

Letter 034  
Paris, August 1875

Dear Theo,

Thanks for your last letter and the poem by Rückert.

Last Sunday, I again went to hear M. Bercier. He had chosen this text: “Il ne vous est pas permis” [It is not permitted] and he concluded with “Heureux ceux pour qui la vie a toutes ses épines” [Happy is he whose life is all thorns]

I know that uncle Vincent really likes this phrase, “Young man, rejoice in your youth and that your heart is made content by the days of your youth, and live like your heart guides itself according to your eyes, but understand that for everything God will make judgment. Take away the chagrin of your heart, and put away malice, for youth and adolescence is not in vain. But remember your Creator during the days of your youth, before the bad days come and the years arrive when you will say ‘I don’t have any pleasure’.”

For me, I find the following phrase better:

Fear God and keep his commandments, for this will give pleasure for all men, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Enclosed is a note for Mr. Tersteeg. It is to ask him if he will have two engravings framed for me, “Good Friday” and “St. Augustine.” You will find them in the next box I send you. And will you be so kind as to have them sent to Helvoirt by September 10? I should like it to be a present [for his mother’s birthday] from both of us, so will you pay 2.50 towards the frames? I told Mr. Tersteeg that you would write me how much it cost and that I would then remit the money to him; the 2.50 you can give me when we meet. That will probably be before Christmas; I think it would be better not to ask for leave before that time.

Tonight I am invited to dine at Mr. Hamman’s<sup>1</sup>. À Dieu, write me soon and believe me,

Your affectionate brother, Vincent

1. A French painter, friend of Uncle Vincent’s.