BEACON LIGHTS

"Christ suffered the punishment which we deserve. And he earned for us lives that are more wonderful than those of Adam and Eve, before they fell into sin. Yes, Christ earned for us a more glorious life than the highest angels have. . . . Christ ascended up into heaven; and He is enjoying the glory which He earned for us, as members of His body, the Church which God designed, and is by Him being brought into existence."

Christ Our Intercessor by Rev. Heys

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Singapore:

A Fine City

by Pete Faber

In the past few years I have heard so much about Singapore. This small country 14 miles x 27 miles receives a lot of attention from the world in general and our church in particular. So Dale Vink, a member of Grandville PRC, and I decided that a trip there would be neces sary.

The title of this article reveals a lot about the government of the country. Singapore a 'fine' city everyone says - fines for many things one might do. Fines for littering, throwing cigarette butts on the ground, huge parking fees, etc. Chewing gum is no longer sold in the country. The government certainly tells the citizens what to do.

Home, while we were there, was Pastor and Mrs. Kortering's apartment. After seeing the "Happy Mansion" address on the top of all their letters, I had imagined in my mind this huge mansion. But when I first arrived I was a little surprised at the outside. After looking at the building I decided that it was not a mansion and it really did not look all that happy. Kortering's apartment on the other hand was really nice and a very happy place to stay so maybe the building is appropriately named after all.

For Dale and me this was the first time to visit a country in the far East. I thought we might suffer from a major shock entering this country, but it does seem surprisingly Western in some respects. This is probably due to the long British rule over this country.

The major reason for visiting the country was of course Pastor and Mrs. Kortering's presence, my Uncle and Aunt, and the desire to meet the people from the church there. For those of you that are unfamiliar with Singapore, there are two churches that we have contact with. Those being First and Covenant Evangelical Reformed Church of Singapore. Pastor Lau is the minister at First and Pastor Kortering at Covenant Church. Pastor Kortering is a minister on loan from the P.R. Churches. Covenant Church has a small building like a store front church. It is a small building but it is convenient and has a nice sanctuary. Since it is very hard to find buildings for sale, the people there are delighted that they found this building and are able to worship there. First Church has recently completed building their church and is currently waiting for government approval, so that they may occupy it.

Dale and I had heard that we would have a great time there and would enjoy meeting and talking with the people from the church. We were not disappointed. We happened to be there over the Chinese New Year. The majority of the people there do not celebrate the calendar New Year but only the Chinese New Year. Everyone had several days off from work and the Chinese section of town was mobbed with people. It sure seemed strange wishing people a "Happy New Year" in the middle of February.

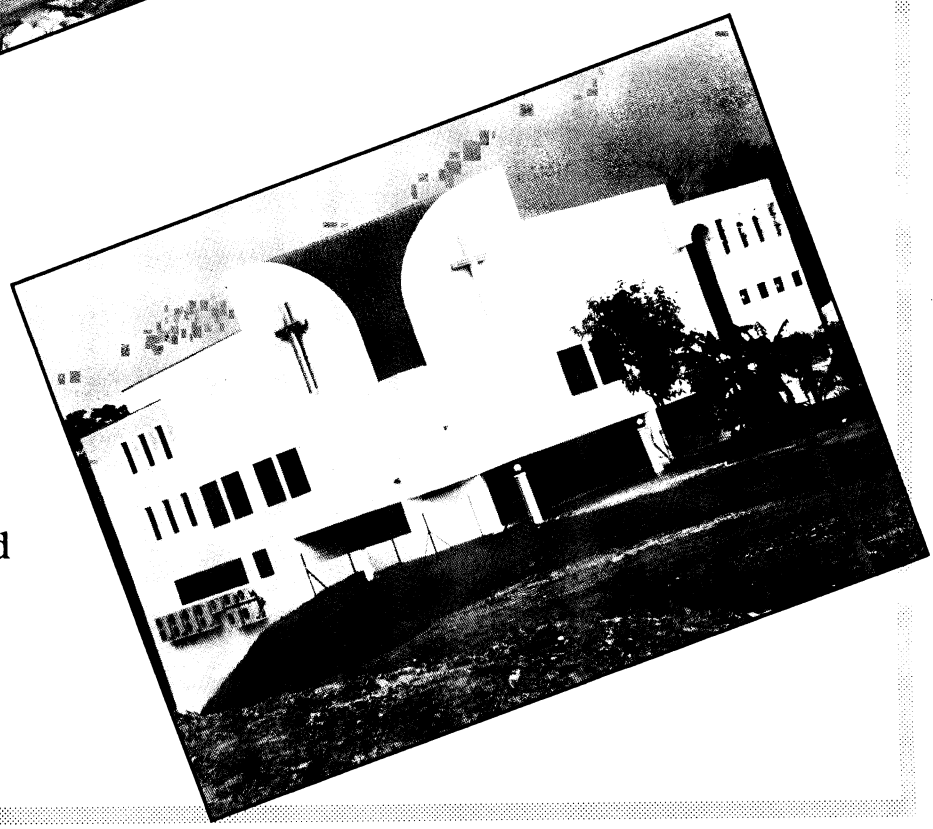
The members of these churches are all younger people. The majority of the people are from 25 to 35 years old. There are quite a few children now in the church as some of the members are marrying. The people of the church there went out of their way to show us a great time. One day, three members of First Church took us into Malaysia. After looking around the town for a while, we noticed a huge windmill in the center of town. It came out that the Dutch had taken over this part of Malaysia and had ruled there for over 100 years. The Dutch sure get around.

Although for the most part, we as well as the saints there struggle with the same problems, it seems that there is an area that we cannot comprehend. It is hard for us to imagine having almost all of our family and friends worshiping other gods like Buddha. For the majority of these young saints they may be the only Christian in their family. While sight-seeing one day

with members of First Church we went into one of these Buddhist temples. People were lighting Joss sticks and putting fruit by an altar. It struck me when one of the members said that this is exactly what their family does. Bringing food and lighting sticks at a Buddhist temple seems like nonsense to us but the Christians there are looked down at for not doing this. Many are slighted by their family on this account.

One important thing that we must learn from them is their great burden for the lost. Unlike most of us, this burden for the lost propels the saints there to be actively involved in doing mission work. This burden or desire to tell others about Jesus makes them go to their neighbor in love. They tell others about their church, inviting them to come and take part in their fellowship groups. They tell them about their faith. We certainly could learn a lot from them, in this respect, about personal mission work.

Pray for the saints in Singapore as they must be lights in a dark world, and for the Korterings as they labour with them!



Top: Pastor Lau and family

Right: New Completed First E.R.C.

Christ Our Intercessor

by Rev. John A. Heys

What happened to Jesus Christ our Savior, and what He did for us and in us, Young People, is presented in Romans 8:34. There we read: "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again; Who is even at the right hand of God, Who maketh intercession for us."

Now Christ's painful death on His cross, His resurrection and ascension into heaven, to sit at God's right hand, present to us a tremendously important truth. It assures us that He suffered all that which is needed for us to be saved, and to work in us that which He, in God's grace, will bring us, namely, everlasting blessedness in Christ's kingdom.

Today, as born-again children of God, we have that tremendously comforting truth that Christ "maketh intercession for us." We need that so badly, and it comes to us in God's grace. Remember then, and bear in mind the awesome truth that all men, except Christ, come into this world guilty and spiritually dead. For, as we read in Ephesians 2:1, we all, except Christ, come into this world "dead in trespasses and sins." And when Christ makes intercession for us, we are born-again children of God, who have a new blessed spiritual life.

Therefore, when we celebrate Christ's resurrection, we reveal ourselves to be those who have a very comforting truth, which we must and are called upon to hold on to tightly. It is so very necessary and comforting then to know and believe that Christ maketh intercession for us. And the striking thing, Young People, is that we do believe that truth and enjoy it because Christ is making intercession for us. Let us therefore consider this comforting truth, and thank God for Christ's death, resurrection and ascension to God's right hand, and to become our intercessor.

Let us, first of all bear in mind that when Christ arose, He told His eleven disciples that "all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Matthew 28:18. That reveals the blessed truth that He arose with a glorious human nature, that is higher than the one which Adam had, until he, by Satan's vile attack fell into sin, and died spiritually. Christ, our intercessor, revealed a blessed victory for us, and worked it in us.

We do well, therefore, to consider the fact that the word "Intercessor" comes from the verb "to intercede." That verb means to act between persons with a view to reconcile differences that exists between us and Himself. We by nature love sin; but Christ, as our resurrected Redeemer, changes us to be those who love God, even as He loves God.

Christ makes us, who by nature are the unholy children of Satan, to become holy children of God. And when Christ returns to this earth, at the end of time, He will make our bodies like His own glorified body, which is already resurrected to a glory that is far above all the highest angels. Of that we read in Revelation 21:1-5. There we read of a new heaven and earth, where God wipes away all tears from our eyes, and where there shall be no death, sorrow or crying; and all things are new. As our intercessor Christ works the love of God in us, and works away the love of sin wherewith we are born.

Thus, as our Intercessor, Christ realizes a most glorious spiritual change in our hearts and minds. And He causes us to walk differently with our bodies, because He implants in our hearts and minds the love of God. Indeed, we by nature are desperately in need of that work of Christ upon us as our Intercessor.

Take hold then on this truth, Young People. Christ suffered the punishment which we deserve. And He earned for us lives that are more wonderful than those of Adam and Eve, before they fell into sin. Yes, Christ earned for us a more glorious life than the highest angels have, including those which are called archangels, as presented in Jude, verse 9.

Christ ascended up into heaven; and He is enjoying the glory which He earned for us, as members of His body, the church which God designed, and is by Him being brought into existence. Look up Romans 12:5, Ephesians 1:22 and 23, but also Colossians 1:18. Christ will lift us up to be higher than the highest angels, with a closer fellowship with God than these angels have. We read that clearly in Hebrews 1:13, 14. There we

read that God's angels are not at God's right hand, and are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." They will be serving us.

Now Christ's resurrection opened the door, not merely so that we would be delivered from physical death; but we will be where angels will serve us, and where we are made to be more glorious than these angels are.

As our intercessor Christ causes us to love God; and in love we will walk as God wants us to walk. But today some in the church-world, who call themselves Christians, do not believe the truth presented in Scripture concerning Christ. Yes, they are enthusiastic, and clap their hands while singing; and during the preaching will cry out: "Amen! Hallelujah!" But that does not always reveal faith in Christ as their intercessor. They reveal merely that they with their flesh enjoy deliverance from physical pain and death. They do not reveal faith in Christ as their intercessor, Who is working all things together to bring them fully delivered from sin, and to be those who love God and want to serve and glorify Him.

Take note, Young People, and hold on tightly to the truth presented by God, the day when Adam and Eve became friends of Satan. Look up Genesis 3:15. There is presented the basic element of our salvation. There in that which is often called "The Mother Promise", there our God reveals that He will cause His elect to hate Satan and sin; and that we can expect persecution. That Satan brings forth on those that love God. And that very serious question is whether those who do call themselves Christian, and cry our "Amen! Hallelujah!" when the truth is preached about our deliverance from sin, not merely from the punishment.

Christ did not die, and was not raised the third day, merely in order to save us from the punishment which we deserve. Christ was sent as our intercessor, Who will cause us to think and will what He thinks and wills. Salvation, in the first place, is deliverance from sin, and the implanting of love of God in our hearts. Salvation is not merely, or in the first place, God's work of saving us from punishment. It is saving us from the hatred of God, which Satan worked in Adam and Eve. Salvation is God's work through Christ, whereby He turns us back to love of God. And Christ as our intercessor is working that in us.

How about it, Young People, is Christ your Mediator? Is He working in your hearts and minds, love of God? Is Christ working in your hearts and minds enmity against Satan, and all that he wants you to do? Do you want to receive spiritual gifts from God through Christ, so that more and more you hate sin, and you want to serve and praise God for sending Christ as your intercessor, that is, He Who works in your hearts and minds, to walk as He walked in love of God.

Yes, there are those who call themselves Christians. Yet they push Christ aside, and claim that we should pray to His mother, Mary. Mary is presented in the Roman Catholic churches as one whom we should hail, and one to whom we should pray. They claim that we need Mary and should go to Christ through her.

The truth of the matter is that Mary needs Christ as much as we do. By God's grace, not by her own strength, she brought Christ forth as her son. But she did not pray to God to let her do that. She was engaged to Joseph, and did not want a child before being married to Joseph, and to get a son through someone else before marrying him. She did not pray to God to give her a child through someone less than Joseph. The child which she did bring forth came in a humanly impossible way. And when this child did come forth, she correctly said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God, my Savior." She boasted of no work she would now do.

Get this truth, Young People, Mary needs Christ as much as we do. She does not help us get salvation. She needs every bit of it herself. She did help Christ physically, when he was a baby, and later was a physically developing child. She did this with the strength and desire that God gave her. And nowhere in Scripture do we find it stated that we need and depend upon Mary. Christ is our intercessor one hundred percent. Besides, Mary is not even able to hear us pray. She is in heaven with her soul and her body is still in the grave. What is more, praying to her is the gross sin of idolatry.

Take hold then of the truth presented in Psalm 139:14. There we read:" I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; and that my soul knoweth right well." Our souls must also know that, and not use Mary for our salvation.

We should appreciate and thank God for that resurrection of Christ. It opened the way for Him to be our intercessor; and thereby to bring us to the blessed life that we will enjoy in the new Jerusalem; when Christ returns to this earth, to bring all the members of His body, all the elect, to that spiritual perfection when, as members of His body, they will walk in love of God. Christ's resurrection is proof of our coming resurrection to a life that will be completely without sin, and will be a life of perfect love of God, through Christ who worked this new life into us.

Watching Daily At My Gates

by Skip Hunter

April 1 — **Mark 14:17-26** Today is Good Friday. For whom is it good? The passage says that it was not good for Judas Iscariot. In other places in Scripture we find that it was not good for many of those who actively crucified the Christ. Is it good for us? The answer is yes, yes, yes! It is good because our sins were placed on Christ and through the cross wiped from our records. We can celebrate that goodness every time we partake of or witness the Lord's Supper. When we see that bread broken and wine poured out, we see the goodness of God for us "that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Celebrate that goodness today and do as the disciples did; sing praises unto God the fountain of all good. Sing or read Psalter 81.

April 2 — **Mark 14:32-42** Do you pray, "Nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt,"? Those were Jesus's words to His Father as He looked ahead to His final sufferings. We experience suffering on this earth. We know that God has in His counsel determined our path in life. Sometimes that path is rocky, hard, and full of adversity. Do we, can we, must we pray "Thy will be done,"? The answer to can we and must we is yes. We can because Christ went to the cross for us. By His death He has given us a confidence that whatever we ask in His name He will do it. We must because God has commanded us to pray this even in the Lord's prayer. Praying that God's will be done and being content with that is one of the joys of our salvation. Do we pray that daily? Sing or read Psalter 188.

April 3 — **I Corinthians 15:1-11** Do you believe in the resurrection? Does it have present reality for you? That is the question that we must answer today as we go to church and celebrate Easter. Easter is no good if we do not believe in and do not live out of the resurrection. We have in these few verses a confession about the work of Christ for us. Today we see the fruits of that resurrection as we listen to the preaching of a lively gospel which is Christ. Tomorrow we must put that gospel into action as we live lives of hope. We have hope that Christ will return and take us all to heaven. That is the present reality for us. Our lives must be lived in hope. We can, too, by the same grace that was given to Paul. That grace is sufficient for us in all circumstances. Sing or read Psalter 48 especially stanzas 1,2, 4, and 8.

April 4 — **Psalm 119:1-8** Do you want to be happy in this life? The recipe for that wish is found in these eight verses. The recipe is to walk in the law of the Lord, keep His testimonies, and seek Him with your whole heart. Does it seem too hard? Does it seem too simplistic? Then stop and consider what those words mean for us. They tell us that every action of our lives must be done in accordance to the gift of Scripture He has given us. When we keep those statues, He will not forsake us but will bless us in this life. Sing or read Psalter 321.

April 5 — **Psalm 119:9-16** Young men and women, are you looking to cleanse your ways? Are you looking for that new and holy life you have confessed or will confess? This section is written for you. First of all you need to hide God's word in your hearts. Did you as a child learn your memory and catechism so that you still know it today? Do you now continue to search the Scriptures to see God's will in your life? Do you declare His judgments to all who are around you? Do you meditate in God's law and delight in it? Do you seek Jehovah in all that you do? After thinking on those questions, look back at verse 12. In your prayer ask Jehovah to teach you His statutes. Do this often. Sing or read Psalter 428 especially stanzas 3 and 4.

April 6 — **Psalm 119.:17-24** Are we strangers in this earth? Is it hard for us to fit in with those of the world who are around us? If we answer yes to those questions, then, good. We are to be strangers and pilgrims here. When we experience this, then we should be driven to God's law and ask Him to show us the wondrous things in it. If we get too comfortable in this world, then God's law gets lost. True, God placed us in the world. We have business to do with the world. But, we are not of the world. We may never be identified with it. We must take for our delights and counselors Jehovah's perfect word. Sing or read Psalter 323.

April 7 **Psalm 119:25-32** Do we sometimes live a life of deceit with regard to the law of God? Do we sometimes hide our faith from those around us? Has it happened that we covered up our Christianity in order to please someone or even to please ourselves? David had that sin on occasion. Here the psalmist asked that the sin be removed from his life. We must also pray that prayer. Then we must go out and live a life so that all who see us know that we are children of the Heavenly Father. Choosing the path of God's law means leading a life that is pleasing to Him. Sing or read Psalter 324.

April 8 **Psalm 119:33-40** How long is the end of verse 33. How long do we have to keep the way of God's statutes? The answer is simple. We must keep that way until He calls us into heaven. For some the end may come soon. This could be either for the aged saint or the youth that God has determined will go to heaven before we expect him to. For some this could be until Christ returns. But all must keep it until the end. This keeping then becomes a marathon for us all. We must work hard. The course goes up some steep hills and into some deep valleys. Our eyes must always be on the prize and not on the vanities of this world. But yet each of us has the comfort that He will be with us and will bring us safely throughout this life unto the glories that await us in heaven. Sing or read 428 especially stanza 5.

April 9 **Psalm 119:41-48** Are you happy when someone mocks you concerning your faith? Do you have an answer for him? These are two of the blessings of salvation. When you are mocked, then it is certain that the light of Christ is shining brightly in your life. When you have a ready answer, then you are certain that the Holy Ghost is living in you and is not quenched by your actions. Make your life one in which you can speak of God's testimonies often. Do this by meditating upon that Word and delighting to live in that Word. Sing or read Psalter 326.

April 10 **Psalm 119:49-56** Are you filled with joy as you go into God's house today? Will you sing God's praises with delight? That is one of the joys found in singing. We can express the joy of our salvation and the hope of singing with the saints in heaven. Now our voices are marred by sin's ugliness; then our voices will be perfected with the rest of our bodies. What are you singing today? Are you singing God's statutes as verse 54 states? We should be happy in God's word and sing God's word. Remember the sabbath today and keep it holy by singing God's praises with other saints in God's house. Sing or read Psalter 327.

April 11 **Psalm 119:57-64** Have you thought upon your ways, people of God? If we do, then our experience will be like that of the psalmist. We will turn our feet to God's law. When we examine our life, we see a life corrupted and polluted with sin. We must hurry to God's Word. In that Word is life everlasting. In that Word is the hope of our salvation, Then as we turn to that Word, our daily lives will show that Word. We will not fear even when troubles come. We will thank God for His judgments upon us. We will know who to choose for friends and not associate with the wicked. Let us constantly pray, "Teach me thy statutes." Sing or read Psalter 328.

April 12 **Psalm 119:65-72** This section is full of instruction for the child of God. Let us concentrate on verse 67. Sometimes we experience the afflictions of this life. Sickness, financial problems, family problems and other troubles are sent by God to try our faith and to bring us back unto the path that leads to heaven. Now not every affliction is sent as chastisement, but we must always examine our walk and see if we are sinning. Notice that the psalmist realizes that before he was afflicted he went astray from God's law. The psalmist now says that he has kept God's word. Is that our confession? Does affliction make us examine our ways? If we do, then we must ask God to "lead us in the way everlasting." Sing or read Psalter 329.

April 13 **Psalm 119:73-80** Do we pray for God's grace daily? Do we ask for His merciful kindness and tender mercies each time that we bow our heads? We should because without them we will fall and perish. God's grace to His people is boundless. We can read about it in His Word and rejoice in it. It will comfort us in hard times. It will smooth the rocky places in our lives. He has promised us it in His word. Let us search the Scriptures prayerfully for such comfort and live lives guided by the Holy Spirit. Sing or read Psalter 330.

April 14 **Psalm 119:81-88** Sometimes we ask, "How long O Lord?" The aged saint wishes to go to heaven so that he can be delivered from this world of sorrows. The harried father and mother wish that Christ would comes as they struggle to bring up covenant children in this world of sin. The minister and elder struggling to bring God's word to the people wish that Christ would return soon. How about you, young people, is this your desire? Verse 83 does not paint a nice picture about our life on earth. Just as a bottle in the smoke becomes black and grimy, so our lives become tainted with the sin and evil around us. We may not forget God's statutes. We must not want the evil of the day. Pray "Thy kingdom come", and live lives that show that desire. Sing or read Psalter 331.

April 15 **Psalm 119:89-96** Friday night has once more come upon us. What type of entertainment are we going to seek? How are we going to spend the night with our family and friends? Is it to be the movie, the dance, or the party? Are we going to be found committing adultery or fornication? Will these things be our delight tonight? If they are, reread verse 92. In this verse the Holy Spirit tells us that God's law is to be our delights. Notice the plural here. Not just one commandment but all the commandments are to be kept. Unless we keep all of God's commandments, afflictions will build until without repentance we perish. Enjoy yourselves tonight in the delights of God's law. Sing or read Psalter 332.

April 16 **Psalm 119:91-104** Do we love God's law enough to meditate on it all day? Is it sweeter to our tastes than any food or drink can be? These words should impress upon us the necessity of studying God's word. If we are going to love a certain hobby or work, then we will immerse ourselves in it and it will permeate our thought. If we enjoy the taste of a certain food, we will make sure that we can enjoy it. We must do that with God's word as well. In fact we should do more with God's Word than we do with anything else in this world. Sometimes we forget that fact as we seek even the necessities of this life. But God's word and His kingdom must come first! Meditate upon it and enjoy its delights. Sing or read Psalter 333.

April 17 **Psalm 119:105-112** Are the words of our mouths always acceptable freewill offerings to God? Think about that last statement for a moment. Then think about the third, sixth, and ninth commandments. Words come out of our mouths that take the Name of the Lord in vain. Are these acceptable to our God? We easily speak against a brother or sister in the Lord. Do we consider that these words may not be acceptable in God's sight? Today, as we go to God's house, are our words of prayer and song sincere or are we saying one thing and living another? Let us use God's word as the lamp on our path and a light to help us bring acceptable speech to His altar today and everyday. Sing or read Psalter 428:8-10

April 18 **Psalm 119:113-120** Notice the comfort of verse 117. "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe." When we trust in the living God, we have complete assurance of our spiritual safety. There are times in our lives where we feel that we are in danger of falling. Because of the world's wickedness, there are slippery places. If we depended on our own strength or the strength of another man, we would most assuredly fall. But when our trust is in Jehovah, we will never fall. The last half of the verse tells us that we must obey God's law all our days in gratitude for His defense. Sing or read Psalter 335.

April 19 **Psalm 119:121-128** If the psalmist had to say verse 126 in his day, how much more shouldn't we say that it is time for Jehovah to work because of the evilness around us? Are we ready for Jehovah to work? Are we ready to be tried by the fire of God? It is easy for us to say, let God work in the wicked world, but are we ready for him to work in us and in our churches? In order to be ready we must love His commandments more than fine gold. And in loving those commandments, we must be keeping those commandments with a diligence that is greater than any other desire in our life. Sing or read Psalter 336.

April 20 **Psalm 119:129-136** Do you love the doctrines of predestination and providence? Do you wish to have a God who has determined every step you have and will take? That was the psalmist's desire as stated in verse 133. He wanted his steps ordered in God's word. Do we want that? If we do, first we must learn that word, second we must make that want our prayer and desire, and third we must bow before such ordering. In bowing we want the face of God to shine on us with all its glory and blessing. Is that our desire, people of God? Sing or read Psalter 337.

April 21 **Psalm 119:137-144** Are we zealous for the testimonies of Jehovah? Are we so zealous that all those around us see those testimonies in our lives? Are we so zealous that any time a situation arises that might cause us to compromise the Word of God we are ready to stand? That is tiring business. That is being a soldier called to fight the battle of faith. This fighting is not a single skirmish; this fighting is a war fought from the time we are old enough to know good and evil until the day we die. While we fight, we must make sure that God's commandments and only God's commandments are our delights. Then and only then will small and despised people find hope in this world. Sing or read Psalter 338.

April 22 **Psalm 119:145-152** Does the fight discourage you, people of God? Are the nights of lost sleep more than you can bear? If it does, you are not alone. When we look around us and realize the enormousness of the enemy, sometimes our hope dims. But God is near. What a wonderful blessing! Jehovah is on our right and our left. He will not suffer us to fall for He neither slumbers or sleeps. God is near. If you are lying on a bed of sickness and suffering, He is there for your comfort. If you are tormented by wickedness, His hand is by your side. God is near. Let us lay hold on that blessing and constantly go to Him for our help. Sing or read Psalter 339.

April 23 **Psalm 119:153-160** Are we grieved because of the transgressors? Are we saddened when God's name is blasphemed around us? The psalmist had that quite often. This was not just when he went to Philistia or Moab. This happened in Israel, that picture of the church. Are we grieved when we see sin in people of our churches and schools? Does that grief show? Do we show them the error of their ways that they might be converted and turned? That is a responsibility that we have as God's people. We must be our brother's keeper even when the task is unpleasant. Sing or read Psalter 340.

April 24 **Psalm 119:161-168** Do we stop seven times a day and praise Jehovah? Is it a true praising or just custom and habit? The number seven is not a prescription but a guide. Seven is the number of the covenant; the number of fullness. Here it indicates that we must always be praising God. We must praise him in our whole life, through our whole life, and by our whole life. We are never finished praising him. When we praise him continually, we will enjoy the great peace that passeth all understanding. The benefits that come by this means are boundless. Let us praise God in all we do. Sing or read Psalter 341.

April 25 **Psalm 119:169-176** The last section to this long Psalm serves as a good summary. I hope our study has been a blessing for each of us. The idea of the last part is that we must constantly come to our God with our troubles. We must see that the only way of salvation is in His word. We must also see that in the keeping of His law is great reward. We also must see our sin. We must know that we go astray daily and need our shepherd to bring us home. Thanks be to God for such a patient shepherd who gave His life for His sheep. Sing or read Psalter 342.

April 26 **John 7:1-9** Jesus was hated by the Jews who lived around Jerusalem. In fact He was hated so much that if they had had their way He would have been killed before the time ordained by the Father. Jesus had a time then and He has a time in the future. Jesus is coming. He will come at the time that His Father has ordained. That time is not known by any man or even the angels in heaven. But it will come and it is coming quickly. But yet while we wait we see Christ hated. The Jews hated Him then and the world hates Him now. We will feel that hatred even as we are known as followers of Christ. Let us wait and glory in the hatred because we know that it is the will of the Father. Sing or read Psalter 31 especially stanzas 1,2,4,5, and 7.

April 27 **John 7:10-19** In these verses we see the cutting edge of the word of God. That word which saves some to eternal life, but also condemns others to eternal death. We see that some confessed that Jesus was a good man while others said that He was a deceiver. What do you confess, young people? What do you say about Jesus in your life? Are you willing to confess His name in any situation, or do you fear those around you? If you have made confession of faith, you have the responsibility to continue to confess your faith. If you have not, you have the responsibility to work toward such confession. Even as Jesus spoke of the Father who sent Him, so must we speak of the Father who placed us on this earth and gave us His word. Sing or read Psalter 90 especially stanzas 1, 3, 6 and 7.

April 28 **John 7:20-31** We are judges in this life. Verse 24 states that. But what are we judging? Are we judging people because of who they are, or what their work is, or what they wear? Or are we judging according to God's righteous judgment? If we judge with God's word, than we must start within ourselves. We must judge to see if we are walking in a way pleasing to God alone. Then as we judge situations around us (and we must) then we must use the same standard. We must judge to see with whom we may associate. We must judge to see where we may be found. We must judge to see what our life's calling is to be. But the standard is always the same. That standard is the infallible Word of God. Sing or read Psalter 38.

April 29 **John 7:32-39** Do you thirst, people of God? Are you like the deer longing for the cooling streams because of the chase? Are you looking for the well of water that leads to eternal life? Here we have the command to come and drink at the perfect fountain. This is not an invitation; it is a command. There is no other fountain except the Christ. Flee to Him; immerse yourself in Him; find in Him the water that will quench our spiritual thirst. Sing or read Psalter 117.

April 30 **John 7:40-53** What do we think about the Christ of Galilee? Are we ashamed to confess His name in our lives? Do we scorn His lowly life and humiliation? If we do, then we show ourselves no better than the rulers in Jerusalem. But that is our old man of sin. We oftentimes hesitate to confess that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the Living God. But that is who He is. And that is who we must confess in all of our lives. We must trumpet that fact every waking moment of every day that God is pleased to give us on this earth. We must not just be in awe of His words. We must learn these words, love these words, and live these words. Sing or read Psalter 350.

Nestorianism

by Eugene Kamps

Nestorius, an unknown heretic to most of us, lived around 300 A.D. to 451 A.D. He denied the unity of the two natures (human and divine) of Christ in the one person of Christ. Nestorius viewed it as two natures and two persons, one human and one divine. This heresy was called Nestorianism.

Nestorius, a presbyter and a monk of Antioch was a native of the region of Germanica in Syria. The greatest influence upon him was his training in the school of Antioch under Theodore of Mopsuestio. Theodore emphasized the distinction between the human and divine natures of Christ to the point that it resulted in two persons.

Nestorius could not conceive of two natures of Christ with out two persons of Christ. He taught that it is not possible for Jesus (Immanuel) to be the person of the eternal Son of God, because he had a beginning in the womb of Mary. Nestorius viewed the second person of the Trinity, who is eternal, to be a divine person; and Immanuel who was born of the virgin Mary, to be a human person, therefore two persons and two natures. He likened the joining of the divine person and the human person in Christ: to the marriage of a husband and wife who remain two distinct persons after the marriage.

How was the divine person united to the human person within Christ? The union was possible only through the mediation of the Holy Spirit. For example, the miracles were not the work of the second person of the Trinity (divine person), but of Jesus the man (human person) through the mediation of the Holy Spirit. If this was true that Jesus was only mere man, we could say that any man could be joined and used by the Holy Spirit. Also, if the Holy Spirit ceased His work of joining the two persons, Jesus as man could go his separate way apart from the second person of the Trinity. By this doctrine, Nestorius denied that Jesus the man was really the person of the Son of God. By denying this, the basis of salvation is destroyed.

God's Word is very clear that Christ Jesus is very God and very man. We read in Isaiah 9:6 "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Also, in Philippians 2:6-8 it reads, "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Even our confessions from early history have taught that Christ is the only begotten Son of God. Belgic Confession Articles 18 and 19 confess that he is very God by his power to conquer death; and very man that he might die for us according to the infirmity of his flesh. We also read in the Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 5 and 6: By the righteous judgment of God, we deserve eternal punishment for our sins. Since God will not punish any other creature for our sins and we cannot make full satisfaction or sustain the burden of God's eternal wrath against our sins, we must needs have a mediator. A mediator who is very man to take the sins upon himself and also very God to bear the burden of God's wrath. Who is this mediator? God's only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

So what must our response be when Jesus is denied as the eternal Son of God, but portrayed as good prophet, man, or an example for to follow? That it is a denial of God's Holy Word and our confessions and it destroys the basis of our salvation. We must always be ready to guard and defend against such heresies as Nestorianism.

Eugene Kamps is a member of Hope Protestant Reformed Church in Walker, MI.

Saved By Christ

proof for the doctrine of Limited Atonement

by Rick Span

Mathematics is a school subject which has challenged us, or may still be challenging us today. Whether we learn about integers, decimals, algebra, or even calculus, we should realize that without the basic facts learned in our earlier years, math in higher grades would almost be impossible to understand. When we had the addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division tables memorized, we usually found the subject much easier to understand.

The same thing is true with respect to our religious beliefs. As young people in the church, we are taught catechism. The catechism gives us the basic facts from the scriptures which form the foundation for what we believe. When we memorize the questions and answers, we should find the Word of God easier to understand.

But this in itself is not enough. We need to test what we have learned for its accuracy. Is it true? In math we find the truth quite quickly by solving practical problems. In our catechism instruction, we test for the truth by using the scripture. When it stand this test, we know that it is accurate.

When we look at Lord's Day VII, we find this question and answer: "Are all men then, as they perish in Adam, saved by Christ? No; only those who are engrafted into him, and receive all his benefits, by a true faith." By testing this with scripture, we test what is commonly called the idea of limited atonement - where only a certain group of people will have their sins covered by the blood of Christ and thereby inherit eternal life. This does not mean that Christ is powerless to save all mankind, but that God chooses whom He will. For we read that He will have mercy on whom He will have mercy and whom He will, He hardeneth (Romans 9:16).

There are many examples throughout the Bible which prove that the atoning power of Christ's blood is limited to only God's elect. We read in Genesis 4 that, after murdering his righteous brother, Abel, Cain left the presence of the Lord; God then raised up Seth, a new spiritual seed, in the place of Abel.

God showed a limited type of salvation at the time of the flood (a picture of the final judgment). God opened Noah's eyes to the coming destruction and how to prepare for it. When the flood waters came, only his family of eight souls was saved on board the ark. The rest of the people were destroyed.

In Genesis 25, we read of the two nations and two manner of people at war in Rebekah's womb. God clearly states in Malachi 1:2, 3 that one of these nations, Esau, was hated by the Lord; the other nation, Jacob, was loved by the Lord.

In the New Testament, we read more about these two nations. Jesus explains to His disciples, after telling them the parable of the sower and his seed, that there are people who have ears but do not hear, and who have eyes but do not see (Matt. 13:14 - 16, and Mark 4: 11, 12). This spiritual nation of Esau has closed its spiritual eyes and ears to the word of God, and they are lost.

Jesus opens the eyes of His disciples, the nation of Jacob, by explaining the parable to them. Jesus also explains to them that the truth is hidden in parables so that the nation with closed eyes and ears will not hear the voice of the Lord. For if they did "hear" the word, they would be converted and their sins would be forgiven (Mark 4:12).

We also read in John 17 that Jesus, knowing that He would soon leave His disciples, prays for them. "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine" (17:9).

In the Acts of the Apostles, Luke recorded many instances in which those given to Christ by God are converted. There were those who believed the words spoken by Peter and the other disciples at Pentecost. There were about three thousand who believed , and "the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47). In the city of Antioch, during Paul's first missionary journey, we read that the Gentiles were glad to hear the word of the Lord, and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed (Acts 13:48). Not all were saved, but only those whom God had chosen believed.

These chosen ones are mentioned in Revelation as well. They are the symbolic number of 144,000 spoken of in chapter 7:4; they have been chosen from the spiritual tribes of Israel. This nation of people has had the names of its members written in the book of life, which is sealed until Christ's return. The names of these people will be remembered, and they will be

given eternal life. To the other nation, God will say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41); then He will cast them into the lake of fire. They will be no more remembered, but will be fuel for the fire (Ezekiel 21:32).

Our comfort, then, is found in knowing that our God is just. We know this because God opens our eyes and ears through the work of the Spirit in our hearts. By studying our textbook, the Word of God, we find that all men have sinned and come short of the glory of God. All mankind, therefore, is deserving of death. But our God is merciful, too, and He loves His chosen children. He sent His only begotten Son to this world that whosoever believeth in Him (those who "hear" and "see") should not perish but have everlasting life. Our salvation comes only through the blood of Christ; may we be eternally thankful to God for this.

Rick Span is a teacher at Hope Christian School in Redlands, CA.

News from: Peace in Lansing, IL

On January 9, 1994, Ed De Jong, Sharon De Jong, Mellissa Eriks and Sarah Houck made public confession of their faith.

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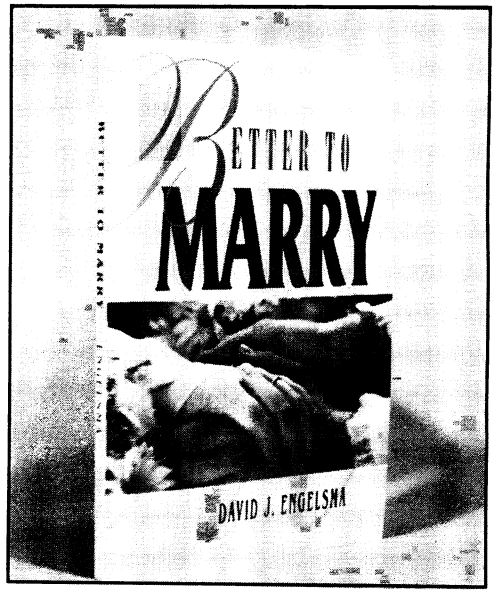
Help get the new format going!

Drawing from the classic passage on marriage, I Corinthians 7, David J. Engelsma gives us some very practical points to ponder in regard to marriage and problems related to marriage. The author presents a careful, exegetical treatment of this timely passage, whether married, unmarried, young, or blessed with years - one and all shall reap from this teaching of God's word.



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Can we pray for world peace?

by Hib Kuiper, Jr.

"Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace good will towards men"

Praying for World Peace is one of the more popular phrases in this Christmas season. It sounds so wonderful to have World Peace... no wars...no fighting... but is this proper for a Christian to pray for?

I believe that as young Christians we can be easily swayed by the beautiful sound of World Peace. Especially when we hear it from so many sources; the United Nations, our own government, signs, billboards, bumper stickers, even from Christian sources. But as we consider this question, even one so seemingly easy to answer, remember that whenever God's people (including young people) have a question there is but one place to find the proper answer: GOD'S WORD.

Now I realize that it is much easier to ask others to answer our questions than to look them up ourselves. Now I don't want you to misunderstand and never ask your parents, ministers, teachers, etc., but rather learn from their example. Where do they find answers? They search God's Word.

Searching God's Word sounds much harder than asking your parents, doesn't it. But remember God gave His Word for our instruction. I think you will be surprised that it is not as hard as you think. You have had, more than likely, years of instruction at home, Christian schools, catechism, societies, Sunday school, etc. These have given you a strong foundation and as you grow older you will be building on that foundation.

But now let's answer the topic at hand. Can we properly pray for World Peace? Let's look to God's Word.

What did our Lord Jesus Christ teach us in the Lord's Prayer? You have known this prayer for years. Does it say anything about Peace in this world? No, but it does say "thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven".

"Thy will be done" is a phrase that we have said and heard many times in prayer. But what is God's will? Matthew 24:6 tells us there will be wars and rumors of wars here on this earth, not peace. In fact if you read Matthew 24:3-24 it paints a frightening picture for God's people, if we only consider our human nature. But do not be afraid, for later in Matthew 24 verse 35 Jesus tells us "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." And what is that Word? "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved..." (Acts 16:31)

However I believe that we can for pray for peace on earth for this reason: that God's Word might be spread to all nations and His people might be called to salvation. In fact we are required to pray for the furtherance of God's kingdom and the second coming of our Lord Christ Jesus.

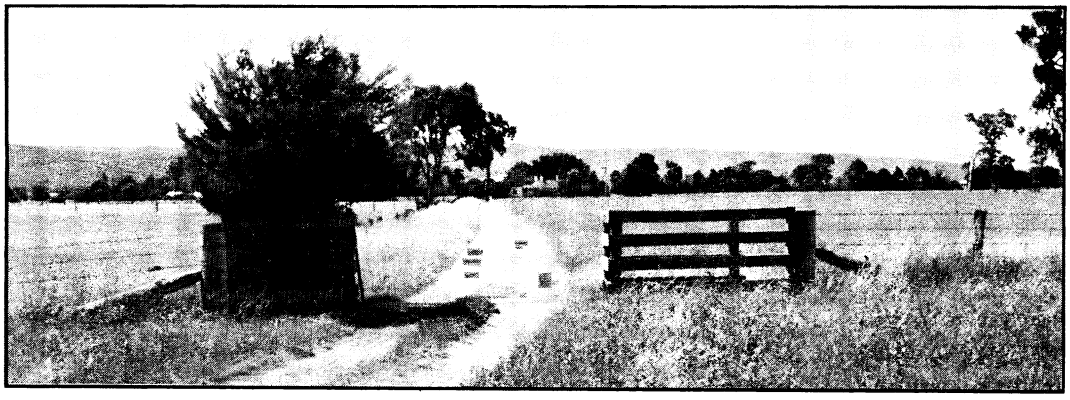
Remember that true peace is communion with God. Think how guilty you feel when you have knowingly and purposely sinned. You probably had a hard time praying to God to forgive your sins when you know in your heart that you premeditated to do whatever you did. Peace with God comes though obedience to His law, or at the very least a sincere effort to obey and the knowledge that God will forgive.

I will leave you with one passage of Scripture to look up, II Timothy 2:15. May God bless you as you study His Word and build upon your foundation.

Hib Kuiper, Jr. is a member of Hudsonville PRC. He was recently blessed with the birth of a daughter, his sixth child. Hib presently works as an auctioneer for Miedema Auctioneering.

Antithetical Walk

by Thelma Westra



My neighbor and I set out one day
To travel the road of life.
The path was wide and beautiful -
Sunshine and gladness were rife.

Onward we journeyed, then we saw on our path
An old man, tired and ill,
Unable to gather strength to get
To the inn at the crest of the hill.

My neighbor rushed past with never a glance;
But I knew what my Saviour would say -
"As thou hast done it to the least,"
Yea, Lord, I will obey.

Then past the hill, my neighbor paused
In a valley, cool and green.
But ere I approached it, a fork in the road
Led me to a different scene.

A sign-post had shown that the path labeled "Pleasure"
Led to that valley so fair.
And the pathway to heaven was rock-strewn and hard
By my Lord was awaiting me there.

So mile after mile the bright way he chose
And his pathway was pleasing to see;
While mine was beset with trials and cares -
Yet through all, God was strengthening me.

And then as I watched, his path was a slide;
Down he plunged - Satan's pathway so dire -
He could see where the road led, and fain would he stop -
But its end was unquenchable fire!

My road still was hard - but I viewed through the clouds
An unspeakably beautiful sight:
The reward of the righteous - the gift of God's grace -
The land where the Lamb is the Light!

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