

Letter 037
Paris, 12 September 1875

Dear Theo,

Flügel, Flügel über's Leben!
Flügel über Grab und Tod!

[Wings to glide above life!
Wings to glide above the grave and death!]

That is what we want, and I am beginning to understand that we can get them. Don't you think Father has them? And you know how he got them? By prayer and the fruit of prayer – patience and faith – and from the Bible that was a light on his path and a lamp ahead of his feet.

This morning I heard a beautiful sermon on the theme: Forget what is behind you; the preacher said for example: Have more hope than memories; what there has been seriousness and blessed in your past life is not lost; wait no longer therefore, you will find it elsewhere, but advance ... All these things have become new in Jesus Christ.

Keep heart and believe me,
Your loving brother, Vincent

If it was true that youth and adolescence are only vanity – of course, if one takes into account what is written above and if one dreams that a well employed youth is a treasure, although he breaks off and resumes later, we would have to strive and hope to become men like our father and others. We hope on these two, and pray. Compliments to all that may ask after me.

You know the etching by Rembrandt, "Burgomaster Six," standing reading before the window? I know that Uncle Vincent and Uncle Cor are very fond of it, and I sometimes think they must have resembled him when they were younger. You also know the portrait of Six when he was older. I think there is an engraving of it in the gallery at The Hague. His life must have been beautiful and serious.