

# REFLECTIONS

The Monthly Newsletter of Grace OPC

## PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

*By Pastor Brian De Jong*

Recently the Session has made some minor adjustments to our Sunday morning worship schedule at Grace Church. These changes are designed to improve our Sunday morning routine and to enhance our enjoyment of the Sabbath Day. The Session encouraged me to explain these changes, and suggest a few ideas to the congregation for preparing themselves for worship.

You already know that we altered the starting time from 9:15 to 9:00. Rather than cutting out elements of our worship service, we thought that beginning earlier would be a better solution. Hence, worship will typically start at 9:00 and conclude by 10:15, allowing more time for fellowship between the service and the beginning of Sunday School. We are also working to begin Sunday School promptly at 10:40 and end by 11:30. These adjustments are working well and achieving their purposes.

Another change relates to the time leading up to the worship service. The Session meets for prayer around 8:50 and is determined to be in the sanctuary no later than 8:55. We have asked the musicians to begin their preludes earlier, so that we can begin doing announcements at or before 9:00. By beginning the service “on time,” we hope to be better stewards of our Sabbath morning together.

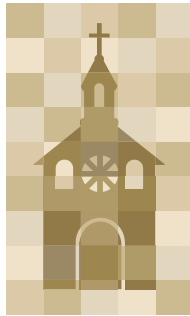
To encourage true worship, let me propose several other suggestions for your consideration. First, it seems prudent to order your Saturday in order to make your Sunday as peaceful as possible. A hectic Sunday morning can produce turmoil that distracts from worshipping God. One way

to avoid chaos on Sunday morning is to use a few moments on Saturday to make sure things are in order for the Sabbath. Make your Saturday serve your Sunday rather than vice-versa.

Another wise step is to arrive at church with sufficient time to find your seat, to perhaps read the bulletin and to spend a few moments in prayer before the worship begins. The prelude is also designed to help you prepare yourself for worship as you focus your mind and calm your heart.

To assist both yourself and others, you may want to save most of your visiting for after worship. The time between the worship service and Sunday School is for that very purpose. Getting engrossed in a deep discussion before the service can make it difficult to “shift gears” and focus on the Lord. Also keep in mind that others in the sanctuary are preparing themselves for worship, and may not be as avidly interested in your conversation as you are. Do to others as you would have them do to you – the golden rule for worship!

Finally, come to church with a sense of joyful expectation. Wonderful and amazing things happen when God meets with His people in corporate worship. The fellowship we experience in our worship services is a preview of the heavenly glories that we will enjoy for all eternity. Do you come to church anticipating a blessing? Are you eager to draw near to God? Prayerfully expect great things – you will not be disappointed!



Volume 1, Issue 10

October 2006

Inside this issue:

<i>Pastor's Article</i>	1
<i>Ask the Pastor by Pastor De Jong</i>	2-4
<i>October Calendar</i>	5
<i>Birthdays</i>	6
<i>Address Additions to the Directory</i>	7
<i>Harvest Home</i>	8
<i>Mentoring by Don Schlernitzauer</i>	9
<i>Grace Church—Development</i>	10
<i>Rev. De Master</i>	-
<i>Women's Missions Meeting</i>	11
<i>Recipe Corner</i>	12
<i>Church Cookbook Corrections</i>	12
<i>Deacon's Report from Jeff Froh</i>	13
<i>Book Review by Samantha De Jong</i>	14
<i>Did You Know?</i>	16

Mnemonics...

- *Youth Group, Oct. 1st*
- *Men's Breakfast & Study, Oct. 7th*
- *Building & Grounds Meeting., Oct. 16th*
- *Session Meeting, Oct. 17th*

# Ask the Pastor

by Pastor Brian De Jong

*How are we to understand the statement in the Apostles' Creed that Jesus "descended into hell", in light of His statement to the robber on the cross next to Him that "Today you will be with Me in Paradise"?*

This is a good, and not uncommon, question from Christians in churches that use the creeds. If we are asked to say that we believe that Jesus "descended into hell," we want to know what that means, and whether we can, in good conscience, say that we believe this statement. Some believers have felt that the statement is confusing at best, and they have omitted that phrase from the Apostles' Creed. Should we retain this statement, or jettison it altogether?

I would start by articulating a basic principle that should find wide agreement. My principle is this: creeds aren't inspired, but Scripture is. Therefore we interpret creeds in light of Scripture rather than vice-versa. After all, a "creed" is simply a statement about what we believe that Scripture teaches.

This takes us one level back. Does the Scripture teach that Jesus "descended into hell." Those who say "yes" usually refer to I Peter 3:18-20, which reads, <sup>18</sup>*For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;* <sup>19</sup>*in which also He went and made procla-*

*mation to the spirits now in prison,* <sup>20</sup>*who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water.<sup>1</sup>*"

From this passage, some will say that Jesus went to hell and preached to the spirits now in prison, giving them one last opportunity to repent. While this is admittedly a difficult passage to interpret, another scenario seems to be in Peter's mind as he writes. Rather than suggesting that Christ journeyed to hell, this passage would suggest that by the Holy Spirit, Jesus made proclamation to the disobedient men of Noah's day. The Spirit of Jesus employed Noah, whom Peter elsewhere calls "a preacher of righteousness." While God patiently waited, and as Noah diligently constructed the ark, a proclamation was going forth to the godless generation surrounding Noah. That message called for repentance, and warned of coming destruction. As we know, Noah's generation did not heed the message and their spirits are now in prison, locked up and awaiting the final day of judgment. Therefore I Peter 3 does not teach that Jesus traveled to hell to preach to the spirits of wicked men.

On the other hand, there are several indications that when Jesus died on the cross, His Spirit went immediately and directly to heaven to appear before the Father. One of the strongest indications is the verse quoted in the question, "Today you will be with Me in paradise." Jesus was promising that dying thief

## Ask the Pastor Continued...

that they would be together that very day in God's presence in heaven.

Moreover, compare Daniel 7:13-14 with Matthew 28:18.

Daniel 7:<sup>13</sup> *"I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him."*<sup>14</sup> *"And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed."*

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."*

Judging from what Jesus said after His resurrection and before His ascension, He had already received all authority in heaven and on earth. That is exactly what was prophesied in Daniel 7. It seems to me very likely that when Jesus died, His soul went directly to heaven, where He appeared before the Ancient of Days. He had fin-

ished the work of redemption and had undergone humiliation unto death. At that time the Father gave Christ dominion, glory and a kingdom. Therefore when Jesus' spirit returned to earth and His body was resurrected, He could tell His disciples that all authority in heaven and on earth was now in His possession.

If this scenario is accurate, then Jesus went to heaven rather than going to hell at the end of His suffering on the cross. So is there any good reason for retaining the creedal

statement that "He descended into hell?" Calvin thought there was, and I tend to agree with Calvin. Here are selected quotes from Calvin's *Institutes* Book 2, Chapter 16, Paragraphs 8 and 10:

"But we ought not to omit his descent into hell, a matter of no small moment in bringing about redemption. Now it appears from the ancient writers that this phrase which we read in the Creed was once not so much used in the churches. Nevertheless, in setting forth a summary of doctrine a place must be given to it, as it contains the useful and not-to-be despised mystery of a most important matter... If any persons have scruples about admitting this article into the Creed, it will soon be made plain how important it is to the sum of our redemption: if it is left out, much of the benefit of Christ's death will be lost... But we must seek a surer explanation, apart from the Creed, of Christ's descent into

*"Jesus was promising that dying thief that they would be together that very day in God's presence in heaven."*

## Ask the Pastor Concluded...

hell. The explanation given to us in God's Word is not only holy and pious, but also full of wonderful consolation. If Christ had died only a bodily death, it would have been ineffectual. No — it was expedient at the same time for him to undergo the severity of God's vengeance, to appease his wrath and satisfy his just judgment. For this reason, he must also grapple hand to hand with the armies of hell and the dread of everlasting death.

A little while ago we referred to the prophet's statement that "the chastisement of our peace was laid upon him," "he was wounded for our transgressions" by the Father, "he was bruised for our infirmities" [Isaiah 53:5]. By these words he means that Christ was put in place of evil-doers as surety and pledge — submitting himself even as the accused — to bear and suffer all the punishments that they ought to have sustained. All — with this one exception: "He could not be held by the pangs of death" [Acts 2:24 p.]. No wonder, then, if he is said to have descended into hell, for he suffered the death that, God in his wrath had inflicted upon the wicked! Those who — on the ground that it is absurd to put after his burial what preceded it — say that the order is reversed in this way are making a very trifling and ridiculous objection. The point is that the Creed sets forth what Christ suffered in the sight of men, and then appositely speaks of that invisible and incomprehensible judgment which he un-

derwent in the sight of God in order that we might know not only that Christ's body was given as the price of our redemption, but that he paid a greater and more excellent price in suffering in his soul the terrible torments of a condemned and forsaken man."

*"For this reason, he must also grapple hand to hand with the armies of hell and the dread of everlasting death."*

Calvin taught that on the cross Jesus grappled "hand to hand with the armies of hell." That evidently took place when darkness fell over the face of the land for three hours, prompting Jesus to cry out, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Why that mournful cry? Because for the past three hours

He had battled against the hosts of hell, suffering all of the hell we deserved for our sins. He was utterly alone, forsaken and crushed by His Father as He drank the cup of God's wrath down to its bitter dregs. Yet the blessed truth is that He did that entirely and completely for you and I. We never will face the hell that we deserve because Jesus experienced hell for us on the cross.

So when I say, "He descended into hell," I am affirming that Jesus endured all of God's wrath and curse due for my sins, and that He bore my hell as He suffered in the darkness upon the cross. I am also rejoicing that because He absorbed the pains of hell that I deserved, I will never ever face that horrific judgment. That I joyfully believe with my whole heart!

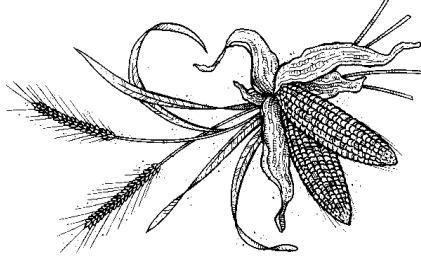
<sup>1</sup> *New American Standard Bible : 1995 update.* 1995. The Lockman Foundation: LaHabra, CA



Grace OPC

# October 2006

*Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ*



*As* each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.

1 Peter 4:10

Church Office:  
4930 Green Valley Ln  
Sheboygan, WI 53083

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

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Youth Group	2 Pine Haven at Pizza Ranch 5-8 p.m.	3	4 Prayer Meeting, 7 p.m.	5 Women's Missions Mtg. 2:30 p.m.	6 Roof Project	7 Men's Study 7:30 a.m. Roof Project
8 Missions Sunday Choir Rehearsal 4:15 p.m.	9 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	10	11 Prayer Meeting, 7 p.m.	12	13 Catechism Class 8:45 a.m.	14
15 Choir Rehearsal 4:15	16 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m. <i>Theology Class 4 pm</i> Building & Grounds Meeting 7 p.m.	17 Session Meeting, 6:30 p.m.	18 Prayer Meeting, 7 p.m.	19	20	21
22	23 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m. <i>Theology Class 3:00 p.m.</i>	24	25 Prayer Meeting, 7 p.m.	26	27	28
29 Lord's Supper,	30 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	31 Pine Have 1:30 p.m.				

# October Birthdays



*Happy  
Birthday!!!*

---

***Q. What has feet,  
but can't walk?***

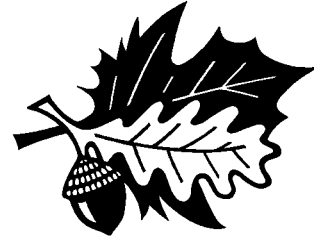


***A. A yardstick!***

## **Address Additions for Grace Church Directory**

## Harvest Home

The annual Harvest Home Dinner is scheduled for Saturday, November 11, at 5:30 pm. Pastor Ivan De Master and Ashley De Troye will report on their recent missions trips to Africa with slides.



---

## PINE HAVEN AT PIZZA RANCH

Pine Haven Women's Auxiliary will be serving at the Pizza Ranch in Oostburg, WI on Monday, October 2 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.



Please come to enjoy the delicious food and to help them raise money for their projects to benefit the residents of Pine Haven.



## MENTORING—ANOTHER OF THE “ONE ANOTHERS”

*written by Don Schlernitzauer*

### *Colossians 3: 16-17*

*“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.” (ESV)*

It is clear in the beginning of Paul’s letter to the Colossians that he is writing to “the saints and faithful brothers at Colossae,” that is to the whole church, not just to the leaders. In chapter 3 Paul presents a number of commands for those to whom he is writing and his only qualification is this (3: 1): “If you have been raised with Christ...” That is, Paul in these commands is not addressing a subset of believers, but rather all believers.

In vv. 16-17 Paul’s commands encompass prerequisite, activity, attitude, and motive. What is the prerequisite that all believers are to have? The word of Christ is to dwell in them richly. All believers are to know the Scriptures and to know them well or richly.

What activity are all believers to participate in? With the word of Christ in them, they are to teach and admonish one another in all wisdom. Teaching in the body of Christ is not the exclusive province of the pastor, nor even all the elders. Remember the qualifier of 3:1, “If you have been raised with Christ...” The Holy Spirit gifts some specifi-

cally to be “teachers”, but all are to teach and admonish one another, including during the times we sing as a congregation. The body of Christ is to be a beehive of teaching activity.

If we look further into what the Holy Spirit means by “teaching and admonishing,” we note that the Greek word for teaching is “didasko”, which means to instruct with the goal of imparting understanding so that the will of the one being taught is shaped. The Greek word for admonish is “noutheteo”, to put into the mind properly as in warning or admonishing. One commentator states in summary, didasko has to do with teaching the positive things, while noutheteo has to do with warning regarding negative things.

Now what is the attitude with which this teaching and admonishing is to be carried out? It is the attitude of gratitude to God. All this edifying of one another is to be done with grateful hearts to God because of His grace to us in Christ Jesus. And what is to be the motive of our teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom? Verse 17 gives the answer: everything is to be done in such a way that the name of Jesus is lifted up and glorified above every name.

What is really being described in these two verses is the building up of the body of Christ through the word of Christ, by His people, to His glory. It is exactly what we are to be doing as we minister to one another including the ministry of mentoring. In the months and years ahead may God bless our obedience to these commands.

# GRACE CHURCH - DEVELOPMENT

*written by Rev. Ivan De Master*

The first worship service of Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church was held on Sunday, January 28, 1973, in the basement of Fred and Tony Barthels' home on Superior Avenue in the Township of Sheboygan. The room was largely filled. Rev. Henry Fikkert urged the people to find another meeting place that would be more adequate. The next week the service was still held in the Barthels' home, but the third week the worship service was moved to Cooper Elementary School in Sheboygan.

The remainder of the first year the worship services were held at the Cooper School. The people developed a sense of unity and vision for the church. The group was under the oversight of Bethel OPC in Oostburg. With the help of the session of Bethel Church an effort was made to find a pastor for the new church. The Rev. John R. Hilbelink, who was a son of Calvary OPC in Cedar Grove and was serving as pastor in Hamil, South Dakota, was contacted. He expressed interest in becoming the organizing pastor. In September of 1973 Grace Church together with Bethel Church in Oostburg issued a call to John Hilbelink, which he accepted. He moved to Sheboygan and secured a home at 1915 N. 7th Street. He was officially received by the Presbytery of the Midwest on January 23, 1974, and installed as organizing pastor shortly after.

The people also began to plan for a building of their own. It was agreed to look for property and land was purchased along Superior Avenue just west of what is now Taylor Drive. This was to be the future home of Grace Church.

Efforts were made to reach out into the community. On Sunday afternoon, some of the members along with members of Bethel Church

would go calling in the neighborhoods. The purpose was to share the gospel and to invite them to visit Grace Church. Many contacts were made and a few people did respond.

In 1974 a decision was made to move to another public school. Mapledale Public School,

which was located on Superior Avenue. This location was used only for a short time and then the services were moved to Sheboygan Christian High.

In 1975, a church building, located at 1704 N. 17th Street, became available. The

Congregational Church had outgrown their building and built a new building. The typical old, white wooded church building was seen as the

opportunity for Grace Church to have their own building. In June of 1975, this building was purchased and became the home of Grace Church. By the end of 1976, the congregation had grown to 33 communicant members and 26 baptized members for a total of 59 total membership.

Pastor Hilbelink served as pastor of Grace Church from the fall of 1973 until 1979. He and his wife Lois had three children when they arrived: Stephen, Christa, and Heidi. Their son Matthew was born after they left Sheboygan. In summer of 1979, Pastor Hilbelink accepted a call to become the mission pastor of Grace OP Chapel in Amarillo, Texas. He was released by this presbytery on September 3, 1979. (The Hilbelinks followed the Churchills in Amarillo and in fact, purchased the home of Bob and Dorothy Churchill.)

John Hilbelink served the church in Amarillo from 1979 until 1987. He then accepted a call to Second Parish OPC in Portland, ME, where he continues to serve today (about 19



*Lois & John Hilbelink  
Matthew, Christa, Heidi, Stephan*

## Grace Church, continued...

years). He has also served on the denominational Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension where he has been chairman many years.



*(The church building Pastor Hilbelink preached in while he served as pastor of Grace Church.)*

(The following was taken from a *Presbytery of Midwest on the Move*, Spring, 1973)

### SHEBOYGAN, WISCONSIN

A new chapel was begun on Jan. 28 when twenty-seven people gathered in the basement of a private house in Sheboygan, Wisconsin for a worship service conducted under the direction of the Church Extension Committee of the presbytery. Two weeks later, the group was meeting in the rented facility of a public school (Cooper Elementary School, 20th and Cooper Streets) and attendance had climbed to fifty-one.

Now under the oversight of Bethel Church in Oostburg, and with the cooperation of Calvary Church in Cedar Grove, a Sunday School is being organized.

Please pray for the Lord to strengthen and increase this new testimony.

---

## Women's Missions Meeting

All ladies are invited to attend the Women's Missionary Meeting held on October 5th at 2:00 p.m. at Calvary Church, Cedar Grove. Mrs. Carla De Master will share about their trip to Malawi and their stop in London to see the Vander Waal's work. Please join in this time to hear about what God is doing around the world.

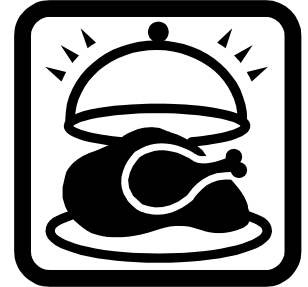


### Poppysseed Chicken

- ★ 1 whole chicken (or 4-6 boneless breasts)
- ★ 1 cup sour cream
- ★ 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- ★ 1/2 cup broth from chicken
- ★ 1 tube Ritz-like crackers
- ★ 1/2-3/4 stick of butter (melted)
- ★ 1 Tbs poppy seeds
- ★ Poultry seasoning
- ★ Celery salt

Cook chicken, season with poultry seasoning and celery salt. Cut chicken into bite-size pieces and place in a bowl. Add sour cream, soup, and broth. Stir. Put into 9x13 dish. Top with crushed crackers and poppy seeds combined. Drizzle with butter on top. Cook at 350° for 30 minutes or until bubbly.

*Joel & Gail Moody*



“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?”

## CHURCH COOKBOOK CORRECTIONS

If you have a recipe in the church cookbook that needs to have a correction in it & you would like others to know about it, please e-mail your correction to [graceopc@tds.net](mailto:graceopc@tds.net) or lay it on the secretary's desk. We will feature the edited version in an upcoming issue.



# Deacons' Report

*from Jeff Froh*

Deacons – Jay Buyze, Ken Koehler, Chris Kaiser, and Jeff Froh

***With God's blessing we were able to assist many people over the past few months.***

***Examples of the deacon assistance....***

Here are few specific examples.....

- ★ Baugh Family
- ★ Malawi students that graduated in May, 2006 - helped out with dentist work, clothing, etc.
- ★ Orphanage in Malawi
- ★ Families of the Malawi students at Lakeland
- ★ Assisted with house moving projects for both members and regular visitors
- ★ Built a wheel chair ramp for the Harden family (with help of Trustees)
- ★ Assisted with Ray Harden funeral
- ★ Morning and evening communion preparation
- ★ Collection and processing of morning and evening offertory

Other areas that the deacons assisted with included the regular attendees, members and their families. This financial help included money for medical bills, food, rent, health insurance, phone cards, car repairs, gas, etc. Of course the deacons don't just provide financial help but encouragement and prayer as well.

*Matthew 25: 35-37*

***For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in. I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.***





Proclaiming the  
Excellencies of our  
Lord Jesus Christ.

The Monthly Newsletter  
of Grace OPC

Worship: Grace OPC  
4930 Green Valley Lane,

Phone: 920-565-2160  
Email:  
graceopc@tds.net  
briaandjong@earthlink.net

---

CHECK OUT THE WEBPAGE:  
[WWW.OPC.ORG](http://WWW.OPC.ORG)

---



## Your Family, God's Way by Wayne A. Mack

*Book Review by Samantha De Jong*

In his book, Your Family, God's Way, Wayne A. Mack presents a biblical plan for building and maintaining healthy family relationships, with a special emphasis on clear communication. Divided into three sections, this book discusses preparing for, building, and maintaining family relationships. In the first section, "The Groundwork For God-Honoring Family Relationships", Mack outlines the biblical role of each member of the family. Next he covers "Developing God-Honoring Family Relationships" through biblical communication. Finally in "Sustaining God-Honoring Family Relationships" the author describes a method for maintaining good relationships and preventing fights. The condition of many American families demonstrates the relevance of Mack's teaching. Because unbiblical ideas of how a household should operate pervade our society, many families are a mere shell of what they

should be. Even Christian families succumb to internal strife because they neglect Bible study, and fail to implement its teaching in their lives. In this book Mack applies a biblical blueprint for a happy home as given in the Bible to today's family. As he says in chapter thirteen,

"Getting along with other people, even family members, can be painfully difficult. Conflicts and divisions come easily and yet can be so hard to resolve. But Scripture holds out to us the possibility for people to establish a deep and abiding peace through a unique and specially ordained peace officer with impeccable credentials and unlimited ability. I refer of course, to Jesus Christ, whom God sent to be our peace, to break down barriers and to abolish enmity."

Reading Your Family God's Way, by Wayne A. Mack is the first step toward establishing this deep and abiding peace in your own home.



★ John Wycliffe was born around 1342?

★ He was born in England?

★ His education was obtained at the University of Oxford?

★ He is often called the "Morning Star of the Reformation"?

★ Wycliffe translated the Bible into English and was persecuted for it?

★ Wycliffe's bones were unearthed and burned by the Council of Constance in 1428 (forty years after he died) then cast into the Severn River?

Information found in *The Church in History*, by Kuiper, Chapter 22 as well as *Foxe's Christian Martyrs of the World* Chapters XIV & XVII and <http://www.wycliffe.org/history/JWycliff.htm>