



West Suffolk Epistle



Association of Reformed Baptist Churches of America



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West Suffolk Baptist Church
“Thoughtfully Reformed - Redemptively Relevant”

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7 Things Your Church Needs From You ***October 13, 2014***

Not too long ago I had the opportunity to speak to a gathering of young adults from several churches across our city. I chose to speak about how any Christian (not only young adults) can make a church better and stronger. Here are some of the things I came up with: 7 things your church needs from you.

Your church needs you to...

1. Be Humble

There is no character quality more important than humility. While humility does not come naturally to any of us, it can be learned, because here's the thing: Humility isn't a feeling or an attitude—it's action. If you want to learn humility, you need to act humble. Here are 3 quick tips on becoming humble:

- Find mature Christians who exemplify humility and spend time around them. Learn from them and learn to be like them.
- Volunteer for the lowliest of tasks. Don't ask to be in the public eye when you serve, but be content to stay in the back. Find joy in doing the lowliest jobs and do them when and where only Jesus will see.
- Get to know Jesus. It was Jesus who said, “Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.” (Matthew 23:12). And it was Jesus who humbled himself the deepest and was exalted the highest.

2. Prioritize Church

Every church has people who make the public gatherings of the church a low priority. These are the people who only come to church when it is convenient and who use any excuse to miss a day or miss a service. Every church desperately needs people who will make the public gatherings a top priority. Today is the day to begin elevating the importance of church in your life.

Let me give you two reasons:

- First, you need your church. God made you part of your church for your good. You cannot do life on your own. You aren't strong enough, you aren't wise enough, you aren't mature enough, you aren't godly enough. Without the beautifully ordinary means of grace you encounter in the church, you won't make it. Without the support of your brothers and sisters, you won't make it.



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7 Things Your Church Needs From You - Continued

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- Second, your church needs you. God made you part of your church for the good of others. 1 Peter 4 says, “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.” God has gifted you to be part of your church, and those gifts are to be used for the good of other people. So prioritize church as an expression of generosity toward others.

3. Consider giving God a day

Why don’t you consider setting aside an entire day of the week and dedicating it to the Lord in a special way? We believe that the Old Testament law has been fulfilled in Christ, though there is some disagreement among Christians about the implications. But even if you believe that the Sabbath command is no longer binding on us, there is still value in learning from it.

It completely changes Sunday when you give the entire day to the Lord and his people. Now you’re not having to decide whether to take that class or join that club that meets Sunday afternoon. You’re not skipping church during exam time because you’ve got studying to do. You’re not leaving early to get home before the football game starts. Instead, you’re leaving behind all the cares of life, and even many of the joys of life, and dedicating an entire day to worship, to fellowship, and to serving others.

4. Live Like a Christian All Week Long

It is easy enough to be a Christian at church, but then you get home. But then you go to work. But then you go to school. And then you’re surrounded by people acting ungodly, and even worse, you’re left alone with your own thoughts and your own desires. Yet your church needs you to live like a Christian all week long.

Each of us faces different challenges and different temptations. But one key to living like a Christian all week long is spending time in Word and prayer every day. Make this a priority no matter how busy you are and no matter how crazy life seems. Make this something you do no matter how badly you’ve sinned and how little you feel like doing it. Pray day-by-day not only for yourself, but for your church. Take that membership directly and pray through it from A to Z, and then start over. Make your devotional life something you do not just for the good of yourself, but for the good of others.

5. Get to Know People Not Like You

Churches are involuntary communities—we don’t get to pick who comes to them, God does. So what we have to do is learn to live with these people and learn to love these people, even when they are very different from us. “For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.” If your church is divided so that all the young adults hang out together and all the older folk hang out together, or if all the people with accents hang out together and all the people without accents hang out together, that makes a statement about the gospel—that the gospel is not big enough and powerful enough to really make people love one another even though they are different.



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7 Things Your Church Needs From You - Continued

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So commit to get to know people not like you. There is no reason you shouldn't be able to say that some of your best and closest relationships are with people who are very different from you.

6. Learn Generosity

Few things reveal the heart better than money. Money has an amazing way of displaying what you really believe and what you really value. No matter who and what stage of life you are at, there is no better time than now to learn to be generous with your money. Here's what the Bible says: "Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." You must give, and you must learn to do it cheerfully.

Here are just 2 quick tips:

- Remember that it's not your money. The money belongs to God—he just gives it to you to manage it. And he means for you to manage it well and to His glory.
- Give to the Lord first. I know people who say they can't give to the church, and yet they've got a new cell phone and are carrying a cup of Starbucks into church every week. That doesn't compute. Learn to give the first and best of your money to the Lord. The harder that seems, the more you need to do it.

7. Be a Great Church Member

Make yourself invaluable to your church, and do this by serving other people. I love reading about Dorcas, the woman Peter raised from the dead who was described as being "full of good works and acts of charity" (see Acts 9). "When Peter arrived, they took him to the upper room. All the widows stood beside him weeping and showing tunics and other garments that Dorcas made while she was with them." Dorcas was a great church member. She loved people so much, and did so much good to them, that the whole community mourned when she died.

Would that be you? Would the people of your church weep as they remember you for all the good you did to others? Find the place you can serve your church, and serve there without fail, without excuse, without requiring praise and accolades. Do it for the good of others and the glory of God. ~ *Tim Challies at Challies.com*

Why You May Be Tempted To Neglect Your Church

October 20, 2014

Every pastor encounters people who have given up, or are tempted to give up, meeting together with God's people. At any given time just about every church has some people who are in danger of drifting away, and no longer participating in the life of the church.



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Why You May Be Tempted To Neglect Your Church - Continued

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To do so is to directly disobey Hebrews 10:24-25 which says, “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” This passage warns us not to neglect local church fellowship and participation, and also hints at the reasons we may do so.

Here are two reasons you may be tempted to neglect meeting together with God’s people.

You Forget What You Bring

Hebrews 10:25 warns Christians against leaving local church fellowship, and the verse immediately prior gives the reason. As Christians, we all equally bear the responsibility to stir up one another to love and good works. We are to provoke one another to act in love and we are to provoke one another to promote good works. And the simple fact is that we cannot do these things if we are not together.

In the background of the book of Hebrews is the New Testament teaching that we, as Christians, are like a body—Christ’s body. In Romans 12 Paul says, “For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.” In some way God looks upon Christians just like we look upon the many parts of one body—many parts, but one person. In some way God looks upon the local church as many parts but one body. Paul explains the same theme in 1 Corinthians and in both of these passages he draws the same application—that just as each part of the body has an important function, each Christian has an important gift. Just as each part of the body makes the body function well and as a whole, each Christian’s gift is meant to make the church function well and as a whole. There are no superfluous body parts, and there are no superfluous Christians.

When you are tempted to disassociate from the local church, whether permanently or semi-permanently or even for a lazy Sunday where you just can’t be bothered, you have forgotten what you bring to the people of your church. You have neglected to understand or believe that you, yes you!, are a crucial part of the body of Christ. You have a gift to bring, and the church is only complete when you bring it and use it.

God has made you part of the body, and the body needs you to function well. When you neglect to meet with God’s people, you deny them the gifts he has given you—gifts that bring him glory when you use them for the good of others.

You Forget What You Need

If it is true that God has gifted you to be a part of the whole, there is an important implication: God has gifted them as well.



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Why You May Be Tempted To Neglect Your Church - Continued

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You Forget What You Need

You are incomplete without your church. God has not so gifted you of all people that you can thrive and grow without the gifts he has given to others.

You are part of the body, but only a small and singular part of it. Unless you can imagine your thumb striking off on its own and building a life for itself, or unless you can imagine your appendix seceding from the body and thriving, you shouldn't imagine yourself leaving local church fellowship.

In this way neglecting to meet with God's people is a sign of overwhelming and outrageous pride. You have somehow determined either that the gifts God has given others are of no real consequence to you, or you have determined that you are so gifted that you can happily survive without. The reality, of course, is that God has made Christians to thrive and survive only in community. Lone Christians are dead Christians.

God has made you part of a body, and you need the rest of that body to function well. When you neglect to meet with God's people, you deny yourself the gifts he has given them—gifts that bring him glory when they use them for your good.

In those times where it just seems to hard to be part of a local church, and in those times where neglecting the church seems so attractive, you are forgetting what you bring and what you need. Of course you've also neglected to consider how badly you need the preaching of God's Word and the celebration of the Lord's Supper and the witnessing of baptisms and the other beautifully ordinary means of grace that God dispenses through his gathered church. But first you've forgotten that you are part of a body—a body you need, and a body that needs you. ~ *Tim Challies at Challies.com*

What Is Discernment?

Someone I know recently expressed an opinion that surprised and in some ways disappointed me. I said to myself, "I thought he would have more discernment than that."

The experience caused me to reflect on the importance of discernment and the lack of it in our world. We know that people often do not see issues clearly and are easily misled because they do not think biblically. But, sadly, one cannot help reflecting on how true this is of the church community, too.

Most of us doubtless want to distance ourselves from what might be regarded as "the lunatic fringe" of contemporary Christianity. We are on our guard against being led astray by false teachers. But there is more to discernment than this.



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What Is Discernment? - Continued

True discernment means not only distinguishing the right from the wrong; it means distinguishing the primary from the secondary, the essential from the indifferent, and the permanent from the transient. And, yes, it means distinguishing between the good and the better, and even between the better and the best.

Thus, discernment is like the physical senses; to some it is given in unusual measure as a special grace gift (1 Corinthians 12:10), but some measure of it is essential for us all and must be constantly nourished. The Christian must take care to develop his “sixth sense” of spiritual discernment. This is why the psalmist prays, “Teach me good judgment and knowledge” (Psalm 119:66).

The Nature of Discernment

But what is this discernment? The word used in Psalm 119:66 means “taste.” It is the ability to make discriminating judgments, to distinguish between, and recognize the moral implications of, different situations and courses of action. It includes the ability to “weigh up” and assess the moral and spiritual status of individuals, groups, and even movements. Thus, while warning us against judgmentalism, Jesus urges us to be discerning and discriminating, lest we cast our pearls before pigs (Matthew 7:1, 6).

A remarkable example of such discernment is described in John 2:24–25: “Jesus would not entrust himself to them ... for he knew what was in a man” (NIV).

This is discernment without judgmentalism. It involved our Lord’s knowledge of God’s Word and His observation of God’s ways with men (He, supremely, had prayed, “Teach me good judgment ... for I believe Your commandments,” Psalm 119:66). Doubtless His discernment grew as He experienced conflict with, and victory over, temptation, and as He assessed every situation in the light of God’s Word.

Jesus’s discernment penetrated to the deepest reaches of the heart. But the Christian is called to develop similar discernment. For the only worthwhile discernment we possess is that which we receive in union with Christ, by the Spirit, through God’s Word.

So discernment is learning to think God’s thoughts after Him, practically and spiritually; it means having a sense of how things look in God’s eyes and seeing them in some measure “uncovered and laid bare” (Hebrews 4:13).

The Impact of Discernment

How does this discernment affect the way we live? In four ways:

1. It acts as a means of protection, guarding us from being deceived spiritually. It protects us from being blown away by the winds of teaching that make central an element of the gospel that is peripheral or treat a particular application of Scripture as though it were Scripture’s central message.



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What Is Discernment? - Continued

2. Discernment also acts as an instrument of healing, when exercised in grace. I have known a small number of people whose ability to diagnose the spiritual needs of others has been remarkable. Such people seem able to penetrate into the heart issues someone else faces better than the person can do. Of course, this is in some ways a dangerous gift with which God has entrusted them. But when exercised in love, discernment can be the surgical scalpel in spiritual surgery that makes healing possible.
3. Again, discernment functions as a key to Christian freedom. The zealous but undiscerning Christian becomes enslaved—to others, to his own uneducated conscience, to an unbiblical pattern of life. Growth in discernment sets us free from such bondage, enabling us to distinguish practices that may be helpful in some circumstances from those that are mandated in all circumstances. But in another way, true discernment enables the free Christian to recognize that the exercise of freedom is not essential to the enjoyment of it.
4. Finally, discernment serves as a catalyst to spiritual development: “The mocker seeks wisdom and finds none, but knowledge comes easily to the discerning” (Proverbs 14:6, NIV). Why? Because the discerning Christian goes to the heart of the matter. He knows something about everything, namely that all things have their common fountain in God. Increase in knowledge, therefore, does not lead to increased frustration, but to a deeper recognition of the harmony of all God’s works and words.

How is such discernment to be obtained? We receive it as did Christ Himself—by the anointing of the Spirit, through our understanding of God’s Word, by our experience of God’s grace, and by the progressive unfolding to us of the true condition of our own hearts.

That is why we also should pray, “I am your servant; give me discernment” (Psalm 119:125, NIV).

This excerpt is taken from *In Christ Alone* by Dr. Sinclair Ferguson.

Profile of Martin Luther



Martin Luther (November 10, 1483 - February 18, 1546) was a Christian theologian and Augustinian monk whose teachings inspired the Protestant Reformation and deeply influenced the doctrines of Protestant and other Christian traditions. Martin Luther was born to Hans and Margaretha Luder on 10 November 1483 in Eisleben, Germany and was baptized the next day on the feast of St. Martin of Tours, after whom he was named. Luther’s call to the Church to return to the teachings of the Bible resulted in the formation of new traditions within Christianity and the Counter-Reformation in the Roman Catholic Church, culminating at the Council of Trent.



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Profile of Martin Luther - Continued

His translation of the Bible also helped to develop a standard version of the German language and added several principles to the art of translation. Luther's hymns sparked the development of congregational singing in Christianity. His marriage, on June 13, 1525, to Katharina von Bora, a former nun, began the tradition of clerical marriage within several Christian traditions.

Martin Luther's early life

Martin Luther's father owned a copper mine in nearby Mansfeld. Having risen from the peasantry, his father was determined to see his son ascend to civil service and bring further honor to the family. To that end, Hans sent young Martin to schools in Mansfeld, Magdeburg and Eisenach. At the age of seventeen in 1501 he entered the University of Erfurt. The young student received his Bachelor's degree after just one year in 1502! Three years later, in 1505, he received a Master's degree. According to his father's wishes, Martin enrolled in the law school of that university. All that changed during a thunderstorm in the summer of 1505. A lightning bolt struck near to him as he was returning to school. Terrified, he cried out, "Help, St. Anne! I'll become a monk!" Spared of his life, but regretting his words, Luther kept his bargain, dropped out of law school and entered the monastery there.

Luther's struggle to find peace with God

Young Brother Martin fully dedicated himself to monastic life, the effort to do good works to please God and to serve others through prayer for their souls. Yet peace with God escaped him. He devoted himself to fasts, flagellations, long hours in prayer and pilgrimages, and constant confession. The more he tried to do for God, it seemed, the more aware he became of his sinfulness.

Johann von Staupitz, Luther's superior, concluded the young man needed more work to distract him from pondering himself. He ordered the monk to pursue an academic career. In 1507 Luther was ordained to the priesthood. In 1508 he began teaching theology at the University of Wittenberg. Luther earned his Bachelor's degree in Biblical Studies on 9 March 1508 and a Bachelor's degree in the Sentences by Peter Lombard, (the main textbook of theology in the Middle Ages) in 1509. On 19 October 1512, the University of Wittenberg conferred upon Martin Luther the degree of Doctor of Theology.

Martin Luther's Evangelical Discovery

The demands of study for academic degrees and preparation for delivering lectures drove Martin Luther to study the Scriptures in depth. Luther immersed himself in the teachings of the Scripture and the early church. Slowly, terms like penance and righteousness took on new meaning. The controversy that broke loose with the publication of his 95 Theses placed even more pressure on the reformer to study the Bible. This study convinced him that the Church had lost sight of several central truths. To Luther, the most important of these was the doctrine that brought him peace with God. With joy, Luther now believed and taught that salvation is a gift of God's grace, received by faith and trust in God's promise to forgive sins for the sake of Christ's death on the cross. This, he believed was God's work from beginning to end.



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Profile of Martin Luther - Continued

Luther's 95 Theses

On Halloween of 1517, Luther changed the course of human history when he nailed his 95 Theses to the church door at Wittenberg, accusing the Roman Catholic church of heresy upon heresy. Many people cite this act as the primary starting point of the Protestant Reformation... though to be sure, John Wycliffe, John Hus, Thomas Linacre, John Colet, and others had already put the life's work and even their lives on the line for same cause of truth, constructing the foundation of Reform upon which Luther now built. Luther's action was in great part a response to the selling of indulgences by Johann Tetzel, a Dominican priest. Luther's charges also directly challenged the position of the clergy in regard to individual salvation. Before long, Luther's 95 Theses of Contention had been copied and published all over Europe.

Here I Stand

Luther's Protestant views were condemned as heretical by Pope Leo X in the bull Exsurge Domine in 1520. Consequently Luther was summoned to either renounce or reaffirm them at the Diet of Worms on 17 April 1521. When he appeared before the assembly, Johann von Eck, by then assistant to the Archbishop of Trier, acted as spokesman for Emperor Charles the Fifth. He presented Luther with a table filled with copies of his writings. Eck asked Luther if he still believed what these works taught. He requested time to think about his answer. Granted an extension, Luther prayed, consulted with friends and mediators and presented himself before the Diet the next day.

When the counselor put the same question to Luther the next day, the reformer apologized for the harsh tone of many of his writings, but said that he could not reject the majority of them or the teachings in them. Luther respectfully but boldly stated, "*Unless I am convinced by proofs from Scriptures or by plain and clear reasons and arguments, I can and will not retract, for it is neither safe nor wise to do anything against conscience. Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me. Amen.*"

On May 25, the Emperor issued his Edict of Worms, declaring Martin Luther an outlaw.

Luther was zealous toward the Gospel, and he wanted to protect the people of his homeland from the Jews who he believed would be harmful influences since they did not recognize Jesus as their Savior. In Luther's time, parents had a right and a duty to direct their children's marriage choices in respect to matters of faith. Likewise, Luther felt a duty to direct his German people to cling to the Jesus the Jews did not accept. It should be noted that church law was superior to civil law in Luther's day and that law said the penalty of blasphemy was death. When Luther called for the deaths of certain Jews, he was merely asking that the laws that were applied to all other Germans also be applied to the Jews. The Jews were exempt from the church laws that Christians were bound by, most notably the law against charging interest.

Martin Luther's Death

Martin Luther escaped martyrdom, and died of natural causes. His last written words were, "*Know that no one can have indulged in the Holy Writers sufficiently, unless he has governed churches for a hundred years with the prophets, such as Elijah and Elisha, John the Baptist, Christ and the apostles... We are beggars: this is true.*"



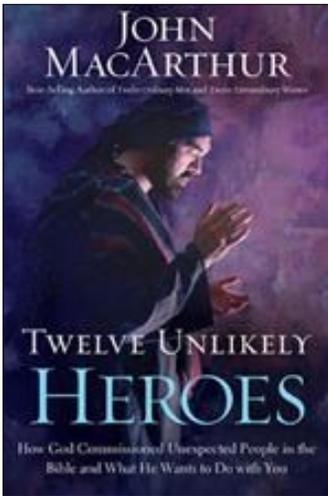
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Book Review

Twelve Unlikely Heroes

Dr. John MacArthur



Throughout Scripture the Lord often uses unlikely men and women to accomplish great things in His name—including many who didn't initially seem up to the task.

Not everyone is as talented as psalmist and king, David, or as dynamic as the apostle Paul. But our weaknesses aren't hindrances to God's purpose or plan—they're opportunities for us to depend on Him, and for Him to display His power in and through us.

In *Twelve Unlikely Heroes*, John MacArthur examines men and women who, in spite of their shortcomings and inadequacies, played pivotal roles in God's kingdom work. All of them were unimpressive, forgettable, or ill equipped in their own ways, but the Lord accomplished mighty things in them and through them just the same. Filled with fascinating insight that add color and life to familiar biblical stories and characters, *Twelve Unlikely Heroes* will encourage you in your desire and commitment to

be a useful vessel in God's hands. ~ *240 Pages*

Audio and DVD Review

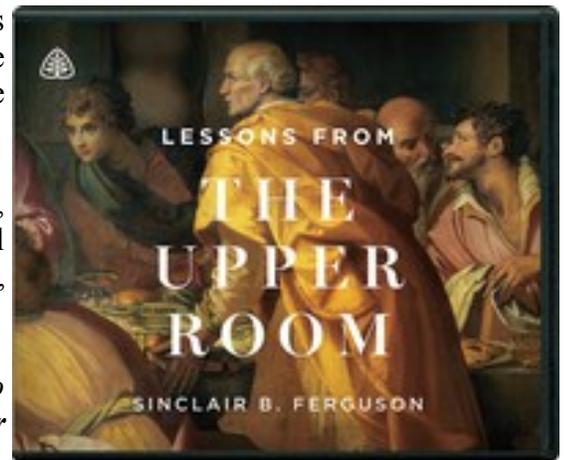
Lessons from the Upper Room

Dr. Sinclair Ferguson

Knowing the time was fast approaching for Him to depart this world, Jesus spent His final hours with His closest friends. As the disciples sat with their master, unaware of what would soon take place, Jesus served them, taught them, and prayed for them.

In this new 12-part teaching series, *Lessons from the Upper Room*, Dr. Sinclair Ferguson paints a vivid picture of the disciples' final moments with their Savior. Carefully walking through John 13-17, Dr. Ferguson reminds us of the centrality of Christ in all of life.

"The Father did not require the death of Christ to persuade Him to love us. Christ died because the Father loves us." ~ Dr. Sinclair Ferguson



Dr. Sinclair B. Ferguson is professor of systematic theology at Redeemer Seminary in Dallas. He is dean of the D. Min. program at Ligonier Academy and a teaching fellow of Ligonier Ministries.



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The True Reformers



Semper reformanda has been hijacked. It is one of the more abused, misused, and misunderstood slogans of our day. Progressives have captured and mutilated the seventeenth-century motto and have demanded that our theology, our churches, and our confessions be always changing in order to conform to our ever-changing culture. However, semper reformanda doesn't mean what they think it means.

Semper reformanda doesn't mean "always changing," "always morphing," or even "always reforming." Rather, it means "always being reformed." When it was first used, semper reformanda was part of the larger statement *ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda* (the church reformed and always being reformed). To make the statement more clear, the phrase *secundum verbum Dei* (according to the Word of God) was later added, making the statement "The church reformed and always being reformed according to the Word of God." It grew out of a pastoral concern that we as God's people would always be reformed by God's Word—that our theology would not be merely theoretical knowledge but that our theology would be known, loved, and practiced in all of life. Simply put, that our reformed theology according to God's Word would be always reforming our lives.

Fundamentally, Reformed theology is theology founded on and fashioned by God's Word. For it is God's Word that forms our theology, and it is we who are reformed by that theology as we constantly return to God's Word every day and in every generation. At its core, this is what the sixteenth-century Reformation was all about, and it's what being Reformed is all about—confessing and practicing what God's Word teaches. God's Word and God's Spirit reform the church. That said, mere men are not the true reformers, but rather they are stewards and servants of God's reformation.

In this sense, Martin Luther, John Calvin, and others were not reformers. Luther and Calvin did not boldly set out to reform the church; they humbly submitted to the reforming truth of the Word and the reforming power of the Spirit. The Word and the Spirit reformed the church in the sixteenth century, and they have been reforming the church ever since. Luther and Calvin were the ones who helped point the church back to Scripture, and Scripture alone, as the infallible authority for faith and life.

The Reformation isn't over, nor will it ever be over, because reformation—God's Word and God's Spirit reforming His church—will never end. God's Word is always powerful and God's Spirit is always working to renew our minds, transform our hearts, and change our lives. Therefore, the people of God, the church, will be always "being reformed" according to the unchanging Word of God, not according to our ever-changing culture. ~ *Burk Parsons - Editor of Tabletalk Magazine and Co-Pastor at Saint Andrews Chapel - Sanford, Florida.*



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The Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689 *Christ the Mediator - Chapter 8*

1. To give effect to His eternal purpose God chose and ordained the Lord Jesus, His only begotten Son, in accordance with the covenant into which they had entered, to be the mediator between God and man; also to be prophet, priest, king, head and savior of His church; also to be the heir of all things and judge of the world. From all eternity God had given to His Son those who were to be His progeny, and the Son engaged in time (as distinct from eternity) to redeem, call, justify, sanctify, and glorify them.
2. The divine Person who made the world, and upholds and governs all things that He has made, is the Son of God, the second Person of the Holy Trinity. He is true and eternal God, the 'brightness of the Father's glory', of the same substance (or essence) as the Father, and equal with Him. It is He who, at the appointed time, took upon Himself the nature of man, with all its essential characteristics and its common infirmities, sin excepted. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary, a woman who belonged to the tribe of Judah, the Holy Spirit coming down upon her and the power of God most High overshadowing her. And so, as the Scripture tells us, He was made of a woman, a descendant of Abraham and David. In this way it came about that the two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the divine and the human, were inseparably joined together in one Person, without the conversion of the one nature into the other, and without the mixing, as it were, of one nature with the other; in other words, without confusion. Thus the Son of God is now both true God and true man, yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and man.
3. The two natures, divine and human, being thus united in the person of God's Son, He was sanctified and anointed with the Holy Spirit to an unlimited extent, and in Him are found all treasures of wisdom and knowledge. He is replete with all that is pleasing to the Father, being holy, harmless, untouched by sin, and full of grace and truth. Thus He has become thoroughly qualified to execute the work of a mediator and surety. He did not take this work upon Himself uncalled, but was commissioned by His Father so to act. His Father also conferred upon Him full powers of jurisdiction and commanded Him to pass judgment on all.
4. The Lord Jesus most willingly undertook the office of mediator, and in order that He might discharge it He became subject to God's law, which He perfectly fulfilled. He also underwent the punishment due to us, which we should have borne and suffered, for He bore our sins and was accursed for our sakes. He endured sorrows in His soul severe beyond our conception, and most painful sufferings in His body. His death was, by crucifixion. While He remained in the state of the dead His body sustained no decay. The third day saw His resurrection in the same body in which He had suffered. In the same body also He ascended into heaven, where He sits at the right hand of His Father, interceding for His own. At the end of the world He will return to judge men and angels.
5. By His perfect obedience to God's law, and by a once-for-all offering up of Himself to God as a sacrifice through the eternal Spirit, the Lord Jesus has fully satisfied all the claims of divine justice. He has brought about reconciliation, and purchased an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those given to Him by His Father.



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The Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689 *Christ the Mediator - Chapter 8 - Continued*

6. The price of redemption was not actually paid by Christ until after His birth in this world, but the value, efficacy and benefits of His redemptive work availed for His elect in all ages successively from the beginning of the world. This was accomplished by the promises, the types and the sacrifices in which He was revealed, and which signified Him to be the woman's 'seed' (offspring) who should bruise the head of the serpent (the devil), also 'the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world'. As the Christ He is 'the same yesterday, and today, and for ever'.
7. In His work as mediator between God and men, Christ acts according to His two natures, one divine, one human, in each nature doing that which is appropriate to it. Yet by reason of the unity of His Person, that which is appropriate to one nature is, in Scripture, sometimes attributed to the Person denominated by the other nature.
8. Christ certainly and effectually applies and communicates eternal redemption to all those for whom He has obtained it. His work of intercession is on their behalf. He unites them to Himself by His Spirit; He reveals to them, in and by the Word, the mystery of salvation; He persuades them to believe and obey, governing their hearts by His Word and Spirit; He overcomes all their enemies by His almighty power and wisdom, using those methods and ways which are most agreeable to the wonderful and unsearchable appointments of His providence. All these things are carried out in His free and sovereign grace, and unconditionally, nothing of merit being foreseen by Him in the elect.
9. Christ, and Christ alone, is fitted to be mediator between God and man. He is the prophet, priest and king of the church of God. His office as mediator cannot be transferred from Him to any other, either in whole or in part.
10. Christ's threefold offices are necessary for us. Because of our ignorance we stand in need of His prophetic office; because of our estrangement from God and the imperfection of our services at their best, we need His priestly office to reconcile us to God and render us acceptable to Him; because we have turned away from God and are utterly unable to return to Him, and also because we need to be rescued and rendered secure from our spiritual adversaries, we need His kingly office to convince, subdue, draw, sustain, deliver and preserve us, until we finally enter His heavenly kingdom.

Couldn't Have Said it Better

What is your only comfort in life and in death? That I am not my own, but belong—body and soul, in life and in death—to my faithful savior Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil. He also watches over me in such a way that not a hair can fall from my head without the will of my Father in Heaven; in fact, all things must work together for my salvation. Because I belong to Him, Christ, by His Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life and makes me whole-heartedly willing and ready from now on to live for Him. (*Heidelberg Catechism, 1563*)



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“Thoughtfully Reformed - Redemptively Relevant”

WEST SUFFOLK BAPTIST CHURCH
ASSOCIATION OF REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCHES OF AMERICA

Birthday and Anniversary Corner - November 2014

Brenda Arthur - 11/1

LeAnn McPhatter - 11/10

Luke Purser - 11/15

Walt Lawrence - 11/20

Gene and Brenda Arthur - 11/22

Marlin and Sadie Halsey - 11/22

Francis and Phyllis Carter - 11/24

Baptizing Them in the Name

“I cannot think on the One without quickly being encircled by the splendor of the Three; nor can I discern the Three without being straightway carried back to the One.” ~ *Gregory of Nazianzus, On Holy Baptism (as quoted by Calvin in his Institutes).*

Which Says a Lot About How We Should Worship Now

The simplest idea of heaven, as the place of a holy God and holy angels engaged in holy occupations, carries on the face of it the necessity for a worldly, sin-loving man being thoroughly changed before he could enjoy such a state, or even bear to be in it. A man must love God, and love goodness, and love worship, and delight in praise and thanksgiving, if the eternity set before us in the Bible is not to be to him a dreary eternity in occupations for which he has no taste. For a man to enjoy heaven, he must have a new heart.” ~ *M.F. Sadler, The Second Adam and the New Birth*

Daylight Saving Time ends on Sunday November 2, 2014 at 2:00 AM. The clock is set to go back one hour at that time.

Disclaimer

The views and opinions from the contributors to this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of West Suffolk Baptist Church or it’s leadership.



West Suffolk Baptist Church

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Please submit information to Walt Lawrence by the second Sunday of the month preceding publication by e-mail, in person or at the church office. The editor reserves the right to edit for content or space. May the Father be glorified in every word.