



REFLECTIONS

Grace
OPC

What's Going On With Our Reformation Conference?

By Pastor Brian De Jong

In our continuing series on What's Going On at Grace Church, we turn to our annual Reformation Conference. You may not have heard much about this year's conference, so I want to tell you that info. But I also want to review why we do these conferences each year.

Ten years ago we had our first Reformation Conference featuring Dr. John Carrick. Traveling from Greenville, South Carolina, Dr. Carrick came and spoke to us about two theologians – Martin Luther and Jonathan Edwards. He also preached on Justification by Faith and Jesus Christ, the propitiation for our sins. Those were memorable presentations and have remained among the most popular on our Sermonaudio website.



The purpose behind it then, and now, is to emphasize the continuing relevance of the Protestant Reformation of the 1500s. That great movement of God's Spirit changed the world for good, as the glorious gospel of salvation by grace through faith in Christ was rediscovered. We strongly believe these things to be of ongoing importance for our day and age. Hence, we sought to promote sound theology that will glorify God and edify God's people.

Since that initial conference, we've invited a series of faithful men to teach and preach at our conference, including Tony Curto, Alan Strange, David Murray, Bebo Elkin, B.J. Gorrell, Robert Godfrey, Craig Troxel, Don Carson and Bill Edgar. Their presentations have taught us about the

Reformation in the Netherlands, Scotland, France and the U.S. We've learned about the Synod of Dort and the Westminster Assembly. We've also tackled topics like Missions and Faith and Doubt.

Another purpose of our conference has been to provide opportunities for our congregation and the visitors from both our community and our Presbytery to hear some excellent preaching. None of these men has disappointed us. While the Saturday lectures have been informative and edifying, the preaching of God's word on the Lord's Day has been superb.

Still another reason for holding this conference is to provide spiritual and theological leadership for our region. In a time when many churches are backing away from Reformed distinctives and downplaying a Reformed identity, we are seeking to be boldly proclaiming Reformed theology to our world.

Beyond the local and regional impact, we post all of our Reformation Conference audio files on the internet at our Sermonaudio website (sermonaudio.com/gracesheboygan) which is mirrored on our church website www.graceopcsheboygan.com. This allows people from all over the world to take advantage of our past conferences. These remain very

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October 2019

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Mnemonics...

- *Ladies' Presbyterial at Bethel-Oostburg, October 5th*
- *Sub and Game Night, October 11th*
- *Men and Boys' Leadership Breakfast, October 26th*

Reformation Conference 2019

Saturday, November 2nd

9:00 - Charles Hodge of Princeton: Another Theologian of the Holy Spirit

10:30 - Recovering the Spirituality of the Church, with Reference to Charles Hodge

Sunday, November 3rd

9:00am - "Pressing On in the Race" (Hebrews 12:1-3)

5:00pm - "Uzziah and Knowing One's Place" (2 Chronicles 26:1-23)

A Bit About Our Guest Speaker...



Our Speaker is Dr. Alan Strange, Professor of Church History at Mid America Reformed Seminary in Dyer, Indiana. He is also an Associate Pastor at New Covenant Community OPC in Joliet, Illinois, frequently preaching there or speaking in other church and conference settings. Professor Strange has done extensive youth and college student work over the course of his ministry and has published historical works for use in Christian education and home schooling. He has also published several articles on colonial American intellectual history and the history of American Presbyterianism.

10 Things You Should Know about Reformed Theology

by: Paul M. Smalley, Joel R. Beeke

1. Reformed theology celebrates the glory of God.

The heart and soul of Reformed theology is the glory of the triune God (Ps. 96:3; John 17:1). For this reason, it is often called “God-centered” theology. B. B. Warfield said, “The Calvinist, in a word, is the man who sees God. . . God in nature, God in history, God in grace. Everywhere he sees God in His mighty stepping, everywhere he feels the working of His mighty arm, the throbbing of His mighty heart.” The magnificent obsession of Reformed Christianity, and indeed the very purpose for which mankind exists, is “to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever,” as the Westminster Shorter Catechism says.

2. Reformed theology uses logic, but takes its stand on the Bible.

We must use logic to communicate clearly and coherently. Otherwise, we speak in empty riddles that darken people’s minds instead of bringing light. However, human wisdom cannot lead us to God (1 Cor. 1:21). God is so much greater than we are, and his ways so much higher than ours, that we can only know him truly as he makes himself known in his Word (Isa. 55:6–11). Therefore, Reformed theology builds all of its doctrines upon the study and interpretation of the Bible, the written Word of God (Isa. 8:20). John Owen said, “The student of theology must demonstrate by his life the absolute authority of the Scriptures, and show himself devoutly submitting his own will and judgment to the authority of the Bible in all matters.

3. Reformed theology helps us to understand and apply all Scripture.

In Reformed exegesis and hermeneutics, context is king. The largest context is what the whole Bible teaches on the particular topic at hand. Since all Scripture is inspired or “breathed out” by God (2 Tim. 3:16), the Bible presents a coherent message on each point of its doctrine and ethics. Reformed theology helps us by providing a systematic presentation of biblical truth so that we can interpret Scripture with Scripture (“the analogy of Scripture”). The Westminster Confession of Faith says, “The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself: and therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold, but one), it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly.”

4. Reformed theology is historical and confessional.

Tradition can be the bane or blessing of the church. Tradition hurts the church when we elevate it to divine authority (Matt. 15:6–9) but helps the church when each generation receives, examines, and passes on what our predecessors learned from the prophetic and apostolic word (2 Tim. 2:2). Innovation can be very helpful for technology, but in Christian doctrine we should seek the “old paths” (Jer. 6:16) in order to hold to “the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). Reformed theology informs our faith with centuries-old Christian doctrinal standards such as the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Canons of Dort, the Westminster Confession and Catechisms, and the Second London Baptist Confession.

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5. Reformed theology holds to ancient catholic orthodoxy.

Reformed theology does not depart from our ancient Christian heritage but affirms the catholic, orthodox doctrines of God and Christ that form the backbone of the great confessional tradition of worldwide Christianity. Though the Reformers were excommunicated by the Roman Catholic Church, they did not cast off the Trinitarian faith of the councils of Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon. They affirmed the doctrines that God is three persons in one divine nature (Matt. 3:16–17; 28:19), and that God the Son took a truly human nature without ceasing to be fully God—two natures in one incarnate person (John 1:1, 14). Reformed theologians have proven ardent defenders of the orthodox doctrines of God and Christ against heresies old and new because those doctrines are revealed in God’s Word.

6. Reformed theology exalts Jesus Christ as our only Mediator.

Christ is everything to believers (Col. 3:11). The Holy Scriptures teach us to “count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord” (Phil. 3:8). Earlier we noted that Reformed theology is God-centered; here we clarify that it is centered on the triune God who comes to us through the only Mediator, Jesus Christ. The Puritans portrayed the gospel as the greatest love story ever told—the Father’s heavenly match of his perfect Son with his fallen and sinful bride, the church. They traced in glowing detail his mediatorial office as the Prophet, Priest, and King of his people. The knowledge of Christ is a topic of immeasurable glory, “the unsearchable riches of Christ” (Eph. 3:8). John Flavel said, “The study of Jesus Christ is the most noble subject that ever a soul spent itself upon. . . God’s heart is opened to men in Christ.”

7. Reformed theology presents a comprehensive worldview—more than five points.

When people ask, “What is Reformed theology?” they often receive an answer couched in terms of “the five points of Calvinism,” the doctrines of total human depravity, unconditional divine election, Christ’s death for the elect, God’s sovereignty in saving them, and their final perseverance in grace to eternal life and glory. Or, they might hear the five *sola* (Latin for “alone”) principles: standing on Scripture alone, we are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, to the glory of God alone.

However, a survey of a Reformed catechism or systematic theology shows that there is much more to Reformed theology than the doctrine of salvation. Reformed theology also includes the biblical doctrines of God’s eternal being and works of creation, providence, and government; of the origin of mankind, our nature, our fall into sin and its consequences; of Christ’s glorious person, natures, offices, incarnation, sufferings, and death, and the glory that followed; of the Spirit and his work in creation and redemption; of the church, its constitution, mission, and ordinances; of the Christian’s experience of grace, his life of thankful service in obedience to God’s law, and the ministry of prayer; and finally, the glorious things that are yet to come as God accomplishes all his holy will. Reformed theology is a proclamation of “the whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:27) insofar as God has revealed it for us to know (Deut. 29:29).

8. Reformed theology breathes a spirit of practical godliness.

God-centered teaching calls us to God-centered living. The Word aims to inculcate the wisdom of God's Word through faith in Christ (2 Tim. 3:15), and the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord (Prov. 9:10). Though it is possible to do theology in a spiritually arid, merely intellectual manner, Reformed theology has historically aimed at the same Paul had in his teaching: "love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith" (1 Tim. 1:5). Reformed divines often speak of "piety" as a synonym for "true religion." John Calvin said, "Indeed, we shall not say that, properly speaking, God is known where there is no religion or piety. . . I call 'piety' that reverence joined with love of God which the knowledge of his benefits induces." Although Reformed theology can be taught on a high academic level, it aims to expound the knowledge of God in such terms that children can practice it at home and adults, in their trades (Col. 3:20–25). Gisbertus Voetius, a renowned professor of Reformed theology, regularly gave his time to catechizing orphans. The English Puritans encouraged people with no more than a basic education to have family devotions so that God's Word permeates all of life (Deut. 6:7). The men of Old Princeton held that "truth is in order to goodness."

9. Reformed theology promotes evangelism and missions.

Reformed doctrine has been treasured by some of the greatest evangelists of all time, such as George Whitefield and Jonathan Edwards. The missionary expansion of the church came as God's answer to the prayers of Reformed and Presbyterian churches, taught by the Westminster Directory for the Public Worship of God to intercede for "the propagation of the gospel and kingdom of Christ to all nations." Reformed theology is a worldview of missionary optimism, because Christ shall surely save all whom the Father gave him, all the sheep for whom he died, as they hear his voice calling to them in the gospel (John 6:37–39; 10:11, 16, 26–29). Such Reformed optimism prompted William Carey to say that we must "expect great things" and "attempt great things" in our missionary endeavors. Furthermore, the God-centered perspective of Reformed Christianity offers the highest motive that can sustain an evangelist or missionary: "for his name's sake they went forth" (3 John 7).

10. Reformed theology sustains faithful preaching and evokes continual praise.

The Reformers and Puritans theologized in their preaching and preached their theology. The Reformers and Puritans took their cue as preachers from the apostle Paul: "I believed, and therefore have I spoken" (2 Cor. 4:13). This was not merely a method they embraced, but the fruit of their encounter with the living God through the truths of his Word. Like Paul, they preached God's Word as in God's presence (2 Cor. 2:17; 2 Tim. 4:1–2). And like Paul, their theology overflowed in blazing doxology (Eph. 1:3–14). Thus, Reformed theology is a grand assertion that "of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever" (Rom. 11:36). Wilhelmus à Brakel said, "God possesses within Himself all glory and worthiness to be served," and therefore, true godliness is "to live unto God at all times and in all things with all that he is and is capable of performing," for "He is God and by virtue of His nature this is His worthy due."

2019 Women's Presbyterial

A Courageous Faith

Speaker: Liz Tolsma

Writer, Editor, & Speaker

Saturday, October 5, 2019

9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Bethel OPC

609 Center Street, Oostburg, WI 53070

A continental breakfast and lunch will be served.

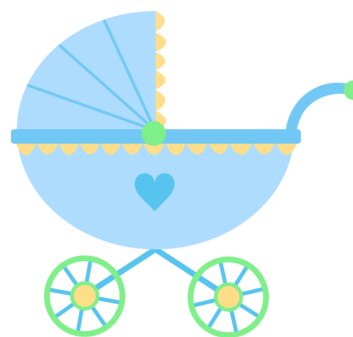
Accommodations and nursery available.

A collection will be taken for a donation to a special project
in the OPC and to cover Presbyterial expenses.

For more information contact: Jennifer DeRu at

jennifer.deru@comcast.net.

Anchor of Hope Pregnancy Center Update



There is no such thing as "a typical day" in the life of a pregnancy medical center. Each new day brings opportunities, challenges, joys, struggles, and so much more. Just this week, we had the joy of realizing that two moms who were served in 2018 had actually carried to term. We had lost contact with them which caused concern (and prayer) regarding these mom's final decision.

Just this week, staff experienced a frustrating technology day where multiple devices that we routinely depend upon to serve clients well, went on the fritz. We blamed these tactics on the enemy. But issues were resolved and every client was served.

Just this week, staff were blessed to have an unexpected conversation with a pregnancy client about life for her baby, God's tender care through an abuse/assault, and His guiding this client to a safer place in life.

Just this week, we were blessed to enjoy our first full week of functional center usage following a recent construction project. This project allows separation of clients who visit us for medical reasons from the joy, activity, and unexpected interruptions presented by the numerous little ones we enjoy each week.

Just this week, we finalized a few more details for Anchor of Hope's 5th Annual Fundraising event. There is still plenty more to do, but, progress was made.

Just this week, close to 40 clients walked through our doors to receive the free, confidential, and professional services offered at Anchor of Hope Health Center.

Just this week, moms and dads received free diapers, wipes, clothing and other needs while learning valuable parenting and life skills.

Just this week, numerous hugs were given, smiles were shared, words of hope and encouragement expressed, tears were shed, and major decisions were made.

Just this week, staff were privileged to hear the words, "I can already see how this is changing my life and bringing me back to God," during an appointment.

Do you see the pattern? There is no "typical" day at Anchor of Hope and I would venture to guess that your life is much the same. We show up daily and obediently to serve one another, while being available to God. In the midst of all that – life happens, both the good and the not-so-good. If we will allow, God can use our ordinary for His purposes. Throw in just a small measure of faith and the results can be worthy of celebration!

For those of us privileged to work and volunteer at Anchor of Hope, we joy in serving. For those who walk with us, we take delight in your ministry partnership. Thank you for being a part of each and every 'just this week' kind of days. We appreciate you more than you know!

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ANCHOR OF HOPE
5th Annual Fundraising Banquet

Save the Date

"WALKING IN FAITH"

Tuesday, October 8, 2019
6:00pm

The Village at 170
Kohler, WI

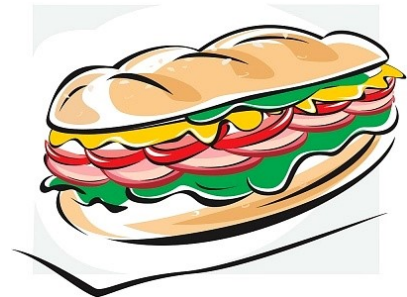
Guest Speaker
Father Matthew Widder



Sub and Game Night

You have been to taco and game night, now how about sub sandwiches and game night!?

Everyone is invited to the fall version of game night on **Friday, October 11**, at 6:00 pm. We will be serving sub sandwiches. Those attending can bring a side or dessert. Please see the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board. Bring your favorite games and join us!



October Birthdays

Roger Arndt	3rd
Shaun Froh	9th
Jason Will	19th
Carla De Master	31st



October Anniversaries

Randy & Lynn Jensema
~October 8th, 31 years~

Mark & Virginia Berenschot
~October 23rd, 48 years~

Steve & Moni Doro
~October 10th, 38 years~

Chris & Sandy Kaeiser
~October 25th, 16 years~





Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ

Grace OPC

October 2019



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4 Ordination/ Installation of Nathan Strom at Bethel 7:00 pm	5 Ladies' Presbyterial at Bethel-Oostburg
6	7	8 Session meeting	9	10	11 Sub Sandwich and Game Night 6pm	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26 Men & Boys Leadership Breakfast
27	28	29	30	31		

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Caramel for Apples

Ingredients:

- 1/ ½ cups white sugar
- 1 cup light corn syrup
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1/2 cup butter at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Instructions:

- In a large heavy saucepan, combine the white sugar, corn syrup, and salt. Bring to a boil and heat to between 234 and 240 degrees F (112 to 116 degrees C), or until a small amount of syrup dropped into cold water forms a soft ball that flattens when removed from the water and placed on a flat surface.
- Stir in the butter and heavy cream carefully - the mixture will bubble up. Remove from the heat and stir in the vanilla. Cool slightly before dipping apples or other fruit; caramel should cling to a spoon and drip slowly. Let apples set on waxed paper or parchment.



*“For He
has satisfied
the thirsty
soul,
and the
hungry soul
He has filled
with what
is good.”*



Showing forth the
excellencies of Jesus
Christ

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Spurgeon Corner

"He had married an Ethiopian woman."

Numbers 12:1

Strange choice of Moses, but how much more strange the choice of him who is a prophet like unto Moses, and greater than he! Our Lord, who is fair as the lily, has entered into marriage union with one who confesses herself to be black, because the sun has looked upon her. It is the wonder of angels that the love of Jesus should be set upon poor, lost, guilty men. Each believer must, when filled with a sense of Jesus' love, be also overwhelmed with astonishment that such love should be lavished on an object so utterly unworthy of it. Knowing as we do our secret guiltiness, unfaithfulness, and black-heartedness, we are dissolved in grateful admiration of the matchless freeness and sovereignty of grace. Jesus must have found the cause of his love in his own heart, he could not have found it in us, for it is not there. Even since our conversion we have been black, though grace has made us comely. Holy Rutherford said of himself what we must each subscribe to—"His relation to me is, that I am sick, and he is the Physician of whom I stand in need. Alas! how often I play fast and loose with Christ! He bindeth, I loose; he buildeth, I cast down; I quarrel with Christ, and he agreeth with me twenty times a day!" Most tender and faithful Husband of our souls, pursue thy gracious work of conforming us to thine image, till thou shalt present even us poor Ethiopians unto thyself, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. Moses met with opposition because of his marriage, and both himself and his spouse were the subjects of an evil eye. Can we wonder if this vain world opposes Jesus and his spouse, and especially when great sinners are converted? for this is ever the Pharisee's ground of objection, "This man receiveth sinners." Still is the old cause of quarrel revived, "Because he had married an Ethiopian woman."

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GRACEOPCSHEBOYGAN.COM



Evening, October 6th, C.H. Spurgeon

Front Page Concluded...

popular and get regular downloads.

One last purpose is for outreach. We have seen several people discover our church through our conference. Several have attended our services as a result of being at our conference. While a theology conference isn't going to attract many non-Christians, it does appeal to believers who are starving to death for good nourishing preaching and teaching.

This year we are delighted to have Dr. Alan Strange with us again. He will be teaching on Charles Hodge, the great Presbyterian theologian of Princeton Seminary in the 1800's. Dr. Strange has studied Hodge thoroughly, and is one of the

foremost experts on Charles Hodge in the Reformed world today.

On Saturday morning, Dr. Strange will deliver two lectures on Hodge, emphasizing the Holy Spirit and the 'Spirituality of the Church.' On Sunday morning he will preach on "Pressing on in the Race" from Hebrews 12:1-3. In the evening he will preach from 2 Chronicles 26 on King Uzziah.

This is a great opportunity to invite a friend. Posters will be available for you to distribute to individuals, or to put up around the community.