

Dear Friends of the Foundation:

The second step of the Christian life, following upon self-denial and really making up a part of self-denial, has to do with bearing the cross. I do not know how often we discuss this today as a vital part of contemporary Christian life. The language seems quaint. The imagery is two-thousand years old. But again, consider the courage for facing and living life that might be engendered by such awareness:

Thus it will come to pass that, by whatever kind of cross we may be troubled, even in the greatest tribulations of mind, we shall firmly keep our patience. For the adversities themselves will have their own bitterness to gnaw at us; thus afflicted by disease, we shall both groan and be uneasy and pant after health; thus pressed by poverty, we shall be pricked by the arrows of care and sorrow; thus we shall be smitten by the pain of disgrace, contempt, injustice; thus at the funerals of our dear ones we shall weep the tears that are owed to our nature. But the conclusion will always be: the Lord so willed, therefore let us follow his will. Indeed, amid the very pricks of pain, amid groaning and tears, this thought must intervene: to incline our heart to bear cheerfully those things which have so moved it. (III.8.10)

These teachings are not meant to be burdensome. They are meant to bear us up, and I believe that they do so in ways that nothing else can.

Grace and Peace,

Jim

Dr. James C. Goodloe IV, *Executive Director*

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"Promoting the study of Reformed theology for the renewal of the church"

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