



REFLECTIONS

Grace OPC

The Summer Morn I've Sighed For

By Pastor Brian De Jong

One of the most sublime hymns in our hymnal is “The Sands of Time Are Sinking.” This hymn is based on a poem by Anne Cousin which is, in turn, based on the letters of Samuel Rutherford, the great Scottish Puritan.

The first verse of the hymn says this:

*The sands of time are sinking,
The dawn of heaven breaks,
The summer morn I've sighed for,
The fair sweet morn awakes;
Dark, dark,
hath been the
midnight,
But dayspring is
at hand,
And glory, glory
dwelleth
In Emmanuel's
land.*

This verse has been on my mind lately, especially the line, “The summer morn I’ve sighed for, the fair sweet morn awakes.”

I think I love summer in Wisconsin as much as anyone does. The beautiful sun, the warm temperatures, the moderate humidity all combine for an idyllic time of the year. Sitting on my back patio, looking out over the fields, and seeing the wind gently blowing through the trees gives me a sense of serenity.

Far different are the bitter days of winter, when you stay inside as much as possible. Or think of the cold, wet days of spring, when mud is everywhere. Nobody longs for those days. But summer? I well understand why Rutherford sighs for the summer morn. It is fair, and sweet. It comforts and calms.

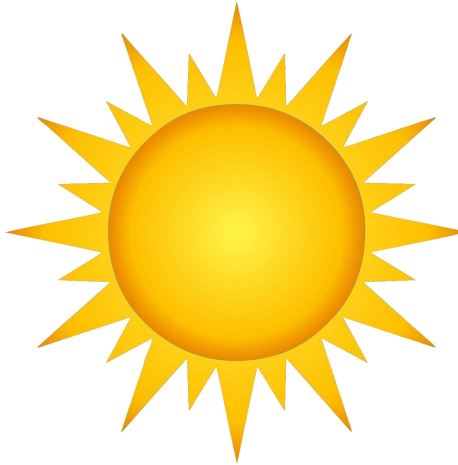
But this hymn is not telling us to “hang in there, summer is right around the corner...” It is not speaking at all of a summer of this world. Rather, it is saying that the glory that dwelleth in Emmanuel’s land is what we anticipate. We are looking ahead to “the dawn of heaven” breaking.

So employing an earthly experience of pure joy in a beautiful summer morning – the one we sighed and longed for during the bitterest dark days of winter – that serves as an analogy of what our hearts really yearn after.

If I might summarize and paraphrase this verse, here is what it is telling us: Life in this fallen and cursed world is dark – dark as midnight. Time is swiftly passing away. Like the sands of an hourglass, it is quickly slipping by. But

something better is coming. The dawn of heaven breaks over the horizon. Dayspring is at hand – the sun has almost risen. As it does, a fair sweet morning awakes. It is beautiful – it is perfect. This is what we’ve waited for, what we want most of all. Heaven is coming, and the glory of that heavenly land is just ahead.

What is the glory of heaven? What is it about Emmanuel’s land that is so magnificent? It is not streets of gold or gates of pearl. It is Emmanuel himself. Jesus Christ is the glory of heaven, and the joy of His people still living upon earth.



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Mnemonics...

- 8/4 Church Picnic



Safe in Christ’s Hands A Testimony



www.issa-almasih.com

Issa-almasih online Arabic program - “Sayings of Jesus the Christ”

My mother is the second wife. When my father’s first wife learned that she could not bear children, she encouraged him to take a second wife. In fact, she introduced my mother to him. They are very close friends. My father respects and loves them both equally. He often says that he is the happiest husband and father in the whole world. I have an older sister and two younger brothers. We feel like we have two mothers, and love them both so much.

My parents do not practice Islam, other than participating in formal occasions, like the circumcision of my two

brothers and attending weddings and funerals. At home, we were never pressured to pray or fast. Occasionally, my father does go with his brother or other friends for prayer in the mosque.

He is a secondary school teacher of history and sociology and very open-minded. Over the years, he repeatedly told us that Jesus (“Issa”) is his “*favorite man of religion*.” He often spoke of him as “*a true prophet of love and peace*.”

Who is Jesus?

Since I was about seven years old, I have been fascinated by my father’s

statements about Jesus, made on so many occasions.

Once, when I was 14 years old, my other mother, complained at supper time about what she heard from the loudspeakers of the neighborhood mosque. She was upset about what the imam said about women. I do not remember the details, but it was something about women’s dress and not working outside of their homes. (She and my mother never had jobs outside the home, but they always looked after older women who were sick, lonely or poor.) My father reacted by saying

the neighborhood mosque preacher was ignorant, like the religious teachers in the days of Jesus. He said that unlike them, Jesus cared about women and defended them. As a teenage girl, this got me thinking even more about Jesus.

About 6 years ago, at the age of fifteen, I asked my father to tell me more about Jesus. He smiled and said that he didn’t know enough, but that long ago he had heard messages on the radio about the good character and good teaching of Jesus. He added that what he heard was very different from what Muslim



Dardasha 7 Arabic program - "Please Understand Me"

people assume they know about him. Then he said that from time to time he visits websites on the internet and listens to other messages – some good and some bad. He said that a good one provides the exact teachings of Jesus from the Gospel ("Injeel").

Finding Out

So, I did my own personal research. For many months, I visited websites and listened mostly to Islamic preachers. When Jesus was mentioned, most spoke negatively of Christian beliefs, but

said nothing about Jesus himself. This reminded me of what my father had said -- that they are ignorant about Jesus. So, after weeks of listening to and reading the gospel on my own, "I found out that *Jesus is our divine Savior.*" I became a follower of Jesus and told my family.

My father told me and the whole family that he was happy for me to have these beliefs, but urged us all not to talk to anyone else about it. One of my cousins is my closest friend. One day I told her that "I now pray to Jesus." She was surprised and a bit worried. She told her father, who spoke to my father about it. He suggested that my father convince me to meet with a certain Islamic scholar. My father said it was up to me.

Holy and Heavenly

One evening, we were visited by an imam who was a college teacher.

Right away, my father informed him that I am free to believe what I want. The imam strongly disagreed and spoke negatively about what he said Christians believe. I pointed out that some of what he said was not Christian at all. He politely replied that at least some Christians believe that it is OK for women to engage in extramarital sex. I answered that this is not the true teaching of Christ in the gospel.

He then said that there are different gospels, but refused to name a gospel that supported his claims. Then he added that as a woman I would not be able to understand what he was talking about. After that, he harshly demanded that I listen to his advice and follow only what Islam says and nothing else. When he spoke like that, my other mother got angry and defended me, telling him, "She is honest, intelligent and old enough to decide for her-

self." My father agreed and further said to the imam that "Jesus' teaching and attitude about women is holy and heavenly."

Now, not only do I know that my father and the whole family respect what I believe, but even my uncle says that he will not be upset if his daughter believes the same, as long as we keep quiet about it.

Prayer & Praise

Please pray for the protection and spiritual growth of this North African young lady and for her family and many others like them in the Arab and Muslim lands needing Christian fellowship. Praise God for MERF's media ministries in Arabic, Farsi and other languages. They bring the gospel of Christ to shine saving grace to many hungry souls, prepared by the Holy Spirit. Pray for their nourishment and growth in fellowship with other believers.

"I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken."

— Psalm 16:8



Dardasha 7 online Arabic program - "Girl Talk"

VERY little of this paper is to be set down to the account of John Ploughman, for our minister, as I may say, found the horses and held the plow handles; the plowman only put in a smack of the whip every now and then, just to keep folks awake. "Two heads are better than one," said the woman when she took her dog with her to market: begging his pardon, our minister is the woman, and the only sensible head in the whole affair. He is a man who is used to giving his people many things of a very different sort from anything which a plowman is likely to turn out of his wallet; but I have, at his request, dropped in a few homely proverbs into his thoughts, as he says, "by way of salt", which is his very kind way of putting it. I only hope I have not spoiled his writing with my rough expressions. If he thinks well of it, I should like a few more of his pieces to tack my sayings to; and the public shall always be honestly told whether the remarks are to be considered as altogether "John Ploughman's Talk," or as the writing of two characters rolled into one.

There are not so many hours in a year as there may be thoughts in an hour. Thoughts fly in flocks, like starlings, and swarm like bees. Like the withered leaves in autumn, there is no counting them; and like links in a chain, one draws on another. What a restless being man is! His thoughts dance up and down like midges in a summer's evening. Like a clock full of wheels with the pendulum in full swing, his mind moves as fast as time flies. This makes thinking such an important business. Many little things make much; and so many light thoughts make a great weight of sin. A grain of sand is light enough, but Solomon tells us that a heap of sand is heavy. When there are so many children the mother better look well after them. We ought to mind our thoughts, for if they turn to be our enemies, they will be too many for us and will drag us down to ruin. Thoughts from heaven, like birds in spring, will fill our souls with music; but thoughts of evil will sting us like vipers.

There is a notion abroad that thought is free; but I remember reading that, although thoughts are toll-free, they are not hell-free; and that saying quite agrees with the good old Book. We cannot be summoned before an early court for thinking, but depend upon it we shall have to be tried for it at the Last Judgment. Evil thoughts are the marrow of sin, the malt that sin is brewed from, the tinder which catches the sparks of the devil's temptations, the churn in which the milk of imagination is churned into purpose and plan, the nest in which all evil birds lay their eggs. Be certain, then, that as sure as fire burns brushwood as well as logs, God will punish thoughts of sin as well as deeds of sin.

Let no one suppose that thoughts are not known to the Lord, for He has a window into the closest closet of the soul, a window to which there are no shutters. As we watch bees in a glass hive, so does the eye of the Lord see us. The Bible says, "Hell and destruction are before the Lord: how much more then the hearts of the children of men?" Man is all outside to God. With heaven there are no secrets. That which is done in the private chamber of the heart is as public as the streets before the all-seeing eye.

But some will say that they cannot help having bad thoughts. That may be, but the question is: do they hate them or not? We cannot keep thieves from looking in at our windows, but if we open our doors to them and receive them joyfully, we are as bad as they. We cannot help the birds flying over our heads, but we may keep them from building their nests in our hair. Vain thoughts will knock at the door, but we must not open to them. Though sinful thoughts rise, they must not reign. He who turns a morsel over and over in his mouth does so because he likes the flavor, and he who meditates upon evil loves it and is ripe to commit it. Think of the devil, and he will appear; turn your thoughts towards sins and your hands will soon follow. Snails leave their slime behind them, and so do vain thoughts. An arrow may fly through the air, and leave no trace; but an ill thought always leaves a trail like a serpent. Where there is much traffic of bad thinking, there will be much mire and dirt; every wave of wicked thought adds something to the corruption which rots upon the shore of life. It is dreadful to think that a vile imagination, once indulged, gets the key of our minds and can get in again very easily, whether we will it or not, and can so return as to bring seven other spirits with it more wicked than itself. What may follow, no one knows. Nurse sin on the knees of thought, and it will grow into a giant. Dip rope in naphtha, and how it will blaze when fire gets to it. Lay a man soaked in depraved thought, and he is ready to flame up into open sin as soon as the opportunity occurs. This shows us the wisdom of watching, every day, the thoughts and imaginations of our hearts. Good thoughts are blessed guests and should be heartily welcomed, well fed, and much sought.

Church Picnic

Mark your calendars for our annual church picnic which will take place on **Thursday, August 4th at **6:00 pm.****

Invite your friends for a wonderful time of fellowship!



Treasurer's Update as of 6/30/2022

General Fund Balance at the start of 2022: \$19,548.74

General Fund balance as of 6/30/2022: \$7,760.41

Decrease in General Fund Balance: \$11,788.33

Missions and Benevolences giving is over the budgeted amount by \$239.50 for the first half of the year.

The current balance in the Malawi Fund is \$383.00

The current balance in the Capital Fund is \$77,702.36. There was a \$43,200.00 increase to the Capital Fund due to a payment received for an easement onto the church's property.

KIDS KORNER (Also for Kids of any age)

FRUIT FRENZY

Galatians 5:22 lists nine gifts, called "Fruit of the Spirit," that God gives to His people. Can you pick these fruit from the list below?

Tolerance	Self-Control	Anger	Sunshine	Kindness	Pride
Patience	Self-Evaluation	Love	Triumph	Diversity	Faithfulness
Water	Concentration	Gravity	Sand	Gentleness	Hunger
Joy	Books	Peace	Africa	Mice	Goodness

BIBLE MENAGERIE

Complete each rhyme with the name of the correct animal.

The Israelites' food store began to fail.
So they wouldn't go hungry, God sent
_____ Numbers 11:31

What a heap of trouble Adam did make
for all mankind when he listened to a
_____ Genesis 3:1

God's Holy Spirit, sent from above;
For our eyes taking the form of a
_____ John 1:32

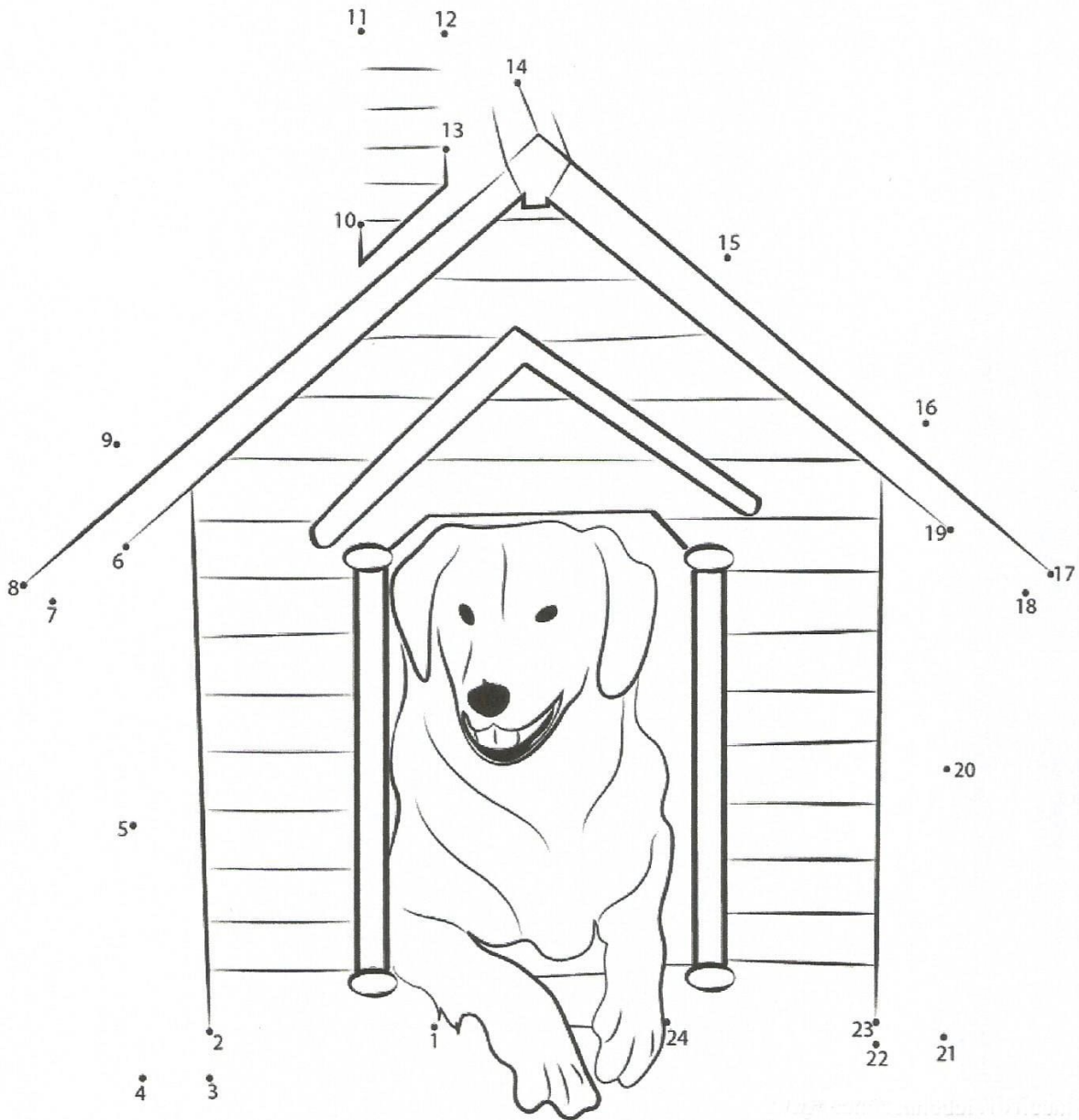
By the little brook Cherith, Elijah found haven.
When he got hungry, he was fed by a
_____ I Kings 17:6

For praying to God toward the city of Zion,
Daniel was sentenced to be eaten by a
_____ Daniel 6:16

When out of the bushes a lion did leap,
David ran after and rescued his
_____ I Samuel 17: 34-35

KIDS KORNER (Also for Kids of any age)

Connect the numbers to complete the Dog house then color it





Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ

August 2022

Grace OPC



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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4 Ladies Bible Study @ 7am Church Picnic	5	6
7	8	9	10	11 Ladies Bible Study @ 7am	12	13
14	15	16	17	18 Ladies Bible Study @ 7am	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 Ladies Bible Study @ 7am	26	27
28 Lord's Supper	29	30	31			

August Birthdays

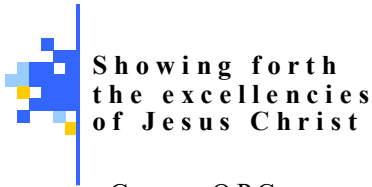
Jonathan Arndt	3 rd
Evelyn Mamazza	10 th
Wendy Froh	15 th
Ellen McNeese	20 th
Sandy Baatz	29 th



August Anniversaries

Brian & De Lou De Jong
August 9th 36 Years





Showing forth
the excellencies
of Jesus Christ

Grace OPC

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Spurgeon “The Lamb is the light thereof.”

Corner

Revelations 21:23

Quietly contemplate the Lamb as the light of heaven. Light in Scripture is the emblem of *joy*. The joy of the saints in heaven is comprised in this: *Jesus* chose us, loved us, bought us, cleansed us, robed us, kept us, glorified us: we are here entirely through the Lord Jesus. Each one of these thoughts shall be to them like a cluster of the grapes of Eshcol. Light is also the cause of *beauty*. Nought of beauty is left when light is gone. Without light no radiance flashes from the sapphire, no peaceful ray proceedeth from the pearl; and thus all the beauty of the saints above comes from Jesus. As planets, they reflect the light of the Sun of Righteousness; they live as beams proceeding from the central orb. If he withdrew, they must die; if his glory were veiled, their glory must expire. Light is also the emblem of *knowledge*. In heaven our knowledge will be perfect, but the Lord Jesus himself will be the fountain of it. Dark providences, never understood before, will then be clearly seen, and all that puzzles us now will become plain to us in the light of the Lamb. Oh! what unfoldings there will be and what glorifying of the God of love! Light also means *manifestation*. Light manifests. In this world it doth not yet appear what we shall be. God’s people are a hidden people, but when Christ receives his people into heaven, he will touch them with the wand of his own love, and change them into the image of his manifested glory. They were poor and wretched, but what a transformation! They were stained with sin, but one touch of his finger, and they are bright as the sun, and clear as crystal. Oh! what a manifestation! All this proceeds from the exalted Lamb. Whatever there may be of effulgent splendour, Jesus shall be the centre and soul of it all. Oh! to be present and to see him in his own light, the King of kings, and Lord of lords!

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SERMONAUDIO.COM/

GRACESHEBOYGAN

CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE:

GRACEOPCSHEBOYGAN.COM



Morning, August 3rd, C. H. Spurgeon

Front Page Concluded...

What we crave to enjoy for all eternity we can begin to experience already in this life. By His grace, we have a relationship with Jesus by faith. His Spirit dwells in our hearts, and sheds abroad the love of God within us. We already have fellowship with Father, Son and Holy Ghost.