

REFLECTIONS

Grace OPC

AN EVIDENT GENTLENESS

By Pastor Brian De Jong

As Paul wraps up his joyful epistle to the Philippians, he provides pithy and practical exhortations appropriate for Christians. Rejoice in the Lord! In everything by prayer and petition make your requests known to God. Dwell on what is right and good and true.

All of these duties we know and love, but I wonder if you've every considered the content of Philippians 4:5 Let your gentle *spirit* be known to all men. The Lord is near.

Tightly wrapped in a tiny package is a glorious universe of truth. It starts with the idea that we must be truly gentle people inhabited by a gentle spirit. This speaks of a heart subdued by Christ – a heart yielded to the work of the Holy Spirit. No longer raging about like a lunatic, this spirit is quiet and peaceable, contented and relaxed. It is not boiling and moiling with malice and bitterness. Christ the King has tamed this wild heart, and the old frantic feeling is gone for good.

Having a gentleness of spirit, we reflect that in how we act and interact. We conduct ourselves as true "Gentlemen" and "Gentlewomen." There is an outward calm that mirrors the state of our forgiven and redeemed hearts. Though we are often excited in good things, we are not "excitable" in the worst senses of that term.

People around us quickly sense a radiating peacefulness. They can tell that we are at rest in Christ, and there is something attractive about it. Although

they cannot explain it, nor necessarily understand the source of it, they do acknowledge the reality of it. To paraphrase a Supreme Court justice of long ago, "I can't define gentleness, but I can recognize it when I see it."

Our duty, then, is to let that gentleness be known to all men. We have a responsibility to manifest and display a gentle and quiet spirit before a watching world. Though we never wish to call attention to ourselves for the sake of self-aggrandizement, we do not either wish to hide our light under a bushel. We let our light so shine before men,

that all may see it and glorify our Father who is in heaven.

I take the phrase, "all men" to mean "all sorts of men" or "all kinds of people." It is simply impossible to let our gentleness be evident to every single human being on the earth. We don't and couldn't know them all. But we should make it known to all kinds and types of individuals that we normally and naturally encounter in life.

That means that we show gentleness to Christian and non-Christian alike. To our spouse, our children, our parents, our 'friends and relations.' We show this sort of spirit to our neighbors, our co-workers, our acquaintances. We even display gentleness to our enemies – knowing that a gentle answer can turn away wrath.

The reason for this evident gentleness is simple: the Lord is near! He is watching how we act and interact. He sees...



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Mnemonics...

- *Ladies' Brunch, 12th*
- *Pastor De Master's 75th Bday Party, 16th*

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Meet My Friends

by Pastor Brian De Jong

Recently someone asked, “Who is this John McKay you keep quoting?” Good question, I thought. Perhaps I should introduce the congregation to all of my friends that I quote in my preaching and teaching.

We’ll start with McKay, since he was the one who got this ball rolling. John L. McKay is the principal of the Free Church College in Edinburgh, Scotland. He teaches Old Testament, Hebrew and “Church Principles” as well as being a prolific author of Old Testament commentaries. I use his commentary on Exodus published by Christian Focus Publications under the Mentor Commentary Series. I find his insights to be carefully stated and accurate to the text. He does not simply rehash what all the commentators before him have said, but he provides fresh outlooks on the text under discussion. His Presbyterian doctrinal commitments come out clearly and naturally, though you never get the impression he is pushing Presbyterian agendas. He began pastoral ministry in 1980, and has taught at the College since 1983.

Another friend that has helped my understanding of Exodus is John Currid. Dr. Currid is a minister in the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, and has taught at Reformed Theological Seminary for the past 15 years. He was the chair of the Biblical Studies division in Jackson, Mississippi before moving to the RTS campus in Charlotte, North Carolina. There he teaches Old Testament. In addition to Old Testament studies, he has taught Hebrew and been actively involved in archeology in Israel.

Currid’s treatment of the book of Exodus has been particularly rich in emphasizing the background, the history and the culture of ancient Egypt. His knowledge of the geography and landscape of the Mid East is superb. His technical work on the exodus event is far deeper than what you find in most commentaries – he has done his homework!

Along side of these two fine resources, I also have enjoyed Exodus: Saved for God’s Glory by Philip Ryken. Dr. Ryken served as the successor for James Boyce at Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia. He recently became the President of Wheaton College and will be one of the speakers at the upcoming OPC

Diaconal Conference. Ryken is a son of Bethel OPC in Wheaton, so he has roots in our Presbytery. This commentary is really a series of his sermons. It is good to see how an excellent preacher like Dr. Ryken has handled the texts that I am pondering. His insights are often pastorally helpful and practically oriented.

James G. Murphy’s A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Exodus is an older work, first published in 1867. Murphy was Professor of Hebrew in Belfast, Ireland. Spurgeon characterized this commentary as “The result of laborious study by a scholar of ripe learning.” Murphy tends to move through the text more quickly and broadly, but often provides interesting insights. It is helpful to see how scholarship of 150 years ago handled the book. Murphy is not at ‘quotable’ as some of the others, but still helpful.

Some may wonder whether I consult my great friend, John Calvin, in my study of Exodus. Sadly, I do not frequently do so. The reason is simple: Calvin did not write a commentary on Exodus, but he included it in his “Harmony of the Pentateuch.” Using the 10 commandments as his organizing structure, Calvin treats the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy in a haphazard way. To find what he says about a particular passage, you must consult the index and then track it down in whatever volume it appears. He did the same thing with Matthew, Mark and Luke. I personally don’t care for commentaries that use a harmony approach, so I often don’t bother to turn to Calvin.

Turning next to my study of Romans, let me tell you about a quartet of characters that are most helpful. My first choice on Romans has become the Rev. John Murray. Murray was a Scot who came to the U.S. to study at Princeton Seminary. He entered the OPC as a minister, and became one of the most influential theologians of the early decades of our church. He also taught systematic theology at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia for his entire career. After retiring, he returned to

Friends Concluded...

his native Scotland and got married. He went home to glory in 1975. It has often been asserted that almost every scholar that has lived has written a commentary on Romans. There certainly is no shortage of choices. Murray is among the best of the best. His combination of careful Biblical scholarship and sharply honed doctrinal understanding make for a very full and good treatment of Paul's great epistle.

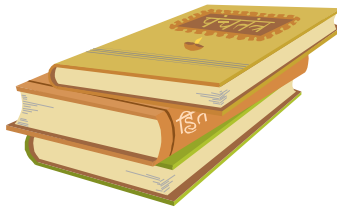
Moreover, Professor Murray was a visitor to Cedar Grove during the days of Rev. DeWaard, and once gave one of his famous bear hugs to our own Jay Buyze.

William Hendriksen is another Reformed standby. His work on Romans is part of the larger New Testament Commentary series by Baker Book House. Hendriksen taught at Calvin Theological Seminary and was a minister in the Christian Reformed Church. His work excels at presenting the standard Reformed position on most passages, with good discussion of alternative interpretations. He is rarely flashy, but always rock solid and steady.

An older writer on Romans is the northern Presbyterian Charles Hodge. Hodge taught for 56 years at Princeton Theological Seminary and has

written one of the classic commentaries on Romans. Hodge's depth is most impressive, as he pierces the surface and goes down to the deep meaning of the passage. Hodge represents the best of "Old Princeton" and can be relied upon at almost every point. Rarely do I find cause to disagree with the conclusions that he draws from the Scriptures.

And then there is Calvin – good old Calvin. As an exegete, Calvin was without peer in his own day. Few since then have rivaled his insightful understanding of Scripture. He writes as a pastor-theologian. His teaching was aimed at ordinary Christians, and he is surprisingly easy to understand. It is true that sometimes his sentence structure is long and complicated, and that his vocabulary leaves us scratching our heads. Yet he sees what others miss in the true meaning of the verses. Calvin's commentary on Romans was translated the Rev. John Owen in 1849. (This is not the Puritan John Owen, but a later translator of the same name). So you have the original Latin translated into the English of 1849, transferred down to us today. It is nothing short of surprising that this commentary continues to be as helpful as it truly is.



Front Page Concluded

...how we treat people, the words we speak, the choices we make. And living before the face of God, we want to do all to please Him.

So ask yourself this: do people think of me as a gentle person? Would they describe me as a "true gentleman?" Or would people characterize me as rough, rude, coarse and crude? Is my gentle spirit shining forth to people around me today?



May Birthdays



75th B-day Party

You are invited to a birthday party for Pastor DeMaster on Wednesday, May 16, beginning at 5:30. Picnic supper, indoors, followed by a program at 6:20. Celebrate 75 years of God's blessing to him and thus to us.

Cards are welcome! No gifts.





Grace OPC

May 2012

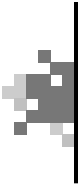
Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m.	3	4	5
6	7 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	8 Session Meeting, 6:30 p.m.	9	10	11	12 Ladies' Brunch, 9:30 a.m.
13 Missions Sunday	14 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m. <i>Pine Haven Study, 1:30 p.m.</i> Theology, 3:30 p.m.	15	16 Pastor De Master's 75th Bday Party, 5:30 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m.	17	18	19
20	21 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	22	23 Prayer Meeting, 7:00	24 Heidi's Baby Shower, 6:30 p.m.	25	26
27 Lord's Supper (a.m.)	28 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	29	30 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m.			

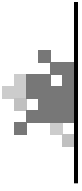
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News from

Continued...



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Social Fellowship Calendar

May 12, 2012	Ladies Brunch
May 16, 2012	Potluck for Pastor Ivan 75th Birthday
May 24, 2012	Heidi Baby Shower
July 1, 2012	Casual Potluck – Evening
July 23-27, 2012	VBS
August 16, 2012	Church Picnic & Bonfire
September 2, 2012	Casual Potluck Lunch
September 7-8, 2012	Camping Kohler-Andrae
September 14-15, 2012	Presbytery
September 20, 2012	Brenda Baby Shower
September 28, 2012	Worldview Movie Night
October 5-7, 2012	In Home Hospitality Weekend
October 27, 2012	Reformation Conference 9:00a.m. - noon (snack at break time)
October 28, 2012	Conference Fellowship Soup Lunch
November 3 or 10, 2012	Harvest Home
November 22, 2012	Thanksgiving Football Game
December 27, 2012	Bowling/Pizza/Game Night
January 11, 2013	Talent Night

This is a schedule that may change so please pay attention to the weekly bulletin and posted announcements as we approach each event.



Men & Boys at Grace Church

TWO ITEMS TO NOTE:

The Hendersons will need help moving soon – stay tuned for specific details!



A Men & Boys Summer Adventure is being planned for Saturday, July 21st. We will be taking a day trip to Rock Island State Park on the very northernmost tip of the Door County Peninsula. It will include an

early morning departure, two ferry rides, hiking, swimming and a picnic lunch on Rock Island, and supper together on the way home.

This is open for men and boys of all ages, shapes and sizes. For more info, see Pastor Brian.

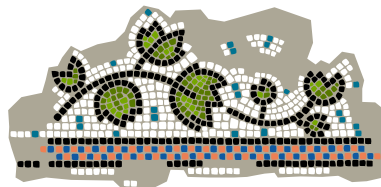


Register Today!

Have you registered yet for Camp Westminster in Green Lake, Wisconsin on July 30-August 3? Lodging reserved for our presbytery will be released after May 30. Join with families and individuals of all ages for fun, fellowship and talks on the topic of *Pilgrims*

Toward Dawn - Living by Faith in the Season of Unseen Things by the Rev. John Hartley. Please do not call the conference grounds directly, rather contact Joe & Judy

Lewandowski for reservations at



Healthy Chicken Fajitas



“The eyes
of all look
to You,
And You
give them
their food in
due time.
You open
Your hand
And satisfy
the desire of
every living
thing.”

- ★ 1 tsp. chile powder (I added extra)
 - ★ 1 tsp. salt
 - ★ 1/2 tsp. ground cumin
 - ★ 1/2 tsp. garlic powder
 - ★ 1/2 tsp. onion powder
 - ★ 1 Tbsp. cornstarch
 - ★ 1/4 cup water
 - ★ 4 uncooked chicken breasts (4 oz. each)
 - ★ 1/2 green bell pepper, sliced into thin strips
 - ★ 1/2 red bell pepper, sliced into thin strips
 - ★ 1 medium onion, sliced
 - ★ 1 Tbsp. olive oil
 - ★ 2 Tbsp. lime juice
 - ★ Lime wedges for serving
1. In a re-sealable bag, combine chile powder, salt, cumin, garlic powder, onion powder, cornstarch, and water. Add chicken, bell peppers, and onion; gently knead to coat. Refrigerate for 15 minutes.
 2. Heat the oil in a skillet, empty the contents of the bag into the skillet and cook over high heat. Stir occasionally and cook until the vegetables are tender crisp and the chick is cooked through, about 7 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in lime juice.
 3. Transfer to serving dish and enjoy with lime wedges.



Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ

Grace OPC

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CHECK OUT THE AUDIO:

**SERMONAUDIO.COM/
GRACESHEBOYGAN**

CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE:

GRACEOPCSHEBOYGAN.COM



Spurgeon Corner

*“A very present help.”
(Psalm 46:1)*

Covenant blessings are not meant to be looked at only, but to be appropriated. Even our Lord Jesus is given to us for our present use. Believer, thou dost not make use of Christ as thou oughtest to do. When thou art in trouble, why dost thou not tell him all thy grief? Has he not a sympathizing heart, and can he not comfort and relieve thee? No, thou art going about to all thy friends, save thy best Friend, and telling thy tale everywhere except into the bosom of thy Lord. Art thou burdened with this day’s sins? Here is a fountain filled with blood: use it, saint, use it. Has a sense of guilt returned upon thee? The pardoning grace of Jesus may be proved again and again. Come to him at once for cleansing. Dost thou deplore thy weakness? He is thy strength: why not lean upon him? Dost thou feel naked? Come hither, soul; put on the robe of Jesus’ righteousness. Stand not looking at it, but wear it. Strip off thine own righteousness, and thine own fears too: put on the fair white linen, for it was meant to *wear*. Dost thou feel thyself sick? Pull the night-bell of prayer, and call up the Beloved Physician! He will give the cordial that will revive thee. Thou art poor, but then thou hast “a kinsman, a mighty man of wealth.” What! wilt thou not go to him, and ask him to give thee of his abundance, when he has given thee this promise, that thou shalt be joint heir with him, and has made over all that he is and all that he has to be thine? There is nothing Christ dislikes more than for his people to make a showing of him, and not to use him. He loves to be employed by us. The more burdens we put on his shoulders, the more precious will he be to us.

“Let us be simple with him, then,
Not backward, stiff, or cold,
As though our Bethlehem could be
What Sinai was of old.”



Evening, May 3, Morning & Evening, by C. H. Spurgeon

Ladies’ Brunch

All ladies and girls are invited to attend a spring brunch Saturday, May 12th at 9:30 a.m. Please invite your relatives & friends to come. There’s a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board at church if you are able to attend.

