

June 23, 2024

This Week: 9:30 a.m. Reading Service
6:30 p.m. Catechism Reading Service (LD45Q116)

Next Week: 9:30 a.m. Catechism Reading Service (LD45Q117)
6:30 p.m. Reading Service

Advance Notices:

-A Young Adult outdoor group activity is being planned for **June 28**. Please call or message Kourtney (712-470-2466) or Jonathan (712-470-4565) for more details. All post high school and young married adults are encouraged to attend.

-**July 7** services with Rev. Vergunst - Confession of Faith

-**July 28** 2:30 service with Rev. Evers

-All the Lord willing-

Collections: Today: 1st General Fund Next week: 1st General Fund
2nd Kingdom Boundaries 2nd Prison Diary

We Remember in Prayer:

-The city of Rock Valley and our church there which are flooded and all the people affected by the devastating flooding throughout Northwest Iowa and also our areas.

-Drake Kattenberg in his upcoming surgery

--Our widows and lonely ones, prodigal sons and daughters, and those with hidden crosses.

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.

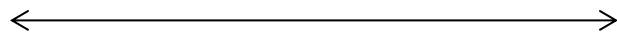
~Rev. G. Van Reenen

I will wash mine hands in innocency: So will I compass thine altar,
O LORD: LORD, I have loved the habitation of thy house, And the place
where thine honour dwelleth. (Psalm 26:6,8)

Deep within the heart of every one of God's people, there is a divine love. It is a heart that yearns for communion at God's altar and finds joy in the sanctuary of His presence. This heart, inclined towards prayer and praise, towards adoration of God and humble confession of sin, is a gift from God with a purpose. It is a gift that is never without significance and effectualness. It is a gift that reflects the glory of God, His supreme and glorious nature, and His boundless mercy, emphasizing our indebtedness to offer Him our utmost reverence and worship.

Consider the earnestness with which devout prophets, apostles, judges, lawgivers, and kings approached the worship of God. Their lives were marked by an unyielding dedication to honoring God through worship. If such Godly men understood the great importance of worship, how futile and misguided it is for us to neglect it or to approach it with indifference!

Let us take hold of the wisdom of this truth: that in the act of worship, we not only fulfill our duty but also acknowledge our absolute dependence on the Creator of heaven and earth. It is through worship that we pray he aligns our hearts with His will, find grace in His presence, and express gratitude for His unending goodness and grace. May we, like those who came before us, embrace worship not only as a duty but as a blessed privilege, a divine calling, and may it become, by God's grace, a worship in spirit and in truth.



Q. 185. How are we to pray?

A. We are to pray with an awful apprehension of the majesty of God, and deep sense of our own unworthiness, necessities, and sins; with penitent, thankful, and enlarged hearts; with understanding, faith, sincerity, fervency, love, and perseverance, waiting upon him, with humble submission to his will. Westminster Larger Catechism

Consistory

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

Contacts

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NETHERLANDS REFORMED CONGREGATION

Sioux Falls, SD



*O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in
wisdom hast thou made them all: the
earth is full of thy riches.
Psalm 104:24*

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