

THE FIRST PIETIST¹

An Introduction and Translation of a Communion Sermon by Jodocus van Lodenstein

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1. Introduction

This introduction and translation began as a request by Stacy Johnson to translate selected works by Seventeenth Century Dutch Reformed theologians and preachers for a forthcoming reader in Reformed Theology.² In translating works by Anna-Maria von Schurman and Jodocus van Lodenstein I was lead to research the secondary literature, most of which dated from the Nineteenth Century. This research revealed that not only has little work been done on Reformed Pietism, but that most studies focus on explicitly *theological* works and tend to overlook the valuable resources provided by its proponents' sermons. Further, it indicated that little has been done in relating Reformed Pietism to three further elements. First, in setting it in the context of both Calvin's thought and that of early Calvinist Orthodoxy, in particular to the work of W. Ames, G. Voetius, and Johannes Cocceius. Second, in examining the relationship of these Reformed Pietists to earlier medieval trajectories in theology, mysticism and the spiritual life³ and third, in examining their understanding of the Sacraments.⁴ These lacunae cannot be filled here, but through this brief introduction and translation of a sermon by Reformed Pietism's most prominent preacher, it is hoped that material is provided for further research.

The introduction will proceed by first defining the term Pietism, then by providing a brief biography of Jodocus van Lodenstein and finally by discussing some of the theological themes raised through his sermons. A translation of "He Brought Me Into His Banqueting House," one of his four surviving Communion Sermons, based on the text *Song of Songs* 1:4, follows.

The Term Pietism

The term Pietism, from the word piety⁵ (used by Calvin to describe the ordered union of knowledge and spirituality⁶), was coined in the Eighteenth Century to describe the movement associated with Philip Jacob Spener (1635-1705).⁷ However, Pietism had much earlier roots, in the English Puritans and in the Dutch Reformed successors of William Ames (1576-1633), Gilbertius Voetius (1589-1676) and Andreas Cocceius (1603-1669); men such as Willem Teelinck (1579-1629), Th. van den Brakel (1608-1669), Jacobus Koelman (1632-1695) and Jodocus van Lodenstein (1620-1677). The focus on later, (Lutheran) Pietism has tended to obscure these earlier forerunners of the movement.

Heinrich Heppe had distinguished between "Reformed Pietism" and its later development as Pietism in Germany, defining the former as:

eine spezifisch protestantische, evangelisch-Kirkliche Erscheinung, welche zu definiren ist als das Streben nach Vervollstandigung der Kirchen-reformation des sechszehnten Jahrhunderts als einer bloßen Reform der Lehre durch Erweckung der Pietas oder durch eine Reform des Lebens...⁸

Albrecht Ritschl also referred to "Reformed Pietism," but tended to view the earlier movement through the lens of (later) German Pietism. He viewed it as influenced negatively by medieval mysticism and monasticism and as seeking to absorb these in the Protestant tradition through conventicles.⁹ Wilhelm Goeters¹⁰ referred to the Reformed Pietists in Holland as rather

“forerunners of pietism,” thus accepting the restricted Ritschlian definition. Modern scholars such as M. Schmidt¹¹ and A.S. van der Linde¹² likewise limit the term Pietism to its German and post-1700 manifestations in Europe and elsewhere. Dutch scholars in particular refer to “Reformed Pietism” as *de nadere reformatie*.¹³

In the English-speaking world however, Pietism is still the overarching term for the phenomenon¹⁴, within which three streams should be discerned; the English (or Puritan), the German (Pietist) and the Netherlands (*nadere reformatie*), separated somewhat in time, but overlapping in basic concerns for the deepening of the individual life and continuing reform of the church. For the purposes of this introduction, the *nadere reformatie* will be called Reformed Pietism.

The Reformed Piety of Jodocus van Lodenstein¹⁵

Context

In Calvin two tendencies might be described as *pietas*: one pertaining to knowledge and intellect and the other to spiritual life and formation. Calvin held these two together, but his stress on the *unio mystica cum Cristo* provided the starting point for later Reformed Pietists. In the Netherlands of the late 16th and early 17th Centuries, these two tendencies would produce, on the one hand, Fransiscus Gomarus (1563-1641) and Johannes Maccovius (1578-1644) who stressed “Orthodoxy” of doctrine, while, on the other hand, William Ames, Gisbertius Voetius, Jacobus Koelman and Andreas Cocceius, who all defined theology as “practical theology.”¹⁶ This latter tendency would find expression in the work of Willem Teellinck (1579-1629), Theodore van den Brakel (1608-1669), Everardus van der Hooght (1642-1716) and Jodocus van Lodenstein (1620-1677).

Lodenstein, called by Ritschl the “first pietist,”¹⁷ was a student of both G. Voetius (Utrecht) and A. Cocceius (Franeker). He was parish minister at Utrecht from 1653 until his death in 1677. There he exercised a powerful preaching ministry, seeking to reform the church, which he claimed was Reformed in doctrine but not in life. Such was his impact that his work *Beschouwinge van Zion*¹⁸(1674) (which has received most attention¹⁹), and collected sermons *Geestelyke Opweker voor het Onverloochende, Doode en Geestelose Christendom* (1701)²⁰ were reprinted up to the last century. His poems (*Uytspanninge*, 1676) also played a major role in later pietist hymnody. He was part of a wider circle of influential figures, including G. Voetius, A. Essenius, J. Teellinck, Anna-Maria van Schurman (1607-1678)²¹ and Jean de Labadie (1610-1674).

Themes

He is the most prominent exponent of Reformed *praxis pietatis*. He stressed sanctification in daily life, which he regarded as more important than justification alone. For the literal meaning or knowledge of Scripture and the Confessions must be inwardly appropriated by the Spirit and lived out practically. He regarded the Reformation rejection of ecclesial practices of confession, daily prayers and monastic life as great losses. Conversion and self-denial were essential elements in the process of sanctification. While remaining true to the Reformed Faith, his stress on experiential knowledge of God revealed clear mystical tendencies. He sought the reform of the Church, charging that the Reformed have rested too easily in the possession of pure doctrine (which he regarded as the benefit of the 16th Century Protestant Reformation). This led to a situation where “The Reformation has become a Deformation,” where “a Reformation without Spirit has led to worse deformation as lives have not been transformed.”²² The true goal of reformation is self-denial and sanctification, for which doctrine is only a medium.²³

In the Communion sermon translated here, the focus is on the inner experience. He affirms the Reformed doctrine of Justification, but holds that it has been emphasized to the detriment of sanctification. This has led to laxity, to the ignoring of good works and to the tendency to view

them as only expressions of thanks, instead of as the results (fruit) of the inner working of the Spirit. Following Calvin, he views sanctification as the (gradual) restoration of the *imago Dei*.²⁴

I saw also our brothers and sisters. They were in Him (John 15:5, 6, 7). I saw how they in this their glory, carried the Image of that King, adorned with fine shapes...²⁵

This is rooted in his Christology which regards the primary goal of the incarnation as the restoration of God's image in humanity. Certainly the incarnation was on account of sin, but Lodenstein emphasises that Christ took human nature that it might also be glorified and sanctified. He can thereby move from the incarnation to sanctification and not remain focused on justification. Thus Goeters' and Proosts'²⁶ claim that justification is but a *Vorstufe zur Heiligung*²⁷ does not account for Lodenstein's understanding of union with God through Christ.

Again following Calvin, he regards the Lord's Supper as a means of strengthening the Christian for work in the world.²⁸ However, he stresses the experiential aspects of the communion, describing his own experience in terms of the mystical union between the Bridegroom and Bride:

For the Lord does not wish that I remain attached to the external, physical eating and drinking,....the Sacrament was but the doors to give entrance to the way to the inner movement of love and to the soul-ravishing communion with the Lord, to the Inner-room of the Saviour.²⁹

Lodenstein rejected the then common understanding of the elements as signs, as "Zwinglianism," charging that the denial of Transubstantiation³⁰ need not lead to a denial of the real presence and enjoyment of Christ in the sacrament.³¹ Certainly he rejects a physical eating of a transubstantiated body, proposing instead, as did Calvin, a spiritual eating. Through the sacrament, one receives not only the benefits of Christ, but also a true union which he describes as:

I see nothing else but the KING...I saw ourselves no longer in the inner-room. That is to say, I sank away in our groundless nothingness. I melted and was consumed in myself and I said, with the man of God, Jacob: (Gen 28:17) How awesome is this place? This is nothing else but a house of God and this is a gate of heaven.³²

Lodenstein's theological contemporaries rejected terms such as "illumination," "union," "melting" and "*vernietiging*" all of which came from earlier, medieval mystical traditions. He does not reject these, holding that these terms reveal the importance of experience beyond a mere literal or intellectual apprehension of Scripture or of the sacraments. Rather, he understood and interpreted them in terms of Reformed teaching. He denied that "mysticism" meant only "highest illumination" and not also the "practice of piety." Thus with Dort,³³ he distinguishes between the immediate and irresistible working of the Spirit in regeneration, and the continuing work of sanctification. Do such mystic experiences deny the individual self? Is it so that *ad nihilum redactus est homo*?³⁴ At first glance this does seem to be an experience of the *annihilatio mystica*. However, note that Lodenstein puts this in the context of a vision of God or rather, of his attributes, buttressed by scripture references.

The King bids us see there his beautiful and wonderful glory....For everything which is in the inner-room, is nothing else but the King himself. There everything reflects DIVINITY....I saw Him there clearly before us....That which I now saw of the Godhead, was nothing else than that he was revealed to us in his attributes and virtues.³⁵

Further, following Bernard³⁶ and Calvin,³⁷ this can be understood as the annihilation of the (sinful) self. The illumination of the Spirit in regeneration does not deny the human self, but is part of the restoration of the *imago Dei* and of God's *ordo*. Rather than advocating an "other-worldliness" it is precisely here that Lodenstein's mysticism is most closely connected to ethics. For in the midst of this vision:

I saw yet another thing; namely, in the reflection of the King I saw also our brothers and sisters...and they see the Head, they also see the members...I saw how they carried the Image of that King.³⁸

The Christian is only brought into the King's "inner-room" in order to serve,³⁹ to struggle against the enemy⁴⁰ and to cultivate the virtues after the image of Christ. This is a matter of both experience and the will: "for to bend our will to his uncreated will, that is to be in the inner-room. The agreement of our wills, that is our heaven, that is our salvation."⁴¹ These themes are clearly expressed in the sermon translated here and subtitled "Preached after the administration of Holy Communion."⁴²

Despite F. Ernest Stoeffler's⁴³ attempt to raise academic interest in Reformed Pietism and its influence in the American Colonies, in recent times little has been done. Indeed, a swift survey of standard reference works⁴⁴ reveals either little or no reference to the topic "Reformed Pietism." It is hoped that his brief introduction and translation will stimulate interest in a neglected area of Reformed studies.

Jodocus van Lodenstein
A Sermon on Song of Songs 1:4
“The King brought me into His Inner-Room”

translated by Iain S. Maclean

Before the celebration of Holy Communion we considered the words of the Bride in Song of Songs 2:4 “He led me into his wine-cellar, and love is his banner over me.” I take the opportunity afforded by these words to consider more closely the things which were further accomplished for us in the Sacrament.

We know how carnal persons, when they go to a dinner, organise everything towards that end. They prepare their clothes, their jewelry and all which serves that end. They think about it, talk about it, rejoice and are glad, even before they arrive at the meal. Likewise we Christians should so behave before this priceless meal which is held here on earth and where one can taste that which is most tasteful, hear that which is most priceless and behold that which is most beautiful.

But now we have already been there and now we must learn from the worldly person to have the most perceptive reflection. Does not the worldly person care for their reception when they have been to a wedding? How long do they not speak of the honor done them there? How sensitive are they to the favours shown? Of the valuables which they saw? These occupy their thoughts and conversation for days, months, indeed for years afterwards. Even in their advanced years they can still with great pleasure tell their children and grandchildren how they were received here and there. So also now must we consider how we fared at the royal table, the marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:9).

I have decided to talk about this now and so that we may do this profitably, we must let pass all that we love in the world. Everything must be still here. Our souls must await God in silence (Ps. 62:1). Otherwise I fear that many here will not understand what I say, because there is no stillness in their souls. For how shall one comprehend the mystery as long as there remains in us the great noise of carnal lusts, of the following of the world in the desires of our flesh, doing the desire of the flesh and of the mind. (Eph. 2:3). I say once again that all must become still if we would profitably hear.

In order to attain our goal, we shall give a sufficient introduction to the read text. The bride in the preceding had praised the beauty, the majesty and the excellence of her bridegroom. She exalted his pre-eminent love, his friendship and love and all the grace and benefits, above the wine of all earthly joy and pleasures, which he showed to his Church. She valued his oil, or the diverse gifts of the Holy Spirit as worthy aroma, worthy to soften, to freshen, to rejoice and to make the soul nimble and light. She rejoiced greatly in his Person and Offices. She declares him as beloved by the maidens, the true elect. She also sought that the Lord Jesus would draw her and her co-elect through his Word, and through the inward working of His Spirit, further enlighten, make willing, improve and gladden her so that in the imitation of her Redeemer she might come to greater salvation, grace, virtue and joy, that the whole Church might be gathered up to the Lord (2 Thess. 2:1).

1.

Now imagine wherein and whereby she saw and experienced his exceptional love. As our text says: “The King has brought me into his inner room.” In order to better understand the text, I shall (1) first see who is here the KING, then (2) what one must understand by this “inner-room” of the King’s and finally, (3) examine for what purpose the king brought her into the inner-room.

I.

The one who is little informed by the Word of God shall scarcely know that the King, of whom the text here speaks, is the Lord Jesus Christ, our saviour, the son of the living God. In the preceding verse she had spoken of this one as the beloved of the maidens. Although it is also true that God the Father or the Holy Trinity in general is referred to by the name of King. He is the King of Heaven (Dan 4:37), the King of the whole Earth (Zech 14:9), the King of Ages (I Tim 1:17) etc. He is the King who has prepared a bride for his son (Matt 22:2). Although in a certain sense here this refers to the Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the Father says: (Ps 2:6) "I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill." He is the eternal, substantive Wisdom of the Father who says: "Through me the King rules and the princess establish righteousness. Through me the rulers rule, and the princess and all the judges of the earth" (Prov 8:15). Of him he said in the preceding verse: "Your name (that is your Person and saving Office) is as an oil poured forth: therefore the maidens love you." He is the one of whom the bride speaks in the words following our text "We will exult and rejoice in you, we will extol your excellent love, above wine; the righteous love you." See thus how the righteous, in whom dwell no deceit, increase in the knowledge of Christ and also, after the sensing of his grace, further increase in spiritual joy and in the praise of his grace. This was all the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and so is he also the King of whom the text speaks.

The bride has repeatedly so called the Lord Jesus. He was the one of whom the Church said, verse 12: "While the King is at his round table, my nard gave forth a fine scent." He is the king who is imaged by Solomon in Song of Songs 3:11 and 7:5. He is the King who desires the beauty of the bride and before whom the bride, as before her lord, must bow down (Ps 45:11). He is the one over whom the daughters of Zion rejoice (Zech 9:9).

That the Church here addresses the Lord by the name of King is worthy of note. For she wished to communicate a) his great glory, his majesty and splendour. Here one must say: "The Lord rules, he is clothed with majesty, the Lord is clothed with strength, etc. (Ps 93:1). She refers here to the King with the crowns, by which his mother crowned him, on the day of his wedding, on the day of the joy of his heart (Song of Songs 3:11). Thereby is represented Christ's glory, to which he was elevated through his ascension and which he shall let his church behold in heaven (Luke 24:26, John 17:24, Philm 2:9). This all serves to elevate the grace which the bride had received, that he who led the bride into the inner-room was not a minor noble, but a King. b) The appellation of King also serves to show that he was her King, to whom she owed honor, service and submission. For he who was her King had bought her with a great price (I Cor 6:20). Who as the first pioneer of her salvation, is sanctified through suffering (Heb 2:10), and who through death brought to nought he who had power of death, that is the devil, verse 14. We must be drawn out of the power of darkness, we must be translated into the kingdom of the Son (Col 1:13). He is the one in whom we have redemption through his blood, (namely) the forgiveness of sins, verse 14. he is the head of body, verse 18. Of him the angel said: "He shall be great and called the son of the most high. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his Father David. And he shall be King over the house of Jacob for ever and of his Kingdom there will be no end." (Luke 1:32).

II.

Now this King said that he had inner rooms. In the royal house there are doorways, portals, throughways, upper rooms and many other rooms. But there are also INNER-ROOMS (I Chr 28:11) which are the hidden parts of the house where one is the safest and where one can view the King's most valuable gold, silver, jewels and other excellencies. There one can speak freely of the greatest secrets of the soul and there one can also enjoy the most inward communion with the excellencies of the King.

The the inner-rooms are to be understood as (a) the most hidden rooms, one can find in 2 Kings 6:12. there one of the servants of the King of Syria says: "Elisha the prophet who is in

Israel gives the King of Israel the words which you speak in your innermost bedchamber.” One also finds this out from Christ’s words, when he says: “When you pray, enter your inner-room and close your doors and pray to your Father who is in secret and your Father who sees in secret shall reward you in the open.” One can also add here the texts Prov 20:27; 24:3, 4; Eccl 10:20; Ezek 8:12; 21:14 and Lk 12:3. So the inner-rooms are also (b) the most safe places; and from this one learns God’s true judgment, when he says: “Is it not the sword of the great, who shall be struck down, who attempt to press on to those in the inner-rooms?” (Ezek 21:14). So also the Lord threatens the disobedient, Deut 32:25 “In the open the sword shall bereave, and in the inner-rooms shall be terror.” It is also mentioned that (c) this is the place where one has the most intimate communion. One sees the same thing in Joel 2:16 and Judg 15:1, where that particular word [(Haadhaar), inner-room, bedroom] is used of the safest and most hidden place. Thus one also sees “inner-room” of the bride” used in Song of Songs 3:4 to translate the same word. This is particularly to be observed of the “inner-rooms” of the King, in which only nobility and the King’s associates commonly move, and where one commonly deals with issues of the greatest secrecy.

Such inner-rooms the bride here ascribes to God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit with respect to his holy and hidden working on our souls. She attributes it with especial emphasis to the Lord Jesus as mediator, as her saviour, friend and bridegroom. We must understand by these inner-rooms then (a) heaven, the house of the Father, where there are many mansions (John 14:2), represented by the Holy of holies and thus called the inner curtain (Heb 6:19). Jesus has gone in there before us (Heb 9:20). Since the believer here on earth already possesses heaven, one understands by these inner-rooms (b) the complete secret of the Kingdom of Heaven, and all the treasures of wisdom and the knowledge of the mystery of God, of the Father and of Christ (Col 2:2-3). By this we understand the tender love of Christ and the inner communion of the soul with Christ. We also understand thereby the sure and certain preservation and protection of God’s children, with all heavenly comforts.

That these benefits, presented under the name of inner-rooms, are many, is because the Lord our King’s treasures and valuables are many and are at different times and ways dealt out to his children. Through them we are in Christ Jesus, who for us is the wisdom of God and the righteousness and sanctification and redemption (I Cor 1:30). He has the grace of making alive (Eph 2:1, 4, 5). He brings about our justification in the name of Jesus and through the Spirit of God I Cor 6:11). And from his fulness have we all received grace upon grace (John 1:16). Thus are the mysteries of the Lord, for those who fear Him, and His covenant is made known to them (Ps 45:14).

III.

Now when the bride says that the King brought her into the inner-rooms, we need first (a) to see what that bringing into the inner-rooms in general means. Second, (b) how in particular is this true for the Bride. Third (c) why she reveals this secret?

(a) The bringing in or coming or being led presupposes three things: If the Bride could do it herself, she would not need guidance. I propose then that there should be noted in the bride (i) a natural inability to bring herself to the inner-rooms in her own strength (according to I Cor 2:14; Eph 2:1-5, Rom 8:7). Apart from her natural inability there was yet (ii) another hinderance to entering the inner-rooms. For there was the “middle-wall” of separation (Eph 2:14) which first needs to be broken. There were also so many worldly hinderances to remove. There are the external duties of religion, upon which thousands remain hanging without moving on to something higher. For they had not learned with Paul to reckon all things lost (Phil 3:8) and thus was it especially important for her that she petitioned “draw me” (verse 4). The bringing into the inner-rooms also presupposes (iii) that the King through a powerful and supernatural work, overwhelmed her and removed all hinderances. Thus his working was irresistible. Thus the Lord

came to her in a most unexpected manner as if seeking the lost sheep. (almost like that of David, but in another context, Ps 78:71). This is what I reckon must be understood by these words.

(b) Now follows what we understand by the bringing into the inner-rooms. One must first understand by this the introduction to the privileges of the Church of Christ here below: for before one enters the glories of heaven, one must first be built up as living stones into a spiritual edifice (I Pet 2:5). Through the lower chamber one ascends to the glories of heaven, where one shall always be with the Lord (I Thess 4:17). One is then led into Jesus' inner-rooms.

(i) Where one obtains a greater knowledge of the mysteries of God, which knowledge is now greater than in the days of the Old Testament. Thus this bringing in of which our text speaks is set here against the Old Testament administration, since the mystery of Jesus' kingdom was still concealed under the shadows of the ceremonies of the Law. But now under the New Testament we see with unveiled face the glory of the Lord, as in a mirror, and we are being changed into the likeness of that same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Cor 3:18). Now this is a revelation of the mystery which was kept secret for ages (Rom 16:25). This however, must not be understood as though the Lord God did not reveal evangelical teaching to the Fathers. For verse 26 states that the revelation occurred through the prophetic scriptures. But this refers to the increase, fulfillment, light and freedom (2 Cor 1:20; Heb 8:10) which is now enjoyed under the New Covenant.

However, this was not all that one understands by being led into the inner-rooms. For had the bride nothing more than an external administration and revelation of the truth; had she but an external confession of the Gospel, she would have enjoyed it and yet been completely devoid of the vision of God's face in righteousness. There was much else to be seen and heard in the inner-rooms, and these some of those in the Old Testament saw and heard more gloriously than many nominal Christians who now live under the New Covenant. See Ps. 4:7, 8; 16:9, 11; 17:14, 15; 51:10, 14.

(ii) Here was a call to fellowship with Jesus Christ our Lord (I Cor 1:9), which must also be understood as a calling to be of one mind (verse 10). One understands by this the illumination through God's Spirit and regeneration. Those who are thus led in are SPIRITUAL (I Cor 2:15). They know the mind of Christ, through the revelation of the Spirit (Eph 4:21). Those who are thus brought into the inner-room have also died and their lives are hidden in Christ in God (Col 3:3). They no longer live for themselves, but Christ lives in them (Gal 2:20). They have been crucified to the world (Gal 6:14). Through the truth they have been set free from sin's power and domination (John 8:32). The law of the Spirit of life in Jesus Christ has made them free from the law of sin and death. Thus they no longer walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit (Rom 8:1, 2). The Spirit of Christ lives in them (verse 9). And thus they mortify in themselves the working of the body (verse 13). Into these inner-rooms then enters no nominal Christian, who is satisfied with the entrance portal, with an external cultivation and external walk, and who does not once think that an inner Christian, over and above these, must conform to the image of God's son (verse 29).

(iii) When the soul is brought into the inner-room, she sees the Lord with unveiled face and his irresistible grace. In this way his children know the love of Christ, which surpasses knowledge, so that they may be filled completely with the fullness of God (Eph 3:19). He assures her then of the certain forgiveness of her sins and lets her see the breadth, the height and the depth of Jesus' love (verse 18). He assures her of her adoption. He reveals all that is hers and he reveals himself to her as merciful and as a forgiving God. Thus he lovingly embraces our souls (Isa 38:17). Thus we know the things which have been granted us by God (I Cor 2:12). Paul can thus say: "I know in whom I have believed and I am assured that he is able to guard my security laid away with him, until that day" (2 Tim 1:12). Oh! That we might comprehend all this! This is for all who belong to the elect in Christ! "That their hearts may be comforted as they are bound together in love, so that they might have all the riches of a full certainty of understanding, the knowledge of the

mystery of God, of the Father and of Christ in whom all the riches of wisdom and of knowledge are hidden (Col 2:2, 3).

(iv) It is a certain pledge of our saving inheritance, that one is already seated in heaven in Jesus Christ (Eph 2:6) who is our head. Thus one is through faith in the inner-room and reckons it good to wait and behold. Once sees than in the spacious halls the great benefits which God has laid-up for those who fear him (Ps 31:20). One perceives the perfect and glorious eternal weight of glory (2 Cor 4:17), so that one in hope is saved (Rom 8:24).

This is a Christian! One who is brought into the inner-room by Christ. Thus was the bride of Christ after her confession brought into the inner-room. By herself she had neither right nor ability, but when the King wished to bring her in, there was nothing that could hinder her. When she was brought into the inner-room, she obtained (i) greater knowledge of Christ's love and grace; (ii) she is renewed according to his image, learns the mind of Christ (iii) is assured there of the King's unchanging love and favour towards her and (iv) had the first downpayment of heaven.

(c) These blessings were so great that the self of the Bride could have passed away. For it was as if the King had taken a poor maid from the street and had taken her into his palace, and not just into the entrance portals, but into his inner-rooms, in his bedroom, where he displayed all his glory and riches and shared himself and his hidden love which he had long bore towards her. She was thus led by hand by a mighty king and must confess that she was brought into the inner-rooms. Thus even more opportune is the leading of a believing soul into the inner-rooms. For such a soul is by nature nothing and worse than a beggar, but is then graced with God's image, adorned with all that is priceless (Ezek 16), received with all that is wonderful. Indeed God Himself is her adornment, spice and joy. Thus the benefits cannot be hid. All this followed her prayer: "draw me," (verse 4). She then alters her prayers in praise, love and thanks.

We learn from this that it is the nature of God's children not easily to forget the grace shown when God is well-disposed to them and has revealed the priceless benefits which he has prepared and granted. They reflect much on this, with the result that discussion leads to their and other's awakening. One sees this in the example of the Church through the ages. She speaks of his excellent love (verse 2). She praises his oils (verse 3). She rejoices in it; she mentions his outstanding love (verse 4). She holds the thought of Christ's love like a bundle of myrrh in order to enliven her heart (verse 13). She relates this to other fellow-members (Song of Songs 2:4). She describes his beauty from head to foot and she testifies that everything about him is attractive (Song of Songs 5:16).

So also have other saints done when they experienced God's mysterious and merciful presence. One sees this in David when he beheld God in his glory, when he saw his power and honour. He spoke of being satisfied with marrow and fat; he would God praise with joyfully singing lips; he thinks of Him upon his bed; he meditates on God during the night-watches (Ps 63:3, 4, 6, 7). He speaks of this to all who fear God, of all that God has done for his soul (Ps 66:16). One sees this in Asaph (Ps 73:17), in the Samaritan woman (John 4:29, 39), and in many other saints.

The reason for this activity of God's children is so that (i) God's children themselves in this way might foster the grace which they once knew and which was the life of their soul; (ii) that in this way the work of heaven might begin here on earth in the loving and praising of God and (iii) that the heavenly good might be enchanting for those who belong to the elect of Jesus and who have not immediately been transferred to the kingdom of his beloved son (Col 1:13).

2. Application

Let us immediately transfer this, and examine what the Lord has accomplished for our souls at his table.

I.

(a) First then, when we approach the Sacrament, so comes the King himself as from his throne and takes us by the hand to the sacramental use of his grace. But how (you say) the King has not invited me, the ministers did? Yet one must know that the ministers are but his external instruments who administer the sacrament. These we must overlook and regard as but friends of the Bridegroom (John 3:29) who do not preach themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake (II Cor 4:5). They seek to prepare you people, in order to present you as a pure bride to a man, namely Christ (II Cor 11:2). It was not Paul, but the Lord who opened the heart of Lydia, so that she gave heed to what Paul said (Acts 16:14). Paul and Apollo were but servants through whom she believed as the Lord appointed (I Cor 3:5). So here it is the true God Himself who has brought us to his Sacrament. We see how in the world *grandes dames* are led by a courtier and go hand in hand with him. But here a greater honour befalls us when the God of heaven and earth, the Creator of all, the holy Jesus, the mediator of his people, the reflection of God's glory, takes us by the hand and sets us down at his table.

(b) Now when the King has brought us there, he opens the doors before us and invites us, through the medium of the sacrament (the doors as it were) to enter his inner-room to behold his glory there. For by the use of that sign he brings us to the significant matter of the Sacrament and he seals to us all the benefits of the covenant of mercy. Likewise we on our part again are united to the Lord.

(c) These doors are now thus opened so that the King does not let us stand in the portal, only to hear the sermon and the prayers and to see the outward signs, but he takes us into his inner-room, in order that through the taking (*gebruyk*) of the bread and the wine, we might enjoy the benefits of the New Testament. There we come much closer to the Lord than in our place of work, where he has temporarily called us and where we in the fulfillment of our call are also led by God's counsel and are always with God; so that the Christian is never outside of God (Ps 73:23, 24, 28). However there we do not have so much opportunity to exercise ourselves in the mysteries of God and even less to experience (in the inner-room of the King) the love of Jesus with a heavenly heart.

(d) Now when we have been brought into the Inner-room of the King's, what happens then? There we first catch sight of the Lord Jesus and the King gives himself there for us to see. There he reveals himself to us and not to the world (John 14:21, 22; Gal 1:16; Matt 16:17). As quickly as we saw Jesus, so did all the windows roundabout become dim. These windows are the external senses and that individual reason, that remnant of the Old Adam. Here the eyes cannot see; the ears cannot hear; the mouth cannot speak; the external sense of taste cannot taste; the organs of feeling cannot feel; the scent of worldly delights cannot be sensed here. The individual reason cannot work (II Cor 10:5). We must cast down our judgment; and all pride which elevates itself against the knowledge of God, and lead all thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ. Our individual objections no longer work here. And thus all the windows were closed.

The King also shuts the doors, through which we were led. For the Lord does not wish that we remain attached to the external, physical eating and drinking, because (purely) physical eating in the Sacrament does not benefit us (John 6:63). Everything what was done there must be done in the Spirit and in the Truth (John 4:24) and the Sacrament was but the doors to give entrance to the way to the inner movement of love and to the soul—ravishing communion with the Lord, to the Inner-room of the Savior.

But was it then not terribly dark in the inner-room, when the windows of our senses and the doors of the external preaching, praying and of the sign in the Sacrament, were also closed? O not at all! There was not only no darkness, but to the contrary, a great LIGHT. For the glory of the Lord is its light and the Lamb is its lamp (Rev 21:23). And that light and its splendour is nowhere else to be found than in the King's Inner-room. That light is not to be found in the world. For there is only darkness (Luke 1:79; Eph 5:8, 11; I John 1:6 and 2:9, 11). There is in all the pleasure, in all the goods, in all the sweetness of the world, nothing else but vanity and striving

of the spirit (Eccl 1:14). This does not approach that light and that joy which is experienced in the inner-room of Christ: for there we see God's perfections; there we see our reconciliation with God; there we see the great things that the Lord has laid aside for his children and this we cannot better see than when they eyes, ears and all external senses are closed off. In contrast, the splendour and the glory of the world can only be perceived through the external senses. All which the worldly person loves and strives after, results from the desires of the flesh, of the eyes and of the pride of life, which are not from the Father, but from the world (I John 2:16). The sweetness and charms of the Lord Jesus are never better perceived than when we turn our eyes from the world, see no vanities (Ps 119:37) and fix our senses on the contemplation (*beschouwen*) of Jesus' perfect love.

II.

Second, when we are thus in the inner-room, we are there with him alone, as if we were on an island and cut-off from all people and had there most sweet communion with each other. There we speak to him from the heart; there he reveals himself completely to us; he shows us who he is and what he is for us (John 14:21, 22). It is indeed true that other Christians also entered the inner-room with Christ and were each refreshed by him. Nevertheless each one tried for themselves under God's eyes, (I Cor 12:28). Each ate their own Communion (*Avondmaal*) in particular and there passed between them and the Lord Jesus that which they and Christ alone know.

III.

Third, when we are thus (a) in that light and (b) with him alone, then (c) he is for us and we can meet no ill. "Here you are under my roof and here you are safe from all ill." And by him saying that, the burning of our evil desire and of all our sinful lusts cease. There persecution and opprobrium also ends. Because he who sits on the throne shall powerfully overshadow us and there we become aware of the fruit of the promise (Rev 7:15, 16). "they shall no more hunger, nor shall they thirst anymore [no suffering or want shall overwhelm them] the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat." (verse 17). "For the lamb who is in the midst of the throne, shall pasture them and shall be a guide to living fountains of water: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Thus we are freed from all evil.

3. What Else Happens?

But what else happens there in the inner-room by the lamp, in the solitariness and under the covering? There (I) I saw, there (II) I heard and there (III) I tasted. Now through these three things we will show the King's reception in the inner-room.

I.

The king bids us see there his beautiful and wonderful glory. And what is this? Is it priceless paintings, tapestries of houses or courts or costly ornaments? Oh, not at all! All that is not to be found in the King's inner-room. What he bids us see is the King himself. For everything which is in the inner-room, is nothing else but the King himself. There everything reflects DIVINITY. And that sight was so wonderful that we could see nothing else in the whole inner-room. For the God we saw included everything in himself. We saw him there clearly before us, and from close by, for we were with him in the inner-room. That which we now saw of the Godhead, was nothing else than that he was revealed to us in his attributes and virtues. There we saw the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (II Cor 4:6). We saw the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, verse 4. We saw his righteousness, his mercy, his faithfulness, his truth, his

love, there also that he loved us from eternity, his goodness, his friendship, his meekness, his humility and what other like things there were. And all this we see in him in the greatest perfection. Now when we saw all these things, we began to see the glory of this King. Then he became before us as a son (Ps 84:12) who as swiftly as he arises the moon and the stars must disappear from sight. Likewise all earthly pleasures flee from our eyes, so that we see nothing else but the KING. We should also there at the table have seen the holy angels, who are also present there (Ps 34:8; I Cor 11:10; Heb 1:14), but with our seeing the King, all that glory was also out of our sight. We saw ourselves no longer in the inner-room. That is to say, we sank away in our groundless nothingness. We melted and were consumed in ourselves and we said, with the man of God, Jacob: (Gen 28:17) "How awesome is this place? This is nothing else but a house of God and this is a gate of heaven (Verse 16). Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it." And this effecting of our minds we call loving God with our whole heart, and with our whole soul and with our whole mind (Matt 22:37). We call God desirable, all and only for his own sake because he is such a glorious God.

We saw yet more in the inner-room and should have had yet much more to tell, but when we beheld this son, our eyes were so blinded, that we again saw nothing but the King himself. Then we saw yet another thing. Namely, in the reflection of the King we saw also our brothers and sisters. These we must necessarily see when we see the King, for they are members of Christ, they see the Head, they also see the members, because the members had put on Christ (Gal 3:27). they were in him (John 15:5, 6; Rom 8:1; Phil 3:9; II Cor 5:17; I John 2:6). We saw how they in this their glory, carried the image of that King, adorned with fine shapes and so we saw in them the King or them in the King.

But (shall one lightly ask), do we see none of the ungodly at the table? Yes, we answer, to tell the truth. We see with our bodily eyes carnal and ungodly persons there. But when we indeed consider the ungodly, they almost immediately depart from our thoughts, for God's words come to us (Ps 1:5) "The wicked shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in gathering of the righteous (see Ps 37:10). Yet a little while and the ungodly shall be no more and you shall mark their place and they shall be no more." Thus the ungodly are completely taken from our sight and their memory from our hearts. They are scorned in God's sight and are so also in our eyes (Ps 15:4). We see them in (the light of) God's righteousness. God hates them and so do we (Ps 139: 21, 22). Thus we saw them lying in misery and calamity under the wrath of the King.

But we saw the believing children of God in a completely different state. We saw them, not as themselves, but in the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom they were conformed. We saw them clothed with the garments of salvation and with the robe of righteousness (Isa 61:10). And then they appeared to us as adorned with the virtues of godliness, humility, gentleness, moderation, faith, hope and love. This was the most wonderful sight that one could imagine, to see below the King all His children, the sons and daughters of the almighty (2 Cor 6:18). We saw there the saints who are on the earth, in whom is all our delight (Ps 16:3). This did we see.

II.

Now when we were in the inner-rooms of the King, he also let us hear priceless things. And what did we hear there? Words of authority. For the King Himself there utters the highest word. Do we speak at all there? Indeed! For when we see the divine reflection there we desire, along with the prophet, to say: "Woe is me, I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips. For my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (Isa 6:5). I cried, how did I come here and what am I doing in this place? And with this we fell on our faces (I Cor 14:25), convicted of our sins. We put our mouths in the dust (Lam 3:29). We confessed in humility our unrighteousness. We despised ourselves and repented in dust and ashes (Job 42:6). We did not know where to hide ourselves from the presence of our sins, by which we had defied his glory (Isa 3:8). For never before had we a clearer view of the enormity of our sins, than when we were in Jesus' inner-room, by the light of the grace of our God and when we had a

clear vision of God's majesty and glorious holiness. This is why some on their deathbed have a clearer understanding of the enormity of sin, than in the days of abundance. For then one sees more clearly who God is and how terrible unholiness is. Now while the soul finds herself so humbled and so shamed about the enormity of her unrighteousness, we heard the King's Father (who is one with the Son [John 10:30-38]) speak (a) comforting and (b) majestic words.

(a) He said: "My child, as horrible as you are in your sight, so are you also in mine. As unworthy as you reckon yourself to be, so also are you reckoned in my sight as I see you in yourself. But I give you my son and thereby you are preserved; He shall be for you justification, sanctification and redemption (I Cor 1:30). Do not doubt this. For as truly as I give you the bread, so truly I give you my son and if you have the Son, you need not fear. In him you have the redemption through His blood (namely) the forgiveness of sins. Through Him I have made peace through the blood of the cross; through Him I have reconciled all things to Myself (Col 1:14, 20). Thus there is no longer any condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus (Rom 8:1). For I have introduced my Son to you as the expiation through faith, in his blood (Rom 3:25). Do not be afraid (Luke 2:10). Take heart" (Mark 10:49). Such pleasant and comforting words the Father of the King addresses to us and he and the Father are one (John 10:30). The Father is in the Son and the Son in the Father, (verse 38).

(b) To what end then did the Father address such comforting words to us? In order that he might speak words of authority to us; and this is why I said He speaks royal words to us. The King says, in addition: "My Child! Do you know why you have come here? It is not so that you might live like the world, as you have lived up till now. No! You have come here, and I have brought you into my inner-room so that I might rule over and command you. This was so that the world, Satan and your own carnal desires may no longer rule you: and I the King might be over you. So that you may be delivered from the hands of your enemies and serve me without fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of your lives (Luke 1:74, 75). My Son suffered once for sin, in order that he might bring you to me (I Pet 3:18). He must also bring you to the state Adam was before the Fall. Arm yourself with the thought that the one who has suffered in the flesh, has ceased from sin. Now no longer to live according to human dictates, but according to the WILL OF GOD (I Pet 4:1, 2). You have once again become my servants and subjects." Says the King in the inner-room.

The King addresses such comforting words to you in order that you do not only walk upright and untainted before the world; but so that you might walk worthy of the calling by which you were called (Eph 4:1), so that the whole world may see that you are my subjects and servants. Now you must be blameless and upright, children of God without blemish in the midst of a perverse and crooked generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world (Phil 2:15; Matt 5:16). Now you must walk worthy of God who has called you to His Kingdom and to glory (I Thess 2:12). "See my child!" Says the King; "I have brought you to glorious privileges, I call you to communion with my son (I Cor 1:9). Do not then have fellowship with the unfruitful works of the devil (Eph 5:11). Therefore come out from the midst of them and be separate from them (2 Cor 6:17). For what fellowship has light with darkness? (verse 14). For why else do I give you the light, but that you might live in it? (I John 1:7). Why else does my Son come and dwell in you? (2 Cor 6:16; John 14:23). Why else is He in your hearts? (Eph 3:17). So that you might do away with all the wonders, glories and attractions of the world in your heart and reckon yourself as loss and dung (Phil 3:8), in order that the Lord Jesus alone might be your beauty and all your glory."

(c) The King also said: "Now is the kingdom of Heaven come near (Matt 10:7). Every one who now will be saved, must give themselves to my kingdom. This meal is a meal of the Kingdom. Have you kept your sins until now? Have you been worldly? Have you been listening to the desires of your flesh and following them? After this, these cannot longer continue. For I must be your King now and you must under my banner actively struggle against all your enemies. Do you want to know what your enemies are? They are the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life" (I John 2:16). The King also tells us that we must be subjects. By this he

includes all our external senses; our eyes, our ears, our mouths, our tongues, our taste, our feeling and our understanding. "See my child" he says "that you rule over all the senses. You must have the strength within you to withdraw from evil and to turn to the good and you must be master of all your passions."

(d) The King goes further and teaches us through the sacrament how we obtain the power to kill sin in order to rule ourselves and to walk virtuously in his sight. He states that first we must accept the Son through faith (John 1:12) and put him on (Gal 3:27). When we are so united with the head, we will bear much fruit (John 15:5). The spirit of life in Christ Jesus sets us free from the law of sin and death (Rom 8:2). We can do all things through Christ, who enables us (Phil 4:13). Thus he shows us from where we obtain our spiritual powers, to be powerful in the Lord, in the strength of his might (Eph 6:10). He says second, whether that is not enough for you? For the Son himself will be your example. He has left you an example, in order that you might follow in his footsteps (I Pet 2:21-24). In him you shall see nothing else but virtues in the highest degree. He is the essential virtue itself. Thus he has adopted humanity and moved among us in order to show us what virtues we must practice. You ought then to deeply consider his life and imitate it. For you must practice to be holy as he is holy. He who says that he dwells in him, ought to walk in the same way in which he walked (I John 2:6). Third, the King continued to say is this still not enough? There are so many precious promises in my Word and as many promises as there are, they are in the Son, in whom is the amen, to God be the glory (2 Cor 1:20). Hold on to these great and precious promises which almighty God has made of your eternal salvation, through which you participate in the divine nature, after you have escaped from the corruption that is in the world on account of passion (2 Pet 1:4). Consider that you have been called and that you have been granted the great promises of Heaven in order to express in your whole walk, God's image of goodness, holiness, wisdom, glory and other such virtues. Fourth, the King continues and asks us, if we still (despite the glorious promises of his support) fear the external powers which we are used to encounter in our practice of the virtues? We dare not say yes; but nevertheless we truly feared that we would be drawn away and tempted by our enemies (Jas 1:4) as soon as we withdrew from the King's inner-room and forgot his strengthening. Now when the King marked this, He said: "I am a shield to you, your reward shall be very great" (Gen 15:1). "I am a sun and a shield, I shall bestow grace and honour." (Ps 84:11). To which we responded: "The Lord is my light and my salvation, of whom shall I be afraid? The Lord is the stronghold of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? The Lord is the stronghold of my life, of whom shall I be dismayed?" (Ps 27:1). We also said: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not lack anything." (Ps 23:1).

While we heard these words, we also heard resounding in our ears such a sweet and wondrous harmony of glorious songs that the whole inner-room became attractive and beautiful. For everywhere there were Hallelujahs, that is "praise the Lord." To this all the believers added their singing hearts and we heard through faith a single voice saying: "From Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory for ever. Amen." (Rom 11:36). And all responded to that song with Amen. And they had no rest day and night, saying: "Holy, Holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and is and who will be." They gave "praise, and thanksgiving to Him who sat upon the throne, who lives for ever..." (Rev 4:8-11). Yet despite this singing we heard the King speak clearly to us. For the song flowed continually with what the King said. For all His words came out to this: "I am your King, I must rule over you." At this all those who sang said, with a great voice: "The lamb who was slain is worthy to receive power, and riches and wisdom and might, and praise and glory and blessing." (Rev 5:12). All this true believers could hear in the King's inner-room when their faith was enlivened or as he brought them into his inner-room.

III.

What we encountered, thirdly, in the inner-rooms of the King, was the King permitting us to taste priceless and most glorious spices; and these spices were the flesh and the blood of God's

Son (John 6:55). These spices were not only priceless to the eyes, but furthermore were (a) of outstanding aroma and (b) delightful to taste. They were (c) most filling and (d) powerful to heal.

(a) They were of excellent fragrance. Thus the powerless soul, which through lack of strength is burdened under the weight of her sins and the privation of heavenly comforts, is supported and strengthened by the fragrance of these spices (Song of Songs 2:5). In this regard, the bride says; "Your oils are fragrant" (Song of Songs 1:3). Thus the aroma of his spiritual gifts was a fragrance from life to life (2 Cor. 2:16).

(b) That which he gave us was also delightful to taste. The bride herself witnesses to this: "His fruit was sweet to my taste" (Song of Songs 2:3). Who among us can express the heavenly delight of his divine comforts? "His speech is most sweet and He is entirely desirable" (Song of Songs 5:16).

(c) His spices were also satisfying. And in this they stood above all the things of the world. For our God has so created us that no world, indeed ten thousand worlds, could satisfy us. For the heart ever desires more and more. But Jesus through his grace is able to satisfy our understanding and our will. For those who eat of the bread and drink of the water Jesus gives, "shall never hunger nor thirst" (John 4:14; 6:35). The bread which he gives is His flesh and so the one who eats this bread, shall live for ever (John 6:51). In his inner-room then, we must confess that we have been fully satisfied. Thus we must cry out: "There is nothing on earth I desire besides thee" (Ps 73:25). "Give us always this bread" (John 6:34).

(d) Over and above the tasting and smelling of the spices, as powerful as these were to satisfy, much yet remained in them to heal. Included in the mercies of God is the fact that he heals all our infirmities (Ps 103:3). Peter witnessed of Christ, that in the days of the flesh, he healed all who were oppressed by the devil (Acts 10:38). But we can also confess that the spice of Christ is a sound spice and a sound doctrine (I Tim 1:10) and that it is his grace which makes us whole in faith, in love and in steadfastness etc. (Tit 2:2). For if the soul is assaulted by evil desires, then this food and drink is like a cold drink that halts and stuns the enemy. Is the soul overcome by the evil of displeasure? This food shall teach the soul the great virtue of satisfaction (Phil 4:11; Heb 13:5). Is the soul infected with the cancer of heresy (2 Tim 2:17) or with the corrupting sickness of a loose life? Here is advice on how to be sound in the Faith (Tit 1:13). Is anyone downcast and broken of heart? Here is a Jesus to heal the broken-hearted (Luke 4:18). There is no ill so great or old that the food which we ate was not sufficient to heal.

See thus how the Lord Jesus brings His bride into his inner-rooms. How he shows us the way to the Father. how he reveals the Father to us (John 14:6, 8). See in this then an account of that which we (on the occasion of the administration of the communion) have seen, heard and tasted of the King.

4. Different Classes of Hearers

Yet, without doubt there are souls present here who shall have differing thoughts concerning the benefits offered.

I.

Indeed, those first come to mind who did not even know that at the reception of the sacrament there were so many things to see, hear and to taste. These remain clinging to the externals of the sacrament. They came unprepared and sat there as if they were dead, deaf, blind and unfeeling. They brought, as it were, an earthly heart to and from the table. How was it possible then that they could care for something spiritual? They did not perceive because the God of ages blinded their sight and the Gospel of Christ was veiled (2 Cor 4:3, 4). For what could they

see? Their beauty was attractive to them and locks of hair hung before their eyes and their heart was set more on these than on the working of a prepared soul. What also could they hear of what the King was saying to them? For the noise of their gold and possessions, of their position and status, so filled their hearts (even during and after the reception of the sacrament) that not once could they hear what the king was saying to them. For if one would see the King in the inner-rooms, then all the doors must be closed (Matt 6:6). Or else the word is choked (Matt 13:22). Would one then see and hear in the King's inner-room, what is to be seen and heard there? Then one must close one's eyes and shut one's ears to all the temptations of the world. Then one ought to pray with one's whole heart: "Lord, open my eyes (Ps 119:18), let me hear joy and gladness" (Ps 51:8). If we do not desire that and wish to remain attached to the world, then we must say to such, in the words of Peter: "You have neither lot nor part in the word, for your heart is not right before God" (Acts 8:21).

II.

There are also others who, in their own experience, have not seen or heard this glory. For the King as a sovereign lord has not granted these benefits to all, and not even always, or even evidently. Indeed they have seen and heard him from afar off and obliquely, but he has not brought them within. They have heard that the Lord is disposed to bring his children in. They have indeed waited for him, but have not met him in this way. Thus they lament and cry out saying: "Lord! When shall we also enter and appear before your presence?" (Ps 42:3, 4).

To these I say: (a) Be patient: Hope in God (verse 11). Do not throw away your confidence (Heb 10:35); this is not a time to despair. One may not say here "God is not my Father because he has left me standing outside this inner-room." Oh no! Here we must submit our wills to God's dispensation and wise governance. One cannot grumble here. Rather our language must rather be: "yet shall my soul be still, for it is the Father's will." If you thus submit your will to the will of your Father, then you have a key to the inner-room. Let then the Lord lock his room; we shall open it again with this key. For to submit your will to his uncreated will is to be in the inner-room. The agreement of our wills with God's will, that is our Heaven, that is our salvation.

(b) I also advise these dispirited ones to remain at the doors of this inner-room until the Lord lets them in to behold there his glory. In this way it is like the distinction between a good and a bad child. The one, when the door is closed by its mother, runs away and associates with bad company. In contrast, the good child remains sitting near the door and will not leave even if it must die there. As a pious child of the heavenly King, you remain there before his mercy-door; remain there until the Father has mercy on you. That is, continue in the use of all religious duties which are the doors through which we can be brought to the experience of God's mercies. Those without call often: "Lord! When shall I enter?" (Ps 42:3). "How long shall you hide your countenance from me?" (Ps 13:2). This does not contradict the confidence which one must have in God's goodness. For a soul can learn to know God's goodness in the consequences. Say then: "Lord! Here I lay myself down before the doors of your mercy, to submit myself to your will. If I perish, so I perish (Eph 4:16). I shall meanwhile hope, even though you slay me" (Job 13:15).

III.

Now there is a third group of those who approach the sacrament; those who have truly seen, heard and tasted the King in his inner-room. Among these no doubt are those who have experienced this more fully than my words could express it. Not that I want to say that the Lord was perfectly enjoyed, for this is not possible here on earth. Yet they enjoyed and more clearly perceived the above-mentioned benefits than I could express through words. To these I say that the matter of the words always exceeds the words concerning the matter.

(a) She thus has reason to cry out: “Blessed is the people to whom such happens: Blessed is the people whose God is the Lord” (Ps 144:15). For the bringing in and receiving in the King’s inner-room exceeds anything we have ever seen or heard. And those who have seen the reflection of this, must say, not without reason: “Lord, it is good that we are here” (Matt 17:4).

(b) In particular, such must stand out as lights in the world (Phil 2:15). For when Moses had spoken with God, the children of Israel saw that the skin of his face glowed (Exod 34:35). So those who have seen God must be transformed according to the same image, from glory to glory, as through the Spirit of the Lord (2 Cor 3:18). Has God revealed his virtues? We must imitate them (Matt 5:45, 48; I Pet 1:15). Did we see God’s children there, adorned with his image? This is why we should love them and why we should follow their virtuous example. Did we hear the King speak of his Kingdom? This is so that we might give ourselves to his rule and be always ready to serve him. Thus we should no longer serve ourselves. Oh, the self! We must let the self go; and it must suffice, that the King exercises his will. Indeed, we must seek his glory above our own salvation. We must continually internalise that voice out of the clouds: “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; Hear Him” (Matt 17:5).

But, where is this to be found? Where are we like such Christians? Oh, our Christian world unlike any Christian world! What must now be done? Nothing else than that we, from this hour on, together strive for this. Christians, let then the Lord Jesus rule you and you shall be preserved. Amen.

NOTES

¹Albrecht Ritschl so described Van Lodenstein in his *Geschichte des Pietismus* (Bonn: Adolph Marcus, 1880), 3 Vols, Vol I, p. 190.

²*Reformed Reader: A Sourcebook in Christian Theology*. Vol I, Edited by John Leith and W. Stacy Johnson (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, forthcoming 1992).

³In other words, the work undertaken by Heiko A. Oberman and exemplified in, for instance, his *The Dawn of the Reformation* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986) needs to be extended into this area.

⁴This is dealt with all too briefly in Izaak Boot's *De Allegorische Uitlegging van het Hooglied Voornamelijk in Nederland*. (Zwijderduijn: Woerden, 1971).

⁵Lucien J. Richard *The Spirituality of John Calvin* (Atlanta, Georgia: John Knox Press, 1974), pp. 78-91, discusses the development of the term from the Vulgate text I Tim 4:7 *exerce autem teipsum ad pietatem*. See also Aart De Groot, "'Godzaligheid is Gelukzaligheid' (Jodocus van Lodenstein) Verkenning in de geschiedenis van een woord." *Kerk en Theologie* Vol 27/3 July, 1976, pp. 117-197.

⁶J. Calvin *Institutes of the Christian Religion* 2 Vols (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), III, iii, 16; I, ii, 1.

⁷Heinrich Heppe in his *Geschichte des Pietismus und der Mystik in der Reformierten Kirche, namentlich der Nederland*. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1879), p. 6, fn. #1, traces the first use of the term Pietism to 1674.

⁸Henrich Heppe, in his *Geschichte des Pietismus und der Mystik in der Reformierten Kirche, namentlich der Nederland*. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1879), p. 6.

⁹Albrecht Ritschl *Geschichte des Pietismus*. 3 Vols. (Bonn: Adolph Marcus, 1880, 1884). See Vol. II, pp. 1-3. It should be noted also that the conventicles begun by Lodenstein were part of the formal ecclesiastical institution and not separate, as they became in Lutheran territories.

¹⁰Wilhelm Goeters *die Vorbereitung des Pietismus in der Reformierten Kirchen der Niederlande bis zur Labadistischen Krisis 1670*. (Leipzig: J.C. Heinrichs'che Buchhandlung, 1911).

¹¹Martin Schmidt "Pietismus" in *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*. 3rd. Ed. (Tubingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1957-1965) Vol. 5. pp. 370-383.

¹²See the collection of essays edited by Prof. Dr. W. van't Spijker *De Nadere Reformatie*. (Gravenhage: Uitgerwerij Boekencentrum B.V., 1986).

¹³This term, perhaps to be translated as "The Further" or "more precise" Reformation, comes from a self-description of the movement by Jacobus Koelman (1632-1695) in his *Nader Reformatie in Leer, Orde en Zeden*. (Utrecht: 1682).

¹⁴This is the basic approach suggested by F. Ernest Stoeffler in his *The Rise of Evangelical Pietism*. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1965), see in particular pages 6-9. He uses the term Reformed Pietism for what contemporary Dutch scholars would call *de nadere reformatie*.

¹⁵For biographical information consult the standard works by Van der Aa, Abraham J. *Biographische Woordenboek der Nederlanden* 20th Ed. (Amsterdam: B.M. Israel, 1874, 1970); J.P. de Bie et al *Biographisch Woordenboek van Protestantische Godgeleerden in Nederland*.

(Gravenhage: 1943); Glasius, Barend *Godgeleerd Nederland: biographisch woordenboek nederlandsche godgeleerden* ('s Hertogensbosch: Muller, 1851-1856); and Goebel, Max *Geschichte des Christlichen Lebens in der Rheinisch-Westphalischen Evangelischen Kirche*. Vol. II (Koblenz: Karl Badeser, 1852).

¹⁶Thus W. Ames defines theology as “teaching which instructs us to live for God, as a people for ever blessed” *Medulla Theologica* (Amsterdam: I. Iansonium, 1623, 1656) Caput I., 1, 8: while Voetius called for a unity of knowledge and piety in *De Pietate cum scientia conungenda* Ed. Art de Groot (Kampen: Kok, 1978 ({1634})).

¹⁷Albrecht Ritschl *Geschichte des Pietismus* (Bonn: Adolph Marcus, 1880) Vol. I. p. 190.

¹⁸For studies of his theology and influence see biographical references as well as Pieter Jzn Proost’s *Jodocus van Lodenstein*. (Amsterdam: J. Brandt, 1880), Wilhelm Goeters’ *Die Vorbereitung des Pietismus* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs’sche, 1911) and C. Graffland’s “Jodocus van Lodenstein” in W. van’t Spijker (ed.) *De Nadere Reformatie*. (Gravenhage: Uitgewerij Boekencentrum, 1986). A. Ritschl and H. Heppe also discuss him.

¹⁹Most studies of his theology focus on this work, comprising ten dialogues between “Urbanus” (= Lodenstein) and two interlocutors on the state of the Reformed Church in Holland. Thus A. Ritschl provides a useful summary of the dialogues in *Geschichte des Pietismus in der Reformierten Kirche*. (Bonn: Adolph Marcus, 1880) Vol. I. pp. 156-173.

²⁰Translated as “A Spiritual Alarm sounded for a Christendom lacking Self-denial, is Dead and Spiritless.” This was edited and published by E. van der Hooght (his pupil) in 1697 under the title *Negen Predicatiën over eenige stoffen, dewelke heel zelden worden geleerd en nog minder gepractiseerd*. The present title was given the expanded edition of 1701. I am using the 1732 Edition, edited by E. van der Hooght and published in Amsterdam by Adr. Douci. Appendix C of P. Jzn. Proost’s *Jodocus van Lodenstein* (Amsterdam: J. Brandt, 1880), pp. 271-282, lists 25 publications.

²¹A woman famous in her time, a student of G. Voetius, friend of Rene Descarte and the author of, inter alia the first Aethiopic Grammar in a European language and of the well-known tract *The Learned Maid: or Whether a Maid May be a Scholar?* (English Translation, London: John Redmathe, 1659). She became a follower of de Labadie.

²²J. Lodenstein *Beschouwinge van Zion*. (Utrecht: Willem Clerck, 1674), Preface and no. I, p. 5ff.

²³P. Jzn Proost *Jodocus van Lodenstein* (Amsterdam: J. Brandt, 1880), p. 123.

²⁴An important theme, (*Sermon* pp. 15-17, 20.) closely echoing Calvin *Institutes* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960) I, 15, 4.

²⁵*Sermon*, p. 20.

²⁶P. Jzn Proost *Jodocus van Lodenstein* (Amsterdam: J. Brandt, 1880), p. 118.

²⁷Wilhelm Goeters *Die Vorbereitung des Pietismus*. (Leipzig: J.C. Heinrichs’sche, 1911), p. 111.

²⁸J. Calvin *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*. 2 Vols. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), on Calvin’s understanding of the Eucharist, see Ronald S. Wallace *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan. Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1959.)

²⁹*Sermon*, p. 18.

³⁰Jodocus Lodenstein *Beschouwinge van Zion* (Utrecht: Willem Clerck, 1674), p. 12.

³¹Calvin's teaching concerning the Real Presence was powerfully restated by John W. Nevin in his *The Mystical Presence*. Subtitled: A Vindication of the Reformed or Calvinistic Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1816), a work which has, it seems, largely been overlooked.

³²*Sermon*, p. 20.

³³The Confession of Faith, Dordrecht Article XXIV "Of Man's Sanctification and Good Works."

³⁴The term is used by St. Bernard in his *Dedicatio Ecclesiae* V, 3 and is also quoted by Calvin *Institutes* III, 2, 25 in his discussion on "St. Bernard on the Two Aspects of Faith."

³⁵*Sermon*, p. 20.

³⁶See in particular the study of his thought by Casey Michael *A Thirst for God: Spiritual Desire in Bernard of Clairvaux*. (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1988).

³⁷J. Calvin *The Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), Bk. III, iii, 2/8 and sections on "self-denial," "mortification" and vivification."

³⁸*Sermon*, p. 20.

³⁹*Sermon*, pp. 22-24.

⁴⁰*Sermon*, pp. 22, 23.

⁴¹*Sermon*, p. 26.

⁴²The communion was preceded by another sermon, based on Song of Songs 2:4 "He brought me to the banqueting house and his banner over me was love." This is preserved in *Het Vervalle Christendom* (Utrecht: J. Stuyvesant, 1711). Other sermons on the Song of Songs are on verse 7:1 in *De Heerlijkheid van een ware Christelyk Lewe*. (Amsterdam: A. Douci, 1711) and on Verses 5:3 and 5:8 of *Geestelijke Opwekker*.

⁴³F. Ernest Stoeffler *The Rise of Evangelical Pietism*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1965.

⁴⁴Brauer, J.C. (Ed.) *The Westminster Dictionary of Church History* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971); Cross, F.L. (Ed.) *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* New York: Oxford University Press, 1958; Reference to the subject is made and fuller treatments are contained in Dupre, Louise *Christian Spirituality: Post-Reformation and Modern*. Vol. III (New York: Crossroads, 1989), C.8. "Protestant Spirituality: Orthodoxy and Piety."; Rice, Howard *Reformed Spirituality: An Introduction for Believers*. (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991) and in the articles by Martin Schmidt in *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*. 3rd. Ed. (Tubingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1957-1965) Vol. 5. pp. 370-3838 and by F. Ernest Stoeffler in *The Macmillan Encyclopaedia of Religion*. ed. Mircea Eliade (New York: Macmillan, 1987), Vol. 11, 324-326.