July 30, 2023

This Week: 9:30 a.m. Reading Service

6:30 p.m. Catechism Reading Service (LD 12Q31)

Next Week: 9:30 a.m. Reading Service

6:30 p.m. Catechism Reading Service (LD 12Q32)

Advance Notices:

-August 13, 2:30 p.m. service with Rev. Adams

-August 20, 9:30 a.m. (baptism) and 2:30 p.m. services with Rev. Slingerland

-All the Lord willing-

Collections: Today: 1st General Fund Next week: 1st General Fund

2nd Alpha Center 2nd Disaster Relief

We Remember in Prayer:

-Our widows and lonely ones, the unborn, our married couples, prodigal sons and daughters, and all those with hidden crosses.

MEDITATIONS

A little that a righteous man hath

"Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, then ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." Now, this is rather striking language, isn't it? It almost startles us. Five words spoken with the understanding or five words received in the heart with the understanding better than ten thousand words that are not understood and that are in an unknown tongue. Five words graciously understood better than ten thousand words that are not understood. Now what a comparison and what a contrast! And one point is made transparently clear here: it is not how much religion we have; it is whether it is real. Better to have five words sealed in our conscience by the Holy Ghost than to be able to recite the whole Bible through from Genesis to Revelation. One of the Old English preachers used to ask this question: he used to say, "How big is your Bible?" Now I think you know what he meant. All of us have the same Bible in our hands and in our homes. He meant how much of the Bible was there that we possessed by a gracious understanding in our hearts. How big is our Bible?

And you see, it fits in with the wise man: "A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked." Oh, to have a

little that is real, a little that God has given us, a little of the Holy Ghost's work in our hearts, a little desire, a little prayer, a little of the tender fear of God, a little humility, a little hope, a little repentance, a little love. Someone said, "This big 'little." To possess something, however little, that is real, rather than to have an abundance and to find at last it is completely worthless. For beloved friends, the one thing that really matters is this: to have a religion that will take us to heaven at last. Oh, to have that "little that the righteous man hath." Oh, to have those five words spoken with the understanding because the Holy Ghost has sealed them home in our hearts! For that solemn day hastens on when the Lord will "sift the house of Israel...like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth." Satan has his sieve. God has His sieve. The difference is that Satan tries to get rid of the good grain in his sieve; God seeks to get rid of the chaff. When the Lord has done His sifting work in our heart, in our conscience, in our experience, oh to have that little left, those five words left, that one grain of vital godliness that can never fall to the ground. ~ B.A. Ramsbottom

A wise son heareth his father's instruction: but a scorner heareth not rebuke.

Such a wise son in filial reverence was Solomon himself. (Proverbs 4:3-4.) The connection however of instruction with rebuke mainly points us to that instruction, which is obtained by discipline. Here then we turn to our great Exemplar. Was not he a wise son, when his ears were opened to his Father's discipline? (Isaiah 50:5.) How did he condescend to this painful school to "learn obedience!" (Hebrews 5:8.) How good is it in our daily practical walk to keep our eyes steadily fixed on him, following him closely in this child-like habit!

But the proud spirit does not easily bend. He has never heard his father's instruction with deference. Soon therefore he takes "the scorner's seat." (Psalms 1:1.) When rebuke becomes necessary, he hears it not (Proverbs 15:12); turns from it to his own course at the extreme point from wisdom (Proverbs 12:1; Proverbs 15:5), on the brink of ruin (Proverbs 15:10; Pro 29:1); carrying about him a fearful mark of reprobation! (1 Samuel 2:25.) Let me remember — If I am reluctant to hear the faithful rebuke of men, I am prepared to resist the rebuke of God. And how soon may this stubborn revolt bring his long-suffering to an end (2 Chronicles 36:16), and my soul to destruction! (Jeremiah 5:3. Zephaniah 3:2.) 'From hardness of heart, and contempt of thy word and commandment, Good Lord, deliver me.'

How different are the feelings and the language of a soul under the first shinings in of the Sun of righteousness from the scoffing recklessness of the profane worldling, the rebellion and enmity of the self-righteous Pharisee, and the hard, unfeeling, talkative presumption of the dead professor. The mere doctrine of grace does nothing for the soul. As long as it is a mere notion or opinion, it has no more saving or sanctifying power than any other notion or opinion... How many, O how many of those who sit in our chapels amidst the saints of God are perishing in their sins with the Bible and hymn-book before their eyes, the sound of the gospel in their ears, the doctrine of grace in their lips, but the love of the world in their hearts. Not so with the soul under the teaching and blessing of God. Grace is to him a "charming sound," not because the word pleases his ear or the doctrine gratifies his mind, but because its inexpressible sweetness and power have reached his inmost soul.

~J.C. Philpot

One of the masterpieces of Satanic craft has been to effect a divorce between morality and religion, while God's plan is to join them inseparably together. Nor does our great enemy seem to have any marked preference for religion without morality over morality without religion. Why should he? Morality without religion is but a smooth way of descending to hell. Religion without morality is monstrous. Williams: "Neither painted hypocrites, nor self-righteous Pharisees, nor mere formal professors; but the true worshippers only of the true God will Jehovah admit to reside with him." A wicked life destroys all hope of salvation arising from any boasted experience, or the most flaming profession. Judgment, mercy and faith are weighty matters of the law, Matthew 23:23. If professed piety makes men no better, what is it worth? Clean hands and a pure heart must accompany any valid profession of religion. Spotless outward behavior without real sanctity of internal character proves no man to be on his way to glory. ~Plumer

Consistory

Moderator: Rev. Slingerland
Bulletin announcements: Mr. Craig Timmer nrcsfsd@gmail.com
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



I will sing a new song unto thee, O God: upon a psaltery and an instrument of ten strings will I sing praises unto thee.

Psalm 144:9

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