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# Beacon Lights

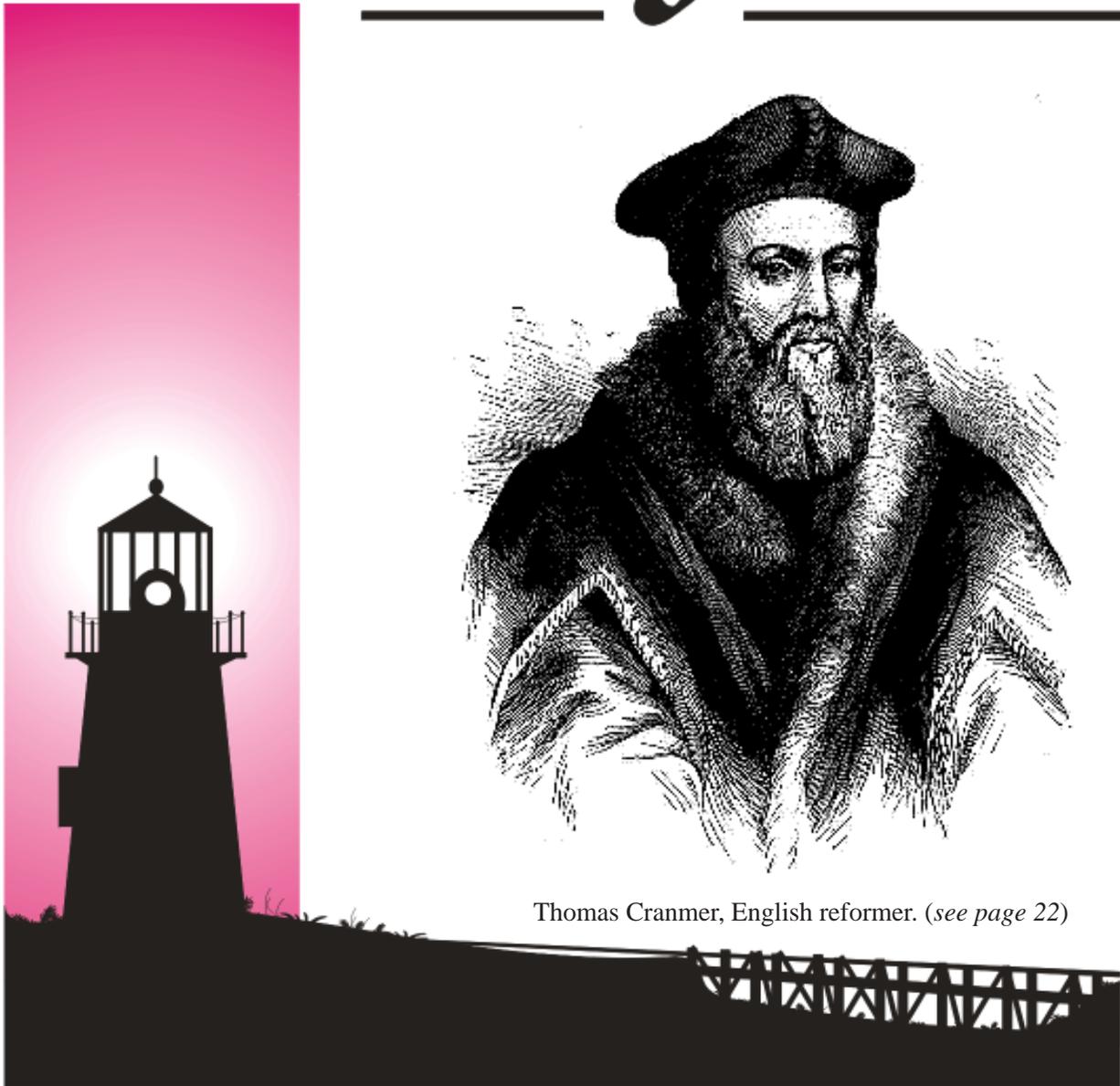
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October  
2004

Volume LXIII  
Number 9



Thomas Cranmer, English reformer. (see page 22)



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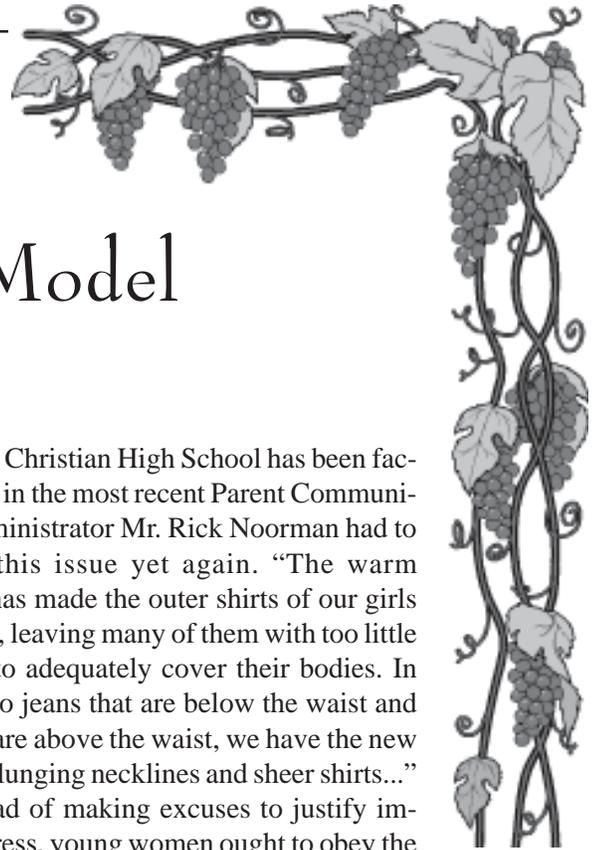
*Beacon Lights* is published monthly by the Federation of Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies. Subscription price is \$10.00. Please send all correspondence, address changes, subscriptions, and article submissions to the business office.

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# The Modest Role Model

by Deborah Key

It is becoming increasingly difficult for young women to find decent clothing. Most of the dresses, shirts, and pants that fill the clothing racks of malls and major stores are inappropriate for young women to buy, much less wear. In light of this situation, it is vitally important to keep in mind that our bodies are temples of God. If our choice of apparel is not pleasing to God, then some changes had better be made.

One does not have to look far to determine the world's definition of modesty. For young women, current trends embraced by today's society include skin-tight pants and revealing shirts. In volume 20, issue 17 of the Standard Bearer, Rev. M. Gritters has something to say about this:

Women of the world "want to be beautiful in order to attract, and they want to attract because they are sensual (384)." He goes on to say that such women dress that way "knowing what power such beauty has on the opposite sex."

Unfortunately, even Christians need to be concerned with the effects of the decreasing modesty of society. Rev. Koole gets to the heart of the matter in his Standard Bearer article entitled, "The Spirit of our Age (3)." He states "When we are continually subjected to the observation of evil, the conscience becomes calloused, insensitive to the sinfulness of sin, not only as it is practiced by others, but as found in our own lives as well (451)." He explains himself by saying, "One sees the dress of our young women, especially in the summer, which accents rather than covers. Where is the modesty? The shame? It is absent (452)."

There is nothing wrong with putting on some make-up and jewelry and dressing up to look nice. But, it must be done in moderation. Beauty in and of itself is not sinful; we certainly may make the most of our God given beauty. However, it is sinful when we become devoted to beauty, and begin conforming to the world.

Conforming to the world by way of immodest dressing is a very real problem, even in the Protestant Reformed Churches. One has only to look at the struggles

Covenant Christian High School has been facing. Even in the most recent Parent Communicator, administrator Mr. Rick Noorman had to address this issue yet again. "The warm weather has made the outer shirts of our girls disappear, leaving many of them with too little material to adequately cover their bodies. In addition to jeans that are below the waist and tops that are above the waist, we have the new trend of plunging necklines and sheer shirts..."

Instead of making excuses to justify immodest dress, young women ought to obey the Word of God and "flee also youthful lusts (II Timothy 2:22)." More specifically, godly young women are commanded in I Timothy 2: 9-10 to "adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." Mothers need to teach their daughters to dress soberly and moderately, in opposition to the world's vain intention of attracting other people's eyes. The apostle Peter also speaks of this in I Peter 3:3-4 saying, "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." Clearly, the will of God concerning the apparel of women is set forth in Scripture.

According to Lord's Day 33, question and answer 90, the quickening of the new man is to "love and delight to live according to the will of God in all good works." Godly modesty is setting an appropriate example that cannot be criticized. "Modesty focuses on inward beauty, for that kind of beauty remains strong and youthful long after our body turns old and frail" (TouchPoints, 178).

This issue of modest dressing also applies to the Protestant Reformed teacher. The spirituality of an individual will reflect in their dress. It is safe to say that a

teacher in short skirts and tight shirts is not spiritually mature enough to be training our children, the next generation of the church, in the fear of the Lord in *all* aspects of life. In Professor Engelsma's book *Reformed Education*, he states, "If the work of the teacher is rearing children of the covenant, the teacher must have spiritual credentials. He must be full of the Spirit and grace of God. The man or woman to whom we entrust our child...must be trustworthy (74.)"

By spiritual maturity, it is understood that one's purpose in life is to praise and glorify God, not oneself. Modest dress is especially important for Protestant Reformed teachers in order to set a godly example for their students, who are taught to respect and make role models of teachers. Students are thereby taught through both word and example to live the antithesis and dress appropriately, since their bodies are temples of God and parts of the body of Christ. I Corinthians 6:19-20 leaves no room for doubt when it states, "What? 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? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Lord's Day 41, answer 109 explains to us, "Since both our body and soul are temples of the Holy Ghost He commands us to preserve them pure and holy; therefore He forbids all unchaste actions, gestures, words, thoughts, desires, and whatever can entice men thereto. If our dress is enticing to men and is not glorifying to God, then some changes need to be made to our wardrobes. As a final warning, the Canons of Dordt, under the Fifth Head of Doctrine, Article 4 we read that we "are not always so influenced and actuated by the Spirit of God...so as to be seduced by and comply with the lusts of the flesh; (we) must, therefore, be constant in watching and prayer, that they be not led into temptation." ❖

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*Deborah is a member of Grandville Protestant Reformed Church in Grandville, Michigan. This essay was written for the Federation of Protestant Reformed Young Peoples' Scholarship.*

Gem of the Month

## Dogs Eat the Crumbs

*A* Canaanite woman to Jesus came  
 For she had heard of our Savior's fame—  
 He healed the sick, the blind, the lame;  
 God worked in her heart belief in His name.

*"O* Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me!  
*"My daughter's sore vexed with a devil," said she.  
 When no answer came, she continued her plea:  
 "Dear Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me!"*

*A*t last then the answer came: "It is not meet  
 To give children's bread to the dogs on the street."  
 Not discouraged by this—her reply was upbeat:  
 "Yet the crumbs from the table the dogs get to eat."

*P*ersistence, humility, faith, all shine through,  
 And Jesus commends her. He said He would do  
 The thing that she asked, though she wasn't a Jew.  
 His kingdom extends to the Gentiles too.

*I*t's a lesson for us, to be humble, contrite;  
 Of ourselves we are less than dogs in His sight;  
 It is only by grace that we walk in the light;  
 Sinners' hearts are transformed by His infinite might.

Thelma Westra

# Polygamy in the Old Testament

by Rev. James Laning

## Dear Rev. Laning

I have a question that I have been thinking about for awhile. I've been reading through the Old Testament, and I've been bothered by the rampant polygamy that is recorded there. I don't understand why God allowed the Old Testament men to have so many wives and concubines, and why He doesn't rebuke them. We know from Jesus's teachings that this constitutes adultery, and those men had the 10 commandments. The thing that really confuses me is that the first wife doesn't seem to be the blessed wife, as you would expect since she is the "real" wife. Take, for example, Jacob. He married Leah first (and this is besides the fact that she was apparently the stronger of the two spiritually), and yet God loved and blessed Joseph, the son of Rachel, the most of all the sons. The same is true in David's life: Solomon was born to the woman with whom David had an adulterous affair, and whose husband David killed. It almost seems like God actually blesses their infidelities, and disregards the legitimate relationships. Then it logically follows that divorce and remarriage isn't really as bad as we make it out to be.

I realize that there are really a few questions in there, but I just cannot come to a conclusion, and the questions keep piling up. I guess the primary question here is why didn't God do something about all these men taking many many wives? Why didn't He at least send prophets to rebuke this sin?

Thank you very much!

A reader who requests that her name not be published

## Dear Reader

Many have asked the very question that you ask. It is a very interesting question.

When God instituted marriage in the Garden of Eden, He showed that marriage was to be between one man and one woman for life. It is true that, in the Old Testament law, having more than one wife was not *explicitly*

forbidden. The king was forbidden to multiply wives to himself (Deut. 17:17). A man was not allowed to be married to two sisters at the same time (Lev. 18:18). And if a man had two wives, and if his firstborn was not born to the wife he loved, he still had to grant that child the rights of the firstborn (Deut. 21:15ff). But this does not mean that God did not show His people the evil of having more than one wife. The quarrels between Sarah and Hagar, and between Leah and Rachel, are examples that show that God disciplined His people by bringing various troubles upon them when they had more than one wife.

In the case of King David, we must remember that God certainly did chasten him for his sin. Remember what God said to him through Nathan the prophet (II Samuel 12:11-14).

Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun. And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.

David's sin, of course, was more than that of marrying many wives. He was severely chastened for taking another man's wife and murdering him.

The truth concerning monogamy, like the truth concerning the Trinity, is an example of one that appears to us to be somewhat obscure in the Old Testament, but very plain in the New Testament.

This, however, does not mean that "*it logically follows that divorce and remarriage isn't really as bad as we make it out to be.*" There are many places in the Old

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Testament in which God rebukes His people for putting away their wives, and for committing fornication and adultery. Consider, for example, Malachi 2:13-16.

And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good will at your hand. Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.

Here God strongly rebukes his people for putting away their wives, and says that He will not regard their offerings unless they repent of this sin.

In the Old Testament the sins of fornication, taking another man's wife, and marrying unbelievers, were rebuked frequently and in much detail. It is in the New Testament, however, that we see more clearly that adul-

tery is committed also when someone is married to more than one person at the same time.

I thank you for your question.  
Fraternally in Christ,  
Rev. Laning ❖

**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:

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Our Young People's Federation

# Walking with God: The Believer's Holy Life

by Rev. Rodney Kleyn  
Speech for Young Peoples' Convention 2004

**B**eloved Young People of our Protestant Reformed Churches. It is a great privilege for me to be able to speak to you at this convention. The last convention I attended was 10 years ago in 1994 and I attended it, like you, as a conventioneer. Now I am here as a minister and chaperone.

I want to start by doing something a little off-topic. I am going to ask a question, and I want you to stand up in response. All of you who are without a minister in your congregation please stand. Now, all of you, look around and see how many that is. Our synod spoke to this need this year by reminding our churches and people

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of this need. I think we can all see the need. These are sheep of Christ who have no pastor. Young men, all of you are thinking of the future, and this is one of the things that you ought to consider. This week is the perfect opportunity to get some help and advice as you consider it. Ten years ago, at the convention I attended, I specifically remember speaking with Rev. Cammenga and Prof. Dykstra about the call to the ministry. And now, by God's grace, here I am with the privilege of speaking to you.

My topic is "Walking with God: The Believer's Holy Life."

When we look at Scripture we learn that "walking with" someone means especially two things. First, it means that we agree, that we agree on a common purpose. Amos 3:3 says, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" and the idea is that two who walk together do agree. Second, walking with someone implies closeness and fellowship. This is the idea of our walking with God: 1) we agree with him, and 2) we are close to him.

Whenever you walk with someone, there are two walking. We must look at our walking with God from two points of view. God walks with us, as well as we walk with him. This is important. We must start with God. Our walking with God means, first, that he reconciles us to himself by changing us so that we agree with him. God changes us by breaking down the enmity that exists between us and him, and removing the sin that gets in the way. Then the two are agreed, and then we can walk with God.

But, there are two. And the other is us. Today we look especially at our calling to walk with God.

I am going to divide my speech under five heads as I explain what it means to walk with God. To help you in remembering what I say (and to keep you awake), I will use five words that start with the letter "P."

First, "**Pleasing** to God." Our walk with God is one that is pleasing to God.

In all of Scripture the clearest illustration of one who walked with God was Enoch. In Genesis 5:24 we read, "And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him." What was that walk with God. Hebrews 11 tells us, not that he walked with God, but that "He pleased God." To walk with God is to walk in a way that pleases God. That way is the way of holiness, the way of keeping his commandments. God said to Abraham in Genesis 17:1, "I am almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfect." What is he saying? He is saying Abraham, I am going to look at you as you walk, and I want you to

walk in a way that pleases me—a perfect way, a way of holiness. Walking with God means that we walk in a way that agrees with God's word.

Now, I want to give just a few examples of how your life as young people must agree with God's word and so be a life that is pleasing to him.

First, God has given you a lot of free time as young people—free time that you will want to fill with "entertaining" yourself. God's word lays down how you should entertain yourself—not with the entertainments of the world, not with what is highly esteemed in the world as "fun" or "entertaining," for that which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of the Lord.

My second example. You are created, like me and everyone here, as sexual beings. But, you are single. In your circumstance, God's word says you must remain a virgin and not exercise the sexuality of your being.

Third, God has not yet given you the lasting relationships of your life, a marriage partner. So, you are looking to establish lasting friendships, and find a life's partner. God's word says, "Marry in the Lord" and "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness."

A fourth example. God calls most of you to live at home with your parents yet, either because you are too young to move out, or because it is their will you stay there, or even because you choose to stay there. God's word says to children living with their parents, "Honor thy father and thy mother."

Another example. God calls most of you to work in a job in the world with many ungodly people, and God even calls you to live with other believers who may want to live in a sinful way. God's word says that you must be a witness to these in your speech and with your life.

Walking with God means that you will keep your virginity. Walking with God means that you will not go after the entertainments of the world (its music and movies). Walking with God means you will seek out godly friends and relationships. Walking with God means you will honor and obey your parents. Walking with God means you will be good witnesses in life and speech.

Your life will agree with God's word, and so you will be pleasing to him.

Are you pleasing to God? Does your walk please the Lord?

Scriptures give us some beautiful examples of young people who did walk with God. Joseph stood against his wicked brothers and their sins, and didn't just go with the flow. And when he was tempted to sin by Potiphar's beautiful wife—he chose for God. What did

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he say? “How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?” (not Potiphar, or you). Or you have Moses, refusing to be called the son of Pharaoh but choosing rather to suffer affliction with God’s people. Or David, the man after God’s own heart, willing to stand against his brothers, against Goliath, against Saul. These are the heroes of faith of Hebrews 11. You would like a hero, someone to follow...how about, Abel, Enoch, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, or the others. What was it that characterized all these? They kept God’s commandments and that pleased the Lord.

Do you? When God looks down on your life, does he like what he sees? Is it pleasing to him?

Or, and this is the alternative, is it what pleases you, your old man of sin, and, in the end, the devil. So that Satan sees how you lives and is pleased, claps his hands in delight. Oh, that’s what he does you know when he sees a child of God stumble. He stands on the side lines as we walk with God, sticks out his foot to trip us up, and “gotcha.” Or he dangles some bate (temptation) in front of our face as we walk and we fall, and he claps his hands; YES! They have fallen again.

Who are you pleasing? God? Self? Or the devil?

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## Who are you pleasing? God? Self? Or the devil?

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Second, walking with God is **Personal**. It is a personal walk with God. Not just that you belong to a church that walks with God. Not just that in your home life, that your parents walk with God. But it is that you are close to him in your own life. The other two speeches this week have addressed this. You must know God, personally. You must pray to God—privately, and in person. God says to Abraham, and to you and me, “walk before me.” Your life of holiness is not before men first of all, but before God. You shouldn’t live a particular way just because Mom and Dad tell you to, or the church tells you to, or you’d look silly and get embarrassed by the results of your sin (How embarrassing it would be to have a child out of wed-lock! How embarrassing to end up in jail for a crime). No, it is a personal walk before God because his word says it. You don’t walk just as part of a crowd moving in a general direction, but personally you walk with God.

In Leviticus 26:12, God says to Israel, “I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people.” Then in verse 21, he says, “If ye will walk contrary to me, and will not hearken unto me, I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins.” I am interested in the word “contrary.” That word has the idea of “antipathy” or “resistance” to God. This is not the kind of resistance of the world outside the church, but is the antipathy of church members and of children in the covenant who say, “Well, we are walking with God. God is in the church. God is in my home. We are walking with God,” but there is no personal walk with God. They are going in the general direction of walking with God, but it is in resistance and with antipathy. Its like a little child being dragged along by his parents—I don’t want to, but I guess I have to. Or better, like a child who is part of a crowd moving in a general direction, but he is flitting from this side to that, and half the time walking backwards, or away from the general direction, with no interest in where the crowd of adults is headed. To walk with God is a personal thing. I walk with God. I know his word. I depend on him in prayer. I keep his commandments.

Third P—**Progress**. There is progress in our walk with God. That is true of walking. Walking is not standing. Walking is not going backwards—that is digression (or in Scriptural terms, falling away). A person who walks, though he do it very slowly, moves ahead. We do not stay in the same place in our walk with God, but move ahead. We should not be happy to stay in one place. There is in the Christian life a “growth in grace” which is an ever greater understanding of our sin and a greater humility before God and men, and then an increase or improvement in holiness so that it can very really be said, “I am better today than last year.” It is the decay more and more of the old man of sin, and the coming to life more and more of the new man. There were sins I struggled with that I am now victorious over. Once I did not find it so easy to be part of church life and activities, and now I love it. I always used to fight back and argue with my parents, but now I have learned to be patient, to listen, to show respect. That’s what the Scriptures mean when they say that God’s people “go on from strength to strength” until at last they appear in Zion.

Can you say that about yourself? As you look at your life. You have struggled, young men, against some of the evil thoughts and lusts. Is there progress in your fight and overcoming, so that you can say, by God’s grace, you are stronger? If not, can you say at least this, “there

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is a desire for improvement, and I fight it, Oh, I fight it?” How is your relationship in the home with your parents? Are you maturing in your behavior toward them? Your witness to the world? Is it clearer, more distinct now than in the past that you are a child of God?

Fourth P—**Patience** with God. This, I think, is very important for young people, and something that adults, pastors and parents, tend to overlook. We get established in life in our early to mid-twenties, and forget for many years what it is to wait on God day after day for something we really desire in life. Many of you young people know what I am talking about. You are waiting for something to happen. Maybe a job. Maybe a milestone that is holding you back right now, graduation, 16 and drivers license, 18 and different curfew. Or, and I think this is most common, maybe you are waiting for a partner for life, or even a date. We have to learn that we are walking with God, and at his pace, not ours. Psalm 73, “thou hast holden me by my right hand, thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory.” God leads us through life to glory, and, he has his pace, his plan for our life.

Hebrews 11 talks about Enoch and many others who walked with God. That was a walk of faith. Their faith meant, not only that they trusted in God from day to day, but that they trusted in God’s promises even when they didn’t see them happening. Abel believed the promise of the Christ and brought a lamb, even when it meant derision and death. Enoch walked with God, even though it meant persecution and mockery. Noah built an ark because it was going to rain—and never saw a cloud. Abram was promised the land of Canaan, and lived in tents.

That’s the kind of patience that is part of a walk with God. God promises you what is best for you in your life—“All things work together for good to them that love God.” You don’t see it always, but you must trust his promise.

The fifth P—**Persecution**. This is my last one, and it’s negative. But, I want to use it last to highlight my final comment which will be positive.

Part of our walk with God is that we receive persecution. “They that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.” That’s not indefinite—might suffer persecution, can expect to—but, it is definite—they will suffer persecution. How much have you suffered? Do you suffer? There is a correlation, you know, between the amount of persecution you receive, and how closely you walk with God. The closer you walk with God, the

more persecution you can expect. How much do you suffer for your faith? Is it much? Almost none at all? Why? Is it because you aren’t walking with God as you should?

Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, all the men of Scripture who walked with God suffered persecution. This will take different forms at different times in the history of the world, but, if you are walking with God you will be persecuted. The ungodly hate the God we serve. The ungodly hate the law of that God. The ungodly hate the Savior Jesus Christ, and they hate our speaking of him, because Jesus demands a confession of sin and a change of life, and they don’t want that. You say something about Scripture on homosexuality these days, you say something about Scripture on sex outside of marriage these days, you say something about God’s particular love these days, and you will suffer for it.

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...if you are walking with God  
you will be persecuted.

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Ah, but what a privilege: to suffer for the name of Christ. To be identified with him in your walk. To have it said of you, by the world that hates Christ, “we will not have this person, put him with Christ in the torture chamber, put him with Christ on the cross of suffering.” What a joy. What a privilege. To be counted with him.

This walk leads to heaven; and the persecution highlights the joy of heaven. Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him. And they sought him, the ungodly men who wanted to kill him, and he could not be found, for God had taken him. Against the background of persecution, and out of the way of persecution, Christ takes his own to glory to live with him eternally. That is where our walking leads us—into the glorious presence of Christ and God.

Come with me, will you? Let us walk that way that pleases God, personally each one. Let us make progress as pilgrims. Let us be patient and trust God. Let us be persecuted for his name. Young people, join with me, Let us go on.

Thank you! ❖

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# Journey through the Night

reviewed by Bruce J. Koole

**J**ourney through the Night, by Anne Devries. First published in Dutch as *Reis door de Nacht*. Translated by Harry der Nederlanden. Paideia Press: St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada: 1978. For Ages 5–105.

*Journey through the Night* is a fictional novel divided into four breath-taking volumes. Each exciting volume vividly recounts the spirit and tormented agony of those five harrowing years during which the evil German Nazis occupied the Netherlands and Hitler built his fortress-Europe. All ages, young as well as old and parents as well as children would spiritually profit from absorbing this book. The volume titles are:

1. *Into the Darkness* (In het Duisternis )
2. *The Darkness Deepens* (de Duisternis verdikken)
3. *Dawn's Early Light* ('t Vroege Licht der Aurora)
4. *A New Day* (Een Nieuwe Dag)

The main protagonists of this book are the Deboer Family: Uncle Gerrit, Father Everett, Mother, John, Tricia, Fritz, Hanneke, and Trudie. Although the Deboers are Reformed Christians, DeVries does not specify their denomination. A recurring theme is “Even if Germany defeats every other country in the world, Adolf Hitler’s Reich will collapse because of its own God-denying principles.” (vol 1, 133). A second theme is VICTORY as communicated through the slogans OSO, Orange Shall Overcome, and a ‘V’. The Dutch communicated the ‘V’ to each other by knocking, tapping, ringing, or using Morse Code this way: 3 shorts and 1 long, echoing the first few bars of the Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony. (Learn Dutch!)

Volume 1 begins on a sunny Friday morning in May at the new DeBoer farmhouse, located in the province of Drenthe, somewhere southwest of the city of Assen. That day, Germany attacks the Netherlands and the family enters into the darkness. Desperately, the family drives near Rotterdam to the cities of Scheveningen and Hillegersberg (in the province of South Holland) to retrieve the three youngest children, who stayed with relatives during the move. While they rest in Scheveningen, Queen Wilhelmina flees to England. Even though life seems dark, God strengthens their faith in Him. Soon, they return to their Drenthe farmhouse, and initiate their

involvement in the Resistance by hiding Jews. The volume ends after the Nazi sympathizer, Schram, betrays Ev for thwacking a Kraut with a large monkey wrench.

Volume 2 starts when Fritz receives a one week suspension from school for stating that the teacher, Mr. Biemolt, who was lecturing about the Synod of Dordt, is *unsound* for detesting the English and not being vocally pro-Dutch. Things make sense when Fritz learns that Biemolt was a Boer who lived in an English concentration camp and watched two of his siblings die during the 1902 English-Boer war. As the darkness of Hitler’s Reich seems to grow stronger, the family responds by involving themselves in the Resistance movement. They distribute the underground newspaper, *Free Holland*, hide divers, take in English fliers, and care for more Jews. The volume concludes after the Gerries assault the farm, because dense neighbor Wallinga betrays them over spilt milk. (Learn Dutch, the language of your forebearers and ancestors!)

Volume 3 commences with a split-up family. John leads a boring life with Uncle Herman and Aunt Haddie in Amsterdam until a former Deboer driver, William, convinces John to join a local Resistance cell. Next, a mesmerizing reunion occurs between John and Father. Then bad things, which further depress the family’s faith, happen both to Father and John. While John considers the darkness of his situation, the daylight dawns when he learns of the D-Day invasion. The volume terminates with the Germans shipping John off to an anonymous forest, where they plan to execute him and others by sub-machineguns. Yet, hope springs eternal! (Learn Dutch, the language of your Dutch Reformed Heritage!)

However, you will have to read all 4 volumes to discover what happens to the family, Father, Schram, svelte Sylvia, the salesman Vos, the young nurse Rita, the BBC, and the liberation of the Netherlands. I recommend that since these four books accurately portray war, parents should acquaint themselves with the contents contained therein or read the book to their children! ❖

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# Watching Daily At My Gates

by Richard G. Moore

## October 1 Read Psalm 14, II Corinthians 5:17

In the meditations this month we will center our thoughts upon various truths of the Scripture. We hope to do this by considering practical questions that arise in the hearts of God's children as we pass through this life. The first question we will ask is, "Are we fools?" The answer for the true children of God must be in the negative, we are not fools. The Psalmist states that the fool says that there is no God. The fool says this in his heart. While there are times in the weakness of sin we may question the ways of God, and even wonder where is the God Who has said he will never forsake His people? You know these times as you have been weak in faith in facing the trials of life, but our heart is made right with God as He has renewed us by the Spirit of Christ. This is our confession by the grace of God. We confess, "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17). This newness includes our heart so that we cannot say from the heart there is no God. Sing Psalter 23:1-3.

## October 2 Read Psalm 14

But lest we become proud and say we are new creatures and therefore are not fools, nevertheless we must also confess by nature we are no different than the fool. According to the Psalmist God looked upon man and said that they are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy. This is the fruit of our sin. Our natural life is such that God, when He looks upon man, must say there is none that doeth good; no, not one. According to the apostle Paul this includes you and me. In Romans 3:10-12, Paul applies this to the church, both of the Jews and Gentiles. We must understand and remember that by nature we are dead in sin and cannot of ourselves bring forth any good. Thus it is alone by grace that we are saved. What a wonderwork of God. Saved alone in the blood of Jesus. May this ever humble us. Sing Psalter 23:4-6.

## October 3 Read Romans 9:11-13

Not all who call themselves Christian believe that it is alone in Christ that we are saved or simply put, not all believe that salvation is by grace alone. Do you believe this? I often emphasized this truth of Scripture concerning salvation by asking a question. I asked this question whether I was at a school or on the street, and whether they were believers or not. The question was, "Does God love all men, women and children in this world?" The answer usually was immediately and loudly given, "Yes He does." Then I would say, "If this is the case then you do not serve the same God as I do, you do not know the God of the Scripture." Following this it is necessary that we point out why this is true. In the first place, it is so because the Scripture teaches the opposite, that God does not love all men, women and children. Literally, we read this in this passage. That the purpose of God according to election might stand it was said of the twins of Rebecca, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." God said this even before they were born, to emphasize the point. Sing Psalter 10.

## BEACON LIGHTS

## October 4 Read Psalm 111; Psalm 115:3

To get to the point of showing that God is a God Who elects His people in love before the foundation of the world, it is well to lead those you are speaking with to the truth of salvation and the Savior. Thus after the first question, you ask if God is able to do what He says He wants to do? The answer is almost always, "Yes of course." Then you ask if He loves someone then this must mean that He surely saves that one He loves? Either this or else He is not God. Understand if one says God loves everyone then it means either He saves every man, woman, and child that has ever lived or God is dependent upon whether those people love Him in return. One must contend if they don't love God then He will not save them. But if this is so then it must mean man is more powerful than God. For man can reject the love of God and frustrate that love. However this is not the God of the Scripture. God is God, and His will is done. His love saves. Sing Psalter 304.

## October 5 Read John 6:36-39

God's love saves, and all whom God loves He delivers from sin and brings to salvation. This our Lord makes clear when Jesus teaches us in our passage that Father gives to Christ a certain people, and all that Father gives to Him surely come unto Christ. This of course already speaks of the fact that God has given to Christ a people. The fruit of this work of God is that they come to Christ without question or exception. And Jesus further points out that all that Father has given to Him and therefore who come unto Him He in no wise shall cast out. God's will is done. And Jesus does that will of God, not His own will, but the will of God that has sent Him. Now for emphasis Jesus points out that of all given to Him He will lose nothing. Those God loves He saves without a doubt. This is the wonderful gospel of salvation that brings comfort to the sinner, and this alone. It is not harsh to say God does not love all men. It is the truth, but it also is a most comforting truth to know that God loves a peculiar people and saves them without conditions. Sing Psalter 306.

## October 6 Read Ephesians 1:20-23

It is by grace alone that we are saved, it is by grace alone that any are saved. How blessed is this truth when by His grace we come to know our own sin and unworthiness of salvation. If salvation were dependent in any way upon you or me then we can boast, but if it is alone the work of God that brings us to salvation, God receives all glory, and we do not boast, but rest in the work of our God. The passage we are to read today brings this truth to the forefront. The church is most glorious. This is evident in the last verses of this chapter as we take note of again. We read that the church as God has put all things under the feet of Christ, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, that is, for the saving of the church, that that church is Christ's body and is the fullness of Christ that filleth all in all. Amazing truth of God's Word. We who are truly the church (elect) are the fullness of Christ! Sing Psalter 141.

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**October 7 Read Ephesians 1:3-4**

We, who are of ourselves sinners, have it said of us that we are the fullness of Christ!! But the only reason that this is true is because of what God has determined to do and has done for His church in Christ. That which God has determined is clearly set forth in the first part of Ephesians 1. For God reveals there that He has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, and this only because He has chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world. Think of that! Before God laid the foundations of this world He has chosen us in Christ. Oh, there is nothing of man in this determination; even the very world serves the salvation of the church in order to fulfill the determinate counsel of the living God. Understand that God has chosen us before time began that we should be holy and without blame before God, that we may be the fullness of Christ Who fills all in all. Beautiful grace of salvation. Sing Psalter 293.

**October 8 Read Ephesians 1:4-6**

Why? Why does God chose a church in Christ from eternity? In the first place, we note that He does so to make us adopted children. Oh, you and I know we are not children naturally. We know this from the depths of our being, we know Paul is right when he says in the second chapter that we were dead in sins. We know our natural depravity as we are brought forth. But God is pleased to predestine us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to be God's precious children. And again we are reminded that God does not choose us on the basis of what we will do or be, but alone according to the good pleasure of His will. He has determined from eternity our salvation from sin and death in Christ merely because of His good pleasure. He has determined that this will perfectly serve the glory of His grace. He has determined that our salvation will bring to Him the greatest glory in all His works. God be praised. He makes us accepted in the beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Sing Psalter 241:1-4.

**October 9 Read Ephesians 1:7-11**

Yet we must ask another question, of those that would say God loves all men head for head, or of those who would maintain that God wants to save all men head for head. That question is, when were we actually saved or justified? Even the young catechumens in the third or fourth grade are able to answer this question. They would tell you that we were justified by the blood of Christ, and He died nearly two thousand years ago. Do we who were born but a few years ago have anything to do with Jesus' work of atonement? We were not even born when He died to redeem us. It is the work alone of God's elective and saving grace. Paul points out to us that we were predestined to be redeemed through the blood of Jesus. Jesus actually covered the sins of all for whom He died. Shall any for whom He died go lost? Impossible, for Jesus is God come in our flesh, His work is complete and perfect. Sing Psalter 163.

**October 10 Read Genesis 17:7; Isaiah 61:8**

What a comfort we have in knowing that Christ is our Savior! The eternal work of God shall surely come to pass. God has indeed chosen us unto salvation in Christ, God surely adopts us from eternity to be His children, and He has sent His only begotten Son into our flesh to redeem us nearly two thousand years ago. Surely that God will bring us out of darkness into His marvelous light and fellowship. He does so according to His promise. His covenant shall never fail. This truth is found not only in the two texts listed for our reading, but is found again and again in the Old and New Testament Scriptures. God is faithful to His promises. Thus indeed we shall be

brought into the consciousness of that salvation by faith given us of the Father. Sing Psalter 250:1, 2, 5.

**October 11 Read Romans 9:10-18**

It is God's eternal good will and pleasure alone that determines the salvation of His church in Christ and the destruction of the wicked in the way of their sin. This chapter nine of Romans clearly teaches. It does so with respect to the twins, Jacob and Esau. One was saved and one was condemned that the purpose of God according to election might stand. The apostle goes on to emphasize that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but it is of God that sheweth mercy. God has mercy upon whom He wills, and has compassion upon whom He wills. He also hardens whom He wills. Salvation is determined alone by God and is brought to pass by His grace in Christ. Knowing our own unworthiness of salvation we can but praise God in everyday thanksgiving. Sing Psalter 267.

**October 12 Read Romans 9:19-24**

But is it fair that God chooses some unto salvation and condemns others to eternal hell fire? Is it fair, you ask? What kind of question is that? Who are you to determine what is fair and what is not? Is it not more to the point to ask what is right? Then we must conclude immediately this is the word of God, and God is right and just (cf. Deut. 32:4). Who are we to question God and His work. Oh, I know that we would like to think that we can discern what is right and just. That is the great pride of man speaking. We would like to think that we are able to determine what is best for us and other men. This would be foolish. Paul replies and rightly so, "Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?" Are we going to hold God at fault? Can we judge Him? God is not judged by man, His ways cannot be questioned. He saves whom he wills. Gracious ways of God. Sing Psalter 244.

**October 13 Read Romans 9:22-23; Romans 5:12-13**

Understand further, that with respect to the question whether it is fair, or even right that God condemns some and that He saves others according to an eternal determination, the child of God understands that it would be right that all men be condemned to eternal suffering and desolation. We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. All men died in Adam, and we are not good, no not one. If it were up to our goodness, or spiritual strength or perfections, then none would be saved. God is pleased to save His elect and is pleased to reveal His righteousness in condemning the wicked. To Him belongs the glory. God has determined to lay our iniquity upon Christ, and Jesus gave His life the perfect sacrifice for sin, to deliver that people of God's eternal love. So judgment is met out upon all that have sinned as the wicked perish eternally and as Jesus suffers eternal judgment for the elect in Him. Sing Psalter 398.

**October 14 Read Romans 6:1-8**

We will follow the former questions and answers by another question that can be raised by those that would destroy our faith or that just plain have a difficult time acknowledging salvation to be the work of God alone. The latter must be led still further into the blessed truth of the Scripture with respect to the salvation of the children of God. The question raised is that, if salvation is eternally determined, if justification is accomplished already by the sacrifice of Christ, then where is man's responsibility? Paul states that there are those that would say that if salvation is of grace alone then why do we not just continue in sin as children of God? Or we could ask, Why do good works? Paul says in answer, "How shall we that are dead to sin continue therein." The point is that the fruit of salvation is that Jesus also sends forth His Spirit into our hearts and we become new

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creatures in Christ. We are given new life, the dead are made alive, and we who are alive become dead to sin. So that consciously we hate the very sins we would walk in and love to seek and serve God. This is our experience also, and about which we will have more to see and learn. Sing Psalter 65.

**October 15 Read Ephesians 2:1-3; Romans 3:9-18**

It is true that we are no better than the wicked, as stated before. In and of ourselves we are dead in sin and trespass. Now when speaking to those outside of the church this point must also be emphasized. One can do this only by going to the Scripture in the passage we have just read and in places like Romans 3. Having established by the Scripture that there is none that doeth good and that we are dead in sin we have the opportunity to ask the question, "Can the dead man do anything to get out of the grave?" Naturally one may point out that the only thing the dead man in the grave can do is become more corrupt as he decays and the worms attack his flesh. It is no different spiritually. We cannot make ourselves alive, but can only add to our spiritual corruption. The conclusion is that if we are to live, someone must make us alive, for we cannot. Thank God for His grace! Sing Psalter 137:1-3, 6.

**October 16 Read Ephesians 2:3-5**

We who are chosen by God and by nature dead in sin, are quickened by God. We who were dead in sin are quickened together with Christ according to the holy writer. It is by grace that we are saved. This happens as Christ sends forth His Spirit into our hearts and we are made to be new creatures in Him. Where salvation is utterly impossible for us God is gracious and makes us alive by sending forth the quickening Spirit. Indeed, by grace are we saved, and that not of ourselves lest we should boast, but we are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, as God has ordained that we should walk in them. It is His work unto His glory. Praise God! Sing Psalter 339.

**October 17 Read Ephesians 2:8; Ezekiel 11:19-20; Ezekiel 36:26-27**

By grace are we saved through faith! That faith is also not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. God plants as it were faith in our hearts by His Spirit. He gives us the ability to believe. We were dead and could not believe, but God makes us alive and gives us the seed of faith and the ability to believe. So that as the prophet of old says for our heart of stone we are given a heart of flesh. Our hearts are softened so that we are made able to receive and believe the truth. Apart from this precious work of God we would continue only to walk in sin and disobedience, but God's love is eternal and He begins the work of salvation in our hearts according as He has chosen us in Christ and redeemed us by His blood. Wonderful eternal love of God! His love saves. Sing Psalter 327.

**October 18 Read Philippians 1:1-6**

Where it is impossible for us to even desire the things of God's kingdom because of natural depravity and sin, God makes us new creatures. He quickens us by His Spirit and we begin to live and are made ready to receive His Word. And this work shall never be thwarted. Not even Satan can overcome the will of God to save His elect in Christ. Oh, if that salvation were in any way dependent upon us, then there would be questions about our salvation. Actually there would be no hope for salvation. But because our salvation is alone the work of God's grace, there is nothing that can stop us from being saved. Surely this is the meaning of the text we read in Philippians, especially in verse six, where we read that we may be confident that He which hath begun a good work in us will per-

form it until the day of Jesus Christ. God's will is done and we shall surely be saved. Sing Psalter 190.

**October 19 Read Ezekiel 36:27; Romans 5:1-10**

The passage from Ezekiel teaches us that when God puts His Spirit within us, He also shall cause that we walk in His statutes. In Romans 5:1 we are taught that we are justified by faith and have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. What a precious word for the sinner. For in the natural walk in sin there is no peace. Understand that faith in Romans 5 is the activity of faith, and believing in Christ we have peace with God. This activity of faith is also the gift of God. It comes to pass as He causes us to walk in His statutes, and this God accomplishes by bringing the seed of faith implanted in our hearts to the conscious activity of believing. It is like a seed that has been planted in the earth that must be nourished by sun, fertilizer, and rain in order for it to become a fruit bearing plant. God also nourishes the seed of faith He has planted into our hearts that we may believe and bring forth the fruits of thanksgiving. God's grace saves from beginning to end. Sing Psalter 81.

**October 20 Read Romans 8:28-30; I Peter 2:9**

How is this faith brought from the seed form in our regeneration to the fruit-bearing activity of believing? Again we must answer, by grace. And we should emphasize that this takes place in such a way that God maintains our moral rational nature. God brings that beginning of new life to activity by a powerful and efficacious calling of His people out of the darkness of sin into the marvelous light of His fellowship and communion. In Romans 9:30, we have an order of salvation, and there we are taught that those that God has predestined or chosen He also calls. This call of God is powerful. It is not like my call to my son when I say, "Come here." My son might hear me, but might not, he might obey me, but might not. However, when God calls His children they hear and they obey! God's will is always done, His Word always works its purpose. Sing Psalter 236.

**October 21 Read Romans 10:13-17**

The calling of the children of God comes under the sound of the Word preached. Faith comes by the hearing of the word of God. It is impossible to believe says the apostle in Romans 10 except we hear Christ, and we cannot hear Christ without a preacher. Further only one that is sent can preach the Word. Christ sends His preacher to bring His Word to His people, and under that Word calls His own unto repentance and belief. He calls His own without fail, as many as the Father has given to Him from eternity. Christ makes no mistake in this work. He knows them that the Father has given Him and loses nothing. He knows the elect in some back country village, and either brings the preaching of the Word there, or He calls the individual away from that village to His minister that is preaching the truth. Every child of God, elect from eternity shall be brought under His Word and called unto salvation by Christ, the One Who cannot fail. What powerful grace. Sing Psalter 403.

**October 22 Read Isaiah 55:11**

We may ask the question, "Does this mean that everyone who hears the sound of the gospel is saved?" If not, then does it mean that the preaching fails its purpose? The answer is that in the first place not all that hear the sound of the gospel are saved, and the preaching on the other hand does not fail. God says in Isaiah 55 that when His word goes forth it shall not return void or empty. This is true, of course, because it is God that sends it forth. Thus we must conclude, as does verse 11, that God always accomplishes that which He pleases. The preaching accomplishes the will of God and the Word shall prosper whereto He sends it. That word saves where this

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is the purpose of God, and that word condemns where this is the purpose of God. The preaching of the Word of God serves perfectly the end for which God has determined for it. God is God. Sing Psalter 222:1, 2, 7-9.

**October 23 Read II Corinthians 2:12-17**

The preaching of the Word is the God ordained means to gather His people unto His fellowship and to salvation. As the Word goes forth it serves as a two-edged sword to make division between His chosen and the world of unbelief. Paul points this out when he speaks of the preaching of Christ's gospel (vs. 12). When the apostles preached the gospel they were a sweet savor of Christ in both them that were saved and those that perish. For God's will is done, the wicked must be without excuse, and are brought to judgment in the way of their sin, and the preaching condemns the wicked in their way, so that Paul says that in the preaching they are a savor of death unto death. On the other hand it is God's eternal good will to save His Church, and the preaching is the means, whereby of those preaching the Word it is said that they are a savor of life unto life. In both they are a sweet savor unto God for His will is done. Sing Psalter 373:1-3, 8-10.

**October 24 Read Roman 5:1-11**

We return to Romans 5 for this meditation. Take note that as we have come under the preaching of the Word and faith is worked in our hearts unto belief, we are comforted by the testimony of our justification. As sinners, it is a marvelous thing to know that Jesus died on the cross to actually deliver us from the condemnation of our sin. He has justified us by His death on the cross. We are given to know in our hearts that when we were enemies, we were reconciled unto God through Jesus' death on the cross. Christ died for us. We have the blessed testimony that being reconciled we shall be saved by His life. Praise be to God. We therefore are filled with joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, for we who are convicted of sin have the assurance that through Jesus Christ we have now received atonement. Salvation is ours. Sing Psalter 111.

**October 25 Read Romans 6:14-15**

Returning to the sixth chapter of Romans we hear the apostle proclaiming our deliverance from sin and death. The word states that sin shall not have dominion over God's elect redeemed by the blood of Christ. The reason given is that we are no longer under the law, but under grace. Under the law we are condemned by our sin, but under grace we are covered by the death of Christ and justified by His blood. The fruit is that sin shall not and cannot any longer have dominion over us, for we are under grace. This does not mean that we no longer sin, but now are made new or alive in Christ by His Spirit. We are not slaves to sin. We do not live to sin, but to serve our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the blessedness of God's grace. Delivered to live unto Christ is the elect, redeemed and regenerated child of God. Sing Psalter 310.

**October 26 Read Romans 6:15-19**

As children of God under grace we have a calling to obey God. Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace. The apostle answers, "God forbid." There are those that would hold this position saying if we are under grace we no longer need to walk in obedience to the law, in fact the law is of no more account. The antinomian would take this position. Jesus has freed us from the law so we may do whatever we please. But you, child of God cannot take this position, can you? This is not the way for God's child. The apostle goes on to show this by saying, "know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to

whom ye obey." We who have received grace have Jesus Christ as our Lord. We cannot then give ourselves to the walk of sin. And we may not by His grace follow this path. Understand that to yield oneself to the walk and life of sin is to die, eternally, but to serve Christ is to be accounted righteous. By grace even in the way of deep sorrow for our sin, and in the way of repentance, the child of God serves his Lord Jesus Christ. And God is thanked for it is He that works faith in us to so walk in obedience to our Lord. Sing Psalter 280.

**October 27 Read Romans 6:22-23 Philippians 1:6**

Because our salvation is the work of God, because we have been made free from sin through the death and resurrection of Christ, because God has shed forth His Spirit in our hearts, because God has irresistibly called us by His Word unto faith, because God has made us to be His servants, we have the fruit of holiness, and we may know that the end is everlasting life. Not so for those not repenting of sin and walking therein. The only testimony for such is that the wages of sin is death. Once again we are reminded that this is all we are worthy of, we are worthy of death alone, but by the gift of God, by His grace, by the death of His Son, we are given eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. This is the promise of the Scripture, the promise of our God. And no one can take this hope from us. Again we are reminded that He that hath begun a good work in us shall perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. It is the work of God it cannot fail. Wonderful Grace! Sing Psalter 347.

**October 28 Read Isaiah 45:5; Romans 8:28**

Practically, the truths we have been considering bring so much comfort to God's children for we believe that Jehovah alone is God. God tells us this through the prophet in Isaiah 45:5. He says that He is the LORD, and there is none else, no God beside Him. Now we have learned that Jehovah is our God and covenant Father. He knows us by name from eternity and He has saves us in Christ. Now because Jehovah is our beloved Father then we very personally confess that all things work together for our good, for the good of them that are called according to God's purpose. We love God because He has so called us. There are no limits to this truth. No trial, no pathway in this life can be anything but good for us. Even when we have passed through the deep ways of sin under the tempting of Satan and delivered by God even then we know it serves our good. We do not always understand how all things serve our good, but we know they shall serve our salvation; they shall serve our obtaining of life eternal. Sing Psalter 53.

**October 29 Read Isaiah 45:17-19**

The prophet does explain for us some of the mystery of this and it is rooted in God alone. God says that he does not speak in secret. He does not speak in devious ways or in darkness. But he has not said unto the seed of Jacob, God's own elect people, "seek ye me in vain." No we never seek God in vain as His children. God speaks in righteousness, and declares things that are right. Our God has said from eternity that He loves us in Christ. He has created to bring forth a people to gather through the deep way of sin and grace into His everlasting fellowship. Surely all things shall serve our good and salvation. Sing Psalter 91.

**October 30 Read Romans 8:31-34**

The apostle now confirms what we have just pointed out as the rich blessing of knowing that salvation is by grace alone. How necessary it is for us to hear this word of assurance and promise, as we pass through this vale of tears. As we struggle with our sin and the temptations of Satan, and realize the weakness of our own sinful

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nature, indeed, it is good to read these words of the Scripture. If God be for us, who can be against us? None can be against us. Understand that God did not spare His only beloved Son, but delivered Him to the death of the cross for us, surely then God will give us all things necessary for this life in order that we enter His eternal fellowship. God justifies us and none can charge us anymore. Not even the devil can bring any charge against us. By nature Satan could find much in us with which to charge us, but in Christ we are justified and Satan cannot lay anything to our charge. So that even now Christ Who has ascended as our Lord makes intercession for us on the basis of His meritorious work. Sing Psalter 302.

### October 31 Read Romans 8:35-39

The love wherewith God has loved us from eternity, the love that God has shown us by sending Christ to die for us, the love showered upon us by His Spirit shall not be turned away. Nothing can separate us from God's love. Oh, if it were our love that had to stand the test of trial and temptation it would be destroyed. But it is God's love and it does not matter whether it be the trials of this life, persecutions, famines, poverty, peril or threat of death, in all things we are more than conquerors in Christ. Nothing can separate us from the love of God, neither in life nor in death. Praise the Lord. How important to remember as we face all trials of life, let us in confidence fight the fight of faith without fear. The wonder of the reformation truth that is our heritage! May God grant us grace to so trust Him for all things. Sing Psalter 7.

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## Music

# God's Love

by Melissa Van Baren

Last time we went for a short walk admiring the glory of God in the Psalms. I would like to continue our different walks as we consider the different aspects of God in the Psalms. Are you ready for another walk? I am! This time we are going to look at and consider the love of God within the Psalms. This isn't the love we have for God (which we will hopefully consider at a different time) but the love of God for us, His people. We will examine how we sing songs of love to Him everyday when we sing these Psalms and we will examine how God's love for His people shines forth to us. This love is like the sun shining down on the gardens we walk through, making the plants grow. The love of God makes us grow and reach more and more towards Him. Come with me as we consider the love of God for His people in the Psalms.

Most of us when we picture and see the word love, we think as young people, of the warm fuzzy love that we have one for another. We think of the type of love (if it can be called that) that gives us the tingles when we see someone we like walk by or someone we are dating picks us up and we spend time together. No, young people we have to think deeper than that. We have to think of a deeply rooted love. This is of something that is strong and something that gives us more than the fuzzies and the tingles. It is something that tells us when we are going wrong, something that lifts us up when we are low,

and someone who sits with us in our pain and knows that pain. Yes, a boyfriend or a girlfriend could do that but I'm thinking of a different love, the type of love our parents have for us. This type of love points us to a better love yet. It points us to a greater and higher love. The love of God for His people.

There is nothing greater than the love of God for His people and we can see this expressed over and over in the Psalms. God's love is deep and rich. The first one that I think of is Psalter number 278, one of my favorites. "The tender love a father has for all his children dear, such love the Lord bestows of them who worship Him in fear" (vs. 1). How comforting it is knowing that God bestows, or showers down upon us His love when we worship Him. If we look farther into that Psalter number we see that "unchanging is the love of God, from age to age the same, displayed to all who do His will and reverence His name" (vs. 4). What a blessing to God's people too to know that God's love will never change but that it will always be with His people who do His will and fear His name! What a comfort to know! We also see this fatherly love in Psalter numbers 283 and 284, which are part of the same Psalm, which reads, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him" (Psalm 103:13).

A father has certain ways of showing his love. We all know this and see this in our fathers. What are some

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ways that you can think of? For me what comes to mind is the fact that a father is very protecting. Fathers allow their children to reach a certain point but then they step in and they protect their children from danger and harmful things. This is how our Father in heaven is to us his people and children. This, too, is expressed in the Psalms. If we look at Psalm 145:8, it says, “The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion: slow to anger and of great mercy.” It shows that God is full of compassion or love. Then if we look further into that chapter, in verse 20, we see what we’ve been talking about with fathers being protective. “The Lord preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.” It is wonderful to think that our Father in heaven is on our side and will protect us as a father would. (We also sing about this in Psalter 395!)

Now that we have considered such a wonderful love, let us think of that every time we open our Psalms/Psalter to sing. What a glorious love we have through our Father in heaven and what a beautiful picture. I am glad that we have this deep love through Christ and that we can experience that love. It makes us long more and more for the more glorious dwelling we will have with God in heaven when we will experience the full showers of love that He will give us in that final resting place. But for now let us sing with the Psalmist in Psalm 63.

“Thou are my God, O God of grace, and earnestly I seek Thy face, My heart cries out for Thee: My spirit thirsts Thy grace to taste, an exile in this desert waste in which no waters be. I long as in the times of old Thy power and glory to behold within Thy holy place; because Thy tender love I see more precious far than life to me, my lips shall praise Thy grace. Thus will I bless Thee While I live, and with uplifted hands will give praise to Thy holy Name; when by Thy bounty well supplied, then shall my soul be satisfied, my mouth shall praise proclaim. My lips shall in Thy praise delight when on my bed I rest at night and meditate on Thee; because they hand assistance brings, beneath the shadow of Thy wings my heart shall joyful be” (Psalter 164).

Thank you so much for that small walk with me as we considered yet another part of the songs that we sing in our praise to God. I pray that we may see more and more God’s love shown to us as we sing the Psalms in praise to OUR heavenly Father! Join me next time as we consider more of the beautiful things contained in our Psalms. What an eye opener it has been for me. I pray that it has been for you too! May you too, see why God has given us these glorious Psalms to sing! ❖

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*Melissa is a member of Hope Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan.*

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Where We Stand

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## Common Grace: Reformed Doctrine or Fallacy (2)

by Jonathan Mahtani

In the previous article we gave Scriptural proofs against the three points of common grace and explained the differences between providence and grace. Not included in the three points of common grace are two points which Richard Mouw brings up in his book, *He Shines in All That’s Fair*, that need to be considered with Scripture and the Reformed faith in mind. The first is the idea of God’s empathy to unbelievers. He says that God must feel a sense of pity for a Muslim woman who is raped and her child killed in front of her. God must also have empathy for an unbelieving couple

who have problems, and He rejoices when they reconcile (Mouw 40-42). These arguments deal with assumptions from our feelings and emotions. Though we are to feel this empathy, we cannot just assume that God feels it too. Just like he punished the Assyrians cruelly because of their unbelief in Him, He can punish a Muslim woman who rejects Him. Just because we are pleased with an unregenerate couple’s reconciliation, does not mean God is pleased with the work of the wicked. This may seem to be a harsh view, but emotional feelings

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should not decide for us what is not revealed in Scripture.

Another interesting point that Mouw brings up in trying to prove common grace is the point that there is more than one purpose of God for this world. Not only is God's purpose for the redemption of the church, he says, but also for the culture of the world to develop into a good culture. (Engelsma 78 -79). However, Reformed Christians everywhere have always believed that the one purpose of God for this world is to redeem His church from sin and damnation and thereby to glorify Himself (Engelsma 88). This is His eternal purpose. Jesus was the accomplisher of this purpose. In Colossians 1:13-20, Paul speaks of Christ's purpose through creation, through His church, and through His death, "That in all things, he might have the preeminence" (verse 18). Jesus from the beginning of eternity had a purpose, and that was to die and save His elect. Developing the culture of this world has nothing to do with God's redemptive work except that living in it leads up to that final day of glorification. Christ did not die for the reprobate in this corrupt culture, but only for His elect whom He has chosen. The second purpose of God is not biblical and does not make sense in relation to Christ's saving work on the cross that was His purpose from eternity.

With Scriptural proofs laid out, the differences between providence and grace explained, and a couple other ideas refuted, the dangers of common grace to the reformed faith can now be shown. The first danger is common grace's denial of total depravity. The Reformed faith stands on the truth that all natural men, not saved by Christ's blood are dead in sin (Gritters 12). He can do no good. Many times, the defenders of common grace refer to the Canons of Dordt III-IV, 4, which say, "There remain, however, in man since the fall, the glimmerings of natural light. . . ." However, they fail to go on reading "But so far is this light of nature from being sufficient to bring him to a saving knowledge of God, and to true conversion, that he is incapable of using it aright even in things natural and civil." The unbeliever, since he remains a man, still has good gifts of God which are "glimmerings of natural light," but only the elect who is saved by the knowledge of God can do good works with those gifts because man is dead without this salvation. He can do no civil or natural good without the saving knowledge of God. Common grace says that he can. The idea of common grace brings with it a denial of this depravity which is a fundamental doctrine of the reformed faith and Scripture.

Another danger that common grace leads to is the denial of predestination. The Reformed faith stands on a truth that God has chosen His elect not because of anything they did, but according to His gracious will. The theory of common grace, especially in its first point, tells us that there is a free offer of the gospel as grace to the unbeliever. It teaches that God actually loves all those who are under the preaching of the Word (Gritters 16 - 17). Now, if God has predestined those whom He would save, how does He offer the gospel to those He has not elected? He does not show love and grace to those that He has not chosen. If He wants to show love to them, He would surely and effectively have saved them. This is the truth of irresistible grace. By accepting common grace, the reformed church will surely be denying essential points of Calvinism and predestination taught in the Bible.

Finally, one grave danger that a Christian can fall into with this theory, is the ignoring of the antithesis. Though we are called to live in the world, we are not called to live *of* the world. Just like the Israelites were commanded not to intermingle with unbelievers and idolaters, and just as Paul tells the Corinthians not to be "unequally yoked", we are called to refrain from participating in the corruptness of this world as lights (Gritters 21). By accepting common grace, the line that the Christian must draw between that which is of the world and that which is not, is erased. Since unbelievers can somehow do good things, Christians can do more than associate with them. Soon, there will be a friendship with them, and then a following of their ways that, as shown above, are not glorifying to God (Engelsma 70). Professor H. C. Hoeksema writes that common grace and the antithesis is contradictory (29). Without the antithesis, Christians will begin to do, like many already do, anything the world does and slowly begin to lose their knowledge of what is really and truly glorifying to God. A Reformed Christian cannot lose this truth of the antithesis and thus cannot accept the idea of common grace because it threatens this truth.

Questions then arise from the previous point and the refutation of common grace. How are we then supposed to live in the world today? Are we supposed to be against everything it produces and are we to flee from all unbelievers? These questions can be answered by again realizing the difference between providence and grace. God, in His providence, has created man with gifts and talents. God does allow unbelieving man to make useful and "good" things according to our earthly standard

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(Engelsma 62). Provided through providence, the products by unbelievers, like a good book or a watch, are not evil in and of themselves. Though the unbeliever is not doing true good when he refuses to glorify God in His work, God's work of providence is useful and a blessing to believers.

Many professing believers, however, with their freedom to use what God has provided, take advantage of such liberty and go overboard. They forget the important point that good is only done if an action glorifies God. It is hard for example, to watch a film filled with worldly lusts and glorify God. A Christian is called to use blessings provided by God, but if God in His providence allows an unbeliever to produce something that is sinful to use, there should be no participation in that sin. Providence again, is not grace. Engelsma says that providence serves grace, but is not grace (59).” Through His providence, He shows grace to believers through some products of the unbeliever, but His providence is not grace. That movie allowed to be created is not a grace to a Christian. One has to be careful that he does not take the truth of the Reformed teaching of God's providence and sovereignty and pervert it either.

Since Christians may use what God has provided, does one have the right to befriend non-Christians? Again, in God's providence, we are set in this world among unbelievers. The believer is called to live *in* the world. However, the association with the world in work and cooperation, is not friendship (Engelsma 70). They associate because it is necessary and commanded in the Bible. Friendship, however, is impossible because God's grace is not to the unbeliever. There is no proof of grace to be seen in the intentions of the unbeliever. Grace can be seen in the intentions of the believer who desires to

glorify God. Since friends share purposes and intentions in life, a non-Christian and a Christian cannot and do not share the purpose of glorifying God. Although Christians are called by Scripture to live in the world, they are not to befriend all in the world that God does not show His grace to.

It is truly hard and close to impossible for a reformed Christian to accept the theory of common grace which seems to confuse the terms of grace and providence and contradict Scripture. The dangers that such an idea brings up can be quite detrimental to the reformed church in the world today. Even accepting just a few ideas of common grace, which the reader may still be inclined to, can be harmful. The Christian is called to search the Scriptures. This is what one must do to accept common grace or reject it as a great fallacy. ❖

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*Jonathan attends the Pittsburgh Protestant Reformed Mission in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.*

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## Pastor Profile

# Rev. James Laning

edited by Kris Moelker

**R**ev. James Laning was born on February 15, 1963, to Gerrit and Betty Laning. The second of four children, he has one older brother and two younger sisters. He was born in Naperville, Illinois, located about an hour west of South Holland, and contin-

ued to live there throughout his childhood until he went away to college.

He was raised in a family where the Bible was read at the dinner table every night, and he remembers as a young child reading his Bible in bed before going to sleep

at night. But the truths of the Reformed faith were not explained to him. Although he spent most of his childhood in a church that was then named “Fellowship Reformed Church” (they have since then removed the word “Reformed” from their name), he did not know what the word “Reformed” meant. Later he would look back and remember joking about this term with his friends.

He went to college at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana. Math and science having been his favorite areas of study, he majored in physics and astronomy. After graduating from college, he moved to Pensacola, Florida, where he attended Aviation Officer Candidate School, and graduated as an officer in the United States Navy.

It was at this time in his life, while far away from everyone whom he had known, that he was led by God to search the Scriptures to find out for himself what they taught. At first he read a number of books that set forth the evil of the false teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. He was very interested in this because some of his childhood friends were Roman Catholic, and he had always wondered where they got their strange beliefs. But after spending a little time on this, he recognized that he needed to find out for sure what the truth was, and needed to be sure that he himself was in a church that was preaching the truth.

It was at this time that he had to move to Sacramento, California, to attend a school that would prepare him for his work as a flight officer in the Navy. At a church in Sacramento he met a young woman named Margaret Empey. Margaret had been raised in an apostatizing Presbyterian church, and was presently trying to find a church that preached the truth of Scripture. The two of them began to date, and spent much time talking together about the Scriptures, discussing the things they were learning. They developed a very close friendship, and noticed that the more they discussed spiritual things the closer they became. After dating in Sacramento for awhile, the two were united as husband and wife in November of 1987.

The two of them began to see more clearly the truths commonly referred to as the five points of Calvinism,



but they did not know of any denomination or individual congregation that faithfully taught these truths. They moved to Hawaii, where they would live for almost three years while he was a member of an air patrol squadron stationed at the Naval Air Station at Barber’s Point, on the island of Oahu. It was in Hawaii that they came in contact with the Protestant Reformed Churches. They had begun to write letters to churches of various denominations, asking for a statement of faith. One of these letters was written to Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church. Not too long after this, in October of 1988,

they received a package in the mail containing a number of pamphlets. One of the pamphlets differed from the others, and had as its title *The Three Forms of Unity*. This was the first time either of them had come into contact with the Reformed Creeds. It was an event they will never forget. They were now consciously connected to the church of the past, and could see more clearly that the truth they were coming to know and believe was the truth God had guided His people to confess officially in their creeds.

After finishing a tour of duty in Hawaii, Rev. Laning still had some time left to serve in his military obligation, so he tried to get stationed near one of our churches. There was an opening at Great Lakes Naval Station in Chicago. The two of them and their firstborn son, Benjamin, left Hawaii and moved to Wheeling, Illinois. There they were members of Bethel Protestant Reformed Church, and rejoiced to develop friendships with their brothers and sisters in Christ there. After living in Illinois for about a year, the Lanings moved to Grand Rapids in October of 1991, where they became members of Hope Protestant Reformed Church.

Before finding the Protestant Reformed Churches, Rev. Laning had thought from time to time that the Lord would have him go into the ministry, but he did not know of a sound seminary that he could attend. When he found the Protestant Reformed Churches, he soon inquired about seminary and began taking college courses again to complete the entrance requirements. Having majored in physics and astronomy, there were many courses that he still had to take. Another two years’ worth of courses

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were required, most of which he took either at Calvin College or at the seminary. In 1993 he entered the Protestant Reformed Seminary, and graduated in 1997. Thinking back on his seminary instruction, he gives thanks to God for the sound, biblical and Reformed instruction that he received.

Rev. Laning was called by Hope Protestant Reformed Church to be their pastor, and was ordained into the gospel ministry in September of 1997. Having already grown to love the people of God at Hope very much, he was glad that it was the Lord's will that he begin his pastoral labors in their midst. He continues to labor there at this time.

To those who are considering preparing for the ministry, but are not sure whether or not the Lord is calling them to this labor, Rev. Laning says that one should see in himself a strong desire to bring the Word of the King. He should see a strong love for the people of God, to be sure. But a strong love for the people of God, he says, will be rooted in a strong desire to bring the Word of king Jesus faithfully and distinctively. Such a person will find that he delights to study the glorious truths of the Reformed faith, so that studying is something that he willingly and cheerfully does.

Rev. Laning would like to see more of our young people, and more of our adults for that matter, reading good theological works, such as those published by the RFPA. He would like our young people to encourage one another to be diligent readers, and to talk with others about the things they are reading.

In addition, Rev. Laning would encourage all our young people to spend time reading and studying our Reformed creeds. It is easy to fall into a pattern of reading only the Scriptures, and not reading also the confessions. Through the great battles of faith in church history, God guided our fathers to come to a knowledge of

many precious truths, and has set them forth clearly and antithetically in our creeds. Our creeds are an accurate and beautiful summary of what the Scriptures teach. By setting forth these truths over against the errors of the past and of today, they help us to see these glorious truths more clearly, and remind us of our calling to confess and defend these truths, while seeking an opportunity to witness to others concerning the hope that is within us.

He also has something to say to young people who are seeking a godly spouse. You have a good indication that God has brought to you the one whom He would have you to marry, if you find that you are developing a very intimate friendship with this person, and if this friendship gets closer the more you talk about the truths of Scripture. Talking about these truths together should be something that both persons readily and cheerfully want to do, out of a desire to grow closer first of all to God, and then also to one another. For some, he goes on to say, it may be somewhat difficult to do that at first. But if the Lord would have you to sojourn together as one flesh, you should find that this is something, by the grace of God, that gets easier with time.

Marriage is a wonderful gift that God has given to his people, a beautiful picture of the glorious, heavenly, and intimate friendship between Christ and the church. Rev. Laning and his wife continue to thank God for the wonderful marriage He has given to them, and for the eight children with which He has blessed them—Benjamin, Heather, Peter, Amy, Michael, Samuel, Olivia and Julianne. They pray that God will continue to bless the marriages of His people, and guide our young people to marry in the Lord, that we in our generations may grow closer to God and to one another, and stand fast in these last evil days to the glory of His holy name. ❖

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*Kris is a member of Hope Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan.*

## From the Business Office

### Dear Subscribers,

In an effort to maintain the smooth operation of mailing *Beacon Lights* we ask you to take note of the following requests.

- 1) We know that there was recently a zip code change in the Wyoming, Grand Rapids area. If this affects your address please contact the business office immediately as to insure no disruption in service.
- 2) If you are giving a gift subscription to another person, please indicate whether just the first year subscription should be sent to the giving party or should all future bills be sent to the giver. Your attention to this matter is much appreciated.

# 400 Years Reformation in France

by J.P. de Klerk

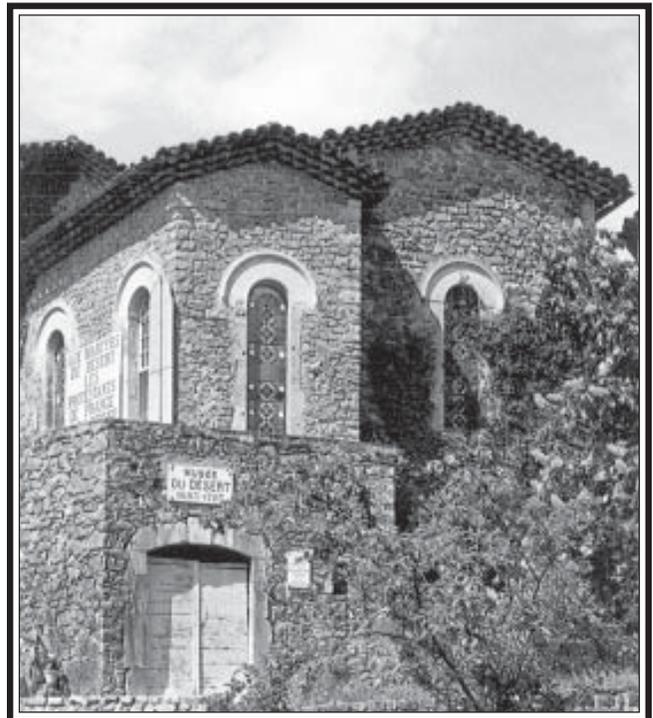
**A**t the first Lord's Day in September 1998 more than 30,000 Reformed French people came to Anduze and later went outside the town to Cévennes for an old traditional hedge-sermon near the Musée du Desert (1685-1767).

This was because it was 400 years ago that the Edict of Nantes gave the Protestants their freedom of religion back. All the small roads in the area became overcrowded and choked, but nobody worried about that. The people climbed over the roofs of the cars there in the sun of South France to hear the sermons and speeches and to sing the well-known psalms and hymns. They remembered the fallen "Camissards" (the soldiers of the Huguenots) of the battle in "Le Mas Soubeyran" (a country seat), led by Jean Cavalier, and the many fights in Langue-doc.

This whole area is a high place of the Reformed Churches of France. Anduze is in fact a hamlet, with historical houses, sheltering the museum that with numerous souvenirs commemorates the Reformed people, persecuted by the troops of the French King Louis XIV and evoked the courageous resistance of the "Camissards" against the Roman Catholic terror. They held on to what Dr. John Calvin, Farel and Beza had taught them. They still preserve the Reformed faith. Louis XIV the 14th hated them and at 23 October 1685 he rejected the Edict of Nantes, which had been the work of King Henry IV (1598). ❖



*The "Temple" of Anduze, damaged during WWII, restored and enlarged, in a busy street in 1998.*



*Musée du Desert (1685-1767).*

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# Thomas Cranmer

by J.P. de Klerk

In this old engraving, the English reformer, Thomas Cranmer, is in the cathedral of Canterbury, opposite the Roman Catholic bishop of Dover, preaching against the mass after the death of the Reformed King Edward VI on July 5, 1443, whose sister Maria was a fanatic follower of the Pope. Cranmer went a long way from priest (even Archbishop), via advisor of two kings, to reformer. With the help of friends of Calvin and Zwingli, he fought against mistakes and injustices, searching to find his way in times of much unrest all over Europe until he finally was condemned to death at the stake on March 21, 1556. He confessed openly that he had often stumbled and sometimes made wrong decisions, but he was a pillar of the Reformation in England, a defender of the faith. ❖

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



## Church News

### BAPTISMS

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

*Mark 16:16*

The sacrament of Holy Baptism was administered to:  
Samantha Jo, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Scott DeYoung—  
Byron Center, MI

Isaac Glenn, son of Mr. & Mrs. Jeff Gunnink—Edgerton,  
MN

Ethan Brady, son of Mr. & Mrs. Ryan Tolsma—  
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Calvin John, son of Mr. & Mrs. Michael Klaasens—  
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Brandt Joseph, son of Mr. & Mrs. Daniel VandenBerg—  
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Kaylee Renae, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Jay Van Baren—  
Faith, MI

Silas Samuel, son of Mr. & Mrs. Mark Ondersma—First,  
MI

Kalyssa Joy, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Rick Corson—First,  
MI

Lydia Ann, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Todd Voshell—First,  
MI

Samuel John, son of Mr. & Mrs. Mike Dykstra—First, MI

Noah Gerard, son of Mr. & Mrs. Vance Hayes—First, MI

Troy Allan, son of Mrs. Christy VerStrate—Georgetown,  
MI

Victoria Grace, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Scott Ensink—  
Georgetown, MI

Devon Lee, son of Mr. & Mrs. Dave Ritsema—  
Georgetown, MI

Maylee Kay, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Dean Boven—  
Georgetown, MI

Seth Ian, son of Mr. & Mrs. Brian Dykema—Georgetown,  
MI

*(continued on the back cover)*

# "LITTLE LIGHTS"

*... let it shine!*

by Connie Meyer

## What Am I?



I am alive  
And I have eyes.  
I even have a mouth.  
But gown, nor dress,  
Nor coat have I,  
Nor move I north or south.

I'm one of three  
Abidingly,  
But not the greatest one.  
A gift that's free  
By God's decree—  
The fount from which I come.

I grow in strength  
Invisibly  
By preaching of the Word.  
Infused and breathed  
Inside of thee,  
My presence will be heard.

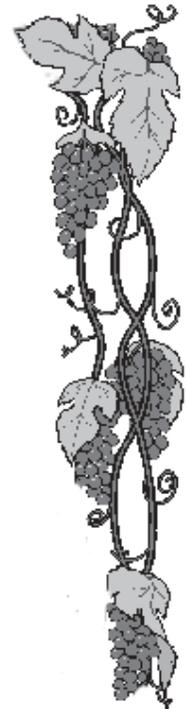
The evidence  
Of things not seen,  
A knowledge sure and true.  
A confidence  
God works fully—  
The willing and the do.

By me you know  
How worlds were framed.  
By me the elders gained  
A good report,  
And promises,  
Built arks, hid spies, were slain.

To see of me  
A picture view,  
Just look outdoors beyond.  
A branch ingraft-  
ed in a vine—  
That's me. I am the bond.

Now one last clue  
So there's no doubt  
Your answer is correct;  
This central point  
Of doctrine stands  
to comfort and direct:

By me alone  
You're justified—  
But not the reason why.  
I'm not the base,  
But instrument.  
Now tell me, what am I? ❖



**Fill in the blanks by writing in the first word of each text. What word is spelled vertically in the squares?**

- Psalm 50:14     \_\_\_ □ \_\_\_
- Psalm 48:1     \_\_\_ □ \_\_\_
- Psalm 27:9     \_\_\_ □ \_\_\_
- Psalm 27:14    \_\_\_ □ \_\_\_
- Psalm 63:4     \_\_\_ □ \_\_\_

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

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## Church News

(continued from page 22)

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MI

Stefan Mark, son of Mr. & Mrs. Tim Kaiser—Grandville,  
MI

James Michael, son of Mr. & Mrs. Daryl Brands—  
Holland, MI

Parker Thomas, son of Mr. & Mrs. Eric Mowery—  
Holland, MI

Caleb Gerrit and Ethan Michael, twin sons of Mr. &  
Mrs. Jason Cleveland—Hope, MI

Stella Anne, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Harlan Hoekstra—  
Hope, MI

Adult baptism was administered to Jeremy Venlet—  
Hudsonville, MI

Blake William, son of Mr. & Mrs. Andy Moss—Hull, IA

Cody John, son of Mr. & Mrs. Steve DeBoer—Hull, IA

Alec Jayde, son of Mr. & Mrs. Dave DeBoer—Hull, IA

Sean Robert, son of Mr. & Mrs. David Vermeer—Peace,  
IL

Jonathan Tyler, son of Mr. & Mrs. Phil Baas—Southwest,  
MI

Adult baptism was administered to Aaron Edwards—  
Spokane, WA

Amber Hope, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Matt Regnerus—  
Randolph, WI

Julia Elizabeth, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Dan Howerzyl—  
Redlands, CA

Joshua Andrew, son of Mr. & Mrs. Tom Miedema—  
Trinity, MI

Nathan Jay, son of Mr. & Mrs. Steve Bylsma—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:

Cherith Crossett—Ballymena, N Ireland

Jason Brands—Edgerton, MN

Shawn Brands—Edgerton, MN

Cheri Meulenberg—Grace, MI

Jason VanOostenbrugge—Grace, MI

Melissa Engelsma—Hope, MI

Margaret Bishop—Kalamazoo, MI

Christopher Miersma—Spokane, WA

Deb Edwards—Spokane, WA

### MARRIAGES

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

*Matthew 19:5*

United in the bond of Holy Matrimony were:

Mr. Jason Brands and Miss Brianna Looyenga—  
Edgerton, MN

Mr. Reed Mesman and Miss Carrie Bleyenber—  
Edgerton, MN

Mr. Nathan Dykstra and Miss Brenda DeJong—Faith,  
MI

Mr. Brad Pastoor and Miss Ericka Hillard—First, MI

Mr. Frank VanBaren and Miss Kristie Kamminga—  
Georgetown, MI

Mr. Dan Drnek and Miss Erin Mowery—Georgetown, MI

Mr. Brian Bangema and Miss Tiffany Heemstra—  
Georgetown, MI

Mr. Karl Quinton and Miss Becky Bosman—Holland, MI

Mr. John Cleveland and Miss Ashley Ferguson—Hope,  
MI

Mr. Grant DeJong and Miss Sarah denHoed—Hull, IA

Mr. Daniel Terpstra and Miss Mary Jo Vermeer—Peace,  
IL

Mr. Michael DeJong and Miss Janelle Bruinsma—Peace,  
IL

Mr. Ralph Medema and Miss Jennifer Rutgers—Grace,  
MI

Mr. Joe Kuiper and Miss Kathleen Doezema—Southeast,  
MI

Mr. Jason Taylor and Miss Jennifer Kuiper—Southwest,  
MI