

June 18, 2023

This Week: 9:30 a.m. Reading Service
2:30 p.m. Rev. Witvoet

Next Week: 9:30 a.m. Reading Service
6:30 p.m. Catechism Reading Service (LD 7)

Thursday: 7:00 p.m., there will be a presentation in Sioux Center at the Interstates Building about the missionary work supported by Bonisa Mission. "Brother Charles" hopes to visit our area to speak about his work and experiences in China.

Advance Notices:

-Congregational Meeting Monday, **June 26**, to vote on a duo for calling of a minister. The duo is Rev. Hakvoort and Ds. Zondag.

-All the Lord willing-

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

We Remember in Prayer:

- Candidate Kleijer, who accepted a call to the Lethbridge congregation.
- Mr. & Mrs. Tyler and Elisabeth Maassen who were blessed with a healthy baby girl, Hailey Jane, on Monday, June 12.
- Our widows and lonely ones, the unborn, our married couples, prodigal sons and daughters, and all those with hidden crosses.

MEDITATIONS

'A Good Custom'

"They went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast" Luke 2:42

Mary and Joseph went up to Jerusalem with their child Jesus to visit the temple of God. It is notable that we read in our text that they did this "after the custom of the feast." Pay attention to the word "custom."

Some people sincerely think that you should only go to church out of desire. Oh, it sounds very nice to say that you should only go to church out of desire and not out of custom. That sounds sincere and honest. When you hear people state this, you may even be persuaded that those who go to church out of custom would be better off to stay home.

In addition, you may come to think that to have a day of rest at home is a wonderful way to spend the Lord's Day. You can delight in a day off of work in any way you please. It is, after all, a day of rest that the Lord wants to give you. Man's corrupt heart makes up these stories and shares them with others under the pretense of being honest. It is really amazing what people nowadays call honest.

Man's reasoning, however is nothing more than an invention to neutralize the commandment of God. For the Lord say very clearly in His Word that we are not allowed to forsake the assembling of the congregation. People will devise any invention to stay out of church. Man's heart is very cunning. And the devil also plays his part in order to keep people away from the proclamation of God's Word. That is because he delights in nothing more than in man's perdition. Man's own heart and the devil are allies. They both know how to devise schemes to stay on the wrong side of the church walls.

But it will be an eternal sorrow to have neglected the supervision of God's Word. It will be an eternal remorse to have had the way proclaimed but not to have walked in that way. The schemes and excuses of people destroy themselves. If they are parents, they set up their children for failure and destruction as well.

Is the issue simply one of going to church? It is definitely wrong not to go to church. So going to church is a good custom and staying away from church is a bad custom. If this is our logic, we prefer to agree with Mary and Joseph, who with their child Jesus went up to the temple out of custom. This was faithfulness to the commandment of the Lord.

The text does not say that they had no desire to go but went anyway. Why should desire and custom not go together? It was a joyful time of gathering to worship. We should do likewise. And even if you attend church out of sheer custom, the Word of God can strike you with truth and gain for eternity.

A minister can at times ascend the pulpit out of custom and a child of God can be seated beneath the pulpit out of custom. But blessed be God who still speaks, no matter what our motivation is for being in the house of the Lord. The Lord says in Psalm 50:23, "And to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God." It is a good custom to go to church. Is this also your custom? Is it the custom of your children?

~Rev. F. Bakker

The tongue of the just is as choice silver: the heart of the wicked is little worth. 21. The lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want of wisdom. Proverbs 10:20-21

The wisdom of refraining our lips must always be connected with diligence in improving our talent. If our tongue be our shame in the overflowing of sin: is it not also our glory? When "speaking of the things touching the king," or sketching the features of his transcendent loveliness; is it not then as choice silver, refined from this world's dross, and shining with heavenly brightness? Who would not eagerly gather up the silver scattered in the streets? And shall not we enrich our store from the choice silver of the just man's tongue, pouring out its precious instruction before us? If, as regards this world's wealth, the Lord's poor must say — "Silver and gold have I none;" at least they may scatter choice silver with a widely-extended blessing — "As poor, yet making many rich."

Observe also the usefulness of this member. If we be living with God, it will diffuse a salt, a heavenly leaven, a rich propagation of holiness in our various circles. The lips of the righteous feed many from the rich stores of "the indwelling word;" "ministering to them grace," the soul's true and proper nourishment! 'Their breath is food to others, as well as life to them.' When "the priest's lips keep knowledge, and they seek the law at his mouth," he feeds the church of God. And as our great Master broke the bread, and gave it to his disciples for their distribution; so does he now dispense to his servants heavenly provision, suitable, and abundantly sufficient for the need of their charge. And every Sabbath is the wondrous miracle displayed before our eyes. The imperishable bread multiplies in the breaking. The hungry, the mourners, the weary and fainting; yea, all that feel their need, are refreshed and invigorated.

The wicked — his coffers may be full. But his heart, being empty of the choice silver, is little worth. So far from feeding others, the fool dies himself for want of wisdom; or rather for want of heart to seek it. He despises the lips that would feed him, and 'dies of famine in the midst of the rich pastures of the Gospel.' Oh! how often are we reminded that sin is self-destruction!

~Charles Bridges

Consistory

Elders: Mr. Rick Rozeboom, Mr. Craig Timmer

Deacon: Mr. Norm DeWit

Contacts

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Sermon recordings: Mr. Ryan Rozeboom Website: nrcsf.com

Consistory meets the first Monday of the month at 10:00 a.m.

Netherlands Reformed Congregation

Sioux Falls, SD



*O give thanks unto the LORD; for he
is good: for his mercy endureth for
ever.*

Psalms 136:1

Church Times: 9:30 a.m. and 2:30 or 6:30 p.m.