

Toetrede

Liturgie van die Lig

Aansteek van die kerse

Lied 163

Soos 'n wildsbok wat smag na water,
smag my siel na U, o Heer.
U alleen is my hartsverlange
en ek bring aan U die eer.
U alleen is my bron van krag;
in U teenwoordigheid wil ek wag,
U alleen is my hartsverlange
en ek bring aan U die eer.

Woorddiens

Tema: Teregwyding/kritiseer/vermaan?

Skriflesing: Matteus 18:15-20 (1953)

¹⁵ EN as jou broeder teen jou sondig, gaan bestraf hom tussen jou en hom alleen. As hy na jou luister, dan het jy jou broeder gewin;

¹⁶ maar as hy nie luister nie, neem nog een of twee met jou saam, sodat in die mond van twee of drie getuies elke woord kan vasstaan.

¹⁷ En as hy na hulle nie luister nie, sê dit aan die gemeente; en as hy na die gemeente ook nie luister nie, laat hom vir jou wees soos die heiden en die tollenaar.

¹⁸ Voorwaar Ek sê vir julle, alles wat julle op die aarde bind, sal in die hemel gebonde wees; en alles wat julle op die aarde ontbind, sal in die hemel ontbonde wees.

¹⁹ Weer sê Ek vir julle: As twee van julle saamstem op die aarde oor enige saak wat hulle mag vra, dit sal hulle ten deel val van my Vader wat in die hemele is.

²⁰ Want waar twee of drie in my Naam vergader, daar is Ek in hul midde.



"Nothing can be more cruel than the leniency which abandons others to their sin. Nothing can be more compassionate than the severe reprimand which calls another Christian in one's community back from the path of sin."

— Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together: The Classic Exploration of Christian Community*

Broodjies vir die pad

"God hath thus ordered it, that we may learn to bear one another's burdens; for no man is without fault, no man without his burden, no man sufficient of himself, no man wise enough of himself; but we ought to bear with one another, comfort one another, help, instruct, and admonish

one another."

— Thomas à Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*



Only the Bible has been more influential as a source of Christian devotional reading than **The Imitation of Christ**. This meditation on the spiritual life has inspired readers from Thomas More and St. Ignatius Loyola to Thomas Merton and Pope John Paul I. Written by the Augustinian monk Thomas à Kempis between 1420 and 1427, it contains clear instructions for renouncing worldly vanities and locating eternal truths. No book has more explicitly and movingly described the Christian ideal: "My son, to the degree that you can leave yourself behind, to that degree will you be able to enter into Me." With a new Preface by Sally Cunneen, author of **In Search of Mary: The Woman and the Symbol**.

"God is our home but many of us have strayed from our native land. The venerable authors of these Spiritual Classics are expert guides--may we follow their directions home."

--Archbishop Desmond Tutu

https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/851393.The_Imitation_of_Christ



Thomas Hammerken (or Hammerlein — both mean "little hammer") / Thomas de Kempis / Thomas Hamerken von Kempen was born at Kempen (hence the "A Kempis") in the duchy of Cleves in Germany around 1380. He was educated by a religious order called the Brethren of the Common Life, and in due course joined the order, was ordained a priest, became sub-prior of his house (in the low Countries), and died 25 July 1471 (his feast is observed a day early to avoid conflict with that of James bar-Zebedee the Apostle).

Thomas is known almost entirely for composing or compiling a manual of spiritual advice known as *The Imitation of Christ*, in which he urges the reader to seek to follow the example of Jesus Christ and to be conformed in all things to His will.

<http://fast.wildmountainfaire.info/PDF/36140-the-chronicles-of-the-canons-regular-of-mount-st-free-book-pdf.html>



The constant reprimands made me hyperconscious of my own performance, and so instead of getting rid of self, I had become embedded in the egoism I was supposed to transcend. Now I was beginning to understand that a silence that is not clamorous with vexation and worried self-regard can become part of the texture of your mind, can seep into you, moment by moment, and gradually change you."

— Karen Armstrong, *The Spiral Staircase: My Climb Out of Darkness*



In 1962, at age seventeen, Karen Armstrong entered a convent, eager to meet God. After seven brutally unhappy years as a nun, she left her order to pursue English literature at Oxford. But convent life had profoundly altered her, and coping with the outside world and her expiring faith proved to be excruciating. Her deep solitude and a terrifying illness—diagnosed only years later as epilepsy—marked her forever as an outsider. In her own mind she was a complete failure: as a nun, as an academic, and as a normal woman capable of intimacy. Her future seemed very much in question until she stumbled into comparative

theology. What she found, in learning, thinking, and writing about other religions, was the ecstasy and transcendence she had never felt as a nun. Gripping, revelatory, and inspirational, *The Spiral Staircase* is an extraordinary account of an astonishing spiritual journey.

https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/27308.The_Spiral_Staircase



The Case for God

by Karen Armstrong

Moving from the Paleolithic age to the present, Karen Armstrong details the great lengths to which humankind has gone in order to experience a sacred reality that it called by many names, such as God, Brahman, Nirvana, Allah, or Dao. Focusing especially on Christianity but including Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Chinese spiritualities, Armstrong examines the diminished impulse toward religion in our own time, when a significant number of people either want nothing to do with God or question the efficacy of faith. Why has God become unbelievable? Why is it that atheists and theists alike now think and speak about God in a way that veers so profoundly from the thinking of our ancestors?

Answering these questions with the same depth of knowledge and profound insight that have marked all her acclaimed books, Armstrong makes clear how the changing face of the world has necessarily changed the importance of religion at both the societal and the individual level. And she makes a powerful, convincing argument for drawing on the insights of the past in order to build a faith that speaks to the needs of our dangerously polarized age. Yet she cautions us that religion was never supposed to provide answers that lie within the competence of human reason; that, she says, is the role of *logos*. The task of religion is “to help us live creatively, peacefully, and even joyously with realities for which there are no easy explanations.” She emphasizes, too, that religion will not work automatically. It is, she says, a practical discipline: its insights are derived not from abstract speculation but from “dedicated intellectual endeavor” and a “compassionate lifestyle that enables us to break out of the prism of selfhood.”

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/6359293-the-case-for-god>

Brood vir die pad

Ons almal het voete van klei

Hermie van Zyl

Daar is al baie besin oor wie die toonaangewendste figure van die 20ste eeu was. Die Switser Karl Barth (1886-1968) word allerweë as die invloedrykste teoloog van die vorige eeu beskou.

Wat het hom so besonders gemaak?

Eerstens, sy enorme literêre nalatenskap. Sy hoofwerk, *Kerklike Dogmatiek*, beslaan in die oorspronklike Duits 13 bande en 9 000 bladsye. En nou tel ’n mens nie sy ander boeke en artikels nie.

Verder het hy voor en tydens die Tweede Wêreldoorlog groot invloed uitgeoefen op die weerstand teen Adolf Hitler. Hy was die hoofopsteller van die Barmenverklaring in 1934 waarin uiteengesit is dat die kerk nie ’n dienskneg van die staat is om dié se oogmerke uit te voer nie, soos in die pro-Nazi- Duitse Christen-beweging gebeur het.

Maar die grootste invloed het van sy teologiese sieninge uitgegaan. Ná die Eerste Wêreldoorlog, toe Europa aan skerwe

gelê en alle optimisme oor menslike vermoëns en ontwikkeling verdwyn het, tree Barth na vore met sy siening dat God nie direk kenbaar is nie, slegs indirek – Hy “verberg” Homself in die mensgeworde Woord (Christus), die Skrifgeworde Woord (Bybel) en die gepredikte Woord.

Die mens kan God daarom nooit besit nie, maar ken Hom slegs wanneer Hy in Sy genade Homself bekend maak. Alle menslike oormoed (soos verteenwoordig deur die liberale teologie van daardie tyd) verkeer daarom onder God se oordeel. Maar terselfdertyd triomfeer God se genade oor alle sonde en menslike mislukking.

Dié visie loop soos ’n goudrif deur Barth se werk, in so ’n mate dat die Hollandse teoloog Gerrit Cornelis Berkouwer ’n boek geskryf het oor die triomf van genade in Barth se teologie.

Maar, soos met baie groot figure, het Barth voete van klei gehad. Hy het ’n verhouding met sy assistent, Charlotte von Kirschbaum, gehad. Sy was instrumenteel tot sy teologiese oeuvre; sonder haar sou hy nie die gehalte en volume werk kon lewer wat hy wel gedoen het nie, het hy self erken.

Hierdie teologiese verhouding ontwikkel egter mettertyd in ’n liefdesverhouding. Sy neem later haar intrek in Barth se huis (Barth was getroud met Nelly en hulle het vyf kinders gehad), wat geweldige spanning in Barth se huwelik en gesin veroorsaak het. Nogtans het Nelly hom nooit verlaat nie.

Die verhouding tussen Barth en Charlotte was ’n redelik ope geheim. Maar dit is altyd voorgehou as ’n professionele verhouding, hoewel gerugte van “iets meer” nooit wou gaan lê nie. Dit was egter eers toe die persoonlike briefwisseling tussen Barth en Charlotte in 2000 en 2008 gepubliseer is dat die volle verhaal van hul liefde aan die lig gekom het.

Uit die briewe blyk duidelik die kompleksiteit van die situasie: Dat hulle mekaar aangevul het op ’n wyse wat nie tussen Barth en sy vrou moontlik was nie; dat hulle terdeë bewus was van die ongewenstheid van hul verhouding en die spanning wat dit in die Barth-huishouding veroorsaak het; dat daar oor ’n lang tyd intense gesprekke tussen Barth, Nelly en Charlotte was met die oog op ’n oplossing, maar dat die situasie mettertyd “onopgelos” gelaat is.

Waar laat dit ons in ons oordeel oor dié groot teoloog? Sy bydrae bly staan, ondanks sy persoonlike aandadigheid aan die ontwrigtende situasie in sy huis, wat uiteraard nie goedgepraat kan word nie.

Sy lewe en werk laat ons egter moed skep vir die lewe: Oor ons almal wapper die banier van die triomf van God se genade, want ons het almal voete van klei. Sonder Sy genade maak nie een van ons dit nie, hoe voortreflik ons ook al lewe.

Dit het Barth se teologie ons geleer.

<http://www.netwerk24.com/Stemme/Sielsgoed/ons-almal-het-voete-van-klei-20170904>



Lied 526

Waar daar liefde is, en deernis,
waar daar liefde is, daar is God die Heer.

Ubi caritas, et amor

ubi caritas, Deus ibi est.