

REFLECTIONS

The Monthly Newsletter of Grace OPC

JESUS & YOUR PROBLEMS

By Pastor Brian De Jong

It is an egotistical error to think that God chiefly exists to solve our problems. How self-centered can we be to suppose that the Savior came to earth primarily to straighten out the messes we make of our lives.

God exists for His own glory, and He sent His Son to accomplish the great work of redemption. The universe is all about Him and His Christ, not about me, myself and I. But within the great overarching work of redemption comes the comforting truth that God does rescue His people from all their troubles.

Psalm 34:17-18 states, *“The righteous cry, and the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles. The Lord is near to the broken-hearted And saved those who are crushed in spirit.”* When taken within the context of God’s plan to redeem a people unto Himself for His own glory and praise, we can see the secondary purpose of God to deliver us from our own folly, and from the malice of our enemies.

David was a man who had more than his share of trouble. Early in life he was persecuted by his own biological brothers. Then his father-in-law started hurling spears at him, chasing him around the wilderness in order to end his life. When he finally ascended to the throne of Israel, he was vexed by Joab’s questionable behavior. Later on he had to flee from his son Absalon, getting pelted by dirt and rocks from that dog

Shimei in the process. Yes, David certainly would have qualified as the “Sweet Blues Singer of Israel.”

Listen to how he speaks of his difficulties in Psalm 25:16-18 *“Turn to me and be gracious to me, For I am lonely and afflicted. The troubles of my heart are enlarged; Bring me out of my distresses. Look upon my affliction and my trouble, And forgive all my sins.”*



David was lonely and afflicted. The troubles of his heart were enlarged. He was in a deep pit of distress, affliction and trouble. He had hit bottom, and he admitted as much. But observe also how David responds to this low point in his life. First, he admits that he has many sins, some of which may be directly tied to the troubles of his life. He knew he needed God’s forgiveness, and so he was willing to confess his sins and ask for forgiveness.

Sometimes we bring trouble on ourselves by sinful choices and actions. The predictable consequences come, and we don’t like the fruit of our sin. We want the effects of our bad decisions to be taken away, but we are too proud to admit that we’ve done this to ourselves. David reminds us that whenever we are in trouble, we need to search our own souls for sin. Finding any violation of God’s will, we should humbly confess and seek His forgiveness.

David also realizes that prayer is an important element in times of trouble...

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May 2009

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Mnemonics...

- *Meadowview Manor Ministry, 3rd*
- *Women’s Spring Dinner, 14th*

Continued on page 6

Man's Chief End

By Thomas Watson

Q: WHAT IS THE CHIEF END OF MAN?

A: Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever.

Here are two ends of life specified. 1: *The glorifying of God.* 2: *The enjoying of God.*

I. *The glorifying of God*, (1 Pet. 4:11) 'That God in all things may be glorified.' The glory of God is a silver thread which must run through all our actions. (I Cor. 10:31). 'Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.' Everything works to some end in things natural and artificial; now, man being a rational creature, must propose some end to himself, and that should be, that he may lift up God in the world. He had better lose his life than the end of his living. The great truth is asserted, that the end of every man's living should be to glorify God. Glorifying God has respect to all the persons in the Trinity; it respects God the Father who gave us life; God the Son, who lost his life for us; and God the Holy Ghost, who produces a new life in us; we must bring glory to the whole Trinity.

...*What is it to glorify God?* Glorifying God consists in four things: 1: Appreciation, 2. Adoration, 3. Affection, 4. Subjection. This is the yearly rent we pay to the crown of heaven.

(1) Appreciation. To glorify God is to set God highest in our thoughts, and to have a venerable esteem of him. (Psa. 92:8) 'Thou, Lord, art most high for evermore.' (Psa. 97:9) 'Thou art exalted far above all gods.' There is in God all that may draw forth both wonder and delight; there is a constellation of all beauties; he is *prima causa*, the original and springhead of being, who sheds a glory upon the creature. We glorify God, when we are God-admirers; admire his attributes, which are the glistening beams by which the divine nature shines forth; his promises which are the charter of free grace, and the spiritual cabinet where the pearl of price is hid;

the noble effects of his power and wisdom in making the world, which is called 'the work of his fingers.' (Psa. 8:3). To glorify God is to have God-admiring thoughts; to esteem him most excellent, and search for diamonds in this rock only.

(2) Glorifying God consists in adoration, or worship. (Psa. 29:2) 'Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.' There is a twofold worship:

*"...to glorify
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(1.) A civil reverence which we give to persons of honour... Piety is no enemy to courtesy. (2.) A divine worship which we give to God as his royal prerogative. (Neh. 8:6) 'They bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces towards the ground.' This divine worship God is very jealous of; it is the apple of his eye, the pearl of his crown; which he guards, as he did the tree of life, with cherubims and a flaming sword, that no man may come near it to violate it. Divine worship must be such as God himself has appointed, else it is offering strange fire. (Lev. 10:1) The Lord would have Moses make the tabernacle, 'according to the pattern in the mount.' (Ex. 25:40) He must not leave out anything in the pattern, nor add to it. If God was so exact and curious about the place of worship, how exact will he be about

the matter of his worship! Surely here everything must be according to the pattern prescribed in his word.

(3) Affection. This is part of the glory we give to God, who counts himself glorified when he is loved. (Deut. 6:5) 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul.' There is a twofold love: (1.) *Amor concupiscentiae*, a love of concupiscence, which is self-love; as when we love another, because he does us a good turn. A wicked man may be said to love God, because he has given him a good harvest, or filled his cup with wine. This is rather to love God's blessing than to love God.

Watson Concluded...

(2.) *Amor amicitiae*, a love of delight, as a man takes delight in a friend. This is to love God indeed; the heart is set upon God, as a man's heart is set upon his treasure. This love is exuberant, not a few drops, but a stream. It is superlative; we give God the best of our love, the cream of it. (Cant. 8:2)... True saints are seraphims, burning in holy love to God.... Thus to love God is to glorify him. He who is the chief of our happiness has the chief of our affections.

(4) Subjection. This is when we dedicate ourselves to God, and stand ready dressed for his service... We glorify God when we are devoted to his service; our head studies for him, our tongue pleads for him... The wise men that came to Christ did not only bow the knee to him, but presented him with gold and myrrh. (Matt. 2:11) So we must not only bow the knee, give God worship, but bring presents of golden obedience. We glorify God when we stick at no service, when we fight under the banner of his gospel against an enemy, and say to him as David to King Saul, 'Thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.' (1 Sam. 17:32)

A good Christian is like the sun, which not only sends forth heat, but goes its circuit round the world. Thus, he who glorifies God, has not only his affections heated with love to God, but he goes his circuit too; he moves vigorously in the sphere of obedience.

Why must we glorify God?

(1) Because he gives us our being. (Psa. 100:3) 'It is he that made us.' We think it a great kindness in a man to spare our life, but what kindness is it in God to give us our life! We draw our breath from him; and as life, so all the comforts of life are from him. He gives us health, which is the sauce to sweeten our life; and food, which is the oil that nourishes the lamp of life. If all we receive is from his bounty, is it not reasonable we should glorify him? Should we not live to him, seeing we live by him? (Rom. 11:36) 'For of him, and through him, are all things.' All we have is of his fulness, all we have is through his free grace; and therefore to him should be all. It follows, therefore, 'To him be glory for ever.' God is not our benefactor only, but our foun-

der, as rivers that come from the sea empty their silver streams into the sea again.

(2) Because God has made all things for his own glory. (Prov. 16:4) 'The Lord has made all things for himself;' that is, 'for his glory.' As a king has excise out of commodities, so God will have glory out of everything. He will have glory out of the wicked. If they will not give him glory, he will get glory upon them. (Ex. 14:17) 'I will get me honour upon Pharaoh.' But especially has he made the godly for his glory; they are the lively organs of his praise. (Isa. 43:21) 'This people have I formed for myself, and they shall shew forth my praise.' It is true, they cannot add to his glory, but they may exalt it; they cannot raise him in heaven, but they may raise him in the esteem of others here. God has adopted the saints into his family, and made them a royal priesthood, that they should show forth the praise of him who has called them. (1 Pet. 2:9)

*Taken from A Body of Divinity, Chpt. 1
Man's Chief End by Thomas Watson.*



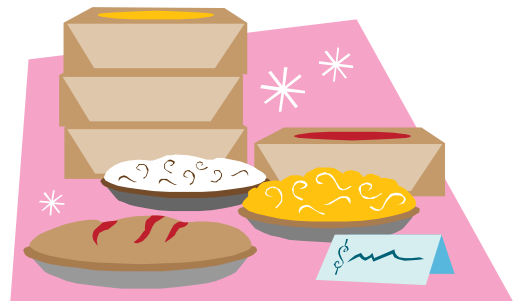
May Birthdays

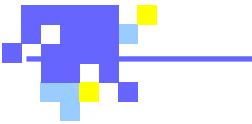


Happy Birthday!!!

Craft & Bake Sale

The Pine Haven Auxiliary will hold a Craft & Bake Sale on Friday, May 8, at the Oostburg Bank from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Please have your donations at the bank by 8:30 a.m. Spring crafts and baked goods donations would be especially appreciated.

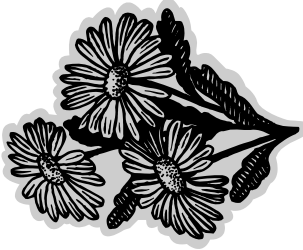




Grace OPC

May 2009

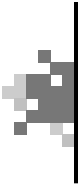
Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ



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

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Front Page Concluded...

...In David's distress he turned to God and talked to His Lord. He knew God understood, and would sympathize and help. David sought the solace of prayer, and so should we.

In prayer, he asked God two things—turn to me and be gracious to me. That's what I need more than anything—turn Your holy face toward me, and shine Your grace upon me. I need grace, for without your loving kindness and mercy, I am lost. In times of trouble, turn to Christ and seek Him with all your heart. And don't forget to say "Thank You" when He delivers you out of your troubles.



Thank You

Dearest Brethren in The Lord,

We would like to thank you for your loving and generous support of the Hispanic Bible Ministry in Cicero, IL. Your generous gift of \$301.92 has served as an encouragement to the believers here in Cicero. It has enabled us to read God's Holy Word a one body, and in both Spanish and English. Your gift is making a difference in the lives of our members and our visitors.

Because of the generosity of yourselves and many others, we have been able to purchase a good supply of dual language Bibles and we will soon be purchasing Spanish language hymnals which are Reformed in their songs. We eagerly anticipate ordering them once we are able to arrange the safe remittance of funds. We praise our God for all of you! We have thanked Him for leading you to

participate in this outreach. We also thank you for your faithful prayers. Occasionally, we will hear from folks who have been visiting somewhere, and they will tell us of the inclusion of the Hispanic Bible Ministry and Chris Sandoval in the prayers of the church they were at. Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

... We now have a website on which we will be posting the newsletter for the general accessibility. The second issue will be coming out in a few weeks. Our website is HBHonline.org. Check it out. We have a photo gallery and news.

Again, thank you for your generosity. It is truly a blessing to be in the family of God.

In Loving Fellowship,
The Hispanic Bible Ministry

Pizza Ranch Fundraiser

The Pine Haven Women's Auxiliary will be serving at the Pizza Ranch in Oostburg on Monday, May 18th from 5:00-8:00 p.m. We would appreciate your coming and letting us serve you and help us raise money for our projects to benefit the residents of Pine Haven Christian Home.



Hot Beef Sandwiches

1 Chuck Roast (about) 2-2 1/2 lbs.)
1 envelope Lipton Onion Soup Mix
1 can cream of mushroom soup

Spray crock pot with Pam. Place roast in crock pot (no need to brown it). Sprinkle onion soup over the roast and then spoon mushroom soup over the top. Do not add any water. Use a low setting on crock pot and cook 10-12 hours.

Remove the roast and with two forks shred the beef. Strain the juice and thicken slightly with flour or cornstarch. Add some to the beef and use the rest of gravy for mashed potatoes.

Kate Nagle

Cheesy Chicken Enchilada Soup

- ★ 2 cans cream of chicken soup
- ★ 1 can Old El Paso enchilada sauce
- ★ 2 cups milk
- ★ 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- ★ 2 cups cut up chicken breast
- ★ 3/4 cup crushed tortilla chips

In 3-quart saucepan, mix all ingredients except tortilla chips. Cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until thoroughly heated and cheese is melted.

Top individual servings with tortilla chips.

Sara TenPas



“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

Missions Speaker

Please mark your calendars!! Pastor Victor Atallah of Mideast Reformed Fellowship, The Back to God Hour, The Words of Hope, and an OPC minister will be speaking at Bethel Orthodox Presbyterian Church on Wednesday, May 6 at 7:00 p.m. There will be an informal time of Coffee afterwards where you may meet Pastor Atallah. Prayer Meeting at Grace will be cancelled for this evening so all can attend.



De Masters in Maine

From the De Masters

Spring is here!! In a retirement home nearby, people were to estimate when a huge pile of snow would be gone. The person who was closest would win a prize. One of the members of Second Parish said, May 27. It has been a long winter but that was a bit too long for the prize.

We enjoy being here and keep reminding ourselves that it is temporary. Please pray with us for a pastor that will lead this congregation in God's service. There are few they are seriously considering. It is good that Ivan sits in on the meetings, mostly listening but giving counsel when needed.

Last weekend the women of the Presbytery of New England had their 15th annual retreat in western Massachusetts. Twelve ladies from Second Parish drove in two cars. Six were from the Sudanese membership, one a teenager. They enjoyed being there. I especially enjoyed a workshop on the life of Sarah by Elizabeth Holmlund, pastor's wife from Dover, NH and the prayer time with the other pastors' wives. There was a workshop for girls that was good. Riding with four others for four hours allowed for a lot of sharing and bonding. Also seeing women from my past in the 60s was great.

Neighbors to the church, Bret and Elizabeth will be joining Second Parish soon. They are ex-

pecting their first child. Pray that that pregnancy will go well. They have started visiting some of the shut ins of the church and enjoy that. Solomon, from Malawi, took the membership class too but he will be moving near another OPC where he will work on a graduate degree in that city.

Speaking of neighbors, Second Parish will have a vacation Bible School July 20-24. We hope to reach many of the children here. We also pray for the neighbors close by that we have conversations with from time to time.

Maine is not exempt from the economic downturn. The Root Cellar, a ministry to immigrants and others of all ages; Abba, a ministry to unwed mothers; and the deacons seek to help those in need. Pablo is a regular attendee and capable fixit man, but had to junk his car, thus having to cancel a few jobs, he DID have. (He painted the whole manse and will fix a floor).

Last Sunday Second Parish had the monthly joint meeting of the two language groups. This was the first time we had the Lord's Supper together. It was a glorious time. Ivan preached on the Lord's Supper, which was translated into Nuer for those who needed it. Then we had a time of fellowship together. Praise the Lord!

Nursing Home Ministry

Come to Meadowview Manor Nursing Home on Sunday afternoon, May 3rd at 1:30 p.m. There will be a message, several hymns, as well as an opportunity to visit with and encourage the residents who are there.





Proclaiming the
Excellencies of our
Lord Jesus Christ.

The Monthly Newsletter
of Grace OPC

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SERMONAUDIO.COM/

GRACESHEBOYGAN

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OPC.ORG



- ★ Do you know who George Gillespie was?
- ★ Did you know he was born in 1613 in Scotland?
- ★ Did you know that after a time in a university, he was first a tutor, and then ordained by a presbytery & began to preach in a church at the age of 25?

★ That in 1643, he became one of the four delegates sent by the church in Scotland to be present for the meeting of Westminster Assembly?

★ That he was well-versed in debate and could plead his case eloquently, both of which abilities he used well when he went to that meeting?

★ Did you know that it was said of him “Gillespie promoted much the work of reformation, and attained to a gift of clear, strong, pressing, and calm debating above any man of his time.”

★ Did you know that this topic will continue further on his work in the Westminster Assembly in next month’s issue?

Taken from ¹(by John Livingstone, Characteristics)

<http://www.apuritansmind.com/GeorgeGillespie/GeorgeGillespieMainPage.htm>

<http://www.covenanter.org/GGillespie/georgegillespie.htm>

Women’s Spring Dinner

All ladies are invited to the Women’s Spring Dinner, which will be held on Thursday, May 14th at 5:30 p.m. There is a sign up sheet on the bulletin board in the hallway. Guests are welcome.

