

February 25, 2024

This Week: 9:30 a.m. Catechism Reading Service (LD34)
6:30 p.m. Passion Reading Service
Classes after the morning service.

Next Week: 9:30 a.m. Passion Reading Service
6:30 p.m. Catechism Reading Service (LD35)
Classes after the morning service.

Monday: The NRCS horticulture club will host the annual waffle supper from 5-7:30 in school.

-All the Lord willing-

Collections: Today: 1st General Fund Next week: 1st General Fund
2nd NAGMission 2nd Emeritus Fund

We Remember in Prayer:

- Our widows and lonely ones, prodigal sons and daughters, and all those with hidden crosses.
- Matteo Timmer, who was able to come home from the hospital on Wednesday.
- Mrs. Kianna Thompson, who hopes to have surgery on her ankle Friday.

MEDITATIONS

A troublesome night

And that night they caught nothing. – John 21:3b

It really was a troublesome night which followed the dark evening. Notice only the diligence which they employed. They had scarcely come to the agreement to go fishing or they already go to the shore and into the ship, and – there they sail away upon the Sea of Gennesaret. They choose the exact time. It is said that this Sea of Gennesaret, when the sun shone upon the water, sparkled to blind the eyes. Then fishing was impossible. Therefore men fished there only at night. So did the seven disciples, for they were competent fishermen. They cast out the net, draw it up – nothing. They sail to another place, again cast out the net, draw it up – again nothing. Why is this; they had always fished in this manner, exactly as they are doing now, and then they caught fish and now nothing? They try it again, again nothing. Peter is so active that he removed his outer garment, but nothing helped.

“That night,” says the writer of Holy Scripture, “they caught nothing.” Oh, what a troublesome night these disciples went through. Is

it any wonder that they finally steer for home and give it up? Nothing will become of it anyway. And for us they are such a striking image of learning, children of the Lord. Indeed, God’s children at times are called in the Bible fishermen who always fish in a spiritual manner. Among other places see this in Ezek. 47. There it is said of the river of the Spirit that there shall be exceeding many and that there shall be a place to spread forth nets and that fishers shall stand upon the shores from En-gedi even unto En-eglaim. Now you can understand that all this must be understood spiritually.

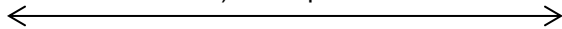
Perhaps you shall ask: where do God’s people spread their nets? Well, child, such a place is in God’s house, the tabernacle of the congregation, where God’s people gladly fish, under the preaching of the Word. They cast out their net in their prayer-chamber; also at times in the reading of good old books and at religious meetings of God’s children; yes, where do God’s children not spread out their nets? They fish beside all waters, and many a small spiritual fish they have already caught. At one time a broken heart and a contrite spirit, a text, a word which refreshes their soul, a ray of light, a prayer, a sigh. And that is so pleasant, and so delightful.

But if it shall be well, a time will still come, a dark night wherein they will catch nothing. That is a bitter disappointment. Fishing everywhere – and fishing exactly as we formerly fished – and then to catch nothing! Does it go thus with you also, child? What a blessing you formerly had under the ministration of the Word; at times it was as if the minister preached exclusively for you, and now, in this night – nothing. And how soul-refreshing it was when in secret you were privileged to pour out your heart before the Lord, in the searching of God’s Word and at religious gatherings and with good books – and now – nothing. It is as if there are no longer any fish! There are no soul-refreshings left for you. Is it not so?

Yes, do you know what you do catch in this night? A condemned heart; a troubled mind; the displeasure of God; an accusing conscience; perhaps a cursing law; perhaps the sentence of death; an angered Judge and a closed heaven. And thus, it is truly a troublesome night through which your soul is presently experiencing, a night wherein you go deeper and deeper into misery by all your efforts, burrowing and working. Do you not know of such a night, child of God? Oh, how full of trouble is such a night, and yet it is necessary if your soul is ever to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. “A short work will I make upon the earth,” says the Lord. God will let you work yourself to death and will bring you into death with everything. But He does not do this to leave you in the dark, in trouble, in this death, oh no! However dark God’s way might be to you at present, keep courage, child, for the Sun of Righteousness shall dawn for you.

~Rev. G. Van Reenen

Beginning with the law here in the Catechism, one may ask what the difference is between it and the gospel. First, the law is known naturally: the gospel was divinely revealed after the fall of man. Secondly, the law declares the justice of God separately considered: the gospel declares it in connection with his mercy. The law teaches what we ought to be in order that we may be saved: the gospel teaches in addition to this, how we may become such as the law requires, that is by faith in Christ. Thirdly, in their conditions or promises. The law promises eternal life and all good things upon the condition of our own and perfect righteousness, and of obedience in us: the gospel promises the same blessings upon the condition that we exercise faith in Christ, by which we embrace the obedience which another, even Christ, has performed in our behalf; or the gospel teaches that we are justified freely by faith in Christ. With this faith is also connected, as by an indissoluble bond, the condition of new obedience. Fourthly, in their effects. The law works wrath and is the ministration of death: the gospel is the ministration of life and of the Spirit. (Rom. 4:15. 2 Cor. 3:7.) ~ Adapted from Ursinus



All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53:6

As His love to us proposed it, and Christ, out of His affection to the honor of the Father and our welfare, accepted it, and was willing to undertake for us, and interpose between us and divine wrath, to stand in our stead and bear our sins, so it was then an act of justice to inflict; for God, being the Governor of the world, the great Lawgiver, righteously exacting obedience from His rational creature, upon the transgression of His law becomes a Judge, and His justice as a Ruler demands the punishment due for the transgression to be inflicted upon the offender. To preserve the rights of justice, and to give a contenting answer to the cry of mercy; to wipe off, as I may say, the tears of one, and smooth the frowns of the other, "God lays our iniquity upon Christ" (Isa. 53:6). Christ takes the punishment upon Himself, to bear our sins in His own body on the tree, and becomes responsible for our transgressions. And though He never sinned nor stood indebted to God in His own person, yet, becoming our Surety, and being made under the law, putting Himself in subjection to the law, and standing in our stead, He put Himself also under the obligations of it to punishment. And thus the weight of the whole punishment, due to man, was laid upon Christ by God as a just Judge. That which He could not have from the debtors, He might have from the Surety, who had put Himself under that obligation of payment, and so was bound to undergo all those curses the law might have inflicted upon us; and pursuant to this obligation God imputed our iniquities to Him, and punished them in Him. Stephen Charnock

Consistory

Elders: Mr. Derek Kattenberg, Mr. Craig Timmer
Deacons: Mr. Norm DeWit, Mr. Rick Rozeboom

Contacts

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NETHERLANDS REFORMED CONGREGATION

Sioux Falls, SD



*O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy
name in all the earth!*

Psal'm 8:9

Services at 9:30 a.m. and 2:30 or 6:30 p.m.

Website: nrcsf.com