

There is another way we keep the unity:
“with all lowliness and meekness”. In short,
with humility.

Keeping the Unity, Lim Yang Zhi

“Crossing the Jordan” is never easy for
anyone to face, nor is it easy to watch our
loved ones crossing this river.

**Crossing The Jordan, Elder Leong
Fai Chong**

The same command also applies to New
Testament believers. God commands us to
ask for the old paths. There are a few things
that these old paths refer to...

**The Importance of History and Reflecting
on the Past, Aaron Lim**



salt shakers
joel 3:16 matthew 5:16

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***“Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways,
and see, and ask for the old paths,
where is the good way, and walk therein,
and ye shall find rest for your souls...”***



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WELCOME TO THE 37TH ISSUE OF SALT SHAKERS!

Dear Readers,

The committee is pleased to announce several developments which will be evident in future issues of Salt Shakers. The first is in the way content for the magazine is planned: previously, planning of content was entirely in the hands of the Salt Shakers chairman, who would plan all the content for the year alone and submit it to the committee for approval. This task is clearly a very heavy one for one man to carry alone, and that is perhaps a testimony to the boundless energy and dedication of our former and founding chairman Josiah.

Last year, Salt Shakers began to put in place a new system whereby the content for the whole year ahead is jointly planned and discussed by a panel consisting of three Salt Shakers committee members, plus the Covenant Keepers (CERC's youth group) chairman. By God's grace, the planning meetings have been very profitable and the fruits of this panel's work will begin to be evident in issues from this March onwards. It is our hope that this new planning system improves the accountability, coordination, quality, and diversity of Salt Shakers topics, and that the magazine may continue to bring solidly Reformed articles for the edification of our dear readers.

Related to this work, the content planners will plan to trial a new concept of having a unified theme throughout the year. In this vein, each issue of Salt Shakers from July to November's this year will follow the theme of "A Pilgrim's Journey". Each issue will thus feature one main article on aspects of our journey as strangers and pilgrims on earth, and various content in the magazine will also be related to the overall topic. If this trial proves successful, all six issues of 2017 will follow a new theme as well.

With each calendar year following an overarching general theme, we hope that these important Biblical truths will be engrained and remembered in the hearts of our readers as we consider them together at length over the course of one year. The cover design of the issues will also be related to the theme, so keep an eye out for July's issue and see if you can spot how the design reflects the theme!

If you like these changes or have comments on how Salt Shakers can be improved, please do send us your letters and feedback! In the meantime, do enjoy reading this issue, and remember to pass the salt!

Pro Rege,
Lee Yang

Let Thine Eyes Observe My Ways

>> Paul Liu



Paul Liu is a confessing adult in CERC and is the Editor of Salt Shakers.

My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways. For a whore is a deep ditch; and a strange woman is a narrow pit. She also lieth in wait as for a prey, and increaseth the transgressors among men. Proverbs 23:26-28

“Let thine eyes observe my ways” reveals what I know only too well: my eyes rest where my heart lies. And if Father wants all of my heart, then he also requires my eyes. My physical eyes, as well as the eyes of my heart, are prone to wander and sin, just as my heart is filthy and dead without the saving work of Jesus. So Father gives my eyes a job—to observe His ways.

The Eyes

Striking how all things worldly and ungodly (1 John 2:16) begin with the eyes, whether those physical ones that lie in my head, or the eyes of my heart. “The lust of the flesh” is *why* I see (the evil desires of my heart), “the lust of the eyes” is *what* I see (the evil desires of the eyes), and “the pride of life” is *how* I see (the perception of comparing eyes and hearts).

The old heart in me desires the weak and beggarly things that are not befitting of a *son*. It lusts and seeks after earthly and temporal satisfactions; it would rather have pottage than the birthright of eternal riches; it would rather have the fish and cucumbers of Egypt than the faithful giving of heavenly manna; it would rather have a daughter of the Philistines than one of God’s people. These fleshly desires of the heart give reason for me to look around and sin by seeking after things that are ungodly and displeasing to Father.

My eyes love to look upon what the eyes of my heart are gazing upon. Fleeting riches and earthly possessions please the eyes which crave after what the heart wants. More than that, my sinful eyes would rather indulge in the sins of depraved men than behold the glory of God. These weak eyes would rather lap up vomit over and over again than feast at the table prepared by the LORD. Without the saving and sanctifying work of the cross, what my eyes lust after is a continual sin against my Creator (Psalm 51:3).

How I see the world around me is tainted with my sinful eyes. I am jealous when I have less, and I am proud when I have more. Even the good things that Father has given others can be an occasion for me to be vain in my imaginations. My eyes are always comparing, and they are evil to accuse Father because of His goodness to others (Matthew 20:15). The eyes of my heart would at all times see myself

greater than everyone else—“pride of life” does not simply mean pride that happens in life, but more than that - it is a lifestyle of being proud.

Yes, Father has much reason to ask that my eyes be kept busy observing His ways—for they are so prone to wander and sin against Him in so many ways. However, there is a specific reason for this instruction here, and we read about it in verses 27 and 28. Father knows me and my heart so intimately, and in the same way, He knows that His sons have a common weakness. So Father’s words of wisdom here are for a very specific purpose—to keep our eyes off the “whore” and “strange woman”.

The Whore

The “whore” and “strange woman” are temptresses who by sexual enticement would compete with Father for my eyes and heart. They, too, say “Give me your heart, and look at my ways...” The corruption in me is drawn to such temptation; it devises to seek after such lusts, and even delights in such sin where no love is (1 Corinthians 13:6). God’s Word is clear when He says, “Whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” There is little left for such a one as I to say other than that I stand in need of a Saviour.

It is of Father’s infinite goodness and mercy that He warns me about the “strange woman” in His Word. If I believe what He says and am

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Whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. ”

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obedient, then I shall not need to suffer needlessly in the wilderness of sin. More than that, the blessings of protection and peace are surely mine since Father’s words and warnings are always true (Jeremiah 7:23).

The Ditch and the Pit

The “whore” is described as a deep ditch and a narrow pit. These are two terrible things to fall into for various reasons. First, these are not just gentle depressions in the ground, but are sudden steep descents that would cause serious injury and setback when one falls into them. In the same way, being ensnared by sexual temptations and sins will cause real and severe damage to my spiritual life. Being in a ditch or a pit separates one from the view and fellowship of others. When I sin, I know that Father in His holiness hides His face from my sinful self, and to be out of His presence and fellowship is unbearable for someone who lives only because of His grace.

Second, it is terrible to fall into these places because they are difficult, if not impossible, for me to escape from.

It is either too high to climb out or there is simply not enough space to manoeuvre a way out. Father warns that for me, son, sexual sins when fallen into will not be easily escaped from. There are many things I must take note of in my Christian life, but from the loving heart of Father God, He tells me to be especially careful to avoid the “whore”.

Third, falling into a ditch or pit is an utter waste of time. If I fall into a pit, I would need to spend hours waiting for someone to come along and pull me out. It does not make me stronger because it is in no way a form of exercise, and I would just have to continue on from where I left off before falling. Worse still, I may be left with an injury or two. It is the same spiritually. As the children of Israel spent years going in circles and going nowhere in the wilderness, so I can also waste much spiritual time and energy if I fall into this deep ditch or narrow pit.

To prevent myself from falling, my eyes have to be fully alert and watching out for such temptations that are especially damaging to me.

The Predator

Father also warns that the “whore” is not simply a trap in the ground who passively waits for me to fall into. She is a predator who conceals herself and waits silently for her chance to pounce, bring me down, and tear me apart.

It is indeed true that the “whore” hunts in such a manner. It could be an unexpected scene from a show that was initially thought as harmless to watch; it could be an advertisement on television or online; or it could begin with some innocent material shared on social media. For a great king after God’s own heart, it was

when he lost sight of the war, went up to the roof of his house to relax after a soothing nap, and instead caught sight of what would destroy him. Whether Bathsheba was innocent in all this is beside the point, because the more important reality is that the “whore” always lies in wait—hidden, quiet, and ready. The fact is that she is always there, and her expertise in disguise or our carelessness and letting down of our guard will give her the opportunity to strike when we are least prepared.

Father’s warning does not tell me to go on the offensive against the predator—to hunt or be hunted; He tells me simply, “Son, when it comes to her, be humble and know you are the prey.” A prey knows that he must avoid the predator and run for his life—literally; a prey knows that if he is faced with the predator he had better use the right weapons to fend off the attack; and a prey knows that he is weakest and most likely to be caught when he is proud.

God’s Word tells me to flee fornication (1 Corinthians 6:18) and youthful lusts (2 Timothy 2:22). If I shall come face to face with temptation, Jesus my Lord has given me the perfect example that I should use the Word of God and His whole armour to fend off the devil and his attacks (Matthew 4:1-11, Ephesians 6:10-18). Also, to be always watching and praying on my knees is the strongest I can be as a prey (Matthew 26:41).

To prevent myself from being hunted, my eyes have to be sharp and careful to detect the presence of this “whore” who lies in wait for her prey.

The Evil

The aim of her sexual enticements is to make me—and as many sons as she can cause to fall—transgress

against Father, especially with regards to his faithfulness. When I fall into temptation, I sin first of all against Father, and I disappoint first of all my faithful and loving Father (Psalm 51:4). I disregard the loving words that Father has spoken to me; I despise the heart that He has first given to me; I take my heart—yes, the one that belongs to Father—and hand it over to the “whore”, and cause my eyes observe her ways. I begin to walk in the dreadful way of unfaithfulness.

This unfaithfulness to Father is a disease that corrupts the very fountain of good in my life which causes unfaithfulness to flow throughout every other area in my life. Father warns me that the evil of this “whore” is not simple and short-lived. She is here to hunt and to destroy faithful lives and souls (Proverbs 6:26,32), and not just a few, but as many as she can find.

Because of that, she is not resting, but very “diligent” in her work. Like the devil himself, she walks about all day long seeking to increase the number of her kills. To escape her snares, my eyes have to be unclouded—sober; my eyes have to be carefully watching—vigilant (1 Peter 5:8); and my eyes have to be looking to Father.

The Way Out

Father has described to me a terrifying enemy, one so deadly and who sounds impossible to stop. But I must not

forget, that this enemy is nothing to Father, for she has already been defeated at the cross of my Lord Jesus Christ. Father already gave the solution when He told me to observe His ways, and then He describes this fallen and defeated foe.

The way out is one of deliverance; the Way is my salvation (John 14:6). It is not how much a struggle I can put up, and it is not how I can outwit this bloodthirsty enemy. Though I am ensnared and though I am cast down, Father asks me to look and observe His ways. His way for His loved ones—and me—is the way of deliverance and salvation. He does not forsake those whom He loves, and He certainly does not send those whom He loves into destruction and condemnation; those whom He loves, He is powerful to save and deliver.

If I am in Christ Jesus, then I am righteous, and Father’s vow is upon me that He shall deliver me (Psalm 34:19). Father has already defeated this enemy through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, and He shall fight for me to bring me safely home (Deuteronomy 3:22, Exodus 14:14, Psalm 35). I am strengthened as I observe Father’s way, and this “whore” melts away and is foiled over and over again in her attempts to destroy me (Proverbs 10:29).

As I observe Father’s ways in thankfulness, I love more and more to give my heart and my eyes to Him.

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I am strengthened as I observe Father’s way, and this “whore” melts away and is foiled over and over again... ”

And if those eyes are properly kept, and are alert and vigilant for the “whore”, then I shall be blessed and protected. And yet, if in weakness I shall lose my guard, fall prey to the enemy, and become unfaithful to Father, then I know to flee to the cross, confess my sins, and humbly ask for forgiveness. Faithfulness is not found in me; but in the cross, Father is faithful and just to forgive with infinite love and mercy (1 John 1:9).

I am undeserving—how blessed it is for such a Father to call me *son!*

1 John 2:1 “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:”

“ How I see the world around me is tainted with my sinful eyes. I am jealous when I have less, and I am proud when I have more. Even the good things that Father has given others can be an occasion for me to be vain in my imaginations. ”

FINANCING A CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

>> Ivan Chew



Ivan Chew is a confessing young adult in CERC.

To most of us in Singapore, “education” in school would be the gathering of facts and application of learned concepts and skills. We also had the occasional “national education” programmes that taught us to be good citizens and effective contributors to our country. We were developed to be problem solvers who were keenly results-oriented. But God was hardly, if not ever, mentioned in class.

The skills and knowledge taught by public schools are certainly important. Every child needs to be taught skills for work and interaction - how to live in this world, how to live lawfully, how to find his calling and station in this life. However, it is much more important to be taught how to deal with his sins and how to enjoy God’s creation. Most importantly, the child must be taught how to glorify God and to love Him through all these things—*for life without God is meaningless, and likewise this education or training if done without God is meaningless* (Huisken, 1969).

We have thus formed a society which seeks to establish a Christian school, that we may train “our children up in the fear of the Lord, to equip them to serve God and enable them to live as a friend-servant of God” (Dykstra, 1999) in this life.

But such an education does not come cheap. To list some obvious expenses: we need teachers who are well-trained and talented in communicating and engaging their students, we need

facilities and equipment to provide technical training and exposure and we also need textbooks and various teaching materials for the classroom.

Here are some numbers for consideration: Education makes up about 20% of our government’s expenditure, an estimated SGD 12.0 billion a year (Ministry of Education, 2016). An unsubsidised student in a primary school pays about \$550 per month (Hui, 2016). With our lack of scale, we can expect to be paying more than this amount. It should be quite evident that a school will not be able to function without strong financial commitment.

On whom does this financial responsibility fall upon? Who is to provide this source of commitment? It would be us—every member of CERC. In Psalm 78, the call to provide Christian education was not given only to parents. Instead, Asaph gave this address to all the people of God. This implies that the youths, the singles, those without children, and even parents who have already once paid for their own children’s fees, all share in the responsibility to provide good Christian education to the children of the Covenant.

Let us consider how we can achieve strong and sustainable financial commitment to the work.

First, prior to financial commitment comes a **dedication to providing good Christian education**. This would require confident and sure

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Ephesians 6:4
And, ye fathers,
provoke not your
children to wrath:
but bring them
up in the nurture
and admonition of
the Lord. ”

answers to questions such as: Why are we spending so much money? Why are we paying a significant amount more than the subsidised rates that we can get at public schools? Why are we putting in so much more effort as compared to the convenience we get by registering our children at public schools? Only with an unwavering dedication to the work will we achieve strong and sustainable financial commitment—for it should be our hope that we continue to provide Christian education as long as God permits. In this intermediary period, we should make an effort to assess the benefits of Christian education and to ask questions and seek clarification in order to reaffirm and firmly root our dedication to this work.

Second, we can achieve such commitment through each member's **active and diligent involvement**. Being actively involved in the society's meetings and events will cause us to be aware of all the challenges and needs of the work, allowing us to give appropriately when required. Being diligent in studying the investigation reports of the board and rendering one's expertise where possible will also help the board reduce expenses.

Third, financial commitment to the work will only be achieved through **sacrificial giving and prioritising the work before ourselves**. "Simple luxuries" like a regular cup of espresso or Gong Cha (a branded tea beverage

“ ...for life without God is meaningless, and likewise this education or training if done without God is meaningless (Huisken, 1969). ”

in Singapore), a monthly meal at a restaurant or a yearly holiday all add up to a significant amount of money annually. Being a good steward of the things God gives us requires that these monies be spent for God's kingdom and not on ourselves. Therefore, the giving up of these luxuries might be necessary if the work requires it.

Last, we can achieve strong and sustainable financial commitment to the work through the **board's good stewardship**. With good financial planning and efficient use of resources, the board will be able to minimise the financial requirements of providing Christian education. Clearly defined needs and accurate forecasting would prevent members from being financially over-burdened and allow us to contribute appropriately. The men on the board, and those who assist in their research and work, are required to have foresight and prudence in these matters.

All in all, let our labours be done for God's glory alone. And despite the many challenges which lie ahead, let us trust that God will provide.

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“ This implies that the youths, the singles, those without children, and even parents.. all share in the responsibility to provide good Christian education to the children of the Covenant. ”

An Introduction: Acknowledging Our Warfare (I)

>> Pastor Brian Huizinga

Pastor Brian Huizinga is the minister of Hope Protestant Reformed Church in Redlands, California.

Remarks: Circumstances directed by the Lord have given opportunity for the following article from the Standard Bearer to be reprinted. As the title indicates, the article is an introduction to a series about the reality of spiritual warfare. This reality, certainly, we do well to be reminded of, as we continue life's journey this year.

(The Standard Bearer, Volume 90/2014, Issue 16, 15th May 2014)

We are at war.

Not a war that leaves our blood pooled on the soil underfoot and holes in our flesh—though it may and it did for the captain of our salvation one dark day on a hill outside of Jerusalem—but it is a war in which souls are killed. It is a war with Satan and his hosts, with this present evil world and all of its rebellious attitudes, vain philosophies, carnal pleasures, and corrupt behaviours, and with our own desperately sinful flesh. It is a war with and against sin. “Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth *sin*, and *sin*, when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (James 1:15). Lust (any desire for what God forbids) in the heart must be treated the way Israel treated the inhabitants of Jericho—utterly destroyed. For lust begets sin. And sin when it has run its course always brings death. And death is the judgment of God, the one who must

be feared because He is able to destroy both body and soul in hell (Matthew 10:28). We are at war right now, not against God, but against *sin*.

We are *always* at war.

As Samson in the lap of Delilah was surrounded by Philistines lying in wait to take him, so we find ourselves, often against our will, in the lap of this sinful world with spiritual enemies in high places lying in wait to take our souls. Always! Worse, there is the traitorous foe that is the old man of sin within always scheming and orchestrating attacks by bringing forth fleshly lusts (wicked desires). Lust begets sin, and sin works death. Not only are we as individuals under assault, the entire kingdom of Jesus Christ, in which we fight, is forever under assault. The gates of hell are continuously warring against God's church.

Whether we *confess* it or not—and we ought to—we are at war. Whether we are *conscious* of it or not—and we ought to be—we are at war. Whether we *prayed* for strength for the battle in our devotions this morning or not—and we should have—we are at war. Whether we *preach* it or not—and we ought to—we are at war.

The seriousness of this war surpasses all others in magnitude, rendering them as mere sport. The wise and prudent will study world history and write tomes on the most significant battles of all time. The babes will know by both faith and experience that the

war against sin that rages in their own souls as members of God's covenant is far more significant. Souls are at stake. The consequences are everlasting. God be thanked we have more than knowledge of the war, for we have knowledge of the certain victory that is ours in the crucified and risen Lord.

However, our certain victory—perfect peace with God eternally—comes in the way of warring. Thus, warfare we must learn. Our children and young people must be taught war. In much of the tribal warfare in Africa there are more adolescent warriors than adults. Children learn to wield a weapon before a pencil. In the church, spiritual warfare is not reserved for seasoned adults, but demanded of all—young and old alike. Even little children must be taught to “abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul” (1 Peter 2:11). We are at war.

With this article in the rubric “Strength of Youth” we begin a lengthy series of instruction on holy warfare in the name of Jesus Christ and on behalf of Jehovah's covenant for the generation of the children of Israel among us today. Our theme is “To Teach Them War,” taken from Judges 3:2. God left wicked Canaanites in Canaan so that the new generation in Israel might have opportunity to learn to war and prove themselves. God left enemies in the land “to teach them war.” We use this rubric in order to teach the youth war. Omitting spiritual military discipline from the instruction we give

our children is inexcusable. We must teach them war.

A significant purpose of this series is, if nothing else is accomplished, to make us *conscious* of our warfare and the calling to engage in it. Probably everyone has read something about spiritual warfare, or heard a particularly stirring sermon on spiritual warfare producing a heightened awareness of our calling to do battle against sin. But how long does our conscious awareness of the battle last? I must ask myself that. All week? All day? All morning? For an hour? A passing moment? Perhaps this article will trigger a sanctified desire in our hearts. But what about tomorrow at this time?

One of the greatest dangers in our spiritual warfare is that we are not always conscious of our warfare and we slip and drift away into an inattentiveness like a slumbering soldier atop the city wall. Then temptations are not avoided but discovered and entertained. Sins, especially bosom sins, are not hated but tolerated, and worse, justified. Wicked attitudes, words, and thoughts are not condemned but enjoyed for just a moment, a night, a season. Selfish pride is not crucified. Proudly waged as something noble before God, unholy fighting with our peers breaks out, and over issues not worth fighting for. The cause and name of God are not advanced but dishonoured. The church slumbers, and certain men creep in unawares.

Probably more dangerous than any enemy is the soldier's own carelessness. In many battles, letting down one's guard only a little proves to be one's last move. One day King David not only stayed home from the battle against the Ammonites, but

that very act contributed to and was a revelation of his spiritual lethargy. Shortly thereafter, he was arranging for his neighbour's wife to enter his bed chamber. "Little" sins like letting down our guard in the battle can lead to "big" sins, even gross, public sins. We are at war, and we cannot afford moments or days or weekends or seasons or periods of carelessness, as individuals or as churches. God, who "holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved" (Ps. 66:9), be thanked that we are never one sin away from lapsing into everlasting death. Yet we must know that safety comes in the way of conscious fighting.

Should a weakened consciousness of spiritual war ever be present, could distance from both national and ecclesiastical war be a contributing factor?

Most of us in the PRCA have no first-hand experience in national warfare, or even in the ever changing but always chilling sights and sounds of war. Very few have ever trained for and fought in war. Another foreign power has not invaded and overtaken our country. Our boys are not catching the train en masse and heading off to battle. We do not have Philistines encircling our camp, Assyrians besieging our walls, or Roman soldiers stationed up and down our streets. Life in North America for us is never one of deafening volleys and sirens throughout the night, the rumble of choppers overhead, fields and beaches strewn with corpses, constant bloodshed and smoke. God be thanked for rest in the homeland! But national rest is rare. The history of the world is a history of nations warring. Is there a spiritual danger? It would seem true that national war would heighten one's awareness of the reality of spiritual war and if nothing else draw one farther and farther away

from sin and closer and closer to God, which is the essence of spiritual war.

Besides no war for most of us, there is for us as churches no great poverty, no severe bodily persecution, no recovery from a catastrophic calamity that wipes out whole cities (though that could change in a moment, and as they say here in southern California, we are due for a big one—an earthquake, that is). Rather there remains easy and ready access to amusement, the comforts of affluence, and pleasure. God's good providence has made it so. From many points of view our world does not resemble a battlefield and remind us of our calling to war, but an amusement park with blinking neon lights, frivolous jingles, loud screams, and a long line of giddy pleasure-seekers eagerly awaiting their turn at the base of a towering Back-Slide that alluringly promises unforgettable thrills as one slides farther and farther away from God toward a pit called Bottomless. Outside of God's Word there is nothing that will remind us of our calling to war. You need it. I need it. The church needs it. For, we *are* at war.

Nor do most of us have much experience in ecclesiastical warfare over doctrine. Certainly the church is always under attack, and is always engaged in holy warfare. At every worship service, monthly meeting of the local consistory, and meeting of classis and synod there are battles even when we acknowledge there is peace in the congregation/ denomination. But we are not living, for example, in the 1950s, when in the PRCA there was a fierce battle over a fundamental doctrinal issue because the lie of man's sovereignty in salvation presented itself in a certain definite form, threatened to make inroads into the churches, and had to be driven out.

There was a battle waging that was taxing to individuals and the churches in so many ways, and was at the same time so spiritually rewarding as weary soldiers pressed closer and closer to their God. Those are not our days.

Not only that, but in the church world at large, the art of right ecclesiastical war is increasingly disparaged and abandoned. When heretics and false doctrine appear in the camp, rather than take up the sword, many are inclined to play the

possum and roll over to play dead before the lie, or worse, to embrace it. False doctrine in many Reformed and Presbyterian churches is not viewed as it was during the great Reformation of the sixteenth century, a foe to be slaughtered hip and thigh. The very concept of ecclesiastical warfare is castigated in the name of a false ecumenicity. Young people do not learn war by scanning the surrounding ecclesiastical landscape. Neither, for that matter, will they properly learn

biblical warfare in Christian colleges, where being an alert soldier might be *most* urgent.

Such warfare is not part of our ordinary daily national or ecclesiastical experience. Outside of God's Word, nothing will remind us of and instruct us in our calling to war as individuals and churches, and the need to be conscious of our calling. The purpose of this series is to do just that. We are at war. War we must learn and wage as young people.

OUR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION: A COVENANT NECESSITY (VII)

>> Aaron Lim



Aaron Lim is a confessing young adult in CERC and has been studying in the Protestant Reformed Seminary since August 2013.

Our church fathers wisely understood that the church had an important role to play in the education our children receive. Article 21 of the Church Order of Dordrecht, binding upon CERC as our own Church Order, reads,

“The consistories shall see to it that there are good Christian schools in which the parents have their children instructed according to the demands of the covenant.”

In Article 41 of the same Church Order, the president of the classis is mandated to ask the delegates from each church whether “the poor and the Christian schools are cared for”.

Explaining the fourth commandment to keep the Lord's Day holy, the writers of the Heidelberg Catechism instructed that the “schools be maintained” (LD 38, Q&A103).

Although CERC does not have a Christian school presently, there is

much that the church can do. Office-bearers, to whom Christ entrusted the welfare of His flock, can and must point out the evils of public education to Covenant parents. They must demonstrate precisely from Scripture the sinful and spiritually devastating consequences public education has for Covenant seed, especially if parents are not careful. Scripture is not silent about the subject. Because they are His children, God has much to speak about the rearing of Covenant seed in His Word.

When the church establishes a clear and distinctive spiritual vision for Covenant education, God's people will not perish. Covenant parents will be convicted of their high calling to rear Covenant seed. They will see the need for a solid Covenant education that has God's Word as its central focus. Any knowledge gained apart from Scripture is meaningless. They will understand that Covenant

children must be raised Covenantally.

While the establishment of a Reformed school may only be a long-term goal for now, the office-bearers can give much needed support to the parents for this cause. There must be support

both for parents who home-school their children and for those who have children in public schools. The church can give much needed support, direction and instruction to them so that every family may pull together in the same direction of establishing a

Christian school one day. The church is our spiritual mother that showers us with loving instruction and care. The church that truly loves the Reformed faith will do all in her power to give her children a Covenant education.

What is Reformed? Reformed In Church Government (IV)

>> Prof. Hanko



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Introduction

I have nearly finished the series of articles I wrote on the meaning of “Reformed” for *Salt Shakers*, and will make this the last one in that series. We have discussed that to be Reformed involves our theology, our worship and the government of the church. We have discussed all of these including church government; the only one that remains to be discussed is the office of deacons in the church. I propose to address that problem in this last and concluding article along with the question of the responsibilities of those who hold the office of all believers.

The Importance of the Office of Believer

In the life of the church institute, for which Scripture lays down certain rules to be observed, and are also rules underlying our Church Order, the office of believers is the most important. It is the most important, first of all, because the believer, who holds this office, holds a three-fold office: prophet, priest and king. He receives that office as a true believer

who is united to Christ by faith and receives also the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Lord’s Day 12 of the *Heidelberg Catechism* tells us, that, because we have the anointing of the Holy Spirit, we are called “Christians.”

The office of believers is the most important office in the church, because finally, the entire rule in the church can be traced back to the office of believers. If you question that statement, then think of how a new congregation is organized. It is organized by a group of believers who come together to decide to organize a church. They have the right to do this as believers. They decide to do this because there is no other church in the area that has the marks of the true church. After deciding to organize such a church, they probably ask for a list of the names of confessing men as the heads of households (in which case they enrol the wives and children along with the men) and single men who have confessed their faith.

These men then proceed to vote for elders and deacons from nominations made from the floor by the men



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themselves. The men chosen are then ordained. If a minister or missionary is present, he will probably guide the meeting as chairman and proceed to ordain the newly chosen office bearers. The constituted body of elders will then, in due time, propose a trio of ministers to the congregation and the confessing male members will proceed to call a minister.

However, as I have written earlier, the relation between the office bearers and the congregation is unique. The relation is one of a delicate balance that will work only where there is godly trust on the part of all the members. The whole relationship seems to an unbeliever to be hopelessly confusing; but it is not, for both the office of believers and those who hold special office in the church serve Christ, who is the Head of the church.

And so the office of believers holds

the final authority in the church and participates actively in the government of the church. But at the same time, he subjects himself to the rule of the elders—as he is admonished to do by Scripture. He rules and is ruled—both.

The Believer's Obligation to the Church

You can understand what a great responsibility each believer has toward the church. The church is always your first concern in life. Nothing must ever interfere with your responsibility towards Christ's church. It is Christ who is the Head of the church; and Christ the Head of the church has given you the most important office in the church.

The church is the manifestation of the kingdom of heaven here on earth and therefore, Jesus' words apply to us in our relation to the church: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

The word "first" in Jesus' words does not mean "on the top of the list" of the things we are permitted to seek: so that we could continue the list with 2. Our studies; 3. Our home; 4. Our car; 5. Our vacations; 6. Our clothes; etc. Jesus means "first" as the principle of everything we do, so that everything is a part of our seeking the kingdom, that is, the church. The church is number one in our lives and the welfare of the church is our greatest joy.

That means that we seek the unity of the church (Ephesians 4:1-3) and the peace of the church (Psalm 122). (By the way, it might interest you to know that I preached on the last verses of this Psalm in my first sermon in the first congregation I served.)

The believer does the work in the

church that is asked of him/her no matter what it is. A believer is anxious to contribute to the welfare of the church in any way he can.

The Believer's Obligation to the Minister

There are two texts in the Bible that define our calling when we come into God's house to hear the preached word. One is Ecclesiastes 5:1-2: "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God: for God is in heaven and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few."

The other is James 1:19-25. I won't quote the passage here, because it is too long. But you may read it yourselves; and you can find a commentary on these verses in my commentary on James, which only a short time ago was published by the RFPA.

The Believer's Obligation Toward His Elders

There are texts in the Bible that exactly define our calling towards our elders. I referred to them earlier and will not discuss them here. They are especially Hebrews 12:7, 17 and I Thessalonians 5:12-13. (Look them up.)

In addition to these texts it is important when your elders admonish you or even speak to you, to learn from them. When the elders come to inquire into your spiritual well-being you must receive them gladly, speak freely to them and seek their counsel in any problems you may have. This happens especially on family visitation.

It reminds me of an experience I had while on family visitation. I always asked the young people whether

they watched movies especially in theatres. One young man admitted that he and his girlfriend often attended movies. Upon hearing this, the father interrupted and berated his son angrily. I said nothing. At the end of his tirade, the son said, "Yes, father, but you watch the same things on our TV set." The father was a bit nonplussed and did not know what to say. I still remained silent. After a stretch of silence, the father said, "Yes, but we watch at home. When you go to theatres you are with wicked people." "No," the son said, "We go to drive-in theatres where we stay in our car." That gave me the opportunity to enter the discussion with the whole family about the evils of drama whether in theatres or on TV or on DVDs.

My point is that God put your elders into office so that you may seek counsel from them at any time. Some people rather talk with the minister, and there is nothing wrong with that; but the minister, while he too is an elder is to be busy in studying God's Word and making sermons. The elders are the ones God appointed to care for the sheep (Acts 20:28-35).

God even tells parents that if they have a wayward child who will not listen to them, they are to bring the child to the elders (Deuteronomy 21:18-21). This is God's way of dealing with stubborn children, and in my experience, I have found that it is often the way God uses to change a young man or woman that they may be obedient to their parents.

I have on occasion put a troubled and burdened mother under the care of an older and wise mother in the congregation so that an older and sympathetic mother can help a young mother through difficult times. Often a young mother will be hesitant to tell her minister personal problems, while

“
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she is free to tell an older mother in the church.

But if such a mother helps a new and young mother or if the minister himself engages in pastoral work, the older mother ought to report to the minister or an elder, and the minister ought to inform the elders at every Session meeting of all his pastoral calls and what is the problem, if any, with which he is dealing. The elders rule in the church.

The Believer's Obligation Towards the Deacons

It is my judgment that there are two extremes in the church of Christ in which people in the church err in their relationship to deacons. One error is to go to the deacons for financial help when they are in poverty because they have not been good stewards of their earthly possessions, and by foolish spending have buried themselves in debt. Sometimes gambling does this to a family, sometimes drunkenness, but sometimes just foolish purchasing of things people covet and buy whether they can afford it or not. In such cases those who need help from the deacons need also instruction from the elders, and the deacons must so inform the elders. Sometimes when poor stewardship is the reason for poverty, the deacons themselves can instruct the poor in Scripture's teachings. I

have even, in my ministry, told the deacons to enlist the aid of their wives to help a mother who squanders money how to be a good steward – especially in grocery shopping.

Sometimes people are reluctant to go to the deacons even though they need help. I have found, in my ministry, there are two reasons for this. One is that people refuse to go to the deacons because they think the deacons should come to them. Their reasoning is that Christ comes to his people; we do not come to Christ. We must not, we are told, be Arminian.

I came once on family visitation to a family that, in the dead of winter, were wearing all their winter clothing. The water in the toilet bowl was frozen for they had no heat, and they had nothing to eat except dandelion greens, which they dug for under the snow. When I asked them why they did not go to the deacons, their answer was, "The deacons are supposed to come to us." It was no time for arguments, so I called the chairman of the diaconate and told him to get deacons down to their house immediately, which also they did. But they had to be told that, while it is true that Christ first comes to us, he nevertheless says, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden."

Sometimes people do not want the

deacons to come because they are proud and do not want to admit that they are in need of help. This is indeed pride, for going to the deacons is the same as going to Christ. Christ has, in his inscrutable wisdom, and through such means as loss of job or grave illness, put them in circumstances in which they need the help of Christ. And Christ helps them through the office of deacons.

Poor people in the church are a blessing, for it is more blessed to give than to receive. Christ reminds his disciples, when Mary anointed his feet with expensive perfumes, that he himself would see to it that the church always has poor. These people are necessary for the spiritual well-being of the congregation. It is a privilege to come to the deacons for help.

I was talking once with a man from another denomination who told me a story out of his own experience. He was a member of a Reformed Church, but certainly not a faithful church. He told me that he had gone to his deacons when he was in desperate need, and the deacons told him to go to governmental agencies to get help. The deacons did not want to follow Solomon's instruction in the book of Proverbs: "The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel." Yet still today some rather go to the government than to the church.

The Believer's Obligation Towards His Fellow Saints

The believers in the church of Christ must do exactly the same towards their fellow saints as the office bearers do. Because believers are prophets, they must bring God's Word in all their contacts with their fellow saints. In Bible study groups, in their mutual discussions when visiting with or talking to their fellow saints, they

must put all their conversation within the context of God's word. If they comfort each other in times of sorrow, strengthen each other when one bears a heavy burden, and encourage each other when their pilgrimage is difficult, they must always come with God's word.

Because God's people are kings, they are concerned about the spiritual welfare of their fellow saints and they must admonish them, but with the word of God. Two texts especially come to mind. One is found in Galatians 6:1-2: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." The other text is in James 5:16: "Confess your faults one to another and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

And because all God's people are priests, they are to help one another with all kinds of help when their brother or sister is in need. They may help with meals, help with running errands for the helpless, help with money necessary, help with doing work for one who needs work done and cannot do it; help in babysitting when a mother is overwhelmed with her responsibilities, etc. And it is the duty and obligation of the person needing help to receive it graciously and in the spirit of love. In these and other situations, God's people come with God's word also – as the deacons do when they help the poor.

The office of believers is and can be a very busy office. When Dorcas died, all the women in the town were broken with grief because "she was full

of good works and almsdeeds which she did" (Acts 9:36-43).

When those who hold special offices in the church, and when all the members seek the good of the church and not their own good, the congregation is richly blessed. It shines in the world as a light on a hill, and God uses such a church to bring many to faith in Christ.

“

Christ reminds his disciples, when Mary anointed his feet with expensive perfumes, that he himself would see to it that the church always has poor.

”

Keeping the Unity

>> Lim Yang Zhi



Yang Zhi Lim is a confessing young adult in CERC.

“We are overjoyed that the Lord has in His providence re-established our sister-church relationship.” CERC, speaking to PRCA at Synod 2012. Year One of unity.

“We thank the Lord for the blessed and priceless unity in the truth that we share [with you].” CERC, to PRCA, at Synod 2015. Year Three.

Three years of unity—counting this year, four.

Unity—that is, as described the words of the PRC Synod 2011’s stated clerk: “...The PRCA and the CERC are unified in all essential matters of faith, doctrine, church government, and practice.”

Unity for three years—and, DV, more to come.

More to come, in the way of keeping this unity, as Paul commands in Ephesians 4.

Yes, we must keep our unity with our

sister. We have a calling to keep the unity.

I do not just mean a calling for our office-bearers and our sister’s office-bearers. For sure, the office-bearers have a calling.

But I mean *we*, we as members of CERC, have a calling to keep the unity. That we, CERC, have a relationship with the PRCA, means that *we members of CERC* have a relationship with the PRCA and her members. Therefore, the calling to keep the unity, as it goes to our office-bearers, comes to us, with equal force.

We consider here not how we keep this unity in the official way through our office-bearers (a way that is undoubtedly important), but how we, as members who do not hold special office, keep this unity.

We keep the unity by knowing the truth.

We must know the truth, because the truth is the foundation of unity.

Paul establishes the truth as the foundation of unity when he calls unity “the unity of the Spirit” (Eph. 4:3). “Of the Spirit” means “by the Spirit.” The Spirit establishes unity. He does so with the truth, and the truth only, because He is the Spirit that guides us to all truth (John 16:13). Later, Paul calls unity “the unity of the faith” (v. 12). Unity is established upon the certain knowledge we have of our Lord.

The truth is the foundation of unity. Therefore, we must know the truth, so that we may keep the foundation of this unity, and thereby, keep unity itself.

How, then, do we know the truth? Listen to Paul again: “And [Christ] gave... some, pastors and teachers...[till] we all come in the unity of the faith” (v. 11, 13). Pastors and teachers—rather, their instruction of the truth, are given for the keeping of the unity of the faith.

In general, all instruction of the truth maintains the unity we have with the PRCA. The weekly preaching, catechism, Bible study, etc., explain the truth on which we stand together with the PRCA.

Yet, a few things stand out to help us keep the unity. There are our afternoon sermons on the Heidelberg Catechism and the classes on the Belgic Confession. These explain the confessions we share with the PRCA. Explaining the confessions, these classes bring us to understand the same doctrinal page on which we are with our sister.

We do well, then, to find ourselves in these classes and sermons.

Another source of instruction is the periodicals published by the members of our sister-churches. Both the *Beacon Lights* and the *Standard Bearer* (to name just two of the available periodicals) further explain the truth that our sisters confess. As with the named classes and sermons, these periodicals help us grow in our understanding of the truth that we confess with our sister.

We do well, then, to subscribe to these periodicals and to read them from cover to cover.

You may ask, “Do I *have* to know the truth so well? The office-bearers need to know, that’s for sure. But me?” Yes, you. Consider this: Our young children will not know what this unity is all about unless *we* first *know* the truth as the foundation of unity and then *teach* them the truth as the foundation of unity. As our children learn the truth, they will learn to keep the unity with our sister through the future.

Know the truth by receiving all available instruction. Then teach it to our children. In that way, unity is kept.

There is another way we keep the unity: “with all lowliness and meekness” (Eph. 4:2). In short, with *humility*.

As we continue in this unity, we will notice weaknesses in our sister. Articles in the *Beacon Lights* and *Standard Bearer* have brought up weaknesses and will continue doing so. Recorded sermons have dealt with weaknesses and will continue doing so. Perhaps our personal fellowship with members of our sister-churches have included addressing these weaknesses. Such conversations, we may assume, will continue. There are weaknesses in our sister.

But this reality comes as no surprise. The church on this earth is never perfect. The seven churches to whom Christ speaks in Revelation 2 and 3 make this reality plain. Five of the seven churches receive stinging rebukes for their diverse weaknesses. Even the two churches that receive no open rebuke received encouragement because they were *struggling* not to deny Christ’s name. No church on this earth is impregnable to weakness.

To keep the unity amidst weaknesses, therefore, we must have a proper response towards weaknesses. That response is that of humility.

Humility recognizes that we are in danger of the same weakness. That is the “lowliness of mind” Paul refers to. We bear the same depraved nature as our sister bears; the weaknesses that endanger her are the weaknesses that endanger us. Nothing else can humility admit, but that we are no stronger than our sister is.

Humility also prays for our sister. The prayer made is the prayer that God will strengthen our sister to overcome her weaknesses. Such a response of prayer is “meekness.” Meekness helps others. No harsh criticism; no feigned ignorance—only a request made in private prayer about the weakness to our Lord, who will strengthen our sister to overcome. Humility responds with help in prayer.

Keeping the unity in this way is important, because pride lies in us to destroy unity. In pride, our minds are easily consumed with *the other’s* weaknesses, so that we forget the danger we have in falling into the same weaknesses. Then we exaggerate the weaknesses and lambaste our sister, instead of praying for them. There is no help in such pride; there is no unity.

Respond to our sister’s weaknesses with humility. In this way, keep the unity.

What is the point of sitting through years of classes and sermons, of reading countless articles written by our sister, to grow in the knowledge of the truth? What is the point of responding humbly to our sister’s weaknesses? There’s difficulty; there’s failure on our part.

What is the point of doing all this? What is the point of keeping this unity with our sister?

There is a point.

It is *not*, “to be Protestant Reformed.” That is, the purpose is not, in idealistic thinking that the PRCA is a perfect church, to unite ourselves to her and to be exactly like her. There is room for healthy admiration of our sister’s strengths, and room to learn from those strengths. But to admire and learn—much less, to think our sister is perfect—is not the point of keeping this unity.

Neither is the purpose our benefit. There is, for us, spiritual profit—*much* profit—in this unity. We have experienced it for ourselves. Our sisters have always helped us as best they could when we were in need. Just think back to 2012: The men sent here to preach and teach—and the *man* sent here to be our preacher and teacher. Yet, our benefit is not the point of keeping this unity.

This is the point of keeping our unity with our sister: The glory of God. There can be no greater reason than this.

Look at Ephesians 4 again. There is unity—oneness—as there is one Spirit, one hope, and one faith. But there is unity, even as there is on God and Father of all, *who is above all, and through all, and in you all*.

That is, God manifests all his glory through us, CERC and PRCA, united in the truth. We are united and *keep ourselves united*, so that we, in our generations, helping each other overcome weaknesses, confess: “One God and Father above all, through all, and in you all.”

The infinite glory of our God is “the point”, or *the* goal, of this unity with our sister.

For Him alone, keep this unity!

Endeavour—Hasten!

Charismaticism (IV): Speaking in Tongues

>> Pastor Angus Stewart



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Having considered the three waves of Charismatic Christianity, the precursors of modern Charismatic Christianity and the baptism with the Holy Spirit, we come to tongue speaking. Let us be clear, first of all, that tongues in the Bible are not gibberish—my deliberately pejorative term for the gobbledegook of Pentecostalism, Charismaticism and Neo-Charismaticism, also known collectively as renewalism. The tongues in Acts and I Corinthians are real human languages.

Acts

Let us prove this from Acts 2, by looking, first, at the words used. Verse 4 says that those in the upper room “began to speak with other tongues”. The Greek for “tongues” here is *glossa*, which is, first, that organ in the mouth by which we speak and, second, the language which is spoken by it. In verse 6, we read that “every man heard them speak in his own language”, with “language” being the Greek *dialektos*, from which we get the English word “dialect”. “Tongue” and “dialect” are used interchangeably for the “tongues” (*glossa*) that were spoken by those in the upper room and were heard by the people in their own “languages” (*dialektos*) (vv. 4, 6). Verse 8 contains the question: “How hear we every man in our own tongue [*dialektos*]?” Verse 11 states, “we do hear them speak in our tongues [*glossa*] the wonderful works of God.” Clearly, “tongues” (*glossa*) and “dialects” (*dialektos*) are used interchangeably in Acts 2:4, 6, 8 and 11.

Second, we know that these are real human languages, along the lines of French or Javanese or Swahili, etc., because this is the explanation given in the passage:

And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue [*dialektos*], wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia ... (Acts 2:7-9).

Third, verse 11 states that the people heard in their own “tongues” (*glossa*) or languages “the wonderful works of God.” However, this is not what we do hear from renewalists. We do not hear the wonderful works of God when they talk gibberish; we do not hear the wonderful works of God for most of their churches side-line preaching; we do not hear the wonderful works of God in their customarily shallow, non-exegetical, Arminian sermons. Their false doctrine and practice regarding the Holy Spirit (including their view of “tongue speaking”) grieves the Spirit, who is the only one who enables pastors faithfully to preach, explain and apply the Word of God (Nehemiah 8:7-8).

With the tongues in Acts 2 being real human languages, we are in a position to understand the tongue speaking mentioned in Acts 10 and 19, and inferred in Acts 8. The tongues there are the same as the foreign human



Charismatics appeal to the word “mysteries” in 1 Corinthians 14:2, which are uttered by the person speaking in tongues.

But “mystery” in the Bible never means gobbledegook.



languages in Acts 2. This is precisely the point of the book of Acts. Those in Acts 2 speak in foreign tongues as a sign that the ascended Christ has now poured out His Holy Spirit on His church and that the church is catholic or universal, embracing all the nations. Later, the Samaritans (Acts 8), the Gentiles (Acts 10) and the disciples of John the Baptist who had not received the full New Testament blessings (Acts 19) also speak in foreign languages or tongues, as a sign that all believers, Jews and Gentiles, are embraced in the New Testament church of Jesus Christ. This confounds the notion of tongue speaking as gibberish in the book of Acts, along with the idea that speaking gobbledegook is evidence of the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 14

The tongues in 1 Corinthians 14 are also real human languages and not gibberish. Isaiah 28:11-12 is quoted in 1 Corinthians 14:21: “With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.” The argument here is that Israel was so wicked that the prophets who came to speak to them in Hebrew were despised and their message was rejected. Therefore, God said, in effect, “You will not hearken to Me speaking My Word through My messengers in Hebrew, so I will make you sit up and listen. I will send the Assyrians and when you find yourself carted away to

a strange country and surrounded by enemy soldiers, speaking a language that you do not understand, then you will know that I have punished you for your sins, as My prophets predicted.” 1 Corinthians 14:22 points out that this is a “sign,” a sign of judgment upon Israel. Now, in the New Testament, tongue speaking is God’s judgment upon unbelieving Judaism and a sign of the catholicity of Christ’s church. Thus, 1 Corinthians 14:21-22 identifies the nature of the tongues spoken of in this chapter as real human languages.

1 Corinthians 14:7 refers to a sort of language that is played with a musical instrument. We call it a tune and it is noticeably different from the banging of little children on a piano. Verse 8 talks about a trumpet, which must give a definite sound to be recognised as a summons to battle. Verse 9 makes a comparison: as with musical instruments, such as a harp or a trumpet, so with the human voice for unless you speak words that people can understand, a real human language, you may as well be speaking into the air.

The same thing is taught in 1 Corinthians 14:10-11. There are many sorts of voices in the world and none without signification or meaning (v. 10). If someone came to a Greek man speaking a foreign language that he did not know, he would think of him as a barbarian, i.e., someone who is saying,

“Bar, bar, bar,” the origin of the word “barbarian” (v. 11). The Greek heard sounds but he did not know what the other was saying. Yet an ancient Greek would have recognised that the barbarian was at least uttering a real language, unlike the crazy sounds uttered by the modern renewalists!

Charismatics appeal to the word “mysteries” in 1 Corinthians 14:2, which are uttered by the person speaking in tongues. But “mystery” in the Bible never means gobbledegook. The word “mystery” in Scripture refers to the great truths of the redemption centred in the cross of Jesus Christ, which were formerly hidden in God and which are now revealed by the Spirit through His prophets to the catholic church of both Jews and Gentiles (e.g., Matthew 13:11; Romans 11:25; 16:25-26; 1 Corinthians 2:7-10; Ephesians 1:9-10; 3:3-9; Colossians 1:26-27; 1 Timothy 3:16).

Madness

What is called tongue speaking in Pentecostal, Charismatic, and Neo-Charismatic circles is one of the biggest shams and greatest follies in the 2,000 years of the history of apostasy in the Christian church—and that is saying something! For renewalists, gibberish is the height of piety. It is viewed as *the* special prayer language that even the devil cannot stop as it ascends up to God. It is seen as a wonderful divine gift to be desired and earnestly sought.

Renewalist tongue speaking, consisting of the sort of sounds that people make to babies, is the folly to which God in His holy justice has reduced that apostate movement. We train our children to speak a language properly but the Pentecostals, Charismatics, and Neo-Charismatics train adults to speak gibberish like infants. Their tongue speaking is not a divine gift; it is a learned or imitated behaviour. People are taught by renewalists, “Do not analyse this with your proud mind. Let go of your tongue, let it rattle around your mouth and let sounds pop out. Isn’t that a wonderful gift; God is so good!” Yet tongue speaking (gibberish) is also found among non-Christians around the world. There are Mormons who speak in tongues, as well as Tibetan monks, Roman Catholics and Islamic whirling dervishes—there are even unbelieving Eskimos who speak gobbledegook in tongues!

There is no spiritual growth through tongue speaking because, as 1 Corinthians 14 underscores repeatedly, edification requires understanding (vv. 2-6, 12-19, 26-28). Christ prayed, “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 17:17), yet tongue speakers deliberately bypass the mind. These powerful words are in the last canonical verse penned by the apostle Peter: “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18). The “and” in this passage is a hendiadys having the force of “through:” “But grow in grace, *through* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” If Satan can get a group of professing Christians to come together to jabber like idiots, then he has achieved his purpose.

The Holy Spirit declares, “If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues [i.e., other languages, as we

have shown], and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?” (1 Corinthians 14:23). It is even worse if a body of professing Christians, instead of uttering real foreign languages, babbles like babies. Thus, renewalist tongue speaking is a terrible witness to non-Christians, making them think that followers of Jesus Christ are crazy!

On the other hand, the ability to speak more than one language is of great value in the service of the catholicity of Christ’s church. Today, the means of acquiring such tongues is *not* a miraculous one, as it was in Acts 2. It is by hard work and study, just like any other intellectual endeavour, as Solomon said, “All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it” (Ecclesiastes 1:8). With the use of more than one language, people can translate Reformed creeds, books and pamphlets into other tongues. These can be published on the printed page and on the internet—a subject dear to my own heart (see www.cprf.co.uk/languages.htm). Work such as this is of far more value for the kingdom of heaven than all the gibberish spoken by all the renewalists all around the world for a hundred years.

Foreign languages are also crucial in missions. There are some 6,700 languages in the world. The Gospel cannot reach and save people from all the languages of the world without missionaries learning their tongues and bringing them God’s truth. Christ will not return until people of every kindred and nation and tongue have been saved. That is the significance of tongues for us today: the church must pray for, and labour in, the spread of the gospel of Christ in every language of the world.

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Today, the means of acquiring such tongues is not a miraculous one, as it was in Acts 2. It is by hard work and study, just like any other intellectual endeavour, as Solomon said, “All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it” (Ecclesiastes 1:8).

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Teaching Our Children To Witness

>> Pastor Ronald van Overloop



Pastor Ronald Van Overloop is Minister of the Word at Grace Protestant Reformed Church in Standale, Michigan. In March 2011 and October 2012, he came to Singapore to assist CERC in her pulpit needs.

The title of this article is the subject given by the Evangelism Committee of Grandville Protestant Reformed Church for a lecture on 4 August, 2015.

I'd like to make three observations by way of introduction. First, it is important to distinguish clearly between the concept of preaching and evangelism on one hand and the concept of witnessing on the other hand. God has given to the church institute the responsibility to preach. This is the proclamation of the pure doctrines of the gospel in the local congregation (including the instruction given by the church to her youth in catechism classes). This also includes all the work of missions. On the other hand, witnessing is the activity of every believer. It is to give external and observable expression to the faith which God has graciously given to live within every believer.

Second, we should realise that we are always giving a witness! We are not to think that sometimes we witness and sometimes we do not. We are

giving a witness all the time. We are either giving witness to our new man in Christ or giving witness to our old man. Because we are always giving a witness, Jesus purposefully added the word "so" when He said, "Let your light SO shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). We are to give that kind of a witness which results in glory being given to our heavenly Father by those who observe our witness. The conduct of a professing Christian can "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour." But also we are warned that "the word of God be not blasphemed" by our conduct (Titus 2:5,10).

A third observation by way of introduction is that parents (as well as grand-parents and teachers) must realize that to teach their children to witness correctly requires that they give a good and clear example of proper witnessing. It is always true that we teach by example more loudly than we do by verbal instruction. Those who are teaching are to demonstrate their instruction in their lives, striving more and more to give witness to our faith, so that our Father is glorified.

What are we to teach our children when it comes to a proper witness? Nothing special — and yet nothing more amazing than what divine grace only does! Nothing more than being what they are in Christ, namely, children of God. Nothing more than what they are commanded to do.

It is my observation that generally the parents of the Protestant Reformed Churches in America (PRCA) are doing a very good job of instructing their children in the knowledge of the Bible, of Biblical doctrine, and of the teachings and practices which make their churches distinctive in the church world. The parents in the PRCA have the great and good help of the church (both in catechism, Sunday School, Young Peoples' Society, and Young Adults). In addition, most of the parents have the help of a local good Christian school. The result is that the children and young people have very good head knowledge of the truth and are able to present and argue their positions quite well.

However, it is also my observation that there is much room for improvement in the lifestyle of godliness, which flows from a real heart understanding of the truth of Scripture. There seems to be a "culture" which does not expect a lot of godliness from our young people. Why is it that we are not surprised that there are reports of parties with alcohol and marijuana by those who are in high school and college? Why is it that we almost expect that the kind of music being played in their cars and on their MP3 players and at bonfires is of a worldly nature? The videos being commonly watched are judged to be ok to watch because "there's nothing bad in them." And all the young people acknowledge that there are some among them who are "friends with benefits." And they all declare themselves to be

children of God regardless of how they live.

Thesorts of activities are acknowledged to be alarming... to most. Criticisms have been raised in the consistory room and statements have been made from the pulpit. However, there has been very little change over the forty plus years of my ministry. Instead of changes I hear excuses: "They're young." or "What do you expect?" And even more alarming is the fact that what I heard in the mid 1970s I continue to hear in 2015: "I did some bad things when I was young and I turned out OK, so I expect this generation to turn out just fine." Is there a more horrible justification of sin than this? Is there any wonder that the witness left by our children (and grandchildren) in the local community can at times be so very poor? And is it any wonder that this lack of godliness leaves a witness which is very inconsistent to their head knowledge of the Bible? And is it any wonder that observers question their declaration that they are children of God?

Why ought we to drill our children and grandchildren in godliness as much as in the doctrines of grace?

First, faith is a certain knowledge which holds for truth what God has revealed in His Word. This faith is what binds one to Jesus Christ, and this union to Jesus not only gives the elect the ability to acknowledge the truth but also this acknowledging of the truth accords with godliness (Titus 1:1). This is the beautiful appropriateness of the title which Reverend Ron Hanko gave to his book, "Doctrine According To Godliness." Paul admonished his preacher son, Titus, to teach with all authority "the things which become sound doctrine," that is, the things which characterize a lifestyle which is consistent with sound (health-giving)

teachings (Titus 2:1,15). Godliness is not only as important as knowledge of teachings, but it flows from a real and genuine understanding of the teachings. Paul exhorts Titus to instruct the young women to live in such a way "that the Word of God be not blasphemed," and to instruct the Christian slaves to live in such a way "that they may adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things" (Titus 2:5,10).

Second, we ought to drill our children in godliness as much as we drill them in the doctrines of grace because God does not have one standard for adults and another for children and still another for teenagers. God gives the same Ten Commandments to teenagers as He does adults. And He does not have a lower expectation for teenagers as He does for adults. When we think of Genesis 17:7 ("I will establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee") we should also think of Genesis 18:19: "For I know him that (literally, I have known him in order that) he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken of him." God knew Abraham so that Abraham would command his children to keep God's way, and this would result in God bringing upon Abraham the reality of His promise that His covenant was with Abraham and with his seed after him! This is the point of the instruction given in Deuteronomy 6:7-9 and Ephesians 6:4. Our children are to know the truth of God's Word, but also they are to be commanded to keep God's way. They are to be commanded not to live as they please – their way. God does not

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expect less of them than He does of their parents.

Third, the language of the Marriage Form is very instructive. When giving the three reasons God had for instituting marriage, the Form speaks of the children which God may be pleased to bring into the marriage, and it states that the parents are to bring up these children "in the true knowledge and fear of God, to His glory, and their salvation." Notice that this speaks of the relationship the children have with God Himself. They are to view themselves as in an intimate, wonderful relationship with God. They are not only in a relationship with their parents or their friends. We are to set before our children what it is to know God and to fear Him, so that they are concerned about His glory. We are to insist that our children know and fear God and live to His glory. And they are to do this as children and as teenagers!

Fourth, we are to realise that remissness in observing God's commandments and carnal security are the effects not of a correct understanding of God's Word but of rash presumption (Canons I – 13b). Accurate and genuine knowledge of God's Word does not excite in anyone a spirit of pride nor what is known as carnal security (a spiritual carelessness about how one lives) (Canons V – 12). Instead the correct response to the assurance of salvation is daily humility, an adoration of the depths of God's mercies, a cleansing of oneself by mortifying all my wants, and for rendering grateful returns of ardent love to God. Also the assurance of the grace of perseverance is the real source of humility, filial obedience, true piety, patience in every tribulation, fervent prayers, constancy in suffering, and in confessing the truth and of solid rejoicing in God. Instead of rendering one proud and cocky about what they know of Scripture, a real understanding of Scripture always leads to humility, and is a constant incentive to serious and constant practice of gratitude and good works (Canons V – 12).

As much as faithful parents will demand of their children that they have a good and extensive understanding of "sound doctrine," they will demand that they be godly. The godliness which is consistent with sound teaching is described with these words: sober, discreet, chaste, temperate, obedient (cf. Titus 2:1-6). It is to love God with our all and to love our neighbour as ourselves.

Godliness is a delightful awareness of God and of His relationship with me. Generally we have a very good intellectual grasp of God and of His greatness, but experientially we often put God in a box. He is a Sunday God. He is a God we talk about when we pray or read the Bible. But He is not around when we are playing a sport.

He is not present when we talking with our friends. When you got dressed this morning, were you thinking of God in any sense? When you are in the middle of playing a game and are intent on winning, where is God? When you are carrying a grudge (sometimes for years), where is God? When you think about shop lifting, where is God? When you are thinking of using drugs or alcohol, where is God?

Which godly virtues do we seek to develop in ourselves, in our children, in our young people? Do we teach and demonstrate proper and sincere confession of sin and sinfulness? Do we teach and demonstrate what it is to fly for refuge to Christ crucified? Do we teach and demonstrate what it is to mortify the flesh and to press toward perfection (Canons V – 2)? Do we urge our young people to be sober in all things, that is, curbing their desires and exercising self-control (Titus 2:4,6,13)? Do we teach our young people and demonstrate to them bowels of mercy and kindness? Forbearance? Forgiving? Agape love? Do we teach our young people to have a works-based or a grace-based acceptance of people? We have a correct theology of salvation and of divine acceptance by grace alone, but we often demonstrate mercy, forgiveness and love on the basis of works. Do we teach and demonstrate solid rejoicing in God and the incentive of the constant practice of gratitude (Canons V – 12)?

Some concluding thoughts: May parents and grandparents press upon their children a new "culture." May we all see the tremendous importance of a lifestyle which adorns and not blasphemes God and His Word. Let us realize that the ungodly are able to identify a proper and an improper lifestyle in one who professes to be a child of the King. They know when we

walk the talk or when we are just talk. May we not even think that because we were naughty as teenagers, we do not need to be so hard on our young people! What does God demand? What does God expect?

May God give us the grace to maintain firmly our system of catechism instruction, and the good Christian schools wherever we have them. In an area where there are the good Christian schools, the catechism instruction has more opportunity to show how God's truth is to be applied and lived. Think of how the instruction in the truth given in Romans 1-11 and Ephesians 1-3 is followed with that truth being applied in Romans 12-16 and Ephesians 4-6. The Form for Ordination declares it to be the duty of the minister of the Word to explain and to apply God's Word. Press the Word upon their minds and (prayerfully) on the hearts of the children and young people. Constantly urge them to see that what is most precious to them is a real knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ (first question and answer of the Essentials of Reformed Doctrine catechism book).

May we all pray to Him Who alone is able to put a real, genuine understanding of the truth and of the godliness which harmonises with that truth in the hearts and minds of our children and young people. May they shine in such a way that their Father is glorified. This is teaching our children to witness!

THE IMPORTANCE OF HISTORY AND REFLECTING ON THE PAST

>> Aaron Lim



Aaron Lim is a confessing young adult in CERC and has been studying in the Protestant Reformed Seminary since August 2013.

“Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein” (Jeremiah 6:16).

God’s command to His beloved church was to ask for the old paths, where is the good way, to walk therein, so that they may find rest for their souls. These old paths are the paths of fellowship and communion with Jehovah their God. These paths were the paths of obedience to Jehovah’s holy and righteous laws. They were the paths of righteous living in Jehovah’s Covenant of grace. These were the paths to experience Jehovah’s favour and blessings.

In proud defiance and rebellion, Judah rejected God’s command to walk in the old paths. “We will not walk therein”, was their answer to God’s stirring command. They chose to walk in the paths of the heathen gods and their abominable ways. They chose to worship the idols of the unbelieving nations around them, rather than to worship the only true and living God. They chose to delight in the pleasures of sin, rather than the straight and narrow path that God set down for them.

Consequently, God inflicted terrible judgments upon them. He brought the armies of the Babylonians to destroy their cities, and to bring them into captivity in Babylon for seventy years. In Babylon, God’s people suffered cruel oppression and bondage under the hand of their enemies. There in their

suffering, they remembered that the old paths were the good way, the only good way.

The same command also applies to New Testament believers. God commands us to ask for the old paths. There are a few things that these old paths refer to. In the first place, the old paths refer to the paths that God has revealed in His Word. His Word reveals His will for His people throughout history. His Word is the truth, the absolute standard for right and wrong. Whenever a church deforms, she departs from the Word of God, embraces false doctrines, and walks in the way of sin and worldliness. For the church to be reformed, she must seek the old paths by going back to the Scriptures. That means repenting of her sins and false doctrines, and walking according to the truth of God’s Word. The Scriptures, after all, are the paths which “are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 3:15).

Second, the old paths refer to the truths that have been confessed by the church of the past. These truths were shaped and established by bitter controversies over doctrine. Many of these controversies were filled with intense struggles and bloodshed for the cause of the truth. Our church fathers gave up their blood and sweat to maintain these truths for their spiritual sons and daughters today. These truths are found in the confessions of the church. As a Reformed church, we esteem our confessions very highly. We recognise that the Spirit who guides the church

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Our church fathers gave up their blood and sweat to maintain these truths for their spiritual sons and daughters today.

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into all truth has used our spiritual fathers for the establishment and development of the truth throughout the ages. That is why we not only preach the confessions, but we teach them diligently to our children and young people. From a young age, our children need to learn these old paths, so that they will not forsake them when they mature. “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6). Our children need to know the old paths that their fathers and spiritual forefathers walked in, so that they can cleave to them and experience the blessings and favour of their Covenant God.

Third, the old paths refer to the specific trials and experiences that God has led his people through. God’s people need to reflect on their own unique history and the circumstances that God has brought them through. In CERC’s situation, we are mindful that the Lord has kept us for close to three decades in Singapore. He has kept his people in a land where they enjoy the freedom to worship him, and to exercise their faith freely. Singapore has enjoyed fifty years of independence, filled with much peace and material prosperity. As CERC enjoys the unique place that God has given her in Singapore, she must be mindful that all these gifts are to be used in the service of her Covenant God.

Church history reminds us that whenever the church is materially prosperous and free from persecution, she tends to become spiritually lax and earthly-minded. Worldliness has a great danger of penetrating the church’s walls when her members are not spiritually alert. When they become indifferent to sound doctrine, biblical worship, and godly living, then the church is in grave danger of becoming spiritually weak

and worldly. The faithful preaching of the gospel is the proper remedy to remind ourselves in CERC that we set not our affections on the things of this earth, but seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Another historical event that has shaped the life of CERC is her bitter controversy that she experienced some ten years ago. The controversy was over the doctrine of divorce and remarriage. That historical event has shaped CERC’s understanding of the true doctrine of marriage and its lifelong permanence. Her rejection of remarriage after divorce shapes and establishes the foundation and life of all her marriages. Her members, cleaving to this doctrine, hold fast to the truth that marriage is for life, and that our earthly marriages are pictures of the heavenly marriage between Christ and His Church.

CERC’s recent establishment of a Christian school society and board for the purpose of establishing a Christian school is not without historical reflection either. A generation of Covenant children has gone through the godless public school system, and far too many of them have departed from the Reformed church and faith. In our desire to establish a Christian school for our Covenant seed, we are reminded of our calling to raise up our Covenant seed in the fear of God’s name. A Christian school is a proper and historical tool to help Covenant parents fulfil their calling.

Going forward, CERC and her sister churches are called to ask for the old paths. Reformed churches are always reforming, and they reform by going back to the Scriptures and the Reformed creeds, searching and developing what God has set forth for them. In these old paths, they experience the joys of His salvation.

“ God’s command to His beloved church was to ask for the old paths, where is the good way, to walk therein, so that they may find rest for their souls... ”

Crossing The Jordan

>> Elder Leong Fai Chong



Fai Chong Leong is an Elder in CERC and is Advisor to Salt Shakers.

In our sojourn on Earth, the Lord leads us through many crossings in our life. Each one of us will cross over different circumstances at different times. Yet there is one crossing that every human being on this earth will have to make, that which brings us from this side of the grave to the other—what we call, death. Death came about when our first parents, Adam and Eve, disobeyed God and fell into sin. God cursed them and their offspring with both spiritual and physical death. Death is indeed a fearful subject for all mankind. Interestingly though, a child of God frequently refers to it as “crossing the Jordan”. Have you ever wondered why this is so?

The metaphoric expression “crossing the Jordan” originates from the Old Testament event during which the children of Israel crossed over the Jordan River to enter into the land of Canaan after forty years of wandering in the wilderness. Canaan was the land which God had promised to Abraham when He called Him out of Ur of the Chaldees. (Genesis 15:7-21 And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it). This physical “Promised Land” is a picture of the eternal inheritance that God had promised, in a covenant, to Abraham and his seed after him. However, this promise would only be realised after more than four hundred years.

The children of Israel had grown into a big nation in Egypt under the

preservation of God. When Pharaoh saw that the children of Israel became mightier than the Egyptians, he enslaved them, afflicted them and killed their new-born sons. The children of Israel cried out to the LORD for deliverance, and the LORD sent Moses to deliver them from the land of bondage. They left Egypt and crossed the Red Sea and were about to enter the land which God had promised to their father, Abraham. However, because of their unbelief (not trusting that God was able to deliver the inhabitants of the land into their hands), they wandered in the wilderness for forty years before they could reach the other side of the “Promised Land”, having been separated by the Jordan River. It was of great significance for this new generation of Israel when they finally reached the western side of the Jordan River. They had been delivered from the land of bondage, and after sojourning for forty years through a long, hard and tedious journey, they finally had a glimpse of the “Promised Land”. Crossing over would bring them to a place that flowed with milk and honey. Crossing over would bring an end to their sojourn, delivering them to a time of rest. Crossing over meant finally having a place which they could call their own. The crossing over of the Jordan is thus a picture of a child of God who comes to the end of his journey on Earth and is translated to his heavenly home to be with the Lord Jesus for eternity, a crossing that all believers yearn for.

You may ask, “What is the significance of the “crossing of the Jordan” to me as a youth? How may I prepare for this crossing?” Firstly, we must acknowledge that this event is good and precious for a child of God. This may seem contradictory as the Word of God states that the “wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23), death being the curse of God upon the whole human race after Adam and Eve had fallen into sin. Indeed, death is a curse for non-believers of Christ. However, we believe that this is a blessing instead for those who are redeemed by Christ. In our Confessions, the Heidelberg Catechism, Q&A 42 states: “Our death is not a satisfaction for our sins, but only an abolishing of sin, and a passage into eternal life”. This is a great comfort for all of us who struggle with our depraved nature from the time of our birth, having to deal with the lusts of the flesh constantly, plagued by the corruptions of the body. To have this assurance that we will finally be free from earthly corruption and that we would be in glory with our Saviour forever and ever, not only gives us strength in our adversities but also inspires us to live courageously for Him in our youth.

Second, knowing this blessedness, we must not fall into the error of living our life carelessly or indifferently. We must

instead live our life as one who has been made alive by the Holy Spirit in Christ and has a purpose and calling here to fulfil. With the knowledge that we will “cross our Jordan” one day, we must now have a renewed purpose in life. In our pursuits for education, career, and family, our purpose and goal must always be to seek first the kingdom of God. We must be reminded that we should constantly seek the things which are above and not things on this earth. This will give us great advantage in the way that we live as we would no longer be bound by pursuits after vain glory, never-quenching power and unsatisfied riches.

Third, since our “crossing the Jordan” is not an event determined by ourselves but solely by our heavenly Father, we must live our life constantly preparing for this day. We must not believe that we still have much time to waste away as we are youthful. The Word of God reminds us to always be “redeeming the time, because the days are evil” (Ephesians 5:16). To redeem the time, we must dedicate our time and energy, living with the consciousness that we are walking in the calling that God has called His people to. One of these chief callings would be to support the preaching of the Gospel regardless of our station in life.

Finally, in preparation to “cross the Jordan”, we must walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called (Ephesians 4:1). We are called to walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God (Colossians 1:10). This is a call to us while we are yet on this side of Jordan. We are to be prudent in employing the gifts and talents which God has given to us, which are to be used for His glory and honour in every station of our life. We do this faithfully till we are ready to “cross the Jordan”. We can then echo the words of Paul in 2 Timothy 4:7, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”

“Crossing the Jordan” is never easy for anyone to face, nor is it easy to watch our loved ones crossing this river. However, with this firm belief that our death is no more a satisfaction for our sins, but only an abolishing of sin, and a passage to eternal life, we can and must live already now as one who is risen with Christ and seeking those things which are above. Let us then echo with the Psalmist in Psalm 150:6, “Let everything that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.” Amen.

“ I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. (2 Timothy 4:7)





News from the Churches

SINGAPORE

Josiah, who is currently in Michigan with his wife, Huiqi, is taking Greek Reading with Professor Dykstra in seminary, Latin Reading and Grammar with Mr Jason Holstege, as well as several courses in Grand Valley State University to complete all the pre-seminary requirements, such as:

Literatures in English, Strategies in Writing, Recent Great Philosophers, Late Modern Philosophers.

May we remember our brethren in prayer as they sojourn in a foreign land, and may they rest in the unfailing care of our Lord.

SINGAPORE/INDIA

On 6th March, Pastor Andy Lanning gave a presentation on CERC delegation's visit to the mission ground in Kolkata. The purpose of the trip was to evaluate the preaching of Emmanuel Singh. The delegation reported that brother Emmanuel was very receptive to feedback from the delegation and that signs of a vibrant congregational life were beginning to show themselves among the saints there.

“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. (Matthew 24:14)”



We rejoice with Joanna and Lee Yang on their marriage



Games at a Sunday dinner - Elder Kregel reading a love poem



Games at a Sunday dinner - Mrs Koole plays "guess the difference"



Follow-up Committee organised a dinner for newcomers



Enjoying the company of Kelly Kaptein



Bidding our farewells to our church visitors

Covenant Evangelical Reformed Church

We are a Reformed Church that holds to the doctrines of the Reformation as they are expressed in the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dordt.

Place of Worship
11, Jalan Mesin #04-00
Standard Industrial Building
Singapore 368813

Time of Worship
Morning Service:
9:30am to 11:00am
Afternoon Service:
2:00pm to 3:00pm

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