

July 30, 2023

This Week: 9:30 a.m. Reading Service
6:30 p.m. Catechism Reading Service (LD12 Q32)

Next Week: 9:30 a.m. Catechism Reading Service (LD13)
2:30 p.m. Rev. Adams

Advance Notices:

-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 Disaster Relief 2nd Hudson Taylor

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

The most important matter with us is, what are we? By the grace of God, have we been stopped in our blind zeal as Pharisees, or have we been plucked as brands out of the fire as profligates? Can we hope that the grace of God hath quickened us? Are we in the narrow path to life? How dwelleth the love of God in us? Can we hope that by grace we have broken hearts and contrite spirits? Can we tell what God has done for our souls? Are we anxious to say with David, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul"? The Scriptures do not give any encouragement to those professing religion who have no soul trouble; they are out of the secret, they fear not God, nor will He show unto them His covenant for their comfort and encouragement. "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" If you are not among those who are calling upon God to bless their souls, or among those who are calling upon their souls to bless God, I would by no means deceive you. Such are strangers to vital godliness, whether they profess religion or not. If they profess, they have the form without the power, a name to live whilst dead in sin; for if your souls were really quickened, you would surely pray and cry for mercy, and would earnestly ask God to bless your souls. There is a great difference between a babe in grace and a father in Christ; but both are safe as they stand in the glorious covenant of God, ordered in all things and sure.

~W. Tiptaft

God brought Israel out of Egypt with an high hand, but did He set them down on the other side the Red Sea, to find and force their way to Canaan, by their own policy or power? When He had opened the iron gate of their house of bondage, and brought them into the open fields, did He vanish as the angel from Peter, when out of prison? No, "The Lord thy God bare thee as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went," Deut. 1:31. This doth lively set forth the saint's march to heaven; God brings a soul out of spiritual Egypt by His converting grace, that is, the "day of his power", wherein He makes the soul willing to come out of Satan's clutches. Now when the saint is upon his march, all the country riseth upon him. How shall this poor creature pass the pikes, and get safely by all his enemies' borders? God himself enfolds him in the arm of His everlasting strength. "We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation", 1 Pet 1:5. The power of God is that shoulder on which Christ carries His sheep home, rejoicing all the way He goes. These everlasting arms of His strength are those eagles' wings, upon which the saints are both tenderly and securely conveyed to glory.

~ William Gurnall

He restoreth my soul:

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

This divine conduct to the people of God is not for their sakes, but for his name's sake. Our names are worthless. Our merits are naught. God is self-moved. "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins," Isaiah 43:25. Compare Isaiah 48:9, 11; Ezekiel 32:22. That which moves God to save his people is found in him, not in them. This should be known and remembered first, because it is true; secondly, because it is greatly to the glory of divine grace to select undeserving objects; and thirdly, because if God found in himself cause for beginning our salvation, and if he never changes, then shall he find in himself cause for crowning with glory the work of salvation begun in us. If he loved and pitied us when enemies, much more he will love and save us when friends. Stier: "Not for any merit of mine, but out of free grace." Poole: "Not for any worth in me, but merely for the demonstration and glory of his justice, and faithfulness, and goodness." Diodati: "Without having regard to any merit of mine, nor to my faults and unworthiness, but to make use of his goodness, and fulfil the truth of his promises." Calvin: "Certainly his choosing us to be his sheep, and his performing towards us all the offices of a Shepherd, is a blessing which proceeds entirely from his free and sovereign goodness." Unmerited grace will finish what it began.

~William S Plumer

The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.

Another vivid contrast of the sluggard with the diligent! The sluggard desires the gain of diligence, without the diligence that gains. He would be wise without study, and rich without labor. His religion is of the same heartless character. He desires to overcome his bad habits, to enjoy the happiness of God's people. So far well. Desires are a part of religion. There can be no attainment without them. Many have not even the desire. They ridicule it as enthusiasm. Yet the sluggard hath nothing, because it is desire without effort. 'He ever desireth; but he taketh no pains to get any thing.' He would fain go to heaven, if a morning dream would carry him there. And many a wish (alas! — of prayer he knows nothing) he sighs for "the death of the righteous." He would gladly be a Christian, if it cost him no trouble. His duties are a force upon him; and when they are over, he feels as if relieved from a heavy weight. This is no rare case. Often do we hear the cry — and that year after year — 'I desire to be a child of God.' And yet the soul continues at the same point; or rather settles down more resolutely in a lifeless profession. 'Hell' — says an old writer — 'is paved with such desires.'

Oh! be industrious — if anywhere — in religion. Eternity is at stake. Hours, days are lost. Soon they come to years; and for want of energy, all is lost. Heartless wishes will not give life. The halting step will not bring us to God. A few minutes' cold prayers will not seize the prize. To expect the blessing without diligence is delusion.

~Charles Bridges

"Buy the truth, and sell it not" (Proverbs 23:23a) Take to heart the wise counsel of Solomon, for we have such a deceitful heart. Searching God's Word and the writings of our forefathers is so necessary. Ask the Lord that you may be occupied with desire and zeal to distinguish the truth from the lie, and reality from a semblance of the truth. The temptations regarding the doctrine of truth surround us.

~Rev. J. Mol

Consistory

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Contacts

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

Netherlands Reformed Congregation

Sioux Falls, SD



*I will extol thee, my God, O king; and I
will bless thy name for ever and ever.*

Psalms 145:1

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