

REFLECTIONS

Grace OPC

A FATHER'S LOVE

By Pastor Brian De Jong

When I first heard it announced, I must admit that I didn't think it would be very interesting. I'm talking about the theme of the love of God the Father for God the Son. Speaker Bart Elshout announced this as the thesis for his talk at the recent Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary Conference in Grand Rapids. I stifled an inner yawn.

But as Rev. Elshout spoke, and as he brought out the Scriptures, my boredom transmogrified into sanctified excitement. His words were like cool water to a thirsty and parched man – how very refreshing and uplifting it was.

While I cannot repeat his talk, nor replicate the excitement that I enjoyed, let me at least point you to the Scriptures – especially in the book of John.

John 3:35 *"The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand.*

John 5:20 *"For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and the Father will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel.*

John 10:17 *"For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again.*

John 15:9 *"Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love.*

Can you seriously doubt the fact that God the Father loves God the Son? If the least shred of uncertainty remains in your brains on this point, consider two more instances in the book of Matthew.

First, at Jesus' baptism in Matthew 3,

"...a voice out of the heavens said, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.'" At the very outset of Jesus' messianic ministry – at the moment of his inauguration, the Father audibly declares from heaven, "This is My beloved Son."

Much later, toward the end of Jesus' sojourn on earth, the Master took His disciples to the Mount of Transfiguration. While Peter is babbling about tents, *"While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, 'This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!'"*

You can listen to Rev. Elshout for yourself by going to Ser-

monaudio and searching for Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. You can find all of the conference speakers under the 2012 conference section. Or put in the following link: <http://www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?m=t&s=82412119530>

But let me tell you what I found most intriguing about this idea: Since the Father loves the Son, and we are 'in Christ' by faith, that means the Father loves us in and through Christ. The community of perfect love found within the Trinity is ours by faith.

Let me leave you with one other passage to ponder: John 14:21 and 23 *"He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him ... If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him."*

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Mnemonics...

- Pitch-in Campout Meal, 7th
- Brenda's Baby Shower, 21st

Conference Report 2012

by Pastor Brian De Jong

One of the ways to stay fresh in ministry is to attend good conferences and sit under sound teaching. In past years I've done this by attending the Greenville Seminary Theology Conference in March. However, due to a scheduling conflict with the Spring Presbytery meeting, I was unable to go to Greenville this year.

In the place of Greenville, I decided to try a new conference – the Puritan Reformed Seminary Conference in Grand Rapids, Michigan. From Thursday, August 23 through Saturday, August 25 my family and I attended this event. As I told several people, it was a fantastic conference that recharged my spiritual batteries.

The conference is hosted by the Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, which is headed up by Dr. Joel Beeke. Dr. Beeke is an industrious man who simultaneously serves as a pastor of the Heritage Netherlands Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, as both the President and a professor at the seminary, as the editor of several periodicals, and director of Reformation Heritage Books. He is also an author of over 70 books, and travels widely as a conference speaker. On top of all of this, he is a husband and father – quite a busy life he leads.

The topic of this year's conference was "The Beauty and Glory of God the Father." The audio of this year's conference can be downloaded for free at the Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary site on Sermonaudio.com.

The first speaker was Dr. Jerry Bilkes, who spoke on the Father and the Son in the Exodus. He showed how God called His Son out of Egypt, and how that theme runs throughout the Old Testament and into the New. It was a very challenging message that reminded me that God calls me to leave the world and walk with Him. It also showed me how I should call my own sons to spiritual maturity in Christ.

The second talk was by Dr. Derek Thomas of Reformed Theological Seminary. Dr. Thomas had served as the Associate Pastor at First Presbyterian (PCA) in Jackson, MS but has recently relocated to Columbia, South Carolina where he works with Dr. Sinclair Ferguson.

Dr. Thomas spoke on The Holiness of God the Father from Isaiah 6. His treatment of the text – especially about the Seraphim – was very profound.

It was beneficial to be reminded that since God is holy, we too are to be a holy people – morally pure and set apart to the service of God. That concluded the first evening of the conference, and we headed back to my parent's condominium, where we stayed.

The next morning began with two very different, but very good addresses. Rev. Bart Elshout spoke on the Love of the Father for the Son (see my front-page article). He developed the theme along the following five lines of thought: (1) How God's love functions within the Trinity, (2) How it is revealed in creation, (3) How it is demonstrated in our redemption, (4) How it is revealed in the lives of His children, and finally how it factors into His wrath toward the wicked. After his presentation we heard from Rev. Burk Parsons, who serves a PCA church in Orlando and works with Ligionier.

(You may have seen his name in *Tabletalk*). He gave a very searching message on the love of God in disciplining His children. He spoke about how afflictions make us understand how entirely dependent we are upon our Father in Heaven, and how very good He is to us in times of trouble. This presentation challenged our attitudes toward suffering, and rebuked our tendencies to complain against God's providence.

The afternoon on Friday resumed with a presentation by Rev. Ryan McGraw on the need for

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Conference Concluded...

a Trinitarian piety. This was probably the weakest message, in my estimation. Afterwards, there were “breakout sessions” with seminar speakers. Elijah, Christian and I attended one on “Counseling and the Fatherhood of God” by Dr. David Murray. Dr. Murray will be our speaker at the Reformation Conference in October of 2013 (next year!). He is Scottish and very engaging. He connects quite well with young people, and my boys enjoyed his presentation.

Due to a long-ish dinner break, we could go back to my parent’s home and enjoy a nice dinner with them. The evening meeting featured Dr. Beeke speaking on The Adopting Love of the Father. It was part preaching, part historical study of the Puritans, and it was entirely sound and good. Dr. Beeke has specialized in the Puritans, and knows their writings very well. His preaching gifts are evident, and it was a moving message he delivered.

Saturday was the final part of the conference. First we heard from Rev. William van Doodewaard about

the Father’s mercy. The last speaker was Dr. Thomas on Seeing the Father in the Face of Christ.

When the last session concluded, we quickly hopped in our vehicle and headed home – making it back in time for Samantha and Rodney’s corn roast.

I am so thankful for the opportunity to sit under such stimulating teaching. It has helped me think deeply about the Triune God whom we serve, and about my own role as a father. I trust the Lord will bring good fruit out of this conference in my own life and family, as well as in our church!



Church Campout & Dinner

A church campout will be held on Friday, September 7- Saturday, September 8 at the Kohler-Andrea State Park in Sheboygan. For more details, please see Pastor Brian.

A Pitch-in Supper will be held Friday Night, September 7th. Bring whatever you would normally eat to share with everyone at the campout.



Plates, cups, utensils and drinks will be provided. You can also bring camp chairs. This meal will be held at the De Jong’s site - ...Dinner will be served at 6:00, but you are

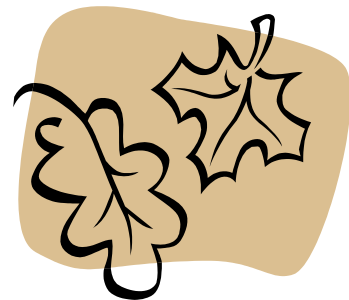
welcome to come early and stay late. See Pastor Brian for more details.

September Birthdays



KAEISER SHOWER

A shower for the Kaeisers will be held on Saturday, September 15th at the church starting at 1:30 in the afternoon. You are invited to sign up on the bulletin board in the hallway at church.





Grace OPC

September 2012

*Showing forth the
excellencies of
Jesus Christ*

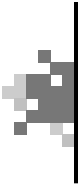


FAITH & HOPE & LOVE

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 Baked Potato Lunch (a.m.)	3 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	4	5 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m.	6	7 Church Camp-out <i>Pine Haven Autumn Fest,</i> <i>Supper, 6 p.m.</i>	8 Church Camp-out <i>Pine Haven Autumn Fest,</i> <i>1:30-6 p.m.</i>
9 Missions Sunday	10 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m. <i>Pine Haven Study,</i> <i>1:30 p.m.</i>	11 Session Meeting, 6:30 p.m.	12 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m.	13	14 PMW Fall Stated Mtg.	15 PMW Fall Stated Mtg. <i>Kaiser Shower,</i> <i>1:30 p.m.</i>
16 <i>Meadowview Manor, 3:00 p.m.</i>	17 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	18	19 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m.	20	21 Brenda Kuiper's Baby Shower, 6:30 p.m.	22 PMW Women's Presbyterial in Menominee Falls 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
23	24 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m. <i>Pine Haven Study,</i> <i>1:30 p.m.</i> Theology, 3:30 p.m.	25	26 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m.	27	28	29
30 Lord's Supper, (a.m.)	31 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.					



Concluded...

Presbytery of the Midwest Women's Presbyterial

Saturday, September 22, 9 a.m. -3 p.m.,
in Menominee Falls, WI. Come along! Enjoy
the women of presbytery! See Phyllis or Carla
if you can attend. We can ride together.



Stamps

from Kate Nagle



Baked Potato Lunch

Everyone is invited to stay after the morning worship service & Sunday School classes for a Baked Potato Lunch, which will be held on September 2nd in the fellowship hall.



Baby Shower

All ladies are invited to attend Brenda Kuiper's Baby Shower, which will be held on Friday, September 21st starting at 6:30 p.m. at the church.



Youth Weekend Camping

From Kyle Ferguson, youth pastor at Cornerstone PCA in Delafield, WI...

There is plenty of extra room at Devils Lake State Park (near Baraboo, WI) for the youth weekend camping trip (Sept. 21-22) his church sponsors each year. We are invited and it's only \$35 per person which includes all the food but you'll need to bring a tent, sleeping bag, etc. There is a worship service on Sunday. See the flyer on the bulletin board or you can also find more info on the PMW Youth Facebook page.

There may be spots for families as well but call Kyle at 262-646-6445 to confirm. If you're interested in attending you can call Kyle or Bob Muether (a member of the Presbytery of the Midwest Youth Committee, at 608-743-0969). You must sign up and pay by Sept. 16.



Baby Items Needed

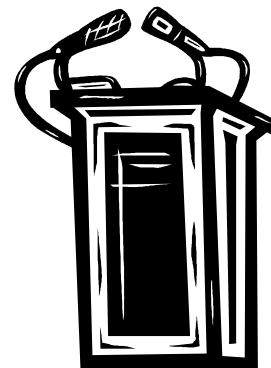
from Carla De Master



PMW EVENTS

The installation of Robert Tarullo as pastor of Westminster Orthodox Presbyterian Church will be held in Indian Head Park on Friday, September 7, 2012. (Pastor Ivan was pastor there for 19 years.)

The dedication of the addition to the Old Stockbridge OPC in Gresham WI will be held on Friday September 28 at 5:30 p.m.



Guacamole



“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.”

- ★ 2 ripe avocados, halved & pitted
- ★ 1 Tbsp. lime or lemon juice
- ★ 1 tsp. salt (to taste)
- ★ 1/2 tsp. ground cumin
- ★ 1/2 tsp. cayenne pepper
- ★ 1/2 medium red onion, diced
- ★ 2 roma tomatoes, diced
- ★ 3 Tbsp. chopped, fresh cilantro
- ★ 2-3 cloves garlic, minced

Scoop out the insides of the ripe avocados & mash to your liking (chunky or smooth). Add the juice, salt, cumin & pepper. Fold in the onion, tomatoes, cilantro & garlic. Grab a bag of your favorite dipping chips & eat immediately or put in the fridge for an hour or two if you like it chilled before eating.

Special Speaker



Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ

Grace OPC

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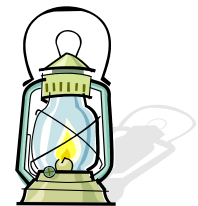
Spurgeon

Corner

*“In the midst of a crooked & perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.”
(Philippians 2:15)*

We use **lights** to *make manifest*. A Christian man should so **shine** in his life, that a person could not live with him a week without knowing the gospel. His conversation should be such that all who are about him should clearly perceive whose he is, and whom he serves; and should see the image of Jesus **reflected** in his daily actions. **Lights** are intended for *guidance*. We are to help those around us who are in the dark. We are to hold forth to them the Word of life. We are to point sinners to the Saviour, and the weary to a divine resting-place. Men sometimes read their Bibles, and fail to understand them; we should be ready, like Philip, to instruct the inquirer in the meaning of God’s Word, the way of salvation, and the life of godliness. **Lights** are also used for *warning*. On our rocks and shoals a light-house is sure to be erected. Christian men should know that there are many false **lights** shown everywhere in the world, and therefore the right **light** is needed. The wreckers of Satan are always abroad, tempting the ungodly to sin under the name of pleasure; they hoist the wrong **light**, be it ours to put up the true **light** upon every dangerous rock, to point out every sin, and tell what it leads to, that so we may be clear of the blood of all men, shining as lights in the world. **Lights** also have a very *cheering* influence, and so have Christians. A Christian ought to be a comforter, with kind words on his lips, and sympathy in his heart; he should carry **sunshine** wherever he goes, and diffuse happiness around him.

Gracious Spirit dwell with me;
I myself would gracious be,
And with words that help and heal
Would thy life in mine reveal,
And with actions bold and meek
Would for Christ my Saviour speak.



Morning, September 6, Morning & Evening, by C. H. Spurgeon

Pine Haven Autumn Fest

The Pine Haven Fall Festival will be held on Saturday, September 8 from 1:30 – 6:00 p.m. at the Pine Haven Home in Sheboygan Falls (531 Giddings Avenue). Come join us for fellowship and food – brats, burgers, chicken sandwiches, potato salad, ice cream, pie and cake.



Crafts, baked goods, produce and home-canned preserves will also be for sale. Any donations of these items are certainly appreciated. Food items need to be labeled for content. Courtyard entertainment will be from 2:00 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. along with Root Beer floats!