

Letter 041
Paris, 6 October 1875

Dear Theo,

Although I have written you recently, I send you the following because I know that sometimes rough obstacles arise on our path. Courage, old son, after the rain, good weather: keep hoping for that. The rain and good weather alternate on The road that goes uphill all the way, yes to the very end, and one rests also from time to time during the journey that takes the whole day long, from morn till night.

Think on this, now and in later years, "This also will pass away."

Jules Dupré liked to repeat: 'One has one's beautiful days'. Let us believe it too.

Today, I have the opportunity to send a parcel to A. and W. in England. I have sent them notably The Imitation of Jesus Christ and some separate fragments of the Bible published in a collection of the Psalms which I have gave you.

Read them with assiduity. Do you want also the four Evangelists and some Epistles, which are published separately?

I would like to have a Hymnbook in Dutch. If the opportunity arises, send me the least expensive edition than you can find. I already have the Psalms. There are some very beautiful English hymns, for instance:

Thy way, not mine, O Lord,
However dark it be:
Lead me by Thine own hand
Choose out the path for me...

I dare not choose my lot;
I would not, if I might;
Choose Thou for me, my God:
So shall I walk aright.
The kingdom that I seek,
Is Thine, so let the way
That leads to it be Thine,
Else I must surely stray.

Choose Thou for me my friends,
My sickness or my health;
Choose Thou my cares for me,
My poverty or wealth.
Not mine, not mine the choice,
In things or great or small
Be Thou my guide, my strength
My wisdom, and my all.

And the following:

Nearer, my God, to Thee
Nearer to Thee.
E'en though it be a cross,
That raiseth me;
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee.

And also:

Oft in sorrow...oft in woe
Onward, Christians, onward go:
Fight the fight, maintain the strife,
Strengthened with the Bread of life.

Let your drooping hearts be glad:
March in heavenly armour clad:
Fight, nor think the battle long,
Soon shall victory tune your song.

Let not sorrow dim your eye,
Soon shall every tears be dry;
Let not fears your course impede,
Great your strength, if great your need.

Best regards to all the friends. How is Carolien Van Stockum? Give her my kindest regards and believe me,
your loving brother,
Vincent

Does the road go uphill all the way?
Yes, to the very end.
Will the journey take the whole long day ?
From morn till night, my friend. ¹

1. Christina Rossetti. Inaccurately quoted by Vincent in the original.