

REFLECTIONS

The Monthly Newsletter of Grace OPC

SO YOU WANT TO GROW

By Pastor Brian De Jong

True Christians possess a living faith in a living Lord. And because living things are growing things, we ought to increase in the grace and knowledge of our Savior Jesus Christ. What is the secret of spiritual growth? How does it happen?

Truth be told, spiritual growth is not as mysterious as it may seem. In His goodness, God has created means through which growth commonly comes – what we call the “means of grace.”

Think for a moment about a garden. The plants in the garden need water in order to grow. Back at your house you have a spigot. How do you get the water from where it is – the spigot – to where it needs to be – the garden? That’s simple, you say! Hook up a garden hose and the water can easily be transported from house to garden. Thirsty plants are watered, and so continue to grow toward maturity.

This is the idea of the “means of grace.” These are God’ appointed methods for bringing grace from where it is – with Him – to where it needs to be – with you. And through a diligent use of these spiritual hoses, refreshing grace is communicated to our thirsty souls.

The chief means of grace is the Bible. In and through the Bible, God speaks to His people. The written word is His favored method for addressing His children. As you read God’s book, your soul can hear His voice as your mind understands the message.

And this word from God is objective – it does not depend upon our perceptions, emotions and interpretation. The Bible is not

some emotional experience that we have – but is the objective written record of God’s word and will for all His creatures in all times and places.

So since you want to grow, let me encourage you to make Bible reading a priority in your daily schedule. Choose a time each day when you can sit down and read your Bible. I suggest you start in an “easier” book, such as Genesis, Psalms, or one of the Gospels. Read a section each day, and you will gradually work through that book of the Bible. Then choose another, and work your way through that one, and so on.



As you read, ask yourself three types of questions: (1) What is this passage actually talking about? (2) What is the meaning of this passage? And (3) How should I apply this passage in my life? You may want to explore parallel passages that cover similar topics, and see how “Scripture interprets Scripture.”

As you make Bible reading a priority in your life, you will begin to experience growth. Scripture exerts its transforming influence on all who take time to meditate upon it. If you want to maximize your spiritual growth, concentrate especially on the application. For when Christians obey the word of God, God blesses them with considerable advancement in their faith.

May God, by His Spirit, grant each of us greater and greater growth as we drink in His word!

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May 2008

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Mnemonics...

- *Men’s Breakfast & Study, 3rd*
- *Session Meeting, 6th*
- *Mother-Daughter Spring Social, 16th*

A Comforting Truth

By R. B. Kuiper

Scripture teaches the parallel development in human history of two kingdoms — that of light and that of darkness. Today it surely seems that the latter is far outstripping the former. ... In some lands the church of Christ is being crushed under the iron heel of totalitarian despots; in other instances the church is decaying from within. Not only does the church find itself in a hostile world, the hostile world is found within the church. In its determined efforts to destroy the church, the world is aided incalculably by a fifth column inside the church. Small wonder that those who constitute a faithful remnant are discouraged, almost despondent.

What comfort to know that seated at the right hand of God is an almighty King who reigns supreme, not only over His church, but also over all the forces in the universe that would destroy His holy church! Through the black darkness of the night comes His voice: “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32).

A ship is traversing the ocean. It has a most excellent captain. Can he guarantee the vessel’s safety? Certainly not, for he has no control over the winds and the waves. Together they may conceivably dash the vessel in pieces. The church of God is a ship, let us say, traversing the ocean of the world. But what a Captain it has! He is Master not only of the ship, but of all the forces that would destroy it. It is He that commanded the winds and the waves of Galilee: “Peace, be still!” — and they obeyed (Mark 4:39). His omnipotence is the absolute guarantee of the ship’s safe arrival at its destination.

Nor is that the whole truth. Not merely *in spite of* the world’s attacks will the church

prevail, but even *through* them. As in the case of the individual believer all things, particularly life’s trials, work together for good, so the King Almighty overrules unto the furtherance of His kingdom all the assaults made upon His church. Thus even the wrath of man will ultimately praise God (Psalm 76:10).

Because of the kingship of Christ over the whole of the universe the grim prince of darkness and the hostile world will not prevail against His church. The faithful members of that church exult in unison:

Wherefore do the nations rage
 And the people vainly dream
 That in triumph they can wage
 War against the King supreme?
 Christ, His Son, a scoff they make,
 And the rulers plotting say:
 Their dominion let us break,
 Let us cast their yoke away.

But the Lord will scorn them all;
 Calm He sits enthroned on high;
 Soon His wrath will on them fall,
 Sore displeased He will reply:
 Yet according to My will
 I have set My King to reign,
 And on Zion’s holy hill
 My Anointed I maintain.

The day is dawning when Christ will cast down into utter ruin the kingdom of Satan and upon its ruins will establish His own eternal kingdom. Then the song will be heard: “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever” (Revelation 11:15).

Taken from The Glorious Body of Christ by R. B. Kuiper, from “Preacher of Christ’s Kingship”.

Church Workday

Your help is needed! The Spring Church Workday will be held on Saturday, May 10th starting at 7:30 a.m. We will be working to tidy up the inside & outside of the church building. Come to clean windows, help with some yardwork, or lend a hand in a variety of other projects.



Mother-Daughter Spring Social

The Mother-Daughter Spring Social will be held here at church May 16 at 6:30 p.m. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board. The deadline is May 11. Bring a guest or two. Plan to attend for Christian fellowship and fun.



May Birthdays



Happy Birthday!!!

Book Review of Selina Countess of Huntingdon

by Grace De Jong

Recently I read Selina Countess of Huntingdon, by Faith Cook, and was deeply encouraged by this peer's remarkable life. She lived from 1707 to 1791, and strongly furthered the 18th century English revival. Whether opening her house to Methodist preachers, or opening a seminary, this "mainspring of the revival" was used by God to further his work. Mrs. Huntingdon also was responsible for the opening and financing of more than a hundred and sixteen churches. One of Selina's seminary

students stated, "What a rare example was the late Countess who laid aside her state, her carriage, her equipage to which she had been accustomed from her infancy, that she might be more able to ...assist in carrying on the cause of her great master." Faith Cook's book will be very encouraging to a Christian reader.

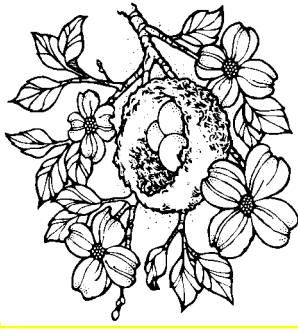




Grace OPC

May 2008

*Showing forth the
excellencies of
Jesus Christ*



Church Office:
4930 Green Valley Ln
Sheboygan, WI 53083

Phone: 920-565-2160
Email:
graceopc@juno.com
briandejong@earthlink.net

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|-------------------------------|--|---|--------------------------------|-----|--|---|
| | | | | 1 | 2 Pine Haven Bake Sale 9 a.m.- 4 p.m. | 3 Men's Bible Study, 7:30 a.m. |
| 4 | 5 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m. <i>Theology Class</i> | 6 Pine Haven Study, 1:30 p.m. <i>Session Meeting, 6:30</i> | 7 Prayer Meeting 7 p.m. | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 Missions Sunday | 12 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m. | 13 | 14 Prayer Meeting 7 p.m. | 15 | 16 Mother- Daughter Spring Social, 6:30 p.m. | 17 |
| 18 | 19 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m. <i>Theology Class, 3 p.m.</i> | 20 Pine Haven Study, 1:30 p.m. | 21 Prayer Meeting 7 p.m. | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 Lord's Supper (a.m.) | 26 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m. | 27 | 28 Prayer Meeting 7 p.m. | 29 | 30 | 31 |

Have You Seen Jesus Lately?

by Don Schlernitzauer

“Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, ‘I have seen the Lord’....Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, ‘We have seen the Lord....’”

John 20: 18 (b), 24, 25(a) (ESV)

After Jesus death first it was Mary Magdalene, then the other ten disciples after her, and finally Thomas, himself, who were given the opportunity so that all of them together could testify, “We have seen the Lord.” It was no small matter to see Jesus fulfill what He called the only sign that would be given to “a wicked and adulterous generation” (Matt 12: 39). But Jesus expanded this great privilege beyond His inner circle as Paul testified in 1 Cor 15: 6, that “He was seen by more than five hundred brethren.”

In each of these circumstances the Greek words used to describe the seeing of the risen Christ mean not just physical sight, as in a photograph, but the perception of Christ’s true nature.

Unless the second advent comes before our death, you and I will never physically catch sight of Christ in this life, but there is a wonderful sense in which we by faith do indeed see Him. And just as with the disciples, our seeing Him is to change us (Acts 4: 13). In fact, we are to see Him everywhere if we really have taken “every thought cap-

tive to Christ” (2 Cor 10: 5). Further, if we have matured in our faith where we can stand with Paul and say, “For me to live is Christ” (Phil 1: 21), our Lord will often be apparent to our senses in many circumstances.

To be acutely aware of our Savior throughout our days as our eyes are on Him and our hearts are in communication with Him is to come to live in His presence. This is to be true of each day, but it is especially be true on His day, the Lord’s day. As each of us considers this gospel privilege, we need to probe ourselves with questions regarding Christ. Do we see Him in worship; do we know it is His voice speaking to us through His word as our pastor speaks? Do we see Him in the sacraments, as the living water, the bread from heaven, as the blood of the new covenant?

Do we see Him as we pray, as the One whose prayers makes our prayers possible and powerful? Do we see him as the yes and amen of every promise of God (2 Cor 1: 20)? Do we discern His person in our brothers and sisters in Christ as they set the very example of Christ before us? Do we by faith see Christ in all of these circumstances? Are our spiritual eyes transformed enough that we see in the new creation all around us that “Christ is all, and in all” (Col 3: 11)? Can we at the end of each day echo the testimony of the disciples of John 20 and the eye witnesses of 1 Corinthians 15 and proclaim that we too “have seen the risen Lord?” God has made provision for this blessing to be ours, but we by faith need to make it our own.

Bake Sale

It’s time again for the annual Pine Haven Women’s Auxiliary Spring Bake & Craft Sale. The sale will be held Friday, May 2 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the lobby of the Oostburg State Bank. All proceeds help support the residents of Pine Haven.

Contact Marge Halbach or Kate Nagle if you wish to donate baked goods or any crafts.



Haiti Missions Trip

by Ken Koehler

I would like to give you a short summary of our Haitian Trip (March 10-20, 2008). Our mission was to help in the completion of construction of the Guest House on the island of Lagonov, Haiti.

On Monday, March 10th, Don De Troye, Chris Kaeiser and I joined up at 2:00 a.m. with Lincoln Davies, Steve Joosse, & Jason Feyereian, all of the Bethel Church in Oostburg. We made our way to Haiti by air from Chicago to Port du Prince.

We were greeted upon arrival at the airport by Ben Hopp, our Haitian Missionary. We drove through the city of Port du Prince, northeast along the shore line to Kaliko, which was a little over a one hour trip on a very busy road.

We arrived at the Hopp's rented home. They have a very small but nice home in a gated yard, which is on the Kaliko Beach Resort properties. We were introduced to Ben's family: Heather his wife, and their three young children, Ethan, Emma & Elijah. We had dinner, socialized, prayer, singing of song, and then retired for the evening at their home.

The next morning we proceeded to the boat dock to board a very crowded ferry to make our 16 mile, 1+ hour, trip across the open sea to the island and city of Lagonov. At this time we proceeded through the very poor town, up into the village's hillside to the partially completed Guest House.

We met Bob Wright, a mission deacon from Uganda, Brian Minor & Ian Smili, both from the OPC of Kansas City.

It was here that we spent 9 long days working on the construction of the guest house, which also served as our place of sleeping on the floor and the eating of beans and rice (& rice and beans).

On Sunday we traveled by small truck into the mountain side to attend a church service in one of the mission churches on the island. It was a

congregation of approximately 50 to 60 people of all ages. It was a very moving experience of song, prayer, and ministry.

After nine days of hard work, the inside and outside walls were completed with concrete blocks, windows, fabricated doors and security bars. The building was basically enclosed and secured when we left.

On Thursday, the 19th, we woke early to travel by ferry back to the Hopp's home on the main island. We spent time fixing items in need of repair, and socializing with the Hopp's for the day.

It became very apparent how rough it must be to live and work as a missionary family in this extremely poor country. Besides financial help, they need physical and personal contact to maintain their sanity. It would be a good idea for many of us to consider personal travel to visit and show our support of their mission.

The Guest House will be used for religious training and schooling and will provide a place for visitors to the island. I want to personally give thanks to the congregation for giving us the opportunity to physically be able to help in the growth of the mission church in Haiti.

It was a very rewarding experience. I would personally like to travel back to pay them a visit in the near future.



Prison Ministry

by Rev. Ivan De Master

A number of people from Grace Church had the opportunity to attend the recent Chaplain's Banquet held at the Blue Harbor Resort. I was told that about 700 people were present. The purpose was to hear about the work of the chaplain and to consider support for his work.

Chaplain Rick Cawthon is connected with the Good News Jail Ministry and is supported by churches and Christians of the area. The chaplain himself is a minister in the Assemblies of God.

Three former inmates spoke of their faith in Christ and how they came to know Christ while in jail. Since their conversion they have continued to serve Christ. At least one said he is waiting to finish his time of probation so he can get involved in working with inmates and sharing the gospel with them.

The speaker Mr. Murphy (also known as "Murf the Smurf") was a former inmate, a jewel thief, and was converted in prison. He is now active in prison ministry and promoting this ministry. He emphasized how it was only Christians who come to the prisons and cared about the men and women there. This had impressed him and made him willing to consider the gospel. He also

stressed that only Christ can change a man's heart.

There are many chaplains in the prisons but only a small percentage of county jails have a full time chaplain. I am encouraged with the ministry of Chaplain Rick, and the inmates I have visited have responded well to his ministry also. He meets with those who are willing to speak with him, provides Bible studies for those who will use them, and arranges for mentors to come in. The Bible studies begin with the Gospel of John and then go on to Romans.

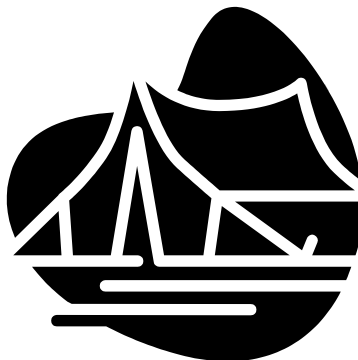
This past week Chaplain Rick and his wife moved into their new house, just a block west of us. We are looking forward to having contact with them as neighbors.

Last Sunday I had opportunity to preach at the OP Church in New Berlin. I was pleased to learn that one couple there, members of Covenant Presbyterian Church, are both chaplains in the Racine Correctional Institution (prison). It was an encouragement to speak with them of their work and know their commitment to Christ. The Lord is using his people to reach those in prisons.

Camp Westminster

The Eighth Annual Presbytery "Camp Westminster", will be held Monday, August 11 to Friday, August 15 at the Green Lake Conference Center in Green Lake, WI.

This year's speaker will be the Rev. Albert Tricarico, OPC Foreign Missionary to Uganda. He will be speaking on the book of James. Topics



are Settled Patience, Divine Wisdom, Faithful Obedience, Christian Love, Helpful Speech and Humble Submission.

You may make your reservation by phone or email - (Please do not call Green Lake to make your reservation.)

Thank You!!!

The trustees would like to give a big THANK YOU!! to all those who have volunteered to clean over the past several months. Your work has helped

out a lot! There is now more space available to sign-up to help on the bulletin board for much of this year.



Summer Missions Project

Dear Grace Church Family,

I would like to introduce you to an exciting short-term mission work I will be part of this summer. The 10 week mission that I will be joining is called San Diego Summer Project, one of the 150 unique projects organized by Campus Crusade for Christ. A growing interdenominational ministry, Campus Crusade works with students on campuses across the country and world. Founded with the purpose of helping to fulfill the Great Commission, their vision is, "To turn lost students into Christ-centered laborers." My involvement with Campus Crusade at the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point has led me to this great opportunity.

May 28th-August 4th I will be joining a community of 120 students and staff from all over the country who desire to grow in their walk with God. The purpose of this project is to provide an environment where students can step out in faith, grow in their passion for the lost, and experience Christ-centered fellowship. We will have a full schedule as we build relationships with one another, get into the Word in small groups, and receive training on how to grow in our own personal walk with the Lord, how to share our faith, how to spiritually multiply our life into others, and how to launch new movements on campus.

While in San Diego we will be reaching out to the people of this city in many ways. Our main place of ministry will be at a full-time job placement. In this position, we will have the opportunity to witness to our co-workers on a daily basis. While at our jobs, we will be able to learn to connect with others in the workplace in order to be a beacon of God's love for them. San Diego Summer Project also focuses on reaching out to four college campuses, to help them launch a Campus Crusade movement that will win students to Christ, build them up in their faith, and send them out to do the same. Throughout the summer, project members will also be partnered with local churches. Our goal will be to raise awareness of these churches, invite new people, engage in fellowship, and enjoy being part of the body of Christ.

I am excited to see how God will use me as his ambassador as I take this step of faith! I trust I will learn how to be a more effective witness for the gospel, and gain a greater understanding of how God wants to use me at this unique time of my life. Your prayers, specifically for the project members, and for the people we will impact in San Diego, would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for supporting me in this missions opportunity. I will keep you up to date on how God is working throughout the summer!

In Christ,

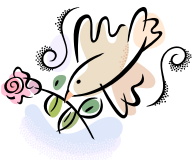
Lisa Berenschot

Young Reflections

A page designed especially for the children of Grace Church (by Samantha De Jong)

*Even a child is known by his actions,
By whether his conduct is pure and right.*

Proverbs 20:11



Do you ever wish you had more opportunities to tell others about Jesus? Maybe you don't have many non-Christian friends. Maybe you know people who aren't saved, but don't know quite how to talk to them about the Bible. Maybe you wonder what your friends will think if you invite them and their families to church.

What ever your situation, Proverbs 20:11 is very encouraging! You can be a good witness for your Savior just by acting in a godly way. When people see you obeying your parents, loving your bothers and sisters, and serving others instead of yourself, they will remember it. Without even speaking a word, you can point everyone around you to Christ!



Spring Search

Signs of spring are all around us! Purple crocuses bloomed in our flower bed last week. Trees and bushes are putting out little leaves, and the ground is green with grass again. Outside the singing of birds is almost deafening! There are 15 "spring words" hidden among the letters below. See how many you can find! Write your findings on a separate piece of paper, and hand it to Samantha DeJong to win a prize.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S | A | D | G | R | A | S | S | T | J |
| U | P | R | A | B | C | D | E | U | F |
| N | R | O | R | F | H | C | I | L | J |
| S | I | B | D | L | F | R | A | I | N |
| H | L | I | E | N | A | O | B | P | C |
| I | E | N | N | P | Q | C | D | R | S |
| N | A | T | E | D | M | U | D | I | U |
| E | F | V | S | R | A | S | W | X | L |
| Y | D | Z | T | I | Y | E | X | F | K |
| Y | R | R | E | B | W | A | R | T | S |



Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip Cookies

- ★ 2 1/2 cup flour
- ★ 1 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- ★ 1/2 tsp salt
- ★ 1 cup (2 sticks) butter, softened
- ★ 1 cup (Holson Old-Fashioned) Peanut Butter
- ★ 1/2 cup sugar
- ★ 1 cup brown sugar
- ★ 2 eggs
- ★ 1 tsp. vanilla
- ★ Lots of chocolate chips

Combine four, baking soda, & salt, set aside. In a separate bowl cream peanut butter, butter, then add sugar & brown sugar until smooth. Add eggs & vanilla, beat well. Slowly add dry ingredients until evenly mixed. Add chocolate chips to your liking. Bake for 10 minutes at 375° (my oven only takes 8 minutes). Makes 3 dozen. (This is mainly from the back of a Holsum Old Fashioned Peanut Butter jar).

Megan Boss



“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?”



Proclaiming the
Excellencies of our
Lord Jesus Christ.

The Monthly Newsletter
of Grace OPC

Worship: Grace OPC
4930 Green Valley Lane,

Church Office Phone: 920-565-2160
Email: graceopc@tds.net
briandejong@earthlink.net

CHECK OUT THE AUDIO:

SERMONAUDIO.COM/

GRACESHEBOYGAN

CHECK OUT THE WEBPAGE:

OPC.ORG



- ★ Did you know that David Brainerd was the subject of April's Did You Know?
- ★ Did you know that David Brainerd worked to spread the gospel among the Native Americans around the east coast of America?
- ★ That he set up a school for the children of the Indians?
- ★ That he worked diligently among them despite a severe lack of good health?

- ★ That his tuberculosis caused him to have to take rests at times of up to several months from his work?
- ★ That after 4 years, his weak body could take the strain no longer and he ended up on a sick bed in the home of Jonathan Edwards?
- ★ That Edward's daughter Jerusha was Brainerd's faithful nurse to the end, 19 weeks after he arrived, on October 9, 1747?
- ★ That he comforted her with the knowledge, "But we shall spend a happy eternity together."
- ★ That Jerusha followed him in death just over 4 months later?
- ★ That Brainerd's last words were, "He will come, and will not tarry. I shall soon be in glory; soon be with God and His angels."

Information found at http://www.desiringgod.org/ResourceLibrary/Biographies/1461_Oh_That_I_May_Never_Loiter_On_My_Heavenly_Journey/

Past & Present- Grace Pastors & Wives



This picture was taken during a recent visit by Rev. Jonathan & Margaret Falk.

All three pastors and their wives are as follows:

Rev. Jonathan & Margaret Falk, Rev. Ivan & Carla De Master, Rev. Brian & De Lou De Jong