

REFLECTIONS

The Monthly Newsletter of Grace OPC

A NEW REFORMATION

By Pastor Brian De Jong

A quick glance around the American landscape is adequate to establish this fact: we desperately need a new reformation. The problem is that the American church is running the opposite direction as fast as it can.

Whether you sample the latest trends in worship, or test basic doctrinal commitments, or even gauge the level of Bible knowledge in American Christianity, the results are discouraging. In a society where anything goes, the church has decided to follow the culture wherever it might lead. The beautiful bride of Christ now takes for her cues from a lewd and perverse generation that knows not the God who created and sustains them in life, and will one day demand an account for every word spoken. We need a new reformation!

The one place we should expect to find spiritual leadership is among traditionally reformed churches. Surely those who have championed the Reformed Faith in past decades will stand up and be counted for Christ! But to our dismay, they are no different and no better than most self-described “evangelicals.” Indeed, they also are fleeing from the faith in search of worldly applause. These old stalwarts now appear like ships without rudders – they have lost their way. We need a new reformation!

What would a new reformation entail? What could it “look like?” First, it demands a renewed enthusiasm for the

Scriptures themselves. *“To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn.”* If we do not appreciate the centrality of Scripture, there can be no true revival, and no real reformation. We need to teach, preach, understand, practice, and obey the Scriptures – this is the law of liberty, and if we are effectual doers of this word, then we will be blessed of God!

A new reformation also necessitates reviewing modern notions about worship. Away with a man-centered model more obsessed with entertaining a human audience than pleasing the Triune God! Let Christ again be the focal point of worship, and let us learn

what is pleasing to the Lord. In all that we do – in our preaching and praying, in our singing and celebrating – let us please God, that He may again be pleased with the worship of His church on earth.

As odd as it may sound, we need a doctrinal revival as well. Flying beneath the radar, various movements foist destructive doctrinal innovations on an unsuspecting church. The Federal Vision movement, the New Perspective on Paul, and the Emerging Church are all guilty of gross doctrinal errors. We need a doctrinal reformation!

Last but not least, we need a revival of sound church government – a revitalized Presbyterianism! If church government is not reconsidered, the cause of reformation will languish. Let us look again...

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Mnemonics...

- *Men's Breakfast & Bible Study, 7th*
- *Harvest Home, 14th*

Family Worship

By A. W. Pink

There are some very important outward ordinances and means of grace which are plainly implied in the Word of God, but for the exercise of which we have few, if any, plain and positive precept; rather are we left to gather them from the example of holy men and from various incidental circumstances. An important end is answered by this arrangement: trial is thereby made of the state of our hearts. It serves to make evident whether, because an expressed command cannot be brought requiring its performance, professing Christians will neglect a duty plainly implied. Thus, more of the real state of our minds is discovered, and it is made manifest whether we have or have not an ardent love for God and His service. This holds good both of public and family worship. Nevertheless, it is not at all difficult to prove the obligation of domestic piety.

Consider first the example of Abraham, the father of the faithful and the friend of God. It was for his domestic piety that he received blessing from Jehovah Himself, *“For I know him, that he will command his children and household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment”* (Gen. 18:19). The patriarch is here commended for instructing his children and servants in the most important of all duties, “the way of the Lord”—the truth about His glorious person. His high claims upon us, His requirements from us. Note well the words *“he will command”* them, that is, he would use the authority God had given him as a father and head of his house, to enforce the duties of family godliness. Abraham also prayed with as well as instructed his family: wherever he pitched his tent, there he *“built an altar to the Lord”* (Gen. 12:7; 13:4). Now my readers, we may well ask ourselves, Are we *“Abraham’s seed”* (Gal. 3:29) if we *“do not the works of Abraham”* (John 8:39) and neglect the

*“...family
worship
should be
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reverently,
earnestly,
&
simply.”*

weighty duty of family worship? The example of other holy men are similar to that of Abraham’s. Consider the pious determination of Joshua who declared to Israel, *“As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord”* (24:15). Neither the exalted station which he held, nor the pressing public duties which developed upon him, were allowed to crowd out his

attention to the spiritual well-being of his family. Again, when David brought back the ark of God to Jerusalem with joy and thanksgiving, after discharging his public duties, he *“returned to bless his household”* (2 Sam. 6:20). In addition to these eminent examples we may cite the cases of Job (1:5) and Daniel (6:10). Limiting ourselves to only one in the New Testament we think of the history of Timothy, who was reared in a godly home. Paul called to remembrance the *“unfeigned faith”* which was in him, and added, *“which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois and thy mother Eunice.”* Is there any wonder then that the apostle could say *“from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures”* (2 Tim. 3:15)!

On the other hand, we may observe what fearful threatenings are pronounced against those who disregard this duty. We wonder how many of our readers have seriously pondered these awe-inspiring words *“Pour out Thy fury upon the heathen that know Thee not, and upon the families that call not on Thy name”* (Jer. 10:25)! How unspeakably solemn to find that prayerless families are here coupled with the heathen that know not the Lord. Yet need that surprise us? Why, there are many heathen families who unite together in worshipping their false gods. And do not they put thousands of professing Christians to shame? Observe too that Jer. 10:25 recorded a fearful imprecations upon both classes alike: *“Pour out Thy fury upon...”* How loudly should these words speak to us.

It is not enough that we pray as private individuals in our closets; we are required to honor God

Family Worship Concluded...

in our families as well. *At least twice each day,—in the morning and in the evening—the whole household should be gathered together to bow before the Lord—parents and children, master and servant—to confess their sins, to give thanks for God's mercies, to seek His help and blessing.* Nothing must be allowed to interfere with this duty: all other domestic arrangements are to bend to it. The head of the house is the one to lead the devotions, but if he be absent, or seriously ill, or an unbeliever, then the wife would take his place. Under no circumstances should family worship be omitted. If we would enjoy the blessing of God upon our family, then let its members gather together daily for praise and prayer. “Them that honour Me I will honour” is His promise.

An old writer well said, “*A family without prayer is like a house without a roof, open and exposed to all the storms of Heaven.*” All our domestic comforts and temporal mercies issue from the lovingkindness of the Lord, and the best we can do in return is to gratefully acknowledge, together, His goodness to us as a family. Excuses against the discharge of this sacred duty are idle and worthless. Of what avail will it be when we render an account to God for the stewardship of our families to say that we had not time available, working hard from morn till eve? The more pressing be our temporal duties, the greater our need of seeking spiritual succor. Nor may any Christian plead that he is not qualified for such a work: gifts and talents are developed by use and not by neglect.

Family worship should be conducted reverently, earnestly and simply. It is then that the little ones will receive their first impressions and form their initial conceptions of the Lord God. Great care needs to be taken lest a false idea be given them of the Divine Character, and for this the balance must be preserved between dwelling upon His transcendency and immanency, His holiness and His mercy, His might and His tenderness, His justice and His grace. Worship should begin with a few words of prayer invoking God’s presence and blessing. A short passage from His Word should follow, with

brief comments thereon. Two or three verses of a Psalm may be sung. Close with a prayer of committal into the hands of God. Though we may not be able to pray eloquently, we should earnestly. Prevailing prayers are usually brief ones. Beware of wearying the young ones.

The advantages and blessings of family worship are incalculable. First, family worship will prevent much sin. It awes the soul, conveys a sense of God's majesty and authority, sets solemn truths before the mind, brings down benefits from God on the home. **Personal piety in the home is a most influential means, under God, of conveying piety on the little ones. Children are largely creatures of imitation, loving to copy what they see in others.** “*He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children: That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments*” (Psa. 78:5-7). How much of the dreadful moral and spiritual conditions of the masses today may be traced back to the neglect of their fathers in this duty? How can those who neglect the worship of God in their families look for peace and comfort therein? Daily prayer in the home is a blessed means of grace for allaying those unhappy passions to which our common nature is subject. Finally, family prayer gains for us the presence and blessing of the Lord. There is a promise of His presence which is peculiarly applicable to this duty: see Matt. 18:19, 20. Many have found in family worship that help and communion with God which they sought for and with less effect in private prayer.



November Birthdays



Happy Birthday!!!

SCCHS WALKATHON

All are invited to participate in the Sheboygan County Christian High School 39th annual Walk for Christian Education on Friday, Nov. 13. The walk begins and ends at the start of the Old Plank Road Trail (at the end of Erie Avenue – west of Memorial Mall — in Sheboygan). SCCHS students are now seeking tax-deductible donations for the walk. Prizes will be awarded to the highest pledge earners. To be eligible for prizes, all donations must be collected and turned into the school office by noon on Friday, Nov. 13. For more information and pledge sheets, please call the school office (458-9981).





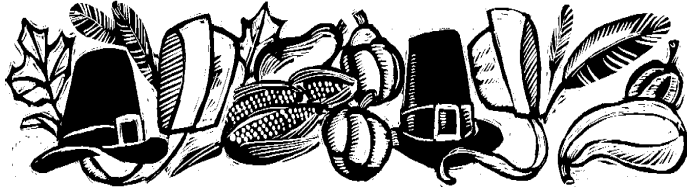
Grace OPC

November 2009

Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ



| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----|--------------------------------------|
| 1 Speaker: Dr. John Carrick | 2 | 3 | 4 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m. | 5 | 6 | 7 Men's Study, 7:30 a.m. |
| 8 Missions Sunday | 9 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m. <i>Theology, 3:30 p.m.</i> Pine Haven Study, 1:30 p.m. | 10 Session Meeting, 6:30 p.m. | 11 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m. | 12 | 13 | 14 Harvest Home Supper, 5:30 p.m. |
| 15 | 16 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m. | 17 | 18 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m. | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m. <i>Theology, 3:30 p.m.</i> Pine Haven Study, 1:30 p.m. | 24 | 25 Thanksgiving Service, 7:00 p.m. | 26 Thanksgiving Day Football Game | 27 | 28 |
| 29 Lord's Supper, (a.m.) | 30 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m. | | | | | |

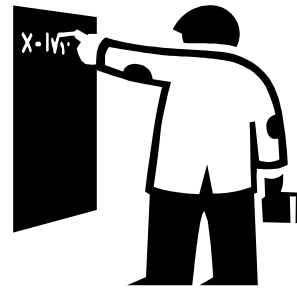


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College Preview

If any high school student is interested in a visit to Covenant College this fall, please call Roy Ingelse at 564-3468.



Front Page Concluded...

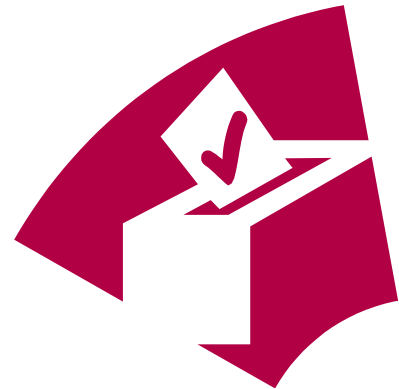
...to God's instruction book for guidance on how the church on earth should be governed. Let ministers and elders and deacons and church members do their duties and fulfill their offices! God's blessing will surely follow.

Now you may wonder where I came up with such bold ideas? What has inspired this call to a new reformation? It all flows from the work of John Calvin – particularly his book The Necessity of Reforming the Church first published in 1544. In both tone and content, all that I've said here was first conveyed by Calvin to his own generation. And look what God did! Pray God to do it again! We need a new reformation!



Nominations

It's once again time for nominations for elder, deacon, and trustees. If you have a nominee in mind, please speak with them first. If they are agreeable, you can either slip their name in the box, or speak to a member of the Session.



New Addresses



Soup & Salad Potluck Recipes

Soups

Panera Bread Broccoli Cheese Soup

1 tablespoon butter, melted
 1/2 medium onion, chopped
 1/4 cup melted butter
 1/4 cup flour
 2 cups half-and-half
 2 cups chicken stock or bouillon
 1/2 pound fresh broccoli
 1 cup carrots, julienned
 salt and pepper to taste
 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
 8 oz. grated sharp cheddar

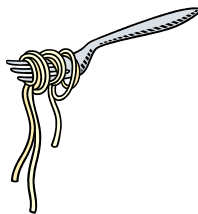


Directions:

1. Sauté onion in butter. Set aside. Cook melted butter and flour using a whisk over medium heat for 3-5 minutes. Stir constantly and slowly add the half-and-half (this is called making a roux). Add the chicken stock whisking all the time. Simmer for 20 minutes.
 2. Add the broccoli, carrots and onions. Cook over low heat until the veggies are tender for 20-25 minutes. Add salt and pepper. The soup should be thickened by now. Pour in batches into blender and puree. Return to pot over low heat and add the grated cheese; stir until well blended. Stir in the nutmeg and serve. Servings: 4. Ready In: 30-60 minutes
 (From Troy Vander Waal)

Meatball Minestrone Soup

2 1/2 lb. lean ground beef
 2 cups onions (chopped)
 5 Tbsp. beef bouillon
 3 cups water
 2 (16 oz.) cans stewed tomatoes
 1 1/2 tsp. thyme
 1/4 tsp. pepper
 2 cups chopped cabbage (corn or green beans)
 4 oz. thin spaghetti (broken)
 Chopped parsley & parmesan cheese

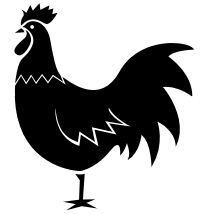


Directions:

In a large bowl, combine beef, 1 cup onion and 2

Tbsp. bouillon. Mix well. Shape meat into 1/2-inch balls. In a 6 qt. Dutch oven, brown meatballs 1/3 at a time. Remove from pan, reserve 2 Tbsp. drippings; pour off excess. Cook remaining onion until tender. Add meatballs, water, tomatoes, remaining bouillon, thyme, pepper. Cover; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer 1 hour. Add cabbage and vegetable and spaghetti, and if desired, parsley, green pepper. Cook 15 minutes or until tender. Serve with Parmesan cheese.
 (From Gail Moody)

Chicken-Noodle Soup



2 1/2 - 3 lb. broiler-fryer chicken, cut up
 4 medium carrots cut up (I never measure - just put in as many as you like)
 4 medium stalks of celery cut up (if your children don't like celery - omit)
 [1 qt. of water with 3 packets of sodium free instant chicken broth & seasoning- Herb ox or 1 qt. of organic/natural chicken broth (I prefer)]
 1 tsp. salt/adjust to taste
 1 tsp. sugar
 1/4 tsp. pepper
 Cooked No Yolks broad egg noodles or rice

Directions:

1. Heat all ingredients except noodles to boiling in a 4 qt. Dutch oven; reduce heat. Cover and simmer until chicken is done, about 45 minutes.
 2. Remove chicken from broth; cool slightly. Remove chicken from bones and skin and tear apart in bite size pieces. Add chicken and cooked noodles to broth; add more salt if needed. If you let sit over night, skim fat off the top. Servings: 4. I usually double this recipe except for the amount of chicken.
 (From Deborah Arndt)

Italian Peasant Soup

1 lb. Italian sausage links, casings removed and cut into 1-inch slices
 2 medium onions, chopped
 6 garlic cloves, minced
 1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch pieces



2 (15 oz.) cans great northern beans
 2 (14 1/2 oz.) cans chicken broth
 2 (14 1/2 oz.) cans diced tomatoes
 1 tsp. dried basil
 1 tsp. dried oregano
 6 cups chopped fresh spinach (I used part frozen
 and that worked just as good, and was lots
 easier.)
 Shredded Parmesan cheese, optional

Directions:

1. In soup kettle, cook sausage over medium heat until no longer pink. Add onions and garlic; sauté until tender. Add chicken; cook and stir until no longer pink. Stir in beans, broth, tomatoes, basil, and oregano.
2. Cook, uncovered, for 10 minutes. Add the spinach and heat just until wilted. Serve with parmesan cheese if desired. Makes about 2 3/4 quarts. Enjoy!!

(From Emily Boss)

Salads

Sunny Vegetable Salad

5 cups broccoli Florets
 5 cups cauliflowerets
 2 cups (8 oz.) shredded cheddar cheese
 2/3 cup chopped onion
 1/2 cup raisins
 1 cup mayonnaise
 1/2 cup sugar
 2 Tbsp. cider or red wine vinegar
 6 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled
 1/4 cup sunflower kernels

**Directions:**

In a large salad bowl, toss broccoli, cauliflower, cheese, onion and raisins. In a small bowl, combine mayonnaise, sugar and vinegar. Pour over salad; toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour. Sprinkle with the bacon and sunflower kernels. Yield: 12-16 servings.

(From Ellen McNeese)

Desserts

Butterscotch Pecan Dessert

1/2 cup cold butter or margarine



1 cup all purpose flour
 3/4 cup chopped pecan (divided)
 1 pkg. (8 oz.) ream cheese, softened
 1 cup powdered sugar
 1 carton (8 oz.) frozen whipped topping, thawed, divided
 3-1/2 cups milk
 2 pkg. (3.4 or 3.5 oz. each) instant butterscotch or vanilla pudding

Directions:

1. In a bowl, cut butter into flour until crumbly; stir in 1/2 cup pecans. Press into an ungreased 13x9x2 in baking pan. Bake at 350° for 20 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool.
2. In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar until fluffy. Fold in 1 cup whipped topping; spread over crust. Combine milk and pudding mix until smooth; pour over cream cheese layer. Refrigerate for 15-20 minutes or until set. Top with remaining whipped topping and pecans. Refrigerate for 1-2 hours. Yield: 16-20 servings.

P.S I doubled the cream cheese topping (2 packages cream cheese, 2 cups, sugar & 2 cups cool whip, and the pudding topping I do a recipe and a half (3 packages pudding & 4 3/4 cups milk.

(From Ellen McNeese)

Can't Leave Alone Bars

1 box chocolate cake mix
 1 cup chocolate chips
 1/3 cup oil
 1/4 cup butter
 2 eggs
 1 can sweetened condensed milk

**Directions:**

Mix cake mix, eggs, and oil together and pat half of it into 9x13 pan. Melt remaining ingredients in microwave. Pour over cake mixture. Put remaining cake batter on top by spoonfuls. Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes. Note: Works good cut in half. Experiment with different combinations of chocolate chips & cake mixes! Quick & easy!

(From Megan Boss)



**Proclaiming the
Excellencies of our
Lord Jesus Christ.**

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of Grace OPC

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CHECK OUT THE AUDIO:

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OPC.ORG



★ Did you know that some of the hymn tunes in our Trinity Hymnal originally appeared in a book called the Genevan Psalter, such as #1 “All People that on Earth Do Dwell”?

★ Did you know that many of the melodies and arrangements in this Psalter were written by Louis Bourgeois in Geneva?

★ Did you know that Bourgeois moved to Geneva, Switzerland in 1541 the very same year that John Calvin came back (Calvin was expelled previously and had lived elsewhere for a time)?

★ That in the churches where Calvin preached, Bourgeois, “was music director there under the pastoral leadership of Calvin...”?

★ That Calvin was involved in the publication of a psalter using many tunes & revisions of tunes by Louis Bourgeois?

★ Did you know that Bourgeois, “was actually imprisoned overnight for some of his musical arrangements but freed after Calvin’s intervention” as Bourgeois had revised some of the tunes which had appeared in previous Psalters and some did not like them?

★ Did you know that the full Genevan Psalter appeared after many revisions in 1562 and the tune for the Doxology we frequently sing at the end of the service was in this Psalter and also written by Louis Bourgeois?

Taken from <http://www.hymnary.org/hymn/PsH/3>

Harvest Home

Everyone is invited to attend the Annual Harvest Home Supper, which will be held on Saturday, November 14th at 5:30 p.m. at the church. This year’s speaker will be the Rev. Iain Wright. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin in the hallway.

