

# BEACON LIGHTS

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Desiderius Erasmus was a Dutch humanist and scholar who lived in the late 15th and early 16th century. In 1509 he wrote a satirical piece called *In Praise of Folly*. Although he made a better satirist than a theologian, in this work he rightfully exposed and ridiculed the excesses of the Roman Catholic Church.

In the editorial, I have attempted to set forth wisdom as the proper course for God's children as opposed to folly, which leads to pain, trouble, and destruction.

*Beacon Lights* is written for young people. However, let the words of Augustine be a word of warning to the older reader as well. In Peter Brown's biography of Augustine, we read of Augustine relaying a story of a "man of 84, who had lived a life of continence under religious observance with

a pious wife for 25 years, [who] has gone and bought himself a music-girl for his pleasure..." This caused Augustine to write, "Who is not aghast at the sudden crevasses that might open in the life of a dedicated man?" "For no one is known to another so intimately as he is known to himself, and yet no one is so well known even to himself that he can be sure as to his conduct on the morrow." The devil, that "roaring lion," has his eyes trained on the old as well as the young.

In this issue is the first installment of the three-part interview with Mrs. Vivian Hunter. This will be the last interview published in *Beacon Lights*. Although we bid farewell to the oral history interviews, we thank our former editor, Mr. Mark Hoeksema, for conducting them.

# IN PRAISE OF WISDOM

You know. You pick up your phone and you know it's going to happen. It's why you closed your bedroom door. If someone were looking over your shoulder, you would never click on that image or follow that link. If your parents read all of your posts and saw all of your pictures, you would never in a million years hit send. It's why you delete the search history. Folly doesn't like an audience.

We hide when we are going to commit an act of folly. We take extraordinary lengths to hide our tracks from our parents, our teachers, spouses, children, or anyone else that we know would be horrified by the sinful acts we are about to commit. If we could—and we wish we could—we would hide from ourselves. But there are two realities we cannot hide from; our conscience and our God. Listen to the early church father, Augustine:

When you want to do something bad, you withdraw from the public and hide in your house where no enemy may see you; from those

parts of the house that are open and visible you remove yourself to go into your own private room. But even here in your private chamber you fear guilt from some other direction, so you withdraw into your heart and there you meditate. But he is even more deeply inward than your heart. Hence, no matter where you flee, he is there. You would flee from yourself, would you? Will you not follow yourself wherever you flee? But since there is One even more deeply inward than yourself, there is no place where you may flee from an angered God except to a God who is pacified. There is absolutely no place for you to flee to. Do you want to flee from him? Rather flee to him.<sup>1</sup>

This reveals the truth of God's omnipresence. God is there in that room with you. He is in the

<sup>1</sup> Augustine, *Expositions on the Psalms*, on Ps. 94, cited in Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, volume 2, p. 170.

car when you are out with friends, when you are alone with your boyfriend on a date, and he is in your mind when you think those thoughts of hatred, envy, or lust. “Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?” (Ps. 139:7).

Folly is acting, speaking, or walking in a way that is contrary to God’s law. God’s word is clear about what he forbids and what he approves. Folly is identifiable by that which you try to keep hidden. If your first instinct is to keep an act hidden, beware, folly is at the door. The problem is that it can be so easy to hide things from your parents! You marvel at times at how naïve they are when they pick up your phone and look at your search history, which you just 10 minutes ago cleaned out. Or, “I don’t even have that app, Mom!” failing to mention that you deleted it a few minutes before, and you plan on reinstalling it as soon as you get your phone back.

But God knows. And Jesus Christ, the One who dwells within you knows as well. As those who are bought with the precious blood of Christ, wonder of wonders, we now enjoy union with Christ. “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, *but Christ liveth in me*” (Gal. 2:20). How foolish to think we can hide our folly from one who dwells within us.

Not only is folly sin, but it is also painful. It caused Adam to hide when he heard God’s voice in the garden, and it cost him fellowship with his God (Gen. 3:8). It is what cost Nabal his life and caused his wife Abigail to say, “Nabal is his name and folly is with him” (1 Sam. 25:25). Rehoboam lost half of his kingdom and earned for himself the sobriquet “ample in folly” for all of history because of his foolishness (1 Kings 12).

Perhaps you, young reader, have experienced the pain of folly in your life. You have never met a “bear robbed of her whelps,” but you have met the painful, real-life equivalent (Prov. 17:12). The vows that your father took “never to forsake her” didn’t seem to mean much when he abandoned you and your mother for that other woman. This is folly writ large. Adulterers do not inherit the kingdom of God, yet your father plunges himself into adultery. Jesus says a man is worse than an infidel if he doesn’t care for his children, yet your father does his best to destroy his children. Does this man have the magic elixir that offers him eternal life here on this earth? Man’s days are like the grass, so it will not be long before he faces the God whose law he has trampled underfoot. When a man acts in this reckless fashion, there is no other word to describe it than folly.

This is to say nothing of the monstrous folly of

the churches that embrace these adulterers and adulteresses who flee to them, crying to them “peace, peace; when there is no peace” (Jer. 6:14).

Young person, you can cause immense pain to your parents and families as well with your foolish acts. Rarely does folly only affect the one acting foolishly. There is pain that is fleeting and soon forgotten. “I told you not to play ball in the house!” There is the pain that can last, as when one disregards the rules of home and school. And then there is the pain that lasts a lifetime, and beyond. As when a child marries against his parent’s clear instruction, the marriage ends in divorce, and soon enough there is another young lady on the horizon. Why? Because “he shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly shall he go astray” (Prov. 5:23). Folly ignores wise counsel and pursues the way that is “right in his own eyes” (Prov. 12:15).

Folly is not the way that God intends for his people to walk. Solomon shows us the better way: “Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness” (Eccl. 2:13). Wisdom is rightly applying all of our knowledge and understanding and pressing it into the service of our King, living a life pleasing to him and of service to our neighbor.

Augustine pointed us on the right path; turn to God. Flee to God! His word, which is a “lamp unto [our] feet, and a light unto [our] path” (Ps. 119:105) will expose the snares and the traps that the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh have laid for us. God’s word will cause the “prudent to understand his way” and will cause them “[to be] crowned with knowledge” (Prov. 14:8, Prov. 14:18). We turn to God when we pray unto him for wisdom and understanding and ask him to send us his Spirit to guide and preserve us on our way. Don’t you see the need to ask him to preserve us from the pits into which we would willingly, joyfully, and repeatedly plunge ourselves were it not for his preserving hand (Prov. 15:21)?

Folly caused Adam to flee from the voice of God. Jesus Christ, who is “made unto us wisdom” (1 Cor. 1:30), draws us near to God in the bonds of love and fellowship so that we need not fear that voice any longer. When we walk in the way of wisdom, rejecting folly and its allurements, we walk in the way of Christ, in whom our life is hid (Col. 3:3).

Have you been foolish? Does it fill you with shame and regret? Are you embarrassed at the pain and hurt you have caused others? Then turn from your folly to Jesus Christ, the one who gave himself to the death of the cross for you. It is the preaching

of that cross that is “to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God” (1 Cor. 1:18). You need to look away from self, turn to God, and take hold of the truth of the “power of God” which is Christ crucified. In Christ you will find the wisdom, discretion, and prudence to avoid the foolish way. And when you fall, when at night

you kneel next to your bed and with tears running down your face confess the sinful acts you have committed, turn to Jesus. Cry out to that crucified, and now risen Lord Jesus Christ for he is “able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:25).

**Our Goodly Heritage** Mark H. Hoeksema

## INTERVIEW WITH VIVIAN HUNTER (1)

*It is March 2, 2009, and I am at the residence of Mrs. Vivian Hunter in Edgerton, Minnesota.*

**Mark H. Hoeksema:** Mrs. Hunter, where and when were you born?

**Vivian Hunter:** I was born in Philadelphia, PA, May 31, 1921.

**MHH:** Who were your parents and what can you tell me about the circumstances of your early life—your family, your religious affiliation, anything that you can tell me about your early life?

**VH:** My parents were Melinda and Foster Row (spelled Row and it rhymes with Cow). I was one of six children, in the middle. I had an older brother and sister, and a set of twins 16 months younger than I was, and a little sister that came later.

We were members of the Evangelical Church, which was really an offshoot from the Methodist Church, because they would not let them preach in the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect in their services. That originally was why the Evangelicals and some of the United Brethren left the Methodist church (at least that’s what I’ve been told). By the time I was born, they were not using the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect, but there were quite a few people in the church I attended who were Pennsylvania Dutch people. And part of my background is that, too. My mother’s background is almost completely German and part of my father’s is. But it’s not all pure either way. In fact, my maternal grandmother’s maiden name was Saul. So I figure somewhere along the lines there’s some Israel in the history (laughter).

**MHH:** Tell me about your childhood and your growing-up.

**VH:** Grade school and Junior High—we went to public school—grade school and junior high were very close to where I lived. Junior high was within a

half a block of my house, and the grade school was a block and a half down the street from where I lived. Then I went to Overbrook High School, which was about a mile from where I lived—walked both ways for four years. I graduated from there. Then I went into nursing at the oldest hospital in the United States, which is the Pennsylvania Hospital—not the University of Pennsylvania but the Pennsylvania Hospital, formed by Dr. Benjamin Rush. Benjamin Franklin had some hand in the whole thing too. It first opened in 1752, so it was an old hospital when I went there.

**MHH:** And did you undergo further schooling or training?

**VH:** No, I just took my boards and got my RN. A year later, I went into the US Army.

**MHH:** You did?!

**VH:** Yes, in 1944.

**MHH:** May I ask what prompted that?

**VH:** Well, all the time that I was in nurses’ training, my siblings were supporting my mother. When I was in training, you didn’t have any side jobs. We were not even allowed to babysit. We had to concentrate on our nursing program. And we had real strict rules—we had to be in by 10:00 every night. And if you were going to stay out later than that, you had to have permission to do that, and that was only till midnight. And then once a week or once every two weeks, you could have a weekend where you could go home for Saturday and Sunday. But then you had to work Saturday afternoon, if you had a weekend, because you had to work a half day on Sunday—either morning or afternoon.

To help support my mother, I did private duty, which was seven days a week, 12 hours a day, for \$49.00 a week. That didn’t leave me much money

for myself to help mother and pay my car fare and my laundry and that kind of thing. The army offered a good bit more money than that, plus taking care of all my physical needs—providing housing and all of that. In addition, they told me when I enlisted that you don't go overseas unless you volunteer. But then they didn't tell me that volunteering is waking up from night duty and finding your name on the list (chuckle).

**MHH:** Did that happen to you?

**VH:** Yes, yes it did. I enlisted in the summer of '44 and in October of '44 I was slated to go overseas.

**MHH:** Really!

**VH:** Yes.

**MHH:** And did you go?

**VH:** I went. I had a leave to go home. Everybody in the armed forces, if they were going overseas, got an opportunity for one pre-overseas leave. So I did that. Then I went back to (that was in Fort Meade) Stanten, Virginia. That was where I went after my basic training. I was there for awhile and then transferred to Longview, Washington. We left there on New Year's Eve, one minute after midnight, because a law had been passed that the WAVES could not go overseas until January 1, 1945. They went on the same troop ship that we did.

We were kind of organized in Longview, Washington as a unit—the 233rd General Hospital. Then we went to Hawaii for our pre-combat training. We were there from January to May. Then early in May we sailed for Okinawa on the USS Beckham. The war didn't go as quickly as Washington had planned, so about halfway there, we made a side-track to a bunch of islands that were called Mogmog and Ulysses, and we sat there for many weeks. During that time I met the man who became my husband. The night before we got off the ship in Okinawa, he said to me (we were sitting on the fantail looking at the beautiful Pacific moon), "How would you like to be tied up with me for the rest of your life?"

**MHH:** So he proposed to you on the fantail of the ship as you were headed for Okinawa. A bit unusual.

**VH:** Very unusual. He, of course, had no ring in his pocket, so I gave him a friendship ring that I was wearing (it belonged to another nurse that I knew from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania).

**MHH:** I assume you accepted his proposal.

**VH:** I accepted his proposal.

**MHH:** And when you got to Okinawa, what

happened? Okinawa had been captured by the United States at that time.

**VH:** Yes, but it wasn't really secure yet. They were not ready for us. They had no barracks for us to sleep in. They quickly rigged some twenty-man tents and a bunch of cots. They had no shower facilities or bathroom facilities or anything like that. We shared with the enlisted men on certain hours of the day. They really were not ready for us. In fact, there were air raids. Many nights we had to get out of our tents and head for what they called the air raid shelter, which was really those tombs which the Japanese caught in the hills. We didn't have any casualties from our unit, but occasionally we would get a soldier or a Marine when we first got there. They did build barracks for us then and our own bathing facilities and stuff. But it took a little time.

**MHH:** And what was your work there? Did they bring in wounded from other locations?

**VH:** Yes. Then the war ended in August of that year, so we were there just a couple months before the armistice. What our major thing was, they would bring prisoners that had been in prisons of war in Japan. And they were the most pathetic creatures you've ever seen in your life.

**MHH:** In what way?

**VH:** They were nothing but skin stretched over bones. They had been fed for months on nothing but the water that the Japanese boiled their own rice in. I had to go outside the tent and collect myself when they brought me the first load. I could hardly handle it.

**MHH:** Wow! What an experience!

**VH:** And then my husband's ship came in (about three times, I think, while we were there), while they were still transporting troops. And then he would always get the opportunity to come ashore.

The last time that I remember his coming to Okinawa was in October. And he came ashore. The captain also (I think he was married, but anyway) dated one of the other girls in our outfit, or he sometimes escorted the major who was our chief nurse to the officers' clubs. And so he let Chips [*VH's future husband*] have his military jeep to come and see me on the base. And my chief nurse was just as generous. She would find somebody to take my place if I happened to be on duty, or she would let him sit in my tent and talk to me while I was working. That was the last time, I thought. He had said they were going to be there for two or three days. He didn't

know exactly how long he'd see me the next afternoon. A typhoon arrived that night. They had taken to sea because that's the best place for a ship when typhoons hit. So, that was an experience, because we were still in tents, and it was quite a problem to keep the tent (there were three of us—two corporals and I). We took turns pounding in the tent stakes to hold it down. One of us would go around and as soon as we came in, one of the other ones would go out. You took off your wet clothes and the other guy would dry your clothes over a stove so you could have dry clothes to put on when your turn came up in another hour. And we did that through the night.

**MHH:** I forgot to ask you this gentleman's name.

**VH:** That I was going to marry?

**MHH:** Yes.

**VH:** He was Chester Edward Hunter. At the time that I knew him, he was a warrant officer, CW01. Then shortly after the first of November, he wrote me a letter saying that I was no longer two ranks ahead of him because he had been promoted to chief warrant officer on November 1. So I wrote back and told him, I'm still two steps ahead. I became first lieutenant on the first of November (laughter!).

**MHH:** Where did things go from there?

**VH:** Well, by December we were no longer really useful. We were just taking care of some that got shot inadvertently in their own outfit, or an occasional sniper that was still in the jungle. So they made arrangements to just stay in the hospital and bring us back. At that time, I had viral pneumonia and I was in the hospital. The doctor didn't really want me to take (in the winter time) that long boat ride to (oh, the Navy will kill me) to San Francisco, so he made arrangements for me to fly out. I flew out somewhere close to the end of December. The plane ride at that time took about four days. We stopped one night in Guam, and they almost left me there because they forgot that I was in the hospital overnight (laughter). They were about to take off and somebody remembered, "Hey, we don't have the nurse." They had to come back to the hospital and pick me up. We were in Honolulu one night, and then I really felt like I was back in the States—sheets on the bed and all that. I got back to San Francisco on the 31st of December. I had always wanted to see the Golden Gate Bridge, but I didn't want to see it from the back window of an ambulance that took me from the airport to the hospital that I went to. We got back on a Sunday night, and the next Saturday we were married.

**MHH:** Your husband-to-be...

**VH:** He was on leave. He was taking all the leave he had, and he had eleven days left, hoping I was going to get back in time before he had to go back in. So we arranged with the Army chaplain to marry us in the Army chapel of that hospital, just about a week after I got back. I had a day off to go find a dress and a pair of shoes and all that stuff.

**MHH:** So you did not really know your husband for a very long period of time

**VH:** Seven weeks that we were on that ship. That was our courtship when we got married—all in the Lord's hands.

**MHH:** But you were convinced.

**VH:** Oh, yeah. He was the one.

**MHH:** If you will, tell me a little bit about him. What was his background? What did you have in common?

**VH:** I can't even say what we had in common except our love for each other, because basically he was raised on the farm here and there. His parents were not religious at all. His father (would have been Chip's grandfather) had used a lot of energy, time, and money to help build the Methodist church in Napa, California. That's where my husband was born. Then he became ill and the minister never came to see him. So the whole family just gave up on anything religious at all.

So he was not churched. He had never been taken to church. He went to Sunday School with some friends in the Presbyterian church in Napa when he was a boy. Just because his friends went, he went too. That was his only connection with a church. But when we were on board ship, I went to the chapel services. He had never attended before, but he did attend with me. He knew that if we got married the church was going to be a big part of my life, though what I knew as church then is certainly not what I know as church now.

**MHH:** He was accepting of that?

**VH:** He was. Then, the Navy sent him to Astoria, Oregon eleven days after we were married, and the Army sent me to Fort Dix, New Jersey.

**MHH:** So now you're separated.

**VH:** Again.

**MHH:** Again.

**VH:** But I only enlisted for the duration of the war,

so they didn't want me anymore. They sent me to Fort Dix to be mustered out. They sent me back on a train from San Francisco to New Jersey. We went through a tunnel near Denver. It was a coal-burning steam engine and all that coal smoke came back into the car. I could hardly breathe. In fact, I was in pretty bad shape. Somebody was saying, "I think we'd better leave her in the hospital in Denver." I hid in the bathroom until we pulled out of the station (laughter). They didn't look very hard.

**MHH:** You were determined to get to New Jersey.

**VH:** To get out of the army. That was my aim in life—to get out of the army. I do not recommend for any Christian person to go into the military. If the country needs to be defended and the government calls him to serve, I feel they should go. That's their duty. But I do not recommend that any Christian voluntarily go into the service. I was raised in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. I took my training on the south edge of Philadelphia, which is close to the slums, if you want to call them that. I thought I'd seen everything in the emergency room when I was in training. I saw a whole lot of immorality when I was in the army. I could hardly stand it.

**MHH:** In what sense do you mean that?

**VH:** Nobody has any respect for the truth. They had no respect for each other. Immorality is wild. Of course in this day and age, it's just about as wild any place you go. People live together without marriage.

They try it all out first and see if it's going to work. But I was not used to that, even though I had been brought up and gone to public schools. I still feel that it beats the military—it's no place for a Christian.

**MHH:** And that's your reason?

**VH:** And that's my reason. As far as possible, I never missed a chapel service. But you can't help but get caught up in it, you know. Even when we were on Hawaii, about the only thing we did for entertainment was go to the Officers' Club. When you did that, you were bending your elbow all night, or you were exposed to that kind of thing. Dancing was the only thing known for entertainment or movies. And all the time that I was in the service, I never really met a chaplain who tried to make it any better for those of us who wanted it better. Even when we went to Okinawa and I was engaged to Chips, my roommate tried to get me to go out with other people because she said, "He's probably doing the same thing. Nobody sits around in this day and age, you know." But that was not the way I felt about it.

**MHH:** So you're definitely speaking from a lot of personal experience.

**VH:** Yes, I am.

**MHH:** I can tell that. So now you're in New Jersey. What happened next?

*To be continued...*

**CHRISTIAN LIVING** Rev. James Slopsema

## DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY (2)

In the previous article on this subject we noted that twenty percent of teens (1 out of 5) will struggle with severe depression or anxiety before they are adults. This is not only debilitating but can be terrifying.

What can be done to avoid this kind of thing happening? The things we need to know and do to avoid depression or anxiety are the same things we need to escape them when they attack. But it's much better to avoid them than having to escape them once they strike.

The key thing is to minimize unnecessary stress in your life. Depression and anxiety are most often triggered by too much stress. It is true that some people are more predisposed to depression than

others because of their genetic makeup. But everyone will fall victim to major depression or anxiety given enough stress.

And what's interesting is that most stress is self-induced. We talk about stressful situations. And it is true that situations arise in our lives in which we become very stressed. But the stress is generated not so much by the situations that arise as it is by the way we view ourselves and handle these situations. The key to avoiding depression then is to learn how to keep stress in our lives to a minimum with biblical thinking and behavior.

One very important thing to focus on is our sleeping and eating habits as well as our physical

activity. How much sleep are you getting? Are you eating properly? Do you get any physical exercise? Many teens don't do well in these areas. Too little sleep. Too much junk food. Too little exercise. This stresses the body and mind and is a major contributor to teen depression and anxiety. And so get your sleep, eat three proper meals a day, and get some exercise. Did you know that the average teen needs 8–10 hours of sleep a night? Remember, your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Take good care of it.

Something that must be looked at are disastrous or potentially disastrous events that God sends into your lives. There are times when teens have to deal with the death or potentially fatal illness of a loved one. Or they find themselves in a broken home as their parents either separate or divorce. Sometimes teens also must deal with a potentially debilitating medical condition of their own.

These become very stressful times for teens. And often they become times of depression and anxiety.

How can we handle this?

God's word shows us how to handle these situations so that we can find true courage, comfort, and peace. And what God's word emphasizes is that the evils of life do not happen by chance but come only by the hand of our heavenly Father. He not only upholds us in the hard times of life but even turns them to our advantage. Both young and old must lay hold of this most fundamental truth by faith when dealing with adversity. Only then can we handle the hard things in life without floundering.

And we all need the help of others to remind us of these truths and build us up in them. But all too often the children and young people in the family are overlooked by the church when calamity strikes, so that their need for pastoral care goes unmet. Perhaps this is the case because teens are reluctant to voice their fears and sorrows. And so when facing difficulty, make sure you turn to the word of God in prayer. Seek the help and comfort of scripture from your pastor, the elders, family members, and friends. And never worry alone! If you worry alone you tend to lose perspective. Take your worries to the fellow saints whom you have come to trust. And together take them to the Lord.

Next we need to talk about sinful behavior that will bring a person down into depression.

We have the example of David in Psalms 32 & 51. These psalms were written in connection with David's terrible sin of adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband Uriah. These two psalms give clear evidence of great depression.

When I kept silence, my bones waxed [grew] old through my roaring [groaning] all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture [*vitalit*] is turned into the drought of summer. Selah (Ps. 32:3–4).

Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me (Ps. 51:8, 11).

David was a man after God's own heart. Yet he fell into great sin and remained impenitent for several months. During that time the Lord troubled his conscience so that he became desperately depressed.

This can happen to Christian teens as well.

The Bible speaks of being overtaken with a fault (Gal. 6:1). Sin has a way of creeping up on us and overtaking us before we fully realize what's happening. That's the character of sin. It will keep you at a place you shouldn't be longer than you wanted to stay. It will take you further than you wanted to go. It will cost you more than you intended to pay. How many Christian teens haven't been overtaken with underage drinking, drunkenness, street drugs, premarital sex, lying, and stealing? We could add to this list.

Life becomes very complicated and stressful for those who fall into sin and continue in sin without repentance. First, there is the troubled conscience. Remember Lot? He vexed (tormented) his righteous soul in Sodom as he continued to live where he didn't belong (2 Pet. 2:7–8). Besides, sin brings into life complications that threaten disaster. All this generates tremendous stress and is a recipe for depression and anxiety.

And so it is important to live a godly, sanctified life in Jesus Christ.

The scriptures emphasize the blessedness or happiness of those that do. Find a concordance and see how often the Bible speaks of blessedness in connection with godly living according to God's law. Those who live godly avoid much of the depression and anxiety that falls upon a sinful, impenitent lifestyle.

Such a godly life requires being in the house of God regularly on the Lord's Day for worship, regular Bible study and prayer during the week. It also requires godly friends who will encourage you to godliness. And it may require the help of your parents, pastor, or friends to escape a sinful lifestyle that has you in its grips.

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## THE DAILY PRESS

“press toward the mark...”  
(Philippians 3:14)

May 8

Read 1 Kings 4

I remember talking about the immense amount of food Solomon’s court required when we read this in class. Verses 22 and 23 state, “And Solomon’s provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal, ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and roebucks, and fallowdeer, and fatted fowl.” Gertrude Hoeksema breaks this down into 11,000 loaves of bread and 130 large animals every day. That’s an enormous amount of food! However, Keil and Delitzsch put it in a little different perspective. They say that if you break it down, you find there were about 14,000 people in Solomon’s court, a number which shouldn’t be all that surprising considering the number of officers required and their families. In comparison, they say, “the kings of Persia required a thousand oxen a day,” and “five hundred sheep and lambs were slaughtered daily for the Sultan’s court.” Compared to these numbers, the court of Solomon seems rather insignificant. Still, whether it was one of the largest courts in history or not, Solomon’s court displayed the great power God had given him as a type of Christ. *Sing or pray Psalter #228.*

May 9

Read 2 Chronicles 1

There’s been quite a bit of talk on the news lately about prosperity gospel preachers. Many of these false teachers get extremely rich by guilt-tripping their followers into giving them money. They try to convince people that writing them checks is synonymous with giving to God and that God will reward them with even more wealth if they do so. In other words, giving in the offering plate is a smart business decision. One went as far as to request an entire month’s pay from all her supporters as a “first-fruits” offering.

We reject the heresy of these teachers, but isn’t Solomon an example of the prosperity gospel at work? He did the right thing, and God blessed him with an enormous amount of riches. However, God only gave him those riches because he knew Solomon wasn’t putting his focus on them. Also, the Old Testament is full of examples of godly men who were made

very rich, but that’s because the time before Christ was a physical picture of what’s still true spiritually. Although there are still rich Christians, God only promises to give his people spiritual riches. *Sing or pray Psalter #172.*

May 10

Read Psalm 72

Psalm 72:20 says, “The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended,” indicating that this was the last psalm David ever wrote. What did David have to say as he lay on his deathbed? He didn’t focus on himself, but on giving God all the glory. David clearly brought out that God rules over the whole earth, and even the wicked must acknowledge him. Verse 11 reads, “Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.” As the one who rules over all, he also cares for his people. Romans 8:38, 39 states, “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” In addition, God’s name endures forever. Man is quickly forgotten. Only God can truly command man’s remembrance, even as he strives to deny God’s existence. With these thoughts of God David concludes his earthly sojourn, and may we do the same. *Sing or pray Psalter #194.*

May 11

Read Song of Solomon 1

The Song of Solomon, or Song of Songs, is a very interesting book that can be tough to read for a couple of reasons. First, it’s an extremely detailed love letter that can almost seem inappropriate for children at times (more on that later in the book). Second, it can be difficult to follow, since the one talking keeps switching. For example, according to Biblegateway.com, she is talking in verses 1–4a of this chapter, “others” are talking in 4b, she is talking again in 5–7, he talks in 8–10, “others” in verse 11, she in 12–14, he in verse 15, and she again in verses 16 and 17. The book is a beautiful dialogue between Christ and his bride the church.

Something that stood out to me in this chapter is

how the woman refers to herself as “black, but comely” in verse 5. The trials that we endure in this life make us black, like skin is darkened by the sun. We fall into sin and darkness at times. However, we are still comely in the eyes of Christ, our husband, who gave himself for us through his death on the cross. *Sing or pray Psalter #125.*

### May 12 Read Song of Solomon 2

There are many dove analogies in this book. In verse 14 the bride refers to her husband as her dove, and in verse 15 of yesterday’s chapter the bridegroom tells his bride that she has “dove’s eyes.” The dove is mentioned many more times in this book and throughout scripture. Here, the dove is a picture of beauty, but it can also symbolize innocence and other things. This innocence is illustrated in Matthew 10:16, where we read, “Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.” A similar idea can be found in Hosea 7:11a, which states, “Ephraim also is like a silly dove without heart.” We know that Noah released a dove from the ark after the flood waters had receded and that the Holy Spirit came down in the form of a dove when Jesus was baptized in Luke 3:22. In addition, Lev. 5:7–11 tells us that doves could be used as a sin offering for those who couldn’t afford something larger. As you can see the dove is often used in scripture to illustrate different truths. *Sing or pray Psalter #421.*

### May 13 Read Song of Solomon 3

In verse 4 we read, “It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother’s house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.” When I read this, I wondered, what’s being illustrated by bringing him into your mother’s house? In answer to this, Matthew Henry brought out some good points. First, the bride wants to show her husband to her family, those whom she loves, just as we are called to be Jehovah’s witnesses. Second, the church is our spiritual mother, and we should be concerned that she is being brought to Christ. Third, bringing the bridegroom to her mother’s house pictures us bringing salvation into our homes. This truth is made clear in Luke 19:9a, where Jesus said to Zacchaeus, “This day is salvation come to this house.”

As a quick side note, we see that Solomon is mentioned directly towards the end of this chapter. Solomon stands as a type of Christ, and this parallel

will manifest itself later in the book as well. *Sing or pray Psalter #426.*

### May 14 Read Song of Solomon 4

Besides the dove references already mentioned, I also noticed that the Song of Solomon has many references to spices. Spices were used in Bible times to preserve bodies, make things smell nice, provide seasoning, and be ingredients in holy anointing oil. This is brought out in Exodus 30:23–31, where God instructed Moses on how to make the anointing oil that was poured over the tabernacle. Spices were extremely valuable in Bible times since they often had to be transported vast distances. The fact that the three gifts brought to baby Jesus were gold, frankincense, and myrrh helps to illustrate this. 2 Chronicles 9:9 tells us that spices were also a large part of the Queen of Sheba’s magnificent gift to Solomon.

Why do you think spices have such a strong spiritual significance? In addition to the fact that they are rare, one thing I thought of is that fragrances travel through the air without being seen, just like we can’t see the work of the Holy Spirit with our physical eyes but we can still experience it. *Sing or pray Psalter #384.*

### May 15 Read Song of Solomon 5

Why does the bride say that she is “sick of love” in verse 8? Instead of pointing to rejection, Mathew Henry says that this phrase means that it overpowers her. As he puts it, “It is better to be sick of love to Christ than at ease in love to the world.” We see a similar idea in Psalm 119:81, where the psalmist writes, “My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word.” The love of the world comes and goes easily, but the love of Christ, though maintained through much trial and tribulation, lasts forever. These hardships are indicated by the watchmen’s beating of the bride in verse 7.

Why does the book talk about the bridegroom leaving anyway? Where does he need to go? When we remember that the bridegroom is Christ we can make the connection to his ascension. Christ died for us, rose again, and ascended into heaven. He now sits at God’s right hand as our mediator. He is also preparing a place for us in heaven so that we soon can go to be with him for eternity. *Sing or pray Psalter #247.*

### May 16 Read Song of Solomon 6

In verse 4, the bridegroom says to his spouse, “Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah.” What or where

is Tirzah? According to Gotquestions.org, the name means “she is my delight,” which fits with the book’s theme. Tirzah was a city in the tribe of Manasseh that acted as the capital for the ten tribes of Israel from the reign of Jeroboam I to Omri, who made Samaria the capital city. Tirzah was also one of Zelophehad’s daughters. I think I discussed her story in a previous devotional, but it’s very interesting. Tirzah and four sisters came to Moses in Numbers 27 because they had no males to take their land and were afraid of losing their inheritance. In answer, God declared that the women should be given the land. Later, the issue came up again when the daughters were looking at marrying men from other tribes and moving away from their land. God responded that they must marry men from their own tribe so that the inheritance would be preserved. Although the Tirzah here seems to be referring to the city, the woman Tirzah was a picture of the church holding dear her inheritance in heaven. *Sing or pray Psalter #239.*

#### May 17 Read Song of Solomon 7

The bridegroom describes his attraction to his bride in detail in this chapter. Two things stood out to me here. First, this passage is consistent with 1 Corinthians 12 which explains that all parts of the body are important. The body parts need one another, for only together can they make up the whole body. Solomon shows this by praising his wife’s feet and navel, parts we might argue contribute little to physical attraction. As 1 Corinthians 12:23 puts it, “And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.”

Second, this chapter brings out the beauty of the sexual union in marriage. Society and our sinful nature have so corrupted our thinking that often these passages are avoided, but that shouldn’t be. This is the word of God which “is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Tim. 3:16). We need to get to the point spiritually where we’re able to discuss these things purely with our children, so they aren’t led by the world to make it a matter of giggling behind closed doors. *Sing or pray Psalter #315.*

#### May 18 Read Song of Solomon 8

Song of Solomon 8:4 says, “I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, until he please.” This verse is repeated, with slight variation, in chapters 2:7 and 3:5 as well. Why is this idea of letting the bridegroom rest such a major idea

in the book? Matthew Henry says this is a reminder to the church not to do anything that would provoke Christ to leave. Without him we are nothing, so we must always have service to him at the forefront of our minds.

Another difficult question is answering who the little sister mentioned in verse 8 is referring to? According to Henry, some say that she pictures the Gentile world. The Jewish church is consulting with Christ about how to nurture her. This could also apply to all the elect who haven’t yet been brought to the knowledge of the truth. We must always be asking ourselves, how can we help our fellow saints around the world come to spiritual maturity? *Sing or pray Psalter #275.*

#### May 19 Read Proverbs 1

1 Kings 4:32 says of Solomon, “And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five.” About 800 of these proverbs made it into this book of the Bible. What is a proverb? According to Wikipedia, a proverb is a “simple and concrete saying, popularly known and repeated, that expresses a truth based on common sense or experience. They are often metaphorical.” A proverb is usually only one verse long.

My Reformation Heritage Bible also mentioned that Solomon isn’t the only man who should receive credit for these writings. Proverbs 25:1 talks about men under the direction of King Hezekiah, some 250 years later, who compiled some of these proverbs together. Sometimes the book attributes statements to “the wise,” seeming to imply Solomon might have copied them. In addition, sayings are attributed to Agur, son of Jakeh, in Chapter 30 and King Lemuel and his mother in Chapter 31, although some think they may refer to Solomon. Regardless, all of the proverbs here position God as central and supreme, something not found in the proverbs of the world. *Sing or pray Psalter #42.*

#### May 20 Read Proverbs 2

You know who makes the worst decisions and judgment calls and embarrasses themselves constantly? The younger you does. I look back on things I said and did a few years ago, and I’m just in amazement at the terrible decisions I made at times. The only problem is that at the time I had those major lapses in judgment I was saying the same thing about a few years prior, and I’m pretty confident it will be just as easy to say it again in the future. Those who are older—do we ever reach a point where we stop falling so blatantly?

I think history tells us that we do not.

Proverbs 2:11 says, “Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee.” As I mentioned, our entire life is one of growing in discretion. We need constant reminders that we are all small children spiritually, in need of growth. Growing in discretion means that we become better able to recognize the dangers around us and flee from them. In doing so, we build up our treasures in heaven, setting our eyes on our eternal home. *Sing or pray Psalter #324.*

### May 21 Read Proverbs 3

Verses 11 and 12 say, “My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.” Correction is often not easy for us to take. I can already see this clearly in the classroom. One thing we’ve been doing lately in writing is proofreading a student’s essay each day together. We read it sentence by sentence and discuss what improvements could be made. Some students do pretty well with this, but others are quick to get defensive. They are still of the thinking that they can sit down and write a bestseller in the last fifteen minutes before recess. We generally get a little better at hiding it as we grow older, but this is the way we all are by nature. We want to hear about all the good things we’ve been doing, not the areas that need improvement. We want to feel good about ourselves, which is what many churches offer today. We need to remember that God and our fellow saints correct us out of love, and we must be thankful for it. *Sing or pray Psalter #32.*

### May 22 Read Proverbs 4

We are reading the book *The Long Walk* in class right now. It’s the true story of a Polish cavalry officer in World War II, who gets sentenced by the Russians to 25 years hard labor in Siberia, but then escapes and walks thousands of miles to freedom. In this book, the author states that the Russian guards always reminded them, “turn to the left, turn to the right, try to escape.” The meaning here was that any movement to the side would be interpreted as an attempt to escape and the prisoner would be shot.

I thought of this when I read verse 27, which says, “Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.” Just as it meant death for the prisoners if they turned aside, so it’s death for us to stray from the straight and narrow. It’s very tempting at times to veer off and enjoy the ways of the world, but we must keep moving forward with our eyes set

on heaven. Whereas successful turning aside for the prisoner meant freedom from bondage, turning aside for us is bringing us into it. *Sing or pray Psalter #334.*

### May 23 Read Proverbs 5

There are a couple of things I wanted to discuss here briefly. First, Solomon addresses this chapter and several of the surrounding ones to “my son.” This reminds us that Solomon stands as a type of Christ, and we are all God’s children who need instruction. Through Christ’s blood, we have been made God’s adopted children and can be called his sons.

Also, in verse fifteen the command comes, “Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well.” Matthew Henry and Keil agree that this means it’s better to marry than to burn, as stated in 1 Corinthians 7:9. A similar picture is seen in Isaiah 51:1, where we read that the wife is a pit from which children are born. The ending of Proverbs 5 seems to confirm this meaning, as it talks about the righteous wife, who is manifested in contrast to the strange woman warned about earlier. Verse 6 talks about this wicked woman whose ways are moveable, unlike the never-changing God. *Sing or pray Psalter #213.*

### May 24 Read Proverbs 6

Have you ever taken one of those personality tests that tell you which one of sixteen personality types you have? One of the possible results of this test is the “duty-fulfiller.” This type of person simply looks for whatever work needs to be done and does it, simple as that. The ant is the ultimate duty-fulfiller. In this chapter, the sluggard is commanded to take the ant’s example, for he works diligently, even without someone looking over his shoulder all the time. In fact, the ant is so diligent in his work that he’s completely oblivious to his own needs. I remember watching a documentary where ants just kept working during a wildfire until they finally succumbed. Obviously, we don’t need that extreme, but we easily become focused on self. I know that I can work hard when I enjoy the task, but I’m terrible at staying diligent when I don’t. The question of whether he enjoys the task being done never enters the ant’s mind; he just does the work he’s called to do, with no prodding necessary. How much prodding is needed for you to do the work to which God has called you? *Sing or pray Psalter #36.*

**May 25**

Read Proverbs 7

Throughout Proverbs, we see the contrast made between the virtuous wife and the strange woman. Why do you think the Bible uses women here instead of men? Two ideas came to mind when I thought this over. First, man stands for the human race, so what's contrasted should be considered in relation to him. Second, no earthly thing has more power to direct man than a woman. This is brought out all throughout scripture. It was a woman that caused man to fall into sin (Gen. 3). The hero of faith Samson had a great weakness for wicked women, and it was Delilah who led to his capture by the Philistines. Genesis 6:2 says that the sons of God married the daughters of men and were led astray by them. When Balak failed to curse Israel, he came up with a second plan; he sent in the Moabite women to lead the men of Israel into adultery and idolatry, a plan which worked amazingly well for a time. However, while the wicked woman is a deadly trap, the righteous woman is an immeasurable blessing, as evidenced by women like Sarah, Deborah, Ruth, Timothy's grandmother Lois, Rahab, and many others. *Sing or pray Psalter #360.*

**May 26**

Read Proverbs 8

According to my online dictionary, "prudent" means "acting with or showing care and thought for the future." This word is used in verse 12, where wisdom says, "I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions." We are to be thinking about the future and laying up treasures in heaven. That's wisdom. This is in direct contradiction to the "living in the moment" world of today. Instead of being wise and considering the seriousness of their sins and its consequences, the wicked blow it off and just try to have as good a time on this earth as possible.

The "witty inventions" of verse 12 also stand in contrast to man's. According to Matthew Henry, the term here refers to the means and methods God has given us so that we can have a right understanding of God's providence and to be able to fight against our three-fold enemy. These are very different from the "witty inventions" of man, by which he seeks to glorify himself and undermine God. We need to be on guard because it's very easy for us to focus on these witty earthly inventions more than the spiritual ones we have been given. *Sing or pray Psalter #231.*

**May 27**

Read Proverbs 9

In Luke 5:32, Jesus says, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." These "sinners" are

the "simple" referred to in Proverbs 9:4. We see this from the fact that they "want understanding." These are the ones invited to wisdom's house, that she might help direct them in the right way. These are the ones who see their need for help.

The same word is used differently in verse 13. Here, the foolish woman is said to be "simple." She does not see God's handiwork and glory in the world around her. She doesn't see her need for reform. She doesn't see the things of heaven. All she sees is hatred for God, and she seeks to instill the same in all that cross her path.

This woman is a great danger to the simple who seek understanding, as brought out in verse 16. The foolish woman of the world is constantly trying to "cure" God's people of their religious convictions, and we must pray for strength to stand true to the truth that's been written in our hearts. *Sing or pray Psalter #301.*

**May 28**

Read Proverbs 10

Should we forgive someone who sins against us and remains unrepentant? I had this discussion not long ago and would like to open it up for your consideration as well. I think there are a few different angles to look at it from, so it makes for an interesting discussion.

In Proverbs 10:12 we read that "love covereth all sins." Does that mean that we forgive and love anyone who sins against us, regardless of whether they show sorrow for sin? According to Matthew Henry, this verse exhorts us to love those who sin against us unintentionally or against their better judgment. It's not a command to look the other way when impenitence manifests itself. On the other hand, however, it's vital that we're able to move on after someone sins against us. We do not know the heart, and we leave vengeance to God, as revealed in Romans 12:19. Still, do you think there's a distinction to be made between moving on and forgiving someone? We must always move on when we're sinned against, but do we forgive those who aren't sorry? Does God forgive them? What do you think? *Sing or pray Psalter #143.*

**May 29**

Read Proverbs 11

Proverbs 11:21 reads, "Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished: but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered." There's only one thing that can unite the world, making "hand join in hand," and that's hatred for the truth. We see this all around us today. One specific example will suffice.

I ran across an article last week titled, "Shout Your Abortion Founder on Bible Belt Abortion Storytelling

Tour.” Apparently, the Bible Belt refers to the southeastern US, where conservative Protestantism still plays a major role in society and politics. Anyway, there’s a very wicked woman who started an organization bringing women together to swap abortion stories. In the picture below the heading, the lesbian founder is holding a sign that reads, “Abortion is normal.” These events, purposefully held in conservative Christian areas, unite women who have in common the murder of their children. Support of abortion logically leads to eugenics, which the founder also supports. As we see the nations coming together in their hatred of all things true, it becomes all the more important that we in the church remain unified in the truth. *Sing or pray Psalter #157.*

**May 30** Read Proverbs 12

One of our class vocabulary words recently was “seamstress.” When I type this into Microsoft Word, I get a line underneath, indicating that something is incorrect. The first time this happened I was very confused. When I clicked to see what was wrong, I was given “consider using gender-neutral language.”

In their concerted effort to destroy the family unit, the world is pushing what they call “gender equality.” This movement is aimed at demonstrating there is no difference between men and women, although the Bible is very clear that there is a difference. Man was created as the head, and the woman is to be his help in marriage, either for good or bad, as stated in Proverbs 12:4. This verse reads, “A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones.” This verse shows that the woman has a very high calling, but the world wants none of it. We need to pray for our girls and young women that they withstand temptation and remain true to their callings. The church needs virtuous women. *Sing or pray Psalter #111.*

**May 31** Read Proverbs 13

In the parable of the ten virgins, told in Matthew 25:1–13, five wise virgins and five foolish virgins are waiting for the bridegroom to lead them to the wedding feast. By the time he arrives, the lamp oil of the five foolish virgins has been used up. They go and buy more, but the door is already shut when they arrive at the feast, and they aren’t admitted.

I thought of this parable when I read Proverbs 13:9, which says, “The light of the righteous rejoiceth: but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.” As the Holy Spirit works in us, we shine brighter and brighter. In contrast, the wicked grow darker and darker as they

fall deeper into sin throughout their life. Isaiah 50:11 talks about how the reprobate should enjoy their little fire of life while they can because the darkness of death is coming. When they try to enter the wedding feast on the judgment day, God will say, “I know you not” (Matt. 25:12). *Sing or pray Psalter #229.*

**June 1** Read Proverbs 14

Proverbs 14:4 reads, “Where no oxen are, the crib is clean: but much increase is by the strength of the ox.” How does this verse fit with the theme of contrasting the wise and foolish? Matthew Henry seems to think the verse is saying that the farm will stay nice and neat if you don’t have any oxen, but that you need the ox if you want to get any work done. He goes on to say, “This shows the folly of those who addict themselves to the pleasures of the country, but do not mind the business of it.” In other words, they want to live it up and are very low on assets, while high on liabilities. All their money is spent on worthless toys instead of useful oxen. Keil and Delitzsch have a little different approach. They believe this verse is instructing us in the proper way of gaining something. If the farmer doesn’t care for his oxen, then he will lose them, and he won’t be able to complete his work. This verse, then, says that the wise man cares for the things that assist him in his labors. *Sing or pray Psalter #283.*

**June 2** Read Proverbs 15

Our Prayer Day service this year was on Proverbs 15:8, which reads, “The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.” Our pastor brought out that this verse contrasts the outward and the spiritual. Sacrificing is an outward activity that only becomes spiritual when it’s sanctified. Holy prayer is spontaneous and the highest form of thankfulness. One of the simple reasons why we should pray is that it’s pleasing to God. In our new man, we want to do what pleases our heavenly father.

One point that stood out to me was that right prayer isn’t always synonymous with sincere prayer. Sometimes we pray as if we just want to see what we can get out of God to please ourselves. These prayers may be spoken very sincerely, but they are not done rightly. Our prayers are only right when they seek God. This means that our prayers aren’t centered around earthly things. We pray for our earthly needs, but not prosperity. Right prayer causes our thankfulness to be removed from our earthly situation. *Sing or pray Psalter #256.*

**June 3**

Read Proverbs 16

Do you remember what happened to Uzziah, king of Judah? His reign started out very well. He walked according to God's commandments and continued the reforms that his father Amaziah had begun. He defeated God's enemies and forced them to pay tribute. He heavily fortified the kingdom and made Judah the greatest it had been since Solomon's reign. But then we get to verse 16 of 2 Chronicles 26, which reads, "But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and went into the temple of the LORD to burn incense upon the altar of incense." The priests told Uzziah to leave, which made him angry, and God struck Uzziah with leprosy in his forehead right in front of them. Uzziah would have to live his remaining years in disgrace and misery outside the camp.

Proverbs 16:18 says, "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." The sad story of Uzziah is a clear example of this, and there are many more throughout the Bible as well. We need to recognize the ever-present danger and be on guard against the destructive sin of pride. *Sing or pray Psalter #104.*

**June 4**

Read Proverbs 17

Verse 18 of this chapter reads, "A man void of understanding striketh hands, and becometh surety in the presence of his friend." This verse was a little tough for me to understand. After some studying, I think it's saying, "Beware of backing up a fool, because fools get into trouble, and if you are backing him up then you will be in trouble as well." Upon doing a Google search, I learned that suretyship is a type of insurance where an agency agrees to use their own property to guarantee that someone else will follow through on their payments. Scripture warns against doing this for a fool or anyone you don't know very well, in this and other passages.

Matthew Henry seems to connect this to lending money to family and close friends, due to the potential strain on the relationship. I've heard people say before that they thought this was ill-advised, but I never thought it was specifically mentioned in the Bible. Do you think this verse can be applied in that way? Do you think it's unwise to lend money to loved ones? Do the potential benefits ever outweigh the risk? *Sing or pray Psalter #279.*

**June 5**

Read Proverbs 18

Proverbs 18:21 says, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof." I have recently come to realize this two-edged power of the tongue more fully. It's so important that we recognize the damage that our tongues can do. I would include here not only words that are spoken, but body language, and the communication environment that's created. Pain caused in this way can last a lifetime. It can be forgiven, but it's never forgotten. We must pray to God for the grace that we deal with one another in love, not in anger, even (or especially) in the face of serious disagreements.

On the flip side, life is also in the power of the tongue. We must never forget this as well. I was talking to someone who had gone through a difficult trial, and he said that encouragement from those in the church was one of the main things that helped his wife and him through it. Often these people had no idea what was going on, but they saw that the brother was struggling, and they did what they could to lift him up. *Sing or pray Psalter #147.*

**June 6**

Read Proverbs 19

There's been an anonymous lottery winner in the news lately. This woman won millions of dollars, but she doesn't want to reveal her identity to claim it. This has resulted in a lawsuit since it's great marketing to have the winner stand there and grin, holding a giant check as the cameras snap away. The problem is that the woman knows the truth of Proverbs 19:4a, which reads, "Wealth maketh many friends." Someone who has lots of money in the world is bound to have many "friends" who are interested in tapping into it as much as possible. The anonymous winner is understandably terrified of this and of someone trying to kill her for her new-found riches.

How do you make friends? What are the criteria you use for identifying someone you'd like to be close friends with? Just as the world clamors around the wealthy, so we should seek out those who are spiritually rich. We should want friends who will help lead us in the right way, not pressure us to fall into ways of sin. As Proverbs 13:20 states, "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed." *Sing or pray Psalter #31.*

**June 7**

Read Proverbs 20

Wicked men, like Ham (Gen. 9:22), find great humor in drunkenness. The internet is full of virally circulating videos that show someone staggering around

in a drunken stupor. Proverbs 20:1 says, “Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.” How is wine “a mocker?” Drunkenness is often viewed as a sociable thing, but in reality it makes one unfit for society. I remember the temptation to drink when we had big parties in high school. People drank together, even though doing so made them completely embarrass themselves. As I was told by someone for whom drunkenness was

a besetting sin, alcohol doesn’t make you unaware of what you’re doing; it just causes you not to care.

It’s important to remember that the Bible clearly states that alcohol is a good gift of God. This is brought out in verses like Ecclesiastes 9:7 and Psalm 104:15. In John 2:3–11 Jesus himself made the water into wine for the people at the wedding feast. However, we must not abuse it or any of the other good gifts God has given us. *Sing or pray Psalter #287.*

**CHRISTIAN LIVING** Rev. Audred Spriensma

## CHOOSING OUR COMPANIONS

*“I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts” (Ps. 119:63).*

Many of you have graduated this past summer. Some will go on to college, others to the work place. Who will be your companions? Where will you seek them? What difference does it make? May the psalmist’s confession be ours: “I am a companion of all that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.”

Many of you have had Christian classmates in the schools you have attended as well as Christian friends in the church. But now, as you move on, who will be your companions at college or the work-place? However, our text does not speak in the past tense (those I had as companions) or in the future tense (whom I will have as companions). Rather, the psalmist speaks in the present tense: “I *am* a companion of all that fear thy name....” This is a confession to God! “I am a companion of all that fear *thee*, that keep *thy* precepts.”

What is it that sets the basis for who our companions are? We find the answer in the first line of this section of the Psalm (v. 57), “Thou art my portion O LORD: I have said that I would keep thy word.” What is a portion? It is an inheritance that is given to us. It is the land that was given to each tribe of Israel when they entered the land of Canaan and the plot of land given to each family within the tribe. But it was not merely the land. God dwelt in the midst of Canaan, and God’s presence and glory spread forth throughout the land. There David is able to say, “Thou art my portion, O LORD...” So my first question to you is this, Is Jehovah your portion? Is he precious to you? Is your inheritance that God has numbered you with his people?

The word companion is a word that does not merely mean “friend”. The idea of “companion” is someone that you are tied to, bound to with rope or chains, someone to whom you are connected by strong bands or cords. This is true of the wicked and also true of God’s people. In Psalm 119:61 we read, “the bands of the wicked have robbed me...” They are banded together in their love for sin and ambition to snare God’s people into their sins. But for the righteous, to be a companion is a covenant relationship. The psalmist is extolling and confessing to God that he is bound to all the members of God’s church. Because we are bound to God in Christ Jesus, we are bound together as members of his body. We are bound in the Holy Spirit. We are bound in faith and in love. The Spirit of Christ has bound us and united us to Christ, and therefore to other saints.

We need companions, and we need to be companions. God saw that in his creation and showed it to Adam before he gave Eve to him. Of marriage, we read in Malachi 2:14, “...yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.” Those with whom we unite ourselves and devote time and devotion to must be those who love God. Those are the ones we love and to whom we are drawn. We must ask the question, “What is the basis for the companions that I have?” Are my reasons selfish or fleshly when I band together, or is it the fear and love of God? Is that primary to you? Is that primary as you seek a life mate? Is that primary as you make friends? Is that primary as you engage in activities? You do not want to do anything that would detract from God’s glory or lead you into sin.

This companionship is all-embracing. Notice that the psalmist confesses, “A companion I am

*of all that fear Jehovah.*” That means that we are not embarrassed to belong to the church. We are not embarrassed to walk with God’s people. Oh, they are all different. Some are more pleasant than others, but they all bear the image of him whom we love, our Lord Jesus. So we encourage one another, admonish one another, visit and help one another, and pray for one another. This does not mean that you will not have some closer companions than others; even Jesus did. John refers to himself as the “disciple whom Jesus loved.” Jesus would single out Peter, James, and John to accompany him on the Mount of Transfiguration and later remain with him in the garden of Gethsemane. But we count all of God’s saints our companions with whom we delight to spend time and devotion. If something happens to drive a wedge between, we do all in our power to remove it.

But in this confession, our companionship is also all-exclusive. Negatively, we are not a companion of everyone. We are not companions of those who hate God, those who are disobedient and rebellious against God and his word. Oh no, we are not companions with them in our dating, marriage, friendships, or activities. That does not mean that you do not work with unbelievers, or that we are unfriendly toward ungodly neighbors. It is impossible when you go on to college or find a place of employment that there are no ungodly persons there. But working alongside of them or taking a class with them does not make you a companion of them. We need a note of warning—some of those people who do not love the Lord will be interesting people. Maybe you share natural interests with them, or you find them fun to be around. If their speech or actions shows that they do not love the Lord, then you are playing with fire if you have an unbiblical relationship with them.

“I am a companion of all that fear thee...” What difference does it make who your companions are? First, because of our sinful natures, ungodly persons will be detrimental to our faith and walk. It is more likely that ungodly friends will influence us rather than that we will be able to influence them for good. Second, we live in a world that is at odds with us and our faith, and Satan lies in wait for us as a roaring lion to devour. Because the road on earth is long and difficult, it is important that we have Christian companions who will help and encourage us in our lives to live godly. Third, this opposition is becoming more and more intense. Notice verse 61: “the bands of the wicked have robbed me.” Therefore it is good to walk in the company of fellow saints.

I have entitled this article, “Choosing Our Companions.” I will get back to that, but notice that this confession of the psalmist is not a confession of what we do, but what God in his grace has done for us. Just as we speak of marriage as “a marriage made in heaven,” so also our being a companion of all that fear the Lord is due to the Lord’s electing love, his work of giving us to Jesus Christ to be saved, and our being made a living member of Christ’s church. Do you see that we are given a place in God’s church by our Triune God? The Father has chosen us, Christ Jesus has redeemed us, and the Holy Spirit dwells in us and sanctifies us as God’s peculiar people. There is no pride that we have made good choices, but God in his grace has been good to us. He has united us to Christ. He unites us to those who fear him. He gives us grace to forgive one another as he has forgiven us. He enables us to be long-suffering, patient, kind, and generous to one another. It is all of grace.

While God has done this wonderful thing, united us to believers, the company of saints, it is possible for us to sinfully unite ourselves with those who do not love God. Do you need examples? Good King Jehoshaphat willingly joined wicked King Ahab in a battle against their common enemy, and God rebuked him. King Solomon joined himself in marriages to many wicked wives who ensnared him in sin. That is why we need the admonitions that come to us in 2 Corinthians 6:14, 15. “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?” So, we do daily choose who we take as those who are close to us and influence us for good or bad. By God’s grace we say no to sin and ungodly folks and yes to those who love God and desire to live and serve him.

So again I ask, Who are your companions? Who are those whom you delight to be with and interact with? Are they those whom God has given to you in Christ Jesus? Or are you, for sinful reasons, choosing friends who will not help you in your pilgrimage but who would lead you astray? By God’s grace may our confession to God be, “A companion I am to all who fear thee.”

*Rev. Spriensma is a home missionary of the Protestant Reformed Church.*

## THE STORMY SEA

You are at sea. Your ship is sound, having passed all pre-departure checks with flying colors. The waves are calm, beating a slow, low rhythm against the hull. You climb the rigging and reach the crow's nest for another long, boring day of keeping watch along the horizon for any signs of trouble. Hours of this go by with no end to the plainness of the blue-on-blue horizon line of water meeting sky. Then suddenly, a small patch appears to the west. You think nothing of it for a while, but as it grows steadily larger to your eyes, the beat of the waves on the hull grows more pronounced to your ears. The up-and-down movement of the ship also becomes more noticeable. Your instincts as a sailor begin to kick in.

“Storm brewing to forward!” you shout to the deck below. By this time, other experienced sailors have begun to notice the change in the weather as well, and several are already out on the deck, eyeing the approaching storm warily. The captain begins calling orders to various crewmen, and they all set to work as you scramble back down the rigging. But they seem to have barely accomplished any of their set tasks before the storm is upon the ship. The rain falls hard on the deck and the crew alike, feeling like so many stinging insects each second. The wind howls, making it impossible for the captain's continued shouted orders to be understood. The storm reaches a point of such ferocity that the boat seems to climb for an eternity between waves before dropping what feels like thousands of feet into the next trough. Water flows in torrents over the deck at every moment. Some men scream and curse as they are swept overboard. Those who are not cling for their lives to whatever secured object they can grasp. The mast creaks and groans in protest, threatening at any moment to snap in half. Many begin calling out to God for mercy and to save the ship, seemingly to no avail. Most have become violently ill. The face of every crew member still aboard glows white with fear.

The sea remains tumultuous for hours, the ship barely managing to stay afloat. But then, just as all seems lost, the storm subsides. The sea begins to calm, and the clouds cease from their deluge, passing slowly across the sky. The sun finally makes its

reappearance as you near the harbor you originally set sail for. You and the others begin to take stock of who and what has been lost.

This may seem just a fantastic story, but odds are, you have lived this. In Psalm 107:23–30, a reader can find a very similar story to the one written above. There the psalmist draws a correlation between the trials and difficulties of life and a ship at sea during a storm. It is a beautiful passage and one well worth memorizing, as well as analyzing for its parallel to life and death, as we do here.

Verses 23 and 24 begin the section with a bold statement: all who go down to the sea, whatever their reason for doing so, see the works of God and his power. There is no “maybe” here; *everyone* who goes to the sea will experience this. Drawing the connection to reality, the sea pictures life. This means that all who ever have lived or will live on this earth have seen or will see the wondrous works of the Lord—his “wonders in the deep” (v. 24). This serves as proof that there truly is no such thing as an atheist. A person may well deny the existence of God, or claim to have never seen any hard evidence of it, but in the hearts of all mankind, there is always a deep-seated knowledge, an undeniable testimony of God's existence and power. Paul echoes this idea in Romans 1:20, where he writes that the invisible things of God are clearly seen in creation, leaving all mankind “without excuse.”

In his next thought, the psalmist describes the ferocity of the storm—the wind and waves beat upon the ship mercilessly, constantly threatening to take the vessel down to the ocean's depths. The obvious connection to our lives here is the trials we face throughout life. God never promises in his word that being a follower of him is an easy task. On the contrary, he promises the opposite, guaranteeing persecution and other hardships on the elect. These hardships and trials we find ourselves in, along with the temptations we constantly face, are our wind and waves. However, there is comfort even in the ferocious peak of the storm's power: God is in control. Just as he is the one to raise up the stormy sea in the first place in the picture (v. 25), so too is he the one who causes the difficulties in our lives. God

is sovereign even in the difficult times, and nothing operates outside of his control.

Even still, we are often overcome. We, as do the sailors in the psalm, “reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man” in the face of these trials of life (v. 27). The verse even goes on to accurately say that we are brought to our wit’s end. We can do nothing, and we realize that trying to save ourselves from this hurricane will do us no good. We eventually realize our hard-heartedness, and turn to the only viable remaining option—calling on God.

Astoundingly, even after we have so blatantly ignored God for so long a time, and have even done everything in our power to avoid turning to him until we are certain we will drown, he does something incredible and totally uncalled for: he hears us. He would be totally justified in ignoring our pathetic cries for help, even in leaving us to drown in our sins and miseries. But instead, he acts out of mercy. Not only does he notice our prayers, but he also answers them. Certainly the answer is sometimes not what we hope for. God’s answer does not always come instantaneously, nor is it always the answer we want to hear in our sinful natures. When we cry out to God, we so often do so in such a way that betrays that we *expect* a particular response from him—healing of an illness, for example—when in reality, we should turn to God, acknowledging that his will is perfect, infinitely wiser than any thoughts of ours (Isa. 55:8–9).

However, even when God does not provide the exact answer that we seek, he still provides an ultimate victory. In verses 29–30, we find a beautiful summary of how this is the case. God calms the storm. Again, this is not always something that comes in an immediate fashion. As a matter of fact, there are some situations in which our “storm” does not end at all, at least not in the way that we expect it to. Going back to the example of illness, God

may respond such that the illness is not healed and removed from us for the remainder of our earthly life; that illness may even be the cause of our death. But even in this scenario, God has provided us the best possible outcome—we go to live with him for eternity. The psalmist words it far more beautifully and eloquently than I ever could, calling heaven our “desired haven” (v. 30). He even writes that we find gladness because we are quiet (v. 30). This idea serves as a good reminder as well. In the modern world, noise surrounds. It seems rare, if not well-nigh impossible at times to obtain a moment of quiet reflection. But these times of quiet, of dwelling on God’s word and communing with him, are how we obtain peace; we ought to make every effort to establish a habit of clearing time for this in our everyday life.

Trials come to us in a variety of ways. Some are very visible to our peers, some are not. Some are widely considered to be terrible things to experience; others are things that most would find trivial and seem only to be a problem for us. But all are very real, and all often seem to be things that we cannot overcome. And indeed, we cannot, apart from the help of God. But what a comfort to know that he holds us by the hand, guiding us through each trial; we need not fear (Isa. 41:13). We inevitably will find ourselves on rough seas many times throughout life. In fact, this is promised us; God tells us in Psalm 77:19 that his way leads through the sea. However, that is also a means of assurance for us: even when we cannot understand why, the way through the sea is God’s way. It matters not how disoriented we become at the hands of the storm—God is our compass, a faithful guide for the entirety of life’s voyage (Ps. 48:14).

*Matthew is a member of Southeast Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan.*

**BOOK REVIEW** Miriam Koerner

## SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES FOR THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

*Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, Donald S. Whitney, Carol Stream, IL: NavPress, 2014. Paperback, 304 pp.

The theme for this book on spiritual discipline is scriptural: “Exercise [or discipline] thyself...unto godliness” (1 Tim. 4:7). But when we hear of a book with a title such as this, the temptation might be

to dismiss the work completely. Are we not saved by grace? Why should I read a 300-plus page list of prescribed activities I must participate in to apparently assure myself that I am “spiritual” or even that I am a Christian?

Though there are times where Whitney’s Southern Baptist background of experience and Puritanism are quite apparent, the work as a whole is written from the understanding that “we stand before God only in the righteousness that’s been earned by another, Jesus Christ” (3). The book does not stem from an attitude of legalism or a goal of putting restrictions on readers. Further, Whitney writes that it is only because of the presence of the Holy Spirit in our hearts that we now have “holy hungers” that we did not have prior to Christ earning us righteousness; the Spirit makes godliness our purpose (3). Whitney contends that God outlines disciplines for us in scripture so that we might pursue holiness, grow spiritually, and become more like Christ; or to put it another way, that we discipline ourselves unto godliness (4).

Whitney identifies and describes eleven spiritual disciplines for the individual believer which, he says, are all in varying levels praised by the inspired writers of scripture. Most of these activities, such as Bible intake, prayer, and worship are (hopefully) already part of our lives as young people and young adults. Nevertheless, even if you already engage in these disciplines, Whitney’s practical applications and suggestions will encourage you to be faithful in your spiritual exercise and to treat these disciplines not as chores, nor merely as parts of your routine, but instead as activities that you desire to partake of each day to grow in godliness. For example, Whitney highlights several practical methods to assist in the two key parts of Bible intake, memorizing the Bible and meditating on it. I personally found Whitney’s Bible meditation methods to be especially helpful in my own devotions, including asking myself how the day’s text points to Christ and asking what the text says about both the law and the gospel. Using Whitney’s Bible-reading methods, I feel that I’m beginning to build the link which Whitney says must exist between Bible intake and prayer: meditation (86).

Whitney’s book also covers some disciplines that we might not personally include in a list of practices that encourage spiritual growth. For example, he makes an extensive case for personal fasting, pointing out that the practice is biblical (using references from both the Old and New Testaments), and

explaining that we should engage in it to demonstrate “that we love God more than food, that seeking him is more important than eating, that Jesus—the Bread of heaven—is more satisfying than earthly bread” (214). He also argues that the practice of journaling, “the act of document[ing] the works and ways of God in life,” is also a biblical discipline because it can be “a great tool for thinking about and applying the life of Jesus Christ” (249, 251).

My favorite discipline from this book is the practice of learning. Referencing Proverbs 18:15, Whitney writes that “a wise person not only acquires knowledge, he or she seeks it” (274). Acknowledging that God’s greatest requirement for us is to love him, Whitney contends that true love for God flows out of a knowledge of doctrinal truth: “just as we cannot believe and love him about whom we’ve learned nothing, so we cannot grow in our faith and love of him unless we learn more about him” (277). Whitney’s practical methods for increasing one’s time spent learning includes listening to audiobooks, having dialogue with others about what one has learned, and making time to read, even if it is just one page per day.

As stated above, Whitney maintains throughout the book that the reason we must practice each discipline is for the purpose of godliness. In fact, each chapter that covers one of the disciplines is the name of the discipline (e.g., “Prayer”) followed by the phrase “For the Purpose of Godliness”; further, each discipline is introduced with an explanation as to why our practice of it must be for this purpose. For example, we serve others for the purpose of godliness lest we begin to serve only “occasionally or when it’s convenient or self-serving” (144).

Whitney recognizes that our natural tendency as readers is to read about each discipline, agree that the practice is important—and even admit that it’s something we should begin to practice or practice more often—but never change our habits to include regular attention to the discipline in our life. Therefore, he ends each chapter with several pointed questions that ask us whether we will adopt the discipline and whether we will become more faithful in our observance of it. So, for example, he asks at the end of the chapter on silence and solitude whether we will seek daily times of it (244). And anticipating our claim to practice the discipline when we “have time,” he asks: “Will you start now?” (246).

The first edition of this book was released in 1991. The revised and updated version which I reviewed was released in 2014. It would be interesting to

compare the books to see how much Whitney updated the text. While I hesitate to call the revised edition dated, I do think Whitney's increased years may have contributed to a somewhat cursory treatment throughout the book of the current challenges (temptations) that keep readers from becoming spiritually disciplined.

Another critique I have for this book is that it reflects Whitney's Puritan leanings. I use the example of the discipline of stewardship: while a call for stewardship, especially of one's time, is welcome in a blatantly self-serving society, I was disappointed that Whitney's overall point appeared to be that we must use the time God gives us now because we are running out of time and that we must "come to Christ while [we] still can" (167). There is no assurance in that attitude. A better motivation for the disciplined life can be found in Rev. Barnhill's blog series and which Whitney faithfully states in other parts of the book: as adopted children of God, we want to grow in our discipline (commitment) to serving God because we desire God's glory and our own growth in holiness.

Despite some shortcomings that I found in this text, I would recommend *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* to *Beacon Lights* readers. This book is not targeted at a specific age level, but we as young people and young adults need to hear the message of this book. We are not a disciplined generation. By nature, we are not interested in Whitney's prescribed "workout" as J.I. Packer puts it in his foreword to this book (x). But we should be. As those redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, we are called to be holy even as God is holy (1 Pet. 1:16, 18–19). When we are disciplined we live more holily, and when we live holily, we "become the more earnest in seeking the remission of sin, and righteousness in Christ, [and we] constantly endeavor and pray to God for the grace of the Holy Spirit, that we may become more and more conformable to the image of God, till we arrive at the perfection proposed to us in a life to come" (Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 115).

*Miriam is a member of Southeast Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan.*

## Church News Melinda Bleyenbergh

### BAPTISMS

"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."  
Mark 10:14

The sacrament of holy baptism was administered to:  
Christian Troy, son of Mr. & Mrs. Lucas Maatman—  
Crete, IL

Illiana Snow, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Ross &  
Brittany Kooienga—Georgetown, MI

LeayLa Joy, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Jared &  
Heather Huisken—Georgetown, MI

Carter Andrew, son of Mr. & Mrs. Andrew & Jill  
Bos—Georgetown, MI

Greta Winn, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Dan & Kate  
VanUffelen—Hope, MI

Austin Ray & Wyatt Alan, twin sons of Mr. & Mrs.  
Chad & Paula Kamminga—Loveland, CO

Charlotte Kay, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Ross &  
Shari Kaiser—Southwest, MI

Taylor Hope, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Kylar  
Hassevoort—Southwest, MI

### CONFESSIONS OF FAITH

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men,  
him will I confess also before my Father which is in  
heaven." Matthew 10:32

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

Alyssa Mastbergen—Grace, MI

Noah Windemuller—Grace, MI

Daniel Huizing—Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Danica Moll—Randolph, WI



## SYNOD OF DORDT PART 4: REVOLUTION IN THE NETHERLANDS

After so many years of persecution, men from the Calvinists, Anabaptists, and other Protestant branches decided to begin to fight back. They had appealed to Philip II with the plea that included the Belgic Confession to stop the persecution, but he hadn't listened. It looked like the Reformation might be wiped out of the Netherlands if the people didn't fight back.

In 1566, groups of the more militant of these men attacked Catholic churches and destroyed the images of saints and the crucifix in what is called the *Beeldenstorm* or Iconoclastic Fury, which means a storm against images.

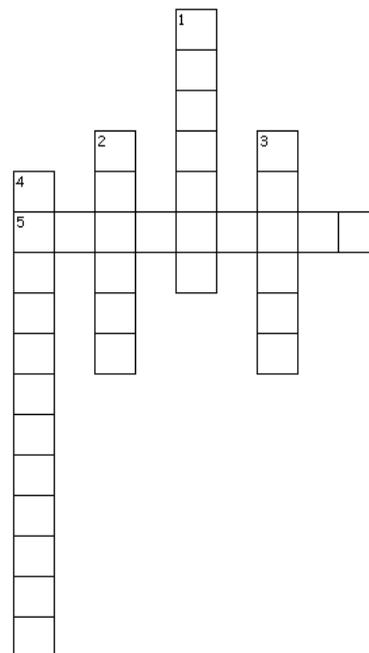
As the rebellion grew, William the Silent, Prince of Orange, emerged as a leader. He had gained favor with Philip II at the court in the Netherlands and had been made the stadtholder of the provinces of Holland, Zeeland, and Utrecht. As the persecution had been building, he had protested the violence. Eventually, he converted to Calvinism.

In 1566, William the Silent rallied the other stadtholders to revolt against Philip II. Some fought because they wanted freedom to worship. Others fought because they didn't want to be ruled by Spain any longer.

Revolution had begun in the Netherlands.



William the Silent, Prince of Orange



### Crossword Puzzle Clues

Across:

5. William the Silent converted to \_\_\_\_\_

Down:

1. Freedom to \_\_\_\_\_

2. William the \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ of Orange

4. \_\_\_\_\_ Fury, also known as Beeldenstorm

*Tricia is a member of Byron Center Protestant Reformed Church in Byron Center, Michigan.*



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# It's not too late to register for the 2018 Convention!

## August 13-17



Banquet Theme: "Hawaiian Luau"

\*a Pinterest Board has been created and can be found at  
<https://prconvention.com/banquet/>

Start putting your teams together for tournament games!  
Sign up is open through August 3.

- Boys Basketball (3)
- Girls Basketball (3)
- Rook (2)
- Coed Soccer (6-8)
- Coed Volleyball (6-8)
- Spikeball (2)

\*Fill out a form under the Activities Tab on the Website.

To register, go to [www.prconvention.com](http://www.prconvention.com), and follow the instructions under the Register tab. If you have any questions, email us at [Registration@prconvention.com](mailto:Registration@prconvention.com).