



REFLECTIONS

Grace OPC

Reformation Faith

By Pastor Brian De Jong

Those Christians who self-identify as “Reformed” and/or “Presbyterian” will sometimes talk about “the Reformed Faith.” The idea conveyed by this jargon has to do with an objective body of theology which is characterized by certain distinctive ideas.

Often the Reformed Faith is equated with Calvinism, or the “five points” of Calvinism. The sovereignty of God in salvation is a core concept for the so-called Reformed Faith. Covenant theology is another very important component, as is Presbyterian church government. We could go on and on with principles, ideas and concepts filling out our list.

There is nothing wrong or bad about such thinking, or the verbiage that I’m describing. Scripture itself tells us to “contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.” (Jude 3) “The faith” in Jude’s usage refers to a body of doctrines – an interwoven theology that is objective in nature. Certainly the history of the Reformation was an account of men like Luther and Calvin earnestly contending for that faith.

But there is another way to understand faith that also deserves our attention – the subjective response of the believer to the truths of God’s Word and the Gospel. Reformed people believe in Christ – faith is very important to the Reformed community.

One of the overarching issues faced by both Luther and Calvin was that of justification. How is a sinful man made right with God? How can we be saved

from the eternal damnation that we so richly deserve?

The Medieval Roman Catholic Church answered the question by proposing a system of works done in obedience to the commands and decrees of the church. It wasn’t that they instructed their followers to obey the Bible. Rather, they were told to obey the dictates of the church hierarchy. That included such non-Biblical ideas as pilgrimages, relics, and indulgences.

The Reformers replied that salvation came not through obedience to rules (either human or divine), but rather through faith in Jesus Christ. Sola fide, Sola Christus, Soli Deo Gloria – by faith alone in Christ alone, to the glory of God alone! For Reformed Christians ever since, faith has been central to our understanding of

the Christian life. We are saved by faith in Jesus Christ, as He is offered to us in the gospel. That faith is apart from works done in obedience to the law. We do not believe that we can earn anything, but that Christ’s obedience produced a righteousness which is imputed to us, and received by faith alone.

Furthermore, we walk by faith, not by sight. We live our lives in conscious dependence and trust in the one who loved us and gave himself up for us. Faith becomes the fountainhead of all the Christian graces that characterize our lives. More than



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Mnemonics...

- 11/7 Men and Boys Breakfast
- 11/10 Session Meeting
- 11/14 Harvest Home
- 11/25 Thanksgiving Service
- 11/26 Thanksgiving Day Football Game
- 11/29 Missionary David Robbins visit

Continued on last page...

Here is our November 2020 E-Newsletter – We trust it blesses you!



As I sit to write this article I decided to share a story I read during my devotion time this morning. I hope it touches and inspires you like it did me. It so spoke to me about who we, in this ministry, get to meet on a daily basis.

From Outcast to Evangelist

I was perhaps eleven or twelve years old when my dad came home one evening with some somber news. “They found Claude under a bridge this morning . . . he was frozen as hard as an ice cube.”

Those words continue to ring in my ears all these years later. Claude was a homeless man who wandered in and out of our small southern Oregon logging town while riding an old ten-speed bicycle and carrying the biggest pack of earthly possessions you can imagine. I’m still amazed the man could pedal his bike without falling over under that load.

I’m sad to say that my friends and I referred to him as Dirt Claude due to the fact that he was filthy and carried the stench of someone who rarely saw a shower or bath. Though he couldn’t have been more than thirty years old, Claude was missing nearly all of his teeth. This didn’t prevent him from indulging in large wads of chewing tobacco, witnessed by the dark brown juices that dripped off his chin.

My dad chose to still show Claude dignity as a human being. If he saw Claude pedaling through town, he would pull his pickup to the side of the road where the two would talk for fifteen or twenty minutes. Before parting ways, Dad would almost always slip a twenty-dollar bill into Claude’s hand. I know because I would usually watch while slinking down into my seat for fear of being seen by my friends.

My compassionate dad might have been the last kind face Claude saw before succumbing to the elements on a cold and lonely winter night. My father’s actions eventually planted seeds of tenderness in my own heart toward those considered outcasts in society.

Upon landing on the other side of the lake, Jesus and his disciples encountered a screaming maniac who wasn’t exactly helping the local tourism industry. No one had any answers for this man consumed by his own internal storm. It was a full-blown category 5 hurricane.

When Jesus asked the man his name, an eerie voice answered, “Legion,” which indicated the amount of demons who took up residence inside. A typical Roman legion was made up of five thousand soldiers. Could it be that there were that many unclean spirits inside this poor guy? Regardless of the number, what kind of power had to be behind a man who could snap chains and smash shackles intended to subdue him?

At this point, I would have been hightailing it back to the boat. But the Son of God was about to calm his second storm of the day. In an instant, the demonic horde was evicted from their human house and now found themselves flying with pigs into the water. You might even call it the Great Swine Dive.

How do you repay someone who has taken you from a life of insanity to instant sanity? From being possessed to now being blessed? From hopeless to healed? With tears in your eyes, you beg and plead with the Teacher to allow you to follow him to the ends of the earth. “No,” Jesus said. “I’ve had special plans for you all along. You’re going to stay quite busy sharing your story with everyone here in this region.”

Only with Jesus is it possible to go from [outcast to evangelist](#) in mere minutes.

Reflection: *Do you know anyone like Claude in your area? How can you bring Jesus to the shores of outcasts in your neck of the woods?*

Continued on next page...

As a Chaplain I have met many "Claude's". Men and women who seem to go through life in the shadows of our communities. Men and women who have been looked down upon and scoffed at by other human beings. Some are fortunate to end up in a jail or prison where there is a Chaplain and volunteers that God has placed there for these souls precious to Jesus.

Praise the Lord that Jesus allows us to be a part of what He is accomplishing right before our eyes.

On behalf of the men and women who serve our community through their service as Law Enforcement and Correctional Officers and the men and women who find themselves incarcerated, "Thank You" for your many prayers that have gone heavenward on their behalf.

Because of the generous support by partners like you, outcasts are being transformed into evangelists!

***Mark Your Calendars for our 2021 Partner Banquet
April 20th, 6:00 PM Blue Harbor Conference Center***

Prayer Requests

Please pray for our many volunteers who are still not allowed in due to COVID-19 restrictions.
Please pray for the incarcerated and their families, especially during this stressful time.
Pray for everyone! As you've heard and maybe said, *we're all in this together.*
Pray for the Church to shine brightly for Jesus.

- Ministry Needs -
Please help!!

Your continued prayers

As I mentioned in last month's newsletter, I give out BRAND NEW underclothing items to inmates who otherwise would not have basic items such as underwear and socks. I am in need of the following items:

Men's boxer briefs: sizes - M, L, XL & 2X

**Long Sleeved t-shirts/sweat shirts (crew neck, no writing or graphics)
sizes - M, L, XL, 2X - for both men and women**

Men's socks (cotton crew or ankle socks)

Women's Sports bras: sizes S, M, L, XL, 2X

Did you know that you can donate online?

If you would like to financially support the Good News Team in Sheboygan, you can give directly to Good News by visiting our website, www.goodnewsjail.org

- select "Give Now"

- select the amount you want to give

- where it shows "designation" scroll down to 072 Sheboygan County,

This will go directly for supporting the Good News Chaplain in Sheboygan County.

As we will be celebrating "Thanksgiving" this month, I pray that Jesus uses us to share the good news of the Gospel with others. I pray that our encounters with others will cause them to well up with "thanksgiving" to Jesus as we proclaim to them (with grateful hearts) the great things Jesus has done for us.

On behalf of our Chaplaincy Support Team and the inmates we serve, thank you to every volunteer, person & Church who support this ministry. Your sacrifice and support truly make a difference in the lives of families in our community. It is our honor to partner with you as we continue to witness heart changes in men and women through the love of Jesus. We pray for God's richest blessings upon you and your families.

May you experience God's powerful blessings this entire year and shine brightly for Jesus to this broken, dark world.! They are worth it! The world needs YOU to show them Jesus!

Mark 5:18-20 NLT

As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon possessed begged to go with him. But Jesus said, "No, go home to your family, and tell them everything the Lord has done for you and how merciful he has been." So the man started off to visit the Ten Towns of that region and began to proclaim the great things Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed at what he told them.

Blessings,



Chaplain Rick Cawthon
2923 S. 31st St
Sheboygan, WI 53081

Book Review

From Carla De Master

With All Your Heart

by A. Craig Troxel

What are some of your favorite books that you will read over again? Sometimes it is the circumstance that brought that book to mean so much, sometimes it is who recommended it. For me, *Knowing God*, by J. I. Packer, read in the hospital for the first time; *Hidden Art* by Edith Schaeffer, read early in our marriage; the 5 volumes of commentary of *John* by J. M. Boice are a few of mine. Now *With All Your Heart* is added to this list. Ivan received this as a gift from the pastoral care committee of our denomination. He read through it quickly and said, "Carla, you will enjoy this."

Another question: What is man's chief end?

To glorify God and enjoy Him forever. WSC question 1.

A book that helps do that is *With All Your Heart*. I will quote one of the recommendations in the book because it is so well written:

"Here is a devotional study of the heart that reflects the pulse of the whole Bible. Craig Troxel offers an anatomy of the thinking, yearning, and acting of the heart. He employs the surgical tool of Scripture to address the sins of the heart, and brings the reader to the Great Physician and Keeper of the heart. Would you like to meet a strong and sufficient Savior anew and afresh? Read *With All Your Heart*." Chad Van Dixhorn, Professor of Church History, WTS.

Marveling at God's love for me and fellow believers through reading this book, sometimes with tears, motivates me to want to love Him with all my heart.

Carla

Treasurer Update as of [9/30/2020](#):

We started the year with -\$3,365.12 in the General Fund and as of 9/30 we have a balance of \$10,458.94 with \$8,000.00 of this increasing being a transfer from the Capital Fund back in January. While the General Fund has increased, as of 9/30 we are \$485.39 short from a budget perspective and we have two larger expenses still coming up before the close of the year.

As of 9/30 the Benevolence Fund has a balance of -\$110.00 and a shortfall next to our budget of \$763.75.

“O God, we praise Thee for keeping us till this
day, and for the full assurance that Thou wilt
never let us go. ”

C.H. Spurgeon

November Birthdays

Gabe Froh 30th



November Anniversaries

Jay & Gail Buyze
November 6th 49 Years





Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ

November 2020

Grace OPC



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7 Men and Boys Fellowship Breakfast
8	9	10 Session Meeting	11	12	13	14 Harvest Home
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 Thanksgiving Service	26 Thanksgiving Day Football Game	27	28
29 Missionary David Robbins Visit	30					

Church Office:
4930 Green Valley Ln
Sheboygan, WI 53083

Phone: 920-565-2160
Website:
graceopcsheboygan.com
Email:
graceopc@tds.net
revbriandjong@gmail.com

Pumpkin Pecan Cobbler

Ingredients

For the cobbler:

- 1 cup + 3 tablespoons all purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons [baking powder](#)
- 1/2 teaspoon [salt](#)
- 3/4 cup [granulated sugar](#)
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon [nutmeg](#)
- 1/2 teaspoon [cloves](#)
- 1/2 cup pumpkin puree
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1/4 cup melted butter or vegetable oil
- 1 1/2 teaspoons [vanilla](#)

For the topping:

- 1/2 cup [granulated sugar](#)
- 1/2 cup [brown sugar](#)
- 1/4 cup chopped pecans
- 1 1/2 cups very hot water

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. In a medium sized bowl, stir together flour, baking powder, salt, sugar and spices. Set aside.
3. In a smaller bowl, stir pumpkin, milk, melted butter and vanilla together to combine. Pour wet ingredients into dry ingredients and mix to create a thick batter. Pour into a small 8-inch casserole dish with high sides.
4. In a separate bowl, stir sugar, brown sugar and pecans together. Spread over the top of the batter evenly. Pour hot water over the entire thing {WITHOUT STIRRING A THING!} and bake for 40 minutes or once the middle is set. {Be sure to place on a baking sheet incase it bubbles over.} Cool 5-10 minutes before serving. Serve with more pecans and vanilla ice cream.



“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.”

Matthew 5:6



Showing forth the
excellencies of Jesus
Christ

Grace OPC

Church Office:
4930 Green Valley Ln
Sheboygan, WI 53083

Phone: 920-565-2160
Website: graceopcsheboygan.com
Email:
graceopc@tds.net
revbriandejong@gmail.com

Spurgeon Corner

“Be thankful unto him, and bless his name.”

Psalm 100:4

Our Lord would have all his people rich in high and happy thoughts concerning his blessed person. Jesus is not content that his brethren should think meanly of him; it is his pleasure that his espoused ones should be delighted with his beauty. We are not to regard him as a bare necessary, like to

bread and water, but as a luxurious delicacy, as a rare and ravishing delight. To this end he has revealed himself as the “pearl of great price” in its peerless beauty, as the “bundle of myrrh” in its refreshing fragrance, as the “rose of Sharon” in its lasting perfume, as the “lily” in its spotless purity.

As a help to high thoughts of Christ, remember the estimation that Christ is had in beyond the skies, where things are measured by the right standard. Think how God esteems the Only Begotten, his unspeakable gift to us. Consider what the angels think of him, as they count it their highest honour to veil their faces at his feet. Consider what the blood-washed think of him, as day without night they sing his well deserved praises. High thoughts of Christ will enable us to act consistently with our relations towards him. The more loftily we see Christ enthroned, and the more lowly we are when bowing before the foot of the throne, the more truly shall we be prepared to act our part towards him. Our Lord Jesus desires us to think well of him, that we may submit cheerfully to his authority. High thoughts of him increase our love. Love and esteem go together. Therefore, believer, think much of your Master’s excellencies. Study him in his primeval glory, before he took upon himself your nature! Think of the mighty love which drew him from his throne to die upon the cross! Admire him as he conquers all the powers of hell! See him risen, crowned, glorified! Bow before him as the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the mighty God, for only thus will your love to him be what it should.

Evening November 5th, C.H. Spurgeon

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anything else, we are “believers.”

In our own generation, it seems that many are throwing away any vestiges of a belief in God. We are surrounded by faithless pagans who don’t believe anything. This can only produce despair and hopelessness. This is the current that is carrying our culture along – a rejection of faith in Jesus Christ.

It is absolutely essential that we do not allow ourselves to be dragged along in this faithless and hopeless current. We must stand firm in our trust and reliance upon God. We must assert our faith boldly, and profess it clearly before the world.

By so doing, we can shine like stars in a dark and depraved generation. More than ever, our

testimony as believers is crucial. By your faith you can point others to the only sovereign Lord and Savior of lost sinners, our Lord Jesus Christ!