

ANNOUNCER

Adams Protestant Reformed Christian School

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adamschristianschool.org

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!



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Administration & Staff

A Quiet and Peaceable Life?

Mr. Rick Mingerink
Administrator

This past November I had an opportunity to draw our students' attention to Article 36 in the Belgic Confession. The occasion was Election Day. I gave a short message to our students on the Christian's responsibility toward our government and magistrates. In Article 36 there is a wonderful phrase about subjecting ourselves to the magistrates "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." This phrase comes directly from I Timothy 2:2.

As I prepared for that short message, I was left clinging to the beautiful picture of a life of quiet and peace in godliness. What a wonderful thought that is! A quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty! What a treasure it is to live not only a life of godliness and honesty, but also to live such a life in quiet and peace! Yet, could such a truth to be too idyllic? It just didn't seem to align with reality. Living a life in godliness and honesty is the expected standard of every Christian, but why am I not always living a quiet and peaceable life?

A quiet and peaceable life can sometimes seem like a unicorn. Always sought after but never found. I think it is the natural condition of our human creation that we all *want* a quiet and peaceable life. This has been the quest of men and women since sin entered the world and disrupted the quiet and peaceable life once known in the Garden of Eden. Men and women have been trying to get back into the quiet and peace of that garden ever since... yet rejecting the God who is the very giver of that quiet and peace.

At the most fundamental level, the absence of quiet and peace in life is a consequence of sin's corrupting powers in this world and in our lives. Quiet and peace, then, are enjoyed in the way of godliness and honesty in life. Because of this, I don't write this article in a state of bewilderment as to why a quiet and peaceable life is often not enjoyed. Sin wrecks the enjoyment of it. A quiet and peaceable life is found in God through a life of godliness and honesty.

A life of godliness and honesty is usually nurtured in a simple life. A simple life isn't cluttered

with all the things that we often choose to fill it with. For me, I too often choose to fill my life with persistent noise and relentless activity. I too often forget that sometimes quietness comes from the deliberate choices I make. The choice *not* to grab my phone or put those earbuds in. The choice *not* to sign up for this or that activity. The choice *not* to have an idol out of a well-manicured yard or trendy house. I too often forget that a quiet and peaceable life is nurtured by moderation and a restraint of my impulses.

Too often we fill our life with stuff. We indulge our covetousness. We pamper our discontentment. We satisfy our need for attention, affirmation, and a desire to be like everyone else. One day we will wake up and realize that godliness and honesty no longer act as a *boundary* in our life but they simply become a hue by which we desperately try to paint everything we've managed to stuff inside our life. In this waking, we realize sin is loosened in this clutter and we no longer lead quiet or peaceable lives anymore.

I know I'm not writing anything we don't already know. Usually, the struggle isn't knowing what is right, honorable, or noble; the struggle is implementing it. Yet, our children are still learning. They likely don't have this knowledge yet. They are, however, voraciously learning through their experiences. We are teaching them at this very moment how (or how not) to live quiet and peaceable lives. So, I come full circle back to our children. If we want our children to lead quiet and peaceable lives, maybe we should be more deliberate in holding back on filling our children's lives with constant noise and activity. We probably are not teaching them much restraint and moderation when we fill their life with more sports, more leagues, more camps, more vacations, more video games, more social media, and more of every other thing competing for their time and attention.

This is a caution for schools, too. Schools can too easily provide endless opportunities for children (and their parents) to be busy, busy, busy. Let's encourage each other to teach our children that restraint and moderation nurtures a life of godliness and honesty, and godliness and honesty nurtures a life of quiet and peace. If we struggle to practice this ourselves, our children will surely have little hope of doing the same.

Lively Letter Learning!

Mrs. Nancy Decker
Kindergarten

"A b c d e f g...h i j k l m n o p...q r s...t u v...w x y and z, Now I know my abc's, next time won't you sing with me!"

This is a very familiar song to young children, but the boys and girls in the kindergarten room just might sing it differently. Using the Open Court Reading Series, our study of the alphabet goes like this—s m d p a h t n l i b c o r g j f u x z w k e q y v! No, we don't sing the song this way, and we certainly don't talk about all of the letters at one time, but every week one or two letters become very special to these beginner reading students. This letter is our main focus for the week—we see it, we say it, we hear it, we write it, we draw it, and we even eat it! It is incorporated into our phonics, penmanship, literacy, and even art with the goal to use these letters to form words and begin to learn to read. There is reason to celebrate if a student's name begins with the letter of the week and we don't forget that it needs to be an uppercase! And when we can include this letter in our other studies or activities in the classroom, it reinforces our "letter learning." Here are some examples of how we have incorporated our letters into our learning in the beginning months of kindergarten.

We began with letter **Ss** which reminded us of the first week of school and our fun **School Tour Scavenger Hunt**. With rhyming clues, (This is the place you get to read, it has all the books you'll ever need! Assemblies, exercise and more, go to the big room and explore! This is the fun place where you'll learn to draw, everyone will be in awe! This is the place to meet the leader of the school, don't forget he is super cool!) the children were introduced to the special people and places in the school building. This was a fun way to find the library, the gym, the music room, the office, the art room, and even the principal's office.

And our principal, **Mr. Mingerink**, which is a "**Double Mm**" fits in perfectly with our study of our second letter. We had visited his office, so now we invited him to be a guest in our kindergarten room. The children properly welcomed him with an in unison "Good morning, Mr. Mingerink." Mr. Mingerink then asked all 15 students their name which helped everyone get acquainted. A relationship was being formed by this short and sweet shared

experience, one that will hopefully last for nine years. Mr. Mingerink talked for just a few minutes and then was asked ten question posed by the kids with a little help from their teacher. Here's a little peek into this fun interview.

1. "Why do you love books?" (Gale Kuiper) Yes, you are right, I do love books. I love books because life can sometimes be the same, but inside a book there is a world of adventure!

2. "We saw lots of keys in your office. Why do you need so many keys?" (Emmett Maatman) Adams Christian School has over 30 rooms and each one needs a key!

3. "Where did you get the big chair in your office?" (Levi Langerak) One day I went "treasure hunting" and visited the first church in our Protestant Reformed denomination where Herman Hoeksema preached. The people that own the church now, gave me that red chair.

4. "What's your favorite thing to do?" (Dylan DeVries) My favorite thing to do with my family is go camping. My favorite thing to do at school is walk the halls and playground and see learning happening and friendships growing.

5. "What is the best part of your job?" (Nick Hanko) I love to see the students grow in the 9 years that they are at Adams Christian. When I shake their hand at graduation, I think about how much they have grown and how much they have learned.

6. "Do you have a family?" (Everly Ophoff) Yes, I have a wife and 8 children. Some of my children go to Covenant Christian, some are here at Adams Christian, and one still at home. Have you met Anna? She is a kindergartener in Mrs. Kalsbeek's class.

7. "What is your favorite animal?" (Ella Langerak) I think horses are great animals. Mrs. Mingerink has ridden horses a lot and I used to ride hers many years ago.

8. "What's your favorite book?" (Rose Ophoff) I love *The Hobbit*, maybe you will read it when you are in the 6th or 7th grade.

9. "What's your favorite food?" (Theo Kuiper) Pizza!

10. "Did you have to go to school to become a principal?" (Mrs. Decker) Yes, I went to school to become a teacher and I taught high school students. Then I went to back to school to help me in my job as principal.

And so we move on to letter **Pp** which is for **Post Family Farm** where **pumpkins** are their specialty. Before our visit to the farm, we studied pumpkins—read books about them, learned and labeled the different parts of the pumpkin, conducted a scientific experiment as we predicted and observed if pumpkins float, drew and painted a pumpkin picture, and then the fun part at the farm, picked our own special pumpkin to take home. At the farm, the kindergarteners used all their senses to see, hear, feel, smell, and . . . taste! Yes, our tastebuds were tickled as we bit into the warm, soft, and sweet pumpkin donuts. Who knew that the pulp part of these orange spheres lying in messy viney fields can end up giving us such a delightful taste? Our adjectives to describe these donuts were yummy, tasty, and our made up word which starts with the letter Pp—**"pumpkiny."**

And a school day in the kindergarten room is not properly begun apart from our **Daily Devotions** reminding us of the letter **Dd**. God's Word, a devotional book, and some heartfelt talk between students and teacher sets the tone for the day. And then with three short words, "hands, head, and heart," the kindergarteners and I are ready to pray. Our hands are folded, our heads are bowed, and our hearts are ready to draw near to God. This prayer reminds both teacher and students that our goal is for all of our work and play to be for God's glory. Our prayers, though sinfully spoken, give praise and glory to God for who He is and all that He has done for us. *"I will praise thee, O Lord with my whole heart, I will shew forth all thy marvelous works"* (Psalm 9:1). Praying in Jesus' name, we confess our sins. *"Oh God, thou knows my foolishness and my sins are not hid from Thee"* (Psalm 69:5). Knowing that all things are from His hand, we give thanks. *"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto Thy name, O most high"* (Psalm 92:1). And finally, we bring our supplications. *"Give ear to my prayer, O God and hide not thyself from my supplication"* (Psalm 55:1).

So you can see that the kindergarten room has been a **sweet, meaningful, profitable** and **delightful** place these first few months of the school year. Who knows what other adjectives we could add as we continue through the year and through the alphabet!

Working Heartily

Miss Lynnae Miedema
Second Grade

When I was a kid, my siblings and I were taught to memorize Bible verses every Sunday afternoon during lunch. Now I use many of the verses my dad and mom taught us in my classroom. One of them is Colossians 3:23, *“And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.”*

Near the beginning (and usually in the middle and at the end) of each school year, I read Colossians 3 during devotions with my students. We talk about what it means to do things “heartily” and what our motives should be in our work. Yet, so often in myself and in my students I see laziness creep in. As teachers and parents we have to be on guard against this laziness.

To work heartily is simply to work with our whole heart. Everything we do, whether it is practicing our handwriting, learning our math facts, or learning about animal habitats, must be done with as much effort and enthusiasm as our hearts can muster. Admittedly, some days our hearts muster more enthusiasm than others, but the expectation of Scripture and the Confessions is clear.

When Prof. Huizinga spoke at a chapel a few years ago, he told the children that they must carry out their work “as willingly and faithfully as the angels in heaven” (Lord’s Day 49). This is a very difficult calling. Throughout the school day I hear things like, “Do we have to? Will this be on the test? Can we just skip that today? I hate [insert subject].” I see homework assignments or work turned in that displays little effort or time given to complete the task. These situations are driven by a lack of heart as described in Proverbs 19:16, *“Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.”* Laziness translates to bad attitudes, which make grumbling and complaining escape our lips so often. This is the “hunger” that our students suffer. They want to be doing anything else besides school. There could be many causes for this laziness. Sometimes I wonder if the increase of technology makes us more lazy. Why would I read a book about animal habitats when I can Google it and have the answer in less than a second? Why write my own paper when I can type the prompt into ChatGPT and get a professionally written essay that makes me sound like I’ve earned my doctorate? Ultimately, the real source of this laziness is a selfish and depraved nature.

Still, God calls us to work heartily. School is the child’s job. What a special job it is! It certainly is not a job that can be done with bad attitudes. Instead, it must be performed willingly, faithfully, and heartily. Like I tell my students, do you think Gabriel complained about having to deliver another message when God sent him to Mary? Even though he had a hard task, did the angel of death grumble and complain about his calling to kill the firstborn of Egypt? Does Michael complain about having to go to battle again against the evil forces in this world? Do they ever say, “Can’t you send someone else this time? I have to do it every time. I did it last time.” No. They obey willingly and faithfully. They do their work heartily.

Why do we work heartily? Not for the praise of men. We don’t do our best work so that our teachers or parents say, “Wow! So neat! So creative! So nicely done!” We do all things as unto the Lord. He is the Father who has given each of us the ability to learn and grow. We have to work heartily to develop those gifts and grow in our love for Him. This is only possible by His Spirit in our hearts, overcoming our selfish, depraved natures. Our desire to work heartily is rooted in thankful hearts. We have been blessed with a gift undeserved and immeasurable. We have salvation and life through Jesus Christ. In thankfulness for this gift, we work heartily at all of our callings in life.

Solomon faithfully instructs, *“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest”* (Ecclesiastes 9:10). This season in the children’s lives is short when compared to all of eternity. This is the time they have to grow in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and men (Luke 2:52). May we not waste this precious time by being lazy. Be assured that your children’s teachers will not accept laziness or the bad attitudes that sprout from it. Pray for the students and teachers at this school that they might continually work heartily as unto the Lord.

Thankful for God's Care Among the Storms

Miss Marissa Holstege
Third Grade

As the past school year concludes and a new one begins, I typically wrestle with the thought of choosing a theme for the upcoming year. This year, I chose waves and sand on the seashore, not knowing it would immediately spark discussion due to God's providential plan in sending multiple hurricanes to the southeastern United States.

Statements from students included things like, "Many people lost power," and, "Many people lost everything. That was a hard trial to go through." That was true. God's immense power was on display for the world to see. Another statement was, "That won't ever happen here." Well, maybe not to that extreme, but we discussed that God can do anything He wills. We also have storms in our own lives—storms that may not be literal, but that can still damage us internally.

One thing we do know is that God will always care for His people amidst any type of storm. That is something we can be thankful for. With Thanksgiving rapidly approaching, my students took the time to think and write an answer to the question, "Why can I be thankful for God's care in my life?" Enjoy their responses!

"I can be thankful for God because He keeps me safe during hurricanes."

~ Nolah Dijkstra

"He is great. He is very nice, and He loves me. There is nothing better than him."

~ Dastan Dykstra

"I am thankful for when I am by myself that God is always there. When my Grandma Flikkema died, God was there. When I get hurt, God will be there with me."

~ Savannah Flikkema

"He cares for us."

~ Luke Hanko

"God made his son to die on the cross for me."

~ Adalynn Kooienga

"I can be thankful for God's care because He has made everything perfect for me."

~ Corbin Kooienga

"He is always watching me and looking over me."

~ Addilyn Kuiper

"I care because He helps me. He makes me happy and leads me in the path of life. He protects me from danger."

~ Cooper Landheer

"God doesn't send very violent storms in Michigan, and that He gives us food every day and drink."

~ Calvin Maatman

"He protects us from floods."

~ Daniel Mingerink

"God watches us in His hand and provides us with what we need. He saves us from trials in our lives. We can pray to Him."

~ Emery Oosterbaan

"God will ALWAYS care for me and be there for me."

~ Levi Ophoff

"God made the earth and He did it very well. He set the birds in the sky and the cows on the land."

~ Ramona Ophoff

"I am thankful because God protects me from storms."

~ Abigail Pipe

"I can be thankful because He protects me. I love to pray to Him when I am scared."

~ Raelle Sleda

"I'm thankful for God's care because I don't deserve it, and He gave us His care. And He sent His son to die on the cross. He protects me from storms."

~ Lucas VanOverloop

2024 Teachers' Convention

Mr. Mike Feenstra
Fifth Grade

Adams Christian School had the privilege of hosting the 2024 Protestant Reformed Teachers' Convention on October 17 and 18. On Thursday morning, Rev. Smidstra gave the keynote speech about Christian children being "Planted by the Rivers of Water." In his address, he reminded the teachers that we must place our trust in the Lord as the source of life-giving water especially because we live in a spiritual desert. Those who walk in sin are as a dead bush which shrivels up and dies in the dry wastes, but those who walk by faith are as a tree that is planted by the rivers of water. They will not die when the afflictions of this life threaten to dry them out.

After the keynote speech, many teachers filed out of the gym to enjoy a short break in the spacious hallways of Adams Christian School. During this time, nine different speakers set up either in the

music room, the library, the science room, the three junior high rooms, or the two 6th grade rooms. Protestant Reformed teachers from all over the United States then “attended class” in one of these eight rooms. (Surprisingly, during teachers’ conventions, the teachers sit by student desks and “attend class” for one hour at a time). The classes are labeled “sectionals” and one can choose what class to attend. For example, at Thursday morning’s sectionals (10:15-11:15), attendees chose between classes on executive function, choral teaching, elementary literature, technology tips, home economics teaching, middle school math teaching, or classes entitled “Small Beginnings” and “All Creatures are so in His Hand.”

I chose to attend a sectional by Jason Holstege and Josh Moelker (Heritage Christian School) on middle school math metacognition. The speakers explained that math teachers must instruct their students to “think about their thinking” during math instruction. For example, these teachers often will accompany a math assignment with a post-survey which asks students to think about how they arrived at their solutions.

Next, I attended a speech by Lanae Regnerus (Faith Christian School in Randolph, WI). She spoke about how God’s covenant applies to our instruction every day in our Protestant Reformed Schools. Her main point was that even as God is the God of covenant friendship to us, we are called to live in covenant community with one another in the school community.

My last sectional on Thursday was provided by Blake DeBoer (Loveland). He introduced a geography curriculum for use in grades 4-8. Over the past several years, Blake compiled numerous PowerPoints for use in United States and World Geography. He presented this curriculum as a possible addition to our school’s curriculum.

On Friday, the teachers all met in the gym to hear two speeches by Dr. Smith from Calvin University. In an engaging style, the speaker called upon us teachers to display the glory of God to our students. He used Psalm 113 as a springboard to his speech. Dr. Smith called on us teachers not only to teach the content of our curriculum but also to teach the students on the processes to gain knowledge as a Christian. He reminded us to teach students to seek knowledge as a community of learners not isolated one from another. After the speech, the teachers

concluded the convention by singing Psalter # 306 in praise to our covenant God.

The Creator’s Gift of Figurative Language

**Miss Jori Baas
Sixth Grade**

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?”

Romans 11:34-35

How often do you find yourself wondering at the grandeur of God? Do you reflect on your life’s circumstances and how only an omniscient and omnipotent God could have written your life’s story? That was Paul’s confession in Romans 11:34-35. Our God is so glorious that our finite minds struggle to even begin to fathom that greatness. Yet, because He created us and knows our limitations, He mercifully reveals Himself to us through His Word and Spirit using wonderful means of grace.

Over the past several weeks, the sixth graders and I have examined one tool in Scripture that God is pleased to use in guiding our limited minds to understand Him and His truths more fully. This tool is figurative language. Figurative language is a way of using words or expressions to convey meanings beyond their literal meaning.

We use figurative language more often than we may even realize. Some common uses you may hear are:

- “She’s as busy as a bee” – “She” is not actually a bee but is being compared, through the use of a **simile**, to a bee who works endlessly to provide for the functioning of the beehive.
- “I’ve told you a million times” – You didn’t actually tell someone one million times to do something. Instead you are trying to get your point across through the use of **hyperbole** that you’ve told them enough times and shouldn’t have to tell them again.
- “It will be a rough road ahead” – Usually this phrase is not used to speak about the actual road you drive on but rather the

circumstances of life. It's a **metaphor** used to explain that what lies ahead will be difficult to go through.

Just as we employ the use of figurative language in our everyday lives, so also God, through His inspired authors, uses figurative language to lead us to a deeper understanding of Himself and His love for us. As a sixth grade class we discussed some of the many passages in Scripture that demonstrate God's use of figurative language. I asked the sixth graders to choose a favorite and write about how that figurative language device helped them better understand God or a truth from God's Word. Read a few of their examples below to find out God's care for you in giving you a tool such as figurative language to understand your Creator more fully. We may never know the mind of the Lord. His ways truly are past finding out. Yet, He mercifully gives us figurative language to guide us to a deeper knowledge of Him. Thanks be to God for that gift!

Jesus, the Lamb and Sacrifice for Us

Sofia Bodbyl

In John 1:29 he [John] uses symbolism to show that Christ is a sacrifice for us. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world," is what John wisely declares when he spots Jesus. The Lamb symbolizes Jesus. Symbolism is defined as a concrete thing which stands for an abstract idea. The concrete thing is Christ who is pictured as the Lamb, and the abstract idea is Him dying on the cross, ("which taketh away the sins of the world"). The people didn't expect Christ to sacrifice Himself like how they sacrificed lambs. Although we don't take away sins we should still apply this to our lives by serving others, sacrificing ourselves like Jesus did for His Church.

Soaring to the Cross

Robyn Key

In Exodus 19:4 God declares to Moses all the things He's done for Israel and for Moses as He led the people. "Ye have seen what I have done unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you to myself," God states. We read that one of these notable things is how God bore Moses up on eagles' wings. This is an example of imagery because Moses could grasp the thought that he was swiftly flying through the air. This verse, which is not commonly read, stands out because it reminds us to pray for God to assist us in flying away from worldly things. As sinful people, what are we to think when we come to Exodus 19:4? We need to question ourselves what it means. Just as an eagle flies to its nest, we are to soar unto God. God gives a refuge to His people and brings us close to Him in times of need. This gorgeous verse, Exodus 19:4, shouts to us that when troubles and trials arise, we need to soar with our troubled souls to the cross, just as Moses did over the troubles in the wilderness.

Red Like Crimson

Samantha Kooienga

In the KJV Bible there is a beautiful simile found in Isaiah 1:18b "... Though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool." This is a simile because it is comparing our sins to red like crimson. This passage really stood out to me because we don't have to worry, for we know that Jesus saves his people from their great and many sins and cleanses us as pure as wool. Amazingly we can trust in Jesus to save us from our sins. We know that Jesus, who died on the cross, did that to pay the debt of his people's sins. I boldly exclaim that Isaiah 1:18b "Red Like Crimson" is an amazing simile and passage.

Creation Praises God Too

Tarrin Kortering

In Psalm 98:8 David uses personification to help describe God's outstanding creation. David proclaims, "Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together." This is personification, which is giving a non-human thing human characteristics, because the creation brings praises to God. This passage stood out to me because the whole creation praises God. You and I examine the creation praising Christ, sometimes more than we do, unfortunately. You spot the birds singing, the ocean crashing, the bees humming, and many other things. The all powerful Lord created everything. This applies to my life because we must praise the Lord with all our hearts. This passage helps us show God's beauty and majesty praised through creation.

How Paul Uses Symbolism

Grant Looyenga

In Ephesians 6:17 the author, who is Paul, adds symbolism. Symbolism is a concrete thing that stands for an abstract idea. The verse is, "The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God..." The passage stood out to me because it is comforting that God will willfully protect us. God shows that He will defend us from our sinful nature. Stand up to those that don't believe. Don't let Satan take over you, and fight against him with the tool God has given you, which is the gospel. God will give you and me strength against him.

A Way David Uses a Simile

Michael Lubbers

A simile used in the Holy Bible is Psalm 1:3. This passage says, "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water," which is a simile because it compares us and a tree. This means that we are in a desert and God plants us in his Spirit and his Word. When God happily plants us we bring our fruit in our season. We will not wither. Instead, we will prosper. One way a simile is used in the Bible is in Psalm 1:3.

Matthew 5:29

Gibson McKinney

"And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish and not thy whole body be cast into hell." In Matthew 5:29, Jesus uses a hyperbole, but He doesn't really mean pluck your eye out. Jesus reminds us that we must constantly guard our eyes from evil and not look at bad things. Jesus also means that if there is sin in our lives, we must erase

it from our lives. Movies, which often have bad images in them, might have to be removed from our lives because they may affect our lives and how we live. The Bible often uses hyperbole to bring us back to living godly lives.

God, Directing Us Through Imagery

Claire Pipe

In Psalm 23:2, we notice how imagery is involved in how God leads and guides us through green pastures and still water. I feel this passage stands out to me because it is very calming and shows us our heavenly Father cares for us as His children. In this text, which shows us about our powerful God, David the Psalmist explains to us that all the terrible and sad things we go through are used for our good. It should also comfort us, knowing that our Savior is in control of all things going on, so that not a hair can fall off our head without God knowing. It's amazing how God directed David to write a short beautiful verse that can also involve imagery and such a powerful meaning.

The Comfort of Our Almighty Shepherd

Reegan Postma

God uses figurative language in the Bible, such as in Psalm 23:1 where David writes about how God is our Shepherd. Psalm 23:1 is a metaphor, which is comparing two different things without using like or as. God will always guide us and be our leader just like a shepherd watches his sheep. God is not our physical Shepherd. Psalm 23:1 says this, "The LORD is my shepherd I shall not want." This means that even in times of trouble, which enter our lives a lot, God will be near his people when they call upon him. The LORD shall restore his people in his time and will. I have seen this work of God in my life. One day suddenly my mother was diagnosed with Covid 19, but was also pregnant with my little sister. Later she was put on a ventilator in 2020. Both, by the grace of God, live healthy lives today. Even with trials and difficulties the LORD is our Shepherd and we do not have to worry for the LORD is on our side. Always remember Psalm 23:1 is a great comfort to you.

Personification in a Passage

Lance Ten Broeke

"No man can serve two masters." This verse is found in Matthew 6:24 and is an incredible instance of personification. The part, "ye cannot serve two Masters," is personification because it is making mammon, which means money, a Master. The writer of this passage was probably stumbling through the frightfully many sins with money. One sin of today that includes money is gambling. This sin involves people injecting their money into machines and expecting more money. Our God is an awesome God because he conceals all this knowledge into sentences we can comprehend. This passage is one of the few passages with personification.

On Eagles Wings

Audrey Van Donselaar

God's servant Moses gave us imagery in Exodus 19:4. He says, "...How I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself." It is imagery (something that authors use to make a story more interesting) because it pictures

God's almighty hand as an eagle's wing. This passage helps us in trials, which may seem to bog us down in life, since it tells us that God is always there. He created the eagle, every eagle that we may spot swooping down, their wingspan stretching so far. Even when we lose a loved one or have a family member walking away from Jesus and His word, God is still holding us up. He's like the goldsmith. We are the gold. He puts us into the fire so we may be purified. But the fire (our trials) is never too hot for us because God is bearing us up on eagle's wings. Truly, this precious imagery in Exodus 19 will help us in our trials for we know that we are on eagle's wings.

The Word of God

Penelope Vander Kolk

John 6:35 says "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." This verse is a metaphor, because Jesus is the sustaining Bread of life. This verse struck me specifically because it reminds us that God sustains with his Word. This verse emphasizes that Jesus provides us with food, His Word, which is the Bible. It would be an excellent idea to start reading the Bible daily if you don't already. John 6:35 is a good reminder that we cannot live without Christ and the Word of God.

The Metaphor of Jesus to Bread

Jade Velthouse

In John 6: 35 we read, "I am the Bread of Life," which is a metaphor comparing Jesus to bread. Jesus and bread are being compared because bread fills us just like Jesus fills us with His Word. This passage stood out to me because Jesus is the superior Savior, and He will supply our needs. I like it because those who truly believe will never hunger for Jesus' love and salvation. This is an application to our lives because if bread is delicious to our stomach how much better is Jesus' Word to our souls? Jesus is truly the Bread of Life.

What are Learning Disabilities

Mrs. Tara Flikkema

ESS Teacher/Coordinator

Many of us have experienced struggles and difficulties learning new things. Some of you may have started your school years with delayed speech or difficulties learning your letters or letter sounds. For some, difficulties may have started when you began learning math or writing papers; some of you may have struggled to follow directions or pay attention in class. For most of you, the difficulties were likely short-term. For others, you may still be struggling with these difficulties today. Often when someone faces academic struggles or struggles in the workplace or in doing things at home, it could be an undiagnosed learning disability. This leads us to the question "What is a learning disability?"

The definition of learning disability (LD), according to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, is a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written. The disorder may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations. This condition can adversely affect a student's educational performance or a person's day-to-day activities in the workplace or home.

What Causes Learning Disabilities?

People started to become aware of LD around the late 1800s and early 1900s. James Hinshelwood, a Scottish ophthalmologist conducted case studies on adults and children who had normal vision, hearing, and intellect but had difficulty reading. He determined that the difficulties resulted from a neurological issue. Since that time there have been many doctors, scientists, and educators who have conducted studies to determine the following, "learning disabilities are caused by differences in the brain which affect the way the brain is able to receive, store, process, retrieve or communicate information."

Studies have been done to show that LD may have a connection to genetics. Tests conducted show a high frequency of LD and ADHD among members of the same family. There is also a higher risk of LD with people who have poor nutrition.

How are Learning Disabilities diagnosed?

To diagnose an LD an individual would need to undergo academic testing, cognitive testing, and several evaluations. For students, the evaluations would require questions their teachers and parents would have to answer.

How are Learning Disabilities treated?

There are many resources used to help individuals with an LD diagnosis. In the school setting we use assessments to pinpoint exactly where a student may be struggling. Because each student is unique, we use different methods and sometimes a combination of methods to help the student learn academic information in a way their brain can process. An LD does not mean that students cannot do the work required of them, it simply means that they may have to learn it in a different manner. Having an LD does not mean someone is not smart or will not go on to be successful in life. Many successful well-known

people have lived their lives with LD, for example: Michael Phelps, Albert Einstein, George Washington, Thomas Edison, and Pablo Picasso to name a few. Some of the more well-known LDs are as follows. Dyslexia (reading), Dysgraphia (writing), Dyscalculia (math), and ADHD. With a LD the messages from the eyes and ears are not getting properly "decoded" in the brain.

Every other year Adams Christian School hosts Consider One Another Day. During that day we discussed LD with the 7th grade students. We ask them to name something someone else can do that they cannot. We read Psalm 139:14 *"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."* This is a reminder that God made each of us with unique gifts and talents. Some ability differences are easy to see. Some may have better handwriting; others may be better at sports, some may have test scores that are higher, others may be gifted in art or music. LDs on the other hand are not always as obvious.

It's important to remember that Learning Disabilities were given to students by God and that is one way that we are fearfully and wonderfully made. If you know someone who struggles you can help them by focusing on their strengths and not their weaknesses. Be a good friend, build each other up and remember the words of Mark 12:31, *"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."*

Pursuing Beauty

Mrs. Lauren Dykstra
Elementary Choir

Last time I wrote in the Announcer, I examined the necessity of music literacy. This time I'd like to look at another aspect of choir and elementary music that is a primary goal: the pursuit of beauty.

This goal is something that perhaps sounds a bit ephemeral and maybe a bit adult for, say, first graders to grasp. However, that is definitely not the case. First graders understand beauty and excellence just as well as we do! The first time they do something beautiful together as a group, they break out into smiles and often cheers. While they may not understand the how or the why of their reactions, those things can, in fact, be quantified and pursued. Let's examine a few of those things.

Precision: When we do something all together as a group perfectly in sync with one another we recognize the beauty of unity with one another. If

you've been to an elementary program and heard the bucket drums you can easily imagine how, if not done precisely, it would sound like an unpleasant cacophony. With precision, it's impressive and fun! That particular activity is one that they look forward to all through the elementary program until it is their turn.

The next one is a rather umbrella term and has several aspects to look at: **Tone quality**. The first aspect of this that we look at is vocal pitch matching and pitch discrimination. There are lots of pitches one can make with their vocal cords, but if we were pursuing beauty, we would want to choose one or a few that sound good together. This means we have to learn to hear and produce a specific frequency of sound (hertz if you prefer the science term) and choose that over all the other frequencies. This is more of a challenge for some than others.

Once we are all on the same pitch we need to examine a few other aspects: **Vowel shape, tone production** and **timbre**, all of which are very much connected. The human vocal cord (or folds), when being used and that sound is resonated through the human body, produces a lot more sound information than we often recognize. They produce things called *overtones* and *white noise* as well as the sound we are paying attention to. Those overtones and whatnot are what make us sound human versus a perfectly pure hertz that could be generated by a computer in a lab. These "extra" sounds are very much affected by the position and density of aspects of the sound producing organ and the body parts the sound travels through: our throats, mouths, sinuses, bones. They all play a part.

Directors spend a huge amount of time working to get our choirs to make similar shapes with their mouths to produce similar vowel sounds and precise consonant sounds (which are often produced in the white noise range). Unified mouth and tongue shape helps the overtones match up and prevents the subtle and unpleasant dissonance that we hear when they don't.

We also try to get our singers to power their voices well to produce more pleasant and pure tones rather than airy or shrill. I often liken this process to a coach teaching a child how to hold a basketball and move through the process of shooting for a smooth and accurate throw. This takes time and practice and is somewhat age dependent as well. A third grader will not be able to produce sound that rivals a high

schooler simply because their bodies aren't as developed. Bone density isn't the same and their larynxes and resonance forming areas haven't matured into their final state.

This brings me to timbre (or color). Of all the concepts discussed thus far, this one is probably less well known and yet when I describe it, you'll understand exactly what I'm referencing. Timbre is the music word to describe differences in sound that can't be quantified by hertz and has much to do with tone quality. If a tuba, piano, and bass all played the same note, you would be able to tell them apart because you would easily be able to hear the difference in timbre. It's what gives each instrument its unique sound. Each human voice has its own timbre as well, though far more changeable and flexible than, say, an oboe.

I won't go too far into this as it is a complex topic but directors have to decide what sort of timbre they are looking for in each song and help our singers make that sort of sound. If you studied under Eric Gritters at Covenant you might have heard him ask for a purple sound in one area and perhaps a yellow sound in another. While sound has no visible color it is easy to understand what is being asked for. We start this process already in the youngest grades in the form of experimenting with their voices and making different sorts of sounds to expand their "toolbox" of options.

While I spend much time working on the "how" of each of these things with your children in the classroom, the best part of this work is when your children actually get to experience success in creating beauty. Their eyes pop up out of their music and they start looking around at their classmates with joy in their eyes. They find it intrinsically rewarding. (Side note: I wish parents could see it when it happens. It is one of the greatest privileges of my life to bear witness to it.)

You see, God made us as creatures that can see and praise His glory, which can also be interpreted, beauty. He, in His infinite wisdom and love, made beauty something that we not only are called to, but something that we enjoy and pursue. He also blessed us with a covenant community that we can do this, not only by ourselves, but with all His people from the youngest to the oldest, both now, and forevermore. Blessed be His name who doeth wondrous things.

SATB – Together

Mrs. Gracia Schipper
Junior High Choir

You've heard a great song. You think our Choir should sing it. We need to find the music with SATB. Even though we don't use the bass part, we need the soprano, alto, and tenor parts written out to teach and sing. We need to separate and work out some individual notes.

The Body of Christ has many members, each with separate, individual roles. Our school has many contributing members, each with specific jobs. Teachers, secretaries, Board members, volunteers, staff, and donors. Everyone works together for the glory of God's name here at Adams. No foot here can say that they are of no importance because they aren't a hand. No head can say that he has no need of the feet. We all work together to God's glory.

Three or four parts coming together in choir work the same way. Individual parts harmonize to make a sweet sound. Praising our God in singing is always the ultimate goal. We welcome music suggestions, even though we can't always fit everyone's favorites into a program. If we can, we will work to find the SATB music. Pray for our music program as we work on individual parts to praise our God together.

School Board

Gratitude

Mr. Jordan Dykstra
Board President

Another school year is well underway, and we as parents are grateful for the Christian school that we send our children to. As the world continues to turn from God, we are filled with gratitude for what God has given to us at Adams Christian School. Being grateful for our school and all that it does for us and our children makes us recognize God's goodness to us.

At Adams, students are often reminded that everything they have, whether gifts, opportunities for learning, or the friendships they develop, are blessings from God. This recognition helps cultivate a heart of thankfulness, where students learn to appreciate not only the knowledge they gain, but also the

truths about God's love, grace, and purpose for their lives. It is in this environment that gratitude becomes more than just an emotion or thought, but it becomes a way of living.

Another aspect of gratitude at Adams is the daily opportunity to give thanks to God through prayer and the study of Scripture. In our school, there is an environment where faith is woven into the fabric of everyday life and in every subject. Students are taught to understand what God has done for us and are shown the hope found in Christ. When students are thankful, it helps them develop a deeper relationship with God and an understanding that their academic and personal achievements are not solely the result of their own efforts, but are gifts that flow from God.

So how is gratitude seen in our Christian school? Teachers, staff, and students share in the mission of nurturing each student's spiritual and intellectual growth. Gratitude is expressed through acts of kindness, encouragement, and service. Students bring prayers for other classmates and songs of joy to God on a daily basis. In the way that our children speak and act toward others, it is a place where gratitude becomes not only an attitude but also an outward action to those around them.

Our gratitude is not just a passing sentiment, but a lifelong practice that changes our children. The lessons they learn about gratitude will stay with them. They will carry with them a deep understanding of how everything they have and everything that they are is a gift from God. In a world that often emphasizes entitlement and self-centeredness, we can be grateful that we have a school that points our children toward God and encourages them to live a grateful life.

We also know we are not prone to be thankful. Like the Israelites in the Old Testament, we murmur. Students are not always thankful for school or teacher, or the subjects they study. Parents are not always thankful for the school. Teachers might not always appreciate every parent. We need to be reminded of the many blessings, starting with salvation, in order to be thankful for the blessings and then we need to be taught how to live a thankful life. What makes a Christian school so valuable is that it teaches both why we should be thankful and how to show thankfulness. Continue to pray that this life of thanksgiving, by God's grace, will continue to be taught, learned, and lived.

Routine

Mr. Ben Zandstra
Finance Chairman

I suspect that since the inception of our school, finance committee agendas have been fundamentally the same: open with prayer, count tuition, conduct the deficit drive, close with prayer. While there is certainly a long and varied list of other matters that demand the attention of our committee, the fact remains that much of the work is routine. Month after month, year after year, committee after committee, Board after Board.

Routine is not necessarily a bad thing. Routine is part of creation. Days, weeks, months, and seasons are all routine. We all have personal routines. Things we do every day. Things we might begin to take for granted. Taking something for granted means failing to properly appreciate it, often because of overfamiliarity. Here's an example: how often do we really appreciate electricity? Or even acknowledge it is there? Probably not often. But when a storm comes and knocks the power out (along with our lights, computers, garage door openers, refrigerators, coffee makers, and wireless routers) we realize very quickly how much we depended on that "routine" electrical service.

Let's take that example now and apply it to finance. Is it possible that we have become so accustomed to the "routine" that we fail to truly recognize the magnitude of the financial blessings we have been given, and how much we rely on them each day to function? Let's consider yet another "routine" financial update from that perspective.

We are pleased to report that tuition is coming in well. We depend on this steady revenue stream to pay our staff, insurance, utilities, and many other financial commitments. For this reason, families are reminded that it is extremely important that they keep their tuition accounts current. Our committee strongly encourages the use of ACH to automate these payments. If you choose to pay with a paper check, please have your payments to school by the first of each month, so they are ready for deposit when our committee meets. To the many families who have made (and continue to make) this "routine" payment, we thank you.

Along with these tuition dollars, we also rely on the support drive. Our goal for this year's drive is \$391,414. To date, we have collected \$141,792. The follow-up drive is underway to collect the

balance. Please consider contributing to help us achieve this goal. This is a wonderful opportunity for grandparents and friends of Adams Christian School to show their financial support for the work that is done here. To the many supporters who have made (and continue to make) this "routine" donation, we thank you as well.

We give thanks to God for the many supporters of Adams Christian School. We ask for your continued prayers and financial support throughout the year ahead. We pray for hearts that are grateful, that we may not be tempted to take the many gifts we have been given for granted. We pray for wisdom to use these gifts to the honor and glory of His name.

Building Committee Report

Mr. Mike Kerkstra

Building Committee Chairman

As I travel from job to job during the day, I considered how I reacted to the general upkeep of businesses and homes. My reactions are different depending on whether the property is attractive, well maintained, and debris and trash have been picked up. The reaction includes an impression of the owner. Are they capable and committed to the community. As newly appointed chairman of the Building Committee, I wondered how the general public and the supporters of our school view the building and grounds (est. 11.9 acres) of Adams Christian School. The committee takes seriously the responsibility to maintain the building and grounds in such a way that we are respected by the neighbors, and our parents are proud of the school.

We also must meet the expectations of the parents, the Board, the teachers and students, and the staff. This list presents us with opportunities to maintain and improve an environment that is good for learning, and that allows the teachers and support staff to do their work.

The work that has been done over the summer and early in this new school year includes landscape around the main entrance to the building. Several overgrown trees were removed, stumps were grinded, and plants were added. There was a major upgrade in one classroom that included the demo of an outdated bathroom that was getting expensive to repair. We also installed new cabinetry and countertops and gave this room a fresh coat of paint. We

plan to do the same for two more classrooms next summer. We also are working on upgrading the outdated keyless entry system yet this year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many contractors and volunteers who made this work possible. From those that worked on these particular projects to others who put in extra effort year-round, maintaining the grounds and snowplowing the parking lots. A special thanks also must go to Mark Ophoff for his exceptional janitorial work and oversight. He is the eyes and ears of the building committee and keeps us alerted to any special needs.

The building committee also keeps a list of men who are able and willing to help on projects. Whether you are a licensed contractor or a handyman, we would like to add you to our list so that we aren't always calling the same people. If you are interested, let me or any committee member know.

We thank God for His providential care of Adams Christian School.

The Professional School Bus Driver

Mr. Eric Lubbers

Transportation Chairman

I am happy to announce that the four bus routes are running smoothly this year. There is much planning that goes into making a safe route. We give a very special thanks to Mrs. Melissa Looyenga, for the much-appreciated work as our transportation supervisor. The five full-time drivers returned again this year, and continue to do an excellent job. Once again, we give a special thanks to Jodi Gunnink (bus 10), Ellen Kamps (bus 11), Jill Essenburg (bus 12), Erika Dykshorn (bus 13 am), and Vicki Elzinga (bus 13 pm) for their commitment to ACS.

Becoming a professional bus driver requires a lot of dedication. There will be times when a sub driver is needed in the case of doctor appointments, family emergencies, sickness, and many other unforeseen things. For this reason, we are always looking to train new bus drivers. In order to become a professional bus driver there are some personal and legal requirements that must be met.

Some of the personal qualifications and responsibilities include:

- Working with children
- Being dependable

- Quality of leadership
- Understanding the mechanical condition of the bus during pre-trip, and report any problems
- Drive safely and defensively at all times
- Maintain a positive image as a representative of the school
- Administer first aid if needed
- Knowledge of local state laws, and regulations for school buses

Some of the legal requirements are:

- Taking a school bus driver education class
- Commercial drivers license examination (class B, and or C, a passenger endorsement and a school bus endorsement)
- Pass the Michigan Department of Education Physical Examination
- Pass a driving skills test
- Clear a federal criminal check by providing a finger print
- Complete a continuing education course every two years keeping your license up to date.

Learning to drive a school bus may seem to be a difficult task at first. Maybe it looks like a lot of work. Maybe it makes you nervous. Whatever the reason may be, I can say from experience that it can be very rewarding and is also a great way to help Adams Christian School. If anyone is interested in fulfilling the need/desire to drive a school bus, please contact either Melissa Looyenga or Eric Lubbers. We would be happy to assist you in any way we can during the training process.

Romans 12:5 *"So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."*

Other News

M is for Mothers Club

Mrs. Nicole Kooienga

Mothers Club President

"What is Mothers Club?" "What do you do on Mothers Club?" "What is the purpose of Mothers Club?" Hopefully I can answer those and other questions like them in this article. The short and sweet answer is, A LOT! The official answer from the constitution is, first "To bring about a closer relationship between home and school, that the parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the training of the

children...,” and secondly “To aid the school financially.” I would like to go into a little more detail on each of these points.

Regarding the first point, I think we can all see the benefit of having a close relationship with the school, and what a blessing it can be for both! When mothers work to help the school, we aid in the raising of our children in a little different way than when they are at home with us. The school takes the place of the home, and we can be part of our children learning and growing in a new way by taking an active role in Mothers Club. There are lots of ways this can be done.

Consider being a room mom! That’s a great way to grow and keep this relationship between home and school. Get to know your child’s teacher and classmates by going on field trips, giving a teacher birthday party, and giving a Christmas party. It is also rewarding to serve on committees like the Teachers Convention, Grandparents Day, and Staff Appreciation luncheon. Let’s remember to give of our time in this way.

I could continue with all the benefits until my fingers hurt from typing, but we can also take encouragement from a much better source. The woman of Proverbs 31 is a good example of someone who works hard for her family. Vs. 30 and 31 say *“Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.”* Also, II Thessalonians 3 gives a warning against not working at all and being “busybodies.” Then vs. 13 says *“But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.”* So, let us not weary, but continue to work hard to raise our children by serving on things like Mothers Club.

Regarding the second point about helping the school financially; how does Mothers Club do this? We have many fundraisers throughout the year. Soup supper, walk-a-thon, freezer meals, Pizza Friday, just to name a few. These all help us raise money to give back to the school. Some ways we give back are: providing Bibles and Psalters for each student, paying for class trips, teacher birthday gift cards, fulfilling the teachers’ wish lists, and giving surplus funds to the Long Range Plan committee to aid in future needs for the school.

Why is Adams so great? What sets it apart? You! You moms make this school a great place to

send our children. This is not to take away from the many hours and dedication of our teachers, staff, and school board, but there are also so many mothers that take care of things behind the scenes to make this school run. Below are just a few of the many notes of appreciation that we have received, showing just how wonderful and hard working all of you moms are!

“Thank you for all the time, effort and thought that you put into preparing food for us teachers!”

“I always know that when I come to Adams for convention, the food and building will be better than anywhere else.”

“The ACS families love their school and it shows.”

“I love going to Adams for Grandparents Day. I am thankful for all the work that you do to make it a special day.”

2024-2025 School Events

December 23 – January 1: Holiday Break

January 2: Return to school

January 17: End of Quarter 2 marking period

January 20 – 24: Aimsweb all week

February 13: Soup Supper

February 21: Parent/Teacher Conferences (no school)

March 4 & 11: Kindergarten testing for next year

March 17 & 18: Hearing/Vision testing

March 21: End of Quarter 3 marking period

March 28: Spring All-school Program (1/2 day)

April 1: Kindergarten Round-Up

April 4 – 11: Spring Break

April 28 – May 2: Aimsweb testing all week

April 30: Kindergarten Program

May 19: All Schools Band Concert

May 23: Last day of school/Graduation

The cards below with quotes on them were used at a previous PRTI Convention. They are included here for our interest. They provide insight into the kind of school a previous generation strived to establish- schools that were broad in scope but sharp and narrow in their distinctives. Let us be reminded of (and even re-engaged with) our foundational commitments to Reformed education as reflected in these past writings. Our success as a school isn't defined by financial stability, facility comforts, student GPAs, enrollment, or staff experience. Success must be defined by the faithful execution of the purpose the school is founded to pursue. – Rick Mingerink

Herman Hoeksema on the Christian School

"It certainly constitutes a fundamental difference in the basis of your education whether you proceed from the principle of common grace or from the tenet that God is gracious to His people only; whether you believe that there is a general influence of grace through the Spirit of God restraining sin and improving men, or whether you insist that the natural man is actually totally depraved; whether you view the natural man as being able to perform much good in this world, or whether you adhere to the truth that all his works are at all times only sin outside of the regenerating grace of the Spirit of Christ"

- H. Hoeksema, *Our Own Christian High School*, SB vol. 18

"It is my firm conviction that the Christian Reformed Synod of Kalamazoo in 1924 has given the death-blow to the Christian school."

- H. Hoeksema, *Our Own Christian High School*, SB vol. 18

"I assure you, that this principle of common grace, wiping out the antithesis between the Christian and the world in regard to civil matters will bear fruit, will obliterate the practical difference between Christian and public instruction."

- H. Hoeksema, *The Christian School Movement: Why a Failure?*, SB vol. 8

"If we understand that the natural and the spiritual cannot and may never be separated, but that in every department of his life in the world the Christian has the calling of living from the subjective principle of the life of regeneration and according to the objective standard of the Word of God. Religion, the Christian religion, is not something that is added to life; but it is a power, a living power, a living power that purposes to permeate all of life. The Christian is called to be a Christian always and everywhere."

- H. Hoeksema, *The Place of Doctrine in the Christian School*, SB vol. 12

"All the instruction that is given in the Christian Schools should be based on the Scriptures, should be permeated with the truth of the Word of God; that Scripture should absolutely be the criterion of all that is taught, so that no instruction shall either be "neutral" nor in conflict with Word of God. This must not only be the case with the instruction that is given in the Bible as such, with the Bible-lesson, but as much as possible with all other subjects taught in the Christian School. History, for instance, not only sacred but secular as well, is, according to Scripture the realization of the eternal counsel of God and its course tends to be the ultimate realization of the Kingdom of God. In a Christian School it must emphatically be taught in this light. It surely cannot use the material that is offered in our modern text-books, which are all based on and proceeding from the theory of evolution. And the same hold for civics, physiology, physical geography, and whatever other subjects may be taught in our schools. And as it is with the instruction proper, so it is with the management of the



school, the relation of teacher to pupil, discipline. The appearance and conduct of the teacher, the language he or she employs, the attitude assumed, it should all be in harmony with the Word of God. A teacher must not appear in front of her class as a painted picture, with a rich application of rouge and lipstick and powder, or as the exemplification of the latest fads in style. And school discipline should not follow every whim and fancy of modern pedagogy. The fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom and which is objectively revealed in the Bible, should reign supreme and dominate in the instruction and life of the Christian School."

- H. Hoeksema, *The Christian School Movement: Why a Failure?*, SB vol. 8

"I have great respect and am very thankful for the heroic efforts of some Christian School teachers to base their instruction on the Word of God throughout."

- H. Hoeksema, *The Christian School Movement: Why a Failure?*, SB vol. 8

"It is not the purpose of the school to prepare the child for confession of faith in the Church, to enable him to appropriate consciously the blessings of salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ, for this belongs specifically to the domain of the Church. But the purpose of the school is to prepare him for a life in the world that is good before God, to give him sound instruction in the various subjects he must know to assume his place in the different domains of this present life. Is it not the distinctive Reformed, Calvinistic conception of life, that it belongs to God in its entirety, that nothing may be excluded from the service of the living God, that His glory is the chief purpose of all? And is it not exactly on this basis that the need is felt for an education that may prepare the child for such a life?"

- H. Hoeksema, *The Christian School Movement: Why a Failure?*, SB vol. 8

"We will acknowledge him as Lord in our personal lives and ask for grace that we may walk as children of light, crucify our old natures, and walk in new and holy paths. We will ask for his will and for grace to do that will in our home life in the relationship of man and wife, of parent and child. We will insist that he be Lord in the schools where our children are instructed, so that they may be thoroughly furnished for every good work. We will confess that God is Lord in the spheres of industry and commerce, over the relationship of employer and employee. In the church and in society, in the shop and in the office, in the home and on the street, in the city and in the state, always and everywhere, it shall be our earnest desire and endeavor to walk according to the confession that God is LORD."

- H. Hoeksema, *Knowing God and Man*, RFPA, 2006

"And finally, also today, the Lord our God is one Lord. Also today He is Lord over all. Lord not only in the church, but Lord also in the state, Lord also in social life, Lord in our home life, Lord in the life of our education. And for that very reason, also today His precepts are valid for every sphere of that life. But if this is so, then it is also clear, that the child must learn to see and honor those precepts, for all those spheres. And that those precepts must form the very basis of his education. Religion must not be something that is added to our life, but it must be the heart of our life. Religion must not be something that is added to our education, but it must be the heart of our education, the precepts of the Lord must be the basis from which our entire education must proceed."

- H. Hoeksema, *Christian Education*, SB vol. 3

Cornelius Hanks on the Christian School

"The question may well be asked: what do you mean when you speak of 'our own schools'? You certainly do not favor a church school. Your intention is not in the least to take the responsibility of the instruction away from the parents by laying it at the door of the church. The training of the covenant child belongs with the office of believers, and we have no intention of destroying this principle. Nor is your purpose to create a school which only carries the outward distinction that it is open only to Protestant Reformed children and boasts a teacher's staff of persons who can prove their membership in some Protestant Reformed Church. That mere outward distinction does not make it a school of 'our own'.



We want a Christian School, call it by whatever name you deem proper, that is based on sound doctrine, where the instruction is permeated with the Truth of the Word of God. Basic Christian instruction is more than a daily Bible lesson, more than a Christian atmosphere, and more than an occasional application of some moral axioms. A passing remark or a story with a Christian moral applied to the lesson of the day does not make a school Christian. The instruction must be permeated with the Truth of Scripture, or it fails to meet its requirements. No teacher is fit to teach Arithmetic unless she carries in her soul the conviction that one and one are two, not simply by some natural law, but because God's ordinances govern the whole universe. She must not merely say so, but that conviction must govern all her instruction. She cannot possibly teach Geography unless she is constantly aware that she is dealing with God's earthly creation, God's world. And she has no right to teach history unless she sees in all of history the unfolding of God's eternal thoughts and purposes, even the development of His covenant.

In one word, also in the sphere of instruction, the question is always: God or Baal. We must absolutely maintain that God is God, the Sovereign and ever blessed Lord, besides whom there is no other. To deny Him, to ignore Him, or even to slight Him is to rear up an idol before His face. Serve Him we must for we either love and serve Him with all that is in us, or we bend the knee to Baal. The choice is inevitable. But it must always be for God and against Baal. There is no alternative.

- C. Hanks, *Our Own School Movement*.
A talk given at the Chr. School Auxiliary meeting, Jan. 6, 1944.