

# REFLECTIONS

The Monthly Newsletter of Grace OPC

## OUR GREAT CALLING

*By Pastor Brian De Jong*

Before our Lord Jesus ascended into heaven, He left his church with their marching orders for ministry. Those orders read as follows:

*Matthew 28:<sup>18</sup> And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth."<sup>19</sup> "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,"<sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

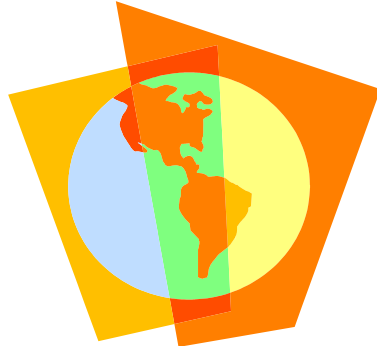
Jesus begins His great commission with the statement that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Him. He is the King of Glory and the Ruler of the Nations. Not one square inch of creation exists outside His sovereign control and authority.

Based on that glorious fact, the church is to carry out its work on earth. As you've heard me say, the main verb of Jesus' instructions is to "make disciples." The other three verbal forms in vv. 19 and 20 are participles. The participles orbit around the main verb like so many planets traveling around the sun.

Thus, our central duty of "making disciples" is modified and explained by the participles. The first tells us the location where this work is to take place – as you go wherever you go. Whether you stay close to home, or travel far and wide, anywhere and everywhere you are to be busy

about the task of making disciples.

The second participle is "baptizing." As we go, wherever we go, we are to be baptizing men and women, boys and girls into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. This reminds us that the mission of the church belongs to the church – for only the church may administer baptism. It also speaks of the covenantal nature of this mission, and to the Trinitarian aspects of our work. Part of making disciples is to baptize them into the church, as it is manifest in



local churches. New believers need to be members of a church where they can be encouraged and instructed.

The third participle is "teaching." Having baptized these new disciples, we must go further in teaching them to obey all that Christ commands us. "Disobedient disciples" are walking contradictions – better described as "hypocrites." Thus as we carry out our mission, we must introduce Jesus' disciples to the Master and His commandments. Instructing and exhorting them to new obedience is essential, lest those believers end up falling into the snare of the devil.

Such a commission would be daunting if it were not for the concluding promise – Lo, I will be with you to the very end of the age. Christ abides with His church, and will walk with her. In fact, He will work in and through her to subdue the nations to Himself. May we be busy about this kingdom work in the year 2009!

Volume 4, Issue 2

February 2009

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### Mnemonics...

- *Group Ski/Snowboard to Sunburst, 6th*
- *Men's Breakfast & Study, 7th*

# Learning Your Duty

By Thomas Watson

*"I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."*

I begin with the first: The scholar, and his proficiency; "I have learned." Out of which I shall by the bye, observe two things by way of paraphrase. 1. The apostle doth not say, I have heard, that in every estate I should be content: but, I have learned. Whence our first doctrine, that it is not enough for Christians to hear their duty, but they must learn their duty. It is one thing to hear and another thing to learn; as it is one thing to eat and another thing to concoct. St Paul was a practitioner. Christians hear much, but it is to be feared, learn little. There were four sorts of grounds in the parable, (Luke 8:5) and but one good ground: an emblem of this truth, many hearers, but few learners.

There are two things which keep us from learning. 1. Slighting what we hear. Christ is the pearl of price; when we disesteem this pearl, we shall never learn either its value, or its virtue. The gospel is a rare mystery; in one place, (Acts 20:24) it is called "the gospel of grace;" in another, (1 Cor. 4:4) "the gospel of glory;" because in it, as in a transparent glass, the glory of God is resplendent. But he that hath learned to contemn this mystery, will hardly ever learn to obey it; he that looks upon the things of heaven as things by the bye, and perhaps the driving of a trade, or carrying on some politic design to be of greater importance, this man is in the high road to damnation, and will hardly ever learn the things of his peace. Who will learn that which he thinks is scarce worth learning?

2. Forgetting what we hear. If a scholar have his rules laid before him, and he forgets them as fast as he reads them, he will never learn. (James 1:25) Aristotle calls the memory the scribe of the soul; and Bernard calls it the stomach of the soul, because it hath a retentive faculty, and turns heavenly food into

blood and spirits; we have great memories in other things, we remember that which is vain. Cyrus could remember the name of every soldier in his huge army. We remember injuries: this is to fill a precious cabinet with dung; but as Hierom saith, how soon do we forget the sacred truths of God? We are apt to forget three things: our faults, our friends, our instructions. Many Christians are like sieves; put a

sieve into the water, and it is full; but take it forth of the water, and all runs out: so, while they are hearing a sermon, they remember something: but like the sieve out of the water, as soon as they are gone out of the church, all is forgotten. "Let these sayings, (saith Christ) sink down into your ears;" (Luke 9:44) in the original it is, "put these sayings into your ears," as a man that would hide the jewel from being stolen, locks it up safe in his chest. Let them sink: the word must not fall only as dew that wets the leaf, but as rain which soaks to the root of the tree, and makes it fructify. O, how often doth Satan, that fowl of the air, pick up the good seed that is sown!

USE. Let me put you upon a serious trial. Some of you have heard much, — you have lived forty, fifty, sixty years under the blessed trumpet of the gospel, — what have you learned? You may have heard a thousand sermons, and yet not learned one. Search your consciences.

1. You have heard much against sin: are you hearers; or are you scholars? How many sermons have you heard against covetousness, that it is the root, on which pride, idolatry, treason do grow? One calls it a metropolitan sin; it is a complex evil, it doth twist a great many sins in with it. There is hardly any sin, but covetousness is a main ingredient of it; and yet are you like the two daughters of the horse-leech, that cry, "give! give!" ...Alas! how have they learned what sin is, that have not learned to leave sin! Doth he know what a viper is, that will play with it?

*"...to  
learn  
Christ  
is to be  
made  
like  
Christ..."*

## Watson Concluded...

2. You have heard much of Christ: have you learned Christ? The Jews, as Jerom saith, carried Christ in their Bibles, but not in their heart; their sound “went into all the earth; (Rom. 10:18) the prophets and apostles were as trumpets, whose sound went abroad into the world: yet many thousands who heard the noise of these trumpets, had not learned Christ, “they have not all obeyed.” (Rom. 10:16) (1.) A man may know much of Christ, and yet not learn Christ: the devils knew Christ. (Matt. 1:24) (2.) A man may preach Christ, and yet not learn Christ, as Judas and the pseudo-apostles. (Phil. 5:15) (3.) A man may profess Christ, and yet not learn Christ: there are many professors in the world that Christ will profess against. (Matt. 7:22-23) Q. What it is then to learn Christ?

1. To learn Christ is to be made like Christ, to have the divine characters of his holiness engraven upon our hearts: “we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image.” (2 Cor. 3:18) There is a metamorphosis made; a sinner, viewing Christ’s image in the glass of the gospel, is transformed into that image. Never did any man look upon Christ with a spiritual eye, but he went away quite

changed. A true saint is a divine landscape picture, where all the rare beauties of Christ are lively portrayed and drawn forth; he hath the same spirit, the same judgment, the same will, with Jesus Christ.

2. To learn Christ, is to believe in him; “my Lord, and my God,” (John 20:28) when we do not only believe God, but in God, which is the actual application of Christ to ourselves, and as it were the spreading of the sacred medicine of his blood upon our souls. You have heard much of Christ, and yet cannot with an humble adherence say, “my Jesus;” be not offended if I tell you, the devil can say his creed as well as you.

3. To learn Christ, is to love Christ. When we have Bible-conversations, our lives like rich diamonds cast a sparkling lustre in the church of God, and are, in some sense, parallel with the life of Christ, as the transcript with the original. So much for the first notion of the word.

*Taken from The Art of Divine Contentment: An Exposition of Philippians 4:11, by Thomas Watson (c. 1620-1686), “Ch. 2, The First Branch of the Text, the Scholar, with the First Proposition. .”*

# Meadowview Manor

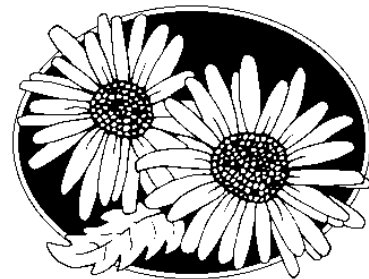
Come to sing some hymns and encourage

the residents on Sunday, February 8th at 2:00 p.m.

as we will be ministering to the residents of

Meadowview Manor Nursing Home in Sheboygan.

Contact Pastor Brian with any questions.



# Portland and the De Masters

*from Rev. Ivan De Master*

Portland, ME will be the area of ministry for Ivan and Carla De Master for the next 9 months or so. The pastor of Second Parish OPC, the Rev. John Hilbelink, has taken a new ministry in Rockford, IL where he is to be installed on February 6 as organizing pastor. While the church in Portland is seeking a new pastor they have asked me to serve as interim pastor. We will be living in the manse, which is across the street from the church building. Responsibilities will include leading both services in Sunday as well as working with the elders, calling on widows and shut-ins, visiting in the neighborhood, and serving where needed.

One of the attractive parts of the ministry there is that there are a number of Sudanese families that are part of the church. Eleven adults and 19 children were received into membership this past December. They have an afternoon service in their own language and once a month there is a joint service with the service translated. Carla is expecting to work with some of the ladies in helping them in the English language.

Second Parish Church came into the OPC in 1936 and being organized as a parish was about the only congregation that was able to keep their building. They have been served by seven pastors since 1936 - John Skilton, Arthur Olson, Calvin Busch, Herbert DuMont, Leslie Dunn, Stanford Sutton, and John Hilbelink. John Hilbelink had been the pastor since 1987.

The church currently has 119 communicant members and 52 non-communicant members. The worship services are held at 11:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. with Sunday School at 9:30 a.m. There are four elders and four dea-

cons. The church oversees one mission work, Pleasant Mountain, in the town of Denmark, Maine. One of the elders lives in that town.

Carla is looking forward to being involved in tutoring. She is also taking her easel and oil paints to capture some of the life in Maine. We hope to get to know and be involved with the congregation as well as have time to see some of the area. Acadia National Park has been recommended by several people. We will also be about 120 miles from Boston and may take a trip there.

The address of the manse is 23 Neal Street, Portland, ME 04102 and the phone number is 207-594-9446. (Our cell 312-927-4826). Perhaps you would like to plan a visit to Maine. The welcome mat will be out.



# Commendation!

At the January Session Meeting the following motion was passed. The Session wishes the congregation to be aware of this commendation, as we're sure you'll agree that Dr. Don has served our church faithfully for many years.

It was moved, seconded and passed "that the Session commend Elder Donald Schlernitzauer as he completes yet another term of active service, for his able leadership in our moderator's chair, for his excellent teaching of the Adult Sunday School class, for his sacrificial service to the saints and for his diligent care for the flock of God at Grace OPC, and that this commendation be made public to the congregation."



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## From the Tammings...

### Greetings, friends and family!

We are happy to announce the birth of our newest little one: Aoife Evangeline. She was born via C-section on January 22, 2009 - 7 lbs. 12 oz (our biggest baby!), 20 1/2 inches. Her first name is pronounced EE-fa – it's an Irish name that we thought fit right in with Tryste and Luthien's names.

Aoife is wonderfully healthy, and Melissa is recovering nicely. We are so thankful for this newest joy in our lives!

With love from all of us Tamms,  
*Uri and Melissa*



# February Birthdays

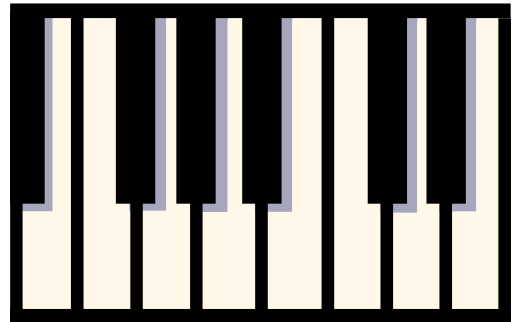


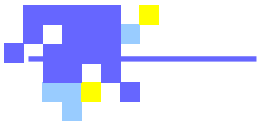
*Happy Birthday!!!*

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## Piano 4 Sale

Longing to play on a piano? The Harmelinks have one for sale (as they are moving). They are looking for \$500 for it. Contact if you are interested!

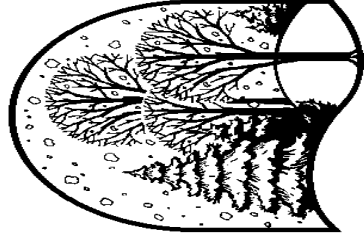




Grace OPC

# February 2009

*Showing forth the  
excellencies of  
Jesus Christ*



## WINTER

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	3 Pine Haven Study, 1:30 p.m.	4 Prayer Meeting 7 p.m.	5	6 Ski/Snowboard Trip to Sunburst 3:30 p.m.	7 Men's Breakfast & Study, 7:30 a.m.
8 Missions Sunday Meadowview Manor, 2:00 p.m.	9 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	10 Session Meeting, 6:30 p.m.	11 Prayer Meeting 7 p.m.	12	13	14
15 Choir Practice, 2:00 p.m. Joint Service at Calvary OPC 6:00 p.m.	16 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	17 Pine Haven Study, 1:30 p.m.	18 Prayer Meeting 7 p.m.	19	20	21
22 Lord's Supper (p.m.)	23 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	24	25 Prayer Meeting 7 p.m.	26	27	28

# Joint Service

**This year's** join service with Grace, Bethel & Calvary OPC will be held at Calvary in Cedar Grove on Sunday evening, February 15th at 6:00 p.m. We are the "host church" this year.

**Those who** would like to join their voices together in the Joint Choir are invited to two practices at Calvary on February 1<sup>st</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m.

**If you enjoy baking**, there is an opportunity to contribute bars & cookies for the refreshment time after the service that evening. All contributions should be brought to Grace Church the morning of the 15<sup>th</sup>.



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## *E-mail Address*



## “LOOK AT US!”

by Don Schlernitzauer

*“Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. And a man lame from birth was being carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple that is called the Beautiful Gate to ask alms of those entering the temple. And Peter directed his gaze at him, as did John, and said, ‘Look at us.’ And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. But Peter said, ‘I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!’”*

~ Acts 8:1-6 (ESV)

Have you ever used the “royal we” or the “royal plural” to add a weightiness to your words so that they will not go unheeded? As Peter and John entered the temple through the Beautiful Gate that day, there were indeed two of them, justifying Peter’s words to the lame beggar, “Look at us!” I would like to suggest, however, that Peter’s use of the plural pronoun in this circumstance was a reference to more than just the two disciples. It was indeed a most appropriate use of the royal plural, for it not only had reference to Peter and John, but as well to the King to whom they were united, the Lord Jesus. This is evident in Peter’s command to the beggar, “in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!” The biblical use of the word “name” is not just as a moniker, but is equivalent to all that person is who bears that name. Nor was Peter’s use of the name “Jesus” like a Hindu using a mantra or holy word to effect a change, but it was the expression of the will and power of the One to whom Peter and John were united.

This union with Christ is also indicated by Peter as he went on to explain the beggar’s

healing in v. 12, “...Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we have made him walk?” The beggar looked at them that day, and Peter spoke, but there was indeed One there whom the beggar could not see who brought about the healing which enable this lame man to obey Peter’s command. In speaking further to the men of Israel, Peter went on in v. 16 to confirm Christ’s presence and power that day saying, “And His name— by faith in His name— has made this man strong.” What we are noting in this passage is akin to what theologian Dr. Sinclair Ferguson refers to in saying that if we pay careful attention to the prepositions in the New Testament, we Christians don’t so much believe IN Jesus, but rather INTO Jesus. In other words, every follower of Christ is in union with Christ. The metaphor of John 15 really is true; He is the vine, and we are the branches united to Him as our life-giving source.

This wonderful truth of our being in union with Christ can cause our spirits to soar as we meditate on such verses at Galatians 2:19b, 20a (“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, But Christ who lives in me.”) and 1 Corinthians 6:17 (“But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with Him.”) But on a practical level this truth should have an immense influence on how we live day by day, hour by hour, as we realize our being in union with Christ means we take Christ the Holy One through everything that we do, every word we say, every thought we think. As we better learn to live in the consciousness of our union with Christ, may we find it helpful to remember Peter’s words at the Beautiful Gate that day, “Look at us!” The royal plural is appropriate for the King of Kings and His child, whether that child be Peter, or you, or me.

## Italian Peasant Soup

- ★ 1/2 lb. Italian sausage links, casings removed and cut into 1 in. slices
- ★ 1 medium onion, chopped
- ★ 3 garlic cloves, minced
- ★ 1/2 lb. boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into small cubes
- ★ 1 can (15 oz.) great northern beans (I used 1 cup of dried beans and pressure cooked them)
- ★ 1 (14.5 oz.) can chicken broth
- ★ 1 (14.5 oz.) can diced tomatoes
- ★ 1/2 tsp. dried basil
- ★ 1/2 tsp. dried oregano
- ★ 4 cups fresh spinach leaves, chopped
- ★ shredded Parmesan cheese, optional

In a Dutch oven or soup kettle, cook sausage over medium heat until no longer pink; drain. Add onions and garlic; saute until tender, Add chicken; cook and stir until no longer pink. Stir in beans, broth, tomatoes, basil and oregano.

Cook, uncovered, for 10 minutes. Add the spinach and heat just until wilted. Serve with parmesan cheese if desired. Yield: 5-6 servings.



“There is nothing better for a man than to eat and drink and tell himself that his labor is good. This also I have seen, that it is from the hand of God. For who can have enjoyment without Him?”

*Emily Boss*

# Morning- February 1

*“They shall sing in the ways of the Lord.”*  
(Psalm 138:5)

The time when Christians begin to sing in the ways of the Lord is when they first lose their burden at the foot of the Cross. Not even the songs of the angels seem so sweet as the first song of rapture which gushes from the inmost soul of the forgiven child of God. You know how John Bunyan describes it. He says, when poor Pilgrim lost his burden at the Cross, he gave three great leaps, and went on his way singing—

“Blest Cross! blest Sepulchre! blest rather be  
The Man that there was put to shame for me!”

Believer, do you recollect the day when *your* fetters fell off? Do you remember the place when Jesus met you, and said, “I have loved thee with an everlasting love; I have blotted out as a cloud thy transgressions, and as a thick cloud thy sins; they shall not be mentioned against thee any more forever”? Oh! what a sweet season is that when

Jesus takes away the pain of sin! When the Lord first pardoned my sin, I was so joyous that I could scarce refrain from dancing. I thought on my road home from the house where I had been set at liberty, that I must tell the stones in the street the story of my deliverance. So full was my soul of joy, that I wanted to tell every snow-flake that was falling from heaven, of the wondrous love of Jesus, who had blotted out the sins of one of the chief of rebels. But it is not only at the commencement of the Christian life that believers have reason for song; as long as they live they discover cause to sing in the ways of the Lord, and their experience of His constant loving kindness leads them to say, “I will bless the Lord at all times: His praise shall continually be in my mouth.” See to it, brother, that thou magnifiest the Lord *this day*.

“Long as we tread this desert land,  
New mercies shall new songs demand .”

*Taken from Morning & Evening by Charles Spurgeon “Feb. 1, Morning.”*

## Corner Store

The Pine Haven Women's Auxiliary would like to encourage you to come and shop at our Corner Store. Hours are Monday - Friday 9:30 a.m.- 1:30 p.m. (closed from 12:00 p.m.- 12:30 p.m.) and Saturday 1:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m.. New items are added regularly. Also, do you have any handmade items you'd



like to donate to the store? We're looking for things like bird feeders, bird houses, baby sweaters, holiday decor, etc. Or if you have any fleece remnants or other craft supplies that we might be able to use in making things to donate, please contact Kate Nagle or Debbie Boss. Thanks for your consideration!



**Proclaiming the  
Excellencies of our  
Lord Jesus Christ.**

The Monthly Newsletter  
of Grace OPC

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CHECK OUT THE AUDIO:

**SERMONAUDIO.COM/**

**GRACESHEBOYGAN**

CHECK OUT THE WEBPAGE:

**OPC.ORG**



- ★ Did you know that [opc.org](http://opc.org) is filled with fascinating facts and practical information?
- ★ Did you know that “Today in Church History” that can be accessed through clicking on the OPC Historian is a daily trivia section about people & events past & present in the OPC & reformed tradition?
- ★ That there is a daily devotion online there as

well?

- ★ Did you know that there is a question & answer section with frequently asking questions on a myriad of practical life & church related items?
- ★ That [opc.org](http://opc.org) is a great way to learn & appreciate the people & committees behind projects & papers such as Telenews, which is in our bulletin every Sunday?
- ★ Did you know that there is a searchable Bible and even a section to listen to & find words to our Blue & Red Trinity hymnals?
- ★ That articles from different publications such as New Horizons and reports are available here?
- ★ Did you know that through the work of the OPC historian and others there are multiple books available to purchase about the OPC and her progress through the years?
- ★ So... go to [opc.org](http://opc.org) today to learn & discover all about the OPC & grow in your knowledge of the Word!

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# Group Ski/Snowboard Night

We are planning a group ski/snowboard night Friday night, February 6th at Sunburst ski area. The meeting time is 3:30 p.m. at Sunburst. The ski lanes are open until 10:00 p.m. More info and sign-up sheet is posted on Pastor De Jong's door. If you have any more questions, please contact Ashley Boss.

