



REFLECTIONS

Grace OPC

Historical Homicide

By Pastor Brian De Jong

In our Book of Church Order, there is a wonderful paragraph that is supposed to be read at the ordination and installation of a new minister. It reads as follows:

The office of the minister is first in the church for dignity and usefulness, for, by our God's sovereign design, the ministry of the Word is the primary instrument in our Lord's gathering and perfecting of his church. The person who fills this office is designated in Scripture by different names expressive of his various duties. As he has the oversight of the flock of Christ, he is termed bishop. As he feeds them with spiritual food, he is termed pastor and teacher. As he serves Christ in his church, he is termed minister. As it is his duty to be grave and prudent, and an example to the flock, and to govern well in the house of God, he is termed presbyter or elder. As he is sent to declare the will of God to sinners, and to beseech them to be reconciled to God through Christ, he is termed ambassador. As he is commanded to warn the house of Israel against the enemies of God and his Word, he is termed watchman. And, as he dispenses the manifold grace of God and the ordinances instituted by Christ, he is termed steward of the mysteries of God.

These days, I feel very much like the watchman on the wall, observing the enemies of God and his Word in order to warn the house of Israel. I see an enemy busy at work, and I fear that the mischief being done will have far reaching and long-lasting effects.

Specifically, I am watching as the rioters and protesters across our land are tearing down statues of historical figures. It started with the removal of statues of Confederate Generals in southern states. It has spread to founding fathers – George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, to name a few. The mania has now expanded to Christopher Columbus,

Teddie Roosevelt, Abraham Lincoln and Ulysses S. Grant. Even more recently, one radical activist called for the smashing of stain glass windows depicting “White Jesus.” Undoubtedly, there is more to come on this rampage against history.

As others have pointed out, the mindset of this movement is profoundly disturbing and deeply unhealthy. There is an overt desire to obliterate history – to burn everything to the ground. Any references to our past must be found to be offensive, and therefore must be desecrated and removed.

As Presbyterians, we have a deep and abiding commitment to truth. One of the foundation stones of our faith is our desire to know and to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. We serve the God of truth, who reveals the truth that sets us free.

The truth about history is not always nice and neat. Sometimes it can be ugly and disturbing. Think about some truths from the pages of the Scriptures... Noah got drunk and lay naked in his tent. Abraham lied about his wife to protect his own skin. Joseph’s brothers sold him into slavery. Moses was proud and angry when he struck the rock with his staff. King David committed adultery with Bathsheba, and then murdered her husband Uriah to cover up his own sin. Peter denied even knowing Jesus, and did so three times! Over and over, God shows us the truth about even his honored servants – they all had feet of clay.

When history is stabbed in the back and left for dead in the streets, we ceased to learn important lessons from our past.

Continued on last page...

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Inside this issue:

<i>Pastor’s Article</i>	1
<i>MERF</i>	2-3
<i>John Ploughman</i>	4-5
<i>Golf Outing</i>	6
<i>July Birthdays and Anniversaries</i>	7
<i>July Calendar</i>	8
<i>Recipe Corner</i>	9
<i>Spurgeon Corner</i>	10

Mnemonics...

- *July 4th Golf Outing*
- *July 12th Men’s Cookout Fellowship Lunch*
- *July 14th Session Meeting*
- *July 26th Lord’s Supper*

Chapter 3: On the Preacher's Appearance

GOOD horse cannot be a bad color, and a really good preacher can wear what he likes, and none will care much about it; but though you cannot know wine by the barrel, a good appearance is a letter of recommendation even to a plowman. Wise men neither fall into love nor take a dislike at first sight, but still the first impression is always a great thing even with them; and as to those weaker brethren who are not wise, a good appearance is half the battle.

What is a good appearance? Well, it's not being pompous and starchy, and making one's self high and mighty among the people, for proud looks lose hearts, and gentle words win them. It's not wearing fine clothes either, for foppish dress usually means a foul house within and the doorstep without fresh white wash. Such dressing tells the world that the outside is the best part of the puppet. When a man is proud as a peacock, all strut and show, he needs converting himself before he sets up to preach to others. The preacher who measures himself by his mirror may please a few silly girls, but neither God nor man will long put up with him. The man who owes his greatness to his tailor will find that needle and thread cannot long hold a fool in a pulpit. A gentleman should have more in his pocket than on his back, and a minister should have more in his inner man than on his outer man. I would say, if I might, to young ministers, do not preach in gloves, for cats in mittens catch no mice; don't curl and oil your hair like dandies, for nobody cares to hear a peacock's voice; don't have your own pretty self in your mind at all, or nobody else will mind you. Away with gold rings, and chains, and jewelry; why should the pulpit become a goldsmith's shop? Forever away with surplices and gowns and all those nursery doll dresses men should put away childish things. A cross on the back is the sign of a devil in the heart; those who do as Rome does should go to Rome and show heir colors. If priests suppose that they get the respect of honest men by their fine ornamental dresses, they are much mistaken, for it is commonly said, "Fine feathers make fine birds," and "An ape is never so like an ape as when he wears a Popish cape."

Among us dissenters the preacher claims no priestly powers and therefore should never wear a peculiar dress. Let fools wear fools' caps and fools' dresses, but men who make no claim to be fools should not put on fools' clothes. None but a very silly sheep would wear wolfs clothing. It is a singular taste which makes honest men covet the rags of thieves.

Besides, where's the good of such finery? Except a duck in pattens, no creature looks more stupid than a dissenting preacher in a gown which is of no manner of use to him. I could laugh till I held my sides when I see our doctors in gowns and bands, puffed out with their silks, and touched up with their little bibs, for they put me so much in mind of our old turkey when his temper is up, and he swells to his biggest. They must be weak folks indeed who want a man to dress like a woman before they can enjoy his sermon, and he who cannot preach without such milliner's tawdry finery may be a man among geese, but he is a goose among men. At the same time, the preacher should endeavor, according to his means, to dress himself respectably; and, as to neatness, he should be without spot, for kings should not have dirty footmen to wait at their table, and they who teach godliness should practice cleanliness. I should like white neckties better if they were always white, but dirty brown is neither here nor there. From a slovenly, smoking, snuff-taking, beer-drinking parson may the? be delivered. Some that I meet with may, perhaps, have very good manners, but they did not happen to have them about them at the time. Like the Dutch captain with his anchors, they had left them at home; this should never be the case, for, if there be a well-behaved man in the parish, it should be the minister. A worn coat is no discredit, but the poorest may be neat, and men should be scholars rather than teachers till they are so. you cannot judge a horse by its harness; but a modest, gentle-manly appearance, in which the dress is just such as nobody could make a remark upon, seems to me to be the right sort of thing.

This little bit of my mind is meant to warn you young striplings who have just started in the ministry; and if any of you get cross over it, I shall tell you that sore horses cannot bear to be combed, and again "those whom the shoe flits must wear it." John Ploughman, you will say, had better mend his own smock and let the parsons alone; but I take leave to look about me and speak my mind, for a cat may look at a king, and a fool may give wise men good advice. If I speak too plainly, please remember that an old dog cannot alter his way of barking, and he who has long been used to plow a straight furrow is very apt to speak in the same straightforward manner.

Golf Outing

Our annual July 4th Golf outing will be at Sunset Hills in Sheboygan Falls! See Roger Arndt for details.



“If you wish to know God, you must know his Word. If you wish to perceive his power, you must see how he works by his Word. If you wish to know his purpose before it comes to pass, you can only discover it by his Word.”

C.H. Spurgeon

July Birthdays

Zach Blasczyk 2nd
Stephanie Arndt 2nd
Amy Gross 6th
Noah Friberg 7th
Megan Boss 9th
Paul Doro 15th
Joel Moody 18th
Brian Wingard 18th
Carl Nyhof 19th
Daniel Doro 21st



Phyllis Nyhof 24th
Graham Ver Velde 25th
Steven Doro 28th

July Anniversaries

Zach and Emile Blasczyk
July 23rd, 4 years

Tim and Tammy Voskuil
July 20th, 25 years

Jim and Arenda Onnink
July 30th, 49 years





Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ

Grace OPC

July 2020



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	Golf Outing
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 Men's Cookout Fellowship Lunch	13	14 Session Meeting	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26 Lord's Supper	27	28	29	30	31	

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Chocolate Chip Cookie Delight

Ingredients:

- 1 tube (16-1/2 ounces) refrigerated chocolate chip cookie dough
- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- 1 carton (12 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed, divided
- 3 cups cold 2% milk
- 1 package (3.9 ounces) instant chocolate pudding mix
- 1 package (3.4 ounces) instant vanilla pudding mix
- Optional: Chopped nuts, chocolate curls and miniature semisweet chocolate chips

Directions:

- Let cookie dough stand at room temperature for 5-10 minutes to soften. Press into an ungreased 13x9-in. baking pan. Bake at 350° until golden brown, 14-16 minutes. Cool on a wire rack.
- In a large bowl, beat cream cheese and confectioners' sugar until smooth. Fold in 1-3/4 cups whipped topping. Spread over crust.
- In a large bowl, whisk milk and pudding mixes for 2 minutes. Spread over cream cheese layer. Top with remaining whipped topping. Sprinkle with nuts and chocolate curls if desired.
- Cover and refrigerate until firm, 8 hours or overnight.



*“Jesus answered,
‘It is written:
‘Man shall not
live on bread
alone, but on every
word that
comes from the
mouth of God.’”
Matthew 4:4*



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excellencies of Jesus
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Spurgeon Corner

“Our heart shall rejoice in Him.”

Psalm 33:21

Blessed is the fact that Christians can rejoice even in the deepest distress; although trouble may surround them, they still sing; and, like many birds, they sing best in their cages. The waves may roll over them, but their souls soon rise to the surface and see the light of God’s countenance;

they have a buoyancy about them which keeps their head always above the water, and helps them to sing amid the tempest, “God is with me still.” To whom shall the glory be given? Oh! to Jesus—it is all by Jesus. Trouble does not necessarily bring consolation with it to the believer, but the presence of the Son of God in the fiery furnace with him fills his heart with joy. He is sick and suffering, but Jesus visits him and makes his bed for him. He is dying, and the cold chilly waters of Jordan are gathering about him up to the neck, but Jesus puts His arms around him, and cries, “Fear not, beloved; to die is to be blessed; the waters of death have their fountain-head in heaven; they are not bitter, they are sweet as nectar, for they flow from the throne of God.” As the departing saint wades through the stream, and the billows gather around him, and heart and flesh fail him, the same voice sounds in his ears, “Fear not; I am with thee; be not dismayed; I am thy God.” As he nears the borders of the infinite unknown, and is almost affrighted to enter the realm of shades, Jesus says, “Fear not, it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” Thus strengthened and consoled, the believer is not afraid to die; nay, he is even willing to depart, for since he has seen Jesus as the morning star, he longs to gaze upon Him as the sun in his strength. Truly, the presence of Jesus is all the heaven we desire. He is at once

“The glory of our brightest days;
The comfort of our nights.”

Morning July 2nd, C.H. Spurgeon

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Front Page Concluded...

We become necessarily ignorant of the past, and are probably doomed to repeat the lessons we refused to learn from history.

As Christians, we do not wish to suppress the truth in unrighteousness. We want the truth to be known, and understood – however painful that might be. Sadly, many in our culture no longer are open to the truth. They want their own narratives to reign supreme, untroubled by truths that may contradict the narrative.

So what should we do? Keep valuing the truth, especially about history. We must all be historians, of a sort. We cannot fall in with the crowd that wants to silence the voice of history. And how we must pray for a God-sent Spiritual revival in our nation. Lord, turn us from our

insanity and toward You, the God of History and the God of Truth!