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# Beacon

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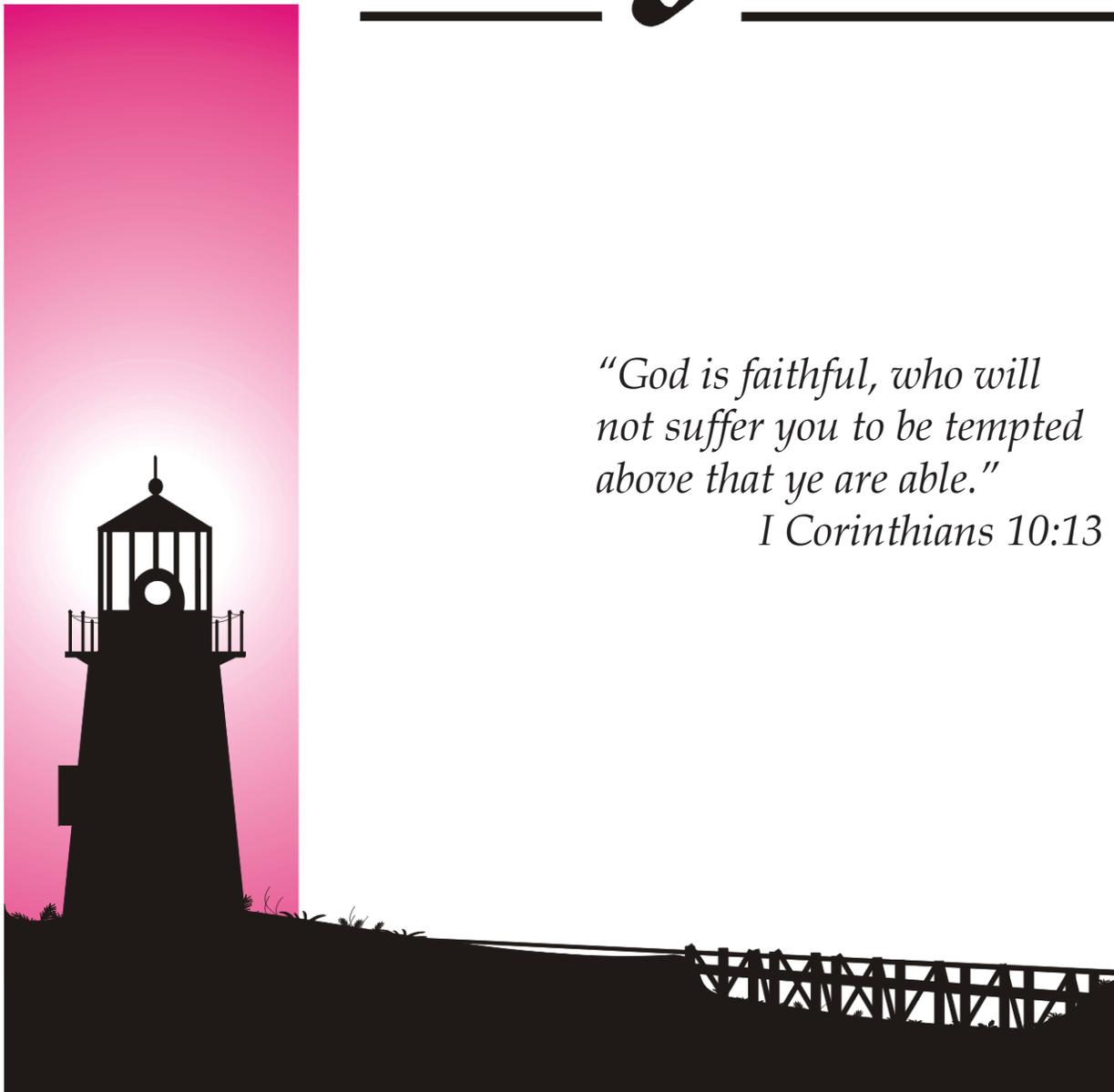
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# Lights

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*"God is faithful, who will  
not suffer you to be tempted  
above that ye are able."*

*I Corinthians 10:13*



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# Proper Following of Matthew 18

By Stephen Mulder



A Reply to “Who are We Known As” by Ryan Kregel

**M**any people have trouble following Matthew 18 in the PRC denomination and a good portion of that problem is with young people. This is obvious from the April 2010 *Beacon Lights* article entitled “Who are We Known As?” by Ryan Kregel, where it says that not only are there party houses in the PRC denomination but there are known party houses. The fact that there are known party houses implies that people are not reproving the sinning brethren. Christ shows us in Matthew 18:15–17 how to properly reprove those that are sinning. This must be done humbly, with the Word of God.

It is of the utmost importance to take the Word of God with us when we reprove the brother. This is important for several reasons. The first is because it is the standard that God has commanded us to obey and to not turn from. “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Psalm 119:105). Secondly, we must take the Word of God with us because it will either save or curse the person who has sinned. It curses the person who has sinned if they do not heed the Word but turn from it. “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23). For the people of Chorazin and Bethsaida heard the Word of God yet they did not heed it, therefore Christ says in Luke 10:14: “But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you.” This is the importance of heeding the Word of God! The Word saves because it is the word of the everlasting God “that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). Thus, these reasons show that taking the Word of God is important when we show a brother that he has sinned.

Another important thing to remember when we go to a sinning brother is that we must do it humbly and must not act better than the person who has sinned. For we all have the same sinful nature that we inherited from Adam. How quickly we forget this in the prideful world that we live in! Also, if we do go pridefully we will most likely do more damage than good. It will cause the sinner to think that you are just a person who likes to think they know better than everyone else.

We must go alone for the first several times and must show the brother his/her sin is against what God has commanded in his Word. Thus, since we are commanded to go alone this forbids any gossiping of what so and so did, but we must speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15). If the brother who has sinned repents then we gain a brother to Christ, but if the sinner does not repent, we are commanded to take one or two witnesses with us to urge the brother to repent. If the sinning brother does not repent, we are commanded to put the matter before the elders of the church. Therefore, it is our Christian duty to not only reprove the brother, but, if he persists in his sin to put him before the elders.

Now that we have dealt with how to properly follow Matthew 18, it is our intention to urge you to actually do it. As we have stated above, young people seem not to follow what Christ has commanded us to do in Matthew 18. This is most likely a result from peer pressure. Usually being different from everyone else is not cool, but we are commanded in the Word of God to be pilgrims and strangers in this world and not to be afraid if men revile us. We must not succumb to peer pressure, but must obey God rather than man. To encourage you fellow young people to do this we will show you several examples of Godly men who stood up against men to defend the Word of God. Examples go from Noah who built the ark while men mocked him, to Elijah on Mount Carmel, to the apostle Paul on his missionary journeys, to John Calvin against the Roman Catholic Church, and lastly to Rev. Herman Hoeksema against the CRC concern-

ing common grace. Although these are just a few examples of men who did not succumb to peer pressure, but obeyed God rather than men we hope this urges you not to be afraid of not being cool; instead, to be God fearing rather than man fearing.

As hard as it is to obey this command there are many benefits in doing this. The first thing that can come out of following Matthew 18 is that God will use you as a means to save his lost sheep. Secondly, if the person is really a child of God then it will strengthen the love of the brethren. It does this by showing you love the brother and care about his spiritual health. Lastly, by following Matthew 18 because you love God and your neighbour it will strengthen your faith because love is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22–23) “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.” The fruit of the Spirit is one of the ways you know if your faith in God is a true faith, because the wicked will not have these attributes in their hearts, but only the believer will.

Finally, we must bring up the point that we cannot do this of ourselves but it is the work of God in the heart of the believer. We would not even want to obey this command if God had not put his Holy Spirit in our hearts. Since we are all weak and born in sin, we must ask God to grant us the grace to obey the Word of Christ. In addition, we must ask God to bless our work so that it is not in vain, but so that it works in the heart of the sinner true repentance. Lastly, we must trust in God alone to cause the sinner repentance, for what can we do of ourselves being all weak creatures of the dust. Therefore, let us all obey this command through Christ that strengthens us. ❖

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*Stephan is a member of First Protestant Reformed Church of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.*

Church Family

# Abstruse Melancholy

## Part II: Depression and Anxiety – Treatment Options

by Dan Bergman

In my last article on this topic I laid out what depression is and also what anxiety disorder is. Signs, symptoms, risk factors, as well as a bunch of other information was given to show what it’s all about and why it’s so important for us to be aware of it and talk about it. Now, in this part of the article, I’d like to show what can be done if someone does have depression or anxiety disorder. Remember, this is all taken from the professionals and experts.

There are various treatment options for depression and anxiety, and the road to recovery may not be easy. I’d like to illustrate that by giving you a brief example of a situation I encountered a few times. This was back

when I, as well as a few others, visited my sister Julie when she was over at a rehabilitation center to help her get better. This place was off a couple dirt roads and tucked back in the woods—beautiful setup! I remember driving on those dirt roads and not driving very fast at all—if you did you’d be jarred teeth-less! The roads, at times, were extremely bumpy and even had big holes that sometimes were filled with water so that you didn’t know exactly how big they actually were. We did all we could to navigate through the holes and bumps and make it to our destination—to see Julie! The roads were not the exact same every day, but we always knew it would be at least a little rough.

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You can expect the same type of travel down your road to depression or anxiety recovery. You may not know what lies ahead or how tough it may be, but you should still stick it out and keep going, because, by the grace of God, you will reach your destination. You can get better! You just need to know where to start and where to go next and how badly you want to get better. I hope this article may help pave the way to your recovery. Let's get started!

### **When Do I Seek Medical Advice?**

It is perfectly normal to occasionally feel sad or upset, or to be unhappy with situations in your life. However, with depression, those feelings linger for weeks, months or even years. Those feelings also are much more intense than “just feeling a bit down” and can interfere with relationships, work and daily activities, and even your ability to eat and bathe.

Depression is not like an upset stomach and will not likely get better on its own. In fact, it may even get worse if left untreated.

Talk to your primary care doctor about your depression symptoms. If you do not have one, then try to seek help from a mental health provider (do not feel threatened by the words “mental health,” after all, they do specialize in your area of suffering). If you, for whatever reason, are not willing to seek treatment, try to work up the courage to confide in someone about your feelings, whether that be a friend or loved one, a health care provider, a pastor or someone else you may trust. They are able and most likely willing to help you take the first step to successful treatment for depression.

### **Suicidal Thoughts?**

As I mentioned in the previous part of this article, suicidal thoughts and behavior are common among people with depression. Are you considering suicide right now and have the means available? If so, it's imperative to talk to someone now. The best choice is to call 9-1-1 or your local emergency services number. If, for whatever reason, you don't want to do that, you do have other choices for reaching out to someone: contact a family member or friend; contact a doctor, mental health provider or other health care professional; contact a pastor or someone in your faith community; go to your local hospital room; call a crisis center or hot line.

### **Examining Your Depression Options**

Many people suffer through depression and are not necessarily affected the same way. That is also true for the treatment of depression—there is no “one key for every lock” treatment that cures depression. What works

for one person might not work for another. The best way to treat depression is to *become as informed as possible* about the treatment options, and then tailor them to meet your needs.

### **How About Some Depression Treatment Tips?**

Here are some helpful tips when considering and dealing with depression treatment. (1) You should learn as much as you can about your depression. It's important to determine whether your depression symptoms are due to an underlying medical condition. If so, that condition will need to be treated first. And remember, the more severe the depression, the more intense the treatment is likely to be. (2) It does and will take time to find the right treatment. It very well might take some trial and error to find the treatment and supports that works best for you. Just be sure to be open to change and a little experimentation. (3) Medications are not the only answer. Granted, it is hard to escape the ads about medication as a treatment for depression. Although medication can be quite effective for severe depression, studies have shown that therapy can be as effective or even a more effective treatment for many types of depression. Therapy and/or lifestyle changes may very well be all you need, and they come without the side effects of medication. If, however, you do decide to try medication, remember that medication works best when you pursue therapy as well. (4) You should get social support. The more you cultivate your social connections, the more protected you are from depression. Asking for help is not a weakness but a sign of strength. (5) Treatment does take time and commitment. All of those depression treatments do take time, and sometimes it might feel overwhelming or frustratingly slow. That is perfectly normal. After all, recovery does have its ups and downs. There is a peak to every valley.

### **Lifestyle changes are an essential part of depression treatment.**

Lifestyle changes are simple but powerful tools in treating depression. Sometimes these changes may be all you need. You may need other treatment as well, yet lifestyle changes can go a long way towards helping lift depression. They can also help keep depression at bay once you are feeling better.

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**Asking for help is not a weakness but a sign of strength.**

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### **Lifestyle changes can treat depression.**

There are some lifestyle changes which can help treat depression: regular exercise; nutrition—eating a regular, balanced diet is important for both your physical and mental health; sleep—poor sleep has a strong effect on mood; social support—strong social support networks reduce isolation, which is a key risk factor for depression; stress reduction—too much stress aggravates depression and puts you at risk for future depression.

### **Medical causes of depression can be ruled out.**

If you suspect that you might be depressed, and lifestyle changes haven't worked, you should make an appointment to see your primary care doctor for a thorough checkup. If your depression is the result of medical causes, therapy and antidepressants will do little to help, and the depression won't lift until the underlying health problem is identified and treated.

### **What about finding a therapist to treat my depression?**

If there is no underlying medical cause for your depression, the next step for treatment is finding a mental health specialist. One of the most important things to consider when choosing a therapist is your connection with this person. The right therapist will be a caring and supportive partner in your depression treatment and recovery. Do not worry if you do not find “the one” right away, for it may take a few tries to find the right one. Also, a good therapist will not pressure you into treatment, and encourages questions about his/her qualifications and patient-therapist compatibility. You should also make sure your therapist is licensed and has credentials.

### **There are many benefits of therapy to help treat depression.**

Talk therapy is an extremely effective treatment for depression. Therapy gives you tools to treat depression from multiple angles. In addition to that, what you learn in therapy yields skills and insight to help prevent depression from coming back.

There are many types of therapy available. I will not be going into them all in detail, but will only mention them. Three of the more common methods used in depression include; cognitive behavioral therapy, interpersonal therapy, and psychodynamic therapy. Often, more than one method is used.

One of the hallmarks of depression is feeling overwhelmed and having trouble focusing. With therapy, it allows you to take a step back and survey what might be contributing to your depression and how you can

make appropriate changes. Some of the bigger topics that therapy can help with include: Relationships, Setting Healthy Boundaries, and Handling Life's Problems.

### **Choosing between individual and group therapy.**

When you hear the word “therapy,” do you automatically think of one-on-one sessions with a therapist? Well, as effective as individual therapy can be, group therapy can also be very useful in depression treatment. In individual therapy, you are building a strong relationship with one person, and may also feel a bit more comfortable sharing some sensitive information with one person than with a group. You will also get individual attention.

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**Pray to God that he will  
guide you in your search  
for the right therapist...**

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Do not rule out group therapy, however. Listening to peers going through the same struggles can be tremendously beneficial and help build self-esteem. Many times group members are at different points in their depression, so you might get tips from both someone in the dog-fight and someone who has worked through a difficult problem. You can also get inspiration and ideas from hearing from others, and are of course increasing your social activities and network.

### **Therapy—Not Always the Most Comfortable Way to Go**

Therapy may and likely will seem difficult or painful, but do not let that give you reason to give up. After all, a lot of difficult and painful things that we go through in life just end up making us stronger than we were. This also may very well be one way God is reaching out his hand of help to you. Discussing your feelings and reactions in an honest way with your therapist will help in your moving forward rather than going in reverse to your old and not as effective ways. Remember one thing about therapy: the foundation of good therapy is a strong trusting relationship. You do not need to be worried about seeing a therapist, for they are placed on this earth by God to help those who need it. Pray to God that he will guide you in your search for the right therapist, and that when you find him or her, you will likely start to feel better. May God be with you on your journey.

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## **Considering Medications for Depression Treatment**

What about medications for depression? Should I take antidepressants? What medications should I take? These, and many more questions are often asked, and rightly so. You should know that, even though depression medication may be the most advertised treatment for depression, it does not mean that it's the most effective. Yes, medication is a helper in the relieving of the symptoms of depression, but it does not cure the underlying problem, and it's normally not a long-term solution. Side effects and safety concerns are also associated with antidepressant medications, and withdrawal can be quite difficult. It's important to learn all the facts when considering whether antidepressant medication is right for you. It will only benefit you and help you in making an informed and personal decision about how best to treat your depression. However, it's important not to ignore other treatments. Want to know of ways that can help speed recovery from depression, and can also provide skills to help prevent a recurrence? That can be done with lifestyle changes and therapy.

While family doctors can be the first professionals to recognize your depression, it would behoove you to explore your options with other mental health professionals who specialize in depression. It may be that you end up working with a therapist and not need medication at all.

## **Tests, Diagnosis and Diagnosis Criteria for Depression**

When doctors suspect someone has depression, it's typical that a set of medical and psychological tests and exams are run. These are done to help rule out other problems that could be causing your symptoms, pinpoint a diagnosis and also check for any related complications. A physical exam, lab tests, and a psychological evaluation are generally included.

There are several other conditions whose symptoms may include depression. In order to get the appropriate treatment, it's essential to get an accurate diagnosis. Your doctor or mental health providers' evaluation will help determine if you have major depression or one of the other conditions, but feel free to check into it in more detail on your own.

There is various diagnostic criteria for depression, therefore, make sure you understand what type of depression you have so that you can learn more about your specific situation and its treatment.

## **Available Treatment Options**

There are many treatments for depression that are available. Standard depression treatment includes: medications, psychotherapy, and electroconvulsive therapy (ECT). Also, brain stimulation, complementary and alternative treatments are among the emerging and less-studied treatments for depression.

There may be some cases in which your primary care doctor can treat your depression. However, in other cases, treatment with a qualified mental health provider, such as a psychiatrist, psychologist or social worker may be of great benefit to you.

It would be good if you were an active participant in your depression treatment. Working with your doctor or therapist, you can decide which treatment options may be best suited for your situation, depending on your symptoms and their severity, your personal preferences, insurance coverage, affordability, treatment side effects and other factors. However, it may be that depression is so severe that someone, such as a doctor, loved one or guardian may need to guide your care until you're well enough to participate in decision making.

## **What About Anxiety?**

So, that is all regarded to depression, but what about the treatment with respect to anxiety? Well, it's important to note first that we'll be looking at both anxiety attacks and anxiety disorders.

## **There Is Treatment for Anxiety Attacks and Anxiety Disorders**

Are you starting to avoid certain situations or places because you're afraid of having a panic attack? If so, it's important to seek help, and I will show you some ways you can do so. There is good news though. And that is that anxiety attacks are highly treatable. In fact, many people are panic free within just 5–8 treatment sessions.

I encourage you to look into more about anxiety disorders and the six major types, each with their own distinct symptom profile. Those six types are: generalized anxiety disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, panic disorder, phobia, post-traumatic stress disorder, and social anxiety disorder.

Because of the amount of information on the various types, I will not be going into them, but recommend that you do so in your spare time. It will help you become more informed and aware.

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## There Are Ways to Help Yourself with Anxiety and Anxiety Disorders

It's important to know that not everyone who worries a lot has an anxiety disorder. It's possible that you're just anxious because of a very demanding schedule, lack of exercise or sleep, pressure at work or home, or even from too much coffee or one of those ever so popular yet extremely unhealthy energy drinks (stimulants) out there today ("heart attack in a can").

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...not everyone who  
worries a lot has an anxiety  
disorder.

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The bottom line is that if your lifestyle is unhealthy and stressful, you're likely to feel anxious—whether or not you have an anxiety disorder. So if you feel like you worry too much, be sure to take some time to evaluate how well you're caring for yourself. Here are some questions to help in your evaluation: Do you make time each day for relaxation and fun? Are you getting the emotional support you need? Are you taking care of your body? Are you overloaded with responsibilities? Do you ask for help when you need it? It's okay to ask for help; it's not a sign of weakness, but a sign of growth. It is very important to take proper care of our bodies in all areas. For, we read in I Corinthians 6:19-20 "that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you...therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Are your stress levels through the roof? Then think about how you can bring your life back into balance. If you're feeling a bit isolated or unsupported, you should find someone you trust to confide in. Just talking about your worries can make them seem less frightening.

You can also reduce your anxiety levels by challenging the irrational beliefs, pessimistic attitudes, and rigid mental habits that trigger and sustain worry. One great book that can help with that is, *What To Say When You Talk To Yourself*, by Shad Helmstetter, Ph.D. We all talk to ourselves, but what do we really say when we do? The more positive thoughts we can fill our mind with the better off we will be. We will be that much more inclined and capable to weed out those bad thoughts—it all starts with proper thinking. Helmstetter says in his book, "Whatever 'thoughts' you have programmed into yourself, or have allowed others to program into you, are affecting, directing, or controlling everything about you." With depression and anxiety, how many of those

"thoughts" are overly positive? Most likely it's more negative, so let's start changing that by washing out those bad negative thoughts with some good positive thoughts. It won't be easy, but just think how rewarding it will be!

## Seeking Professional Help For Anxiety

If you've experienced any of the worries and fear mentioned above and they are beginning to disrupt your daily life, it's quite necessary to seek professional help.

Are you experiencing a lot of physical anxiety symptoms? If so, you should start by getting a medical checkup. This way your doctor can make sure that your anxiety is not caused by a medical condition, such as thyroid problem, hypoglycemia, or asthma. Since it is the case that certain drugs and supplements can cause anxiety, you should also tell your doctor of any prescriptions, over-the-counter medications, herbal remedies, and recreational drugs you're taking.

Let's say that your physician rules out a medical cause. So, the next step is to consult with a therapist who has experience treating anxiety disorders. Why? Because the therapist will work with you to determine the cause and type of your anxiety disorder and devise a course of treatment.

## Various Treatment Options for Anxiety Disorders

You may be comforted to know that anxiety disorders do respond well to treatment—and often in a relatively short amount of time. In general, most anxiety disorders are treated with behavioral therapy, medication, or some combination of the two. I encourage you to look into this in more detail some time on your own.

One thing to be aware of when it comes to medication is that, how often a medication is needed can depend on the type of anxiety disorder. Anxiety medications can be habit forming and cause unwanted side effects, so be sure to research your options. It's very important to weigh the benefits and risks so you can make an informed decision about whether medication is the right treatment approach for you.

There are several new anxiety treatments which are showing promise as compliments to both therapy and medication. In mild anxiety disorder cases, these treatments may provide adequate relief on their own. Exercise—A natural stress buster and anxiety reliever. Research shows that as little as 30 minutes of exercise three to five times a week can provide significant anxiety relief. Relaxation techniques—When practiced regularly, these techniques can reduce anxiety and increase feel-

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ings of relaxation and emotional happiness. There is also biofeedback and hypnosis.

Remember, it will help to get the treatment by the doctor but the more motivated one is to help oneself, all the more successful one will be.

### **Exercise Can Ease Symptoms With Depression and Anxiety**

As much as we all know how good exercise is for us, it is equal or better for someone suffering with depression and anxiety. According to the Mayo Clinic, exercise can improve symptoms of depression and anxiety. Even a little exercise helps. Even just using the stairs a couple times a day can be beneficial.

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**As much as we all know how good exercise is for us, it is equal or better for someone suffering with depression and anxiety.**

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“It’s not a magic bullet, but increasing physical activity is a positive and active strategy to help manage depression and anxiety,” says Kristen Vickers-Douglas, Ph.D., a psychologist at Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota.

### **How Does Exercise Help Depression and Anxiety?**

A growing volume of research shows that exercise can also help improve symptoms of certain mental health conditions, including depression and anxiety. It’s also said that exercise may also help prevent a relapse after treatment for depression or anxiety.

Although it’s suggested by research that it may take at least 30 minutes of exercise a day for at least three to five days a week to greatly improve depression symptoms, it’s likely that smaller amounts of activity—as little as 10 to 15 minutes at a time—can improve mood in the short term. “Small bouts of exercise may be a great way to get started if it’s initially too hard to do more,” Dr. Vickers-Douglas says.

It is not known just how exercise reduces symptoms of depression and anxiety. However, some evidence suggests that exercise raises the level of certain mood-enhancing neurotransmitters in the brain. The boosting of feel-good endorphins, releasing of muscle tension can be an effect of exercise, as well as helping you sleep better, and reducing levels of the stress hormone cortisol. It also increases body temp which may have calming effects.

All of these changes in your mind and body can improve such symptoms as sadness, anxiety, irritability, stress, fatigue, anger, self-doubt and hopelessness.

This is not to say that exercise is meant to replace medical treatment of depression or anxiety. So, if you do exercise regularly but depression or anxiety symptoms still interfere with how you live, you should seek professional help.

### **Benefits of Exercise for Depression and Anxiety**

There are some great benefits of exercise for depression and anxiety. One benefit is *confidence*. Being physically active gives you a sense of accomplishment. Another benefit is *distraction*. When you have depression or anxiety, it’s quite easy to dwell on how badly you feel. Exercise can shift the focus away from unpleasant thoughts to something more pleasant, such as your surroundings or the music you enjoy listening to while you exercise. *Interactions* is also a benefit. Exercise may give you the chance to meet or socialize with others, even if it’s just exchanging a friendly smile or greeting as you walk around your neighborhood. After all, smiles can be very contagious. One other benefit is *healthy coping*—Doing something positive to manage depression or anxiety is a healthy coping strategy.

Of course, as we all know, knowing that something is good for you doesn’t make it easier to actually do it. Just as with many things in life, it may be easy to do but easier not to do. That’s why, if you can even get started, then you’re that much further ahead. Way to go!

So, How do I get started on this exercise? you may ask. Well, according to the staff at the Mayo Clinic, here are some steps that can help you exercise when you have depression or anxiety. Remember, as always, be sure to check with your health care provider before starting a new exercise program to make sure it’s safe for you.

- 1) Get your mental health providers’ support.
- 2) Identify what you enjoy doing. What are you most likely to do? When and how would you most likely do it? Do what you enjoy to help you stick with it.
- 3) Set reasonable goals. Think about what you may be able to do in reality. 20 minutes? 10 minutes? Start there and build up.
- 4) Don’t think exercise is a burden. If exercise is just another “should” in your life that you don’t think you’re living up to, you’ll associate with failure.
- 5) Address your barriers. What’s stopping you from exercising? If you think about what’s stopping you from exercising, you can probably find an alternative solution.
- 6) Prepare for setbacks and obstacles. Exercise isn’t always simple and joyful. It’s also tempting

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to blame yourself for that. People with depression are especially likely to feel shame over perceived failures. Don't fall into that trap. Give yourself credit for every step in the right direction, no matter how small. If you skip exercise one day, that does not mean you're a failure and may as well quit completely. Just try again the next day. It's all part of success. And if you do stick with it, just think how much better you'll feel, and how worth it it will have been.

### **Sticking with Exercise When You Have Depression or Anxiety**

Anyone who has ever started an exercise program knows that it can be difficult. However, sticking with it can be even harder; partly because how much work it actually is. One key is problem solving your way through when it seems like you can't or don't want to exercise. It's quite a refreshing feeling once you start seeing and feeling the results you were after. It's certainly true for myself!

"What would happen if you went out to your car and it wouldn't start?" Dr. Vickers-Douglas asks. She goes on to say how you'd likely start [quickly] listing ways how to handle it or work around it, such as calling a friend or a tow-truck or some other form of transportation. "You instantly start problem solving."

However, most people don't approach exercise that way. Dr. Vickers-Douglas says, "With exercise, we often hit a barrier and say, 'That's it. I can't do it, forget it.'" Too many people take that approach with exercise as well as many things in life. They fall victim to the Excusitis (ex-cus'-i-tis) disease (continually making excuses). Granted, it's not an actual medical disease, but many fall victim to it. Good news is that there is a cure, and that cure is finding a way to work around it by finding a way to do that which you don't want to do or "can't" do. You need to problem solve your way through the exercise barrier, just as you would other obstacles in your life. By the grace of God you can. Working through one obstacle can in turn start a ripple effect to the breaking down of other obstacle walls. It all starts with one small step. Remember, little things do matter.

"Some people think they need to wait until they somehow generate enough will power to exercise," Dr. Vickers-Douglas says. "But waiting for will power or motivation to exercise is a passive approach, and when someone has depression and is unmotivated, waiting passively for change is unlikely to help at all." She goes on to add how the focusing on a lack of motivation and will power can make you feel like a failure. Instead, you

should recognize your strengths and skills and use them to help you take your first steps toward exercise.

### **Conclusion**

It is my prayer, now that you have a little better understanding of what you can do if you suffer with depression and/or anxiety, that you can take the appropriate steps and measures to getting better. Also, you may better be able to help those around you who may not even know where to start.

It won't be easy but it will be greatly beneficial to you and all those that you care about and who care about you. By God's wonderful grace, may you find the right medication or professional help or other source of help you need.

Not sure what to do or if you can even do it at all? First of all, do your research—be an honest skeptic. Secondly, for what it's worth, I know you can do it. But don't just take my word for it, take these words from Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Or the words found in Psalm 37:5, "Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass."

In the final part of this article series, I will get into what others can do for someone who has depression or anxiety. There are certain things which should be said and which should not be said. I will also point out other helpful information that I have found from my research as well as from those I talked to (whose names will be withheld for privacy matters, respectfully).

I'd like to leave you with a poem that is taken from I Corinthians 10:13 and is written by Helen Steiner Rice.

*No problem is too intricate  
And no sorrow that we face  
Is too deep and devastating  
To be softened by His grace,  
No trials and tribulations  
Are beyond what we can bear  
If we share them with our Father  
As we talk to Him in prayer.*

*"God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able" (I Cor. 10:13). ❖*

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*Dan is a member of Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church in Hudsonville, Michigan. Part 1 of this article was in the November 2009 issue of Beacon Lights.*

# Watching Daily At My Gates

by Chester Hunter

## July 10 Read Proverbs 11:1-11

We have come to a section of Proverbs where the true meaning of a proverb is shown. A proverb is a short, pithy saying which portrays the wisdom that we should desire. In these devotionals it would be hard to examine each one so I ask you to consider any that appeal to you while I examine only a few of them. The first three verses deal with honesty. There is no area of life where honesty can be ignored. If we are not honest, we will find ourselves breaking many of God's commandments. We must examine our lives and make sure that we are giving to our God a full measure of his glory. May this be our guide all of our lives. Sing Psalter 136.

## July 11 Read Proverbs 11:12-21

This section of chapter 11 is a mixture of synonymous and antithetical parallelisms. They all have one theme. There is a certain way that the children of the heavenly Father must live. That way is to walk in wisdom. Notice verse 19. In that verse we see the end of the way that men walk on this earth. Some look to eternal life. Their way is replete with the good works of righteousness. Some pursue evil; their end is eternal death. What is scattered around us on our way? Do we see good works or the works of folly? May God grant to us wisdom to fear Jehovah and seek him all the days of our lives. Sing Psalter 301.

## July 12 Read Proverbs 11:22-31

As I have pointed out before, Solomon wrote many proverbs concerning the treatment of the poor. Verses 24 and 25 again remind us of this fact. While Solomon's kingdom was one of prosperity, he knew there were poor in it. Jesus in the days before he died reminded his disciples and the church of all ages that the poor are ever present among it. Poor is a relative term. The poor that are seen in an industrial nation are different than the poor in a third world country. The point of Solomon and Christ is that among us, where we live, are poor. We must make sure that we give of our abundance for them that they may truly know of the mercies of Christ. Sing Psalter 98.

## July 13 Read Proverbs 12:1-8

In this section of antithetical parallelisms we have various contrasts between the righteous and the wicked. Verse 1 is not isolated from the rest, but it is the keystone upon which

the others rest. The book of Proverbs is instruction. How we react to that instruction is the manner in which we live our lives. Our covenant God is always instructing us. Do we heed such instruction? Do we learn the way we should walk from the situations that he places before us? He has given to us a textbook that covers all situations of life. But the Bible is not a cold lifeless book, it is a living letter of love to those whom he loves. Let us seek instruction and live lives of thankfulness for not only that instruction but also the way of salvation found in God's Word. Sing Psalter 333.

## July 14 Read Proverbs 12:9-22

In this section of Proverbs there are many admonitions about the tongue. We can sin with our mouths in more ways than just simple lying. But as verse 22 states, even that is an abomination to God. How do we speak about others? What kinds of words come out of our mouths? James in his epistle also gives to us much instruction on this matter. Our mouths need to be fountains of praise to the almighty God. This is not just a matter of praying and singing. This is a matter of all that we say. Let us guard our lips as we interact with people each and every day. May those around us know that we truly love God by our speech. Sing Psalter 90.

## July 15 Read Proverbs 12:23-28

The first five verses of this section are all antithetical parallelisms. Each of them addresses a different aspect of life. Each of them gives to us guidance on the various matters that make up daily living. Notice verse 25. Do we have a chance to help someone's outlook on life? If we do, we should not fail to speak a good word to them. That good word will come from Scripture. In order to speak that good word, we must know the Word. The final verse is synonymous parallelism. It speaks not of life on this earth, but the life to come which will be in heaven. As we go through this book of wisdom, let us make sure that we are walking on the right path. That right path has eternal life as its end for the righteous. Sing Psalter 53.

## July 16 Read Proverbs 13:1-12

We see that once again Solomon returns to instruction. This instruction concerns various aspects of our daily lives. One of these verses is different in construction. Can you find it? Verse seven is still antithetical in nature but uses a

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different form. Are we rich in this world but poor in what matters most? Or are we poor in the world but rich in what matters most? What matters most are things that are spiritual in nature. Do we “covet the best gifts”-the gifts of the spirit? As you read through these various nuggets of truth, seek what is spiritual. If we live in the ways of God, we will find blessing. May this be our goal today and every day. Sing Psalter 334.

### **July 17 Read Proverbs 13:13-25**

Notice verse 22. While Solomon mentions a man leaving an inheritance to his children, he means more than just that. First of all, there is the spiritual aspect to the verse. The inheritance mentioned is the spiritual inheritance of knowing and walking in God’s word. If fathers do not do that for their children, they leave their children nothing, even if they have much worldly goods. Parents must, like Amram and Jocebed, see the importance of this fact. Secondly, children must see what a true inheritance is. While you might want to be left many worldly goods, the best inheritance is the fear of Jehovah. Children and young people must be thankful when their godly parents put much energy in leaving them a good spiritual inheritance. All the work put into the local congregation and the local covenantal Christian school is for their inheritance. What more could you want? May God be thanked for the blessing of godly parents and grandparents. Sing Psalter 359.

### **July 18 Read Proverbs 14:1-7**

If we would study the Proverbs one by one, we would definitely find much to guide our lives. This would be profitable. For our purposes we choose to look at groups of parables; we can profit by this method as well. Look at verse 7. As we live our lives in this earth we come into contact with many kinds of people. Some of them we need to; some of them we choose to. What kind of people are they? Are they people that fear the Lord? Do we go away from those who show themselves foolish, when we can? Solomon tells us that this is necessary for the child of God. Let us work at staying away from those who do not love God. In that way our steps will be directed on the right path. Sing Psalter 101.

### **July 19 Read Proverbs 14:8-14**

A word that is seen throughout the book of Proverbs is the word prudent. A prudent person is a wise person. He is one who follows the way of God. He is prudent because he considers his path and applies the wisdom of God to that path. He is truthful in all his dealings with those around him. There is much blessedness in the way of the prudent. The ultimate blessing is, of course, eternal life. But in this life, as well, he finds the blessing of Jehovah. Because he does not walk in the way of sin, he finds the peace of Christ

each day and each night. There are pitfalls along the way, but with the strength of Jehovah he is delivered from them. Let us be prudent in our daily walk as we look for the city that hath foundations. Sing Psalter 35.

### **July 20 Read Proverbs 14:15-21**

Several of the verses in this section show to us how we must live out of the second great commandment, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Notice the last verse. If we despise those whom God has put on our paths, for they are our neighbors, we fall into sin. That is the negative aspect of loving the neighbor put very simply. When we have mercy on the poor, we are blessed. That is the positive aspect. This is not a hard thing. What is hard is going against our sinful human natures. We would rather leave the poor in his poverty, and see what we can do to further our own causes. As we live our lives on this earth, we must look for the opportunities placed in our paths to love our neighbor and thereby to love God. All of God’s people can do this from very young to very old. When we do, we can be assured of the blessing of Jehovah. Sing Psalter 24.

### **July 21 Read Proverbs 14:22-28**

People of God, are you a true witness? Are we true witnesses of the faith once delivered to the saints? What does it mean to be a true witness? First of all, a true witness lives the gospel that he confesses. He shows to those around him that not only does he confess with his lips the word of God, but he also shows in his life that word in all that he does. Secondly, a true witness is always ready to give an answer to the hope that lies within him. He is ready by word and deed to show his love for the heavenly Father. Our beloved catechism reminds us that our walk may lead others to Christ. Are we a witness that delivers souls, or is our whole life a lie? Sing Psalter 113.

### **July 22 Read Proverbs 14:29-35**

The antithetical parallelism of verse 30 points out two aspects of our spiritual life. We can have a sound spiritual heart, but we also can be envious of everything and anything around us. That envy will eat away, as it were, at our very bones. Are we content with the station and calling in which God has placed us? Are we convinced with Paul that godliness and contentment is great gain? As we live our lives on this earth, we first must be Godly. We must flee sin and the old man and cleave to God’s law and the new man. Secondly, we must be content where we are and with what the potter has made of us. Is this easy? No. Is this possible? Yes, by grace. Let us flee envy and live out of the sound heart given to us by God. Sing Psalter 95.

### **July 23 Read Proverbs 15:1-8**

In this chapter from Solomon’s words of wisdom, we have many different pieces of, not advice, but admonition

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from God's servant. Verse 1 is one that we should all remember all of the time. How many times are we tempted to snap at someone because of some perceived slight? Anger is a dangerous sin that leads to more sin. By having a quiet manner towards others, we can avoid many problems. As verse 4 tells us, our tongues can make all the difference in the world. Let us pray daily for the grace to control our tongues and by doing this glorify our Father in heaven. Sing Psalter 386.

### **July 24 Read Proverbs 15:9-17**

In verses 16 and 17 we have a pair of verses which work together. It is most men's goal in this life to amass great amounts of possessions. Whether it be recreational toys or that which makes a house look beautiful, many want to have much. Solomon, who had much, realized that possessions were nothing. He teaches us in these verse like Paul in I Timothy 6 that "godliness with contentment is great gain." The gain is not in this world but rather in the world to come. This gain goes to those who have obtained the fear of Jehovah and the love of spiritual things. Let us seek contentment with what we have been given by God. In this way we will find the blessing of Jehovah. Sing Psalter 97.

### **July 25 Read Proverbs 15:18-24**

Let us take a look at verse 22. It is not in our nature to want counsel from others. A very young child will proclaim that he can "do it by myself." Older children and teenagers want to go their own way. Young adults do not want parents "meddling" with their business. Even the rest of us do not want help very often. We want to be independent. God gives to us good counselors. We find those counselors in Scripture first of all. We find those counselors all around us. Yes, that counsel is often tainted by sin because that is human nature. However, we should look for the counsel of those God has placed in that position. We should not just want it when we are in trouble. Counsel is a good gift from God. Let us embrace it as if it comes from his mouth. Sing Psalter 51.

### **July 26 Read Proverbs 15:25-33**

No one likes the last clause of verse 33. The world, even the church world, is concerned about being honored. To be humble is unthinkable, but yet that is the way that Solomon says we must walk. We must be receptive to instruction in the wisdom of Jehovah. We must, from that instruction, seek to fear God and keep his commandments. Then we must be humble. That is not the recipe for success of the self-help gurus today, but that is the Word of God. Can we walk in it? Will we walk in it? Only by God's grace can we and will we. May our prayers today include requests for such grace. Sing Psalter 366.

### **July 27 Read Proverbs 16:1-7**

In this section Solomon addresses man and the way that his life leads him. The first principle which we must heed is found in the first two verses. Our way in life is in God's hand. We may make preparations for finding our way, but we must always remember to say, "If the Lord will." Many will misuse verse 3. They like to say that if you commit your way unto God, you will get what you want. That is not the intent at all. First of all the first clause is a command. We must commit our ways unto the Lord. Secondly, the thoughts mentioned in the second clause are his thoughts that he has put into our hearts. As we go along life's path, let us remember that all things are in God's hands. He will bring them to pass for his glory and for his good for his church. Sing Psalter 362.

### **July 28 Read Proverbs 16:8-17**

Solomon was a king, and from a king's perspective he gave to us many words of wisdom. He did this both for the king but also for the king's subjects. As citizens of a kingdom on earth as well as in heaven, we do well to study Solomon's admonitions to us. Some of us occupy places of authority. There are words to us as well. Verse 9 gives a message to all of us. We think that our plans are the best. God knows better than we how we should go. Sometimes he upsets our plans by death. We must see that this way is best as well. Sometimes through calamities he causes us to see that he has a better way. He speaks to us in all that happens to us. Are we listening? Sing Psalter 223.

### **July 29 Read Proverbs 16:18-25**

We can find many words in this section to guide us upon our pilgrimage upon this earth as we await our final destination in heaven. First of all, we have the admonition to be humble in all that we do. We live in a world characterized by "I did this!" We need to have a humble demeanor. Secondly, we need to gather words and ways of wisdom. There is only one source of this wisdom, and that is from our heavenly Father. Finally, we need to watch our tongues. By doing this we find we will have a pleasant life especially with those around us. Let us seek these virtues knowing that with them comes the blessing of Jehovah for they are blessings from him. Sing Psalter 80.

### **July 30 Read Proverbs 16:26-33**

Solomon continues to instruct us in the right and wrong ways of life. You see in these verses vivid reminders of the antithesis. The summary to life is found in verse 33. Life is not about luck or chance. It is not about man making his own way. Life consists of a series of events directed by God's counsel as expressed in providence. Do we see the providence of God directing all of our ways? Notice that the verse says the "whole" disposing is of the Lord.

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Not a part of our lives but all of our lives and the events in them are in his hands. What a comforting thought that is to the child of God! If our lives even had a tiny bit of us in them, they would end in disaster. Let us thank God for his guidance through every hour of every day of our lives. Sing Psalter 253.

### **July 31 Read Proverbs 17:1-7**

Notice the reference to the covenant in verse 6. Solomon knew about disobedient children. He had several brothers and sons that fit that category. God has given to us the covenant of friendship with him. He has also given to us the sign of the covenant in the children with which he blesses us. A God-fearing family is a benefit to parents and children alike. Children and young people must heed their fathers and mothers. Fathers and mothers must bring up their children in the fear of Jehovah. When both of these take place, God's name is glorified. May this be our goal throughout our lives on this earth. Sing Psalter 360.

### **August 1 Read Proverbs 17:8-14**

Verses 9 and 14 are good ones to consider when seeking guidance in dealing with our neighbors. First of all, when it says in verse 9 that we cover transgression, it does not mean that we cover it up. Rather, the idea is that we not let others see it. We discuss it with the offender and him only unless it is of such a nature that we apply the way of Matthew 18 to it. Verse 9 warns us against breaking the ninth commandment by way of gossiping. In verse 14 we see good advice again concerning our neighbors. If we poke a small hole in a dam, eventually a torrent will pour out of it. If we poke at our friend with words, we may be opening up troubles that we cannot mend. We must seek good relations with those around us in order that peace may reign in God's church. Sing Psalter 83.

### **August 2 Read Proverbs 17:15-21**

The blessings of the covenant family relationship are brought forth in verse 17. The relationship may be by blood or by the Word. That which is by blood should also be by the Word. A friend in Christ is one that loves you whatever the circumstances are. If you are to be a friend, you must follow the same guidelines. Those who are spiritual brothers and sisters will care for their spiritual brothers and sisters. That is the type of relationship we must seek. We have a spiritual friend who loves us at all times. He is also our elder brother. As our elder brother, he went to the cross for us and showed to us the greatest expression of love. Are we that kind of friend and brother? Sing Psalter 408.

### **August 3 Read Proverbs 17:22-28**

In this section of Scripture we find several verses dealing with life and our relationships with others. First of all, in verse 22 we see how we can affect those around us by our

demeanor with them and toward them. The idea of merry is not the merriment of the world, but rather the joyfulness of the saved child of God. Those around us must see our spiritual joy, and seeing it, they too will be gladdened. In verses 27 and 28 we are admonished to watch our tongues. Sometimes we need to be silent, and in that silence we will, as it were, "speak volumes." These are not easy behaviors sometimes. They take grace. We must ask for that grace each and every day of our lives. Sing Psalter 221.

### **August 4 Read Proverbs 18:1-8**

Solomon in this part of his instruction of wisdom goes back to the subject of the tongue. We would do well to reread the words of this part of the Bible daily. We use our tongues often every day. From it must come words of truth. We must not be found guilty of breaking the third and ninth commandments each time that we speak. How often have our words wounded others and brought shame upon us? Let us speak words of grace "seasoned with salt" every day and in all situations. By doing this we will be truly wise and not be found a fool. Sing Psalter 336.

### **August 5 Read Proverbs 18:9-16**

Verse 9 of this section is one to which we should pay attention. Throughout the world today there are many that rail at waste among the nation's and world's people. Following God's Word would provide much guidance on this subject. We have been made stewards of this creation. We must use it wisely. Why? Is it so our planet does not wear out? Is it so we have natural resources for a long time? The answer to both of those questions is a resounding NO! We are not lazy and are not great wasters so that God's name is glorified. That is the plain and simple answer. How do we measure up? Sing Psalter 309.

### **August 6 Read Proverbs 18:17-24**

There are many verses in this section to which we should heed. First of all verse 19 reminds us that we should follow the words found in Hebrews, "Let brotherly love continue." Secondly, we are again warned to watch our tongues in verse 21. Verses 19 and 21 are tied closely together. There will be no brotherly love when the tongue is not controlled. Young men, are you seeking a wife? Are you seeking one that is pleasing to God? Young women, are you seeking to be a wife pleasing to God? Finally, in verse 24 we have again words about love for the neighbor. All of these actions are possible because of that friend that is closer than a brother. That friend is Christ. Let us seek him and devote our lives to living a friendly life with him. Sing Psalter 371.

# The Gift (14)

Tom Cammenga

The ringing of the telephone jolted the old man back to reality. He had been browsing through some material that Pastor Kielman had given him that morning when they had met for breakfast and made it to the phone only a second or two before the answering machine would have picked it up.

Grumbling to himself for not having taken the phone with him when he sat down he reached out and picked it up. "Hello," he said slightly winded.

"Hello Mr. Michealson, this is Janet from next door. I hope I'm not disturbing you," she said sensing that he was a bit out of breath.

"Oh no my dear," he chuckled. "I was in the chair reading and these old bones just don't move like they used to. Forgetful as I am I didn't take the phone with me when I sat down."

"Well, that is a relief." Janet paused very briefly and then continued on with the reason for her call. "I was wondering if it would be possible for you to come over and sit with Ruth for a few minutes? She is feeling pretty lousy from the Chemo and doesn't want to be alone but I just realized that I have to get her prescription filled soon; otherwise I'll have to wait until tomorrow."

"Boy, my appointment book is pretty full, Janet, but I suppose I could squeeze you in," the old man said sarcastically, glad for an opportunity to help even if it were something simple like this.

"Are you sure?" asked Janet half laughing. "I would hate to disrupt your busy schedule!"

Both of them laughed then and the old man answered as he feigned looking in an imaginary planner, "It looks like I can fit you in between reading and taking a nap. If that doesn't work maybe I can work you in between a nap and reading." Knowing how bored the old man could get sometimes they laughed once again, both thinking how good it felt.

"I really appreciate it Mr. Michealson," said Janet, still attempting to stifle her giggles.

"It really is no problem," he said as he began looking for his shoes and coat. "I will be over in a few minutes." Hanging up the phone he set it back in the charger and went about putting on his shoes and coat. As he walked towards the door he stopped and looked towards the

pamphlets he had been reading through. Should he take them? Well, if Ruth wasn't feeling well it would probably be a good time to continue looking at them.

Upon arriving at the VanVleets, Janet had given him the run down of the day thus far and after checking on Ruth, who was sleeping in her bedroom, had been on her way.

Settling into a chair at the kitchen table he began to page through one of the pamphlets. As he did so he couldn't help but feel a bit strange to be here. That would not have been the case had the family been there but for some reason it just didn't feel normal, alone except for Ruth sleeping in her room. He supposed it was because he had only been in their house a few times and never really saw much more than the kitchen and the family room. Having set the pamphlets down on the table he decided to explore just a bit.

The first thing that struck him as he walked down the hallway and peeked into the various rooms was how neat and clean everything was. It was by no means an extravagant or overly large house but the way it was decorated gave it a very warm and comfortable feel.

In the hallway were a number of family pictures arrayed on the wall, each telling a small part of a larger story. As he looked at this collection of photographs he heard a faint call from upstairs.

As quickly as his old legs would carry him he made his way up the stairs to the doorway of Ruth's room.

"Mom?" she said softly as she lifted her head slightly off her pillow and looked in his direction.

"No my dear," he said as he made his way into the room. "It's Mr. Michealson from next door. Your mother had to go to the store for a minute and asked me to sit with you while she was gone."

"Oh yeah," she said as she lay her head back onto her pillow. "I remember now."

"Is there anything I can do for you?" he asked as he sat down on the chair that her mother had positioned next to her bed.

"I...I just don't feel very well," she said wishing that her mother were here.

Unsure of exactly what to do he simply sat next to the bed in silence as Ruth closed her eyes again. After a

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few minutes, as if in answer to Ruth's unspoken wish, the sound of the back door opening announced the arrival of her mother home from the store. Not seeing the old man downstairs she immediately headed upstairs to Ruth's room.

Looking up as she entered the room the look of concern on the face of the old man was all the explanation Janet needed.

"It's the chemo," she said softly as she sat down in the chair that the old man had vacated and now offered her. "The doctor said she was probably going to feel sick for a while." Reaching over she placed a hand on Ruth's forehead. "She'll be alright in a while."

"Well, ok then, I guess I will get going," he said feeling a bit out of place. "Is there anything I can do for you before I go?" he asked as he moved towards the door.

Janet looked at him and smiled slightly. "No, I think we are all set. Thank you so much for coming over and sitting with her while I was gone."

"No problem at all Janet," he said as he returned her smile. "Anytime there is anything I can do please let me know."

"We will," she said as she bowed her head to him in a gesture of thanks.

At a bit of a slower pace than he had ascended the steps he now made his way back down. Having reached the bottom of the stairs he headed to the kitchen only to be stopped as his attention was once again captured by the collage of pictures that hung in the hallway. There was something that just didn't seem right about them but he couldn't immediately put his finger on what it might be. They were the typical pictures that adorned the walls of so many homes; parents, grandparents, and the children. And then he realized what it was. There, set in a frame off to one side was a picture of a much younger Jack and Janet holding a newborn baby. Next to the picture was a poem.

*Oh how we prayed the Father,  
That He would give a child.  
And in His boundless love He did,  
If only for a while.*

*We prayed that He would give you health,  
And asked for mercy too.  
That He would grant our one request,  
And bless our lives with you.*

*And yet His will is not as ours,  
Far deeper than the sea.  
He took you home to be with Him,  
A precious jewel to be.*

*You were with us for so short a time,  
And yet our love for you is great.  
In hope we gave you back to God,  
And fell upon His grace.*

*Although we miss you greatly,  
And an emptiness remains.  
God's love has bound our broken hearts,  
And grace from day to day.*

*Now in patient expectation,  
We wait for that great day.  
That Christ will reunite us all,  
The name of God to praise.*

*And in the years to come,  
We'll never lose our love.  
Because the love we love you with,  
Is ours from God above.*

*So rest in Jesus's arms,  
Our precious little one.  
And until we meet again someday,  
His will be always done. ❖*

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# The Kingdom of the Gracious One

By Trisha Haak

**T**he sun rose in gentle strides over the kingdom that lay in the southern mountains. The light chased away the shadows of night as it drew its curtain

up the mountainside. It peeked into the houses and shops of the inhabitants of the kingdom as if to say "Up, up. A new day is beginning."

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The kingdom was situated among the crevices and cliffs on the tallest mountain in the range that was both austere and ominous in appearance. Here was the home of all things tough and hardy, of the mountain lions, wild dogs, and birds of prey. The people that dwelt here were as gruff as the rocks themselves and even the sparse wildflowers that grew in small scattered clusters here and there contained a prickly edge to them that suggested a sturdy character of survival in the most unlikely of places.

As the day was dawning, the streets and marketplace began to hum with the life of people. Shopkeepers opened the doors of their shops. Men and women called out their wares and goods to passersby who either stopped to barter and bring down the price of the item or hurried away, intent on some business, to wherever their destination was. Children chased each other and stray animals down the streets and in and out of booths among the sellers till some poor fellow holding a stack of lanterns or hats would invariably trip over child or stray sending all his goods flying this way and that, to the amusement of all those looking on.

Towering above all the hum drum and every day business of the marketplace was the castle of the king of the Southern Kingdom. Its tall turrets and spirals jutted out into the sky and interrupted the jagged silhouette of the Southern Mountains. The castle was a foreboding monument, built and constructed on the backs of the king's slaves and the townspeople. Giant stone eagles guarded the perimeter wall of the fortress. In the Great Hall the statues of the kings of long ago looked haughtily down on visitors passing through. At the end of the Great Hall was the throne of the king made of marble, alabaster, and gold inlaid with diamonds and jewels. The back of the throne was the height of 3 men and on top sat a gold eagle in flight, wings spread, talons outstretched, as if ready at any moment to devour its prey.

As the king sat on his throne, scepter in hand, he looked down in disdain as his servants and slaves approached the throne. He wore robes of the finest silks and velvets of the richest colors and a large ring of gold and jewels on every finger. How immensely better than my slaves, am I! He thought. Why, they are not even worthy to approach my throne or even to speak to me. Oh, how I despise them! How many of them he would sentence to death today, he did not know. He only knew that the blood would flow from his ax. The slightest error, the smallest mistake, was rewarded by the King with the penalty of death. And so the servants and slaves approached his throne in fear, each having said good-bye to their families and the sun, uncertain whether they would

see either ever again.

And so throughout the course of the morning, after he had sentenced to death 3 slaves (the cook for too much salt in his breakfast, the master of wardrobe for tying his belt too tight, and the chief musician for allowing the trumpeter to play flat) it was time for the reading of the parchments where all matters of the kingdom were brought to the attention of the king.

Now the servants and slaves dreaded this time more than any other. No slave had read the parchment without being sentenced to death for the last 3 years. Whoever read the parchment now was sure to die. And so they had resorted to pulling straws for no man willingly claimed this task. This morning the shortest straw had been pulled by a young man who had only been serving the king for 3 months.

And so the young man approached the throne with trembling hands and weak knees. For a brief moment he thought of his wife that he had kissed good-bye this morning and the children that he had hugged for perhaps the last time. Was it really only this morning? It felt like a lifetime ago. But there was no returning to his family now. The only thing he could do was the task set before him and so with courage that came from where he did not know, he raised his eyes to the king and waited for the signal to begin.

"Read," the king said.

The king studied the new servant standing before him. He had never seen this servant before and did not know his name. Did it even matter? No, the king could not possibly think why the name of this man would matter or who he would matter to. What appalled the king the most was the dirt and grime on this servant. Why was it so hard to find a clean servant? Ugh, he had terrible posture. And his teeth! Was there no end to the appalling condition of this servant? Haven't I set an example of proper decorum and hygiene? the king thought. How can it be that this man is standing before me? He is unworthy!

Though the servant knew he was under the king's scrutiny, he kept his eyes focused on the parchments. He had to read the letters perfectly. His very life depended on it. And so he read as best as he could until to his great dismay he came across a word he didn't know and couldn't pronounce. He tried to stumble across the word but the king stopped him.

"Slave, did you falter in your reading?" the king asked.

"Your majesty, I—"

"Slave, I do not know your name nor do I care to. Many unworthy people have entered this Great Hall

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and have appeared before me not even aware of their unworthy condition. Do you see this Hall that I have made with my own hands? Do you see the utter perfection of this throne upon which I sit? There is nothing amiss here, nothing out of place. I root out all things that offend my perfection. And so it must be that you shall be put to death.”

The king motioned his hand and the guards came forward and seized the servant. He cried and pleaded to the king for mercy as they took him away but the king would not hearken. They carried him through the Great Hall and passed through the Doors of the Forgotten where those who enter are never seen again. And so by a flick of the king’s hand the servant would never see the sun again and the sun would set at dusk upon a family who waited for the return of a husband and father whom they would never see.

As the Doors of the Forgotten closed a servant came running through the Great Hall to the throne of the king, breathing heavily, chest heaving. Before the king could sentence him to death as well, he spoke.

“Your majesty,” he panted, “Invaders.”

“Impossible,” the king replied. Who would have the audacity to invade his kingdom? The king rose and looked out on the Great Balcony. There on the fields at the foot of his mountain were swarms of soldiers who carried the emblems and seals of the Gracious One. His eyes scanned the hosts and his heart faltered for he could hardly see a patch of grass from the field, so great was the number of soldiers.

“How many,” he cried, “How many?”

“Your majesty, there are legions. More than any one man can count,” the servant said.

For a moment he hesitated. Could he defeat the army of the Gracious One? He considered surrendering but his indignant anger fueled his actions. He motioned his hand and gave the signal for battle. The servants scrambled to prepare. The king called for the archers and for the soldiers who fight on foot and for those who fight on horseback. He commanded the catapults to be brought out and swords, bows and arrows to be given to every able body in the kingdom. He would prove the audacity of the Gracious One to invade the kingdom that he had created with his own hands.

The king put on his armor and mounted his horse and stood at the head of his army at the gate. He did not have many soldiers, not as many as the Gracious One, but that didn’t matter. He ordered the gate to be opened and called his army to charge forward. And so they went down the mountainside till at last they stood on the field

before the enemy. The two armies charged at each other till they met in the middle of the field with a resounding clash. The battle had begun.

How many soldiers fell that day no man could count. As the heat of the sun increased so did the intensity of battle. Horses charged, men lunged, swords clashed till finally the army of the Southern Kingdom grew weary. They could not stand against the strength of this army. It seemed as though the soldiers of the Gracious One never faltered or tired. One by one they put down their swords in defeat and surrender.

“Cowards,” the king cried, “Cowards! Come and fight with me those of you who have remained loyal and I will reward you.” The king drew up a sword that a soldier had laid down. He charged forward with a battle cry but looked back in shock. He was alone. His men stood behind him, unmoving, silent. They took three steps backward and surrendered their king to the reward that awaited him.

The king looked across the field that was now soaked in blood. The dead were piled and strung across the field covering it like a blanket of armor and flesh. A silence had fallen upon the armies which every man knew to be the silence of souls departing. The carnage had been great and so the soldiers knew to have respect unto those who had paid the price.

The armies separated a path amongst themselves as the Gracious One stepped forward to stand before the king of the Southern Mountains. Although few men have seen the Gracious One, every soldier that looked upon his face that day knew that never was there a king fairer than he, nor would there ever be. He drew his sword and spoke before the king had a chance to cry out in scorn.

“There is nothing amiss here, nothing out of place. I root out all things that offend my perfection.”

And with those words the Gracious One slew the king of the Southern Kingdom with his sword. His body dropped to the ground and laid there in a pool of his own blood.

So the army of the Gracious One returned to the north from where they had come. They had accomplished their purpose and there was no need for them to stay. It wasn’t in them to conquer and divide, to make great cities or nations. They only bring grace when needed and relieve those who are oppressed like the reprieve of the moonlight sky from the glare of the desert sun.

The people of the Southern Kingdom took the bodies of those who were slain and buried them in the field. And when springtime returned white lilies sprung up all over the field where never lilies had grown before. So to this

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day they call the field the Field of the Redeemed because beauty grew again in the place of hatred and cruelty.

They did not touch the body of the king but left him to rot where he had fallen. This was his royal burial as he was left to be devoured by the jackals, wild dogs and birds of prey that would pick his bones clean till nothing remained. The people didn't mind that their king was disposed of in such a way as this. Because the people thought it only fitting that he should return to his own kind.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sometimes, as depraved sinners, we have tendencies to build great kingdoms in our imaginations. In these kingdoms we are kings and nobody knows better than we do. No person is cleverer than us, no person more just or more right. All people that we come into contact with become the subjects of our kingdom, the vassals of our tyranny.

The kingdoms of our imagination become the fruition of our hands in our day to day dealing with the people of the church and others that we come into contact with. With frightening strength we hold onto distorted views, petty arguments, and vain self opinions in the belief that nobody knows better than we do. And so we walk among each other as lords, peering down at one another, despising this man and that man for what we believe are weaknesses and for differences that aren't salvation issues and, quite frankly, not worth the fight.

And there are so many things for which our kingdoms battle against one another. We fight about church practices, school issues, sports, church politics, world politics, people's behavior. The point of this article isn't to argue either side, to validate one group over the other. Let each man have his opinion and speak peaceably about it. The question here is which kingdom are you fighting for?

Outside of the kingdom where your old man of sin rules, there is another kingdom that is often referred to as Zion. It's a beautiful kingdom and the one that rules it is fairer and more worthy than you. This kingdom has been built on the eternal foundation of his arms and the people that dwell in this kingdom dwell in the Covenant of Grace.

Although there are many joyful aspects of this kingdom, I want to focus on one in particular: grace. It's the tool that God uses to save his people, to restore them from eternal damnation to everlasting life. It's the means by which you are saved. And as such it's breathtaking.

But the beauty of grace doesn't just lie in the fact of what it accomplishes. The beauty of grace is also found in its boundlessness. That's how it's been measured to us, in boundlessness. Grace does not come to us in the

measurements of teaspoons and tablespoons, in rationed amounts and child-sized portions. It comes to us in floods and torrents, in the quantities of seas and oceans. Grace is not the drizzle of a light April shower but it's the drenching thunderstorms of a late summer day, so heavy the rains fall, so thick the torrents of water that drench your skin, soaking you to the bone, till it's dripping from your clothes and fingertips. The quality of grace is eternal. It never ends for us. It never fails. West and east are forever away from each other and there in between lies all the grace that has been given to you.

Yet with all the grace that we receive from God, too often the grace that we deal out to one another is given in paltry doses. Like pennies and nickels that a miser gives to the poor and orphaned children, we hoard all the grace that God has bestowed upon us within ourselves. We refuse to surrender our unfounded expectations. We refuse to let go of arguments that grieve the Spirit because of the disunity that it causes among the members of the body of Christ. Life among the church becomes a tug of war as each kingdom of man refuses to budge or give an inch. And so we never stop to ponder what pleases the kingdom of Christ most. Or to ask ourselves as members of the covenant of grace, how can we best serve the Gracious One?

The kingdom of your vanity is rancid and a foul stench as are all kingdoms of men. The activities of these kingdoms are despised by God and displeasing to him. So it is that you have to dismantle your kingdom. You have to tear it apart because you can not have citizenship in both. You can't be a king in your kingdom and a member of the kingdom of the Covenant. So dismantle your kingdom. Raze it to the ground. Burn it if you need to. Do whatever it takes because your kingdom is doomed and the Gracious One will destroy it at the rising of his Son.

As a member of the Covenant of Grace you can be assured that the grace of our Father will never disappoint you. In time you will find it to be a cure-all, a band-aid, the super glue of the life of the church. Grace is the blood that flows in the body of believers as it forgives, chastens, restores, serves, loves and heals. It's the fertile soil that allows friendships to grow, marriages to flourish and covenantal life to abound.

The king of the Southern Kingdom was a vain man who believed that he was better than all men. He caused the death of so many people, just as we in our pride and cruelty kill so many people in word and thought. Let go of your vanities. Think yourself better than no man lest the Gracious One come and find something amiss and in his wrath root out those things which offend his perfection.

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Abdicate your throne before the Gracious One slays you and gives your body to the wild dogs and birds of prey and all those that feed upon the flesh. ❖

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*Trisha is a member of Trinity Protestant Reformed Church in Hudsonville, Michigan.*

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## Church History

# The Sixth Century of His-Story: The Church is Served by Inventors and Technology

by John Huizenga

**W**hen God created the earth, he made it to be a treasure chest of wonders and materials to be fashioned into an endless variety of tools for man to use in life. God created the mind of man able to discover the riches and subdue them for use in this life. The wonders, powers, and beauty of the various properties of elements along with the laws of physics reveal the great wisdom and majesty of the Creator. After being driven from the church, Cain with his sons brought security to the family by building a city. Within the security of its walls, the family grew and set out to discover how to make their life without God to be more pleasant. The hollowness of their life and deadness of soul drove them with full devotion to earthly life and a pursuit of the pleasures and wonders that it offered. Like the root system, stem, leaves and husk, these wonders serve the kernel of grain which is the church.

To be sure, the unbelieving decedents of Cain were not the only scientists and inventors. The believer also applies his mind to unlocking the wonders of creation, but instead of basking in his own glory, gives glory to the creator. Understanding his fallen condition, his primary concern is the kingdom of God and he does not pursue technology as an end in itself. He knows of a new heavens and earth with wonders that will make this creation pale in comparison. He seeks to apply the technology to the service and praise of God. We have some examples in God's word: Noah applied the woodworking skills of the day to bear the whole church and a seed of all creatures upon the waters God sent to save the church. Abraham and David prospered with cattle. God raised up skillful men to build the tabernacle: "See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in

wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, To devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, And in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship. And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan: and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee" (Exo 31:2-6).

Looking at a lamb, Abel saw the promised Savior, but Jabal saw profit for earthly life. His keen eye noticed the details in the ways of cattle. With careful attention to the needs of these animals, his herds grew and flourished. He learned how to move with them, guiding and protecting them. He understood how to use genetics to ensure strong, healthy animals with the characteristics most suitable for prosperity. Soon his skill and efficiency in providing an on-demand source for food and clothing in the cities would bring him fame as "the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle." Today he may have been the CEO of Wal-Mart.

Jubal was drawn to the beauty of sound. He perceived the power that sound had upon man for pleasure and excitement. He experimented with the vibration of strings: strings of different length and tension that could be plucked on the harp, amplified with chambers, and played together to create pleasing harmonics. He experimented with the vibration of reeds and the shapes of wind instruments. He experimented with the vibrations of air produced in a flute. Not only did he discover how to create attractive sounds, but also how to combine sounds to make music that would resonate with the rhythms and vibrations of the body, mind, and life of man. While his brother Jabal learned how to control and manage animals

to serve the physical needs and desires of man, Jubal had discovered a power to inspire, encourage, excite, and control the mysterious depths of emotions within man. Not only could he provide man with pleasure, he held a power that could control and direct man to a particular purpose.

Tubalcain learned how to give “teeth” to the passions of man. He understood that man was physically weak in comparison to many of the large ferocious creatures, and that the secret of man’s power was to be found in his mind and ability to create tools. When his brothers saw mere rocks,... he saw elements that could be softened with heat and fashioned into weapons. At some point he discovered concentrations of copper, tin, and iron. Most men paid little attention, but he collected it, and his curiosity compelled him to study and test it for various uses. He noticed the changes upon materials under the intense heat of fire. With enough heat, pure tin would ooze from the dross and flow into a mold. With hotter fires the copper succumbed to melting. A mixture of tin with copper resulted in bronze, a metal alloy easily molded and superior in strength to copper or tin alone.

With a little practice, the new bronze weapons proved to be deadly. A man with sticks and stones was no match for a man with bronze weapons. His knowledge and technology brought power; power to exercise his will and desire over others. The passions and desires of man were bound and limited by his physical weaknesses, but advances in technology would expand that boundary.

Such discoveries are still being made today. Who would have thought that the sand along the seashores would become the foundation of computer chips as silicon wafers upon which the microscopic electronic circuits are etched? Today it is the man with electronic tools who has power. Perhaps it will be the tool used by Antichrist to manage and control a worldwide domain.

Together these brothers began to harness three main branches of science: biology, psychology, and chemistry. They had virtually taken over the world consisting of matter and living things. The boast of their father Lamech was not an empty boast. As long as he and his family

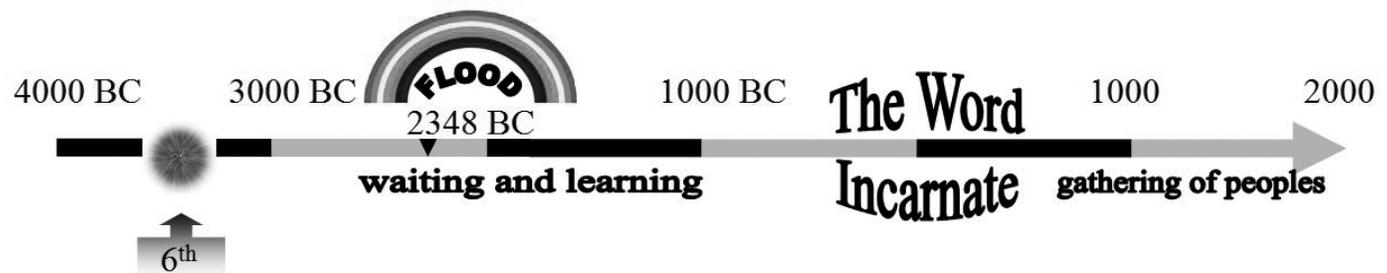
stayed on the cutting edge in farming, entertainment, and technology, he would rule the world. As a result, every ounce of energy that was not used in enjoying the fruits of their labors was pressed into further advances.

It would appear that because they served Satan, all the power exercised with science would flow through the hands of Satan and serve his cause of thwarting God’s purpose of gathering a church. In reality, God brings everything, even the discoveries of Lamech’s sons into the service of his kingdom and church. Like the corn stalk serving the grain, so the world serves the church. When the time is come for harvest, “he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable” (Luk 3:17).

This is not to say that what these brothers discovered are worthless or evil in themselves. God commanded man to subdue the earth (Genesis 1:28), and these brothers did it with unmatched zeal. Many famous modern scientists were believers. Johannes Kepler [1571-1630], who developed our understanding of astronomy and laws of planetary motion, testified: “I had the intention of becoming a theologian... but now I see how God is, by my endeavors, also glorified in astronomy, for ‘the heavens declare the glory of God.’” Louis Pasteur [1822-1895], who is known as the father of microbiology, developed “pasteurization” and testified: “The more I study nature, the more I stand amazed at the work of the Creator” and “Science brings men nearer to God.” Wernher Von Braun [1912-1977], who was the first director of NASA and a pioneer of space exploration wrote “Scientific concepts exist only in the minds of men. Behind these concepts lies the reality which is being revealed to us, but only by the grace of God.”

The believer rightly sees the glory of God and praises him. He is willing to use technology, the arts, and all earthly powers in the service of his Creator and Saviour. We read in Romans 1:18-25:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them;



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for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and

fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. ❖

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

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## Church News

# Church News

### BAPTISMS

“For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” Act 2:39

The sacrament of Holy Baptism was administered to:  
Whitney Faith, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Steve Westra—  
Calvary, IA

Aubyn Jean, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Toby Boogerd—  
Calvary, IA

Sydney Ann, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Mike Brummel—Faith,  
MI

Morgan Elizabeth, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Troy  
Karsemeyer—Faith, MI

Evelyn Michelle, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Everett Langerak—  
Hope, MI

Caleb Elliot, son of Mr. & Mrs. Dustin Boven—Hudsonville,  
MI

Alex Logan, son of Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Gritters—Hudsonville,  
MI

Malaya Lynn, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Matthew Kamps—  
Hudsonville, MI

Peter Michael, son of Mr. & Mrs. Peter Westra—Hull, IA

Trevor Ryan, son of Mr. & Mrs. Carl Maassen—Hull, IA

Josiah Robert, son of Mr. & Mrs. Bob Bos—Loveland, CO

Kate Elise, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Thom Moore—Loveland,  
CO

Jake Matthew, son of Mr. & Mrs. Lee Kooienga—Loveland,  
CO

Hope Marie, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Matthew Medema—  
Peace, IL

Danica Renee, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Scott  
VanDerGriend—Peace, IL

Ann Rose, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Dan Regnerus—  
Randolph, WI

Avery Rose, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joshua Feenstra—  
Redlands, CA

Stefan Mark, son of Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan den Hartog—  
Redlands, CA

Taylor Lee, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Todd Ferguson—  
Redlands, CA

Aiden Glenn, son of Mr. & Mrs. Tim DeJong—South  
Holland, IL

Deklan John, son of Mr. & Mrs. Nathan Haak—South  
Holland, IL

Jayson Arie, son of Mr. & Mrs. Pete Hanemaayer—Trinity,  
MI

James Andrew, son of Mr. & Mrs. Nate Lanning—Trinity, MI

Owen Dale & Ethan John, twin sons of Mr. & Mrs. Kyle  
TenBroeke—Trinity, MI

### CONFESSIONS OF FAITH

“Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be  
established.” Proverbs 4:26

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

Kylie Mulder—Faith, MI

Kerri Koole—Hope, MI

Phillip Koole—Hope, MI

### MARRIAGES

“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto  
thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him,  
and he shall direct thy paths.” Proverbs 3: 5 & 6

United in the bond of Holy Matrimony were:

Mr. Ben Rau and Miss Brenda Koole—Hope, MI

Mr. Jake Alberda and Miss Jessica Boone—Providence, MI

Mr. James Kooienga and Miss Amanda Terpstra—South  
Holland, IL

Mr. Jeremy Kortering and Miss Lisa VanPutten—Southwest,  
MI

# "LITTLE LIGHTS"

... let it shine!

by Connie Meyer

## "Ever So Little" or Three Travelers

A man stood before the porter of the gate. The weight of the sack on his shoulder bent him over. His shoes were dusty and worn. He slid the sack on the ground and took out a heavy wooden stool.

"What allows thee to enter this gate, Traveler?" the porter asked.

The man pointed to the stool on the ground. "I've come from afar, carrying this stool that I've made. I trust this work will get me in. See how strong and sturdy it is."

"This is the work of your own hands?" the porter said.

"It is," the man replied. His hands trembled a little, but he kept looking at his fine workmanship.

"Wood can burn. Away with you," said the porter, and he kept the gate locked.

A second man came near the gate. He had heard that small works were better, and he saw what happened to the first traveler. His knees shook as he walked toward the porter.

"What allows thee to enter this gate, Traveler?" the porter asked.

"I know I'm unworthy, Sir," he said as he reached into his pocket, "but I have a tiny glass bead."

"This is the work of your own hands?" the porter said.

"It is," said the man. "See, it is quite beautiful, and ever so little."

"Glass can melt. Away with you," said the porter, and he kept the gate locked.

A third man neared the gate.

"What allows thee to enter this gate, Traveler?" the porter asked.

"Nothing, Sir."

"Nothing?" the porter replied. "You have no works

at all of your own that allows thee to enter this gate?"

The man hung his head down. "I have nothing, Sir. Not even a little one. My best works are—rotted."

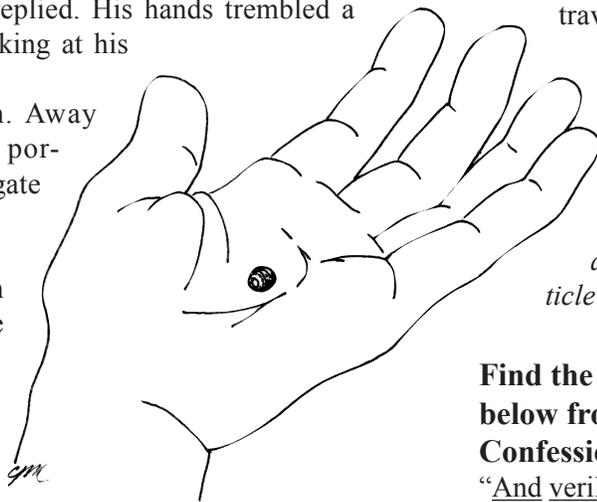
The porter was astonished. "But what reason is there then to open this gate to you?"

The man cleared his throat. "There is one reason, kind Sir. I own no works, nor even myself, but he who owns me has paid my way in."

The porter checked his lists and found that the traveler's words were indeed true. He smiled.

"Then you shall come in," he said, and he opened the gate.

*"And verily if we should appear before God, relying on ourselves, or on any other creature, though ever so little, we should, alas! be consumed" (Belgic Confession, Article 23).*



**Find the underlined words in the puzzle below from the following portion of Belgic Confession, Article 23:**

"And verily if we should appear before God, relying on ourselves, or on any other creature, though ever so little, we should, alas! be consumed."

Belgic Confession, Article 23

S	H	O	U	L	D	A	Y	S	W	C	S
H	V	E	L	T	T	I	L	V	B	E	Y
O	S	Q	T	L	V	R	I	R	V	T	L
U	H	A	P	P	E	A	R	L	M	H	C
L	N	O	T	L	V	R	E	H	T	O	R
D	C	M	Y	C	E	S	V	Y	N	U	E
P	P	I	S	B	R	R	V	S	W	G	A
Y	N	A	G	U	O	N	U	G	H	H	T
G	L	M	O	L	F	M	B	V	F	T	U
A	C	O	N	F	E	S	S	I	O	N	R
O	U	K	G	D	B	B	F	Y	V	W	E

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

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The Truth

Shall Set

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John 8:32

**2010 Young People's Convention**  
**August 16-20, 2010**

Don't forget to read through the discussion  
outlines in last month's *Beacon Lights*.

Also, be sure to check online at [www.prcconvention.com](http://www.prcconvention.com) for  
a schedule of events,  
the rules,  
a list of what to bring, and  
the banquet theme (A Night in Paris).

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**See You There!**