

# *The Standard Bearer*

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# Teach Things Consistent with Sound Doctrine

*"But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine."*

Titus 2:1

Paul left Titus among the new Christians on the island of Crete with the responsibility to "set in order the things that are wanting" (1:5a). Titus was to complete matters not yet finished. His primary duty was to organize churches by ordaining officebearers (1:5b).

Meanwhile, Titus was to continue his main task of preaching and teaching in the interest of the faith of God's elect and their acknowledging of the truth that accords with godliness (1:1). Such preaching and teaching included the duty of rebuking sharply those who brought false teachings and wrong lifestyles (1:10-13). When he taught the truth he would confront and condemn errors in belief and in life. Errors and evils are confronted and condemned with words of condemnation accompanying the Word of truth. In addition, Paul calls Titus to teach the new Christians a godly lifestyle

that would also condemn an evil lifestyle. Christians living in a godly manner overcome evil with good. Godly lives adorn the truth. It is concern for this duty to live godly that is presented in the second chapter of Paul's letter to Titus.



What Titus is to teach and to speak stands in sharp contrast to the teaching of the false teachers and the generally wicked world (cf. 1:9-11, 16). It is obvious that there was a generally immoral atmosphere prevailing among the people of Crete. "One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies." And Paul adds, "This witness is true" (1:12,13a). Their unbelief (not holding to the sound teachings of God's Word and not striving to obey His commands) resulted in a lifestyle of grievous sins.

There were gainsayers (1:9b), that is, those who contradict, who declare themselves to be against the right. Generally they were insubordinate and vain talkers, liars. Their false teachings resulted in their being spiritually unhealthy. Their total depravity clearly revealed itself in their walk. God declared them to be "abominable" (detestable) in His sight (1:16).

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To answer these evils, Titus is called to do two things. First, it was committed to him (as it was to Paul) to preach the truth, so that God's elect would believingly acknowledge this truth unto the hope of eternal life (cf. 1:1-3). Second, Titus was to accompany the preaching of sound doctrine with the strict preaching of God's commandments, for the truth that is to be believed is also to be lived. This is what Paul meant in our text: "speak the things which become sound doctrine."

Let's consider this "sound doctrine." It is assumed that Titus was preaching sound doctrine. The word translated "doctrine" is literally "teachings" or "instruction." The proclamation of the gospel is not merely the presentation of a set of doctrines to be grasped intellectually. The word "teachings" describes the manner in which the truth is communicated—teachings are taught by one to others. Further, this word implies that there is a relationship between the one doing the teaching and those receiving the teachings. Preachers and pastors are teachers who, like Jesus (Mark 4:33, 34), convey the truths of Scripture in the best way for the sake of the hearers. They strive to know the ones being taught, and they strive to communicate the truths of Scripture to them in the best possible way.

The teachings are "sound," that is, healthy in the sense of health-giving. Teachings that are faithful to God's Word as to its contents will result in the spiritual health of those who believe the teachings. The instruction of God's Word is healthy for us. For example, the correct understanding of the doctrines of grace is constant reason for humility before God and others (Canons I, 13). This implies that false teaching or compromised teaching is unhealthy for the hearers.

There is a very practical and powerful implication here: it is for our spiritual well-being that we attend a church where God's Word is faithfully preached the best. There are other factors that can lead to a lack of spiritual health, but that which guarantees spiritual ill health is the lack of right teaching of the pure doctrines of the gospel. Just as a good diet leads to good physical health, so when the clear preaching/teaching of the truths of Scripture are truly grasped by believers, then it produces good spiritual health in them. The right and true teachings of the Word of God generate good health.



Paul admonishes Titus (along with all of his spiritual sons in the gospel ministry) to teach the "things which become" sound doctrine. The word "become" means "to be consistent with" or "to be in harmony with." With similar language Paul besought the Ephesians to walk *worthy* of the calling to which they had been called (Eph. 4:1). What are the "things" that are in harmony with these health-giving teachings? The next verses give the answer. They consist of those things that Paul tells Titus to admonish the old Christian men to do, what the old Christian women are to do, what the young Christian men and women are to do, and what the Christians who are slaves are to do. The aged men who are Christians are to be taught to be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, charity, and patience. For the older Christian women, that which is consistent with sound teachings is a holy life, not being slanderers, not being given to much wine, but being willing to teach and help the younger Christian women. There are similar things for young men, young women, and slaves. These "things" refer to a godly life that flows from and is consistent with sound teachings of biblical truths.

How is it that a godly life is in harmony with right teachings of Scripture's truths? Well, doctrine and life are very closely connected. What one believes will be reflected in how one lives. By their fruits shall ye know them! What we believe determines how we live. What we believe concerning God and the way of salvation affects the way we live and conduct ourselves.

This is exemplified in the false teachers. They profess to know God, but their works deny Him: they are disobedient, and their good works cannot stand the test of God's judgment (1:16). The root of such an abominable life is the erroneous teaching of work righteousness. For example, if you teach that man must earn salvation by keeping the law, then you alter the law so you can keep it with a shallow or superficial obedience that is without a heart of love for God. Again, their total depravity reveals itself in their ungodly walk.

On the contrary, all teaching that is true to God's Word will glorify God and thus will teach a lifestyle that is God-centered. All false teaching leads to a man-centered lifestyle. The seeds of a proper walk before God are found in those doctrines that are faithful to

God's Word. Therefore right, biblical teaching is not only healthy for God's people, but also results in a godly life.




Titus is commanded to “speak” the things that become sound doctrine. He is to instruct in sound doctrine *and* in the things that are consistent with sound doctrine, and he must “speak” of that in his everyday conversation and walk. He must demonstrate in his life what true doctrines mean for the lives of the saints. His own life must exhibit the correctness of what he preached. He must practice what he preached!

This is the calling of every minister of the gospel. First, he must preach doctrines that present the truth of God as revealed in the Scriptures. He must not give his own ideas or the current ideas of other men.

Rather, he must come to the pulpit and classroom only with the truth—the whole truth of God.

And the faithful minister of the gospel must instruct concerning the lifestyle that must accompany and that flows from the right teaching. He must admonish the saints as to how they must live. Their life is to harmonize with what they believe.

Why? So that God will be glorified by and through His people. God is glorified by the confession of the believer (church). And God is also glorified by the life and conduct of His people. The world sees our good works and glorifies our Father in heaven (Matt. 5:9). “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another (John 13:35).

The Father is honored when His children conduct themselves well. And He is dishonored when they sin. Our life is to adorn or dress up the teachings we hold, evidencing that we belong to Him. 

## EDITORIAL

REV. KENNETH KOOLE

# Two Books (3)

Last installment we introduced to our readers the book *Reformed Thought: Selected Writings of William Young*. As stated, due to Young's reference to Hoeksema's covenant view in his severe criticism of Abraham Kuyper's covenant view (in particular Kuyper's doctrine of presupposed regeneration) and then essentially identifying Hoeksema's view with that of Kuyper, we are constrained to respond, be it briefly, to Dr. Young's assessment of and al-

legations against Hoeksema's (and our own PRC's) view.

We use the word “allegations” purposely.

In his paper *Historic Calvinism and Neo-Calvinism* (ch. 3 of Young's selected writings), Young charges Kuyper's covenantal view with being *neo-Calvinistic* and with being a form of *Hyper-Covenantism*, which evil, alleges Young, Kuyper was guilty of introducing into Dutch Reformed covenantal thinking.

This is no small matter, because, according to Young, the inevitable outcome of such a covenant view

has been the death of experimental religion and of heartfelt Christian piety in those churches infected by this view. Young points to what took place in the past century in the GKN (*Gereformeerde Kerk Nederlands*—“Kuyper's” church) and even in the CRC as proof. According to Young, it was the adopting of Kuyper's covenantal perspective even more than his inflated common grace error that contributed to this spiritual deadness. In accordance with this covenant view, children are simply assumed to be elect and saved, with the grievous result that mere intellectual agreement with

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*Previous article in this series: February 1, 2012, p. 197.*



church doctrines has been allowed to stand as an evidence of true faith, rather than parents and elders insisting upon evidence of deeper convictions of the heart, that is, true faith.

All of this is of more than mere academic interest to us.

As pointed out last time, not only does Young place Hoeksema and his covenantal view in the same camp as Kuyper, but in a footnote in another paper (Chapter 10 of the book) Young charges Hoeksema with being numbered with those who “...have carried *Hyper-Covenantism to an extreme not to be ascribed to their mentor [Kuyper]*” (fn 3, p. 207).

Why Hoeksema and his view should be placed in the “Hyper” covenantal category we will state in just a moment.

But first we simply point out that, in our judgment, it will do no good to answer Young’s allegation against Hoeksema (and the PRC with him) by reiterating for the ‘umteenth’ time that we do not subscribe to Kuyper’s presupposed regeneration view. Of that denial Young, well read and scholar that he is, surely is well aware.

Young, like many others, would simply respond, “You folk may differ with Kuyper on various details of the covenant, but in essence your view is the same.”

And what is that similar essence?

This: that we with Hoeksema maintain that children of believers, received as covenant seed, are to be viewed, dealt with, and addressed from earliest years as being spiritu-

ally alive rather than as numbered with the ungodly and the dead.

And this puts one in the camp of Hyper-Covenantism.

Why?

Because this view stands in stark contrast to the ‘old Princeton’ Presbyterian view (the mainline historic Presbyterian view) as described by Archibald Alexander (1772-1851):

The education of children should proceed on the principle that they are in an unregenerate state, until evidences of piety clearly appear, in which case they should be sedulously cherished and nurtured.... Although the grace of God may be communicated to a human soul at any period of its existence in this world, yet the fact manifestly is, that very few are renewed before the exercise of reason commences: and not many in early childhood (p. 38).

There you have it—“The education of children [of believers] should proceed on the principle that they are in an unregenerate state [that is, spiritually dead, needing a conversion experience in their teens or later—kk].”

To deny that we are to deal with the seed of the covenant as if they are numbered with the spiritually dead, as if they were no different than the children of pagans, is, according to Young, to make oneself guilty of Hyper-Covenantism.

Interestingly enough, old Alexander does acknowledge that *some* of our children may be renewed “before the exercise of reason commences,” that is, from infancy. Not many, but some...perhaps: a necessary conces-

sion to cover the indisputable gospel evidence of John the Baptist having Christ’s Spirit and life from his mother’s womb, and an attempt to circumvent its broader covenantal application for the New Testament church and believers.

Zacharias and Elisabeth certainly did not proceed in their education of little John from the perspective that their covenant seed was spiritually dead and might not properly address God as his Father in heaven or be taught from his mother’s arms to express sorrow for sins and lay hold on assurance of forgiveness based on the blood of the lamb.

And do not forget it was this John who introduced the rite of baptism in preparation of the New Testament age and for believers being baptized into Jesus as the promised Christ of the kingdom of God now being manifest.

And it was John who was a Nazarite from his mother’s womb, which truth with its application to how John was to live was taught him from little on, which calling has spiritual significance for the children of believers in the New Testament age. Can this be denied?

And yet we are to believe that what God did for and in John as seed of the covenant by His Holy Spirit at the time of *the introduction* of the New Testament kingdom and age has no real application to the New Testament age and its families, that is, to the kingdom age, when the Holy Spirit was poured out in His fullness and in an even greater measure than in the Old Testament age?

We find such exegesis of the gospel passage incredible, to say the least. It has more in common with the Anabaptist view than with what should be considered Reformed.

But that is another matter.

What we find striking is Alexander's statement that believers are to view their children as unregenerate "until evidences of piety clearly appear, *in which case they should be sedulously cherished and nurtured* [emphasis ours—kk]."

*In which case* they should be sedulously (with special diligence) nurtured??

Which of our children should be nurtured with special diligence and affection? Only certain of our children? And even with these, this "sedulous" perspective is to be taken only when we detect (we think) some special evidence of piety in them rather than, more than, the others?

"Sedulous" is not the word that comes to mind.

"Incredulous" does.

This is the "true to Calvin" view?

If it is, I for one disagree with Calvin on this matter wholeheartedly and say so publicly without any hesitancy whatsoever.

But there is no evidence this was Calvin's view, though it may well be, and has been, the view of various theologians of Calvinistic and Presbyterian vintage who can trace their roots back to Calvin when it comes to *other* fundamental doctrines of grace and ecclesiology, men such as old Archibald Alexander, and the divines such as the Hodges, Thornwell, Dabney, Warfield, and so on.

And of various Dutch divines as

well, of whom W. à Brakel is representative.

But what Calvin's doctrinal perspective was is not the fundamental question.

The fundamental question is, what is the apostolic and scriptural perspective?

Special, diligent nurturing of some at a certain stage? And the rest consigned to a category of being spiritually unregenerate, devoid of the Spirit, and dead?

This is how we are to understand Paul in Ephesians 6:4 and his admonition to fathers to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? The real focused nurturing is to be directed to a special few? To those whom we think may be the Isaacs of the bunch (we dare not use the label "flock") and not the Ishmaels? Or with special regard to our more pious Josephs, rather than his eleven brothers with their less attractive, more difficult characters?

And we know what that led to in Jacob's family!

Actually, what Alexander (and Young with him) says here about wholehearted nurturing being selective (not something incumbent upon us for *all* of our children, in fact, not even permitted, but something that must wait until some noteworthy piety shows itself in certain children), logically is absolutely consistent with his (and Young's) premise, namely, that children of believers are spiritually dead and to be viewed as such. One cannot nurture *death*. To nurture something presupposes something, namely, there is a life, be it ever so fragile, and it requires nur-

turing exactly because it is young and tender and needs this special attention and care.

No life? What's to nurture? One best wait until what one judges to be genuine spiritual life at last appears, brushing all the rest aside as so much childish pretense.

Remember, the Hannahs of the *New Testament* receive precious few, if any, Samuels who have priestly hearts from little on. So implies Young and his view.

Or did Samuel need to be converted later in life also?

But this is Young's perspective, the practical consequences of his and the "old Princeton," historic Presbyterian view.

According to Young, for believing parents to view and raise (nurture!) their children as having spiritual life is a most *unspiritual* perspective and can only lead to dire spiritual consequences, as the following quote makes crystal clear.

If so-called covenant children are to be regarded as regenerate, then there is no need to tell them, "Ye must be born again." Indeed, it would appear that there was no need for these words to be addressed to Nicodemus. A sharp theoretical cleavage may be drawn between regeneration and conversion, but in practice the child will be regarded as already converted, or as being gradually and imperceptibly converted. The practice of the Christian school and catechetical training will be determined by this view, and will terminate in the expectation that the young adult will automatically make confession of faith and go to the Lord's Table. A system for

breeding Pharisees, whose cry is “We are Abraham’s children,” could hardly be better calculated. (p. 52)

That’s quite a concluding statement.

And now the reader may better understand why we stated in the last issue that Young’s statements concerning Hoeksema and his covenantal view made us bristle a bit.

If few covenantal systems are better designed for “breeding Pharisees” than Kuyper and his Hyper-Covenantism, and Hoeksema is even more extreme in his covenantal view than Kuyper, what does one have to conclude about Hoeksema’s and the PRC’s view?

Alright, more than a bit.

One can also understand why,

upon reflection, we have decided to devote at least one more *SB* article to Young’s assessment of Hoeksema’s covenantal view and Young’s insistence that believers are to view and deal with their children as numbered with the spiritually dead.

We intend to bring some Scripture to bear on this issue.

And something must be said about what Calvin says and does not say.

And there is the name of Bavinck that must be brought into the picture, which Young does. But he does not want to say the same severe things about Bavinck and his covenant view that he does about Hoeksema.

Why not?

As a certain Alice once said, this becomes “curiouser and curiouser” the longer one looks and reflects.

It is here that a certain dishonesty

shows itself, unintentional though it might be.

And we fear not just with respect to Dr. Young.

What present day covenantal theologians will say about Hoeksema with asperity they cannot bring themselves to say about Bavinck and his covenantal view.

Why is that?

Is this honesty?

Is this fair?

I probably shouldn’t have, but when Bavinck’s *Dogmatiek* came out in English, it made me smile like that proverbial Cheshire cat.

Now all could read what the esteemed Bavinck’s covenant view was.

Similar to Kuyper’s, but not the same.

Nor is Hoeksema’s.

More next time. 

## ALL AROUND US

## REV. CLAY SPRONK

### ■ “Religion” Attacked

Your teenage sons and daughters may have seen it. It is a poem/rap by Jefferson Bethke entitled “Why I Hate Religion, But Love Jesus.” It has been viewed over 13 million times on YouTube. Its lyrics are recorded on this website: <http://rapgenius.com/Jefferson-bethke-why-i-hate-religion-but-love-jesus-spoken-word-lyrics>. “Jesus came to abolish religion,” the first line of the poem says. Religion is bad, and the people who are religious are bad, perhaps the most wicked people on earth, the poem proclaims. What is religion, and who are these terrible religious people? The poem is ambiguous. Nevertheless, it is certainly an attack on tra-

ditional churches and their members—in other words, on orthodox Reformed churches and their members.

The message of the poem is similar to the message of Mark Driscoll, a mega-church pastor based in Seattle, Washington. Driscoll can also be seen on YouTube.com expressing his hatred for “religion.” The first line of one of his videos is, “I hate religion.” He has recently published a book with the pejorative title “Religion Saves: and Nine Other Misconceptions.”

Bethke and Driscoll seem to want to leave the impression they are attacking Phariseeism, the notion that one is saved by keeping rules. “Religion,” then, is a works-righteousness program, and “religious people” are people who think they have earned salvation. But their attack on “religion” is not simply an attack on Phariseeism. It is an attack on “traditional” churches, with their rules, especially those regulating church government

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and worship. Bethke and Driscoll promote “freedom” from what they view as the Phariseeistic rules of traditional churches. In other words, this attack on “religion” is a promotion of the “anything goes” mentality in the church.

Their message is dangerous. It is also attractive, perhaps especially to young people. Bethke’s poem is well produced and catchy. Driscoll is clever. He claims to be a sound Calvinist, perhaps putting people at ease about his orthodoxy. At the same time he promotes an unbiblical, unCalvinistic view of the church and of worship that is attractive to the flesh. He preaches in blue jeans with an un-tucked button-down shirt. His sermons are peppered with jokes. He leads his congregation in the singing of Christian rock songs. You can be a sound Calvinist, he says, without following the old rules about church and worship. In fact, people who insist on the old rules are wicked “religious people” promoting an empty “religion.”

The danger of this attack on traditional churches is real. A while ago a Protestant Reformed mother handed me a sermon CD of Mark Driscoll and said, “My son thinks he is great.” The sermon text was Jesus’ healing of the ten lepers in Luke 17:11-19, if my memory is correct. The sermon was filled with attacks on “religion,” that is, on orthodox churches.

Young people who have heard Bethke’s poem or listened to Driscoll’s sermons or watched him preach need to have it explained to them that these attacks on the church, veiled as attacks on “religion,” are wrong.

A helpful refutation of these attacks on “religion” is given by Rev. Kevin De Young in this excerpt of his response to Bethke’s poem:

More important is Bethke’s opening line: “Jesus came to abolish religion.” That’s the whole point of the poem. The argument—and most poems are arguing for something—rests on the sharp distinction between religion on one side and Jesus on the other. Whether this argument is fair depends on your definition of religion. Bethke sees religion as a man-made attempt to earn God’s favor. Religion equals self-righteousness, moral preening, and hypocrisy. Religion is all law and no gospel. If that’s religion, then Jesus is certainly against it.

But that’s not what religion is. We can say that’s what it *has become* for some people or what we *under-*

*stand* it to be. But words still matter and we shouldn’t just define them however we want. “Jesus hates religion” communicates something that “Jesus hates self-righteousness” doesn’t. To say that Jesus hates pride and hypocrisy is old news. To say he hates religion—now, that has a kick to it. People hear “religion” and think of rules, rituals, dogma, pastors, priests, institutions. People love Oprah and the Shack and “spiritual, not religious” bumper stickers because the mood of our country is one that wants God without the strictures that come with traditional Christianity. We love the Jesus that hates religion.

The only problem is, he didn’t. Jesus was a Jew. He went to services at the synagogue. He observed Jewish holy days. He did not come to abolish the Law or the Prophets, but to fulfill them (Matt. 5:17). He founded the church (Matt. 16:18). He established church discipline (Matt. 18:15-20). He instituted a ritual meal (Matt. 26:26-28). He told his disciples to baptize people and to teach others to obey everything he commanded (Matt. 28:19-20). He insisted that people believe in him and believe certain things about him (John 3:16-18; 8:24). If religion is characterized by doctrine, commands, rituals, and structure, then Jesus is not your go-to guy for hating religion (Quoted from TheGospelCoalition.org, “Does Jesus Hate Religion? Kinda, Sorta, Not Really”).

## ■ Mormonism Under the Spotlight

In the November Presidential election Reformed Christians will likely have an unsatisfactory choice to make in deciding which candidate they will vote for. The frontrunners, if they are Christian, belong to churches known for apostasy rather than biblical orthodoxy. The candidates chosen to stand for election by the Democratic and Republican parties may in all likelihood be men who approve of and live by the world’s moral standards rather than the Bible’s. The 2012 Presidential election might add a unique wrinkle. We might be faced with the decision of whether or not to vote for a Mormon. Two professing Mormons have sought the Republican Party’s nomination to be elected president, John Huntsman, who recently dropped out of the presidential race, and Mitt Romney, who is the current favorite to receive the nomination. The Mormon religion is receiving a great deal of attention.

Along with the discussion about whether or not



Christians should vote for a Mormon, a discussion is taking place about whether Mormonism should be viewed as a Christian religion or as an unchristian cult. Judged in light of Scripture and the confessions of the church there is no question Mormonism is a wicked religion that has nothing to do with Christianity. Its teachings are clearly unbiblical, and it does not seem likely many Christians would accept the notion that Mormonism is a form of Christianity. However, the Mormon Church, well known for its aggressive outreach programs, is attempting to gain legitimacy by promoting the notion that it is a branch of Christianity.

Mormonism.org, which calls itself the “Official Website of the church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,” provides this answer to the question “Are Mormons Christians?”—

We are Christians in a very real sense and that is coming to be more and more widely recognized. Once upon a time people everywhere said we are not Christians. They have come to recognize that we are, and that we have a very vital and dynamic religion based on the teachings of Jesus Christ. We, of course, accept Jesus Christ as our Leader, our King, our Savior...the dominant figure in the history of the world, the only perfect Man who ever walked the earth, the living Son of the living God. He is our Savior and our Redeemer through whose atoning sacrifice has come the opportunity of eternal life. Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints pray and worship in the name of Jesus Christ. He is the center of our faith and the head of our Church. The Book of Mormon is Another Testament of Jesus Christ and witnesses of His divinity, His life, and His atonement.

Mormons think of themselves as Christians, want others to think of them as Christians, and rejoice that they are more “widely recognized” as Christians.

Are an increasing number of Christians accepting Mormonism as a branch of Christianity? This may be true, according to a poll cited by the *New York Times* website in an article entitled “The Theological Differences Behind Evangelical Unease With Romney.” The poll found that “about two-thirds of mainline Protestants and Catholics said Mormonism is Christian, compared with only about a third of white evangelicals.”

The poll reveals the appalling doctrinal ignorance of many professing Christians, but also, that it may not be as superfluous as we might think to remind ourselves of the gross heresies of Mormonism.

What follows is a description and condemnation of Mormonism from an article entitled “Mormonism, Democracy, and the Urgent Need for Evangelical Thinking,” posted by Dr. Albert Mohler, Jr. on his website [AlbertMohler.com](http://AlbertMohler.com):

Is Mormonism just a distinctive denomination of Christianity?

The answer to that question is definitive. Mormonism does not claim to be just another denomination of Christianity. To the contrary, the central claim of Mormonism is that Christianity was corrupt and incomplete until the restoration of the faith with the advent of the Latter-Day Saints and their scripture, *The Book of Mormon*. Thus, it is just a matter of intellectual honesty to take Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism, at his word when he claimed that true Christianity did not exist from the time of the Apostles until the reestablishment of the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods on May 15, 1829.

From a Christian perspective, Mormonism is a new religion, complete with its own scripture, its own priesthood, its own rituals, and its own teachings. Most importantly, those teachings are a repudiation of historic Christian orthodoxy—and were claimed to be so from the moment of Mormonism’s founding forward. Mormonism rejects orthodox Christianity as the very argument for its own existence, and it clearly identifies historic Christianity as a false faith.

Mormonism starts with an understanding of God that rejects both monotheism and the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. The Mormon concept of God includes many gods, not one. Furthermore, Mormonism teaches that we are now what God once was and are becoming what He now is. This is in direct conflict with historic Christianity.


Mormonism rejects the Bible as the sole and sufficient authority for the faith, and insists that *The Book of Mormon* and other authoritative Latter-Day Saints writings constitute God’s final revelation. Furthermore, the authority in Mormonism is mediated through a human priesthood, through whom God is claimed to speak directly and authoritatively to the church. Nothing makes the distinction between Mormonism and

historic Christianity more clear than the experience of reading *The Book of Mormon*. The very subtitle of *The Book of Mormon—Another Testament of Jesus Christ*—makes one of Mormonism’s central claims directly and candidly: That we need another authority to provide what is lacking in the New Testament.

The Mormon doctrine of sin is not that of biblical Christianity, nor is its teaching concerning salvation. Rather than teaching that the death of Christ is alone sufficient for the forgiveness of sins, Mormonism presents a scheme of salvation that amounts to the progressive deification of the believer. According to Mormonism, sinners are not justified by faith alone, but also by works of righteousness and obedience. Mormonism’s teachings concerning Jesus Christ start with a radically different understanding of the Virgin Birth and proceed to a fundamentally different understanding of Christ’s work of salvation.

By its very nature, Mormonism borrows Christian themes, personalities, and narratives. Nevertheless,

it rejects what orthodox Christianity affirms and it affirms what orthodox Christianity rejects. It is not orthodox Christianity in a new form or another branch of the Christian tradition. By its own teachings and claims, it rejects any claim of continuity with orthodox Christianity. Insofar as an individual Mormon holds to the teachings of the Latter-Day Saints, he or she repudiates biblical Christianity. There are, no doubt, many Mormons who are not fully aware of the teachings of their church. Nevertheless, the doctrines and teachings of the LDS church are there for all to see.

It is neither slander nor condescension to state clearly that Mormonism is not Christianity. Taking Mormonism on its own terms, one finds a comprehensive set of teachings and doctrines that are self-consciously set against historic Christianity. The larger world may be confused about this, but biblical Christians cannot make this error, for we are certain that the consequences are eternal. 

## STRENGTH OF YOUTH

## REV. GARRY ERIKS

# A Time to Serve

**W**hat are you doing to serve others? How are you serving your family? You receive so much from your parents. They supply the basic necessities of life, send you to Christian schools, and drive you to music lessons, sporting events, and other appointments. Your mothers and fathers serve you in so many ways. What are you doing to serve them? How do you serve your brothers and sisters, who maybe are not always very kind to you?

What are you doing to serve the other members of the church individually and collectively, as young people’s societies? As I am writing this, your Bible study season has reached its midpoint. By the power of the Spirit of truth your Bible study has been profitable under the direction of your spiritual leaders.

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Fundraising efforts are in full swing. The young people are asking their congregations to help fund convention expenses by supporting their fundraisers or by giving when the collection plate is passed in a worship service or at a song service. Soon plans will be made to attend the convention that Hope (Walker) PRC members are busily planning. Maybe you have enjoyed an activity or outing together—a gym night, a ball game, or a bonfire. But what planning have you done to serve the members of your congregation? Did you sing Christmas carols to the elderly? Did you rake leaves or help with other chores at the homes of some members of the church? If you have, then I want to encourage you to continue these activities. If not much planning has been done, then I want to encourage you to begin.

Receiving help from your church is a good thing. What a blessing to receive financial and spiritual help from the other members of your churches. Because of the reality that conventions cost money and you want

out-of-pocket expenses to be lower for the convention, the focus easily becomes receiving help from the congregation. Our congregations have always been extremely generous when it comes to supporting our young people. For this support the young people are thankful. As you have received, do not forget to give.

Service, not receiving, is a chief mark of the Christian life. Ministering to God's people in their time of trouble is the essence of the Christian life. James 1:27 teaches this truth: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Paul commands us in Galatians 5:13, "by love serve one another." In Matthew 25:31-46, Jesus teaches that at the Judgment Day we must give an account of how we loved and served the least of our brethren. Mercy, love, and kindness shown in word and deed have always been the hallmark of the Christian life. As members of Christ's church, you are called to serve the other members of the church. On the basis of Scripture's teaching, the Heidelberg Catechism, in Answer 55, teaches us that the communion of the saints means "that everyone must know it to be his duty, readily and cheerfully to employ his gifts, for the advantage and salvation of other members."

Those who know God and His Son Jesus Christ want to serve in response to what God has done. Our Lord is merciful, gracious, and kind. He cares for the needy. He is a Father who takes pity upon His children in all of their weakness (Ps. 103:13). "A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation. God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land" (Ps. 68:5, 6). How amazing is the mercy, grace, and kindness God has shown to you in Jesus Christ.

Our Savior Jesus Christ came to this earth to serve His Father and His people. His service for us was revealed with such clarity in the upper room on the eve of His death when He washed His disciples' feet. When none of the disciples would do the job because it was the menial, disgusting, lowly job of a slave, Jesus got down on His hands and knees and washed their sweaty, dirty feet. Afterward Jesus instructed them and us in John 13:12b-15: "Know ye what I have done to you? Ye

call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you." Jesus came to serve by His death on the cross. As His people, we are called to follow His example by washing each other's feet (serving). The apostle Paul teaches us the same thing in II Corinthians 5:15, "And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again."

Because God cares for His needy people, His needy people are to do likewise. Because Jesus served us by His death on the cross, we are to serve others. In effect, we are to do unto others as Jesus has done for us. Because God has loved us, we are to love others (I John 4:11). Because Jesus laid down His life for us, we are to lay down our lives for one another (I John 3:16). As those who have received the tender compassion of the Lord we are to demonstrate tenderness in kind to those around us.

God calls us to love our neighbor—every person with whom we come into contact in this world. There is no doubt about this. Yet, the Scripture calls us to love especially our brothers and sisters in the Lord. We are to do good to all, but especially to the household of faith. Love for Christ is shown by loving our fellow saints. The life of service I am emphasizing is the life of serving others in the church. This service is not limited to those in the home and church. But here is where true service starts, for these are the people God has put in our path each day.

To be involved in service of others does not mean we have to go far away to do this. There may be opportunities for serving God's people in far-off places where the saints are in great need. It is wonderful to help God's people who are affected by the great destruction caused by hurricanes, tornadoes, and flooding. But let us not forget the many opportunities that are right under our noses in our homes and churches.

What are these acts of true service? Such acts of service have a right motivation—love for Jesus Christ and love for the neighbor. There are many people who do nice things for other people, but their motivation is all wrong—they are motivated by selfishness. They want

glory for themselves, or they think that doing good will somehow bring good karma in the future. These are not true acts of service. I call your attention to this because this is a danger for us. There is the danger that we do things for others because it feels good or it looks good on a resumé or on a college application.

True acts of kind service do not want recognition. They are content to be in the background and even done in secret. They don't demand something in return. Service is motivated by the love of Jesus Christ. True service is humble duty in the small things of life. This is what Jesus taught us when He washed His disciples' feet.

This kind of service is so difficult because of the selfishness that resides in our hearts. We live in an age that is self-centered. This self-centeredness exists in each of our hearts. When selfishness rules in the heart there is no concern for others. Then there is no time for serving others. "I have too much going on"—if you have ever thought this or said this, think about what this says concerning your heart. Selfishness wants acknowledgment for the things we have done. It wants people to know. May the Holy Spirit drive this selfishness from our hearts.

I hope that the Word of God inspires you to acts of service. But maybe you are wondering what acts of service can be done. I would like to provide a list of some possible activities.

Let's start at home. Your parents do so much for you. What can you do to serve them? Without thinking much you might reply, "I should obey them." This is a good place to start. Remember that service is done in the small moments of life. You can serve your parents by obeying their instructions without forcing them into repeating their instructions. When you do your chores around the house, you can do them without grumbling or complaining, remembering what a great blessing it is to have a family, a home, clothes, food, running water, electricity, and heat in a world where millions of teens do not have such things. You could do things around the house without having to be asked. These are examples of the actions of true service. The hard part is

to do them with the right motivation. The right motivation is not that you want to build a resumé for the time when you want to ask for the car or money. True service does not expect anything in return. Instead it is done because you love them and your Savior, Jesus Christ.

How can you serve your brother(s) and/or sister(s)? Service is expressed often with kindness. Instead of putting them down with criticism, you can build them up with compliments. Any criticism you give to your brother or sister will be for their improvement and not to cut down or belittle them. You can share the things you have with them willingly. What are some other ways you can serve your siblings?

How can you serve the other members of the church? I remember quite a few years ago that a young people's society decided all on their own that once a month on a Sunday afternoon they would go sing to some of the elderly saints in the church. What a wonderful activity of service. Visiting elderly saints in the church is a wonderful way to serve them. But there are things that they may need help with. A blind member could use some young people who could read the bulletin or the *Standard Bearer*. I know of a young people's society that sent cards to those who were sick or those who had lost a loved one in death. All the young people would sign the card.

One of the ways to serve our churches would be for the young people to visit a mission field. They could go there to help promote a speech, or the Sunday worship services in the community, or help the mission in some other way. When young people give of their time and money to make this kind of trip, it is a wonderful example of true service within the church.

As you continue to study the Word in your Bible studies and in private devotions, may you grow in the truth of God's Word. God's Word reveals the amazing love of God in Jesus Christ for sinners. What a wonderful truth. Those who love that truth live that truth by serving others. May God grant you growth in learning how to serve Jesus Christ by serving saints.



*True service  
is humble duty  
in the small things of life.*



# Who Purchased Scenic, South Dakota?

Those of our readers in the Midwest of the United States of America might be somewhat surprised to learn that recently, in September 2011, a Filipino religious cult bought 46 acres of land and buildings in and around the town of Scenic, located about 50 miles southeast of Rapid City, South Dakota. What will now become of the formerly abandoned town we do not know, but this news illustrates the amazing wealth that this Filipino cult has accumulated since it started in the early 1900s and its expanding presence in the world, which extends now from the Philippines to the USA and 95 other countries.

Who purchased the town of Scenic? A religious cult, aptly called by some “The Cult of Manalo,” bought the town. The Cult of Manalo is the third largest religion in the Philippines, behind Roman Catholicism and Islam. We will survey and evaluate this part of the religious landscape in the Philippines today.

## Its Early History

The Cult of Manalo, more commonly known as the “Iglesia ni Cristo” (“The Church of Christ”), was a religious movement in the early 1900s that was begun by Felix Manalo. He was born on May 10, 1886, as Felix Ysagun, but following the death of his mother, he chose to use his mother’s maiden name, Manalo, for his surname. He was baptized into the Roman Catholic Church, and he remained a member until he witnessed a debate between a Catholic priest and a Protestant pastor in Paranaque, Rizal province, which was near Manila. The apologetics of the Protestant pastor impressed Manalo so much that he eventually left the Catholic Church, in 1902, at the age of 16.

His departure from the Roman Catholic Church was the beginning of a decade of ecclesiastical wanderings from one denomination or religious group to another. In 1904 he joined Methodist Episcopal Church and

trained in their seminary to be an evangelist. In 1907 he joined the Presbyterian Church, and, after brief training in their seminary, became a Presbyterian pastor for a short time. In 1908 he joined the Disciples of Christ for a year, till he was forced to resign due to alleged misconduct. He joined the Christian Mission in 1910, and there became convinced of adult baptism by immersion only. Then, in 1911, he joined the Seventh Day Adventist movement. A year or so later, he left the SDA religion over his conviction that their view of the sabbath was unscriptural and over alleged misconduct, for which the SDA leaders had suspended him.

Dissatisfied with the doctrines, the practices, and the experiences of his former churches or religious affiliations, he began his own independent church in late 1913 or early 1914. He claimed in his preaching that only *his* teachings were based upon Scripture alone. On July 27, 1914, Felix Manalo registered his church with the Philippine government as the *Iglesia ni Cristo* (“The Church of Christ”), with himself as its first hierarchical leader, called the Executive Minister.

Between 1914 and today, the INC has grown impressively in members, so that there are INC locales (their designation of local congregations) and buildings throughout the Philippines. Total soul membership is estimated to be about three million today. This membership number includes only adults, no children, because membership in the INC can be obtained only through adult baptism, by immersion. What the exact number of the membership may be, we do not know, because the INC does not publish its membership counts.

After Felix Manalo died on April 12, 1963, his son, Erano Manalo served as the executive minister. Erano Manalo served in that position until he died recently, on August 31, 2009. Now, the grandson of Felix, Eduardo V. Manalo, is the hierarchical head of the INC.

The cult has spread across the globe into other countries. In its recent history, it has established locales in Rome (1994), Jerusalem (1996), and Athens (1997).

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In the United States of America, the INC boasts a membership of 150 locales, with the potential, now, of another locale, in rural Scenic, South Dakota.

### Some of Its Significant Beliefs and Practices

What are the main beliefs and practices of the *Iglesia ni Cristo*? As is true of most cults, the first major teaching of the INC is that Felix Manalo was the last special messenger of God. He based this claim on the prophecy of Revelation 7:1-3. He believed that he was appointed to be the “angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God” (Rev. 7:2a). Although this false teaching did not appear in the INC at its beginning, it eventually became part of its official confession by the 1940s. By 1922 already, Manalo was claiming that he himself was the last human voice, chosen and sent by God, to bring the people of God the message of true salvation. For additional support, he appealed to the prophecy of Isaiah, claiming that he was the fulfilment of Isaiah 46:11 concerning “the bird from the east.” Along with his interpretation of Isaiah 24:15-16 concerning the “isles of the sea,” he claimed the isles of the Philippines would be the location of the true church of God, with himself as head in the latter days.

This basic teaching of the INC is exactly what Jesus warned the church to expect to appear in the last days. There will arise many false Christs and false prophets (Matt. 24:24), and they will with their doctrines of devils deceive many. Manalo proudly and presumptuously claimed to be God’s last chosen prophet and to have exclusive gifts of biblical interpretation that have never been provided by the Holy Spirit to any others in the church world in recent history. However, his blind wanderings through various denominations, even coming in limited contact with Presbyterianism and the Reformed confessions, leaves him to be judged, without excuse before God, a false prophet.

That he was a false prophet is most clearly evident in the second main doctrinal position of the INC about the triune God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. The INC is Arian in its theology. Although the church condemned Arianism long ago through the Nicene Creed, Manalo embraced that old heresy as the fundamental basis of the INC. As a result, the INC adamantly de-

nies that the Son and the Holy Spirit are divine. The INC insists that Jesus Christ is only a man, and His person was created by God. Although the names of Jesus in the Bible show His divinity and that His person is the only begotten Son of God, the INC rejects that fundamental truth. They reject that the Holy Spirit is God, proceeding from the Father and the Son. Rejecting that bedrock truth of the Trinity, the INC has brought upon itself the judgment that it is a group of liars and antichrists (I John 2:22).

Although it is in reality a cult, it claims nevertheless, in its third main teaching, to be “The Church of Christ” and the only one. Denying the oneness and presence of the church in the Old Testament and the New Testament, the INC teaches that Jesus Christ instituted the church in Jerusalem in A.D. 33 with the help of His apostles. The INC claims that between the death of the apostle John and the year 1914, the true church of Christ disappeared and was completely dormant. According to the INC, all churches that existed and new denominations that were established during that period of time were and continue to be only false churches. There is no other true church, besides the INC, and outside of physical presence on the membership roles of one of the INC locales there can be no salvation.

This boastful claim of the INC is a rejection of the word of Christ that He would be with His church even unto the end (Matt. 28:20b). Christ implied that His church would always exist on the earth, no matter how small, through all ages, by His Word and Spirit. His promise was fulfilled even through such dark periods in New Testament history as the Middle Ages. Further, the INC claim is a denial of the work of the Holy Spirit to lead the church into the knowledge of the truth (John 16:13), one obvious example of which is the work of the Lord in the Reformation of the sixteenth century. Finally, to claim that there has been no faithful preaching of the gospel by the Lord throughout most of the New Testament age is a denial of the faithfulness of our Chief Prophet and Teacher, our Lord Jesus Christ, to see to it that by His Word and Spirit His eternally chosen church is gathered from the beginning of time and even throughout all of the New Testament age. We can be sure that the Lord’s white horse and rider of Revelation 6 did not stop galloping between the death of John and the birth of Felix Manalo.

As one would expect from what has been mentioned about the INC's view of membership, the INC maintains that salvation is conditioned on works and obedience to the teachings of the church and God's commandments. In fact, the act of application for membership in the INC and faithful maintenance of one's membership in the church is considered a requisite for salvation. As a result, the INC totally rejects the Reformed doctrines of salvation by grace alone, justification by faith alone, and original sin. Instead, the INC embraces fully the old heresies that promote the sovereignty, righteousness, and basic goodness of man.

One more distinguishing teaching of the INC is its eschatological view, which is similar to the Seventh Day Adventist teachings. When an INC member dies, he believes that his body and soul both die and both remain asleep or unconscious in the grave until the second coming of Christ. When Christ does return visibly, the resurrected INC members will join the living INC members, and together they will reign with Christ in earthly Jerusalem for 1,000 years. After the 1,000 years, there will be a second resurrection. Those who still remain wicked at that time will be cast into the lake of fire to be burned up and soon after be completely annihilated into non-existence. After this, the everlasting age will begin. The INC dreams of a kingdom of Christ upon this earth in old Jerusalem. These views deny the doctrine of the intermediate state, the doctrine of the final resurrection at the second appearing of Christ, the correct interpretation of the millennium of Revelation 20, and the doctrine of hell. These views stand opposed to the Reformed confession of what must shortly come to pass in preparation for the Lord's final and blessed appearing.

### **Its Significance Today in the Philippines**


In order for the members to know and defend its doctrines, the INC catechizes its members faithfully so that even the least educated members are well acquainted with the essentials of its teachings and practices. In a church world where there is appalling doctrinal illiteracy and ignorance of the religious landscape, this characteristic of the INC makes it a powerful and persuasive movement in the Philippines.

Along with its zealous catechizing of the members,

the INC also upholds high moral standards among its members. Members are forbidden excessive drinking, drunkenness, gambling, apostasy from INC teachings, marriage outside of the INC, immorality, and insubordination to INC authority and its policies. Outwardly the INC members appear to be decent and law-abiding citizens, which has helped to promote the popularity of the INC.

With the growth of the movement has come its growth in wealth and influence in government. The impressive INC buildings, which are all made with the same architectural style, are easily recognizable wherever their spires reach up into the Philippine sky and often seem to challenge the spires and buildings of the cross-town rivals, the Roman Catholic cathedrals. This noticeable presence and influence of the INC in the Philippines has been recognized by the Philippine government, so that it legislated in July 2009 that July 27 will be an annual holiday, known as "*Iglesia Ni Cristo Day*."

Envisioning a future kingdom of Christ in the earth has had the effect of the INC becoming involved in the government of the Philippines. For example, the hierarchy in the INC dictates to its members how they must vote in national or regional elections. As a result, the INC is courted by many candidates for various offices in the country, including the presidency, since the INC represents a block vote of several million Filipino voters. This is one example that shows how earthly minded the INC actually is, even though Jesus showed plainly to Pilate how totally uninterested He was in a kingdom in this present sin-cursed earth (John 18:36).

However, for the faithful church of Jesus Christ in the Philippines, the cult of Manalo represents another powerful enemy against sound doctrine and godliness. The INC belongs to the ranks of other well-known cults and enemies of Christ that have a foothold in the islands, such as Mormonism, the "Jehovah's Witnesses," and a few other lesser known, home-grown varieties. From these enemies of the truth and of the kingdom of Christ may the Lord preserve and protect His sheep and lambs here in faithful Reformed churches by means of distinctively biblical and Reformed preaching, so that His saints are not destroyed for lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6) and deceived by doctrines of devils (I Tim. 4:1). 

## God's Purpose with Adam (1)

## Sin Impossible Only in the Last Adam

For Adam to attain a life that he could not lose, he would have to be able to get to the point where it was no longer possible for him to sin. Some think that Adam eventually would have arrived at this point, if he had only remained obedient long enough. But such an idea originates in the mind of man. It is nowhere spoken of in Scripture.

Jesus Christ is the one and only man that was and is unable to sin. So for the first Adam to get to the point that he would be unable to sin, he would have to be engrafted into the last Adam, Jesus Christ (I Cor. 15:45).

**The first Adam could sin,  
the last Adam could not**

Although Jesus very really was tempted, it was impossible for Him to sin. That is because sin is committed by a person, and Jesus as to His person is the eternal Son of God—the second Person of the holy Trinity. There is no way that the holy God can do that which is evil. And since Jesus is God, it was impossible for Him to sin.

There are things that God cannot do—and that we rejoice to know that He cannot do. Scripture, for example, says that He “cannot lie”:

In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began (Tit. 1:2).

That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us (Heb. 6:18).

What a comfort it is to know that there is no way that God ever could do something that is contrary to His infinitely perfect Being. He is light, and in Him is no darkness at all (I John 1:5).

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So, since Jesus as to His person is God, He is also the one and only man who could be tempted without there being any possibility that He would sin. For Adam, outside of Christ, falling into sin would always have been a possibility. But for our Lord Jesus Christ, it never could have happened.

**The new man in Jesus Christ: Unable to sin and die**

The regenerated believer already now has a beginning of this life of Christ. In the new man he is in Christ, and thus it is impossible for him to sin. He still does sin, of course. In fact, it is impossible for him to do even one work that is not defiled with sin. But that is because he still has an old man—a nature that is inclined to all evil. In the new man he is born of God, and thus is like Him, always delighting to do what God says.


That this is really the case is brought out in a number of passages:

Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God (I John 3:9).

For I delight in the law of God after the inward man (Rom. 7:22).

In Christ we are born of God, and we cannot sin. We delight in the law of God, and with a heartfelt desire long to do what is pleasing to our everlasting Father. So when the believer sins, it is actually proper to say that it is not he that does it, but sin that dwells within him. That is what the inspired apostle Paul actually says about himself:

For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me (Rom. 7:19–20).

In Christ the believer cannot sin, and thus he will never be punished with death. He has a higher life, a higher freedom, which Adam prior to the fall never could have obtained. 



# Religion and Discrimination in Employment (Part I)

In the United States, the law protects individuals from being discriminated against in employment based on religion. At the same time, believers enjoy a great deal of freedom in operating and governing churches and schools free from government interference. These institutions are subject to many of the laws of the land regarding employment, including certain laws prohibiting discrimination. Often there is confusion as to whether or how a law applies to a church or school.

Sometimes believers mistakenly believe that a church or school is subject to laws that it is not, or that it is exempt from laws that really do apply. Employment laws contain some notable exceptions for religious organizations, and recently several federal circuit courts and the United States Supreme Court have looked at some of these issues. In this article, we will look at religious freedom in the context of employment discrimination law.

The government in the United States has prohibited employment discrimination in many forms for years. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is an independent commission established by Congress after passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to investigate and prosecute cases of alleged discrimination in employment. An employee may have an individual claim against an employer based on illegal discrimination, and the EEOC may assist the employee in investigation, but may also independently prosecute cases.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 is often thought of as the law that prohibited discrimination based on race. While it is true that this law did prohibit such discrimination, Title VII of the Act also contained provisions preventing discrimination based on religion. This act applies only to companies with 15 or more employees, but where it does apply, it provides some valuable protection for Christians in the workplace. However, for Christian business owners the act also requires that other religions be accommodated.

The Act generally prohibits an employer from treating a person unfavorably because of his religious beliefs. Employers must treat employees of different religions equally in all aspects of employment, such as in hiring, firing, pay, job assignments, promotions, layoffs, training, and fringe benefits. Employers cannot allow employees to be harassed because of their beliefs, or restrict them to certain jobs or areas because of their beliefs. Employers must also make reasonable accommodations so that employees can maintain their sincerely held religious beliefs.

This law provides some protection to believers working in today's world. One obvious example is for Sabbath observance. More and more employers are opening their doors for work on Sunday. Many cases have found that employers have not accommodated employees' religious beliefs when they require them to work on the Sabbath as a condition of employment. The question of whether the employer can reasonably accommodate an employee who won't work on Sunday depends on whether this would pose an undue hardship on the employer, which is usually determined on a case-by-case basis.

As mentioned above, employers have to accommodate only "sincerely held" beliefs. Written statements

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of a church's beliefs and doctrine are often the best evidence to show that an employee's beliefs are sincerely held. As will be seen later in this article, clear statements of beliefs and doctrines are also important when our churches and schools are in the role of employer. While we are always called to be clear and unwavering in holding fast to the truth, such clarity is also important when using the laws of the land in which God has placed us. As traditional "Christianity" recedes and apostatizes or is even replaced by other religions, our beliefs will be more and more strange in the world around us. As long as the law of the land provides protection for those beliefs, we must set them out clearly to avail ourselves of the protection of the law.

Many people mistakenly believe that, based on Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, our own schools or even churches are prohibited from discriminating by giving preference in hiring to members of our own denomination. However, there are two exceptions to the rules against discrimination, one for religious organizations, and one known as the ministerial exception.

The religious organization exception provides that religious institutions may give preference in employment to members of their own religion if the organization's "purpose and character are primarily religious."<sup>1</sup> Four of the factors considered by the EEOC and courts in determining whether an institution's purpose and character are primarily religious include: 1) Do its Articles of Incorporation state a religious purpose? 2) Are its day-to-day operations religious? (e.g., curriculum directed towards a certain religion) 3) Is it not-for-profit? 4) Is it affiliated with or supported by a church or other religious organization?<sup>2</sup>

It is important that as churches and schools we have our legal paperwork in order so that we can clearly show that our actions are consistent with our doctrines and beliefs. Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and IRS filings should be reviewed from time to time to ensure that they are clear in stating the basis for our

institutions. Article 28 of the Church Order directs that the churches take legal measures so that they "for the possession of their property, and the peace and order of their meetings can claim the protection of the Authorities." For these same reasons we need to ensure that the legal status of our schools and churches allows us to avail ourselves of the protection of the law, including employment laws, to the greatest extent possible without allowing the government to infringe upon the royal government of Christ over His church.

This religious-organization exemption remains firmly intact. Recently the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that World Vision, a Christian humanitarian organization, was within its rights to fire three employees who did not agree with the statement of faith of the organization.<sup>3</sup> The United States Supreme Court refused to hear the employee's appeal of this decision, allowing it to stand.<sup>4</sup>

Some believe that since our schools and churches are religious institutions, they are free from all laws prohibiting discrimination. This is true only with regard to employees who are covered under the "ministerial exception," which will be discussed later. Employees who do not come under the "ministerial exception," must still be treated equally regardless of age, gender, or disability. What about different pay based on sincerely held religious beliefs, such as the belief that men are the head of the home and are to be the primary financial support for the family? The EEOC Compliance Manual contains the specific example of a day-care center that pays male employees more based on this principle, and concludes that this would be illegal discrimination.

The second exception to the rules against discrimination in employment is the "ministerial exception." This exception is based on the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, on the principle that the government should not interfere with the internal affairs of the church. Employees who fall under this exception cannot bring a claim based on Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Equal Pay Act, or the Americans with Disabilities Act. This exception is known as the

<sup>1</sup> *Hall v. Baptist Mem. Health Care Corp.*, 215 F.3d 618, 624-25 (6th Cir. 2000) (college of health sciences qualified as a religious institution under Title VII because it was an affiliated institution of a church-affiliated hospital, had direct relationship with the Baptist church, and the college atmosphere was permeated with religious overtones).

<sup>2</sup> EEOC Compliance Manual Section 12-I (C)(1).

<sup>3</sup> *Spencer v. World Vision, Inc.*, 633 F.3d 723 (9th Cir. 2011).

<sup>4</sup> *Spencer v. World Vision, Inc.*, Sup. Ct. Docket No. 10-1316, (Petition for Cert. denied Oct. 3, 2011).

“ministerial” exception because it has long been held to apply to ministers and other members of the clergy. The unanswered question is, to what extent does this exception apply to other employees of religious organizations, such as teachers in Christian schools, who provide instruction on religious subjects?

In October 2011, the United States Supreme Court heard oral arguments in a case presenting just this question. The Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran School had a teacher who was discharged, and alleged that she

was discriminated against.<sup>5</sup> The school asserted that since the teacher gave instruction on religious as well as secular subjects, the ministerial exception applied. The Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of the teacher and the EEOC, but the Supreme Court agreed to hear the case on appeal. Lord willing, we will look more closely at this case, the arguments on both sides, and the Court’s decision in a future article after the Court’s decision is rendered. ☞

<sup>5</sup> Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church and School v. EEOC, Docket number 10-553, Argued October 5, 2011.

## BRING THE BOOKS...

## MR. CHARLES TERPSTRA

*The Emperor Has No Clothes: Dr. Richard B. Gaffin Jr.’s Doctrine of Justification*, by Stephen M. Cunha. Unicoi Tennessee, The Trinity Foundation. 118 pages. Softcover. ISBN978891777325. [Reviewed by Clay Spronk.]

Mr. Cunha wrote what makes up the main body of this book in 2008. At that time Mr. Cunha and his family were leaving Cornerstone Presbyterian Church, a congregation belonging to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) denomination. He explains in the preface that his purpose was “to outline the reason for our family’s decision to leave that congregation” (p. 7). The reason Mr. Cunha and his family left this congregation, as it is explained in the book, is that Mr. Cunha is convinced that an elder of the congregation, Dr. Richard Gaffin, has publicly taught and endorsed views that “[undermine] the Biblical doctrine of justification” (p. 8). Mr. Cunha sent his explanation of Dr. Gaffin’s errors to the appropriate ruling body of the church, the Session and Diaconate of Cornerstone Presbyterian Church.

In addition to explaining why he was leaving the congregation, he asked the Session to read his presentation of Gaffin’s errors and explain to him why he is wrong if it determined Gaffin’s views are orthodox. Accord-

ing to Mr. Cunha, the Session responded by asserting that “*The Emperor Has No Clothes* misunderstands and misrepresents Dr. Gaffin’s teaching on the doctrine of justification, while in the same breath refusing to interact in writing with its substance” (p. 8). In this reviewer’s opinion, it is a weakness of the book that it does not provide any more information about how this case was handled ecclesiastically, or whether Mr. Cunha made any appeals to broader ecclesiastical courts. One is left to assume Mr. Cunha was not happy with the Session’s decision and decided to publish *The Emperor Has No Clothes* so it can be read by a wider audience. It would have been helpful if the Session’s response was included as an appendix, along with other information about Mr. Cunha’s church membership.

This is an important book and a must read for anyone interested in the teachings of Dr. Richard Gaffin and in the state of the OPC denomination today.

The title, *The Emperor Has No Clothes*, is fitting. Mr. Cunha explains that he picked the title because it represents the way he sees himself. He writes, “...I do not have a seminary degree, am not an ordained officer in the church, and work in the business world. For these reasons, I am identifying myself as the boy in Hans Christian Andersen’s classic story” (p. 7). Mr. Cunha denies the title was picked “...as a personal invective against Dr. Gaffin,” and does not apply the title to Gaffin. Yet, there are unmistakable parallels between Dr. Gaffin and the Emperor in Andersen’s story. Like the Emperor, Gaffin holds a place of prominence in the

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Rev. Spronk is pastor of Peace Protestant Reformed Church in Lansing, Illinois.

OPC. Dr. Gaffin taught at Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia for over 40 years, and for many of those years was the chair of Systematic Theology at the Seminary. Like the Emperor, Gaffin has exposed himself publicly (metaphorically speaking). In addition to publishing his own erroneous views, Gaffin defended Norman Shepherd (the founding theologian of the Federal Vision heresy) for over 30 years and even endorsed Shepherd's glaringly heretical book *The Call of Grace*, in 2000. Finally, like the Emperor in the story, Gaffin is surrounded by people, especially in the OPC, who are determined not to alert Gaffin to his folly and call him to his senses.

The comparison between the Emperor and Gaffin works because Mr. Cunha makes a convincing case against Gaffin. Mr. Cunha makes four charges against Dr. Gaffin, which are the titles of the four main chapters in the book. His charges are "Dr. Gaffin Teaches Believers Are, in One Sense, Still Under Condemnation; Dr. Gaffin Teaches Justification by Faith and Works; Dr. Gaffin Denies Absolute Law/Gospel Antithesis in Justification; Dr. Gaffin Endorses Mr. Shepherd's Distinctive Covenant Theology." Though the book could have been shortened, it is not a tedious read, and the length can be explained perhaps as the byproduct of a concerned member in the church working through important doctrines.

The important point is that Mr. Cunha successfully demonstrates and explains Dr. Gaffin's errors. The first chapter quotes this statement from Dr. Gaffin: "*in other words, the continuing mortality of believers, as the consequence of sin, has legal, forensic significance. Here, we should conclude, their bodily mortality is seen as the still present, yet unremoved penal consequence of sin*" (emphasis is Mr. Cunha's). Dr. Gaffin teaches here that the death of believers is in some way a punishment for sins. Mr. Cunha rightly judges this statement to be an error and that, in addition to other serious implications, "...means that the believer's sufferings and death are joined with Jesus' sufferings and death in payment for the believer's sins" (p. 19). Dr. Gaffin's teaching means that Jesus did not fully pay for sins by His death. I encourage the reader to pick up this book for Mr. Cunha's explanation of the orthodox way to view the believer's death.

In the second and most important chapter Mr. Cunha demonstrates that Gaffin teaches justification by faith and works. This chapter is not light reading, but it is well written and clear. It is not light reading because Dr. Gaffin's error is subtle and requires close scrutiny. Mr. Cunha is forced to deal with important distinctions. One who reads this chapter will be rewarded with instruction on the difference between the *basis* of justification, the *instrument* of justification, and the *evidence* of justification. The Reformed faith confesses that faith is *alone* the *instrument* of justification. Good works that flow out of faith are only the *evidence* of justification. Mr. Cunha argues, convincingly in my opinion, that Dr. Gaffin uses the word "integral" to modify works in such a way that he makes works an additional instrument in justification. The import of this chapter is that it leads to the conclusion that Dr. Gaffin denies the Reformation doctrine of justification by faith alone.

The last chapter is perhaps second in importance. In this chapter Mr. Cunha explains that Dr. Gaffin has not only failed to join the fight against false doctrine but has a long record of supporting others who teach heresy, notably Norman Shepherd. Though Cunha does not call attention to this fact in this chapter, he does make reference in an earlier chapter to another serious mark against Gaffin, that is, the fact that he defended the heretical elder John O. Kinnaird in 2002 (p. 49).<sup>1</sup> Gaffin has publicly defended two men who compromise the doctrine of justification by faith alone. Gaffin's support for those who teach error, along with his own teachings, demonstrates that Gaffin is indeed an enemy of the truth of justification by faith alone. Cunha ought to be applauded for having the courage and willingness to bring this to light.

In addition to exposing Gaffin, Cunha exposes the OPC. The OPC is looked at by many as a fine, orthodox, conservative denomination. It is also viewed by many to have taken a stand against the Federal Vision and in particular against the Federal Vision's erroneous doctrine of justification by faith and works. In support of the contention that the OPC has taken a stand against the Federal Vision's doctrine of justification by faith and works, it is often pointed out that the OPC

<sup>1</sup> Those interested in the Kinnaird case can obtain information at <http://www.trinityfoundation.org/kinnaird.php>.




adopted a report on justification in 2004 that opposed the Federal Vision. However, there are facts that call into question whether the OPC has really taken a stand against the doctrine of justification by faith and works. One fact is that the OPC has never overturned its bad decision in the Kinnaird case. The second fact is that the OPC has never required that Dr. Gaffin confess he erred in his own teachings or in his support of the erroneous teachings of others. The OPC has been confronted with Dr. Gaffin's errors and so far has decided to do nothing about them. The fourth fact is that Steven Cunha, a defender of the truth of justification by faith alone, has determined he cannot remain a member of the OPC denomination (a Google search indicates he has left the OPC). It is a sad commentary on a denomination when those who corrupt and confuse the doctrine of justification by faith alone are given sanctuary and those who stand for this cardinal truth are driven away. Mr. Cunha's book sounds an important warning about Dr. Gaffin and the OPC that the church world needs to hear.

Mr. Cunha's book is also important because it demonstrates the need for laypeople to be involved in doctrinal studies and discussions.

Preachers, theologians, and elders apparently have not been willing to expose Dr. Gaffin's errors. This demonstrates the reality that sometimes the truth must be defended by the people of God in the pew. Mr. Cunha was willing and *able* to defend the truth. Mr. Cunha is obviously a reader. Mr. Cunha is obviously comfortable with doctrinal terms and distinctions. What about you? Do you read theology? Do you understand and study the cardinal doctrines of the church? Are you willing, but also *able*, to defend the truth? Some laypeople may not have Mr. Cunha's abilities—he is even conversant to some degree with the Greek language. Nevertheless, all laypeople should be willing to put forth the effort Mr. Cunha did to know and to defend the truth.

Officebearers and laypeople will alike benefit from reading this book. I am not in full agreement with everything Mr. Cunha writes. For example, he seems to deny that there will be a judgment according to works. But, on the whole, the book is profitable reading.

Mr. Cunha loves the doctrine of justification by faith alone. This book is highly recommended to those who share that love with him. 

## CLASSIS EAST REPORT

## MR. JON HUISKEN

January 11, 2012  
Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church

Classis East met in regular session on Wednesday, January 11, 2012 at the Hudsonville PRC. Each church was represented by two delegates. The session was chaired by Rev. Daniel Holstege.

The January session is the time for voting. Elected to serve as synodical delegates are the following: **MINISTERS:** *Primi:* C. Haak, K. Koole, A. Lanning, J. Slopsema, R. VanOverloop; *Secundi:* M. DeVries, G. Eriks, W. Langerak, A. Spriensma, M. VanderWal. **ELDERS:** *Primi:* Nick Kleyn, Howard Pastoor, Dave Rau, John VanBaren, Pete VanderSchaaf; *Secundi:* James Lanting, Joel Minderhoud, Ted Pipe, Kevin VanOverloop, Deane Wassink.


In other voting, Rev. K. Koole was elected to serve a three-year term as a *primus* delegate *ad examina* and

Rev. A. Spriensma as a *secundus* delegate *ad examina*. Rev. W. Langerak was elected to serve a three-year term on the Classical Committee. Revs. Koole and VanOverloop were elected as church visitors, with Revs. DeVries and Slopsema as alternate church visitors.

The classis approved subsidy request for 2013 for Cornerstone PRC, Kalamazoo PRC, and Wingham PRC. These requests will be forwarded to Synod 2012 for approval.

The church visitors reported to the classis that all the consistories were visited. The visitors report a time of peace and unity among the churches and in the consistories.

The expenses of classis amounted to \$138.13. Classis will meet next on May 9, 2012 at the Georgetown PRC.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jon J. Huiskens, Stated Clerk 

### Minister Activities

Rev. Carl Haak, pastor of the Georgetown PRC in Hudsonville, MI, declined the call that was extended to him to serve as the next pastor of the Hope PRC in Walker, MI.

The Council of the Loveland, CO PRC granted the request of our Seminary to sponsor the internship of Seminarian Eric Guichelaar, beginning July 1, 2012, God willing, with Loveland's pastor, Rev. Steven Key, as his mentor.

As Rev. Key supplied pulpit for the Edgerton, MN congregation in January, Loveland PRC welcomed to their pulpit and fellowship Seminarian Vernon Ibe, who comes from the Berean PRC in Manila, the Philippines. Seminarian Ibe filled their pulpit January 8 and 15. Mr. Ibe, his wife Melody, and their infant son, were scheduled also to be in Sioux Falls, SD on Sunday, January 29, where Mr. Ibe was to bring a word of edification to the Heritage congregation while their pastor, Rev. Allen Brummel, filled a preaching assignment in Edgerton, MN.

While in Colorado, Seminarian Ibe also kindly consented to speak at a chapel service at Loveland Christian School on January 13. Chapel was held in the sanctuary of Loveland PRC and everyone was invited to attend.

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*Mr. Wigger is a member of the Protestant Reformed Church of Hudsonville, Michigan.*

### Congregation Activities

Saturday morning, January 14, the members of the Hudsonville, MI PRC came together for a dedication of the recently completed addition to their church building. Rev. Garrett Eriks, pastor in Hudsonville, gave a brief meditation based on Ephesians 2:19-22. Hudsonville's choir sang three numbers, there was audience singing, and a prayer of thanksgiving was offered. After the dedication, Hudsonville enjoyed fellowship and held an open house for the surrounding community as well as others from nearby PR congregations.

The city of Randolph, WI held their annual blood drive on January 9 at the Reformed Church. Not only were the members of Randolph PRC invited to "roll up their sleeves" and donate, but this year they took their church's turn providing the bars and cookies that are needed while one "recovers" from donating.

### Denomination Activities

This year our Seminary offered an interim course on "Contemporary Roman Catholic Theology." Prof. Ron Cammenga taught the course, examining the central teachings and practices of the Roman Catholic Church. It was also the purpose of this course to assess the current movement within Evangelical and Reformed churches that seeks closer relations with Rome. The last class featured a presentation by our home missionary, Rev. Wilbur Bruinsma, on witnessing to Roman Catholics. The class met mornings

from Monday, January 9, through Wednesday, January 18. We thank the Seminary for thinking about those of us who could not attend the course in person. Beginning on January 9, the Seminary posted an audio version (MP3 format available for download) of each day's lecture and discussion on the Seminary's "Faculty" page through the PRC website. There will be a special notice and link to it on the home page ([www.prca.org](http://www.prca.org)). Look for it and participate in the Interim in this special way.

The Reformed Doctrine Class meeting at Faith PRC in Jenison, MI under the leadership of Prof. David Engelsma, met January 11. The topic for that evening was a discussion concerning the distinction between the church visible and invisible, including the question whether one can be a member of the church invisible if he is not a member of the church visible.

### Mission Activities

The Tuesday Night Bible Study of the Berean PRC in Manila, the Philippines, started the new year by meeting January 10, 17, and 24, viewing via DVD and discussing the three lectures given by the professors of our Seminary on the subject of the King James Version of the Bible, in this the 400th-year anniversary of its publication. The first lecture, on January 10, was "Restoring the Bible to the Believer: The Reformation's Concern Over Bible Translation."

## School Activities

The parents and teachers of the PTA of Hope PR Christian School in Walker, MI held one of their meetings on February 9. Several teachers and volunteers gave a presentation on "Motor Movement: Why So Important."


Supporters of Hope PR Christian School were invited to an upcoming travelogue series sponsored by the Hope Foundation. This year the Foundation is scheduled to host three travelogues, one in January, one in February, and one in March.

The first in that series took place on January 14 and was entitled, "Jordan/Israel, More Stories from the Holy Land," by Sandy Mortimer.

## Young People's Activities

The Young People of the Hudsonville, MI PRC were able to enjoy a night of bowling at Hudsonville Lanes on January 19. By coincidence, that night was dollar night, so every game, etc., was only a dollar. So not only could the young people enjoy an activity together, they could save some money at the same time.

The Young People's Society of the Byron Center, MI PRC took part in a fundraiser at a nearby Culver's restaurant on January 11. Money raised that evening went towards this year's Young People's Convention.

January 14, preceding the Hope Foundation's travelogue, the Young People's Society of the Hope PRC in Walker, MI sponsored a soup supper, with proceeds going to this summer's YP Convention, of which Hope is this year's host society and congregation. 

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Conference

■ Attention Men: Mark your calendars for the Men's Conference to be held March 8 and 9, 2012.

The speech on Thursday evening by Pastor Spriensma will be "The Godly Man: Living Soberly, Righteously, and Godly in This Present World."

The speech on Friday evening by Pastor Haak will be "The Godly Man: Looking for the Glorious Appearing of Our Savior."

Following each speech will be many interesting and informative sectionals from which you may choose to attend:

- God Created Men and Women Differently;
- Battling Temptations that Christian Men Face Today;
- Practical Ideas for Personal Devotions and Family Worship;
- Cultivating the Desire to Serve the Church and the Covenant Community;
- Balancing Priorities of Family, Church, Work, and Play Through Various Stages in Life;
- When and How to Discipline in Love;
- The Role of a Godly Grandfather, Using His Time, Influence, and Experiences;
- Gaining Others to Christ by Our Godly Conversation (LD32).

Pre-registration is required. Registration deadline is February 20. Go to [byronprc.org](http://byronprc.org) for more information and registration form.

### Wedding Anniversary

■ On February 18, 2012, our parents, **JONATHAN and BARBARA BOL**, will celebrate their 35th wedding anniversary. As their children we are thankful for their godly marriage, for their years of teaching us in His fear, and for the wonderful example they are to us. We wish them the Lord's blessing and many more wonderful years together as they serve God together in their marriage. Jeremiah 32:38, 39: "And they shall be my people, and I will be their God: And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them."

- \* Nate and Rebecca Bol  
Gerrit and Karissa
- \* Kyle and Audra Bruinooge  
Elise and Devin
- \* Adam Bol

Jenison, Michigan

### Teacher Needed

■ The Protestant Reformed Christian School of Dyer, IN is accepting applications for a lower grade teaching position for the 2012/2013 school year. Interested applicants can send a letter of inquiry and resumé to the school. If you have questions regarding the position, contact Ryan Van Overloop at 219-558-2660 (school) or 219-374-6547 (home) or Education Committee chairman Phil Kooiker at (708) 429-7890.

### Wedding Anniversary

■ On February 22, 2012 our parents, **WARREN and MARSHONN BOON**,

will celebrate 40 years of marriage in the Lord. We are thankful to our heavenly Father for blessing their marriage and for the godly instruction they have given us. "Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations" (Deuteronomy 7:9).

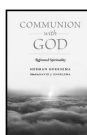
- \* Brent and Cara Boon  
Matthew, Michael, Emily
- \* Keith and Amy Zevenbergen  
Meghan, Sarah, Katelyn
- \* Rob and Candice Andringa  
Kaylie, Luke, Gavin, Simon, Jack
- \* James and Alisa DeKam  
AnnaMarie, Jeffrey, Jamie,

Aric, Jenna  
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### Wedding Anniversary

■ With thankfulness and praise to God, we rejoiced with our parents,

**ALVIN and MARIE DeYOUNG**, as they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on February 14, 2012. We their children, grandchildren, and great grandchild thank God for their faithfulness in establishing a covenant home and for their godly instruction and example. May God continue to bless them as they live to give glory to our great covenant God.

"He will bless them that fear the LORD, both small and great. The LORD shall increase you more and more, you and your children" (Psalm 115:13, 14).

- \* Dan and Laura Schipper  
Brad and Sara Schipper, Caleb  
Nick and Liz Schipper  
Erika and Emily
- \* Todd and Lisa Groenendyk  
Ethan, Meghan, Madalyn, Lily  
Jenison, Michigan

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audio sermons  
from the archives of  
the PRCA

### Call to Aspirants of the Ministry

■ All young men desiring to begin studies in the Theological School of the Protestant Reformed Churches in the 2012-2013 academic year should make application at the March 15, 2012 meeting of the Theological School Committee.

A testimonial from the prospective student's consistory that he is a member in full communion, sound in faith and upright in walk, and exhibits the qualities and personality necessary for a gospel minister; a certificate of health from a reputable physician; and a college transcript must accompany the application. Before entering the seminary, all students must have earned a bachelor's degree and met all of the course requirements for entrance to the seminary. These entrance requirements are listed in the seminary catalog available from the school.

All applicants must appear before the Theological School Committee for interview before admission is granted. In the event that a student cannot appear at the March 15 meeting, notification of this fact, along with a suggested interview date, must be given to the secretary of the Theological School Committee before this meeting.

All correspondence should be directed to the Theological School Committee,

4949 Ivanrest Avenue SW  
Grandville, MI 49418.

Jon Huiskens, Secretary

\* \* \* \* \*

The Protestant Reformed Seminary admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin.