

VOLUME 69 NUMBER 5 · MAY 2022 EDITION

THE MESSENGER

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF NORTH AMERICA



02 MEDITATION:
CAPTIVITY IS
LED CAPTIVE

12 BIBLE STUDY:
BIBLICAL CHURCH-PLANTING (2):
THE LEADERSHIP & THEIR TASK

20 THEOLOGICAL TRAINING:
THE FRUIT OF MUKHANYO
THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE



CAPTIVITY IS LED CAPTIVE

Psalm 68:18: “Thou hast ascended on high,
thou hast led captivity captive....”

It is supposed that David wrote Psalm 68 on the occasion of the bringing up of the ark to Jerusalem. This was a major event. Before that time, the ark had been at several places, mostly at Shiloh. After the Israelites had brought it into battle with the Philistines, it was captured by the Philistines and brought to their land. Since that time, the ark went from one spot to another. After seven months, it was returned to Israel, where it stayed in Kirjath-jearim for many more years. It was David's desire to bring the ark to Jerusalem, for the ark was the symbol of God's presence with His people. This was David's first concern. The Lord must be in our midst; He must reign. Without Him, my reign will be a failure. In contrast to king Saul, David needed the Lord. That is why this was a major event in David's life. Yet, there was more. Enlightened by the Spirit of prophecy, David saw in this event the unfolding of a future event. What we have here is a prediction of Christ's ascension into heaven.

Three things are mentioned about Christ. Let us consider them briefly. First, “Thou hast ascended on high.” The apostle interprets this as speaking of Christ's ascension (see Ephesians 4:8-11). Jesus first descended into the lower parts of the earth, that is, He died and was buried. But on the third day, He rose again, and after forty days He ascended into heaven. There He now sits at God's right hand. What great glory is given to Him!

When Jesus ascended into heaven, He went there triumphantly, meaning that He was victorious. That is the second thing mentioned here. “Thou hast led captivity captive.” These words may refer to the people whom Christ has redeemed by His blood from the captivity and bondage they were in by nature. They were held in the slavery of sin and served Satan, doing his will. In that case, the words need to be read as, “Thou hast led captives captive.” But the reference may also be to those who led His people captive, such as sin, Satan, the world, death, and every spiritual enemy. Christ conquered them all and triumphed over them. He not only freed captives, but He has broken the power of sin and Satan.

During the Second World War, resistance fighters sometimes broke into prisons and freed political prisoners who were detained by the Germans. These were victories they gained, but it left the power of the occupying nation intact. It became a different story, however, when the Allied forces liberated Europe. Then, prison doors were opened and captives were set free. That was a much greater victory. It meant that the enemy had lost his power over the territory he had occupied for so many years. Such is also the victory of the Lord Jesus. He says, “[I] have the keys of hell and of death” (Rev.1: 18b). He has the power to free those who are enslaved in the cruel bondage and tyranny of Satan.

There is even more. “Thou hast received gifts for men.” Victorious kings used to give some of their spoils to the people. The people shared in what their kings had seized from their enemy. In a much more magnificent way, the same picture applies to Christ. When He entered heaven, the Father bestowed upon Him many gifts. Christ shares them with His people on earth. To magnify the kindness and love of Christ, the psalmist mentions that these gifts are “for the rebellious also.” They are the ones who have forfeited God’s gifts. They are disobedient and unbelieving. Perhaps the Gentiles are especially meant here. They are the ones who are without Christ, having no hope, and without God in the world.

But it is not limited to Gentiles only. All men, Jews and Gentiles, in their fallen condition, are rebellious. Before their conversion, God’s very elect were enemies of God. For such people, Christ has obtained the gift of the Holy Spirit. On the Day of Pentecost, He poured out the Spirit of God upon rebellious people, making them partakers of salvation.

Again referring to Ephesians 4, we find that the apostle applies it to the offices in the church. Christ bestows an extraordinary benefit upon His church when He qualifies men for the ministry of the Gospel. Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, is an outstanding example of this. First a persecutor of Christ’s flock, Christ turns this “lion” into a “lamb” and makes him a faithful preacher of the Gospel.

All this is done so “that the LORD God might dwell among them.” The separation between God and man has ended. The goal of Christ’s work was to restore the fellowship between heaven and earth. God will dwell among His people, and His people will dwell with their God.

When Christ bestows these gifts upon the rebellious, they do not stay rebellious. They put down their weapons and return to God with repentance and faith. Rebels become loyal servants of the most High King. Enemies become friends and persecutors become preachers. All this is the result of the grace of Him Who ascended into heaven and Who is still giving gifts to men.

The whole text breathes a sphere of royal majesty. Christ is majestic in His ascension, He is majestic in His victory, and He is majestic in His giving. Would such a king exclude anyone? If there is room for the rebellious, then there is room with Him for you and me. You may be addicted to gross sins and unable to free yourself, but here is the King Who has power over your worst sins. Are you without God’s grace and destitute of the Holy Spirit? He has received these gifts for men. Are you rebellious against God? He has received gifts for rebellious people! With such a gracious king, no one needs to live in poverty. Ask Him and He will give of His abundance to you. His resources are never depleted. But do not take these things for granted. Realize what you deserve, for God would do no injustice if He let us perish in our rebellion. Rather, He wants to be glorified in our salvation. ^M

Rev. J. W. Wullschleger was pastor of the Langley Free Reformed Church from 1993-2007. He is presently pastor of the Zeewolde congregation of the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in The Netherlands.

**All this is done so
“that the LORD
God might dwell
among them.”
The separation
between God
and man has
ended. The goal
of Christ’s work
was to restore
the fellowship
between heaven
and earth.**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

02

MEDITATION:

Captivity Is Led Captive

04

GUEST EDITORIAL:

Confusion: A Judgement On Society

06

BOOK REVIEW:

Puritan Pocket Books

08

CHURCH HISTORY (17):

New England’s Mission In The Wilderness

12

BIBLE STUDY:

Biblical Church-Planting (2): The Leadership and Their Task

14

INSTALLATION REPORT:

Report of the Institution and Installation Service for the FRC of Picture Butte, AB

17

RETIREMENT:

Of Mr. Henk Kleyn

18

THEOLOGICAL TRAINING:

Witnessing the Fruit of Mukhanyo Theological College

CONFUSION: A JUDGEMENT ON SOCIETY

It would appear that one of the many ways in which God punishes the sins of men and nations is to give them over at times to widespread perplexity and confusion. Life in a perfect world would be ideally simple. We should all instinctively seek first the glory of God and he would unfailingly supply our every need. Supply would always providentially balance demand. Men would never know want. As they delighted themselves in God as their highest and only good, so he would manage their private and social affairs for them, anticipating their requirements and tailoring all circumstances to their comfort, convenience and capacities. As a wise and kind parent foresees the needs of his children in their nursery and arranges everything for their safe and profitable enjoyment, so God would dispose all events (if we were still in our first paradise) so that nothing would terrify or confuse us. That the world we live in is not so now, is a reflection, not on the power, wisdom or goodness of God, but on our deeply sinful state.

Sin made all things complicated upon earth. Every human enterprise is now beset with labour, sweat and tears. We are not to be surprised by that. Our Maker foretold us that it would be so when he informed Adam that from the first hour of man's Fall all his labour would henceforth be with 'the sweat of his face' (Gen. 3:19). The testimony of history is that God's words have most assuredly come to pass. Look where we may on earth 'all things are full of labour; man cannot utter it' (Eccles. 1:8). There is a crook in every lot, a twist in every path, a thorn under every rose. Foolish man calls it the cursed spite of Fate. The Apostle calls it by the name of Vanity, that frustration appointed by God for the whole world in its present state under the discipline of God's judgement upon sin (Rom. 8:20).

But God's judgements intensify when sinners grow worse. Men are perversely blind when they refuse to pause in the course of their frenzied lives to observe the perfection of God's judgements in this world. The judgements of providence are not as complete as they are going to be on the Last Day. But they are not entirely mysterious or inscrutable either. They are proportioned, more or less, to the conduct of men in this life. The more sinful society becomes, the heavier God's judgements become. This at any rate is the *general* tendency of God's dealing with us in society. The many exceptions to the rule are to remind us all that an *ultimate* judgement on men's sins awaits them at another time and in another place.

It should not surprise us to hear that God proportions his blessings and curses to men and nations according to their conduct (generally speaking), even in this life. The more wicked a society becomes, the more it provokes God and fetches down his wrath upon itself. For the Almighty is not an idle spectator of mankind's behaviour but is daily on the watch, taking constant notice of the way public policies and

private attitudes are altering for the worse, or for the better. We should not suppose therefore that he has reserved all his punishment for the last great judgement. Even in the course of mankind's history, he takes out his weapons to punish men's sins. Sometimes he removes from his quiver a sheaf of arrows with which to wound men and nations, and at other times he lays aside his bow and gives a respite to sinners when they relent and plead for mercy.

If perplexity and confusion are, as we think, judgements of God on sinful nations, we need to confess that God's hand is manifestly 'stretched out' (Isa. 9:12, 17, 21; 10:4) upon us at this hour. For confusion and perplexity are everywhere to be seen — from the throne to the poor-house and from the prince to the prelate. In just about every sphere of life there is a widespread uncertainty and agony of distress. Our jobs and our currencies are about as unsteady as our morals. Those who lead us appear frequently to be without any sense of vision. Too often they are found wanting in their private lives. Our modern world has become sophisticated and clever. But the problem is that God is cleverer still and he frustrates us at every stroke by turning our unblessed efforts to vanity and futility. Concerning very few of our modern societies would it be true to say: 'Wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation: the fear of the Lord is his treasure' (Isa. 33:6). God has set his face against us and thrown over us the mantle of confusion.

Those who take the Bible seriously are in no doubt as to how and why this modern confusion has become so widespread. Men are attempting to live without any understanding of the principles of righteousness. Society is stampeding towards greater and greater misery and damage because it *will not* stop to listen to the voice of God speaking in Scripture and in providence. When each new crack appears in the wall, instead of examining the fault to its foundation, men are content simply to 'daub it with untempered mortar' (Ezek. 13:10).

What ought to be happening to us as a society when so many problems are enveloping us is to question the prevailing philosophy of life as a whole. But that is, sadly, the last course of action which men welcome. The pretence is kept up on every side that our troubles have nothing to do with our sins. Prosperity is always 'just around the corner'. Tomorrow, or the next day, our national debts will be paid off, jobs will be here for all and peace and plenty will be on hand for every citizen. But this hollow optimism is itself nothing more than a symptom of our tragic confusion. Massive questions call for an answer but are presently meeting only a deafening silence: What new factor in tomorrow's world is going to make our vast populations industrious, law-loving, neighbourly, upright, wise and moral? What new influences deriving from our prevailing philosophy of Atheism are capable of making the society of tomorrow any happier or better than the society of today?

The frank and honest answer — for those who are prepared to hear it — is that there is none. Society is spiralling ever further downwards because of the bankruptcy of its moral and religious outlook. Men need to have the mists of spiritual ignorance dispelled from their minds by a new vision of the world, as God has given it to us in his Word. Nothing novel is needed to lift our modern civilisation out of its moral quagmire. No new formulas are required to put the ship of state back on a safe and prosperous course. What is needed is to return to an understanding of those ancient truths of revelation which our forefathers cherished in their day but which have been sinfully neglected and ridiculed for so long.

The need of the hour, to put matters plainly, is for society to be renewed and reformed from the pulpit outward. Let all who enter pulpits see it as their unique calling to labour in Christ's name to lift society up by giving it large doses of biblical teaching. When fogs and mists overspread the face of society the only power that will dispel them is the genial sunshine of pure evangelical preaching. Let us be convinced of that more than ever in the light of the evident failure of political humanism or social science to heal the troubles of mankind. What the modern man needs to hear is the old curriculum of religious truths which used popularly to be referred to as the 'three Rs': ruin by the Fall; redemption by the blood of Christ; and regeneration by the Spirit of God. If the reader feels a momentary disappointment that we have nothing else to offer as a remedy for present ills in the world, let him ponder the historic and undeniable fact that this is the apostolic message which God has blessed times without number in the past to 'turn the world upside down'. Nothing else is the 'power of God unto salvation' (Rom. 1:16). If society today is to be raised again from its acknowledged depravity and confusion, it must be done in the same way as in the past. God will bless what he has given to man as

EDITOR: Dr. Gerald M. Bilkes
2692 Bridge Place NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49525
USA · T: 616.977.0599 ext.121
E: jerry.bilkes@prts.edu

ASSISTANT EDITOR:
Rev. David H. Kranendonk
T: 616.290.4125 · E: kranendonk@frcna.org
The Editors report to the Synodical Publications Committee.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:
· Mr. David Tamminga
· Rev. Kenneth Hutton
· Rev. Scott Dibbet
· Mr. Hans VanDoodewaard
· Mr. Michael Driesse
· Mr. John DenDekker, Treasurer

SUBSCRIPTION RATE
Canada & U.S.A. - **\$34.50 ANNUALLY**
Overseas - **\$75.00**
PER SUBSCRIPTION The Messenger is published 11 times per year (July & August issues are combined).

SUBSCRIPTIONS/REMITTANCES
Subscription requests, invoices, and payments should be addressed to:
Janey Slingerland
(Publications Administrator)
18 Chapala Cres. S.E.
Calgary, AB T2X 3M4 CANADA
T: 403.254.6591 · E: bookorders@frcna.org

SUBMISSIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/NOTICES: All articles, notices for family announcements, obituaries, anniversaries, and non-commercial advertisements for the **JUNE 2022** issue should reach the editor no later than **TUESDAY, MAY 3RD, 2022** and should be sent to:
Mrs. Rhonda Kroesbergen
(Messenger Administrator)
E: messenger@frcna.org

OPEN WINDOWS
This bi-monthly publication for children is under the direction of the Free Reformed Publications Committee:
Rev. Jerrold Lewis, General Editor
160 West Parkway
Pompton Plains, NJ 07444
E: jlewis@frcna.org

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR MISSIONS AND OUTREACH CAUSES SHOULD BE DIRECTED AS FOLLOWS:

FOREIGN MISSIONS
Dietrich DeKruyff, Treasurer
P.O. Box 141 Shedden PO 9655 Union Rd
Shedden, ON N0L 2E0
E: dietrichdekruyff@gmail.com

Keep in contact with your missionaries online:

RADIO EVANGELISM & HOME MISSIONS
Banner of Truth Radio Broadcast
Mr. John denDekker, Treasurer
16726 – 80th Avenue
Surrey, BC V4N 0G8 CANADA
T: 604.576.8935 · E: jdendekker@telus.net

REFUGEE FUND
James Van der Zwan, Treasurer
26829 – 33B Ave., Aldergrove, BC V4W 3G8
T: 604.818.3423 · E: jplumber@telus.net

CHRISTIAN MINISTRY TO ISRAEL
Mr. John Wilbrink, Treasurer
8 Weneil Drive, Freerton, ON L8B 0Z6
T: 905.659.7413
· E: john.wilbrink@gmail.com

Read *The Messenger on the Free Reformed website:* www.frcna.org

the gospel, and He will bless nothing else.

But it is at this point that the churches of Christ are generally failing today. Preachers are themselves confused. The true message is not sounding forth from even one pulpit in twenty. The generality of preachers do not tell their people of their sinful and lost state. The wrath of God is not pronounced against the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. Jesus Christ is not being held forth as the only Saviour of hell-deserving sinners. The New Birth is not being preached as indispensably necessary to men. Those preachers who *do* proclaim these old truths are few and precious. Even once evangelical pulpits are sliding into the sleepy confusion and apathy which has come to be the prevailing norm. Preaching has given way to something akin to entertainment. The trumpet has been muted. Heaven and hell are not felt realities in the consciences of most preachers. We are all in danger of becoming so polite that the sinners who come to listen to us will never hear one awakening sermon till they die in their blood.

The sight of a perishing and miserable world must be a stimulus to all who go to church to seek a fresh baptism of spiritual enlightenment and power to come upon the preachers of our modern world. This is no age for the fooleries of ecclesiastical pantomime or charade. We cannot afford the dubious luxuries of religious plays produced in the name of evangelicalism. Even the exercise of speaking in angelic tongues may have to wait till another world arrives. Our business today is clear enough — to preach righteousness and to confront men's consciences and their reason with the claims of God and truth. In short, we need to get to as many ears as possible the plain message that they are called on to 'flee from the wrath to come' (Luke 3:7). Other matters are secondary to that and need to be looked at as secondary. To put smaller things at the top of our agenda is to fiddle while Rome is burning.

As Christians, we will not be able to see above the general confusion if we live only at the level of the world around us. The prophet must climb the high mountain and dwell in a watch-tower. The smoke of modern permissiveness and ungodly entertainment can only blind us unless we shun it and discipline ourselves to live apart and only for God. The call of the hour is to live near to Christ and to get ever closer to him till we have that power with God which will prevail and which will call down the fire of fresh authority on this generation of preachers.

God has darkened our age very extensively with judicial blindness at every level of society. The mists of confusion thicken visibly. But our glorious confidence is that the same God is well able to remove the veil of obscurity which covers the eyes of the multitudes. This he always does, when he does it to mankind, only by one means: by the old gospel preached faithfully and 'with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven' (1 Pet. 1:12).

Let us labour steadfastly to have this judgement on society removed to the eternal glory of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ①

Rev. Maurice Roberts is an emeritus pastor of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing), residing in Inverness, Scotland. He wrote this article while serving as editor of the Banner of Truth magazine (for the December 1992 issue). The passing of three decades have only made it more timely.

PURITAN POCKET BOOKS

Increasing numbers of people are learning about Puritan books and becoming interested in buying and reading them. But maybe you are among those who say, as I have heard not long ago: "I would like to read them, but the language is old English and it takes so much effort to get to the meaning." Well, that was true at one time, but not anymore. Today, you have your pick of handy little paperbacks at little cost in up-to-date language and easy-to-read print that can be put in your pocket or purse and taken anywhere.

The **Puritan Paperbacks** are published by Banner of Truth Trust, 3 Murrayfield Road, Edinburgh, EH12 6EL UK and P.O. Box 621, Carlisle, PA 17013, USA.

Some notable titles include:

- *Christian Love* by Hugh Binning (1627-1653)
- *The Holy Spirit* by John Owen (1616-1683)
- *The Bruised Reed* by Richard Sibbes (1577-1635)
- *Heaven on Earth* by Thomas Brooks (1608-1680)
- *The Doctrine of Repentance* by Thomas Watson (1620-1686)
- *The Heart of Christ* by Thomas Goodwin (1600-1680).

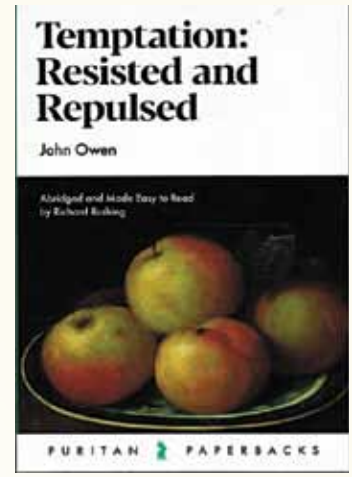
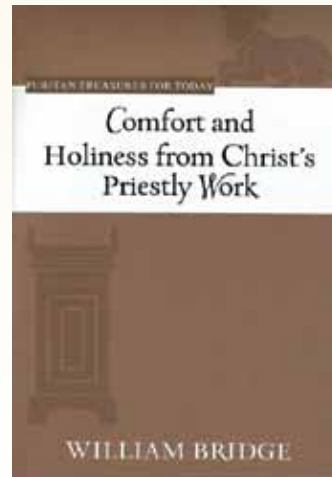
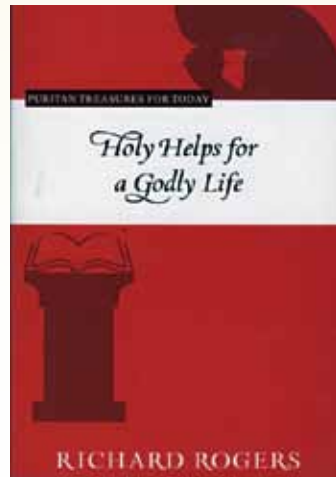
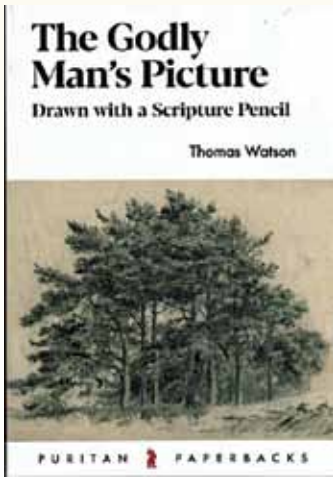
Reformed Book Services prices range from CAD \$8.00 to \$13.00 depending on the size of the book. There are 61 paperbacks in this series. A list may be found on the Banner website (banneroftruth.org) under *Devotionals for Daily reading* with this introduction: "The books ... include shorter meditations on God that are meant to be read daily. Like all Banner of Truth books, they are founded on God's Word, teach a robust theology, with warm devotional insight. After all, all study of God should lead to the worship of God."

The **Pocket Puritan Series**, also by Banner of Truth Trust, is a collection of short, accessible writings from the Puritans. Described as "small enough to fit in your pocket, these books cover topics ranging from sin to heaven to growing one's love for Christ. These are great works of 'spiritual theology,' and can go with you as you travel." These are shorter works than those in the Puritan Paperback series. Some notable titles include selections of the writings of John Flavel, titled *None but Jesus*, and *Heaven a World of Love* by Jonathan Edwards. RBS prices are \$5.75 each.

Puritan Treasures for Today are published by Reformation Heritage Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan, under the editorship of Joel R. Beeke and Jay T. Collier. Some notable titles include:

- *Turn and Live* by Nathaniel Vincent (1639-1697)
- *Faith Seeking Assurance* by Anthony Burgess (d. 1664)
- *Stop Loving the World* by William Greenhill (1591-1671)
- *Rules for Walking in Fellowship* by John Owen (1616-1683)
- *Contentment, Prosperity, and God's Glory* by Jeremiah Burroughs (1599-1646)
- *The Fading of Flesh and Flourishing of Faith* by George Swinnock (1627-1673).

RBS prices range from \$7.00 to \$9.00. The booklets tend to be more compact than the Banner of Truth publications. This quote describes each booklet: "Interest in the Puritans



continues to grow, but many people find the reading these giants of the faith a bit unnerving. This series seeks to overcome that barrier by presenting Puritan books that are convenient in size and unimposing in length. Each book is carefully edited with modern readers in mind, smoothing out difficult language of a bygone era while retaining the meaning of the original authors. Books for the series are thoughtfully selected to provide some of the best counsel on important subjects that people continue to wrestle with today.”

In the 1950s and 1960s, there were those who persevered in reading books in the older print and Elizabethan language because they felt so blessed by the Puritans and similar books that they made them available as facsimile (copied) editions, even in tract format.¹ Other books that drew their attention were mostly 19th century authors such as J. C. Ryle, an Anglican bishop in England, and Charles Spurgeon, who drew thousands to his preaching in London, England.² There was also Arthur W. Pink (1886-1952), whose self-published ministry is now widely available in books with titles such as *God's Sovereignty*, *Attributes of God*, and *Profiting from the Word*. Dr. Lloyd-Jones,³ aided by his then assistant pastor, Iain Murray, and similarly interested persons provided financial support, that the Banner of Truth Trust began publishing these books and then the hidden treasures of the Puritan legacy.⁴

Unless you are a “stranger in Jerusalem,” you will have heard of a Puritan and Reformed resurgence, spread by Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and other Reformed, Presbyterian, and Baptist Seminaries, especially in the United States. For over twenty-five years, PRTS has graduated students who learned to know the Puritans and bring the gospel not only in our denomination, but in many countries throughout the world.

The Puritans stood in the heritage of the Reformation theologians, especially Calvin, but what distinguishes them is their more experiential emphasis, simply meaning that their teaching touches the heart. Many of them were very well-educated men, taught in the best colleges and universities of their time. They taught the Scriptures not merely as an intellectual faith, but focused on how true spiritual faith transforms the whole person and how the Lord guides believers in their spiritual walk.

In addition to buying a Puritan paperback to put in your pocket, purse, or place on your night table, you can also buy a 10-volume set of Puritan Classics or a set of all the paperback Puritans published by Banner of Truth Trust. You can also buy beautifully bound volumes of

the writings of Puritans such as Hugh Binning, John Owen, William Gurnall, William Perkins, John Flavel, and others. Interestingly, Matthew Henry, also a Puritan, never seems to have gone out of print and his commentary is still quoted and read by many. When one reviews the footnotes and bibliographies of the newer Bible commentaries or contemporary books on Christian living, counselling, and even women's and children's books, there are almost always references to a Puritan author or to Ryle, Spurgeon, or even Pink. In spite of audio books and the Internet, many, especially theological students, are interested in learning more about the Puritans and covet their sets of treatises for their personal libraries.

A leading theologian writes about the Puritan paperbacks: “A great gift for the willing reader, this set contains some of the greatest writings of the Puritans that have been read and enjoyed by Christians for centuries.” So, take up and read. ¹

Endnotes

- 1 Some readers may remember Kris Winters of Grand Rapids, Michigan, who cranked out tracts on a Gestetner machine and mailed them out as “Quotations & Reflections.”
- 2 Spurgeon continued to be published and read in the mid 20th century, but there were publishers who edited out references to election and God's sovereignty, as the early Banner of Truth publishers discovered.
- 3 His books of sermons and other writing are still in wide demand and keep on being printed and re-printed.
- 4 Iain Murray told us that in the early days of the Banner of Truth Trust, he and others would visit church libraries and buy old Puritan books priced by the yard.

These books may be purchased in Canada at Reformed Book Services in Brantford, Ontario, and at Reformation Heritage Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A.

ReformedBookServices

A CHRISTIAN BOOKSTORE

STORE HOURS: MON.-WED. 10-5 • THURS. 10-9 • FRI. 10-5 • SAT. 10-3

230 LYNDEN ROAD (BEHIND GALAXY CARWASH) BRANTFORD, ON N3R 8A3
T: 519.304.4709 • E: SALES@REFORMEDBOOKSERVICES.CA

NEW NIAGARA DEPOT
195 VICTORIA AVE., FENWICK, ON L0S 1C0 • T: 905.714.6257

PILGRIMS AND PURITANS IN AMERICA (17)

NEW ENGLAND'S MISSION IN THE WILDERNESS

Perry Miller, a pioneer in American Puritan scholarship, wrote several books on the New England Puritans, including, *The Errand into the Wilderness*. Miller borrowed this title from a sermon preached by Rev. Samuel Danforth in 1670. In this sermon, Danforth used this title as a metaphor to describe the purpose or mission of the entire Puritan experiment in New England. What was that experiment? Why did the Puritans come to America? What was the driving force behind their migration from Old to New England?

According to Miller, John Winthrop and his fellow migrants did not come to New England for religious reasons only, but also for economic factors. While this is true, the main reason for going to America was certainly a spiritual one. That became very clear when Winthrop preached his famous sermon titled “*A Model of Christian Charity*” onboard the ship *Arbella*.

A Model of Christian Charity.

In this sermon, Winthrop draws a clear distinction between the motives of his fellow Puritans and those of later immigrants who would migrate in quest of material advancement. He made it abundantly clear that

Others may come for wealth or pelf (dishonestly acquired possessions), but this migration is specifically dedicated to an avowed end that has nothing to do with incomes. We have entered into an explicit covenant with God and if we succeed and do not let ourselves get diverted into making money, He will reward us. But if we fail... and embrace this present world and prosecute our carnal intentions, seeking great things for ourselves and our posterity, the Lord will surely break out in wrath against us and make us know the price of the breach of such a Covenant.¹

The Terms of the Puritan Covenant

What were the terms of this covenant? By mutual consent, Winthrop said, we need to organize ourselves as a biblical society living “under a due form of government both civil and ecclesiastical.” If we fail to accomplish this, he warned, we will invite God’s fearful judgements to fall upon the colony.²

By the 1660s and 70s, there were indications that these judgments were beginning. Ministers began to preach so-called “jeremiad” sermons, in which they rebuked their congregations for having defaulted on the terms of the covenant to which they had subscribed. The evidences of divine displeasure were manifold: crop failures, epidemics, grasshoppers, heat-waves, cold spells, Indian wars, and hurricanes. The Synod at Boston in 1679 developed a long list of sins which included: declining godliness, controversies in the churches, extravagance in attire, tolerance of heresies, Sabbath desecration, sexual immorality, excessive alcohol consumption, and dishonesty in business dealings.³



By the end of the 17th century, this Synod report had become a handbook for preachers in preparing their jeremiad or election sermons. These solemn jeremiads fostered the dominant mood of frustration and disappointment in many New England churches. Many ministers feared that the beautiful experiment, begun in the 1630s, had failed and that all their efforts to build a pure church in America had been for naught.

The World's Eyes on New England

John Winthrop had told them that they would be a City upon a Hill and that the eyes of the world would be on them. By the world, he meant the Protestant world, specifically the Reformed branch of it and even more specifically the English branch of the Reformed faith, the Puritan movement. The hope of the New England Puritans was to show old England what an authentic and pure New Testament Church would look like, so that ultimately not only England but all of Europe would imitate what had been achieved in America. But, as Perry Miller writes:

The situation was such that, for the moment, the model [of such a pure church] had no chance to be exhibited in England. Puritans could talk about it, but they could not display it, could not prove that it would actually work. But if they had it set up in America--in a bare land, devoid of already established (and corrupt) institutions, empty of bishops and courtiers, and if then it performed just as the saints had predicted of it, the Calvinist internationale would know exactly how to go about completing the already begun but temporarily stalled revolution in Europe.⁴

What English Eyes Saw

Though for the first fifteen years the experiment seemed to succeed wonderfully, something happened in Old England that threw the New Englanders into great confusion. The eyes of their Puritan brethren in the mother country had been focused on Massachusetts, and, at first, they liked what they saw happening there. But when the General Court threw out Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson, along with several Anabaptists and Quakers, many disapproved of these actions. The irony was that while the governors and ministers of Massachusetts thought that Cromwell and his Puritan colleagues might learn from them how to deal with dissenters, they often disagreed with their disciplinary policies.

New England watched with great dismay at Cromwell's increasing tolerance of dissenters, after his victory over Charles II. This unexpected development greatly confused and alarmed the New Englanders. As Miller explains:

[To them] it was a fantastic notion that a party struggling for power should proclaim that, once it captured the state, it would recognize the right of dissenters to dis-

agree and to have their own worship, to hold their own opinions. Oliver Cromwell [they felt] was so far gone in this idiocy as to become a dictator, in order to impose toleration by force!⁵

What made matters worse for the New England Puritans was that some of their English ministerial colleagues also disapproved of their policies of intolerance. In 1645, thirteen leading independent

divines, including John Owen, Thomas Goodwin and Jeremiah Burroughs, formerly friends and allies of Hooker and Davenport, wrote the General Court that the colony's law banishing Anabaptists was an embarrassment to the Independent cause in England.

Old England's increasing critique of New England's policies so disappointed the latter that many Puritans began to question the success of their mission. Had their errand into the wilderness turned into a fool's errand after all? Were they indeed a City upon a Hill?

The intended audience, England, was losing interest in the affairs of the Colony. To most Englishmen, including many Puritans, the religious experiment begun with great enthusiasm and conviction now seemed at best strange and at worst a failure.

New England's Self-Critique

Although the New England Puritans were very disappointed with the way they were viewed by their brothers in England, they began to blame themselves for failing to inspire the mother country. In the many jeremiad sermons that followed the collapse of the Puritan movement in England, the New England pastors started to rebuke their congregations for their backsliding, exhorting them to reclaim the spirituality and godly conduct that had characterized the founders of the Colony.

On the whole, Puritan preachers were thankful for the outward display of decency of most of their church members, their intellectual grasp of Scripture and its doctrines, and for their legitimate pursuit of economic prosperity and social respectability. But they were most concerned with the salvation of souls, with the need for true conversion and vital godliness. These evidences of God's work in the churches, they felt, were sadly lacking. Unless they would return to a degree similar to what the older generation remembered from the early years of the colony, the Puritan experiment would turn into a fiasco.

New England's Decline

The decline of Puritanism in New England went at a much slower pace than in Old England and followed a different pattern. While Puritanism in England declined quickly after the death of Cromwell, the restoration of the monarchy in 1662, and the Great Ejection of 2000 Puritan ministers that same year, Puritanism in New England remained a dominant force for over a century.

Although the New England Puritans were very disappointed with the way they were viewed by their brothers in England, they began to blame themselves for failing to inspire the mother country.

However, from the beginning there were forces at work to whittle down the religious and political regime it imposed on the “strangers” and dissenters in the colony. These “strangers,” who were at best nominal Anglicans, came with the Pilgrims on the Mayflower and reluctantly agreed to live by the regulations of the Plymouth colony. The same was true of the Baptists, Quakers, and others who came later and were barely or not at all tolerated by the Puritan establishment. From within the Puritan movement, differences of opinion also arose, which caused much strife and even led to the expulsion of ones like Roger Williams and Ane Hutchinson from the colony.

New England’s Positive Contributions

Having looked at some of the more negative aspects of the Puritan movement in the Massachusetts Colony, we will conclude with reviewing some of its positive contributions. How may we benefit from the legacy of Puritanism today?

The Puritans have much to offer the present generation of Christians. According to J. I. Packer, the one outstanding characteristic of the Puritans was that they were mature Christians who, for that reason, can teach us a lot. These men, Packer says, were spiritual giants compared to whom we are mere dwarfs in our spiritual immaturity. Among their contributions, Packer mentions the following:

1. For the Puritans, communion with God in Jesus Christ was central and the Bible was the only norm. They reflected and meditated on the entire range of biblical truth as they saw it applying to their lives. Because they were keenly aware of the dishonesty and deceitfulness of their sinful hearts, they cultivated humility and self-suspicion, examining themselves regularly for spiritual blind spots and lurking inward evils.
2. They believed in and promoted church reform. This pursuit involved not only outward reform of the church’s doctrine, church government, and worship, but also and especially inward spiritual renewal.
3. The essence of reformation for the Puritans was growth in faith,

the holiness of believers, and the conversion of the unsaved. The ideal church for them would be one which had a truly “reformed” ministry and in which the congregation would be soundly converted, doctrinally orthodox, and abounding in good works.⁶

Another great contribution is the New England view of a truly Christian society comprising a church closely allied to a state. Ones like Roger Williams rejected the very idea of such a relationship and insisted on separating the two spheres. Many after him agreed with him, but for different reasons. The American Constitution’s First Amendment concerned the Separation of Church and State and Freedom of Religion. The constitution’s framers, however, based this amendment on Enlightenment philosophy, not on God’s Word. Roger Williams thought his views were based on Scripture, but he was wrong. As Iain Murray wrote:

There is perhaps nothing upon which the New England Puritans have been more fiercely criticised than upon their views concerning the proper ordering of society... Sometimes the judgment of the pioneers was wrong. They erred in supposing that voting rights could be restricted to church members. But in their conviction that civil rulers must acknowledge the Word of God, and the Kingdom of Christ, they ought to need no apology. They knew that governments can only stand firm if they are based upon morality, and that morality in turn must find its sure basis in God and in submission to His Word. Accordingly, they held that magistrates have a religious obligation: their power is of God and they must use it lawfully for God to whom they will be answerable.⁷

Did New England’s “Errand [Mission] in the Wilderness” fail? Today’s society says it did. The idea of a Christian church living completely separate from a secular state has become standard today, but it does not meet the standards of God’s Word. The Puritans lived by all of that Word, not only by believing that salvation is by grace alone (Eph. 2:8), but also by obeying the powers that are ordained by God (Rom.13:1). They never wavered, but looking upwards, they confessed: “Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven” (Psalm 119:89). ¹

Dr. C. Pronk is an emeritus Free Reformed pastor residing in Brantford, Ontario. This is the final article in this series.

Endnotes

- 1 Perry Miller, *The Errand into the Wilderness*, p. 5.
- 2 Miller, *The Errand into the Wilderness*, p. 6.
- 3 Miller, *The Errand into the Wilderness*, p. 6.
- 4 Miller, *The Errand into the Wilderness*, p. 12.
- 5 Miller, *The Errand into the Wilderness*, p. 14.
- 6 J.I Packer, *A Quest for Godliness*, pp. 21-28.
- 7 Iain Murray, “Spiritual Characteristics of the First Christian Society in America” *Banner of Truth Magazine*, Oct. 1976, p. 18.

OXFORD REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
 Invites applications for the 2022-2023 school year:
Full-time Elementary and High-School teachers

About us:

- An expanding student body of 350+ students from K to 12
- A dedicated, Reformed, parent-run school community
- New facilities in a rural setting in south-western ON (Mount Elgin)
- A unified, professional staff committed to a Christ-centered education

We are looking for enthusiastic, qualified teachers who have a passion for Christian education, and submit to the Holy Scriptures as summarized in the Reformed confessions. Seasoned veterans looking for a positive change, or young beginners looking to gain experience are both encouraged to apply.

Applications must include a resume, statement of faith, philosophy of Christian education, and references. Email applications to
Mr. William Van Brugge (principal@orcschool.ca).
 Visit our website (orcschool.ca), or come and visit our school:
 333182 Plank Line, Mount Elgin, Ontario.

Reformed Book Services

GREAT SELECTION OF CHRISTIAN NEW & USED BOOKS AT LOW PRICES

PROMOTING GODLINESS, REVIVAL & REFORMATION

CLASSIC TITLES



The Works of Hugh Binning
By Hugh Binning
Hugh Binning (1627-1653) lived at a time when politics and religion were inexorably intertwined. Binning trained as a philosopher, believing that philosophy was

the servant of theology but that both should be taught in parallel. It is said of him: "It is a rare thing to find someone with the ability to seamlessly weave together the theological with the practical. Writing in a way that engages the mind and captivates the heart, Hugh Binning was able to give expression to the height, breadth, and width of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ revealed in the full counsel of God."

Hardcover, 720 pages, Soli Deo Gloria Publications **RBS Price \$40.00**

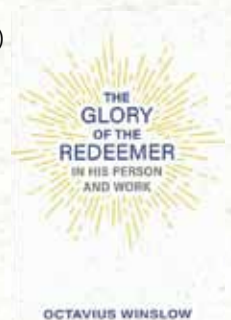


The Fiery Edge of Love: A Collection of Quotes from Samuel Rutherford
By Samuel Rutherford

Samuel Rutherford was a 17th Century Scottish Presbyterian preacher whose writings have had a profound impact on Christians throughout the generations. He was one of the Scottish Commissioners to the Westminster Assembly, and his best-known work, *Lex, Rex*, had far reaching influence. For those who have never read Samuel Rutherford's works before, this is an inviting introduction, encouraging you to seek out his full works. For those who need no introduction to his writings, these quotes are a quick reminder of the great truths he strove to preach and the great God he strove to proclaim. Hardcover, 77 pages, Christian Focus Publications **RBS Price \$12.00**

The Glory of the Redeemer in His Person and Work
By Octavius Winslow

Octavius Winslow (1808-1878) was born in London, England, and raised in New York. He was ordained as a pastor in 1833 and held pastorates in New York, Leamington Spa, Bath, and Brighton. A prolific author, his devotional writings exhibit his Reformed, experiential convictions and distinctive, warm, ardent style. He examines the person and work of Christ, tracing Jesus's glory from the eternal existence of His divine nature through the Old Testament types and shadows, His humiliation and exaltation in the New Testament, and even up to and including His second coming. Softcover, 420 pages, Reformation Heritage Books **RBS Price \$15.00**

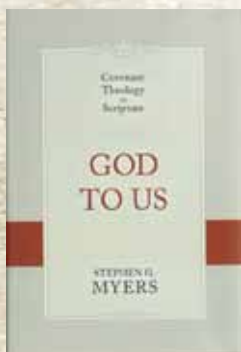


CONTEMPORARY

God to Us: Covenant Theology in Scripture
By Stephen Myers

"Dr. Myers' book on covenant theology is a sterling blend of thoroughly sound and Reformed exegetical, biblical, historical, systematic, and experiential theology presented in both an academic and popular way, such that I believe it is the best basic book on the subject that I have ever read. It is so well written, succinct, helpful,

and informative throughout that it will be a basic text on covenant theology for generations to come. Highly recommended!"--Joel R. Beeke. Stephen G. Myers (PhD, University of Edinburgh) is associate professor of historical theology for the PhD program at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. Hardcover, 420 pages, Reformation Heritage Books **RBS Price \$22.00**



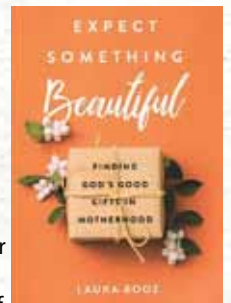
What Does the Bible Teach About Transgenderism? [A Short Book on Personal Identity]
By Owen Strachan & Gavin Peacock

Gavin Peacock and Owen Strachan delve into what God's Word says about gender identity and transgenderism. Topics considered include the following: 1. The Bible on Gender and Identity; 2. Returning to Biblical Manhood and Womanhood; and 3. New Identity, New Life. They also answer frequently asked questions. Hardcover, 162 pages, Christian Focus Publications **RBS Price \$8.50**



Expect Something Beautiful: Finding God's Good Gifts in Motherhood
By Laura Booz

Motherhood makes high demands. Yet you know it is worth the cost because it benefits your child. On some grand level, it is also good for civilization. And of course, it is a calling from God. So, is that what you're doing here--pouring out your life for God and others while getting little in return except the consolation that you've done the right thing? You might be asking: Will I lose myself in motherhood? Compromise my career? Squander my potential? What's the point of all that unseen (and uncelebrated) serving, cleaning, caring, snuggling, discipling, and praying? Behind all the giving that mothers do is the receiving of something special--a profound growth in God that is cultivated through motherhood's everyday ups and downs. Let this book give you a renewed vision of motherhood: to see God's good purpose for you as a mother, a woman, and a follower of Christ. Softcover, 237 pages, Moody Publishers **RBS Price \$18.00**



GIFT CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE

IN CANADA:

REFORMED BOOK SERVICES

230 Lynden Road, Unit 5A, Brantford, ON N3R 8A3
• T: 519.304.4709 • E: sales@reformedbookservices.ca • www.reformedbookservices.ca
• Store Hours: Mon-Wed 10-5 | Thurs 10-9 | Fri 10-5 | Sat 10-3

USA CUSTOMERS:

REFORMATION HERITAGE BOOKS

3070 29th Street SE,
Grand Rapids, MI 49512
T: 616.977.0889 • F: 616.285.3246
• E: orders@heritagebooks.org
• www.heritagebooks.org

Orders & Deliveries also at: *Niagara Depot, 195 Victoria Ave., Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0 • E: niagaradepotrbs@gmail.com

BIBLICAL CHURCH-PLANTING (2): THE LEADERSHIP AND THEIR TASK

SCRIPTURE READING: TITUS 1:5-16

Last time, we looked at the need for the gospel and the planting of churches. This is a need of all times, but certainly when lies and a culture of deception are the order of the day. The Holy Spirit makes this clear in Paul's letter to Titus, who was called to see churches planted throughout the island of Crete.

It is worth noting that after Paul sets forth that the foundation of church-planting lies in God and His faithfulness, he instructs Titus to ordain faithful leaders in the various cities in Crete. From this we can take that Paul does not begin with man, but God. Yet, having begun with God, he urges Titus to appoint leaders whose conduct corresponds to God and who govern the church through the instruments whom He appoints. As we will see, these leaders must be spiritual men who reflect the character of their God in life and doctrine.

Not Going It Alone

The first lesson that we should draw from this passage is that Titus was not to do the work of church planting on his own. He was not to undertake what he was neither able to bear nor to be profited by trying to bear alone. Here is the principle of plurality, which undergirds church government. Paul himself usually went into new areas with associates, whether Barnabas, Silas, Timothy, or others. In his letters to the churches, he also mentions many people who clearly labored together with him planting and strengthening churches. As far as Crete is concerned, Paul did not envision that Titus would do all the work himself or that he would be a lone-ranger or dictator over all the church labours in Crete. He is not told to set up a pyramid system and run everything top down.

Recently I heard a saying said to come from Africa: "If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go with others." The Bible clearly emphasizes multiplicity and sharing burdens among many and censures people who desire the preeminence. Sometimes pioneering situations are places where a "strong man" seems warranted and might seem to work well. However, this is not the biblical template. Paul writes to Titus: "Ordain elders in every city" (Titus 1:5).

Qualifications

The Titus 1 list of qualifications for elder (or "bishop" in verse 7) closely parallels the list in 1 Timothy 3 (the term bishop simply means overseer and is equivalent to elder). That means that there is a basic consistency for what the Bible envisions as qualifications for office-bearers (for deacon see the qualifications in 1 Tim. 3:12).

The qualifications of office-bearers are not academic or professional, but spiritual and moral. An elder need not be a recognized leader in the community, able to run a business well, or learned in the schools of his day. Indeed, he must be well spoken of (1 Tim. 3:7) and, if he has a family, must have led it well (1 Tim. 3:4). Yet, this is not first and foremost requirement. Neither is likeability, having a pleasant demeanor, or being an easy-going person.

The basic qualification is that the elder must be “blameless” (vv. 5,6). That means that the man should be beyond reproach. That does not imply moral perfection, but it does mean that his conduct is not morally questionable. If he is someone whose character is questionable, not only will he not properly care for the flock, but his followers will emulate his questionable character.

This blamelessness needs to be evident in the commitments or the spheres of influence that this person has already had. What is mentioned right after blamelessness is that he must be “the husband of one wife” and “having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly” (Titus 1:6). Paul here is referencing the man’s domestic life. This does not mean that an elder may never be an unmarried man, for Paul himself seems to have been such. The question is whether he is blameless in marriage or outside marriage. If married, is he a one-woman man, committed to his wife not just in letter but in spirit? Does he rule his household well in this sense that he has proven leadership in the smaller sphere of his family? If he does not in his family, how could he care for the larger realm of the congregation (1 Tim. 3:5)?

The Life

The elder must live as someone accountable to God, “a steward of God” (v. 7). He does not live an entitled, self-centered life. He must not be given to addictions, abusive in language or actions, hot-tempered, argumentative, and the like. He must not be greedy but hospitable and generous, and one who loves what is good (vv. 7-8). He must be sober in judgment, which means sensible and discerning, not drawn away naively or emotionally. He must be charitable, equitable, and devoted to God. He must be “temperate,” that is, self-controlled, which only comes as a fruit of the Spirit, through the Word and a life in union with Christ and communion with God. In sum, the elder must be Christ-like. God will not entrust His church, His people, His flock to any who are not united to Christ and who do not show

the character of Christ.

Before we go further to all that an elder must be and do, we note that this should be the character that every believer aspires to. Obviously, not all will be elders or bear office in the church of God, but all should be able to follow the example of those whom God has entrusted with the care of the flock. By virtue of the priesthood of all believers, all believers may and must in their own station seek grace to be more conformed to the image of Christ.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 01 What would you say from the Word of God to the idea of hiring an outside organization that specializes in church planting to plant a church for your congregation?
- 02 Why do you think God doesn’t want church work to be done simply by a solo pastor or just a single person, no matter how capable they may be?
- 03 Is it biblical to say that we should be able to imitate our elders in so far as they follow the Lord? How important is it to do so?
- 05 What do life and doctrine have to do with each other? Why does Paul stress both for an elder? What does that mean for the whole of Christianity?
- 04 Are any of these biblical qualifications for elder optional, or even less important than others?

The Doctrine

According to 1 Timothy 3, elders must also be “apt to teach” (v. 2). To Titus, Paul says that the elder must be “holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers” (Titus 1:9). This means that elders must cling to faithful teachings. You do not hold long onto anything that you don’t love. The elder must be devoted to the truth even when it is not in vogue. He needs to exhort on the basis of truth and refute those who detract from it. This does not mean that he must be highly educated or even quick with words. I have known elders who were poorly educated by the world’s standards but

who knew the truth and could handle it with discernment both to comfort and to convict.

Paul elaborates on this point in his first epistle to Timothy: “not a novice (or new believer), lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil” (1 Tim. 3:6). There should have been some period of testing before a man is put into the office. Elders do well to be teaching the younger generation in the doctrine of the church. The younger generation should also have close contact with those who are to lead in the church of God.

Conclusion

God would have churches planted and nurtured under the leadership of men who have a Christ-like character and who know their charge is to learn, hold fast, and hold forth the truth of the Bible. God does not single out men with business acumen, great academic prowess, or possessing respected positions in the world for holding office. God builds His church through those who have displayed the grace of God and character of the Lord Jesus, be they high or low in the eyes of society. After all, the church is not a human organization, but a divine work that comes about through the truth in words and actions. 11

REPORT OF THE INSTITUTION AND INSTALLATION SERVICE FOR THE FREE REFORMED CHURCH

PICTURE BUTTE, ALBERTA, MARCH 19, 2022



Picture of the Consistory.



Pastor Overduin.

Saturday, March 19, 2022 was a very special day for the members of Bethel Free Reformed Church in Monarch, especially for those who committed themselves to become members of the FRC Church in Picture Butte that was about to be instituted. The day started in the morning with a men’s breakfast in Monarch, where Pastor L.J. Bilkes from Oxford County instructed the attendants on the “Attributes of God.” Later that day, many were gathered at the “Elk’s Hall” in Picture Butte in order to prepare this rental property for the evening service.



Inside of the church.



Elder Marvin VanMaanen.

The consideration of a preaching station started a few years ago when the building in Monarch proved to be too small for the many congregants, especially during special occasions. Some members from the Picture Butte area formed a committee, looking into starting worship services as a daughter church of the Monarch FRC. Then Covid-19 became reality, affecting church attendance dramatically. In the summer of 2021, the committee started their activities again, resulting in a first service in the “Elk’s Hall” in Picture Butte in September, where Pastor J. Schoeman led the official first service. It started off with around 100 members and kept growing with Monarch members as well as with visitors from other denominations. It has grown to about 180 or 200 members and visitors each Sunday. The Monarch consistory has been very helpful and supportive and made developments go very smoothly, resulting in the institution on March 19. Truly, the Lord has made all things well – very well.

Pastor H. Overduin from Calgary, who served Monarch these last two years of vacancy beyond expectations, led the service, focussing on Psalm 87 and Acts 11:23: “Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.” He showed how special this occasion was: in a time of church closings, the Lord has blessed this flock wonderfully well. He referred to the hope contained in Psalm 87 that souls will be added to the number that will be called God’s people. The connection was easily made to Acts 11, where the church of Antioch proved to be instrumental in the furtherance of the gospel throughout the larger area. This can be seen in the theme: “The Joyful Ministry of the Christian Church!” He spoke of this using three points: 1) Its essence, 2) Its urgency, and 3) Its fruitfulness. Pastor Overduin spoke about



Rebekah and Hadassa Rozendaal

Providence Christian School

is currently accepting applications
for the 2022-2023 school year
for a full-time principal.



Providence Christian School is situated in a beautiful, southern Alberta rural community, minutes from Lethbridge. It has grades K-12 with about 170 students and 18 staff members.

Our desire is to train our students to become responsible citizens who are true Christians and who will worthily occupy their places in society, church and state.

The principal at PCS will be called on to

- provide spiritual leadership
- engage in transparent, ethical and responsible decision making
- lead staff members in defining, developing and delivering learning for all students
- provide insightful stewardship of funds entrusted to the operation of the school
- be a spokesperson for the school to the community

Qualifications

- Experienced teacher with training and understanding of the meaning and value of Christian based pedagogies and methodologies
- Having a Masters in Leadership or equivalent training is considered an asset
- Alberta principal certification or ability to obtain it
- Experience within the Reformed Christian school movement
- Rooted in the Reformed faith and by experience acquainted with the history, culture, doctrines, and practices of the Reformed churches and schools.

Find additional details at
www.pcsmonarch.com

Please submit a resumé
with a cover letter,
statement of faith, and
philosophy of Christian
Leadership and
Teaching.

Direct inquiries
and/or applications
to Mr. Bill Pas,
Board president
and chair of the
Principal Search Committee:
recruitment@pcsmonarch.com

pray
volunteer
donate



"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord" Revelation 11:15


INSTALLATION REPORT

the calling and the mission of this new church in Picture Butte to be such a church indeed, depending on God's guiding Spirit in their thoughts, words, and deeds. He referred to the gospel fact that it was not Barnabas who added to the church of Antioch, but God. This is truly a calling and a responsibility for this church in Picture Butte.

Following the sermon, the brothers Henk Van Rhee, Erwin Van Ee, and Gerrit van de Haar were installed as elders, and the brothers Clint De Leeuw, Jason Rosendal, and Adriaan Hengstmengel were installed as deacons. Next, Pastor Overduin addressed both the office bearers as well as the other members. He emphasized that hope is not to be found in men, despite members praying and the entire federation of FRC churches praying, but in the God "Who is faithful."

Elder M. Van Maanen from the Monarch FRC led the last part of this evening. First, Pastor Bilkes spoke on behalf of Synod and all the FRC churches in extending congratulations and gratitude for this institution. Hope and expectation can be found in the words of the Lord Jesus from Matthew 16: 18: "...I will build

Pastor Overduin spoke about the calling and the mission of this new church in Picture Butte to be such a church indeed, depending on God's guiding Spirit in their thoughts, words, and deeds.

my church." Jesus is the Great Church Builder and its Foundation. Satan will seek to attack the church, using different means, but the builder of the church is stronger, much stronger. Next spoke Pastor J. Van Eyk of the Lethbridge URC, who on occasion has worshiped with us and has preached in the Picture Butte branch before. He wished that we would put our hope and trust in Jesus Christ and that He would be proclaimed, be believed, trusted in, cherished, and treasured as the Great Pearl above all price. Pastor P. Drooger, from Iron Springs CRC, shared in the excitement of what God is doing to expand His kingdom. Elder Nico Kattenberg read a letter from the Chilliwack FRC, and deacon Jan Van de Brake spoke on behalf of the Blackfalds FRC. Elder Van Maanen read letters from several FRC churches, after which he addressed the new congregation on behalf of the mother church, Monarch FRC. He thanked many and mentioned not only about the blessing of the institution of a new church, but also of the sadness of missing each other that came with it. That summarized indeed the beautiful process of how this church came to be. God's hand could be seen in how doors were opened, how things fell into place, and also in how peaceful the separation went. To God be glory, now and forever! 

Mr. Gerrit van de Haar is an elder of the newly established Picture Butte congregation.

53RD
ANNUAL

LADIES' CONFERENCE

of the Free Reformed Churches

TUESDAY
MAY 31, 2022 D.V.

LOCATION:
ZION FREE REFORMED CHURCH
1075 BOYLE RD. RRI, FENWICK, ON LOS 1C0

CREATING SAFE HAVENS

HOME
CHURCH
SCHOOL
COMMUNITY

COFFEE: 9:30

MORNING SESSION: 10:00
SPEAKER: PASTOR ERIC MOERDYK

AFTERNOON SESSION: 1:30
PANEL DISCUSSION

LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED

COST: \$20



Online pre-registration will be required. A link will be sent to each society and church bulletin in advance.

RETIREMENT OF MR. HENK KLEYN

On April 23, 2022 we had a 3-hour open house for the retirement of Henk Kleyn as Vice President of Operations at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, which included a one hour program expressing thanks. Hundreds attended the open house to express their love and congratulations.



Our dear brother Henk served here faithfully at PRTS with all his heart, exemplifying Christlike love, for nearly 17 years, supported throughout by his dear wife Margaret who also showed much love to the students. I gave a 15-minute opening meditation which included thanking him especially for four of his most sterling qualities, using the acronym of PRTS: Passionate service, Readiness to serve, Tender-hearted leadership, and Sacrificial spirit.

Following the meditation, a half hour video was shown in which about a dozen faculty and students expressed their deep love and thanks for brother Kleyn in a variety of ways. Dr. Bilkes closed the program with some heartwarming comments, the reading of Revelation 4 (a chapter that is precious to Henk and points to God working all things for His glory alone), and prayer.

We will miss brother Kleyn greatly; he truly served “the Lord with gladness,” as Psalm 100 commands, which was also the text he quoted at the end of all his letters. Please pray for him as he enters a new phase of his life where he will be doing part-time labor in the Free Reformed Church serving as a kind of “pastoral visitor” while this vacant church continues to seek to receive its own pastor. Please pray also for Chris Hanna and Jonathon Beeke as they take up the responsibilities that Mr. Kleyn has carried for so many years. ¹¹ *Dr. J. R. Beeke*

Editorial note: As editors we are thankful that Mr. Kleyn is not retiring from his service of giving each issue of *The Messenger* a final proof-reading prior to publication. His ongoing service is much appreciated.



Stillwaters
PS 23:2
Christian Retirement Community

- Life lease independent living with a pathway to full care
- Maintenance-free living with many amenities
- Close to several Reformed churches

A New Christian Retirement Development is Underway!
In Beautiful Norwich Ontario

CONTACT US while suites are still available!
**Rental units are also available*

Phone: 226-796-0250
Email: email@stillwaters.info

7 Howard Avenue
London, Ontario
N6P 1B3
519-203-0266

COVENANTAL | CHRIST CENTERED | SHAPING KINGDOM CITIZENS

Inviting applications from qualified individuals for the following position for the 2022/23 school year:

Upper Elementary Teacher

Join a growing Christian school community comprised of families from Canadian Reformed, Free Reformed, and United Reformed churches.

- Positive Christian work environment
- Newly expanded facilities
- Excellent volunteer base
- Extensive Special Education program

ROOTED IN TRUTH ~ GROWING IN CHRIST

Applicants should be members in good standing of a Canadian Reformed, Free Reformed, Orthodox Presbyterian, or United Reformed church.

Letters of application (including Statement of Faith and Philosophy of Reformed Education) may be sent to:

Principal:
Mr. Shawn Wolski
519-203-0266
principal@ccslondon.org

Education Committee Secretary:
Mrs. Madelyn Poort
905-348-5531
edcomm@ccslondon.org

WITNESSING THE FRUIT OF MUKHANYO THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE



Pastor Jeremie and elder outside church sanctuary.

The worship service had already started. The dirt road was littered with garbage, rocks, and potholes, and we were unsure whether our vehicle could navigate over the large ditch in the road. Eventually, we found one small, sloped ‘parking spot.’ We had arrived at a small church on the outskirts of KwaMhlanga. As soon as we parked, we were enthusiastically greeted by Pastor Jeremie. He ushered us around the front of the church, past two small, doorless rooms with concrete toilets, and then into the center of the congregants already in worship. Their music leader, Richard Muhire, led the small congregation of about forty individuals in song, both in the English and Ndebele languages.

Soon after, Pastor Jeremie ascended the platform to lead us through the familiar story of Naaman, as found in 2 Kings 5. He preached in English while pausing for translations into Ndebele, the local dialect. As he expounded this passage, a familiar and precious gospel was declared, “...As Naaman was plagued with leprosy, so are each one of us with our leprous hearts of sin. Paul says in Ephesians 2, ‘We are all dead in our trespasses and sins.’” Pastor Jeremie likened the natural human heart to

Naaman’s condition, desiring his own way to be healed. Pastor Jeremie set Christ before us as the only way of salvation, not of works, lest any man should boast, followed by a life of humility and obedience to God. Sadly, the South African religious culture is infused with much divination through ancestral and spirit worship. Pastor Jeremie exhorted his congregation to not live a double life, attending worship service and then afterwards going to listen to the many so called ‘prophets’ speaking divination.

Dr. Brian DeVries, principal of Mukhanyo Theological College, had recommended Family Ministries of God Church in KwaMhlanga, pastored by Jeremie Havugimana. Pastor Jeremie graduated from Mukhanyo with his diploma, and then later completed his Bachelors in Theology. He currently works as Facilities Manager for the campus in KwaMhlanga, serves on the board of Nakekela Clinic, and leads a Mukhanyo distance learning center in Moloto each Saturday. He and his wife Triphoe have raised four children.

Pastor Jeremie’s church is multicultural, and English is the language most understand. In New Jersey, where I live, I may

view a multicultural church as noticeably different ethnicities, from a variety of originating countries, with maybe some differences in vocal accents and skin color, coming together for worship. But while this church may not have appeared to be multicultural to us, we were later told that the members came from Rwanda, Burundi, Zimbabwe, Ghana, and Congo, along with several South African ethnic groups.



Pastor Jeremie preaching with an interpreter.

Having prayed for the work of Mukhanyo over the past years, it was helpful to get a first-hand look of the many ministries of the college. My wife Mary and I were able to visit the KwaMhlanga and Johannesburg campuses. In total, Mukhanyo has five campuses, the other three being in Durban, Pretoria, and Rustenburg. Each of the two visits had its own unique experiences.

After finishing a tour of the recently expanded facilities at the KwaMhlanga campus, we were invited to an annual church leaders' conference. An invitation had been sent out to local pastors and church leaders, as well as others from more distant areas,



Two restrooms attached to the sanctuary.



Contact your deacon
or Peace Haven
Director, (SEE BELOW)

FREE REFORMED ASSOCIATION

PEACE HAVEN, a ministry of Free Reformed deacons, offers you and your family help with disabilities:

- a listening ear
- help accessing church and government resources
- meaningful day and evening programs
- respite or vacation care
- residential care

Margaret Heemskerck, mheemskerck.peacehaven@gmail.com or 519.770.8816

Don't discard used Christian literature or Bibles!

CHRISTIAN SALVAGE MISSION

"Worldwide Distribution of Evangelical Literature"
3 – 120 Lancing Drive, Hamilton, ON Canada L8W 3A1
Phone/Fax: 905-574-3334 Email: info@csmcanda.org

www.csmcanada.org

The mandate of Christian Salvage Mission is to gather Bibles and other evangelical Christian literature that is no longer needed from the shelves of people across Canada and ship it to Christians in third world countries who are less blessed than we are.

"Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost."

John 6:12

1-866-833-2741



Individual,
marriage
and family
counselling.



www.christiancounsellingcentre.ca



Duane and Mary Rogers on steps of KwaMhlanga campus.


to come and join together in song and to hear two relevant topics on ministry. The first topic, presented by Dr. Brian DeVries, was on ‘Leading a Marginalized Church in a Society that Views the Church as Non-essential.’ Our society is increasingly turning more hostile to the church and to Christianity. How do we as Christians respond to this trend? The church is called to be



Church leaders conference at KwaMhlanga Campus.




Dr. DeVries presenting topic on “Leading a Marginalized Church”.

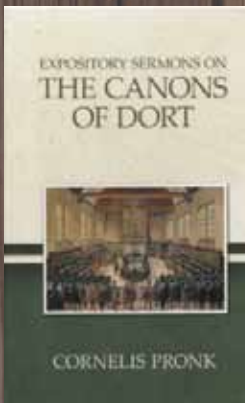


Free
Reformed
Publications

Confessional Studies



*Simply, Faith!
Expository Sermons
on the Belgic Confession*
REV. C. SCHOULS



*The Canons of Dort:
Expository Sermons
on the Canons of Dort*
REV. C. PRONK

Hardcover | 323 pages | \$19.50

Hardcover | 285 pages | \$15.00

Free Reformed Publications
18 Chapala Crescent S.E. Calgary, AB T2X 3M4
Email: bookorderse@frna.org
Tel: 403-254-6591
To see our catalogue visit us at
<http://frna.org/publications>

a spiritual hospital for sinners, a role-model of social morality, and a message of hope to all nations.

The second topic, presented by Rev. France Mookisi, a former graduate of MTC, was titled ‘Reviving a Luke-warm Church.’ Pastors and leaders are called to be servants of God. They are to know their responsibilities, but they must also beware of the peril that awaits them if they fail to execute them according to God’s Word.

My wife and I have fond and enjoyable memories of the a-cappella singing, especially as it was led by talented voices throughout the audience. We also participated in fellowship and were provided a warm and tasty lunch.

Early the next week, we visited the Johannesburg campus. This campus lies in the heart of the Johannesburg metropolis. Our morning began with a brief tour of the facility, followed by a Monday morning chapel devotional and song with the stu-

\$9.00
EACH

FREE REFORMED PUBLICATIONS

\$24.00
FOR FULL
SET

BIBLE STUDIES

18 CHAPALA CRESCENT S.E. CALGARY, AB T2X 3M4

EMAIL: BOOKORDERS@FRCNA.ORG

TEL: 403-254-6591

TO SEE OUR CATALOGUE VISIT US AT

[HTTP://FRCNA.ORG/PUBLICATIONS](http://FRCNA.ORG/PUBLICATIONS)

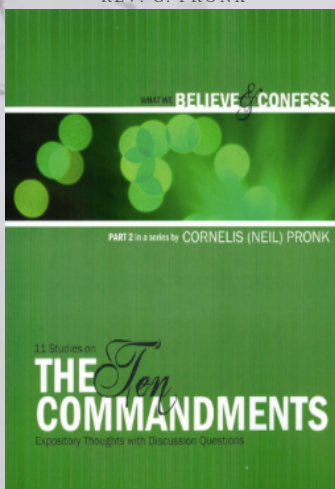
*What We
Believe &
Confess: Part 1
The Apostle's
Creed*

REV. C. PRONK



*What We
Believe &
Confess: Part 2
The Ten
Commandments*

REV. C. PRONK



*What We
Believe &
Confess: Part 3
The Lord's
Prayer*

REV. C. PRONK



Christian Ministry to Israel commits over \$105,000 CDN annually to support Ha-Gefen Publishing who's mission is to translate solid Reformed literature and books into Hebrew for distribution to Jews around the world.



We are committed to spreading the Gospel of CHRIST JESUS among the people of Israel and Jews worldwide. Help us to spread the Gospel through your prayers and donations. Please donate by cheque or online at www.cmisrael.org



To donate by cheque, please mail your donation to: Christian Ministry to Israel, c/o John Wilbrink, 8 Weneil Drive, Freelon ON L8B 0Z6 Reg. Charity: 85123 0466 RR 0001



Waterfalls near Blyde River Canyon.



Chapel service at Johannesburg campus.

dents and teachers. Afterwards, we mingled in the courtyard speaking with students and faculty members. We also appreciated our time spent with Pastor Glyn Williams, head of the distance learning programs. It was a blessing to hear how this program expanded, and the genesis of new distance sites was very encouraging.



Professor and student at Johannesburg campus.

Our trip to South Africa also allowed us to view the beauty of God’s glorious and diverse creation as an expression of His general revelation (Psalm 19) and to know that His special revelation has and continues to spread through institutions like Mukhanyo Theological College. It is a wonderful testimony to God’s love for sinners. The knowledge that His bride, the church, continues to receive the same power and promise in the sending of and help of the Holy Spirit is humbling. “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).



Three Rondavels at Blyde River Canyon.

It is a privilege to be a part of the Free Reformed Church of North America International Mission Committee. Our federation not only helps to support Mukhanyo financially, but we also have opportunity to give guidance, as well as serve as an advisory member church and participate annually in Mukhanyo’s Annual General Meeting.

“...Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the Great God and Savior Jesus Christ” Titus 2:13. ①

Mr. Duane Rogers of Pompton Plains Free Reformed Church is the secretary of Free Reformed Missions International.



Free Reformed Historical Centre

“What do I do with these things?”

Contact the Free Reformed Historical Centre

The Free Reformed Historical Centre is to gather and preserve materials relating to the Dutch roots and North American establishment, development, and ongoing life of our churches. Specific materials are classified as unrestricted access (available to all), restricted access (available only to approved persons), and/or time-specified access (available after a specified future date).

The Historical Centre is looking for:

- Printed materials from the churches.
- Audio recordings of worship services and speeches.
- Personal materials (letters, diaries, sermon notes, essays, etc).
- Publications from our ‘mother’ churches.
- Pictures of people and events.
- Interviews with ‘founding’ members.

If you or your (grand)parents have materials that may be of interest to the centre, please contact:

Rev. D. Kranendonk (secretary)

Cell: 616-290-4125 • Email: kranendonk@frcna.org



WORD & DEED

PRAY for our partners
SPONSOR a child
JOIN a business group
PARTICIPATE in a fundraiser



OUR MISSION

To help meet the spiritual and physical needs of people in the developing world in accordance with biblical principles for the glory of God.

www.wordanddeed.org

Give the gift of reading with
Open Windows!

Open children's minds to history, vocations, music, the Bible, creation, art, and countries around the world. With stories, a meditation, puzzles, colouring contests, and book reviews, it's a magazine for the home, school, libraries, and outreach. For ages 4-12.



\$21.50 annually, 6 issues per year
Print subscription form at
openwindows.frcna.org
or contact
administrator@frcna.org



**COME
OVER &
HELP**

Our vision is to
see thriving,
BIBLICALLY FAITHFUL
churches serving
EASTERN EUROPE!



VISIT www.coah.org | CALL 888-844-2624

FREE REFORMED SYNOD 2022:

The denominational synod meetings are to be held, the Lord Willing, **June between 6 - 10** at **Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary** in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The **prayer service** and **first session of synod** will be held on **Monday, June 6 at 7:30pm** at the **Heritage Reformed Congregation** in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Rev. David VanBrugge (FRC) and Dr. Brian DeVries (HRC) will be leading this service. The Synod of the Heritage Reformed Congregations is scheduled to meet separately during the same week, also at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary.