April 7, 2024

This Week: 9:30 a.m. Reading Service (Classes following)

6:30 p.m. Catechism Reading Service (LD38)

Next Week: 9:30 a.m. Catechism Reading Service (LD39)

6:30 p.m. Reading Service

Tuesday: Asaph Choir practice instead of Thursday

Friday: Youth activity 10th grade and up at 7:00 PM, at Air Madness

Advance Notices:

April 17 7:00 p.m. midweek service with Ds. Evers April 21 2:30 p.m. service with Ds. Evers (baptism)
-All the Lord willing-

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

2nd Prison Diary 2nd Disaster Relief

Collections Received: General Fund \$1117.00

Kingdom Boundaries \$224.00 Israel Mission \$223.00 NAGMission \$1622.00 Hudson Taylor \$265.00

New Periodicals: Paul, Mission Board letter, Disaster Relief magazine, and Blue Books

We Remember in Prayer:

-The call which has gone out to Rev. Maljaars to be our shepherd

MEDITATIONS

"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna." Rev. 2:17

Probably there are some readers who will ask: What must we do to have another revival in the church? Now I think of good and anxious people who mean well and are depressed over the spiritual and moral decay we find not only in society and in the church, but also in the personal life of God's people. They are seeking the means to get a revival started. This is good that they are concerned, but what are the means which should be used? Are we not convinced by now that revival is the work of the Holy Ghost? Some, as Abraham when he took Hagar for his wife, are trying to help the Lord a little.

We all agree we are living in dark times, but can we say that it drives us out to the Lord? Do not forget that only the Holy Spirit can bring new life to the valley of dead men's bones. This is the condition of the church of today. Of course, we would be thankful if the Lord would give a revival among us, and it should be our daily prayer that the Lord would reveal Himself more among us as it has been in former days. No, we don't want to cut off everything, but we must be very careful as the history of the church teaches us. Why are we so concerned about imitation? We have only one soul for a neverending eternity and in our days the prince of darkness is working so hard, through wickedness or false religion, to get all power on earth. The Lord says in His Word: "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the LORD of Hosts" (Zech. 4:6b). We do not feel at home where there is much enthusiasm in revival meetings, but where the life of a poor sinner is missing. There man has to do it himself and that means free will and nothing of the Lord.

As we have said before, we must emphasize the necessity of prayer. The reason that little is heard and seen of God's work is because our inner rooms are so empty. Not for, but upon, prayer the Lord does great things. It is true we don't know how to pray, but we should ask the Lord to instruct us in this. If it truly becomes a need in our life, then the Lord will send His Spirit for the first time or by renewal.

In regeneration a dead sinner is called to life. Then a revival comes in the life of such a person. In the valley of dead men's bones a noise will be heard — a noise of weeping and supplication before the Lord, not only to confess our sins, but also to ask for the continual leading of the Lord in our life. From the vision of Ezekiel we can learn it is not sufficient to have the Word only, the Spirit must be added to it. The condition of the church in general today can be compared to a valley of dead men's bones, which is not such a nice picture, but I am afraid it is the truth. May it become our prayer, people of God, that a real revival in our personal life, in our families, but also in the church and society, may take place. This would mean great joy for our soul but, above all, it would lead to the glory of God.

-Rev. A. M. den Boer

Lord, visit Thy church in this dark evil day;
O keep us lest haply we swerve;
And graciously listen as humbly we pray
For a blessing we do not deserve.
We pray for a pastor to rule us in love,
To edify, comfort and feed;
As wise as a serpent, as meek as a dove,
Made willing and able to lead.
A father to counsel, a shepherd to guide,
A brother to visit the sick;

A steward with wisdom and skill to provide,
With feelings and sympathies quick.
We crave such a leader our course to attend
As long as we sojourn on earth;
Dear Jesus, in love Thine ambassador send,
And teach us to value his worth.
-F. Windridge

Prayer and Fasting

While calling for a day of prayer and fasting is very much considered a thing of the past in our day and, in many cases, often misunderstood and abused, and as with many other means that God has given us to use, our corruption tends to trust in the means instead of the Lord who has provided them. Yet, there is a right way to observe them, having a long Biblical and Reformed precedent based upon the Scriptures. In this short, very limited meditation, it is impossible to do justice to a topic preached to the faithful over the church's long history. Yet it would seem unprofitable to call the congregation together for such a day without some understanding of what it is and expose myths surrounding it. As all things are to be based upon the Scriptures, let us look at three examples from them and briefly apply this biblical practice.

In Ezra 8, Ezra proclaims a payer and fast to seek God in order to receive the protection needed for all who were making the long journey back to the land of Israel. Prior to this, Ezra had spoken highly of the Lord to the king and would have now been ashamed to ask the king for a band of horsemen and soldiers to protect them. Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the LORD our God. (Ps 20)

In II Samuel 12, the Lord sends Nathan to expose David's sins of adultery and murder, of which he was guilty. Following the proclamation of the judgment against his house and David's confession of sin, Nathan tells David that the child shall surely die. David besought the Lord for the child and fasted. After seven days, the child died, David arose, anointed himself, went to the house of the Lord to worship, and then broke his fast.

In Acts 14, after ordaining men to Church office, Paul prayed with fasting and commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

In summary, we can see from the Scriptures that whether the prayer was answered in the manner as it was expressed, the opposite of the supplication, or commending the present action into the hands of the Lord for future blessing, the supplicants did not desire to turn the will of God to their own wills, quite the contrary. Knowing that the will of the Lord is supreme over all, let us entrust ourselves and the outcome of these means into the hand of the Lord, for we are in a great strait: let us fall now into the hands of the Lord; for his mercies are great.

NETHERLANDS REFORMED CONGREGATION

Sioux Falls, SD



For the LORD is our defence; and the Holy One of Israel is our king. Psalm 89:18

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