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***"There is no tribunal so magnificent,  
no throne so stately, no show of triumph  
so distinguished, no chariot so elevated,  
as is the gibbet on which Christ hath  
subdued death and the devil."***

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— John Calvin

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# MEDITATION

## God is Speaking

Rev. J. Greendyk

*"The Lord is known by the judgments which he executeth."  
—Psalm 9:16*

A review of recent world events has, for the most part, been discouraging. We have worldwide wars, terrorist attacks, threats, earthquakes, extreme heat, drought, famine, and forest fires. North America isn't free from problems either. There's the chicken disease, too much rain, drought which has sparked forest fires, troop deployments to hot spots, economic struggles, and blackout. Within Canada alone there's SARS, cases of West Nile virus, flooding and drought which has caused forest fires and for some, crop failure. Who can forget the mad cow disease which has virtually crippled Canada's beef industry and much connected to it? Though many of these evils have been experienced by mankind for years, are you responding by saying carelessly, "These are just the cyclical ups and downs of life?"

But are they? Aren't these signs of God's displeasure with our sins and evidences of the rapidly approaching day of final judgment? Isn't God putting up roadblocks to stop us in our sins and our disobedience against Him and His Word? How are we reacting to God's callings and judgments? Have they brought us to prayer and repentance, or have they made us bitter? Have we recognized God's hand in these calamities, and turned to Him? God invites us to come to Him with all our troubles. Psalm 50:15 confirms this. "And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." Psalm 46:1 states, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

Yet one more issue calls for our attention and is definitely adding sin to sin and calling down the judgment of God's holy wrath on us. It's the sin of "same sex marriages." How is it possible that some of our Canadian government officials are supporting and promoting such a sin? Even Prime Minister Chretien has resisted pressure from those opposing this unbiblical and God-dishonoring sin. Are these the same officials who put their hand on the Bible, swearing an oath that they would speak the truth and nothing but the truth?

Friend, do we possess a Bible and yet remain silent on the issue? From a biblical point, we may not support such a sin. We must take a stand! But maybe you're wondering what direction the Bible gives regarding this issue.

In Genesis 2:24, God says, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Anything outside of this biblical framework flies in the face of God's will and commands. Sin is the transgression of God's law (1 John 3:4). In Romans 2:26-27, God clearly defines the atrocious and dishonoring sin of homosexuality. The result of this sin is that "God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly." What follows? These men received "in themselves that recompense (reward) of their error which was meet" (or what they deserved). "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind (a mind void of judgment), to do those things which are not convenient." God ends all this with verse 32 revealing, "that they which commit such things are worthy of death," along with those who consent or agree with and promote such sinful ways. God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah with fire and brimstone for the sin of homosexuality, as Genesis 19 records. What about Leviticus 18:22-30?

If you love the Scriptures because you've learned its precious truths through the Spirit's instruction, pray that we as nations, with our leaders and people, may turn to God in true sorrow for our sins. May we experience the truth of Psalm 130:3-4, "If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared." God is gracious and ready to forgive through Jesus Christ. However, persistence in sinful and unbiblical ways will bring down His judgments. Do not forget, dear reader, "The Lord is known by the judgments which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgsaion. Selah. The wicked shall be turned in to hell, and all the nations that forget God. Arise, O LORD; let not man prevail" (Ps. 9:16-17, 19a). Therefore, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall find mercy" (Prov. 28:13).

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Rev. J. Greendyk is pastor of the Heritage Reformed Church of Fort Macleod, Alberta.



## EDITORIAL

Dr. J.R. Beeke/R. Pederson

### Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758)

Jonathan Edwards is a towering figure in American history and well deserves the attention given to him in recent decades. But opinions on Edwards are not universally positive. As Iain H. Murray notes, “Edwards divided men in his lifetime and to no less degree he continues to divide his biographers” (*Jonathan Edwards: A New Biography*, p. xix). The task of these biographical notes that commemorate Jonathan Edwards’s birth three hundred years ago on October 5 is not to argue the merits of Edwards as philosopher versus Edwards as theologian; however, clarification on this point might help.

As Murray elsewhere noted, Edwards was first and foremost a theologian. His whole life was devoted to the study and knowledge of God. He considered philosophy to be handmaid to that theology. While several recent studies on Edwards deal more with his philosophy than his theology, Edwards himself preached the gospel of Jesus Christ to fallen sinners; he never taught his private philosophical reflections from the pulpit. The focus on Edwards as philosopher is thus a more recent emphasis.

Jonathan Edwards was born in East Windsor, Connecticut. He was the son of Timothy Edwards, a pastor, and Esther Stoddard, daughter of the famed Solomon Stoddard of Northampton, Massachusetts. Edwards was an only son with ten sisters. He was educated on the East Windsor estate along with other boys that his father was preparing for college. Under his father’s teaching and ministry, Edwards experienced two periods of awakening during boyhood years prior to his later conversion.

At age twelve, Edwards entered the newly founded Yale College in Wethersfield (its temporary location), under the leadership of Elisha Williams. By that time, Edwards already had a good knowledge of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, and was writing papers on philosophy. When the college settled in New Haven, Edwards studied with the rector, Timothy Cutler, and graduated at the top of his class in 1720. For most of the twentieth century, Edwards’s intellectual development has

been credited to Sir Isaac Newton and John Locke. More recently, however, scholars have argued that though Edwards learned much from those empiricists, he was more inspired by post-Cartesian thinkers such as Nicolas Malebranche and Antoine Arnauld.

Edwards dated his conversion in 1721, while studying for a Master of Arts degree. The saving change took place one day as he was reading 1 Timothy 1:17, “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever, Amen.” Edwards later wrote: “As I read [these] words, there came into my soul...a sense of the glory of the Divine Being; a new sense quite different from any thing I ever experienced before.... I kept saying and as it were singing over those words of scripture to myself and went to pray to God that I might enjoy Him.... From that time I began to have a new kind of apprehensions and ideas of Christ, and the work of redemption, and the glorious way of salvation by him. And my mind was greatly engaged to spend my time in reading and meditating on Christ, on the beauty of his person and the lovely way of salvation by free grace in him.”

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***“As I read [these] words, there came into my soul...a sense of the glory of the Divine Being; a new sense quite different from any thing I ever experienced before.”***

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In 1722, Edwards preached briefly to a struggling Presbyterian church in New York City. Here Edwards showed his life-long pursuit after holiness. “I went to New York to preach and my longings after God and holiness were much increased,” he wrote. “I felt a burning desire to be in everything conformed to the blessed image of Christ...how I should be more holy and live more holily...the heaven I desired was a heaven of holiness, to be with God and to spend my eternity in holy communion with Christ.” In that year of ministry in New York, he wrote seventy resolutions, in dependency on the Spirit’s grace. A sample of a few resolutions conveys the spirit of them all:

*Resolved:* Never to lose one moment of time, but to improve it in the most profitable way I possibly can.

*Resolved:* Never to give over, nor in the least to slacken, my fight with my corruptions, however unsuccessful I may be.

*Resolved:* To study the scriptures so steadily, constantly and frequently, as I might find and plainly perceive myself to grow in the knowledge of the same.

At his father’s urging, Edwards left New York to take a pastorate in rural Bolton, Connecticut, but he

soon returned to Yale in 1724 to serve as a tutor. Tutoring was not an easy task; Edwards's diary entries show how despondent he became in disciplining unruly college boys. He also struggled being a Calvinist at a college where the president and two senior professors had just defected to the Anglican Church. In the fall of 1725, Edwards suffered an acute bout of illness, probably in response to the stress.

In his *Personal Narrative*, Edwards described how God brought him to the grave and shook him "over the pit of hell." His outward reformation seemed dull compared to the awe-inspiring doctrine of God's sovereignty. But Edwards found sweet refreshment in the Calvinistic doctrines of sovereignty and irresistible grace. He may also have been inspired by thirteen-year-old Sarah Pierepont of New Haven, whose spirit he described in 1723 as "a wonderful sweetness, calmness and universal benevolence of mind." He married Sarah in 1727, and later described her as a model of true conversion in his 1743 treatise, *Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival of Religion*.

Edwards left Yale in 1726 to become co-pastor with his grandfather, Solomon Stoddard, in Northampton, a prosperous agricultural town. Since his 1669 installation, Stoddard had become known for leading periodic revivals in his church and for making stinging pronouncements against the spiritual deadness of most ministers and the laity's unwarranted pursuit of power within the Congregational system.

Edwards apparently knew little about Northampton when he first arrived. According to what he later wrote in *Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God* (1737), Edwards found dullness of spirit, licentious behavior, and long-standing contention between two political factions. When his grandfather died in February of 1729, Edwards underwent another difficult time physically and emotionally. He saw more of his depravity than when he had penned his resolutions, and confessed that he had pursued those resolutions "with too great dependence on my own strength." He went on to say, "My experience had not then taught me my extreme feebleness and impotence and the bottomless depths of secret corruption and deceit that was in my heart. . . . I know not how to express better what my sins appear to me to be than by heaping infinite upon infinite."

Upon recovery, Edwards earnestly attacked the complacency of sinners in his congregation. During the first ten years of his pastorate, Edwards wrote hundreds of sermons, more than twelve hundred of which have

survived. Most contain warnings about the inevitability of damnation and offers of the spiritual peace found in grace. The published versions of these sermons stress the absolute sovereignty of God's will and place less emphasis than Stoddard did on the need for sinners to reform their lives in preparation for grace. This slight move away from Stoddardism somewhat alienated Edwards from his congregation, and served as a precursor to the eventual break in Northampton.

Edwards's first publication, based on a lecture at Harvard in 1731, was titled *God Glorified in the Work of Redemption, by the Greatness of Man's Dependence upon Him in the Whole of It*. Edwards there defined faith as "a sensibleness of what is real," or fallen man's "absolute and universal" dependence on God. Three years later, his *Divine and Supernatural Light, Immediately Imparted to the Soul by the Spirit of God* described the work of true faith as producing a new "sense of the heart... above all others sweet and joyful." Faith's "new sense" would become a key to Edwards's theology.

People who heard Edwards's sermons undoubtedly appreciated them, yet Edwards was still left with the problem of promoting godliness in an increasingly divisive congregation. To correct the errors into which people had fallen during the last years of Stoddard's pastorate, Edwards attacked the sins of specific groups. He paid less attention to the squabbles of local politicians and more to adolescents who opposed attempts to correct their impiety. To Edwards, it was a sign that Northampton had forsaken its covenant oath.

So, between 1729 and 1735, Edwards focused his preaching on common sins. He urged people to repent of their lawless ways and to accept the gospel by faith. That theme was repeated in a series of sermons Edwards preached on justification by faith in 1734 (published in 1738 as *Five Discourses on Important Subjects*), which prompted a small awakening at Northampton. Those sermons also set the stage for the forthcoming revival known as The Great Awakening.

In *Faithful Narrative*, Edwards describes how in the winter of 1734-1735, the young people and their elders responded to Edwards's preaching with renewed interest, wishing a genuine examination of their public and private behavior. People who visited Northampton noticed the change of spiritual climate and returned to their homes bearing Edwards's message. With the Spirit's blessing, that prompted an area-wide revival. But there were dangers in such a movement. Jealousy arose among some church members, especially when

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young converts became fervent followers of their pastor without honoring their parents. Some people were led to such intense soul scrutiny that they fell into despair; Edwards's own uncle committed suicide.

For a while, it seemed as if the Holy Spirit had ceased working through Edwards. The young preacher struggled with persistent illness and depression. From 1735 on, his sermons focused on God's retributive justice and the narrow way of repentance and faith. During this period, Edwards preached what would become his most famous sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." This sermon, often erroneously portrayed as a hell-fire and brimstone sermon, was given to awake his congregation to the brevity of life. Unfortunately, the sermon seemed to hit hearts of stone and produced little change in Northampton.

Some time later, Edwards invited a number of itinerant preachers, including George Whitefield, to Northampton. Whitefield stayed with the Edwards family, and provides a glimpse of their home life: "A sweeter couple I have not yet seen. Their children were not dressed in silks and satins, but plain, as become the children of those who, in all things, ought to be the examples of Christian simplicity. Mrs. Edwards is adorned with a meek and quiet spirit: she talked solidly of the things of God and seemed to be such a helpmeet for her husband."

Under the preaching of Whitefield and Edwards, the Great Awakening ignited in Massachusetts in 1740.

While many people were converted and made public profession of faith, others indulged in ecstasy. Several young people who professed to be converted engaged in flagrant sexual misbehavior. Furthermore, Edwards faced the ongoing challenge of opposition to the Awakening.

Edwards worked hard to correct false notions of piety. His aim was twofold: he cared immensely about the spiritual welfare of his congregation's souls, and he wanted to save the Awakening from disrepute. But when prominent church leaders denounced the revival, Edwards felt compelled to defend the Spirit's authentic work in it. In September of 1741, Edwards explained the revival in a sermon titled "The Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God." He insisted that non-traditional church services, unusual body movements, and strange fancies among the seemingly pious neither proved nor disproved claims of grace (a theme later repeated in his book *Religious Affections*). After testing the revival for evidences of true piety, which essentially involved devotion to Jesus as Savior, rever-

ence for Scripture and sound interpretations of Scripture, Edwards concluded that it indeed was the work of the Spirit of God. He cautioned that the devil could and would counter this work, however, using men's own imaginations to produce irrational behavior.

By late 1742, New England Congregationalism was divided into two camps: the "Old Light" anti-Awakening group and the "New Light" pro-Awakening party. Colonial Presbyterians were also of two minds about the Awakening; "New Side" Presbyterians promoted the Awakening against the objections of "Old Side" traditionalists. In an effort to make peace within the clerical community, Edwards wrote *Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival of Religion* (1742), taking pains to denounce extremists on all sides. He even suggested that the remarkable outpouring of the Spirit in this Awakening could be ushering in the millennium. Pushing the argument from *Distinguishing Marks* a step farther, he insisted that true spiritual life was not only a matter of intellectual assent, but also of the affections. "Now if such things are enthusiasm," he wrote, "let my brain be evermore possessed of that happy distemper! If this be distraction, I pray God that the world of

**"Now if such things are enthusiasm, let my brain be evermore possessed of that happy distemper! If this be distraction, I pray God that the world of mankind may be all seized with this benign, meek, beneficent, beatifical, glorious distraction!"**

mankind may be all seized with this benign, meek, beneficent, beatifical, glorious distraction!"

This writing did not deter the Old Lights, however. Charles Chauncy, one of the greatest opponents of the revival, wrote *Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New England* (1743),

denouncing affections as carnal passions, and necessarily profane. In response, Edwards published the *Treatise Concerning Religious Affections* (1746), regarded by many historians as his most influential work.

*Religious Affections*, which distinguished between true and false religious experience, was important, but Edwards's 1749 edition of the diary of a young missionary named David Brainerd was more moving. Brainerd had been expelled from Yale for slandering a tutor during the Awakening. He was denied reinstatement despite Edwards's support. He began working among the Delaware Indians in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, but tuberculosis forced him to come home. He spent his final days at the home of Edwards, constantly attended by Jerusha Edwards.

The loss of this young man, who was like a son to Edwards, came when all the theories of godliness that Edwards had written about so elegantly seemed too distant. *The Life of Brainerd* was a tribute to true piety. It also became a model for missionaries.

In the end, Edwards was dejected at how fleeting the

revivals were and concluded that institutional compromises between the true works of grace and external morality had to end. He thus could no longer continue the practice of "open communion" made famous by his grandfather; he could not trust the state of men's and women's souls to safeguard the sanctity of the sacrament. The moment of crisis came in 1748, when Edwards told two applicants that they lacked the saving grace necessary to partake of the Lord's Supper. In *An Humble Inquiry into the Rules of and Qualifications for Communion*, Edwards insisted that if conversion was real, it must have visible fruit, used as the criteria for sacramental privileges.

Many townspeople and ministers objected to *The Humble Inquiry* in letters and publications, apparently assuming that Edwards had gone too far. They refused to listen to him and voted to eject him from the Northampton pulpit. In his farewell sermon on June 22, 1750, Edwards suggested that discipline cases had turned the town against him. Privately, however, he told a friend that he suspected the real issue was infant baptism. By an almost unanimous vote, the church refused to change its policy.

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***Edwards had eternity before  
his eyes; he was caught up in  
that vision his whole life and labored  
to share it with others.***

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Edwards stayed in town for a year, continuing to preach while his church looked for a new pastor. Some of his supporters tried to organize a new church for him, but he was financially pressed by the marriage of two daughters and the support of nine other children, and took the best call offered to him. He became missionary to the Indians and pastor to the small settlement at Stockbridge, near the western border of Massachusetts.

His years in Stockbridge were not easy. Edwards's sermons to the Indians necessarily covered only the essentials. The simple messages restrained Edwards's imaginative brilliance, frustrating his craving to express the complexity of gospel truths. He continued to argue with the members of his former congregation and with distant cousins as the Seven Years' War raged around his home. Not surprisingly, Edwards was frequently ill.

Amid these difficulties, Edwards turned to writing *A Careful and Strict Enquiry into the Modern Prevailing Notions of That Freedom of Will, Which Is Supposed to Be Essential to Moral Agency, Virtue and Vice, Reward and Punishment, Praise and Blame* (1754). Edwards argued that only the regenerate person can truly choose the transcendent Good and that choice can be made only through a disposition that God infuses in regenera-

tion. In this, Edwards rejected the materialism of the British philosophers along with the utilitarianism of most free-will advocates.

In 1758, Edwards agreed to become president of the College of New Jersey at Princeton. He left his family in January, as "affectionately as if he should not come again," one of his daughters wrote. When still outside of the house, Edwards turned back to his wife and said, "I commit you to God." His first sermon preached at Princeton was on Hebrews 13:8, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and for ever." The sermon was over two hours long and made a great impact. Several weeks later, he reacted to a smallpox inoculation and died on March 22, 1758.

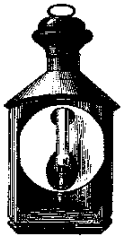
In George M. Marsden's new biography titled *Jonathan Edwards: A Life*, he writes: "Edwards spent his whole life preparing to die" (p. 490). Considering what Edwards wrote in *Resolutions*, it is hard to disagree with that. Edwards had eternity before his eyes; he was caught up in that vision his whole life and labored to share it with others.

Still, Edwards must be judged through a narrower lens. Considering the towering figure that he was, the true effect of his theological insight on New England Christianity has been hotly debated. Some say Edwards provided the impetus for New England to move beyond the primitive thought of its founders. In that sense, Edwards was a true philosopher. Others say Edwards carried forward the theology of his Puritan ancestors. He was thus the last representative of this thinking in the New World, where Puritanism would be later disdained, as it had been in the Old. In that sense, Edwards was a true theologian.

A third group views Edwards as a dangerous man. He certainly inspired many good things but his legacy is mixed. Though he stressed godly living, some of his successors who sought to imitate his speculative views and methods discarded the Reformed doctrinal and confessional base, which supported that godliness. That in turn fostered a decline of both doctrinal and experiential Calvinism in New England. Edwards was thus a theologian-philosopher whose vision died with him. Perhaps the most accurate assessment is that Edwards was a mix of all three, though preeminently a theologian and minister of the Word of God.

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# PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY

Rev. J.M. Brentnall

## The Golden Rule

Though the term "Golden Rule" does not appear in Holy Scripture, it refers to the injunction of our Savior: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" (Matt. 7:12), or "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise" (Luke 6:31).

Described by Isaac Watts as "that golden principle of morality which our blessed Lord has given us," it has formed the backbone of Christian moral teaching since the day it was spoken. Indeed, no one seriously questions its fundamental place in Christianity.

Let us try to understand it and see how it applies to our conduct.

First, let us never use it as many modernists do, as the basis of their working creed: "But what do you suppose you are in the world for?" "Oh, I don't know: I suppose to do one's duty, and make the best use of one's faculties, and avoid hurting other people." "In short, to do unto others as you would they should do unto you?" "I suppose so."

Neither let us licentiously pervert it into George Bernard Shaw's notorious adage: "The golden rule is that there are no golden rules."

What, then, does the injunction mean?

Augustine states that the Golden Rule means the same as "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." In short, it is part of the eternal law of God that Christ re-enforces under the gospel, thereby harmonizing Old Testament morality with New. In a perceptive addition to this understanding, Augustine claims that it is also designed to secure sincerity of motive in all our dealings with our neighbor. That is, there should be no "double dealing" with him, but we should do him good so as to expect "no temporal advantage from him." What is this but to love him as we love ourselves?

John Chrysostom adds a further dimension to our understanding. Seeing the Golden Rule in the context of the preceding injunction to ask, seek, and knock,

he puts great emphasis on the word "therefore." Jesus "did not merely say, 'All things whatsoever ye would,' but 'Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would.'" The purpose of the "therefore," he insists, is this: "If ye desire...to be heard [in prayer]...do... 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you.'" In other words, we need to behave righteously towards others if ever we expect to be heard by God.

Calvin reached a similar conclusion as did Augustine, but from Christ's precept develops an all-inclusive Christian social ethic. Comments Guenther Haas: "He understands the Golden Rule of Matthew 7:12 as a short and simple definition of equity. It is a rule of thumb which Jesus gives to His disciples to guide them in implementing the commandment to love their neighbors. Thus, it becomes Calvin's guide for interpreting, expounding, and applying the commandments of the Second Table of the Law, and it permeates his writings and sermons on Christian social behavior."

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***Calvin is so concerned for the strict application of the Golden Rule that he states that no sooner should we reflect on our own well-being than we should instantly think of our neighbor's. This means that we must guard against that sinful self-indulgence which expects everyone to treat us well while we treat them how we like!***

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With Augustine, too, Calvin saw the Golden Rule as deliberately designed to cut across "all empty pretence" by which we cover up our selfish, unjust dealings, adding pointedly: "Every man demands its strict application for himself... Where our own advantage is concerned" we can all go into great detail "on the extent of our right." By applying the same rule to everyone else, we not only show our sincere love to them; we also "demonstrate thereby that we are true children of God."

The Golden Rule is a recurring theme with Calvin. His remarks on it are always eminently practical. It requires, he says, "that we render to our neighbors what belongs to them," and do whatever we can to ensure that they are not denied their natural rights. As Christ's law of love, it expects us both to promote their welfare and to avoid anything that would harm them. When individuals are "too tenacious of their rights" we should even be humbly "ready to settle...at our own loss, rather than pursue our rights with unyielding energy." A characteristic application of Calvin's relates to usury. We would never be guilty of

gaining excessive interest on loans to others, he claims, if “we had engraven on our hearts the rule of equity which Christ provided in Matthew 7:12.”

Calvin is so concerned for the strict application of the Golden Rule that he states that no sooner should we reflect on our own well-being than we should instantly think of our neighbor’s. This means that we must guard against that sinful self-indulgence which expects everyone to treat us well while we treat them how we like! In short, “everything that is not regulated according to it [the Golden Rule] is wrong, however beautiful” it appears to us. Obedience to it is the only way to secure righteousness in society.

For Calvin, the only model for observing the Golden Rule is Christ Himself. He perfectly fulfilled the Moral Law, both in its spirituality and its extent. He therefore exemplifies it in all His dealings with others. By His example, as well as by His precept, “all the sons of God should frame their lives.” Consequently, we are “to embrace each other with that love with which Christ has embraced us.”

Luther points us to a very important practical distinction regarding the Golden Rule. The unbeliever endures injustice according to it mainly for the sake of peace and order. The believer, by contrast, moved by love for Christ, does so by faith. That is, he acts not on the basis of natural law, but on the law of Christ expressed by His death on the cross.

Henry Scougal views the Golden Rule as covering love to our enemies—that is, “those who hate us, who envy our happiness, who wish our misery and abhor our persons and society.” Our obligation to love them, he says, “may be deduced from another...doing to others what we would have done to ourselves. Everyone of us,” he amplifies, “desires to be loved and cherished by others, to have our faults pardoned, our failings overlooked, and our necessities supplied.... How then can we think it unreasonable to allow that to others which we ourselves expect and desire?... With what confidence can we say ‘Pardon our sins’ unless we are willing to...pardon those who sin against us?... Nothing but blind selfishness and extravagant partiality,” he concludes indignantly, “can teach us to make so unreasonable a difference between ourselves and others.”

A very interesting chapter actually entitled “The Golden Rule” appears in the anonymous 3rd-4th century Clementine Homilies. Its fullness deserves quotation: “It is natural to all to love those who love them. But the righteous man tries also to love his enemies and to bless those who slander him, and even to pray for his enemies and to compassionate those who do him wrong. Wherefore also he refrains from doing wrong, and blesses those who curse him, par-

sons those who strike him, and submits to those who persecute him, and salutes those who do not salute him, shares such things as he has with those who have not, persuades him that is angry with him, conciliates his enemy, exhorts the disobedient, instructs the unbelieving, comforts the mourner; being distressed, he endures; being ungratefully treated, he is not angry. But having devoted himself to love his neighbor as himself, he is not afraid of poverty, but becomes poor by sharing his possessions with those who have none.... And as he wishes...to have all his sins forgiven, thus he does to his neighbor, loving him as himself. In one word, what he wishes for himself, he wishes also for his neighbor. For this is the law of God and of the prophets; this is the doctrine of truth.” This disarmingly simple chain of Scripture references says more about the Golden Rule than whole tomes of scholastic casuistry.

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***Luther points us to a very important practical distinction regarding the Golden Rule. The unbeliever endures injustice according to it mainly for the sake of peace and order. The believer, by contrast, moved by love for Christ, does so by faith. That is, he acts not on the basis of natural law, but on the law of Christ expressed by His death on the cross.***

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Let us wind up our brief consideration of this much-neglected precept by attending to the characteristically forthright comments of Bishop J.C.Ryle: “We are not to deal with others as others deal with us: that is mere selfishness and heathenism. We are to deal with others as we would like others to deal with us: that is real Christianity. This is a golden rule indeed! It does not merely forbid all petty malice and revenge, all cheating and overreaching: it does much more. It settles a hundred difficult points which in a world like this are continually arising between man and man; it prevents the necessity of laying down endless little rules for our conduct in specific cases; it sweeps the whole debatable ground with one mighty principle; it shows us a balance and measure by which everyone may see at once what is his duty: Is there a thing we would not like our neighbor to do to us? Then let us always remember that this is the thing we ought not to do to him. Is there a thing we would like him to do to us? Then this is the very thing we ought to do to him.” May He who made and kept the Golden Rule teach us how to live by it!

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Rev. J.M. Brentnall is the editor of *Peace & Truth*.

# Evangelism/Missions

Rev. B. Elshout

## How Do I Evangelize?

At our recent youth camp in Michigan, I conducted several workshops about evangelism. The discussions during these workshops revolved around five questions—questions which evidently reflected the issues our young people are struggling with as they seek to come to grips with the Christian's obligation to communicate the gospel to his perishing neighbors. Since, however, many adults are (hopefully) also struggling with these questions, I would like to address them in this article.

### 1. Do you feel a burden to share the Gospel with your lost neighbors?

This question immediately leads to self-examination, for if I do not feel a burden for the soul of my perishing neighbor, I need to ask myself whether I have ever felt the burden of my own soul. A lack of concern for the soul of my lost neighbor may be an indication that true spiritual life is absent—or at least that it is in a state of serious decline.

The Lord Jesus identifies the citizens of the kingdom of heaven as being merciful (Matt. 5:7); that is, they are compassionate. The compassion Jesus is referring to is not merely compassion for someone's physical and emotional needs, but primarily and preeminently a concern for someone's spiritual needs. Why is this so? A true Christian is someone who has become acquainted with his own spiritual need and has experientially understood that to be without Christ is to be without God and without hope in the world. This understanding of what he once was without Christ makes him acutely aware of the true state of his fellowmen apart from Christ.

This, however, is not the only reason for such compassion. The Christian is also someone in whose heart the love of God has been shed abroad—the love of a God who has no pleasure in the death of sinners but that they would turn unto Him and live (Ezek. 33:11). It is that love which, by the indwelling ministry of God's Spirit, is a functional reality in the life of the believer and translates into genuine love for the souls of our perishing neighbors.

The apostle Paul is a clear illustration of a man who had a genuine and abiding burden for souls—a burden which so pressed him down that he exclaimed, "Woe is

unto me if I preach not the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:16). From his own testimony we know why he felt this burden. In 2 Corinthians 5:11 he writes, "Knowing the terror of God, we persuade men." (The Dutch translation reads, "We persuade men unto faith.") How did the apostle know the terror of God? Because he came face to face with the wrath of God against sin in his own experience—something which had such an effect on him that he neither ate nor drank for three days and three nights (Acts 9:9). It became real to him that a just God will by no means clear the guilty, unless the guilty sinner believes on the Lord Jesus Christ. With a vivid memory of this, he sought to persuade men, by his preaching and when interacting with them, to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, stressing, as he did at the conclusion of his sermon in Acts 13, that without believing on Christ they would surely perish. Paul believed in hell (which much of present evangelicalism appears to be either negating or minimizing), and that is what made his ministry toward perishing sinners so urgent.

However, not only did the terror of God move him to persuade men, but he also tells us in the same chapter that the love of Christ constrained him—Christ's love for him and his love for Christ. That love moved him to say to sinners, "Be ye reconciled with God!" (2 Cor 5:19). So it ought to be with everyone that names the name of Christ. We too—knowing on the one hand that it is a fearful thing for men to fall into the hands of the living God apart from Christ (Heb. 10:31), and having experienced on the other hand that in Christ God is ready to forgive abundantly (Ps. 86:5; Isa. 55:7)—should, with a sense of holy urgency, seek to persuade men to repent of their sins and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

### 2. Do you feel comfortable sharing the Gospel?

It is quite possible that, after reading this, you would come to the conclusion that you do have a burden for souls. Yet, when the opportunity presents itself to interact with someone about the gospel—whether it be your neighbor, a family member, a colleague, or a person you meet through incidental encounters such as in an airplane—you find yourself freezing up, becoming tongue-tied, and even trying to avoid the encounter by carrying on a conversation about everything except the

gospel. What is it that makes us so uncomfortable with communicating the most glorious message a human being could ever hear—a message the person whom we encounter may never hear again? Why is it that knowing the terror of the Lord and having personally experienced the love of Christ we remain silent when we ought to speak?

Must we not all admit shamefully that the fear of man is often the chief reason why we fail to be evangelistic toward our perishing neighbor? It is truly astonishing that we who profess to fear God find ourselves in situations where we fear man more than God. Why are we more fearful of offending a creature of the dust rather than the glorious Creator of heaven and earth whom we profess to love? Is it not because self-love enters the picture? We neither want to be embarrassed nor be rejected. Thus, out of self-love, we seek to avoid embarrassment and/or rejection by remaining silent about the gospel, failing to recognize that we are thereby displeasing and dishonoring the God who has entrusted the gospel to us in order that we in turn might communicate it to others.

Instead of feeling uncomfortable about speaking to others about the gospel, we should feel very uncomfortable about remaining silent, being more conscious of the fact that we are in God's presence rather than in man's presence. What can a man do to us? How does his disapproval and rejection measure up to the favor of God when, in loving obedience to Him, we carry out the great commission even in our one-on-one encounters?

### **3. What holds you back from sharing your faith with others?**

In addition to the fear of man, there are other reasons that may hold us back—fear of failure, an introverted nature, an inadequate grasp of the essential truths of the gospel, or conduct that is unbecoming of the gospel.

The fear of failure can proceed from a misunderstanding of our calling as evangelists—be it as an ordained or as a private evangelist (one-on-one). God does not ask us to convert sinners, but rather to bear witness to His truth. If, in an evangelistic encounter, we faithfully communicate the gospel to our neighbor, we have been successful in God's sight, even though our witness may yield no tangible result at that moment. Even though we ought to desire and pray for a positive response to our message, we must realize that many times there will not be such a response, and that there will be times when we and our message will be outright rejected. This, however, does not mean we have failed! We fail when we fail to communicate the message of the gospel to our neighbor. Furthermore, though we seem to have failed in our effort to persuade a sinner to repent and believe, it may later prove that

our interaction with this individual may have been the first of several additional encounters with others, which, by the grace of God, ultimately resulted in genuine repentance and faith. We are called to bear witness to the name of Christ, but fruit upon that witness belongs solely to the jurisdiction of God. Once this dawns on us, we will become a lot less anxious about fulfilling our evangelistic obligations. We must water, but it is God alone who gives the increase so that all glory is yielded to Him alone (1 Cor. 3:6-7).

Being introverted can also be a hindrance. Introverted people are not outgoing by nature. It is therefore much harder for them to strike up and maintain a conversation than for an extroverted person who often effortlessly engages others in conversation. Yet even our introverted nature may not hold us back from being a witness for Christ. If this is our stumblingblock, we need to pray all the more fervently that God will enable us to overcome this. He will never put those who put their trust in Him to shame—especially about something that is so very dear to the heart of God!

Let me briefly address the matter of our conduct. Our conduct becomes particularly important when we seek to reach out to people with whom we interact on a regular basis—such as family members, work associates, etc. Due to our profession, these people will be examining our walk far more frequently than we realize. In fact, the people with whom we frequently interact are “fruit-inspectors,” and in a sense they have a right to be. If we profess Christ, our allegiance to Him and His Word should be visible. If, on the other hand, our walk contradicts our talk, our testimony will not be credible and we will rob ourselves of the freedom to bear witness to the truth we fail to exemplify. We have to merit by our walk the right to be heard by our neighbor. We should keep in mind that we might be the only Bible such people will ever read!

### **4. What do we need to do to be better equipped to share the Gospel message?**

First, we need to be as familiar with the Scriptures as we possibly can. The fact that we may be called upon to be an evangelist on any given day and in often unexpected situations is another compelling reason for us to be diligent students of Scripture. We must also pray and work. God is pleased to bless our diligent use of the means He has ordained. Love to God and our fellowman should motivate us to fill our minds and hearts with His precious Word, so that we will be ready to communicate the truths of Scripture effectively when the opportunity presents itself. Therefore, not only ministers must study the Word to show themselves approved, but every member of the body of Christ is called upon to do so.

Second, “practice makes perfect” also holds true in evangelistic outreach. We only really learn by doing. Thus we must persevere, be it haltingly at first, and use every God-given opportunity to bear witness to His well-beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **5. Why is evangelism that is not bathed in prayer doomed from the onset?**

This is a question that contains its own answer: Evangelism that is not bathed in prayer is doomed from the outset. It would seem obvious that the work of communicating the gospel to others should be accompanied by fervent prayer. And yet it is sadly true that this work is often engaged in without seriously and diligently seeking God’s face for the indispensable ministry of His Spirit. Without the applying work of the Holy Spirit, our witness to the gospel will bear no fruit. How foolish to not cry out more fervently to God, asking Him to do what He only can accomplish: to bring about genuine repentance and faith in response to the gospel. We need to give heed to His wonderful and compelling invitation, “Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it!” (Ps. 81:10).

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***Knowing the terror of the Lord and  
being constrained by the love of Christ,  
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Not only do we need to pray for the ministry of God’s Spirit, but we must ask God to create opportunities for us to reach our perishing neighbor, and for discernment and discretion to recognize those opportunities when they do come our way. When we go our way, looking for opportunities to communicate the gospel and crying out to God to give us such opportunities, we may expect that such opportunities will indeed come.

In conclusion, knowing the terror of the Lord and being constrained by the love of Christ, let us do what our hand finds to do, looking to our exalted Savior to whom all power in heaven and earth has been given and whose people are willing in the day of His power.

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# PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY

Rev. G. Thomas

## The Consequences of Grace

Paul’s letter to the Philippians ends with an intriguing phrase, “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit” (Phil. 4:23). Why does the apostle say, “with your spirit”? Men and women are not mere animals—“naked apes,” as the phrase was common in the 1960s—and so men can resist the wickedness of such exhortations as “Give in to your feelings! Go with the flow! Seize the moment! If it feels so right it can’t be wrong.” That is the level at which mere animals function. They act by their instincts. They don’t possess a conscience. If they have some basic hunger or urge, then what could be more natural for an animal than to satisfy it? How different is man. He is spirit as well as body. He can lay down his life for his friends. He can look up and see the stars. He can consider the brevity of life and the wonders of the creation, and see the handiwork of its Maker both by day and night.

Because man is spirit he can take an ape’s skull in his hand and turn it round and round, wondering all the while how similar it is to his own. But apes are not spirit, and so they don’t take human skulls, weigh them, analyze them, put them under a microscope, subject them to carbon dating, and cry “Eureka!” Because man is spirit he can speak. You have to be spirit to speak. “Why do animals never speak?” asked a wise man. “Because they have nothing to say!” he answered his own question. Man has a great deal to say about sun, moon, and stars; about origins and destinies. He can write a letter and read a letter which ends with the words, “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit” and he can say, “Amen! I understand that and agree with that.” He can know that the only way he can become a complete man is by that grace of Christ. There are people with vast wealth, boundless energy, and great cultural achievements, but they have known nothing of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Consider the falls of some politicians that we have been told about in the recent past—all that has happened to them because they neglected their spirits, and were strangers to the grace of the Lord Jesus

Christ. I recently came across some words of the American playwright, David Mamet: "We're spiritually bankrupt. We don't pray. We don't regenerate our spirit. These things aren't luxuries. There has to be time for reflection, introspection, and a certain amount of awe and wonder." (*London Times*, 6 May, 2003). But does Mamet know the cause of this bankruptcy and the Lord to whom to turn? The Christian who professes to know also knows that evil thoughts and imaginations and desires work havoc in his life. A sense of wrong, a grudge, jealousy, envy, lust, self-pity—those are the things which cause us trouble. How much unhappiness and wretchedness we would avoid in this life if the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ were with our spirit!

Or perhaps we can see Paul referring in these words to the whole corporate spirit of the body of Christ there in Philippi. May your spirit, as a church, know the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ being with you as you evangelize, as you love one another, as you worship, and as you pray. What a difference in our lives as a fellowship when the grace of the Lord Christ is with us day by day. What does the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ do to our spirit?

### **1. Christ's grace gives assurance.**

If God has loved you before you were born and, in the mystery of His grace, chose you to be His own, do you think He will ever let you go? Never. Never! Of course, if 99 of the links were forged by grace in the heat of Golgotha's inferno, but one link was forged entirely by us while God stood by and watched, then all our lives we would be worrying about that one link. The strength of a chain is its weakest link. But if all the links in the golden chain were cast by God, aren't we safe? And were they not all cast by God? "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified" (Rom. 8:29-30). Who can break such a chain and separate us from the love of God? "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:38-39).

*"Things future, nor things that are now,  
Nor all things below or above;  
Can make Him His purpose forgo  
Or sever my soul from His love."*

—Augustus Toplady

If Christ's grace is with your spirit, you will know that nothing will separate you from God's love.

### **2. Christ's grace stimulates evangelism.**

Does this surprise you? Perhaps you imagined that believing in sovereign grace would discourage evangelism. It should do the very opposite. Why? Because we all know from both Scripture and experience that man by nature is either opposed to or indifferent to the gospel. Again and again those of us who have tried to witness to unsaved friends and neighbors have been discouraged by lack of response. Nevertheless, we never lose hope because God has said that the gates of hell will not prevail against the church. He will have a people called after His name. The Lord Christ has said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me" (John 6:37). Don't you just love that "shall?" They shall come. God has made up His mind. When Luke gives a summary in the book of Acts of the progress of the church, he says it in this way, "And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48). When Paul was afraid outside of the city of Corinth, responsible to take the gospel of Christ to that city, a word from God came to encourage him, "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city" (Acts 18:9-10).

God's purpose is the salvation of sinners and so those engaged in this work are not wasting their time and energy. Of course, if we believed that it was entirely up to man's "free will" then we would have cause to be despondent, because what the sinner needs the most he desires the least. He would never come. That confidence drove the great evangelists and missionaries in the history of the church to keep preaching, such as Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, William Carey, and Charles Haddon Spurgeon, and reap a great harvest. They did not believe that salvation needed psychological techniques and manipulative gimmicks to get a response. It was God's business, so they were men of holy love and courage and integrity. When they centered their message on the divine diagnosis and remedy, then God honored it.

### **3. Christ's grace promotes worship.**

This most of all. The truth that salvation is by God's grace humbles us, but it also exalts our God, doesn't it? It gives God all the glory. When a sinner sees this he doesn't say, "I think I made the smartest choice a man could make. I chose eternal life." He knows that it was the mighty God who set His love on him. God knew all about us; he had seen the file. He understands us better than our own spouses or parents, but He still loves us with a love that continually forgives and will never let us go.

Then our worship has to be God-centered. If it is to fasten attention on God's saving grace to adore and praise the Lamb and have communion with Him, it is

obvious our response must be God-centered. And this is one of the places the professing church has gone astray; it is confused about worship because its approach to worship is this, "What am I going to get out of it; am I going to leave feeling good about myself? Am I going to be moved?" We have come with all the wrong reasons and are asking all the wrong questions. We shouldn't be asking what are we going to get out of this but what is God going to gain. How will His name be blessed and His loveliness portrayed? As we fasten our attention on God and seek His glory and commune with Him, our hearts will break. We will be exuberant; we will rejoice with trembling; we'll serve the Lord with fear. We will indeed be moved from the depths of our being because we sought Him. Just as in a marriage relationship, if we seek our own well being, our marriages are wrecks. But, if we seek the well being of our spouses, we find our marriages to be fulfilling.

I ask you this very simple question: if an unconverted person comes to a worship service and leaves feeling good, who has not been present? God. The unconverted cannot come into the presence of God as we've described it and feel good or fulfilled. His conscience is going to be scratched with the strong claws of the Lion of Judah. He's going to be probed. As Paul says, he's going to fall down before the Lord, his heart laid naked and bare before God. Then God saves him—that way. We are so foolish to take that which is God's and profane it and adulterate it by trying to package it for the world. We are changing God's glorious and holy celebration into an outreach enterprise, and He is no longer the center of attention; He's no longer honored and glorified in our worship. But when an entire congregation knows they are what they are by the grace of God, then all of them give glory to Him with one heart and one mouth. Without an appreciation of grace there can be no full-orbed doxology. Watered down grace leads to watered down worship, and how deadly an ethos is that for the future inhabitants of heaven.

#### **4. Christ's grace strengthens and sustains our spirit.**

Grace is not a sentiment or a divine attitude or feeling. Grace is God's omnipotence, saving and sanctifying His people. Grace is strength. Grace is the total commitment of God. He holds nothing back. He spares not His own Son. With Him He freely gives us all things. You see it perfectly in Paul's second letter to the Corinthians. He is telling them about his thorn in the flesh, and how the Lord refused to remove it. Paul knew constant weakness, distress, and tribulation. He longs for deliverance, but he was told this by the Lord, "My grace is sufficient for you." Then you see the next parallel phrase in the Lord's tender reply to Paul, "For

my strength is made perfect in weakness." The grace of Christ is the strength of Christ upholding His hurting servants. His grace can change every circumstance, strengthen every weakness, cheer every distress, lift every burden, bear every responsibility, and handle every privilege. All those things are experienced by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So there is no need for God to remove the thorn in the flesh. Paul can do all that God plans to have done through him by His grace. What is put forth in grace is the energy of Almighty God. Christ's grace is His commitment to us of the power that spoke to the winds and waves in the boat and there was a great calm; the authority that was evident as He preached in the synagogue; the dominion He exercised over death and demons. When we say that our spirit has been touched by grace, we are not saying that we are in the grip of a great sentiment or that we are the objects of a great mood, but that we are gripped by the might of the Creator of the heavens and the earth. The One who conquers the grave has us in His grip.

I suspect that for us the concepts of "power" and "grace" are kept in two different compartments, but that is not the case in the Word of God. In the Scriptures there is the closest possible relation of God's power and God's grace, and the wonder of our spirits being sustained by grace is the power that helps us in our time of need.

When Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones came to the end of his studies on the letter to the Philippians fifty years ago, he looked at the congregation and said, "My beloved friends, we live in an uncertain world, an uncertain life; no one knows what is going to happen to any one of us. There are an almost infinite number of possibilities. Can we end our considerations of this mighty epistle on a grander note than this? Whatever may happen in life or in death; whatever may take place in any conceivable situation or circumstances, whatever may be your lot, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ will be sufficient. It will hold you, it will sustain you, it will even enable you to rejoice in tribulation, it will strengthen you, establish you, hold you, keep you, answer your every need, and take you through. Ultimately it will present you faultless, perfect, in glory in the presence of God. 'The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.'" (*The Life of Peace: Studies in Philip- pians 3 & 4*, p. 271).

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# BOOK TALK

Dr. J.R. Beeke/R. Pederson

## Bavinck's *Reformed Dogmatics* and Teellinck's *The Path of True Godliness*

The following titles are recently published or reprinted. The first price is retail, and the second, our discounted price. p = paperback.

Two major books being worked on by the Dutch Reformed Translation Society will be available next month: the first volume of Bavinck's four-volume *Reformed Dogmatics* (the remaining three volumes will appear on an annual basis D.V.) and Willem Teellinck's major work on godly living, *The Path of True Godliness*.

**Bavinck, Herman.** *Reformed Dogmatics, Volume 1: Prolegomena.* \$49.99/28.00



Theologians have long appreciated Herman Bavinck's four-volume masterpiece, *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, published in 1895-99, for its comprehensive treatment of dogmatic theology. Unfortunately, this magnum opus from the great Reformed theologian has only been available in Dutch, and therefore has been inaccessible to most readers. Now,

thanks to the Dutch Reformed Translation Society and the work of translator John Vriend and editor John Bolt, the first volume of Bavinck's magisterial *Reformed Dogmatics* is available in English for the first time. Bolts tireless work updating the documentation augments this significant work.

The seventeen chapters of this volume are grouped into sections: Introduction to Dogmatics, The History and Literature of Dogmatics, Foundations of Dogmatic Theology, Revelation, and Faith. Bavinck's approach throughout is meticulous, though he wears his vast learning lightly. As he moves throughout the subject of dogmatic theology, he stands on the shoulders of giants such as Augustine, John Calvin, Francis Turretin, and Charles Hodge.

Editor John Bolt characterizes the work as follows: "*Reformed Dogmatics* is biblically and confessionally faithful, pastorally sensitive, challenging, and still relevant. Bavinck's life and thought reflect a serious effort to be pious, orthodox, and thoroughly contemporary. To pietists fearful of the modern world on one hand and to critics of orthodoxy skeptical about its continuing relevance on the other, Bavinck's example suggests a model answer: an engaging, Trinitarian vision of Christian discipleship in God's world."

This work will appeal to scholars and students of theology, research and theological libraries, and pastors and laity who read serious works of Reformed theology.

— Baker's Fall Catalog 2003

**Teellinck, William.** *The Path of True Godliness.*

\$19.99/11.50p



In nine short "books," this remarkable work by Teellinck, translated by Dr. Annemie Godbehere, shows believers the character of true godliness and the kingdom of darkness that opposes it. Dr. Joel R. Beeke, who edited the book, has included an introduction (recently printed in this periodical) that chronicles Teellinck's life and times.

This is one of the best books written on the subject of sanctification. How does one flee from temptation? What is the best way for believers to open their hearts to God? Packed with scriptural guidance, *The Path of True Godliness* answers these questions and many more about how to live godly in Christ Jesus.

As with the other titles in the Classics of Reformed Spirituality series, *The Path of True Godliness* deserves attentive reading. Teellinck promotes biblical, Reformed spirituality, which serves as a corrective for the too common pseudo-spirituality of our time. He helps us link a clear mind, a warm heart, and helping hands to serve God with the whole person, which is our reasonable service.

If you earnestly desire to tread the paths of godliness, let Teellinck be your guide. You will find much help here. Highly recommended.

### Two special offers



The publication of Teellinck concludes a series of four books published by Baker Book House this year in the Classics of Reformed Spirituality series developed by the Dutch Reformed Translation Society. The first three volumes (\$14.99/ 9.00p each) were Jean Taffin's *The Marks of God's Children*, Jacobus Koelman's *The Duties of Parents*, and Gisbertus Voetius's and Johannes Hoornbeek's *Spiritual Desertion*. We are very pleased that the great classics of the Dutch

Second Reformation (in addition to Brakel's *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, 4 vols., \$160/80), in which we have our roots, are finally being made available to the English-speaking world. The retail value of all four of these paperbacks amounts to \$64.95. **We are offering the set for the special price of \$32.50 (50% discount) until the end of this year.**



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—RP

