before with him. History proves that the professor is subject to hallucinations. According to Pillsbury (a writer in Psychology, H.H.), a hallucination does not arise from objective phenomenon.

After describing what this "hallucination" was, Rev. Ophoff goes on to give his reasons for rejecting common grace.

Well do we realize that among the adherents of the views which we reject is found the master mind. The chief exponent of the doctrine of Common Grace, the late Dr. A. Kuyper, was a recognized genius. This man devoted time and energy to the development of the doctrine of Common Grace. A work of three volumes was the result. Yet a careful study of Scripture and our standards on the one hand and the doctrine of common grace on the other hand convinced me that the views and the conception of things which the term "common grace" stands for, clash with Scripture. Therefore, I could not do otherwise than break with the doctrine.

However, it was not without considerable hesitancy that I did so. It is a difficult matter to part company with a great Christian thinker like Kuyper. One is constantly haunted by the thought that it is one self who errs. What is more, the existence of common grace is a settled thing. We have come to believe in it as a matter of course. So be it. I cannot see it otherwise but that the doctrine of common grace clashes with Scripture.

Rev. Ophoff goes on then to show how the writings of those who defend common grace deny in fact the truth of total depravity. He concludes this with the remark:

I, as a reformed preacher, cannot and will not preach total depravity and in the next breath assure my hearers that the depraved sinner, in his depraved state, performs noble deeds, has pure emotions, and thinks good thoughts. God's Word unclothes the sinner, strips him of every virtue and sends him naked to Christ. God forbid that I stop that sinner on the way to clothe him in the beautiful garments of common grace. I should fear lest that sinner would no longer feel the need of Christ.

Such and similar thoughts finding their way into this (article) did its share in opening my eyes to the dangers and fallacies of common grace.

There are other things which caused me to break with common grace.

By this, Rev. Ophoff referred particularly to many inconsistencies and problems which the defenders of common grace themselves brought up, which led him to the conviction that such views were contrary to the clear and unambiguous teachings of Scripture. He concludes this section with the words:

These methods of *some* of the exponents and defenders of common grace, their faulty thoughts, illogical reasonings, their blunders, their noise, widened the breach between me and common grace. I thought, it

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can not be, there is so very much to say in defense of common grace after all.

Then too, it seems to me that the exponents of common grace are bent on misunderstanding, misrepresenting and misinterpreting the opponents of common grace.

All these different things taken together disengaged me from the doctrine of common grace. I regard the doctrine dangerous, as well as the views and conception of things which the term stands for. I shall use my talents to help expose, in the light of God's Word, the dangers and fallacies of common grace.

The Synod of 1924 declared itself for common grace. Yet the Synod evaded the real issues. The Synod failed to furnish proof. The existence of common grace has never been proven. The objections raised against it have never been removed.

Well, that was a sharp and unequivocal stand. And from that resolve, Rev. Ophoff never wavered in all his life. But such a firm commitment to the cause of the truth led to trouble within a matter of weeks. ❖

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*Prof. Hanko is a professor emeritus of the Protestant Reformed Seminary.*

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## De Kleine Kerk of Steenwijk

by J. P. de Klerk

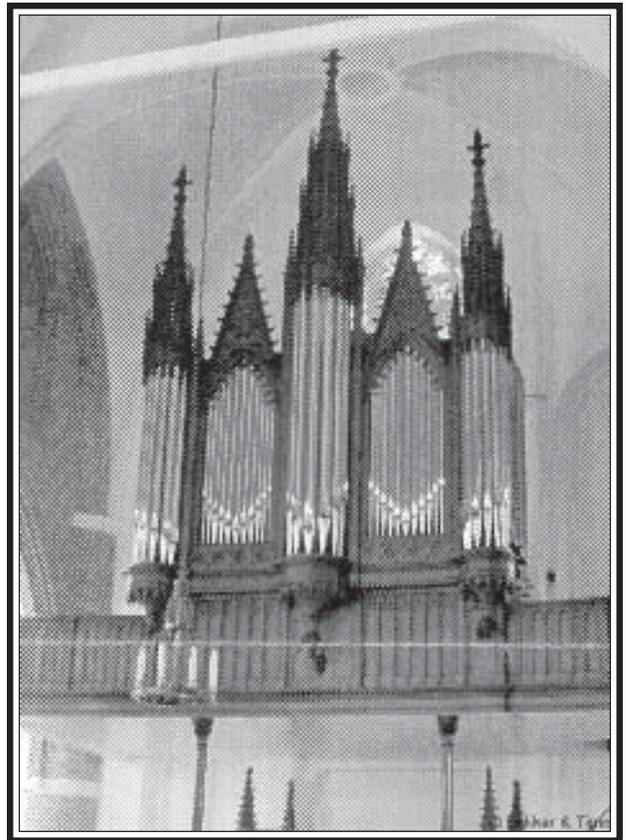
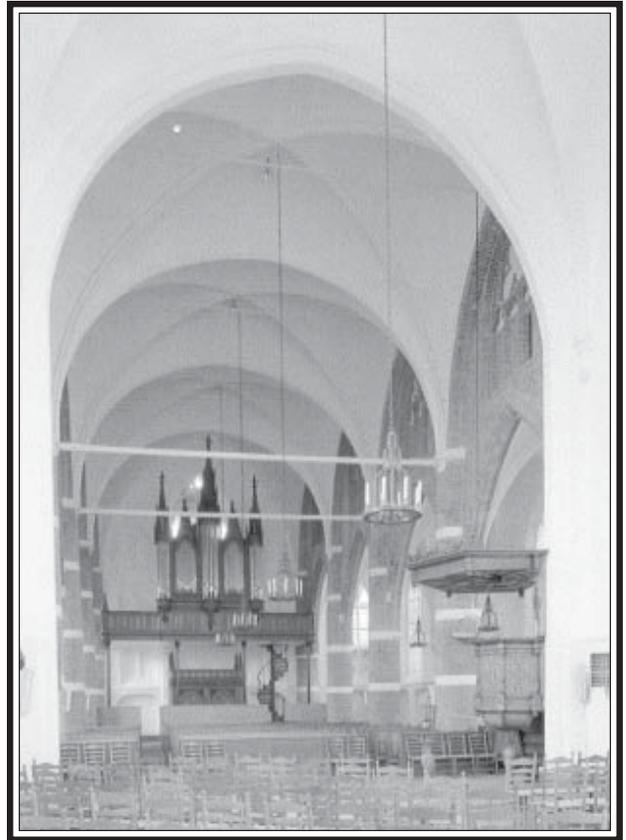
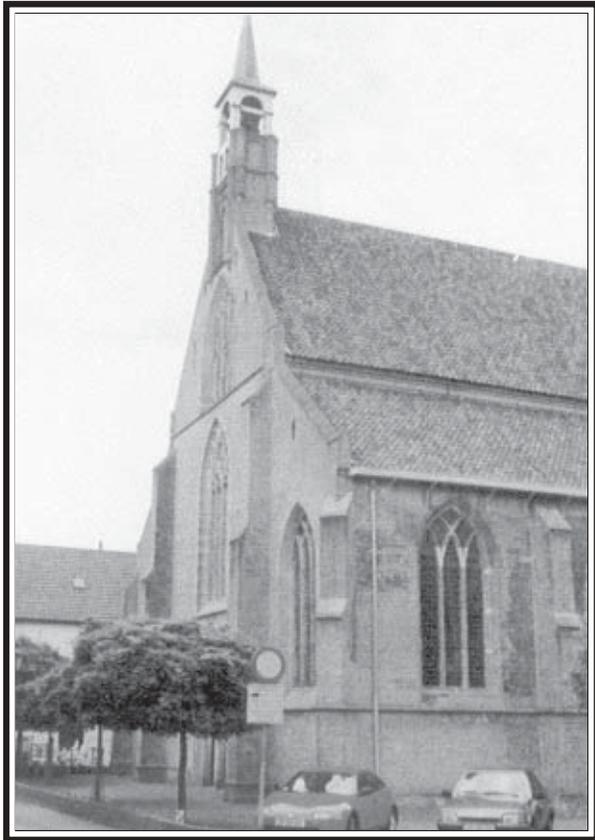


In 1477 De Kleine Kerk (the small church) then called the Onze Lieve Vrouwe Kerk (Our Dear Lady Church) was built in Steenwijk—a nice town in the Dutch province of Overijssel, which is 75 percent Christian. In 1300, before the church was built, there had been a Maria kapel (Maria chapel) at this place, probably built by Roman monks. It was made of wood and it burnt down during fights with invading armies. Some parts of the high protecting walls of the town are still preserved. De Kleine Kerk is owned and fully restored by the Liberated Reformed Churches of The Netherlands. It is officially registered as a “pseudo basilica” because it has aisles. You see a photo of the tower, which contains two original bronze bells. The photo was made before the restoration started. The bells were made by Geert van Wou in Kampen in 1501.

Inside the church is a pulpit, made in 1640, carved out of oak, against the brick wall. There is also a fine organ, restored by the firm Bakker & Timmenga of Leeuwarden. It was placed into use again on September 14, 2002. ❖

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*J. P. deKlerk is an author and journalist from Ashhurst, New Zealand.*





But it is good for me  
to draw near to GOD:  
I have put my trust in  
the Lord God, that I  
may declare all thy works.

PSALM 73:28

*Covenant Hills Otisville Md.*

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# "LITTLE LIGHTS"

## One Man Against the World (3)

*... let it shine!*

by Connie Meyer

Arius was not a man to give up. He had very influential and outspoken friends. He and his followers stirred up divisions in the church. Their heresies and lies worked as a cancer in the body of Christ. The divisions even threatened the unity of the whole Roman Empire. Constantine the emperor would have to intervene.

Constantine was the first emperor to not only tolerate Christianity, he even promoted it. He claimed to be a Christian himself. But above all, he hated divisions. The issues that Arius brought up had to be solved. God would use this man, this leader of the civilized world, for His own special purposes and pleasure. The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord; He directs it whithersoever He wills.

God willed to have a church council called to Nicea. Constantine called a council of the church to Nicea. It would be a council whose work would endure for centuries. It would benefit the body of Christ for all of history. It would help to establish the truth of Scripture to the end of time. Constantine just wanted peace.

Over 300 church leaders came to Nicea to state once and for all—Who is Jesus. A few believed as Arius did,

that Jesus was like God, but not really God. Even less believed as Alexander and Athanasius did, that Jesus as the Son of God is very God indeed. But most believed something in between these two positions. The victory for the truth would not be easily won.

Eusebius of Nicodemia, a large, tall man with a voice to match and a head full of white hair led the way for the Arian view. Eusebius of Caesarea, a tall, thin man with a noble, scholarly manner held sway for the middle ground. These were men of knowledge and renown. Then there was Athanasius, the short, young, redheaded deacon of Alexandria. Too young to be a member of the council, he was there merely as the attendant of Alexander. Experience and numbers were by far on the side of the Arians. How would the truth prevail in such a council as this?

(to be continued) ❖

*Connie is the mother of 5 children and a member of Hope Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan.*



**Unscramble the letters to complete the verse:**

“Het snigk thrae si ni teh nahd fo

-----  
eht Lord, sa eth vierrs fo twear: eh  
\_\_\_ Lord \_\_\_\_\_

-----  
huntert ti rohveewestrih eh liwl.”  
-----

Proverbs 21:1

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## Church News

### BAPTISMS

*"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."*

*Mark 16:16*

The sacrament of Holy Baptism was administered to:

Hailey Nicole, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Pete Byker—Faith, MI

Annika Rose, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Koole—Faith, MI

Samuel David, son of Mr. & Mrs. Dave Korhorn—Faith, MI

Russell Gise, son of Mr. & Mrs. Rick VanBaren—Faith, MI

Kyle Andrew, son of Mr. & Mrs. Mike Brummel—Faith, MI

Braxton Fisher, son of Mr. & Mrs. Robb VandenHeuvel—Georgetown, MI

Hallie Mae, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Jordan Engelsma—Georgetown, MI

Meghan Dawne, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Joel Beute—Grace, MI

Lydia Grace, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Jeremy Meulenberg—Grace, MI

Tristan John, son of Mr. & Mrs. Shane Davelaar—Hull, IA

Matthew Larry, son of Mr. & Mrs. Brian Wierenga—Lacombe, Canada

Cydney Cait, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Phil DeVries—Randolph, WI

Colin Joseph, son of Mr. & Mrs. Kyle VanBaren—Randolph, WI

Kaylie Joy, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. John DeBoer—Redlands, CA

Alexis Breann, daughter of Miss Heidi Bleyenberg—Trinity, MI

Ashley Dawn, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Matt Dykstra—Trinity, MI

### CONFESSIONS OF FAITH

*"...and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."*

*Romans 10:10*

Public confession of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ was made by:

Scott Ferguson—Edmonton, Canada

Shane and Tamara Davelaar—Hull, IA

Stefan Griess—Loveland, CO

Mikal Dykshorn—Peace, IL

Kyle Prins—Trinity, MI

### MARRIAGES

*"...and they twain shall be one flesh."*

*Matthew 19:5*

United in the bond of Holy Matrimony were:

Mr. Jeff Westra and Miss Nicki Berens—Holland, MI