

## May 7, 2023

**This Week:** 9:30 a.m. Reading Service  
6:30 p.m. Catechism Reading Service (dB #2)

**Next Week:** 9:30 a.m. Reading Service  
6:30 p.m. Catechism Reading Service (dB #3)

### Advance Notices:

**May 17,** Rev. Slingerland hopes to be in our midst at 7:00 p.m. for an Ascension Day service.

**June 4,** Rev. Witvoet hopes to be in our midst at 2:30 p.m.  
-All the Lord willing-

**Collections:** Today: 1<sup>st</sup> General Fund    Next week: 1<sup>st</sup> General Fund  
2<sup>nd</sup> Prison Diary                                2<sup>nd</sup> Emeritus Fund

### 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

*Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.* – I Peter 1:17b

Our life here is but a vapour. We are but pilgrims and strangers on this earthly ball, mere sojourners, without fixed or settled habitation, and passing through this world as not our home or resting-place. The Apostle, therefore, bid us pass this time, whether long or short, of our earthly sojourn under the influence and in the exercise of godly fear.

We are surrounded with enemies, all seeking, as it were, our life, and therefore we are called upon to move with great caution, knowing how soon we may slip and fall, and thus wound our own consciences, grieve our friends, gratify our enemies, and bring upon ourselves a cloud of darkness which may long hover over our souls. Our life here below is not one of ease and quiet, but a warfare, a conflict, a race, a wrestling not with flesh and blood alone, but with principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places.

We have to dread ourselves more than anything or anybody else, and to view our flesh as our greatest enemy. This fear is not a slavish, legal fear, such as that which John speaks of, and of which he says that "it hath torment," but that holy, godly, and filial fear which is the first fruit and mark of covenant of grace, and is a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death. Where this fear is

absent, or even if not wholly absent, not in full exercise, we are sure to go wrong, for "by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil."

How needful, then, is it to pass the time of our sojourning here in the exercise of this godly, reverential fear! And let no one think that this filial fear is inconsistent with faith even in its highest risings, or without love in its sweetest enjoyments. In fact, it is only to those who fear His great Name that the Lord manifests Himself in His beauty and blessedness, for "the secret of the LORD is with them that fear Him, and to them (and to them only) does He show His covenant." Hart, therefore, sweetly says of the men that fear the Lord: *His secrets they shall share; His covenant shall learn; Guided by grace shall walk His ways; And heav'nly truths discern.*

We may observe also that there is a very close and intimate connection between this godly fear and being "holy in all manner of conversation." When do we drop into levity of conversation? When do light and frothy words fall from our lips? When do any of those hasty bursts of temper, or those fretful expressions, or that mere carnal, worldly talk to which we are naturally prone hover upon our lips and break forth, more or less unguardedly, from our tongue? Is it not when this godly fear is not playing its streams as a fountain of life to well water the soul and soften it into humility and love, and is not springing up in wholesome checks and godly admonitions to keep the tongue as with a bridle and to rule that little member which, though so little, if untamed, defileth the whole body? But if this fear be in exercise it will restrain that levity of speech which not only grieves and wounds our own conscience, but is often a stumbling-block to the world, a bad example to the family of God, and a weapon in the hand of Satan to bring death into their soul.

We should do well to ponder the words of the Apostle and to carry them with us when we are brought into conversation with others in the daily walks of life: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. iv. 29, 30).  
~J.C. Philpot

TRUE CHRISTIANITY. There is a common, worldly kind of Christianity in this day, which many have, and think they have enough, a cheap Christianity which offends nobody, and requires no sacrifice, which costs nothing, and is worth nothing. Next to praying there is nothing so important in practical religion as Bible reading. By reading that book we may learn what to believe, what to be, and what to do; how to live with comfort, and how to die in peace. Happy is that man who possesses a Bible! Happier still is he who reads it! Happiest of all is he who not only reads it, but obeys it, and makes it the rule of his faith and practice! ~J.C. Ryle

The study of wisdom in the word of God is here commended to us with affectionate earnestness, and with a beautiful variety of imagery. Let us ponder these valuable rules for practical application.

Let the whole mind and heart be occupied with it. Keep it as the daily means of life. (Proverbs 3:21-22; Proverbs 4:4, Proverbs 4:13. Isaiah 55:2-3. Jeremiah 22:15.) Sir Matthew Hale told his children — 'If I omit reading a portion of Scripture in the morning, it never goes well with me through the day.' Lay it up (Proverbs 10:14. Deuteronomy 11:18. Luke 2:19, Luke 2:51) carefully, not on our shelves, but on our hearts. Let the whole Word of God be our precious treasure. Receive the promises from his grace with simple affiance, and the commandments from his holiness with ready obedience. Stand with your eye in the land of promise; but with your feet "in the land of uprightness." (Psalms 143:10.)

Maintain a jealous regard for the law. What care is necessary to keep the apple of the eye — that most tender part of the most tender member! (Deuteronomy 32:10. Psalms 17:8. Zechariah 2:8.) With the same care preserve the integrity of the law. Let every part of it have its full weight. To explain it away, or to lower its requirements, breaks down the barrier, and gives an easy entrance to temptation. The sensual sinner is often a covert infidel.

Let it be at hand for constant use. Bind them upon thy fingers (Pro 3:3. Deuteronomy 6:8; Deuteronomy 11:18); that, being always in sight, they may be always ready for the present moment. And for their practical influence, write them upon the table of thine heart. Oh! my God! this is thy Almighty work (Isaiah 26:12. 2 Corinthians 3:3.) But thou hast engaged to do it for thy people (Jeremiah 31:33.) I "take hold of thy covenant." Lord! Seal thy promised grace.

~Charles Bridges on Proverbs 7:1-5

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Consistory

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# Netherlands Reformed Congregation

Sioux Falls, SD



*I was glad when they said unto me, Let  
us go into the house of the LORD.*

*Psalms 122:1*

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