BEACON LIGHTS

FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

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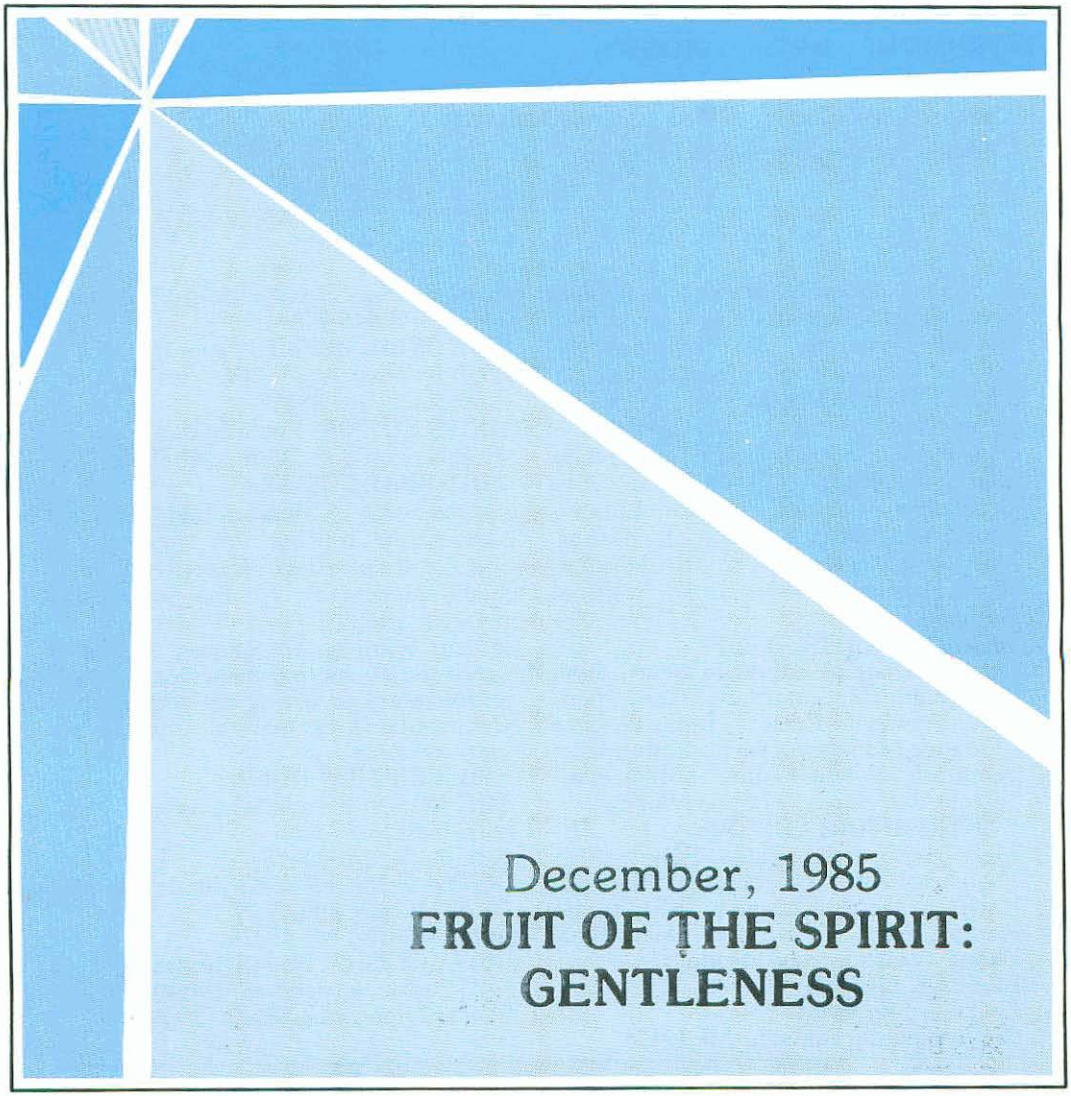
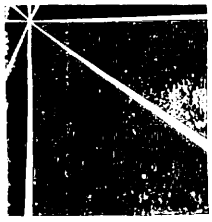


December, 1985

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: GENTLENESS



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Fruit of the Spirit
"Neither Do I Condemn Thee. . . ."

by Don Doezema

There are some people, are there not, with whom it's just plain difficult to get along. Others there are whose engaging personality makes it a pleasure to associate with them. To the latter, one is easily and quickly drawn. Such people have a way of putting others at ease in their presence. For whatever the reason, they are **friendly** in their dealing with others.

Sometimes it may become apparent at length that the graciousness which was so winsome was not in fact genuine. It springs, sometimes, not from a sweet temper, but from a fear of displeasing anyone, or from a desire to win the favor of others for selfish advantage. It smacks therefore either of cowardice or of insincerity, and what was thought to be courtesy is seen to be hollow and the politeness, false.

But, whatever the case, mere (i.e., unsanctified) amiability (whether more genuine or less) is not the "gentleness" of which Paul speaks in Galatians 5. No matter how attractive it may be, humanly speaking, it is not, in itself, the fruit of the Spirit as that becomes evident in the life of the child of God.

. . . . . .

What exactly **is** real gentleness? How must it show itself in the lives of the people of God? Calvin says concerning this particular manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit that the definition is clear, "for the quality of mind becomes open from its fruit." To a large extent that's true, I suppose; but there are nevertheless some questions which might arise in connection with a consideration of gentleness. There is, for example, this: Is gentleness an attribute consistent with **candor?** We must be honest with others, must we not? Well, can a person be **forthright** in his dealings with others, and at the same time be **gentle?** There are those in the church of Christ who in the interest of honesty are quick to "tell it like it is," willing, so to speak, to let the chips fall where they may. They pride themselves in having the courage of their convictions. That kind of bluntness, in fact, is sometimes seen to be a **virtue**; but is it consistent with **gentleness?**

Then how about this: Is gentleness a trait which is appropriate for those who are in positions of **authority** (parents, teachers, elders in the church, employers, or whoever)? It would seem that the only way to get the job done is to be **forceful**, to rule with a firm hand within a rather inflexible framework of black-and-white rules. To be mild in dealing with offences committed (so one might be inclined to think) is to be ineffective; to be sensitive to the feelings of others is to run the risk of being inconsistent in discipline.

. . . . . .

Gentleness belongs to the fruit of the Spirit. And not to be gentle is sin. That sounds simple enough. But the question remains, how do we **show** it? How does one demonstrate gentleness

in his everyday, ordinary dealings with others? Further, when it becomes necessary to reprove a brother, and disciplinary measures must be taken, how does one do that **gently?** Must one perhaps choose between gentleness and strict adherence to truth and justice?

We do well to bear in mind that **God** is gentle. The prophet Isaiah says of the sovereign God Who rules by His arm (40:10) and before Whom the nations are as nothing (40:17) that He "shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young" (40:11). **Christ** too was noted for His gentleness (see I Cor. 10:1). And **we** are exhorted to pursue it (Titus 3:1, 2). It becomes us therefore (as George Bethune put it 150 years ago in his book **The Fruit of the Spirit**) "to meditate upon a quality which bears the impress of divine beauty, as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ, and proves him who possesses it to have been born of the Spirit, taught by the Father, and transformed into the image of his dear Son."

• • • • • • •

Jesus was kind and considerate. We can say without fear of contradiction that Pharisee Sanhedrists like Nicodemus and publicans like Zaccheus found Him eminently approachable — whether they came to Him in the dead of night or tried only to get close by climbing a tree. For hypocrites, it's true, Jesus had little patience. He was scathing in His denunciation of those who for pretense made long prayers; who made broad their phylacteries; who, like whited sepulchers, were beautiful to outward appearances but within were full of dead men's bones. But, for the rest, no one, whether high or low, rich or poor, ever came to Jesus and found Him anything other than humble in His demeanor and kind in His speech. He had **compassion** for sinners and was a **companion** of publicans.

This was a source of irritation to the Pharisees, whose attitude over against sinners was that "this people who knoweth not the law are cursed" (John 7:49). They tried, in fact, on one occasion, to use what they knew to be Jesus' attitude toward sinners as a means to bring Him down. Christ was in Jerusalem at the time, for the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles. Early in the morning He had come to the temple and sat down to teach the people (John 8:2). Apparently His enemies on this occasion made a point of waiting until He had quite an audience before they themselves come on the scene. Then, when the moment seemed propitious, they stepped forward with a question. Pointing toward a woman they had brought with them, they said, "Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?"

Adultery — a terrible sin, right? Indeed it is. How serious it is in the eyes of the Holy God is clear from the fact that God, as the Pharisees were careful to point out to Jesus, had made it a crime punishable by **death.** And there was no question either, in this instance, about the **guilt** of the accused party. There were **eye-witnesses.** A clear-cut case if ever there was one!

Now, what was the attitude of the Pharisees toward such a sinner as this? Were they concerned about her **well-being?** Did they desire her **repentance,**

her **salvation?** These Pharisees were they who "shut up the kingdom of heaven against men" — who neither entered themselves nor suffered those who **were** entering to go in (Matt. 23:13). These were they who uttered long prayers. . .and devoured widow's houses (Matt. 23:14), who were careful to tithe mint and anise and cummin, but "omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith" (Matt. 23:23). The letter of the law, that's what interested them. Ordinarily, therefore, in a case like this, they were intent only on gaining a conviction and passing a sentence in accord with the law. Yes, make justice swift and sure. . .that's what must be done! Make an example of the guilty one; let the rabble know what happens to those who transgress the law! That'll teach them to toe the line! Tender compassion for sinners was foreign to them. Yet, these blind leaders no doubt prided themselves in being scrupulous caretakers of the law. The Lord should be pleased with their carefulness!

On this occasion, however, they were not even interested in that. If they were, they would have brought her, not to Jesus, but to the judges. They were shamelessly **using** this woman, and her sin and guilt, in an attempt to maneuver Jesus into what they hoped would be for Him a no-win situation. They would force Him to make a choice which could only be unpopular (if He answered one way) or improper (if He answered the other). "Here's a woman taken in adultery," they said. "The **law** says such and such. What do **you** say, Jesus?"

If He answered, "Moses was right; stone her," then what would the people think? Many of the common people were attracted to Jesus exactly because in Him there seemed to be hope of salvation for sinners. His was a ministry of **mercy**. Were Jesus now to recommend that this particular sinner be **stoned**, the people would conclude that there was no more hope in Him than there was in the Pharisees, with their doctrine of salvation by the works of the law. An unpopular answer that would be, therefore, and one which would serve the Pharisees' long-held purpose of discrediting Jesus before the multitude. On the other hand, Jesus could choose to say, in one way or another, "Let her go free." But then He would be standing in clear opposition to Moses and the law. And it could be argued compellingly that He had come out openly in favor of relaxing public morals.

A dilemma, it would seem. Let's see how Jesus handled it. At first, He didn't say a word, but stooped down instead and wrote with His finger on the ground. What it was that He wrote we have no idea. But we can imagine that He was wrestling in His soul with the whole matter of the relationship of Christ to the law. For that was the fundamental issue involved here — one which, when faced by Christ, brought Him front to front with the **cross.** The Pharisees, however, perceiving none of this, and probably viewing the delay as an indication that their plan was working out well, began to press Jesus for an answer (see 8:7). So He arose, and said simply, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her."

The implication is clear: the woman deserves to die. It is not in vain that the law proclaims death to adulteresses. However (and this implication is equally clear), the Pharisees are in no way fit to serve as judges of

this woman. Why not? Note, first of all, that it isn't true that they were disqualified by Jesus because they were **sinners.** If **that** were the case, then all discipline in church, home, and school would be out of place, for no one is without sin. That, therefore, could hardly be what Christ meant to teach. We must understand Jesus' answer in the light of the circumstances. The woman's accusers in this instance were hard, self-righteous Pharisees, who refused to acknowledge the same sins in themselves which they condemned in others. What Jesus is saying is that one cannot presume to remove the mote from his brother's eye while he regards not the beam in his own. Willfully blind to their own sins (specifically, here, with respect to the **seventh** commandment), the Pharisees were in no way able to deal properly with sin in the life of this woman. Compassion for a fallen sinner, concern for that sinner's repentance and restoration to the favor of God — the Pharisees knew none of this. Not ready therefore to deal sensitively, gently, with this poor, lost sheep, they were disqualified as judges.

Apparently God so worked in the consciences of these Pharisees that the secret sins of each one were brought forcefully to his mind, causing him to **feel** his own guilt and condemnation before God. The result was that, without another word from Christ, the accusers slunk away, one by one, from the oldest to the youngest, till none remained.

To the onlookers it might appear as if the case against the woman were dismissed at this point. But that was hardly so. Now it is **Christ** alone before Whom the woman stands. And into His hands God has committed all judgment — so that He has power not only to kill the body but to cast into hell. For the woman, therefore, the situation has taken a turn for the more serious. What will be the judgment of Christ — that was the all-important question.

Yes, what **will** Jesus do? There's only one thing **to** do, isn't there? Justice will not be served if the judge does not "lay the law down." An opportunity will be missed to provide an object lesson for others who would be inclined to slip into the same sins, if this guilty party is allowed to escape the penalty prescribed by the law. But what **did** Jesus say? Having a genuine concern for the spiritual well-being of **this lost sheep**, and sensitive to her immediate need not for a tongue-lashing but for the assurance of being forgiven, He said, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more" (vs. 11).

Had Jesus set aside the law? Hardly. His first response to the Pharisees, remember, made it clear that He understood well that the stones **must be thrown.** Oh how well He knew that! But Jesus had not come in order to thow them. By His verdict in this case He is saying to God, in effect, "Let all the stones of Moses' law which should fall on elect adulterers and adulteresses, fall instead on **Me. I** will suffer the death they deserve." It was, in other words, the cross alone which made it possible for Jesus to render that gracious verdict, "Neither do I condemn thee." The woman was justified. And Jesus adds the word of power, "Go, and sin no more." The grace of sanctification never fails to follow upon justification.

* * * * * * *

That's gentleness. And it's born, obviously, not of weakness but of

power.

According to Young's Analytical Concordance, the Greek word translated "moderation" in Philippians 4:5 is the same as that which is translated "gentleness" in II Corinthians 10:1. Paul's admonition to the saints in Philippi therefore can be read as well "Let your **gentleness** be known unto all men." And he adds this: "The Lord is at hand." I rather like the way one writer paraphrased this verse: "The Lord is standing at my shoulder, waiting to see how I will handle the various relationships I have with people today. Will I be rigid and exacting in my demands of them? Or will I be gentle and considerate, seeking to understand the pressures and insecurities they face and making allowances accordingly?"

Not being myself a parent I do not know this from experience, but I've heard it said many times that parents who know their children, understand that the same offense can be dealt with in one by a stern look, and in another requires a good lickin' in order to accomplish the same thing. That's dealing gently — and, we might add, **effectively.** Sometimes it does indeed become necessary to **wound** with words, or with a rod. But the gentle person is careful also, by words of comfort and encouragement, to bind up those wounds. A gentle person, wrote George Bethune, "takes care that he adds nothing by his own manner likely to offend, but, on the contrary, endeavors to present the truth or administer the rebuke in such a way as to recommend the one, and sweeten the other." It has been said that "there is a charm in gentleness, which a man must be a savage to resist." Perhaps it would be better to end on this note: "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy" (James 3:17).

The resurrection of Christ, as it was, in itself, the most glorious event that ever came to pass, was also productive of the utmost advantage to us. It serves to confirm and strengthen our faith in Him, as the true Messiah and Saviour of sinners. He was buried in a cavern hewn within a rock, which had but one way for entrance, and that blocked up with a stone of prodigious size and weight. The stone was likewise sealed for the greater security, and a watch, or company, consisting of sixty soldiers, was set to guard the sepulchre, night and day; notwithstanding all which obstructions, He raised again the temple of His body, which the Jews thought they had destroyed; and every precaution they took, in hope to prevent His rising, only added to the glory of His triumph, and as the Apostle's words are, "declared Him to be the Son of God with power."

His resurrection is also a matter of endless consolation to believers, as it was proof that the sacrifice of Himself, which He offered to God, and the atonement He made for our offenses, was accepted in the court of heaven.

A. Toplady

The Fruit of the Spirit
GENTLENESS

by Mary Beth Lubbers

But a certain Samaritan as he journeyed came where he was: and when he saw him he had compassion on him. And went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine and set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn and took care of him.

Luke 10:33 and 34

The tired traveller never intended to go home by that way. For that particular road from Jerusalem to Jericho was well-known for its many places of entrapment and for its roving bands of robbers who waited in ambush for the unwary and unsuspecting traveller. Many a lone man and caravan had been waylaid by thieves and thugs along this route.

But the man had spent four days in Jerusalem on business, instead of the two for which he had planned, and now he was eager to be home before the Sabbath began. Even though he was a Samaritan, he rigorously kept the Sabbath Day. And so, he took the shorter, however the more dangerous, route to his home just on the outskirts of Jericho.

He was apprehensive, being a solitary traveller, and that probably accounted for the double safety measures which he took for his own person and for his meager possessions and the few coins which he had finally gained after the long and shrill bargaining session in Jerusalem. Then, too, he had his flask of wine and small jug of oil without which no serious traveller ever set out on a journey. He felt confident also about his donkey who was steady and dependable, neither skittish nor whimsical as so many of his species were inclined to be.

Nevertheless, he was keenly aware that each of his senses must stay alert on the rocky road which dropped precipitously from Jerusalem to Jericho. The road was steep and uneven and dropped some 4000 feet in about 15 miles. He must try not to let his mind wander, neither to recall the events which had transpired on this trading excursion in Jerusalem—especially the despicable Jew with whom he had done business at the Temple—nor to muse on the strange but wonderful Rabbi whom he had happened to hear in Jerusalem. No, he must concentrate totally against the snare of ambush. For around any bend in this twisted and winding road could lurk the bandits so dreaded by the innocent wayfarer.

Tall spiked shrubs, thick coarse grasses, and tangled vines and thickets provided concealed protection for the thieves who laid in wait. Rocky niches, stony cul-de-sacs, and old crumbling walls afforded ideal hiding places for the murderous villains who preyed upon the hard work and industry of others. One even had to be alert to overhead dangers. For thieves could easily hide themselves in the large-leafed branches of fig and sycamore tree, dropping down with brutal suddenness on the unsuspecting traveller.

The man's eyes strained to detect any movement or rustling in bramble or bush. His ears stretched to catch any sudden or unusual call of bird or animal. And his own donkey plodded faithfully by his side, his large pointed ears twitching regularly against the pesky flies and the occasional bee.

As the man focused sharply and intently upon the landscape about him, even the hunched and gnarled form of the olive tree took on the foreboding resemblance of thief and robber lurking on the path. Everything was dry and sere. Only the ribbon of oleander trees brightened the semi-baked ravines and the cracked stream beds.

After travelling some time in this way and with no immediate sign of trouble ahead, the man was eased of his tensions a bit, lured into reverie by the companionable squelching of the leather bags against the straps on his donkey. He began to reminisce on his business in Jerusalem, and, as was usual, he began to second-guess himself on the bargaining which he had done. It was always this way when dealing with a Jew, and that probably accounted in part for the fact that the Samaritan usually had no dealings with the Jews. What shysters those Jews were! Oh how wheedling and shrewd they were! Crying, complaining in their nasal, high-pitched voices that you were driving a hard and unfair bargain, all the while reaching with their greedy, greatly-veined hands for the goods which you could sell them.

Even now, the man was not sure that the Jew with whom he had done business had not gotten the better of him. Those wily sons of Abraham! Were it not for the fact that the man had to have a steady and dependable market for his olive goods, he would not even consider dealing with a Jew. But, he owned a productive but small olive grove on the outskirts of Jericho and the olive oil which he was able to squeeze from the succulent fruit was much sought after by the Temple merchants in Jerusalem. He and his wife had a special knack for timing the plucking of these olives, crushing them between two heavy stones. But the real secret for his product came in the curing of the olive oil—allowing the oil to stand in specially-prepared earthenware jars conducive to its final texture and sweetness. Even the oil which he sold of inferior quality was used for the little clay lamps which brightened and cheered the humble peasant's home.

Had it not been for the Great Teacher which the man had heard in Jerusalem, this trip would have been drearily like every other trip which he had taken. The haggling, the arguing, the torrent of raised voices, the arms and hands gesticulating in wild entreaty over product and price. The all-pervading smell of penned animals, the unwashed people, the chickens and other poultry scurrying through the streets. How could the Jew be so inordinately proud of his Temple in Jerusalem? To a foreigner, such as he was, the Temple seemed but just another dirty bazaar like that to be found in any large mercantile city. No sanctity or holiness could in any outward way be ascribed to it. Gerizim seemed a paragon of purity in its comparison. The hatred and bitterness of his ancestors towards the Jews throbbed anew within him. Sometimes the man wondered how such violent antipathy had originated. Regardless, he knew in the very marrow of his bones that as an upright and dedicated Samaritan it was his sacred duty to

hate, and hate scathingly, the Jew! And he knew, too, that all that hatred was eagerly reciprocated by the Jew.

It was the Rabbi whom he had heard in Jerusalem which set this trip apart from all previous ones. In all his years he had never heard anything like it. How that Rabbi had preached! To be sure, the man had seen and heard many a Rabbi during his trips to Jerusalem. He could not have avoided hearing them even if he had wanted to. They stood on every corner pontificating in measured tones to the riff-raff which passed them. How carefully, however, they lifted the borders of their long robes to avoid touching the unkempt masses. Punctiliously they kept every outward code and convention. And how they loved to be greeted in the market place with the respectful cries of "Rabbi, Rabbi." But this Rabbi—how very different he was. He spoke with such authority! And of what unfamiliar truths He spoke! He spoke of the first being last, and humbling yourself to be exalted. He spoke of calling **not** the righteous, but sinners to repentance. He spoke of giving a crust of bread and a cup of cold water in Christ's name. He spoke of clothing the naked, visiting the sick, and entertaining strangers. And, yes, He spoke of **loving** your enemies. . .and at its very remembrance the man dropped his eyes to the rocky path in front of him just as he had done in the marketplace where he had first heard these strange words fall from the Great Rabbi's lips.

Come to think of it, even this Rabbi's robe was different. His robe, though beautiful, was of simple cloth and had no phylacteries on it. Was He really a Rabbi? Secretly, the Samaritan was eager to return to Jerusalem in the hopes that he could hear the Rabbi from Nazareth once again. And His eyes—would he ever forget them? They pierced through a man, exposing his very soul; yet such a tenderness and compassion shone through them.

And then he saw it. Lying along the side of the road just a few feet ahead was a man. . .and he appeared to be dead or very close to it. Closer inspection revealed that this was not just **any** man, but a Jew. Wounded he certainly was, bleeding profusely from many gashes, stripped of all his earthly possessions, and his life's blood fast ebbing out of him. Robbers, ironically, were no respecters of either Jew or Samaritan.

Involuntarily, the hostility of the centuries coursed through the man's veins. So the Jew rejoiced when a Samaritan died? Aha! Now would he rejoice at the imminent death of this hapless Jew! So the Jew cursed the Samaritan in his synagogue? Well, curses of the ages upon you, helpless one! Ah! Sweet and final vengeance!

But why was he stopping? Already his hands were fumbling at the thongs on his saddle bag to get at the flask of wine and the bottle of oil which he carried for just such a contingency, while in his ears drummed the words, "Love your enemies. . . Do good to those that despitefully use you. . . Whosoever giveth a cup of cold water. . . ."

With that intensity now he strove to save the dying man. Liberally, he doused the gaping wounds with wine to cleanse them. Lavishly, he splashed the oil on his wounds to ease the dying Jew's pain and to bring the two sides of the gashes together. Having no bandages, the Samaritan took his own freshly-laundered tunic and tore strips from it to bind up the Jew's wounds

and gashes. Then gently and tenderly he lifted his age-old enemy upon his own beast, he himself almost running along urging the animal to greater activity.

And now, oddly enough, no longer was his heart hardened towards this stranger, but rather a great compassion and tenderness welled up within him. The wine with which he had cleansed this stranger's wounds must have also splashed onto himself cleansing him of his bitter hatred; the oil which he had sloshed on this alien's gashes must have spilled into his own soul soothing his hatred and spreading compassion and gentleness in its place.

In great haste, the man brought the mortally-wounded Jew to the nearest inn, adjuring the innkeeper to care for him well, paying him in advance, and promising to pay him again when he returned this way.

Once he was on the rocky path again, the man began to worry about what his wife would say. Not even the precious apricots which he had specially purchased for her from the Syrian merchant would placate such a wrath as she was bound to show. How his wife would scold that after these many days of bargaining and bartering he had so little to add to the old clay pot in which they saved the few coins not needed for daily living or necessary to put back into the olive grove.

There was no doubt about it, he would have to tell his wife that he had aided a badly mutilated and dying man—a Jew, no less. How else would he account for his own shredded tunic? He could imagine her fury when he told her the whole truth—how that he had promised the innkeeper that he would pay for the Jew's further restoration to health and for his prolonged lodging when he made his next trek to Jerusalem. He covered his ears as he anticipated her shrill rebukes; he shaded his eyes as he envisioned the anguished wringing of her hands that she could be married to such a foolish man.

How could he **ever** explain to his wife that in the nursing of the enemy, he had even yearned towards him so that his deed of kindness far surpassed mere duty, but embodied mercy, gentleness, and compassion as well?

But the man would excuse the predicted responses of his wife. He would forgive the expressions of her feelings. For, after all, she had never heard the Great Rabbi in Jerusalem.

THOUGHTS FOR CONTEMPLATION

". . .when God is purely worshipped among us, and when true religion flourishes, it will be our best protection. We shall then be more impregnable than if we had all the power and wealth of the world: nothing can hurt us, if we give to God His due honor, and strive to worship Him in sincerity and truth."

—John Calvin (on Jer. 50)

"However miserable our condition may be, it is yet better than the happiness which the ungodly seek for themselves in the world,"

—John Calvin (on Jer. 51)

The Fruit of the Spirit
Developing the Fruit of Gentleness

by Rev. R. Van Overloop

That we might develop this virtue, it is required that we understand the concept, "gentleness".

The best way to gain such an understanding is to examine the passages in which this word is used. A lexicon (a dictionary of New Testament Greek words) tells us that "gentleness" means "mild, pleasant; the opposite of harsh, hard, sharp, and bitter." This same Greek word is also translated "kindness" and "goodness".

This word is used as an attribute of God. The "goodness" of God leads to repentance (Romans 2:4). While the severity of God is manifested on those who are cut off, it is the "goodness" of God which is manifested on those who are saved (Romans 11:22). God's "kindness" to those dead in trespasses and sins is the evidence of the riches of His grace (Ephesians 2:7). This same idea is expressed in Titus 3:3,4.

Also, this word describes an attribute of the people of God. As the recipients of God's kindness, they are made able, by the work of the Holy Spirit within them, to be kind and gentle (Galatians 5:22). They are urged by Paul to put on "kindness" (Colossians 3:12). We, who have tasted the gentleness and kindness of God are admonished to be "gentle" to all men (Titus 3:2; Philippians 4:5 - the word "moderation" means "gentleness"). This "kindness" is to be especially in evidence in a minister of the Gospel (II Corinthians 6:6 and II Timothy 2:24).

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Now we face the question, How is one gentle? How can we show gentleness?

Mr. Doezema and Mrs. Lubbers have used various phrases to describe this attribute. I cannot improve on them. Examine carefully the following expressions, which I have taken from their articles. I believe that you will find an excellent presentation of "gentleness". "Eminently approachable"; "humble in demeanor"; "kind in speech"; "tender compassion for sinners"; "concern for a sinner's repentance and restoration to the favor of God"; "to deal sensitively, gently with the poor, lost sheep"; "genuine concern for the spiritual well-being of the lost sheep"; "sensitive to their immediate need"; "gentle and considerate, seeking to understand the pressures and insecurities they face and making allowances accordingly"; "adding nothing by his own manner likely to offend"; "present the truth or administer the rebuke in such a way as to recommend the truth and sweeten the rebuke"; "giving a crust of bread and a cup of cold water in Christ's name"; "clothing the naked, visiting the sick, and entertaining strangers"; "loving your enemies"; "tenderness and great compassion"; "do good to those that despitefully use you"; "soothing his hatred and spreading compassion and gentleness in its place".

Quite a list, is it not? These expressions catch the true flavor of "gentleness".

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Some have erroneously thought that gentleness is contrary to honesty; that it is a weakness.

It is sad, but true, that some have and others presently use gentleness as an excuse for cutting off the sharp edges of the truth, for making the Word of God more palatable for man. This is a most serious crime against God and against His Word (Rev. 22:19).

But we must be careful that we do not throw the baby away with the dirty wash water, for gentleness is not opposed to truth. Much to the contrary, gentleness and kindness are placed side by side with teaching the truth in those passages which ascribe this attribute to officebearers (II Corinthians 6:6, 7; II Timothy 2:24, 25). The whole counsel of God is to be declared, and that declaration of the Truth is to be with gentleness.

Thus we are made to see that rather than being opposed to the truth, gentleness describes the manner in which the truth is to be presented. Gentleness is not contrary to honesty and candor; it is its faithful companion.

* * * * * * *

This fruit of the Spirit we must put on (Colossians 3:12).

How can we put on gentleness? How can we develop this virtue?

1. Begin by coming boldly unto the throne of grace, asking that God, by His Spirit, grant you the grace of gentleness.

2. Next, consider how much we are the objects of God's kindness. Ephesians 2:4-7 and Titus 3:3-6 describe that kindness upon the back-drop of a description of our unworthiness: "foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another".

3. Contemplate how Titus 3:2-6 shows the intimate relationship between our being gentle and our consciousness of how we have received God's kindness and love.

4. Next, meditate on the fact that our gentleness is especially necessary when we face those who curse and hate us. We are to be gentle to our enemies, for we must be like our Father in heaven and not like the publicans who are only gentle to those who are gentle to them (Matt. 5:43-48). If we are ill treated, then we have opportunity to show that we are disciples of Christ, who, "when He was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, He threatened not" (I Peter 2:23). We may "not render evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing; knowing that we are thereunto called" (I Peter 3:9).

5. Finally, do not forget that we are **commanded** by the sovereign God to be gentle. Therefore, we have no excuse before Him for not putting on this virtue. Also, this command of God is that we must be gentle to **ALL**. God has not put any saint before someone so terrible that we are excused from obedience to this command. And God has given to no saint such a personality that he or she is excused from obedience to this admonition. Even in the extreme case of one excommunicated from the Church of Christ, the "Form of Excommunication" (long used in Reformed Churches; admonishes us, that, while accounting such a one as an heathen and keeping no company with him, we are to admonish him in the manner of a brother.

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We **must** be gentle.

Every child of God must pray for

the blessing of God, which enables him or her to put on this fruit of the Spirit. It must be put on when we deal with someone who is exasperating and frustrating to us. We must be gentle when we deal with a brother or sister in the Lord, of whom we are inclined to think that they are less than we.

This gentleness must be evident especially in officebearers. Gentleness must characterize the presentation of the Truth to unbelievers. It must be present when we seek the reformation of those who have gone astray. Gentleness must be greatly in evidence in the consistory room, on house visitation, and discipline calls. Gentleness must be present in the deliberative assemblies of consistory, classis, and synod.

Controversy is not reason to set aside gentleness. Much to the contrary, this is precisely the time it must be present, according to II Timothy 2:24, 25: "The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." In a letter on the subject of controversy, John Newton (an 18th century Calvinist preacher and hymnwriter from England; wrote the following:

> "Of all people who engage in controversy, we, who are called Calvinists, are most expressly bound by our own principles to the exercise of gentleness and moderation. If, indeed, they who differ from us have a power of changing themselves, if they can open their own eyes, and soften their own hearts, then we might with less inconsistency be offended at their obstinacy; but if we believe the very contrary to this, our part is, not to strive, but in meekness to instruct those who oppose, 'if peradventure God will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.' If you write with a desire of being an instrument of correcting mistakes, you will of course be cautious of laying stumbling-blocks in the way of the blind, or of using any expressions that may exasperate their passions, confirm them in their prejudices, and thereby make their conviction, humanly speaking, more impracticable.
>
> "If our zeal is embittered by expressions of anger, invective, or scorn, we may think we are doing service to the cause of truth, when in reality we shall only bring it into discredit. The weapons of our warfare, and which alone are powerful to break down the strongholds of error, are not carnal, but spiritual; arguments fairly drawn from Scripture and experience, and enforced by such a mild address as may persuade our readers, that whether we can convince them or not, we wish well to their souls, and contend only for the truth's sake. . .
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> "There is a principle of self, which disposes us to despise those who differ from us; and we are often under its influence, when we think we are only showing a becoming zeal in the cause of God. I readily believe, that the leading points of Arminianism spring from, and are nourished by, the pride of the human heart; but I should be glad if the reverse was always true; and that to embrace what are called the Calvinistic doctrines was an infallible token of a humble mind." "I am afraid there are Calvinists, who, while they account it a proof of their humility, that they are willing in words to abase the creature, and to give all the glory of salvation to the Lord, yet know not what manner of spirit they are of. Whatever it be that makes us trust in ourselves that we are comparatively wise or good, so as to treat those with

contempt who do not subscribe to our doctrines, or follow our party, is a proof of a self-righteous spirit."

"What will it profit a man if he gains his cause, and silences his adversary, if at the same time he loses that humble tender frame of spirit in which the Lord delights, and to which the promise of His presence is made?" "If we act in a wrong spirit, we shall bring little glory to God, do little good to our fellow-creatures, and procure neither honour nor comfort to ourselves." "Go forth, therefore, in the name and strength of the Lord of Hosts, speaking the truth in love; and may He give you a witness in many hearts, that you are taught by God, and favoured with the unction of the Holy Spirit."

Be gentle to all!

Are you zealous for the church with great enthusiasm, while neglecting the evils which creep into your home, your friendships, your social life, and worst of all neglecting to fight your own personal spiritual battles? Then you are living a lie.

To "war the warfare of the Lord" and to "Keep the watch of the house of the Lord" is to battle in every sphere, in every manner, in all relationships; every moment, always and everywhere standing against Satan, always and everywhere and in everything on the side of God.

Many will be ashamed upon reading this, even as our own soul bows in shame at the writing.

For who of us would dare say that his own hands are clean for the battle?

But let that not dishearten! For we must feel ashamed. God's word must bring upon us, again and again, a conviction of sin that burns as a fire into our very inmost being.

Only let us take care that our principles remain founded upon the true foundation.

If we fight for the church of God and neglect the evil within our own hearts, however men may attempt to justify such action, we incur the judgement of God.

When we acknowlege our own guilt, acknowlege the justice of the accusation against our false zeal, then pardon is assured us. And the Lord will lead us on.

A. Kuyper

When I lay sucking at my mother's breasts,
I had no notion how I should afterwards eat,
drink, or live. Even so we on earth have no idea
what the life to come shall be.

M. Luther

Truth Vs. Error

APOSTASY IN THE LAST DAYS
6. Apostate Churches Barren From Heaven

by Rev. R. C. Harbach

"I will, therefore, put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not" (Jude 5).

The Greek text of this verse is difficult. The variant manuscript readings, aside from not carrying much weight, do not help much toward a good translation. Both the textual critics and the exegetes have considerable trouble with the text. In order to translate as literally as possible, yet making good sense, we use bracketed phrases for clarification, as follows: "Now, I intend to remind you, you once-for-all fully knowing this, that the Lord, having saved a people [the whole orgainism, kernel and shell] out of the land of Egypt, [on] a second occasion destroyed those who believed not [the reprobate shell]."

"Now," (not 'therefore') "I **intend**," (**boulomai** is so rendered in Acts 5:28; 12:4). Jude is saying that he intends to and only need remind his readers, since they are already quite familiar with the (three) Old Testament instances of apostasy he is about to mention (in verses 5-7). The first instance follows: "That the Lord having **saved** a people," a whole people, the entire organism, the wheat, the chaff and the mixed multitude, out of Egypt, then, in the wilderness wanderings, **destroyed**, not the whole organism, but only the chaff, those that did not believe. The whole organism is saved for the sake of the wheat; finally the chaff is disposed of (destroyed) that the wheat may be gathered into the granary. Among the saved, those not destroyed, were not only Caleb and Joshua, but also the spiritual Israel, including the tribe of Levi (Deut. 33:8, 9; Mal. 2:4-6) and those under the age of twenty (Num. 14:29-32), that is, the elect remnant.

Jude first of all pens his introduction (1-2), then the occasion of his letter: the then present apostasy (3-4). Now he continues, giving three historical instances of apostasy (5-7), the judgment on apostate Israel, on the fallen angels and on beastly Sodom and Gomorrah. The first instance recalls the corporate declension of all the unbelieving in the nation of Israel. The second instance points to the collective body of all the angels that sinned, and the third is of the corporate body politic embracing all the citizens in the cities of the plain, which, departing from the knowledge of God, fell into the vilest evils of the ages. These groups represent the apostate church, the demonic angels and the wicked world. What we are dealing with here in verse 5 is the fact that the Lord on one

occasion, having saved a people out of the land of Egypt, on another occasion destroyed those who did not believe. We therefore consider (1) the salvation, (2) the unbelief and (3) the destruction.

Israel was saved typically in the passover and passage through the Red Sea, both of which represented the saving Blood of Christ. The spiritual Israel God had always saved in all the eras of history. It was always true of them, "they shall never perish" (Jn. 10:28) and "shall never thirst" (4:14). That is why Scripture affirms, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord!" (Deut. 33:29). Put it this way: O the happinesses of Israel, a people saved by Jehovah! Israel enjoys blessednesses (plural) without end, and no wonder, being **saved**! For any to be blessed, God must save them. He redeemed His people out of Egypt, preserved them through the wilderness, saved them from many enemies and brought them over Jordan into their own land. Through all the periods of history God saves His people, victory after victory; first, by the victory of the Flood; second, by the victory of the Red Sea; third, by the victory of David's and Solomon's reigns; fourth, by the victory of the return from captivity; fifth, by the victory of the birth of Christ; sixth, in the victory of the Second Coming of Christ; and seventh, by the ultimate victory of the New Heaven and Earth.

But apostate Israel was always marked by unbelief. Hardening in unbelief characterized the whole people of Israel throughout their forty years of wilderness wanderings. In all that time they carried about with them the tabernacle, but they hated it; they despised God's house. Secretly, in their hearts, they made a sanctuary for Moloch. (Acts 7:43). Moses, from God's law had repeatedly denounced this horrifying superstition. Lev. 18:21; 20:2; Dt. 12:31; 18:10. They also hated the altars of Jehovah, so that while they outwardly offered their sacrifices for forty years at the brazen altar, inwardly they worshipped false gods, sacrificing to demons (not to God, Lev. 17:7). So how the Lord took them to task for this was, "Was it to Me, or to your idol-gods, that ye offered in the wilderness?" (Acts 7:42). This hatred of the religion of Jehovah erupted in the worship of the golden calf (Acts 7:41) and was never really eradicated from their hearts, continuing in their secret idolatries and whoredoms (Num. 14:33). They despised God's miracles in Egypt and in the wilderness. "Our fathers (1) understood not Thy wonders in Egypt; they (2) remembered not the multitude of Thy mercies, but (3) provoked Him at the sea, even **at** (worse yet, **in**) the Red Sea! (Psm. 106:7). Amazing! right there in the midst of the sea, the miracle of their passage through it then taking place, they dared to break out in unbelief against God! They were then guilty of an interpretative blasphemy, hating and refusing the fact that God's wonders were mercies on Israel, but judgments on Egypt (cp. Psm. 136). Such a blasphemy it was too, because their unbelief had made God a liar. "He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar" (I Jn. 5:10). A liar is not fit company. Therefore, they at that moment **in** the sea, withdrew from God's covenant fellowship! For they hated being reminded of the presence of the Lord at every turn, longing to forget Him and to be free to sin in the enjoyment of undisturbed lust. They

Catholics and Protestants. An example of this can be found in the book **Genius of Geneva**, by L. Penning. Here I read that one of the servants in an inn where Farel, Viret, Froment, and Calvin stayed, put poison in their soup. Viret ate it, but he did not die.

Many immoral practices were defined. Most were forms of entertainment. Those considered sinners were forbidden to take part in ligious services; although they did have to attend them.

Many people were opposed to Calvin's strict rules, and when a man by the name of Caroli accused Calvin of denying the Trinity it was the last straw. A synod was held, and although Calvin was cleared and set free, the slander spread. It was decided that Calvin and Farel were to be banished from Geneva. From Geneva, Calvin went to Strausburg where he stayed for three years, writing and teaching theology. It was here that he met Idelette Von Bure, a woman possessed of gentelness, kindness, and piety. They were married and lived happily together for seven years until her death. Idelette was a true comfort to Calvin, and he loved her deeply. They had one child, but he died after only a day.

In 1541 Calvin returned to Geneva after his reform party won. Here, he perfected an autocratic system of political and religious government. He selected a group of men called presbyters, who were to control the social and cultural lives of individuals down to the smallest detail.

Calvin was a respected man, he consulted all of the great Protestant religious leaders of his times. Calvin published many works which had a great influence on Protestant theology. One example of his influence would be in Scotland. Here John Knox followed his teachings and brought about the Scottish Protestant Reformation.

Calvin died in 1564, shortly after the followers of Calvin separated from the Lutherans. By doing this, they formed the first great division in the Protestant Church.

Calvin was a great hero of the Reformed faith. Because of him we now have the five points of Calvinism, which were developed from his teachings. They are: Total Depravity, Unconditional Election, Limited Atonement, Irrestible Grace, and Perseverance of the Saints. We owe a great deal to John Calvin, and we ought to thank God for his dedicated, hard work.

1 Moose, George L. - Encyclopedia-World Book Vol. 3
2 Penning, L. - **Genius of Geneva**

Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but there is a necessity for it; for the believer here is like the tribe of Manasseh, half on this side Jordan, and half on the other side, in the Holy Land; he hath both corruption and grace; for if he hath any good in him, the devil will surely gnash at him; and if he hath any evil in him, he must look that God will afflict him.

A. Toplady

From the Pastor's Study
THE PROPHETIC CAPTIVE

by Rev. D. H. Kuiper

"And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said to them, Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me them, I pray you."
Genesis 40:8

God moves in mysterious ways His wonders to perform! With this truth we are deeply impressed as we continue to learn from the fascinating life of the young saint Joseph. As a young man we found him rejected by his brethren in his father's house. After his brothers have sold him as a slave for a few shekels, he is taken to Egypt and in the house of Potiphar his faith and holiness are severely tried; but they are found strong with the result that for righteousness sake he is cast into prison. There he was "laid in iron, and his feet hurt with fetters." (Psalm 105:18) All these things befell him not by chance but by the hand of God Who works in mysterious ways for the purpose of bringing about great wonders. The hand of God often leads His children through the valleys and ravines of trouble in order that through them they may be brought to exaltation and honor and strength.

Today we find Joseph in this prison. According to the last part of Genesis 39 this outstanding young man had once again risen to a position of great prominence. At home, in Potiphar's house, and now in the prison, this stalwart character manifests his abilities and integrity. Soon he is in virtual control of the entire prison. And as he labored in this high position, everything he did prospered for the Lord was with him. As the overseer of the prison, his lot was eased considerably, but he is still a prisoner in a strange land. Sometime after he had been cast into jail, he is approached by two of his fellow prisoners, and what began as a little chat regarding a couple of dreams turns out to be very important, both for Joseph personally and from the point of view of prophecy.

One day the chief butler and the chief baker of Pharoah's household, due to some wrongdoing, are committed to the care of Joseph as prisoners. Since both these men labored in things pertaining to the king's table, it is very likely that their crime was a conspiracy to get rid of Pharoah, perhaps by poisoning. These servants were men of high repute in the Egyptian civil service. The duty of the butler had been to present the cup to the king after having tasted a portion of its contents, thus insuring that the king would not receive wine that was sour or poisonous. Since he is designated as the chief of the butlers, he served not only as cupbearer but also as overseer of the royal vineyards and cellars; he was in complete control of the production of wine. The baker had the superintendence of everything relating to dainties for the royal table. He was over a host of other bakers and confectioners. So both officers were men of high rank and importance, both

had access to the king's household and presence, and both were very likely of nobility as well.

Dreams in Scripture

For a season, perhaps for a year, these men continued in the prison ward under the care and supervision of Joseph. On a certain night, both of them dreamed a dream. Ordinarily this might pass without comment for dreams are common - everyone dreams whether they can give a lucid account of them or not. Also today, dreams comprise a part of our lives, and undoubtedly we will be judged according to those things which we dream as well as for our conscious activities. It is, of course, difficult to explain the working, or the mechanics, of any dream; but we can all agree that there is a rich subconsciousness in every person that is far broader and richer than one's conscious experience. When we are awake the contents of this subconsciousness is controlled by our will and judgment, but when we sleep these restraints are removed, so that various images arise out of our souls and tread over the threshold of our mind. The result is that without our control, frequently strange combinations of images and events appear. Such are our natural dreams.

But in the Holy Scriptures, dreams were often-times the medium of divine revelation. That the dreams of the butler and baker formed a certain speech of God is evident from the facts, first, that these dreams created an indelible impression upon these men, and second, that a definite interpretation was given to them. When a dream is from God, the Spirit of God works upon a man, influencing the subconscious mind to select and combine certain images, so that they form a symbolic whole. In this way God makes known His will and counsel. It was through this kind of a process that the butler and baker went one night.

The next morning, when Joseph observes their melancholy, depressed faces, and after he learns that this was due to the dreams they had had, and that there was no interpreter for these dreams, he responds with the words, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me them I pray you." He did not claim to be God, but he did confess that God was with him. And, he did not scoff at the idea of dreams; he did not say, "Oh, I have had my dreams too, and once they seemed important to me, but they have only mocked me and they will do the same to you." No, Joseph's readiness to interpret their dreams reveals that he still believed that his own dreams will be realized and that he held fast to the truth that with God all things are possible!

You can read these rather well-known dreams in Gen. 40:9-19. To the dream of the butler Joseph immediately gives this interpretation: "The three branches are three days. Yet within three days shall Pharoah lift up thine head and restore thee into thy place, and thou shalt deliver Pharoah's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler." To the baker's dream Joseph responded: "The three baskets are three days; yet within three days shall Pharoah lift up thy head from off thee, and shall hang thee on a tree. And the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee." The alien in a strange land has become the Lord's prophet!

Generally when we think of a prophet, we think of a man who has the ability to narrate events before those events take place. Though it is true that

prophecy often-times includes the element of predicting the future, that is not the essential idea of prophecy according to Scripture. Prophecy is not interested in history or the future as such, but prophecy had to do with the development and realization of the **Kingdom of God**! Further, prophecy is based on the principle that God's covenant people, being His friends, are called to **know** God, to enter into His secrets, that they may be His witnesses in this world. Thus, a prophet is one who is commissioned by God to speak His Word and is so filled by the Spirit and Word of God that he bubbles over with the revelation of God. Thus it makes no difference if his declarations have to do with the past, present or future. The important point is that the prophet reveals the will of God! In the office of prophet Joseph functions while in prison. "Do not interpretations belong to God?" God will give the meaning; Joseph is only His mouthpiece.

Now what is the Word of God through Joseph at this point? The simplest answer is that the destinies of the butler and baker is set forth here. Or, in light of Gen. 41:12, we could say that the future of Joseph himself is tied in with these dreams. But you sense immediately that this history, recorded so faithfully and in such detail in the Scriptures, must have a broader significance that that! Let us list the outstanding features of this history. 1.) This bit of history takes place in a prison, and we know that Egyptian prisons were terrible places, dark, gloomy places where the prisoners either died very quickly or endured a living death. 2.) The butler and the baker were in this terrible place because of their own guilt. Joseph was unjustly accused and innocent. 3.) As the prophet of God, Joseph set forth the Word of God in this horrible dungeon of death. Now if we put these things together, we see: 1.) That Joseph is a beautiful type of Christ Who is sent of God to be the Light that shineth in darkness, the great revelation of God in our flesh. 2.) The prison stands for this world of darkness in which all men are held ensnared by their sins and guilt. 3.) And the two rightful prisoners represent the whole of humanity, all of mankind, which has involved itself in ruin by transgressing the will of the King in Heaven! 4.) The words that Joseph speaks to the prisoners proclaim that in three days there will be a general resurrection (a lifting up). Both the butler and the baker will be lifted up, the one will be raised to glory and honor as he is reinstated to this high position in the king's house, the other will be raised unto shame and disgrace, for he will be beheaded and hung on a tree. Both were at fault, both were guilty of crimes against the king, both were under condemnation. But the king decides the outcome. On the third day one is given life and the other death.

What Genesis 40 sets forth here are the great events that transpire centuries later on Calvary's hill. Once again, three individuals are involved. There is Jesus, the Son of God, numbered with the transgressors but actually the Lord of all! He has been anointed "to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those that are bound." (Is. 61:1) On His right and left hands are the malefactors, criminals of the worst kind who had fallen under similar condemnation. And, at the first, both sneered at the Just One. But by the amazing

grace of God the one repented of His sin and believed on this King of the Jews, and he is assured of a resurrection unto life when the Savior of His sheep speaks these wonderful words of life, "Today thou shalt be with Me in paradise." The other persists in his unbelief and is raised unto desolation and death.

That's what Joseph proclaimed in Egypt's prison, what Jesus tirelessly preached during His earthly ministry, and what the Church must continue to hold forth today! God alone determines the eternal destinies of men! All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. All are under a just condemnation. All come into this world as guilty children of wrath, shut up in the prisonhouse of sin, out of which there is no human way of escape. But in eternal love and abounding grace, God has chosen some to escape the awful prison, to know the friendship of the King, to be restored to a wonderful place of service in His house, and to have the promise of a resurrection unto everlasting life in the kingdom of heaven where we will have new names! This will happen on the third day; perhaps we can distinguish three great days on the clock of God's counsel: the great day of creation, the long awaited day of Christ's incarnation, and the final day of the resurrection and judgment. Then all shall be lifted up to receive according as they have done in the body, whether it be good or evil.

Yes, God alone determines the destinies of all the men in this world. It is not of him that runneth, or of him that willeth, but of God which showeth mercy. Men like to question the wisdom and the righteousness of the Most High. But the truth cannot be changed. Joseph said it. Jesus said it. The Word continues to say it without ambiguity. God sovereignly chooses, redeems, and glorifies whom He wills. And God sovereignly reprobates, condemns, and destroys, in the way of their sins, those whom He wills. Because He is God! Is it not lawful for God to do what He wills with His own? Jesus said, "Even so, my Father worketh hitherto, and I work." Shall we also say, with humility and fear, "Even so!"

We must seek peace, with all earnestness. Bitterness, ill will, malice, and love of dispute should never characterize a Christian in his defense of the truth. Instead, there should be a sincere interest in the honour of God and the well-being of our fellowmen. Paul says, "As much as lieth in you, live peaceable with all men."

Having then purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently. Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, will all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one-another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

And may the God of mercy and peace, the God of order and unity, grant that we may be of one mind and may together praise Him in unity of faith, now and eternally.

A. Kuyper

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III. Developing The Fruit of Gentleness	RRVO	10	10
Fruit of the Spirit, The Longsuffering			
I. "Father Forgive Them"	DD	7	1
II. Longsuffering	MBL	7	5
III. Developing Long Suffering	RRVO	7	11
Fruit of the Spirit, The Love			
I. "As I Have Loved You"	DD	1	9
II. Love	MBL	1	12
III. Developing Love	RRVO	1	15
Fruit of the Spirit, The Joy			
I. Happiness is. . . .	DD	3	7
II. Joy	MBL	3	12
III. Developing Joy	RRVO	3	16
Fruit of the Spirit, The Peace			
I. Peace	MBL	5	3
II. "Why Are Ye So Fearful?"	DD	5	8
III. Developing Peace	RRVO	5	12
Fulfill Ye My Joy	ED	1	17
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God's Wisdom (TVE)	RRCH	1	5
-H-			
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Joy of Deepening Convictions, The	CB	2	15
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Relationships in the Home	RGVB	6	12
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The Teaching Task (CRIT)	BW	9	7
Trickery of Error (TVE)	RRCH	3	4
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AUTHOR'S KEY

CEC - Current Events and Comments
CRIT - Critique
ED - Editorial
PS - From the Pastor's Study
TVE - Truth vs. Error
BK - Bernie Kamps
BL - Brenda Langerak
BW - Ben Wigger
CB - Carol Brands
CP - Charles Pastoor
DD - Don Doezema
DH - David Harbach
DR - David Rau
DW - Deane Wassink
ED - Ellen Dick
EL - Ed Lotterman
GH - George Hutton
GN - Gary Nienhuis
GVDS - Gary Vander Schaaf
JEK - Jerry Kuiper
JK - Jay Kalsbeek
JL - Jack Lenting
JMF - John M. Faber
JP - Jane Pastoor
KF - Ken Feenstra
LB - Lynn Bekkering
LOB - Lori Bouwkamp
MB - Martha Bruinsma
MBL - Marybeth Lubbers
MVB - Marsha Van Varen
PF - Paula Faber
PWB - Pastor Wayne Bekkering
RCH - Rev. Cornelius Hanko
RCJH - Rev. Carl J. Haak
RDK - Rev. Dale Kuiper
RGL - Rev. George Lubbers
RGVB - Rev. Gise Van Baren
RJK - Rev. J. Kortering
RRCH - Rev. Robert C. Harbach
RRH - Rev. Ron Hanko
RRVO - Rev. Ron Van Overloop
RHV - Rev. Herman Veldman
SH - Sharon Huizinga
SO - Suzanne Ondersma

WHAT'S HAPPENING

by Paula Faber

GOD BLESSED:
-Mr. and Mrs. P. Young with a daughter, Melanie Leila.
-Mr. and Mrs. D. Kamphuis with a son, Jason Lee.

CONFESSION OF FAITH:
-Michelle Gleason made public confession of faith October 6, in Southeast Church.
-Jill Busker, Kristin Engelsma, Stefan Engelsma, Sheily Lenting, and Randy Vander Noord made public confession of faith September 29 in South Holland Church.
-Brad Dykstra, Vonda Klamer, Bill Langerak, Tim Schimmel, Tim Van Dyke made public confession of faith October 13 in Hope Church in Grand Rapids.

MARRIAGES:
-Jon Meulenberg and Lori were united in marriage October 4.
-Cheryl King and Louis Regnerus were united in marriage October 18.

MEMBERSHIP TRANSFERS:
-Loveland Church received the papers of Mary Collmann from our Doon Church.