

August 25, 2024

"For ye are many..." (1Kings 18:25b).

This Week: 9:30 a.m. Reading Service
6:30 p.m. Catechism Reading Service (LD50)

Next Week: 9:30 a.m. Catechism Reading Service (LD51)
6:30 p.m. Reading Service

Advance Notices:

September 11 6:00 p.m. Church Picnic
September 22 2:30 p.m. service with Rev. Baan

-All the Lord willing-

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

Heidelberg Catechism – We plan to read the sermons by Rev. Sonnevelt next. Please let the consistory know if you need the books.

We Remember in Prayer:

- The call sent out to Rev. Baan to be our shepherd.
- Our widows and lonely ones, our families, prodigal sons and daughters, and those with hidden crosses.

MEDITATIONS

Christ has assumed our human nature in order to suffer and die in that nature and to satisfy Divine justice in that nature, to obtain by His passive and active obedience a place with God for people who end up without a place anywhere. Oh, if God comes in our life we cannot find rest anywhere; then God's justice pursues us, then we must die and meet God.

Do you know what you then experience? That Bethlehem also falls away. We must have that Child in that manger, for Bethlehem and Rome fall by the wayside. I see world powers represented in Rome and religion reigning supreme in Bethlehem. But in that Child, I see the eternal wonder of God. There I see the Saviour, the Surety, and Mediator, Who perfectly accomplishes the Father's will to save His Church and to redeem it from eternal perdition.

~Rev. W.C. Lamain

Upon Mt. Carmel are the four hundred fifty prophets of Baal and the people who halt between two opinions. Also, Elijah, the servant of the Most High God is there. Was he intimidated by the pomp and splendor of those who intend to call upon Baal to send fire from heaven? No, but he does say, "For ye are many..."

The devil has many followers, and what can Elijah do? He observes how the wood is placed and the animal slain for a sacrifice, and then all is finished except there is no fire. Their god, Baal, must send the fire.

Do you understand? Also today there are many upon the field of religion. Much is being done, but there will come a time that we must say, "But where is the fire? Where may you see that there is a God who is speaking?"

Elijah stands there, seemingly by himself, but that is deceiving, because God in heaven is with His servant. Elijah knows that ultimately it will be He who speaks when His servant calls upon Him.

Do you see this, young people? It is not the multitudes, not the many voices today, saying, "Follow us and we will show you a much easier way to be saved." The question is, "Is there fire there? Is the Lord there?"

Do you believe that it is His work? Where do you stand? With those who cannot find the voice of the Lord or with Elijah—a man who may call upon the Lord and know that His God will hear and answer him?

~Rev. J. den Hoed

Shaped for Heaven

I heard of a man who during the Great Depression lost his job, his wife, his home, and his fortune. He hung on tightly to the one thing he did have left—his faith. One day he stopped to watch some men doing stonework on a church. One of the workers was chiseling a triangular piece of stone. He asked the worker: "What are you going to do with that?"

The worker replied: "See that little opening up there near the spire? Well, I'm shaping this down here, so it will fit in up there."

As the man walked away, tears filled his eyes, for it seemed that God had spoken through that worker to explain the ordeal he was going through: "I'm shaping you down here, so you will fit in up there." May we remember to thank the Lord for all the "shaping" He does in our lives, which works to bring us closer to Him.

~Taken from The Friendly Companion

The fear of the Lord.

Sometimes it arises from faith in the mercy and goodness of God. When the heart of man has once felt a sweet taste of God's goodness, and found that all happiness consists only in His favor, it is struck with such an inward awe and reverence, that it would not displease His majesty for anything. Rather, it would do whatever it knows to be pleasing and acceptable to Him.

Sometimes again, awe and dread of the divine majesty arises from distrust. When a man's heart doubts God's mercy, and expects nothing but vengeance, the very thought of God strikes an awe or rather dread into him, and so makes him fear God.

From this double cause of fear, where one is contrary to another, has arisen that usual distinction of a filial, or son-like, fear, and a servile, or slavish fear. This distinction is grounded on these words of the apostle, "ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear [this is a servile fear]; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:15). This causes a filial fear. The filial fear is such a fear as dutiful children bear to their fathers. But the servile fear is such as bond-slaves bear to their masters. A son simply fears to offend or displease his father, so that his obedience is accomplished with love. A bond-slave fears nothing but the punishment of his offense, so that his obedience is joined with hatred. Such a man fears not to sin, but to burn in hell for sin.

~William Gouge

My son, give me thine heart

If thou hast not done it, do it now. Let there be no half-giving. To hesitate — to delay — is to refuse. And why should you delay? Has Satan been so good a Master, that you are reluctant to leave him? Can you find a better friend than Him, who hath cared so long for you, than Him who hath died for you? Now then, with the help of the Divine Spirit, without whom this cannot be done — resolve, decide — once and for all — forever. Oh my God! thy grace alone can enable me. I am ashamed of the gift. Nothing can be more unworthy. But because it is the purchase of thy death, and thou callest for it, it is thine own, it shall be thine. Take it then as it is. Make it what it is not. Keep it with thyself. Bind it so close to thee with the cords of love, that it may never cast a wishful look away from thee. Had I a thousand hearts, all should be thine. Thou alone canst fill it. Thou alone art worthy of it. Exalt thine own throne in it forever. Think how all hangs on this point. Give it; all the blessings of the gospel are yours. Refuse; you trample them under your feet; you live a life of base rebellion to your best friend, and of cruel madness to your own soul; you live without Christ; you will die without hope; accursed, lost forever. The command of authority is an invitation of love.

~Charles Bridges

NETHERLANDS REFORMED CONGREGATION

Sioux Falls, SD



*Give unto the LORD the glory due unto
his name; worship the LORD in the
beauty of holiness. Psalm 29:2*

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