

The Standard Bearer

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God's Workmanship

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2:10

The two verses before this passage are verses that all of us should commit to memory. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Here God's grace is contrasted to our own works and efforts. God's grace is His undeserved favor to His elect people. Works are works of obedience to God that a man may perform. We are taught very clearly that salvation is not of works. This is so that no one may boast before God or man. Salvation is all of grace, so that our boasting may be in God alone.

The passage that we consider for this meditation gives the reason why salvation is not and cannot be of works but is of grace.

Notice that this passage also speaks of works. It emphasizes that these good works are the result of God's work of grace to save us. We who do good works have

been created in Jesus Christ and thus are God's workmanship. In fact, God has created us in Jesus Christ exactly for the purpose that we may do good works. In addition, all our good works have been ordained by God from all eternity. Certainly good works are not the basis of salvation but the fruit of God's gracious salvation. Indeed, we are saved by grace alone and not by our works.

But good works are necessary for those who are saved by grace. Their necessity is found in the fact that God created His people unto good works and even ordained that they should walk in them.



A wonderful workmanship!

Workmanship is the end result or product of someone's work. Thus, for example, a beautiful home is the workmanship of a builder who spends weeks and months building it. A beautiful song or arrangement is the workmanship of the composer who created it.

In like manner we are God's workmanship. We are that because He has created us.

In the beginning God created Adam out of the dust of the ground. And what a wonderful work that was. God made Adam to be superior to all the creatures that God made on the earth, so that Adam could have dominion.

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He even created Adam in his own image, so that Adam resembled some of the perfections of God in a human way. Being the image of God, Adam was God's own son, with whom God would live in covenant friendship in the garden. What is amazing is that when God created Adam, He created the entire human race. The entire human race was genetically in Adam, so that it develops out of Adam as its first father. For that reason Adam also represented the entire human race before God. In that sense, all men are the workmanship of God.

However, the passage of this meditation is not talking about God's workmanship of creating us in Adam. It is talking about our being God's workmanship in that we are created in Christ Jesus.

Because we were originally created in Adam, we also fell in Adam. Adam rebelled against God in the garden by eating of the forbidden fruit. God's punishment on that sin was to take from Adam the beauty and wonder of His own image and turn Adam into the image of the devil. Being the image of Satan, Adam lost the ability to serve God and was bound to a life of sin and judgment. Because Adam represented us, his sin became our sin, as also did its horrible consequences. We are all born in sin, dead in trespasses and sins, bound to serve sin, and suffer the horrors of God's judgment.

However, there is a people whom God in His grace recreates in Christ Jesus. This is a people whom God has eternally chosen to Himself and determined to live in covenant fellowship for time and eternity. That God might live with them in covenant fellowship, He has eternally determined to save them in Christ Jesus. This determination is not based on their worth or efforts but is merely of His sovereign and gracious good pleasure. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."

How does God save His elect people in Jesus Christ?

He sent Jesus to the cross carrying the guilt of their sin, and He punished Jesus in their place. This redeems them from their sin and secures their salvation.

On the basis of Jesus' perfect sacrifice, God through

Jesus Christ recreates His redeemed people, so that from a spiritual point of view they become new creatures. This is a work similar to the original work of creation, only much more wonderful. In the original work of creation God created man out of the dust of the ground and gave him His own image. In Jesus Christ God takes men, women, and children who are the very image of Satan and makes them over into His image and likeness so that they become His beloved children. This work of recreation is also called in the Bible a new birth and a spiritual resurrection from the dead.

What is important to remember here is that this work of creation in Jesus Christ is something that is not found just with believing parents of the church but also with their children. Indeed, believing adults have been

created in Christ Jesus. The fall left all men incapable of faith in Jesus Christ. To believe on Jesus Christ one must be recreated in Christ Jesus and become a new creature. But this work of spiritual recreation and its resultant faith are not limited to the adults in the church. It is also a work found among the children of the church. Notice, "we" are the

workmanship of God created in Christ Jesus. This "we" is the inspired apostle Paul, who wrote the epistle, and the church of Ephesus, to whom this epistle was sent. Included in the congregation of Ephesus were children, whom Paul addressed specifically in 6:1-3. Also the children in the church are the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus.

This is due to the very nature of the covenant. God's covenant is the relationship of love and friendship that God forms with the elect in Jesus Christ. To establish that covenant, God recreates His people, making them His own children, who bear His image. One of the realities of the covenant is that God establishes it in family lines, so that He places His elect children in the homes of believing parents. And He recreates them in Christ Jesus early on in life to be His children, and to live with Him in the covenant from a very early age.

What a great blessing this is for the church and every covenant home!

*One of the realities
of the covenant
is that God establishes it
in family lines.*



A wonderful purpose!

God's purpose in creating a people in Christ Jesus is good works.

People often think of good works in terms of avoiding certain behavior. They don't curse, do drugs, get drunk, cheat on their spouse, lie, or steal. This is indeed part of what good works are. The standard of good works is not society, the press, or the courts, but God's law. God in His law has forbidden certain kinds of behavior that are offensive to God and contrary to the goodness of His being. In fact, because of our tendency towards this kind of behavior, the law of the Ten Commandments is largely negative in language. Thou shalt not....

But good works are far more inclusive than avoiding certain behavior. For everything God forbids in His law, there is a positive work implied. There is the good work of worshiping God in His house, of confessing His name, of keeping the Sabbath day holy, of seeking the welfare of our neighbor, of being a faithful husband and wife.... And all this must be done as an expression of love, to glorify God and promote the welfare of the neighbor.

God has even foreordained the good works that we should do. This suggests that the good works mentioned in our text go beyond a general keeping of the law. They include also specific works of service that the Lord has in mind for each of us as one of His people. For example, the work that God has for some is to be a husband or wife and raise a family, whereas the work he has for another is to serve Him in a special capacity in single life. The work that God has for some is to be an employer, and for others to be employees. The work that God has for some is to be officebearers in the church, but for others to be engaged in other work of the church. The work that God has for some is to aid the poor, the dying, the sick, or the despondent in ways that others cannot.

And the only way one can do this work is to live a life of good works in love to God and the neighbor.

But these specific works have all been predetermined by God in eternity for each of His elect children.

And God has created us in Christ Jesus unto these good works. This expresses God's purpose in creating us in Christ Jesus. His purpose is that we may do the

good works He has ordained for us from all eternity. Being fallen in Adam we are corrupt and depraved and thus totally incapable of doing good works. To do the good works that God has for us to do, we must be created in Christ Jesus. And so God created us in Christ Jesus that we may do good works.



A wonderful calling!

Our calling is to walk in the good works that God has foreordained for us.

To walk in good works means to devote our entire life to serving God in good works. We must devote our entire lives to avoiding the behavior forbidden by God's law and serving God in the work He has foreordained for us. In that connection we must prayerfully consider what is our special place of work in the church and kingdom of God and gladly devote our lives to it.

This calling arises out of the very work of God. A principle of Scripture is that it is our calling to walk according to the works of salvation that God has performed in us. So also here. God has created us in Christ Jesus unto good works. Our calling is to discover what these good works are and walk in them.


The power to do so is found only in Christ Jesus, in whom God has created us.

And Jesus Christ uses the Word to empower us to walk in good works. It is by the power of the Word that God makes us new creatures in Jesus Christ, even as He made us originally in Adam by the power of His word. And it is by the power of that same word that we will be strengthened as new creatures to walk in good works.

Here we see then also the need for proper training for our covenant children. God uses the Word to recreate our children in Christ Jesus and also to make them fit for good works. It falls to parents and the church to bring them that Word.

May the church be faithful in this.

May parents also be faithful in this. This requires that they themselves walk in good works by the power of the Word. Only then can they train their children in the same Word unto good works.

Good things to remember as our Christian schools open their doors again for another year of instruction and as the Catechism season is about to start! 

Rob Bell: A Consistent Heretic, with Theologically Inconsistent Critics

Rob Bell's latest book, *Love Wins: A Book About Heaven, Hell, and the Fate of Every Person Who Ever Lived*, is full of heretical teachings. He proposes a "better story" than the biblical gospel preached by the Christian church for nearly two thousand years. The book has stirred up a firestorm of protest from Evangelicals and Reformed theologians. A number of the reviews contain extensive criticisms of his theology. They condemn Bell for his improper use and interpretation of the Bible, his universalism, his wrong view of sin (all horizontal), his vitiation of the atonement, and his erroneous views of Christ and of God. His teaching is rejected as old liberal theology reformulated, and as a new gospel, which is no gospel.

While all of that criticism is deserved, it is a bit surprising that these critics are thus aroused. For these things are not new from Bell. In 2005, Rob Bell wrote *Velvet Elvis: Repainting the Christian Faith*. Virtually everything that Bell writes in *Love Wins* is found in *Velvet Elvis*, at least in seed form. So why the hue and cry over the new book?

Previous article in this series: August 2011, p. 436.

To be fair, part of the answer is that they are dismayed and/or angered that a well-known preacher is promoting heresies that cut out the very heart of the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ. Yet, that is not the whole story.

The rest of the answer is that the newer book, by focusing on God's love and the final destiny of all, is exposing the theological errors of the vast majority of Evangelical and Reformed preachers. (I use the label "Reformed" loosely.) Bell is teaching the same *basic theology* (i.e., basic errors) as his Evangelical and Reformed critics. In *Love Wins* Bell draws out the logical conclusions of these teachings. And his critics are not willing to accept these logical conclusions of their own theology. Although they recognize that Bell's conclusions undermine the whole of the Christian faith, they will not see that Bell's conclusions are the logical consequence of a universal love of God. Thus they try to reject the fruit (his heretical conclusions), while yet maintaining the heretical plant (Arminianism) that produced the evil fruit. The critics fail to acknowledge (whether deliberately or through lack of understanding) that the fruit is the natural product of the plant. They are theologically inconsistent. Rob Bell is consistent.

Thus the sound and the fury of the critics. Rob Bell's book teaches that the theology of a universal love of God eliminates hell and places all who ever lived in heaven. If a Hoeksema or an Engelsma points out the logical conclusion of Arminian theology, they are dismissed as hyper Calvinists. But when a Rob Bell does it...

Consider the remarkable agreement between the theology of Rob Bell and that of the overwhelming majority of Evangelical and Reformed ministers:

- God is love, and God loves everyone.
- God wants to save all, and offers salvation to all in the preaching, expressing His desire that all be saved.
- Christ died for all people, and also for the creation. This death is a demonstration of God's love for all, not a penal substitution for the elect. The benefits are available for all.
- God is sovereign, that is, all powerful. (In reality, this is a meaningless, non-functioning sovereignty, for God does not, according to this view, exercise His sovereign power in salvation.)
- All children who die in infancy go to heaven.
- God is building His kingdom on earth. He calls all Christians

to be kingdom builders (or, to use different terminology, to redeem creation).

How many preachers today, identified as Evangelical or Reformed, would disagree with those statements? Precious few.

The problem is that these teachings result in logical conclusions that blatantly contradict Scripture. For example: If it is so that 1) God loves all men and wants to save them, and 2) God is sovereign, then 3) all men must be saved. However, the Bible is plain that not all will be saved.

Or, consider this: If Christ died for all men, thus paying for their sins, then all men must be saved. But that conclusion too contradicts the Bible.

Or this: If God commands us to work to redeem the creation and to build His kingdom in the earth, to make the whole of this world subject to Jesus, then this earth must be or become heaven. For why should the church subdue the whole earth and restore it to its original purity, if the coming of Jesus means that this world will be literally burned with fire and we will be lifted off from it to a different place called heaven? But that conclusion, namely, that this earth is heaven, is too obviously contrary to the Bible. So the promoters of this earthly kingdom, not daring boldly to teach that heaven is here, teach a contradiction: build the kingdom of heaven here; yet there is a heaven somewhere else.

God loves all men, Christ died for all, God offers salvation to all, yet God saves only some.

How do these same preachers/theologians reconcile these contra-

dictions? They do not. They rather call them paradoxes. Apparently contradictory. Such teaching may seem like contradictions to us, but God can resolve them. We must hold on to both, they insist.

Rob Bell solves other “paradoxes” of Evangelical/Reformed preachers. How can God who *is love*, put people into hell, a place of eternal torment? How is it possible for God to love a man all the time he lives on earth, but after the man dies, God pours out dreadful, killing wrath on the same man? A paradox, say the critics. No, says Bell. A loving God does not put a man into hell; the man puts himself into his own “hell”...temporarily. Eventually the love of God will melt the man’s obstinacy, and he will agree to love people and care for the creation, and he will effectively be in heaven, by his own choice.

What about this difficult question: Why does a sovereign God allow men (whom God loves, according to their teaching) to perish, when He could save them? Evangelicals and Reformed preachers will babble on and on at this point about man’s responsibility, and how hard it is to reconcile God’s sovereignty and man’s responsibility. But they have no answer.

Rob Bell does. Salvation is entirely up to each person. Live in love, and you bring heaven to earth. Live in hatred, and you create your own hell on earth. Man controls his own destiny. Bell wants us to believe too that all who ever lived will end up in heaven, eventually. That this blatantly contradicts the Bible is of no concern to Bell. It is consistent with the basic tenet that God loves all

men, which teaching is proclaimed by virtually every Evangelical and nominally Reformed preacher.

The issue comes down to this: Who saves, God or man? The Reformed (biblical) position is that God *alone* saves. God eternally determined to save certain ones whom He loved, predestinating them unto adoption as His sons (Eph. 1:4-6). Others God rejected, forming them as vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction (Rom. 9:22). In time God sent His Son to lay down His life for His sheep (i.e., the elect, John 10:14, 15). God by His Spirit powerfully regenerates His elect people, giving them a new, spiritual life (John 3:3-8). God gives faith, and by His sovereign, particular grace, God saves from death and hell, and gives eternal life (Eph. 2:1-10). Through the preaching God commands all men everywhere to repent and believe in Jesus (Mark 1:15; John 3:36). Through the power of sovereign grace, the elect believe, they repent, they turn to the living God (Rom 10:13-15; Acts 14:15). The reprobate hear and are hardened in their unbelief (II Cor. 2:14-16). God preserves His own unto the end, and brings them through death unto Himself (Phil. 1:6). The reprobate, on the other hand, are justly condemned to hell on the ground of their sins (Rev. 20:13-15).

This is the theology of sovereign grace. It is a sovereign salvation. It is a gracious salvation. And it is a particular grace (and love) that saves—the only kind of grace (and love) that the Bible teaches.

That theology, however, is loathsome to most preachers and theolo-

gians. They want a place for man. “Man’s responsibility”—that is the touchstone and the battle cry, as if a *command* from God to repent and believe is not enough to establish man’s responsibility. Accountability is not the real issue. What they loathe is the teaching that God sovereignly determines whom He will save, and then effectually saves them, and them alone.

But if God does not determine who will be saved and who will not be saved, then who does? The logical answer is, Man does. But preachers are a bit hesitant to say that, for the Bible is rather plain on that—For by grace you are saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast (Eph. 2:8, 9). So most preachers would say, No, man does not save himself.

But that answer is inconsistent with the theology that God loves all and offers salvation to all. Rob Bell gives the answer that is consistent with the “God-loves-all-men and God-offers-salvation-to-all-men” theology. Bell’s answer is: Man determines his own destiny. And Bell is explicit about this. As he ridicules the biblical teaching that God saves through preaching that God sovereignly sends where He wills, Bell draws the reader up short—“This raises another, far more disturbing question: Is your future in someone else’s hand?” (*Love*, p. 9). The Arminian abhors the thought that someone else might be in control of his future. The Reformed believer answers without hesitation, Indeed, my future *is* in Someone else’s hand. Thank God that it is!

A warning

In so many ways, Bell’s teaching is a warning to the church world of the end product of their theology. Virtually the whole of the church world has adopted some form of higher criticism of the Bible, thus destroying the church’s stand that the Bible is, word for word, God’s inspired word, infallible and inerrant. Bell takes that to its logical end—insisting, for example, that the story of Adam and Eve’s fall is not important because it *happened*, but because it *happens*. Bell is not even convinced that the canon of Scripture is closed. Such a

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Universal salvation,
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low view of the Bible allows Bell to pick and choose the verses that he likes, and to ignore the rest. The reviewers rightly criticize Bell for this, but they are guilty of the same. Most of them present God’s plan of salvation as if John 3:16 is the last word on the matter, and close their eyes to explicit passages on salvation such as John 10, Romans 9, and Ephesians 1 and 2.

Bell follows N. T. Wright, as does

virtually the whole church world today. N. T. Wright also teaches that heaven is right here on the earth.

Bell plays with Roman Catholicism, as so many Evangelical and Reformed folk do. When he speaks of the Lord’s Supper, he claims it includes an altar. More significantly, in his defense of purification in the next world, he uses the same texts that Rome uses to defend the heresy of purgatory.

The chickens come home to roost. And it makes the preachers uncomfortable.

This is God’s warning to the church that teaches that God loves all and wants to save all. Through Rob Bell, God sets before the seminaries, the preachers, the elders, and the people the proper, i.e., logical, conclusion of their false theology: Universal salvation, heaven on earth, man determining his own destiny. Will the preachers listen? Let them turn and seek the old paths of sovereign, particular grace. Let them call the people to worship the true God who is holy, just, and truly sovereign. And let them honor the God who revealed not only that He is love, but that He is also the one who “hath...mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth” (Rom 9:18).

Is this a hard doctrine? Of course. Is it offensive? It certainly is! It offends me daily! Nonetheless, it is the gospel of God revealed in the Bible. A preacher, as an ambassador of Christ, must speak what the King commands him to speak, even if it brings the wrath of the whole world upon him.

... to be concluded. 

Chapter Four

Postmillennialism (14)

The Fundamental Elements of Postmillennial Eschatology (concluded)

Preterism

An exception to the rule that postmillennialism is and must be preterist in its interpretation of the biblical passages that prophesy dark days for the church towards the end is the seventeenth-century Dutch Reformed theologian Wilhelmus a Brakel. As a prominent member of the theological movement known as the “further reformation,”¹ Brakel was heavily influenced by the English Puritans. He was an ardent postmillennialist.

Brakel gave what surely must be one of the most complete and optimistic descriptions of the postmillennial expectation ever written. Only Warfield’s exceeds it.

In the last days...the antichrist [for Brakel, the papacy as the essence of the Roman Catholic Church] and the Turk [Islam], the two main enemies [of the church], will be utterly destroyed, the devil will be bound for a thousand years; and in that time of his binding the Jews will be converted, and there will be an extraordinary spreading of the church among the heathen. The church will excel in peace, the knowledge of God, and holiness. God will make known His presence in His church in an extraordinary way. Jesus alone will be the King. No one will presume to dominate the church, but she will be left to herself as an ecclesiastical state. There will be an outstanding fruitfulness [of all this]. From all this,

¹ Dutch: *nadere reformatie*.

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Previous article in this series: June 2011, p. 397.

no other conclusion can be drawn than that the millennium will be a glorious condition of the church.²

Brakel then recognized the objection to the bright earthly future of the church that he had painted in glowing color, that such passages as Luke 18:8, Matthew 24:37-39, and II Timothy 3:1 teach that the “last times will be the worst and most miserable times” for the church in the world.³ Earlier, Brakel had explained a number of significant passages that warn of future tribulation for the church as having been fulfilled in the past, already in his day. The two witnesses of Revelation 11 were the forerunners of the sixteenth-century Reformation.⁴ The time of the dominating power of the beast of Revelation (which for Brakel is the Roman Catholic papacy) ended at the Reformation.⁵ To this considerable extent, Brakel practiced the preterist interpretation of Scripture’s prophecies of tribulation for the church in the last days that is characteristic of postmillennialism.

² W. a Brakel, *Redelijke Godsdienst*, vol. 2 (Leiden: D. Donner, 1893 [the work was published originally in 1700]), 325. This and all other quotations from *Redelijke Godsdienst* in this article are my translation of the Dutch. The concluding section of Brakel’s dogmatics, treating of eschatology by explaining the book of Revelation, was omitted in Soli Deo Gloria’s 1995 publication of Brakel’s dogmatics in English as *The Christian’s Reasonable Service*. Volume four ends with the cryptic notation that because of the controversial nature of Brakel’s explanation of Revelation, this part of his dogmatics is not included in the publication of the English translation.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., 238.

⁵ Ibid., 263.

Nevertheless, contrary to most postmillennialists, Brakel refused to explain all the New Testament passages that teach dark and troublous times for the church in the last days as referring to a time that is past, whether AD 70 or the sixteenth-century. Rather, he explained these passages—Luke 18:8, Matthew 24:37-39, and II Timothy 3:1, among others—as referring to the short period between the loosing of Satan at the end of the millennium (Rev. 20:3, 7-9) and the second coming of Jesus. “In that time there will be a great falling away and a severe persecution of the true believers by Gog and Magog.”⁶

Thus, Brakel handled the passages prophesying tribulation for the church in the last days exactly opposite the way in which most postmillennialists handle them. Rather than explain them as having been fulfilled in the past, long before the millennium, he explained them as being realized in the future, after the thousand years of the church’s “golden age” has ended. To play off the odd language of the preterist postmillennialists, rather than “preterize” the passages, Brakel “futurized” them. But the effect is the same: None of the New Testament’s prophecies of apostasy, Antichrist, and tribulation interferes with the coming of the “golden age.” All of these passages are effectively referred to a future time, as the preterists effectively refer them to a past time, so that the hope of the glorious earthly dominion of the church is undisturbed.

A Temporary Messianic Kingdom

Yet another fundamental element of postmillennialism is the conviction that the millennial kingdom of Christ, although lasting for a thousand years, or, as some postmillennialists teach, hundreds of thousands of years, will end with the second coming of Christ. It will be temporary. At the coming of Christ, the kingdom will be established in the new creation as the kingdom of the triune God. The mediatorial kingship of Jesus Christ will end. He will continue to reign over the kingdom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, as the second person of the Trinity. No one denies that Christ will reign over the kingdom of God forever. Scripture is clear that Jesus Christ “shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and

of his kingdom there shall be no end” (Luke 1:33). But, according to postmillennialism, His reign as the Messiah, as the glorified Son of man, will have been consummated.

The basis of the teaching that the Messianic kingship of Jesus Christ and His Messianic kingdom are temporary is I Corinthians 15:24-28:

Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

The postmillennial explanation of the passage is that Christ progressively rules in history by His word and Spirit, putting down all rule, authority, and power, so that eventually He realizes, within history, the millennium of the earthly dominion and glory of the church. When the millennium has run its course, Christ will come again in the body, to raise the dead and conduct the final judgment. On that occasion, He will abdicate as the Messianic king, turning over to the direct rule of the triune God the kingdom that He—Jesus—has brought to its fullest victory and splendor. So the postmillennialists understand the phrases in I Corinthians 15: “when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God”; “he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet”; and “then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”

Jonathan Edwards wrote:

The meaning [of I Cor. 15:24-28] is, that Christ shall deliver up that kingdom or dominion which he has over the world, as the Father’s delegate or vicegerent, which the Father committed to him, to be managed in subser-viency to this great design of redemption. The end of this commission, or delegation, which he had from the Father, seems to be to subserve this particular design of redemption; and therefore, when that design is fully ac-

⁶ Ibid., 325.

completed, the commission will cease, and Christ will deliver it up to the Father, from whom he received it.⁷

Benjamin B. Warfield taught the same as the great American Puritan:

An even more important fact faces us in the wonderful revelation we have been considering (I Cor. 15:20-28): the period between the two advents is the period of Christ's kingdom, and when He comes again it is not to institute His kingdom, but to lay it down (verses 24, 28). The completion of His conquest, which is marked by conquering "the last enemy," death (verse 28), which in turn is manifest when the just arise and Christ comes (verses 54, 23), marks also the end of His reign (verse 25) and the delivery of the kingdom to God, even the Father (verse 24).... Jesus holds the kingship for a purpose (verse 25), namely the completion of His mediatorial work, and...when it is accomplished He will restore it to Him who gave it to Him (verse 28), and thus the Father will again become "all relations among all creations."⁸

J. Marcellus Kik, who is followed by the Christian Reconstructionists also in this aspect of his postmillennial doctrine, likewise taught that "the Messianic kingdom, as such, ceases to exist [at the second coming of Christ—DJE], as is clearly indicated in I Corinthians 15:24-28.... There was a period of time when Jesus received the kingdom and there will be a period of time when He will surrender it to the Father."⁹

That the Messianic kingdom is strictly temporal and temporary, ending at the conclusion of the millennium, demands that the kingdom become the outwardly, visibly powerful and glorious reign of Christ that postmillennialism teaches, *within history*. Otherwise, the kingdom of Christ never attains the absolute dominion and supreme glory in all the creation that Scripture reveals God has appointed for His Christ. On the view that the Messianic kingdom ends with the coming of Christ and the creation of the new heaven and earth,

the postmillennial conception of the glorious state of the church in history is *necessary*.

But if, on the contrary, the Messianic kingdom is everlasting; if Jesus is an everlasting king *as the Christ of God*; if, in fact, His coming again, rather than writing *finis* to His kingdom, will be, and is intended to be, the consummation of His kingdom; if at His coming He transforms for *all* His citizens (and not only for those who happen to live during the millennium of postmillennialism) the kingdom of the cross of history into the kingdom of glory of eternity; if the outwardly, visibly powerful and glorious kingdom of Christ is the *goal* of history (at the coming of Jesus Christ), rather than an event *within* history, why, then, the postmillennial dream concerning a kingdom of glory within history is not necessary, is, in fact, among other serious errors, guilty of grievous confusion of the order of the coming of the kingdom, as determined by God and made known in Scripture.

Postmillennialism, then, is unholy impatience with the divine timetable.

The Failure of the Church

Yet one more essential element of postmillennialism is its blame of the church for the failure of the millennial kingdom to appear. Postmillennialists must answer the question, why, if the millennial kingdom in all its earthly glory and dominion is the great purpose of God in history, does this kingdom not appear? Why has it not appeared for some two thousand years? If, as postmillennialists charge, the present spiritual form of the kingdom is, in fact, the *defeat* of the kingdom (for the kingdom will be victorious only when it rises to earthly dominion), why has the kingdom of the risen Christ not yet conquered? Why has the Messianic kingdom been defeated in the world for about two thousand years?

And, one might add, why does the kingdom show no sign whatever of converting the majority of humanity, "Christianizing" all nations, and ruling the world at the beginning of the twenty-first century?

The answer of many postmillennialists is that this sorry state of affairs regarding the Messianic kingdom is the fault of the church. The kingdom has not yet come in its power and glory because of the failure of the church. If only the church would bestir herself to sub-

⁷ Jonathan Edwards, *The History of Redemption* (Grand Rapids: Associated Publishers and Authors, n.d.), 343.

⁸ Benjamin B. Warfield, "The Prophecies of St. Paul," in *Biblical Doctrines* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1929), 625.

⁹ J. Marcellus Kik, *An Eschatology of Victory* (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1971), 17.

due the nations by the gospel and the law, the “golden age” would soon arrive.

Kik charged that the reason why “there is still a remnant of paganism and papalism in this world is chiefly the fault of the Church.” Kik bitterly lamented that

Christ has placed in her [the church’s] hands the chain by which she can bind Satan. She can restrain his influence over the nations. But today the Church bemoans the fact that evil is becoming stronger and stronger. She bemoans the fact that the world is coming more and more under the control of the Devil. Whose fault is that? It is the Church. She has the chain and does not have the faith to bind Satan even more firmly. Satan is bound and the Church knows it not. Satan can be bound more firmly and the Church does it not!

Attempting to rally the troops to the great calling of establishing the earthly kingdom of Christ, Kik urged, “With sufficient faith in Christ we could crush Satan under our feet shortly.”¹⁰

Gary North speaks for Christian Reconstruction when he accounts for what the men of Christian Reconstruction must regard as the defeat of Christ’s kingdom and the victory of the kingdom of Satan for the past two millennia, with no sign of a reversal of fortunes in

¹⁰ Kik, *Eschatology of Victory*, 250, 196, 19, 20.


sight at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

The only thing that is holding up the victory of God’s home guard [in establishing the millennial kingdom of earthly dominion] is the home guard’s lack of confidence, lack of training, and lack of tactics.

*Christ is waiting for His church to surround Satan’s last outpost. Christ is waiting for the work of the leaven to replace Satan’s leaven in the dough of creation.*¹¹

Summing Up

An earthly victory of the church within history; the conversion in the future of masses of Jews, if not the entire race and nation; preterism in interpreting all passages of Scripture that warn of tribulation for the church in the last days; the cessation of the Messianic kingdom at the (bodily) coming of Jesus; and blaming the church for the singular failure of the earthly kingdom to rear itself up in history are essential elements of postmillennial doctrine.

In light of these elements must Reformed amillennialism critique this significant challenge to orthodox eschatology. 

¹¹ Gary North, *Unconditional Surrender: God’s Program for Victory* (Tyler, Texas: Institute for Christian Economics, 1988), 366, 332; the emphasis is North’s.

TAKING HEED TO THE DOCTRINE

REV. JAMES LANING

The One Infallible Authority

The following is a brief summary of what has been considered thus far in this series on divine revelation:

- *The Son, and thus the Father, is revealed only to some people.* The Father reveals Himself in and

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Previous article in this series: May 1, 2011, p. 350.

through His Son. When one sees the Son, He sees the Father, since the Son is the perfect Image of the Father. The Son, however, does not manifest Himself to everyone. Only the elect receive the grace to see the Son, and in this way to see the Father. The gracious revelation of Christ is particular.

- *Christ reveals Himself to His people by means of the Scriptures.* Even though the Scriptures are available for anyone to read, only some are given the grace to understand them. The elect alone receive the eyes of

faith, that they might see Christ's glory as it is set forth in these holy writings.

● *The Scriptures we have today are God-breathed.* Even though men were used in the production of the Scriptures, and the words recorded are sometimes referred to as the words of the man who wrote them, yet the Scriptures are very really the word of God. The writers of Scripture were borne along by the Spirit of God while they were making known what God had said, so that what they wrote was, in truth, the word of the Spirit.

● *Since the Scriptures are the word of the Spirit, it is obvious that they must be infallible.* It is impossible that there could be any errors in the Scriptures, since the Scriptures are the Spirit's word, and the Spirit of God makes no mistakes.

So we have considered the fact that God's revelation recorded in Scripture is an infallible authority. But are there any other infallible authorities? We turn now to consider the answer to this very significant question.

Our creedal position: Scripture alone as the infallible authority

Article 7 of the Belgic Confession is entitled: *The Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures to be the Only Rule of Faith*. The only rule of faith—that is what we and our fathers confess the Scriptures to be. No decision or writing of any individual man, or of any instituted church or group of churches, is of equal value with Holy Scripture. It alone is the standard, and any statement or decision that disagrees with it is to be rejected.

In this article we unashamedly confess that the Scriptures are infallible: "...we reject with all our hearts whatsoever doth not agree with this infallible rule..."

Furthermore, we confess that because the Scriptures are infallible, no statement or decision made by man can be said to be of equal value to them: "Neither do we consider of equal value any writing of men, however holy these men may have been, with those divine Scriptures, nor ought we to consider custom, or the great multitude, or antiquity, or succession of times and persons, or councils, decrees, or statutes, as of equal value with the truth of God..."

It is possible for errors to creep into the writings of men, the decisions that they make, and the preaching

that they utter. The Scriptures, and the Scriptures alone, are the inerrant word of God.

The Romish church's claim of infallibility

The Romish church argues against the position that Scripture alone is the infallible authority. She actually maintains that she herself is infallible. The Romish church declares that whenever she makes official statements on issues, those statements are an infallible interpretation of what God says on the subject.

The argument of the typical papist goes something like this: The Scriptures cannot be the only infallible authority because they are unable of themselves to tell us when we have misinterpreted them. What is needed, they say, is the church (i.e., the Romish church), who has been given the ability to tell us when we have interpreted the Scriptures correctly, and when we have not.

It is true, of course, that a passage of Scripture needs to be rightly interpreted to be understood. In the book of Acts we read of the Ethiopian eunuch who recognized his need for someone to give him a faithful interpretation of the passage he was reading. When Philip approached this eunuch, he found him reading a portion of the prophecy of Isaiah: "And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me?" (Acts 8:30-31a).

The eunuch realized that to understand the Scriptures, he needed to be guided by someone who could faithfully *interpret* the Scriptures.

Recognizing that a faithful interpretation of Scripture is needed, the Romish church claims to be able to provide one. In fact, they claim to be able to do this infallibly. That is not to say that they always cite Scripture in an effort to prove their positions. They often refer to their so-called Sacred Tradition as an authority. But whenever they do cite and interpret the Scriptures, they claim that the interpretation they give is infallible.

The Romish church's claim of infallibility is significant. By making this claim they are saying that infallible inspiration is continuing today, and that new revelation is continuing to come forth, but now only through the mouth of the Romish church.

But let us consider for a moment what it would mean if God did grant someone the grace to give an infallible interpretation of the word of God. Would not that interpretation have authority equal to that of the Scriptures? An infallibly inspired interpretation of God's word would amount to new revelation. It would, in fact, be Holy Scripture, and would have to be added to the sixty-six books that presently constitute the Bible. Thus, by claiming infallibility for herself, the Romish church has fallen into the grievous sin of adding to the word of God.

Over against this false teaching, our fathers have maintained that Scripture alone is the inspired word of God. It is the one perfect rule, and any church that exalts herself above it will experience the just judgment of God coming upon her.

The Interpretation God Provides

But what about the need for a faithful interpretation of Scripture? If such an interpretation is necessary, where do we find this interpretation?

The answer to that question is twofold.

First of all, as far as an *infallibly inspired* interpretation of Scripture is concerned, that is found only in the Scriptures themselves. The Scriptures as a whole are the perfect guide when it comes to interpreting any individual passage of Scripture. Scripture interprets Scripture. It alone provides us with an inerrant interpretation of what the Scriptures teach.

This point is not to be passed over quickly. Very easy it is, for example, to fall into the error of taking a phrase or symbol found in Scripture and deciding on one's own what it means. The Scripture itself provides us with a perfectly accurate interpretation of its own phrases, symbols, etc. Realizing this, we must search the Scriptures to find the interpretation that God Himself has provided for us.

Yet there is more that we must do if we seek to understand the Scriptures. We must also hearken to Christ as He is presently expounding these Scriptures to us, speaking through the instituted church.

The Romish church is really saying that we must listen to her rather than to the Scriptures. That, of course, is erroneous. But the passages she cites to prove her position are important for us to investigate. In fact,

one of the reasons that God sovereignly raises up false teachers is to have them point out to us passages that He would have us consider.

The Romish church, in an effort to defend her position, points us to a number of passages. First of all, she makes reference to passages that speak of the church being given the grace to understand and to declare what the Scriptures teach: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (I Tim. 3:15).

Another group of passages that papists cite are those that speak of the necessity of listening to what the church decides:

If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates: then shalt thou arise, and get thee up into the place which the Lord thy God shall choose; And thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and enquire; and they shall shew thee the sentence of judgment.... And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest that standeth to minister there before the Lord thy God, or unto the judge, even that man shall die: and thou shalt put away the evil from Israel (Deut. 17:8, 9, 12).

And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican (Matt. 18:17).

He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me (Luke 10:16).

These passages, and others like them, do in fact teach that God faithfully guides His church to interpret the Scriptures correctly. The Spirit of Christ over the years has guided the church to understand the truth and to confess it in her creeds and in her official positions on various matters. God promised that this would be the case, and God has been faithful to fulfill this promise.

But how, then, is the Romish church erring when it gives its explanation of these passages? First of all,

they err when they declare that they themselves are the church that is spoken of in these passages. The church God speaks of here is the church that proclaims the truth. There is the true church that proclaims the truth of God, and then there is the false church that declares her own ideas and claims to be the word of God. These passages quite obviously are speaking of the former, not the latter.

Secondly, the Romish church errs when it says that when God guides His church to understand and proclaim the truth, He guides her in such a way that her statements and decisions are to be taken as *infallible*. God does indeed guide her. Yet true churches can and do err from time to time.


Ongoing verbal inspiration is not what God was promising here. The days of that came to an end nineteen hundred years ago. Rather, our Lord is assuring us that He will speak in and through the instituted church, guiding her to make an accurate declaration of the truth set forth in Scripture.

Though many churches will apostatize from the faith, there will continue to be a church on this earth through whom Christ will be speaking. In this way the voice of Christ will continue to be heard. That being the case, when we hear Christ speak to us through His church it is obviously of utmost importance that we hearken to what He says.

This is stressed in the passages quoted above. The voice of God is heard in the true church of Jesus Christ still today. The Spirit of Christ who inspired the Scriptures is speaking through the church, guiding her to interpret them. Christ's voice sounds forth in the preaching of the gospel, and in the official decisions of sound churches. Therefore it is true that we must listen to the true church, or be guilty of rejecting what our Lord is saying through her mouth.

Yet that does not mean that she never errs. The statements and decisions even of true churches must always be tested with the Scriptures. There is only one perfect standard, and every statement or decision of man must be compared to that rule.

Thanks be to God that we have such a rule. In an age of the rapid transmission of a steady stream of lies, what a joy it is to know the one truth that is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path.

May we be granted the grace to search these Scriptures. May we grow in our ability and our desire to seek and to find the interpretation that our Father Himself has provided for us in the Scriptures themselves. And may we also be granted the grace to submit to the expounding of that word as we hear it from the mouth of the church—the faithful church that God has promised to guide into all truth. 

ALL AROUND US

REV. CLAYTON SPRONK

■ The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) to Homosexual Officebearers: “You are free to be sexually active.”

In 2010 the General Assembly of the PC(USA), a denomination with 2.3 million members, decided to remove a clause from its constitution that required ministers to “live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman, or chastity in singleness.” Removing this language would have the effect of allowing homosexual officebearers in the PC(USA) to have same-sex dating and “marriage” rela-

tionships. For this decision to take effect a majority of the denomination's presbyteries needed to approve it. In 2010 *Christianity Today* reported the hope of Rev. James Berkley that the majority of presbyteries would reject this change to the constitution. Rev. Berkley is quoted as saying, “The General Assembly erred..., but that will not be the final word. Faithful Presbyterians will not let this stand.”¹ Rev. Berkley received sad news on Tuesday, May 10, 2011. On that date the Twin Cities Presbytery cast the deciding vote approving the change to the constitution. The *New York Times* reports that this will now “allow openly gay people in

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¹ http://blog.christianitytoday.com/ctliveblog/archives/2010/07/pcusa_general_a.html viewed on 5/24/2011.

same-sex relationships to be ordained as ministers, elders and deacons.”²

Many are asking, what led to this? It is being reported that the debate about whether homosexuals may serve in office has been ongoing in the PC(USA) for 33 years. How were those who were in favor of ordaining practicing homosexuals into ecclesiastical office able to achieve victory?

Grady Parsons, the Stated Clerk of the denomination, “attributed the turnabout in the votes to both the growing acceptance of homosexuality in the larger culture, and to church members simply wearying of the conflict” (quoted by the *The New York Times*).

Dr. R. Albert Mohler, President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, believes the problem is that the authority of Scripture is denied in the PC(USA). Dr. Mohler takes issue with the PC(USA)’s claim that it believes in the lordship of Jesus Christ and will continue to require candidates for church office to confess the lordship of Jesus Christ while allowing them to be practicing homosexuals. Dr. Mohler rightly sees the lunacy of this position, explaining,

That is a fundamental error that leaves this denomination now in the implausible position of claiming to affirm the Lordship of Christ while subverting the authority of Scripture. The removal of the constitutional language about marriage and chastity, coupled with the removal of the language about repentance from what Scripture identifies as sin, effectively means that candidates and presbyteries may defy Scripture while claiming to follow Christ.

Dr. Mohler then writes, “Clearly, this action could not have happened without this denomination having abandoned any required belief in the full authority, inspiration, and truthfulness of the Bible long ago. This most recent decision sets the stage for the total capitulation of this church to the normalization of homosexuality—an act of open defiance against the Scriptures.”³

² [http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/11/us/11presbyterian.html?_r=2#h\[\]](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/11/us/11presbyterian.html?_r=2#h[]) viewed on 5/24/2011.

³ <http://www.albertmohler.com/2011/05/11/following-jesus-while-rejecting-the-bible-yet-another-tragedy-in-mainline-protestantism/> viewed on 5/24/2011.

The PC(USA)’s denial of the authority of Scripture is certainly serious and is certainly part of the explanation for why the denomination has opened up church offices to practicing homosexuals. But the denial of the authority of Scripture is not the only reason, and perhaps is not the main reason, why after 33 years of battle those in favor of the ordination of practicing homosexuals have gotten their way. There are two other reasons that explain why the PC(USA) now allows the ordination of practicing homosexuals.

The first reason is that the PC(USA) had already approved the vile sin of homosexuality. The wording of *The New York Times*’s description of the result of the PC(USA)’s decision is telling. The decision will “allow *openly gay* people in same-sex relationships to be ordained as ministers, elders and deacons (emphasis mine).” The PC(USA) already allowed *openly gay* people (women as well as men) to hold the office of minister, elder, or deacon. People *unrepentant* of their homosexuality were allowed to hold office. People who were *proud* of their homosexuality, and who broadcast it to others, were allowed to hold office. The PC(USA) was more openly in favor of homosexuality than was the military during the Clinton-Bush years with its “don’t ask, don’t tell policy” that forbade openly gay people to be in the military. The PC(USA) for a long time had a wrong understanding of what the sin of homosexuality is. It defined the sin of homosexuality as the “practice” of engaging in same-sex physical contact. It denied that having same-sex thoughts, desires, or tendencies is sinful. This is where the PC(USA) went wrong and where many others go wrong. The Bible does not merely condemn homosexual acts, it also condemns homosexual thoughts and desires. Once the PC(USA) denied the biblical definition of the gross sin of homosexuality, it approved homosexuality, and the approval of homosexuals engaging in vile sexual activity was a foregone conclusion.

The second reason those in favor of the ordination of homosexuals have won in the PC(USA) is very obvious, but no one ever seems to notice this reason. People scratch their heads and ask, how could this happen? Dr. Mohler points out that attempts were repeatedly made and rejected to open up ordination to gays in the PC(USA). After this idea was rejected so many times,

how could it be approved now? This is what people have asked in denominations that experienced a similar, long, drawn-out debate over the ordination of women. For years the attempt to allow women's ordination is rejected. Then one year it is approved. And people ask how this could happen. Often people talk about the denial of the authority of Scripture. Or they point to the fact that many conservatives leave the denomination so that now "liberals" outnumber and outvote "conservatives." The real issue is missed.

No one points to the fact that the only reason the "liberals" are able to push their agenda year after year is that they are not put under discipline. They are not told they must repent for supporting the ordination of gays or of women. They are not told that if they do not repent they will be excommunicated. It seems the "conservatives" do not understand that it is a sin worthy of discipline to promote unscriptural views concerning the ordination of homosexuals or of women. One wonders how they cannot see that the reason they face a relentless push to open up church offices to women and gays is that they allow people in favor of these unbiblical positions to remain in the church. A denomination should be bothered with the deplorable suggestion that church offices should be opened to women or gays only once! Of course, the denomination should reject that suggestion clearly and decisively. Then the denomination should demand the repentance of those who made the suggestion. If those people repent, the denomination will not be bothered by them again. If they do not repent, the denomination should excommunicate them, which is another scenario in which the denomination will rid itself of troublemakers and prevent itself from having to go through years of struggle about issues that are extremely easy to settle and shameful to debate.

■ Debate Still Open about the Flood in the United Reformed Churches?

A little over a year ago I reported in "All Around Us" that Dr. Tony Jelsma, a member of the United Reformed Churches and professor at Dordt College, publicly denied the universality of the Great Flood as described in Genesis 6 and 7. In that previous article I wrote, "It will be interesting to see if the URC will argue that just as it can tolerate different views on creation

it can also tolerate different views on the flood. Will Prof. Jelsma's unbelieving attitude toward the Bible be rejected, or will he, like those who hold to figurative views of Genesis 1 and 2, be defended as 'within the bounds' of the confessions?" Readers may remember Dr. Jelsma's views were expressed in a letter written to *Christian Renewal*. Now a year later Dr. Jelsma has written again to *Christian Renewal*, once again claiming that his denial of the universality of the flood does not contradict Scripture or the Reformed confessions. Dr. Jelsma's letter stirred up debate that raged in the "Letters" section of *Christian Renewal*. I refer the interested reader to the "Letters" section in the issues of *Christian Renewal* ranging from February 23, 2011 to April 27, 2011.

What is noteworthy is that a year after Dr. Jelsma's denial of the universality of the Great Flood it appears no action has been taken against him, or against his consistory for approving his position. Dr. Jelsma's views may be rejected at some point. But at the present time it seems the Great Flood is open for debate in the URC.

■ Shocker: Study Commissioned by Roman Catholic Church Determines Celibacy and Homosexuality have Nothing to do with Sexual Abuse Scandal.

Many news outlets have called attention to the recently published report on the sex abuse scandal in the Roman Catholic Church. This report comes from the John Jay College of Criminal Justice and was commissioned by the Roman Catholic Church. Its findings are explained by Lisa Wangsness of the *Boston Globe*:

The sexual abuse crisis in the Catholic Church was caused by the influence of sweeping social changes and increasing "deviant behavior" of the 1960s and 1970s on priests who were inadequately trained, emotionally unprepared, and isolated, according to a new report commissioned by the nation's Roman Catholic bishops.

Researchers at John Jay College of Criminal Justice at the City University of New York, who spent five years conducting the most expensive and extensive study of sexual abuse in the Catholic church to date, concluded that homosexual priests were no more likely to abuse than heterosexual priests.

They also found that celibacy could not be blamed for the abuse epidemic. Nor could seminaries have done a better job screening for likely offenders because abusive priests had no common profile.

Wrote the authors: "The most significant conclusion drawn from this data is that no single psychological, developmental, or behavioral characteristic differentiated priests who abused minors from those who did not."

The report also states that poor training of priests, combined with social isolation, job stress, and few support mechanisms likely contributed to the abuse problem. The decline of sexual abuse in the mid-1980s coincided with better training for seminarians in human sexuality and relationships.

The report, titled "The Causes and Context of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Catholic Priests in the United States, 1950-2010," appears to deflect most blame for the crisis away from the church.⁴

That last sentence appears to describe the actual purpose of the report—to deflect blame from the Roman Catholic Church.

The report contradicts itself when it says celibacy is not the problem, but the problem is rather a lack of preparation for celibacy. The truth is that the require-

ment that priests be celibate is a man-made law that contradicts the law of God found in I Corinthians 7, which requires those who do not have the gift of continence to marry. By requiring men who do not have the gift of continence to remain celibate, the Roman Catholic Church asked for a sex abuse scandal. As long as Rome continues to require this unbiblical celibacy, it can count on more scandals in the future.

The report's claim that homosexuality is not the cause of the scandal is refuted by its finding that most of the victims of sexual abuse were male. The *Los Angeles Times* quoted a member of the Roman Catholic Church critical of the report's conclusion regarding homosexuality: "Bill Donohue, the outspoken president of the conservative Catholic League, noted on the group's website that the report found that 81 percent of abuse victims were male and 78 percent were beyond puberty. 'Since 100 percent of the abusers were male, that's called homosexuality, not pedophilia or heterosexuality,' he said."⁵

That the report attempts to defend the Roman Catholic Church and deny that celibacy or homosexuality are problems is unsurprising, since it was commissioned by the US Catholic bishops. ☞

⁴ http://articles.boston.com/2011-05-18/news/29556900_1_abusive-priests-sexual-abuse-minors-by-catholic-priests viewed on 5/24/2011.

⁵ <http://m.spokesman.com/stories/2011/may/19/report-says-priest-sex-abuse-largely-past/> viewed on 5/24/2011.

PR SPECIAL ED

MR. JIM VAN OVERLOOP

Annual Society Meeting Report

May 2, 2011

The Board welcomes all of you to this annual meeting and thanks you for the support you show by your attendance this evening.

The Lord in His infinite knowledge and plan has given us the privilege of educating *all* the covenant children that He has given us. We as a Board are privileged

Mr. VanOverloop is a member of Faith Protestant Reformed Church in Jenison, Michigan. We print here an abbreviated version of his annual report.

to work for the children with special needs whom God in His wisdom has given us. We need your help, your prayers, and your financial support, but also we need you to advocate for this great cause. More members are needed for this Society as we are reminded of the great need. As the number of students and schools increases, so too must the level of support increase. More men need to be informed of the work that the Society does on behalf of the families and children God has blessed us with.

I'd like to give you some history that I've gleaned from the past.

In August of 1983, almost 28 years ago, the Board of Special Education published their first newsletter. I will quote a portion from that publication here:

A few months ago a society and board were formed to begin Protestant Reformed special education. What follows is some information about who we are and, the Lord willing, what will happen. Last fall, under the direction of the Hudsonville consistory, Mrs. Gertrude Hoeksema conducted a Bible study class with four children. Believing that this teaching could be expanded biblically and academically, the consistory held an informational meeting for all interested on March 16, 1983. At the meeting Mrs. Hoeksema detailed her work with the children and discussed what she has learned through research and experience with special children. Also, two committees were formed to lay the groundwork for organization. A second meeting was held April 20. A constitution was adopted, a society was formed, and board members were elected. The board has been busy with a number of issues. First of all, the evaluation of potential students with the capable assistance of Miss Jessie Dykstra. Also, the location of the school and the ensuring that all laws are met. The board is holding a special public meeting on August 6 at 4 p.m. at Jamestown's Spring Grove Park. There will be guest speakers, activities for special children, and a covered-dish supper. We encourage members of the society and *all interested* to attend. Being members of the covenant, handicapped children need God-centered education. With the Lord's blessing, it will become reality. We ask for your support, both prayerfully and financially.

At the organizational meeting of April 20, a committee reported. The committee was titled "Committee to investigate staffing, laws, and building for a Special Education Society and School." The committee was made up of John Buiter, Deane Wassink, and Greg Van Overloop. The committee brought the following recommendations:

1. If we organize as a school society we seek the services of a qualified lawyer in order to arrange the necessary state and federal registrations.
2. Our society acquire precise information on potential students by asking parents to release records of their child or children and having these records studied by a

knowledgeable person for the purpose of giving recommendations as to educational needs of the children and possible groupings in classes. We recommend Miss Jessie Dykstra for this work. She is willing to do this work and is qualified in special education by training and experience.

3. Our Society will seek information on interested teachers and aides by means of public notices. Also that we seek out all possible students for a school by the same means.

4. Decisions regarding the type of classroom or classrooms to be established should wait until a detailed study of possible students is completed.

5. That a school operated by this society be operated in conjunction with an existing P. R. Christian School. Grounds:

- a. We can share facilities (gym, playground, transportation).

- b. This will provide social interaction with other students.

6. That our society contact Hope P. R. Christian School and discuss the possible cooperation in facilities and services in the proposed satellite school in Hudsonville.

At that meeting on April 20, 1983, a constitution was approved, from which I now quote:

Article II

The purpose of this Society is to provide God-centered education for those who cannot at the present time receive instruction in our present schools because of mental and/or physical handicaps.

And now, moving forward....

Last year's report mentioned that our drive was about \$35,000 short of its goal. We conducted a second drive, and the response exceeded our shortage. This year's drive fell short by \$44,500, and we are currently conducting a second drive to fulfill our obligations. As of last week, we have received \$20,100. Please be mindful of this shortage of \$24,400. As a board we covet your support, in prayers, in participation, and financially.

As you can see on the proposed budget, we have dropped our support of resource rooms from 25% to 20%. This was done after much discussion to present a budget that is attainable. We face the fact that our budget of last year anticipated \$193,000 in expenses

and \$10,000 in normal income. Past years show similar projections. Reality is that we depend on gifts, church collections, and our drives to finance our operation. Please remember our cause in your giving. We have attempted to keep our cause in front of our constituents through newsletters and bulletin announcements. Our covenant responsibilities to all the causes God has given us should be part of our conversations with friends and relatives.

This past year we have been approached by more schools as evidence of the growing need of this great cause. We thank and encourage Hope school, which has begun a resource room. Mrs. Deb Kuiper is ably handling her duties there in coordination with Mrs. Audrey Starret.

The PR school in Doon, IA has contacted us. They have up to three special education students coming up, one from Doon, possibly one from Sioux Falls, and possibly one from Hull. We are striving to help them. We have committed \$25,000 financially. We also have offered them the knowledge and experience of our staff, so they don't have to reinvent the wheel.

The school in Dyer, IN, formerly South Holland, has also been in contact with us. To date, they have not made request for financial assistance or other support. We do encourage them and anticipate in the future there may be additional opportunity for the Society.

Covenant Christian High School has made plans for a Special Education Room within the new addition. We have met with representatives of their board to review and plan for special education at the high school

level. In the near future there will be students coming out of our Special Education classroom who will need to continue their education, and we desire to make that possible at Covenant. More meetings lie ahead to deal with how this will be handled.

One last note on our current year. "Fearfully and Wonderfully Made Day" was held at Heritage again this year. Once again it was very well received and gave the families and individuals an opportunity to share their experiences. We have encouraged the other elementary schools also to have this program. Mr. Deane Wassink gave the chapel speech that day. We thank him for his work on behalf of the Society.

We currently have five students in special education. We are blessed with a staff that has great dedication to this cause. The work they do and the love they show is much appreciated. They are gifts to us through their work with the children.

God has given us many gifts, as we call them. However, He has also given us everything else—including the trials and the heartaches that come with special-needs children. All this is in His plan, and all of this is for our good. May we be a thankful people. Our tendency is to take thought for the morrow, what we shall eat, what we shall drink. As we are directed in the Scriptures, may we take our example from the birds.

May our efforts on behalf of Special Education students be pleasing to God, and may our covenant God bless the work.

Mr. Jim VanOverloop
Special Education Board Secretary 

BRING THE BOOKS...

MR. CHARLES TERPSTRA

A Queer Thing Happened to America: And What a Long, Strange Trip It's Been, by Michael L. Brown. Concord, NC, EqualTime Books, 2011. 691 pages. Hardcover. ISBN-10-0615406092. [Reviewed by Martyn McGeown.]

A *Queer Thing Happened to America* is a carefully researched, and very disturbing, account of

Rev. McGeown is missionary-pastor of the Covenant Protestant Reformed Church in Northern Ireland stationed in Limerick, Republic of Ireland.

the development of the GLBT⁶ movement, from the Stonewall riots (June 1989), through the reception (June 2009) by President Obama of 300 gay activists at the White House, to its vision of the future.

Brown lifts the lid on militant homosexual activism, especially in America, and uncovers an agenda that pervades every part of society. He reveals that activists have enormous power, influence, and wealth, and that they will tolerate no dissenting voice as they move

⁶ GLBT means "Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender" and is the common acronym for the movement.

relentlessly to change the world. GLBT activism's buzzwords are "tolerance," "diversity," and "inclusion," but there is more to these terms than meets the eye.

The agenda, which Brown calls a "stealth agenda," starts in the schools. In 2009 President Obama appointed Kevin Jennings "Safe Schools Czar" or Assistant Deputy Secretary for the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools. Jennings was founder and president of GLSEN ("The Gay Lesbian and Straight Education Network"), an organization that seeks to end discrimination, harassment, and bullying based on sexual orientation and gender identity. How? By promoting homosexuality as normal, even as something to be celebrated, in the nation's schools. Because of the activities of GLSEN, April 25 has become the annual Day of Silence (solidarity for GLBT students [118]); grade-school children are reading books called "Heather Has Two Mommies" and "It's Perfectly Normal" (110-111); and schools can override parents' objections to their children being taught that GLBT is normal and to be encouraged (103-106).

The GLBT movement captures hearts and minds through the media. Homosexual activism rules in Hollywood, as TV and movies promote GLBT as wholesome and good, and conservative Christians and ex-gays (an abomination to the GLBT movement) as evil, hateful bigots, ignorant buffoons, or hypocrites. This is no accident! GLAAD ("Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation") "now routinely vets all TV scripts dealing with homosexuality to make sure that the public sees only what the activists want" (167). In fact, when CNN's *Good Morning America* permitted Alan Chambers of Exodus International *four seconds* to make his case that homosexuals can be changed by God's grace, GLAAD was not glad. Their 2011 Resolution is to petition CNN to allow *no* "counterpoint discussion from the anti-gay industry" (171).

The GLBT movement also influences corporate America by encouraging and enforcing "diversity" in the workplace. The HRC ("Human Rights Campaign")

maintains a Corporate Equality Index. What must one do to gain 100%? Offer comprehensive insurance benefits to same-sex partners, have policies for accommodating transgender employees (including special bathrooms), have gender transition (sex change) guidelines, and provide company-wide "diversity awareness training," to name but a few! (283-284). Three hundred five companies scored a perfect 100% in 2010, and many companies donate millions of dollars to GLBT organizations (284-285). Companies opposed to diversity can expect to be named, shamed, and threatened with boycotts. Ironically, when Brown tried to get corporate sponsors for *his* pro-family, pro-life event, he was rebuffed by several major firms because they promote "diversity" (where "diversity" means pro-GLBT!).

GLBT trumpets tolerance, but how tolerant is it? Writes Brown, "If you are fiercely opposed to traditional, biblical values, but in favor of same-sex marriage, you are *tolerant*. In fact, you have the right to call anyone who does not agree with you *intolerant*. You even have the right to advocate that their freedom of speech be taken away. How dare they not embrace the gay rights movement!" (318). There is a propaganda

*There is a
propaganda war
through the schools,
colleges, and media—
and the GLBT movement
is winning.*

war—through the schools, colleges, and media—and the GLBT movement is winning. For example, how do you measure *homophobia*? You use the GLSEN-approved "Dorothy Riddle Scale." Listed under the homophobic category are not only repulsion and pity, but *tolerance* and *acceptance*! To have a positive level of attitude you must reach, at least, the categories of *support* or *admiration*! (117). Furthermore, if you dare even question


the validity of homosexuality you are a hateful person, *even if you express your disagreement in the most compassionate of terms*. Brown asks, "Why must the hate button be pushed incessantly? Are the only two options embracing homosexuality or hatred?" (74).

Brown fills his book with case studies ranging from the absurd to the deeply disturbing. Take, for example, a freshman student who was brought before a school tribunal because she refused to write a letter advocating

same-sex adoption (528); a Roman Catholic professor who was fired from a secular university for stating that according to Roman Catholic teaching homosexual acts are morally wrong (531); and a Christian elderly care home that was threatened with loss of funding and was accused of “institutionalized homophobia” by Brighton (UK) Council because they refused the Council’s demand to question elderly residents every three months about their sexual orientation and use images of GLBT couples in their promotional literature (541)!

I have a few criticisms. First, because the book is self-published (most conservative publishers would not touch it with a ten-foot bargepole) the proofreading is less than rigorous, and there is no index. Second, the cover is wholly inappropriate. Discard the dust jacket with its cover as soon as you receive the book! Third, Brown, an Arminian, writes approvingly of Charles Finney! (141). Fourth, Brown fails to address the scandal of divorce and remarriage in Evangelicalism, something that has not gone unnoticed by the GLBT movement. The argument is simple: if the churches can accept divorced and remarried members (condemned in Scripture), why cannot they accept gay and lesbian members (also condemned in Scripture)? To this, compromised Evangelicalism has no answer. Brown does not even address it. Finally, some material is too explicit. While Brown is to be commended for his detailed research, one chapter in particular is so of-

fensive that Brown has to affix a warning! That chapter is entitled “Queer Theology.” Many will not be able to read it. I could not.

Brown has done us a service. He writes with compassion. Of course, that will not stop people from calling his book “hate filled” and “homophobic.” To question homosexuality elicits an almost Pavlovian response today. The “hate button” has been pressed too often and with great success. We may not wish to study this subject, but it will not do to bury our heads in the sand. Western, post-Christian society is destroying itself. Homosexuality is accepted, promoted, and celebrated. Dissenting voices are being silenced. We should expect to suffer. Legislation in Europe and America is being developed to ban “hate speech” (and, remember, “hate speech” is anything *perceived* to be homophobic” [534]). Denominations are capitulating all around us. Just a few weeks ago, the PC(USA) and the Church of Scotland took steps to allow the ordination of homosexuals. God is giving men and women over to vile affections (Rom. 1:26-28). Indeed, men and women no longer recognize that God made them male and female (Matt. 19:4)! The “Queer” New World envisaged by GLBT is diametrically opposed to and will not tolerate Scripture. Nevertheless, we must not fear. Iniquity will abound, but we and our children are safe in the Savior’s hand. 

NEWS FROM OUR CHURCHES

MR. BENJAMIN WIGGER

Congregation Activities

On Monday morning, July 11, a line of severe thunderstorms came in off Lake Michigan and swept through southwest Michigan. In addition to the usual rain, thunder, and lightning, these storms also packed winds estimated by the National Weather Service to be in excess of 90 mph. You can imagine the damage done in some com-

munities around the area. One such area was Jamestown, MI, where the parsonage of the Providence PRC took a direct hit from those storms. Five trees on the property around their parsonage and barn were uprooted or broken off as a result of that storm. In God’s providence, Rev. and Mrs. Bleyenbergh were not home at the time, and the parsonage did not receive any damage from falling trees. We are reminded again of the words of Psalm 46:8, 10, 11: “Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the

earth.... Be still, and know that I am God....”

The Adult Sunday School of the Georgetown PRC in Hudsonville, MI enjoyed a special presentation on the translation of Reformed Catechism books, including from our churches, into Chinese, Tamil, Burmese, South African, etc, and their distribution in foreign countries. Their guest speaker was Ming Chong, from the Pilgrim Covenant Church of Singapore. She translates for the Gratia Dei Sola Media, which also has projects

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

of translating Reformed materials in Myanmar, India, and Africa.

At a special congregational meeting on July 11, the members of the Loveland, CO PRC gave approval to the proposed building project from their Building Committee. Work has already begun and will continue in the months ahead.

The congregation of First PRC in Grand Rapids, MI hosted an area-wide summer singspiration entitled, "Sing for Joy," on Sunday evening, July 17, at First. This was an evening of praise to God in song, with audience singing as well as vocal and instrumental special numbers.

The members of the Kalamazoo, MI PRC enjoyed some relief from the summer heat with a pool/supper get-together Saturday afternoon, July 23, at the home of one of their families. Also available was the public park behind their home and various yard games, which all added up to an enjoyable time together.

Evangelism Activities

The Evangelism Committee of the Georgetown PRC in Hudsonville, MI had the opportunity this summer to lead a Bible Study Class at the Holland Men's Rescue Mission from mid-July through August. Mr. Deane Wassink volunteered to lead those classes centering on the Lord's Prayer. Georgetown's congregation was invited to join the Bible study each week.

The Evangelism Committee of First PRC in Grand Rapids, MI has been busy this summer reworking ten information sheets that were origi-

nally produced by Rev. W. Bruinsma for the Pittsburgh Mission. These information sheets answer some commonly asked questions about the PRC. Copies will be available for visitors, and members of First were encouraged to direct visitors to these sheets to help them better understand our churches.

As reported earlier, the Georgetown PRC has decided to discontinue the airing of their worship services on a Grand Rapids radio station. Sunday, July 24, was the last broadcast. We thank the Lord for giving Georgetown the opportunity to air these services each Sunday for over five years. Georgetown concluded these efforts in the confidence that in each broadcast God has directed the Word as He saw good and built up His people in the faith that will not make ashamed.

Mission Activities

The PR Fellowship in Pittsburgh, PA has set up new Facebook and Twitter accounts. These accounts can be found at www.facebook.com/prcpittsburgh and www.twitter.com/prcpittsburgh. Be sure to go to these sites often and follow the Fellowship activities, as well as following links to Rev. Bruinsma's sermons at Sermon Audio each week.

Sister-Church Activities

Rev. Ron Hanko was invited to Singapore to speak for the annual Church Camp sponsored by the Covenant Evangelical Reformed Church of Singapore. Rev. Hanko and his wife, Nancy, were there from the 14th to the 27th of June. This year's camp was held in Rompin

Pahang, Malaysia. Rev. Hanko spoke four times on the theme, "Rooted in Christ: Bearing Fruit." His message subjects were: Rooted in Christ, Established in Christ, Walking in Christ, and Abounding in Christ. Rev. Hanko also spoke for Covenant's family support group on "Husbands, Love Your Wives." Rev. Hanko concluded his note to the "News" by adding that he and Nancy "had a wonderful time, enjoyed the wonderful hospitality and food, and were refreshed and encouraged by the love of the people there, by the good fellowship, and by the Christian witness, both of the adults and the youth."

Rev. Angus and Mary Stewart left on July 18 for their biennial trip to North America. Plans called for them to be away from the Covenant PRC in Ballymena, NI for four weeks. In their absence Rev. Heath Bleyenbergh was scheduled to preach three times for them and one week for the Limerick Reformed Fellowship, filling in for Rev. Martyn McGeown, who planned to be in the United States serving as a chaperone for the Young People's Convention, D.V.

Minister Activities

Candidate Brian Huizinga received calls to serve as the next pastor from the Edgerton, MN, the Hope Redlands, CA, and the Hope Walker, MI PRCs.

Candidate Nathan Decker received calls from the Cornerstone PRC in Dyer, IN and the Trinity PRC in Hudsonville, MI to serve as their next pastor. ☺

CELEBRATING THE **400TH** ANNIVERSARY OF THE KING JAMES VERSION

A Conference Presented by:
 PROTESTANT REFORMED
 THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
 on:

September 16-17, 2011

Schedule:

September 16, at 7:30 P.M.

***Restoring the Bible to the Believer:
 The Reformation's Concern
 Over Bible Translation***

Prof. Russell Dykstra,
 Professor of Church History and N.T. Studies,
 Theological School of the PRCA

September 17, 9:00 A.M.

***'Ere Many Years,
 the Boy that Driveth the Plow...':
 The History of the King James Version***

Prof. Ronald Cammenga,
 Professor of Dogmatics and O.T. Studies
 Theological School of the PRCA

September 17, 11:00 A.M.

***Should the KJV be Replaced?:
 A Critical Assessment of the KJV
 and of Some More Recent
 Bible Translations***

Prof. Barrett Gritters,
 Professor of Practical Theology and N.T. Studies
 Theological School of the PRCA

at:

First Christian Reformed Church
 2450 85th St. SW
 Byron Center, MI 49315

Please note:

This same conference will be presented
 on another occasion
 (same speeches, speakers, and times), in:

Hull Protestant Reformed Church
 1006 Hayes Ave.
 Hull, IA 51239

on: **October 7 and 8, 2011**

...and a third, since the same speeches
 figure prominently in the:

OFFICEBEARERS' CONFERENCE

CLASSIS WEST

in Peace PRC
 18423 Stony Island Ave.
 Lansing, IL 60438

on: **September 6, 2011**

Schedule:

9:00 A.M.

Opening Devotions and Meditation
God's Word Written: Where, How, and Why?

Rev. Douglas Kuiper,
 Pastor, Randolph PRC, Randolph, WI

10:30 A.M.

***Restoring the Bible to the Believer:
 The Reformation's Concern Over Bible Translation***
Prof. Russell Dykstra

12:00 P.M. - Lunch
 (freewill offering to defray expenses)

1:00 P.M.

***'Ere Many Years, the Boy that Driveth the Plow...':
 The History of the King James Version***
Prof. Ronald Cammenga

2:45 P.M.

***Should the KJV be Replaced?:
 A Critical Assessment of the KJV
 and of Some More Recent Bible Translations***
Prof. Barrett Gritters

More information at: www.kingjames400years.com

Wedding Anniversary

■ On August 7, 2011, our parents,

DOUG AND ELIZABETH MINGERINK,

celebrated their 30th wedding Anniversary. We pray that God will continue to bless them in their marriage together. We thank our heavenly Father for the godly example they have set for us.

"Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways. For thou shalt eat the labor of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee. Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.... Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel" (Psalm 128).

✿ Doug and Larissa Mingerink

Braylon, Jake, Christian

✿ Rick and Carmen Mingerink

Hailey, Jack, Noah

✿ Jon and Tina Mingerink

Eloise

✿ Scott

Grand Rapids, Michigan

Wedding Anniversary

■ With thankfulness to our Lord we rejoiced with our parents,

PROF. ROBERT and MARILYN DECKER,

as they celebrated 50 years of marriage on August 18, 2011. We are grateful for their love and devotion not only to each other but also to us, their children and grandchildren. Their guidance, instruction, and support have been a wonderful blessing to us. "But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them" (Psalm 103: 17, 18).

✿ Douglas and Deborah Altena

Jared, Amanda, Rachel, Michael

✿ Daniel and Denise Decker

Blair, Paige, Danae

✿ Timothy and Kathy Decker

Tyler

✿ Jonathan and Sarah Decker

Jordan

Jenison, Michigan

Resolution of Sympathy

■ The Council of the Loveland PRC expresses Christian sympathy to Nicole Kooienga, Larry and Pam Kooienga, Tim and Mary Bertsch, and their families in the tragic death of their husband, son, grandson, and brother,

MR. DALE KOOIENGA.

Psalm 116:15: "Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints."

Rev. Steven Key, President

Victor Solanyk, Clerk

Resolution of Sympathy

■ The Men's Society of Hope PRC (Walker, MI) expresses its sincere Christian sympathy to its fellow member John Streyle in the death of his father,

MR. GUSTAVE STREYLE.

II Corinthians 5:1: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Harry Langerak, President

David Moelker, Sec'y.

Resolution of Sympathy

■ The Men's Society of Hope PRC (Walker, MI) expresses its heartfelt sympathy to fellow members Jim Schimmel and Hank VanderWaal in the death of their mother and mother-in-law,

MRS. GIB (GRACE) SCHIMMEL.

"Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God" (Psalm 146:5).

Harry Langerak, President

David Moelker, Sec'y.

Annual Meeting

■ Annual meeting of the RFPA will be held on September 22, in Faith PRC. See insert for details.

Resolution of Sympathy

■ The Council and congregation of Hope PRC in Walker express their Christian sympathy to Deacon Henry VanderWaal and his wife in the death of his mother-in-law,

MRS. GRACE SCHIMMEL.

May they be comforted by the words of Scripture in II Corinthians 4:14, "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you."

Tom DeVries, Vice-President

Joel Minderhoud, Clerk

Resolution of Sympathy

■ The Adult Society of Doon PRC express their sympathy to Mr. and Mrs. Lee Hoekstra in the passing away of their father and father-in-law,

MR. HAROLD HOEKSTRA.

"I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (John 11:25, 26).

Rev. David Overway, President

Gloria VanBemmel, Secretary

Resolution of Sympathy

■ The Council and congregation of Calvary PRC express their sympathy to Mr. and Mrs. Roger Grevengoed and to Mr. and Mrs. Terry VanMaanen and families in the loss of their father and grandfather, and to Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hoksbergen and Mrs. Bernice VanMaanen in the loss of their brother and brother-in-law,

HAROLD VAN MAANEN.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever" (Psalm 23:6).

Rev. Cory Griess, President

George Hoekstra, Clerk of Records

Reformed Witness Hour September 2011

Date

Topic

Text

September 4

"God's Mercy with Repentant Sinners"

Jonah 3:10

September 11

"A Sinful Response to Sovereign Mercy"

Jonah 4:1-5

September 18

"God's Rebuke of a Pouting Prophet"

Jonah 4:6-11

September 25

"A Greater Than Jonah Is Here"

Matthew 12:41