

JOIN US FOR AN 8-WEEK STUDY OF HTPC'S

First Principles

A decorative flourish consisting of a horizontal line with a central dot and two pointed ends extending outwards.

SUNDAYS

5:45 - 7:00 PM

SEPTEMBER 13 - NOVEMBER 8

in the fellowship hall

Week 1: Theology - What Is It? Why Is It Important? (What Is a Reformed Church?)

- Where have we come from?
- Where are we going?
- Answers bearing upon this class and our church life as a whole.

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

1. A mighty fortress is our God,
a bulwark never failing;
our helper he amid the flood
of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe
doth seek to work us woe;
his craft and pow'r are great;
and armed with cruel hate,
on earth is not his equal.

2. Did we in our own strength confide,
our striving would be losing;
were not the right man on our side,
the man of God's own choosing.

Dost ask who that may be?

Christ Jesus, it is he,
Lord Sabaoth his name,
from age to age the same,
and he must win the battle.

3. And though this world,
with devils filled,
should threaten to undo us,
we will not fear, for God hath willed
his truth to triumph through us.
The prince of darkness grim,
we tremble not for him;
his rage we can endure,
for lo! his doom is sure;
one little word shall fell him.

4. That Word above all earthly pow'rs,
no thanks to them, abideth;
the Spirit and the gifts are ours
through him who with us sideth.
Let goods and kindred go,
this mortal life also;
the body they may kill:
God's truth abideth still;
his kingdom is forever.

Recent History

- Gates of hell have pummeled this local congregation. Christ has defended her.
- Left a rogue Presbytery in March. Praying for wisdom about denominational future.
- Presbytery's ongoing attacks.
- Our desire: Honor Christ and see his church built among us. God-centered, Christ-centered, warmly relational and outwardly facing.

Jesus' Promise

Matthew 16:18: “And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

“One holy, catholic and apostolic church”

“Problem” of various denominations

Acts 17:11: “Now these Jews [Bereans] were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.”

Reformed Theology

Theology = Speech (*Logos*) about God (*Theos*).

Reformed = reference to period in church history. Reforming church back to standard of God's Word **versus** rogue church which operated according to mixture between God's Word and man's inventions. (*a la* OT Prophets v. false Israel; Jesus v. Pharisees; Paul v. Judaizers; etc.)

1 Corinthians 10:31: "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

Sola Scriptura. Sola Gratia. Solus Christus. Sola Fide. Soli Deo Gloria.

High view of God. Therefore, proper view of man.

Building Consistently

“What is true is what is practical; what is practical is what is true.” Richard Gaffin

Denial of truth leads to error. **Lack of application** of truth leads to error.

—Do not listen to the voice of a **stranger**.

—Watch your *life* and doctrine closely!

—Apostles committed to *prayer* and ministry of Word.

1 Corinthians 3:9-15

9 For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's **building**.

10 According to the grace of God given to me, like a **skilled master builder** I laid a **foundation**, and someone else is **building** upon it. Let each one take care **how he builds** upon it. **11** For no one can lay a **foundation** other than that which is laid, which is **Jesus Christ**. **12** Now if anyone **builds** on the foundation *with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw*— **13** each one's **work** will become **manifest**, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be **revealed by fire**, and the fire will **test** what sort of work each one has done. **14** If the **work** that anyone has built on the foundation **survives**, he will receive a reward. **15** If anyone's **work** is **burned up**, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

Cloud of Witnesses

Facts about B.B. Warfield

Goal: Vibrant, warm orthodoxy.

Whether simple essays or academic works, same Scriptures must guide both. Period. Same truth (at different levels) for children and adults!

What do **you** believe? How does it impact **your life** (and **our ministry**)?

A Brief and Untechnical Statement of the Reformed Faith

by B. B. Warfield

God's Glory; God's Word!!

1. I believe that my **one aim** in life and death should be to **glorify God and enjoy Him forever**; and that **God teaches me** how to glorify and enjoy him in His holy Word, that is, **the Bible**, which **He has given** by the **infallible inspiration of His Holy Spirit** in order that **I may certainly know** what I am to believe concerning Him and what duty He requires of me.

Trinity

2. I believe that God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal and incomparable in all that He is; **one God but three persons**, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, my Creator, my Redeemer, and my Sanctifier; in whose power and wisdom, righteousness, goodness and truth I may safely put my trust.

Creation and Providence

3. I believe that the **heavens and the earth**, and all that in them is, are the **work of God's hands**; and that **all that He has made He directs and governs in all their actions**; so that they fulfill the end for which they were created, and I who trust in Him shall not be put to shame but may rest securely in the protection of **is almighty love**.

Covenant of Works

4. I believe that **God created man after his own image**, in knowledge, righteousness and holiness, and entered into a **covenant of life** with him upon the **sole condition of the obedience** that was his due: so that it was by **willfully sinning against God that man fell** into the sin and misery in which I have been born.

Original Sin in Adam

5. I believe, that, **being fallen in Adam, my first father, I am; by nature a child of wrath, under the condemnation of God and corrupted in body and soul, prone to evil and liable to eternal death; from which dreadful state I cannot be delivered save through the unmerited grace of God my Savior.**

Election and Salvation

6. I believe that **God** has not left the world to perish in its sin, but **out of the great love** wherewith He has loved it, has **from all eternity graciously chosen** unto Himself a **multitude** which no man can number, **to deliver** them **out of their sin and misery**, and of them to build up again in the world **His kingdom of righteousness**: in which kingdom I may be assured I have my part, if I hold fast to **Christ** the Lord.

Christ as Mediator

7. I believe that **God has redeemed** His people unto Himself **through Jesus Christ** our Lord; who, though he was and ever continues to be the **eternal Son of God**, yet was **born of a woman**, born under the law, that He might redeem them that are under the law: I believe that He **bore the penalty** due to my sins in His own body on the tree, and **fulfilled** in His own person the **obedience** I owe to the righteousness of God, and now **presents me to His Father** as His purchased possession, **to the praise of the glory of His grace forever**: wherefore *renouncing all merit of my own*, I put **all my trust only** in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ my redeemer.

Christ's Resurrection and Exaltation

8. I believe that Jesus Christ my redeemer, who **died** for my offenses was **raised again** for my justification, and **ascended** into the heavens, where He sits at the right hand of the Father Almighty, continually making **intercession** for his people, and governing the whole world as **head over all things** for his Church: so that I need fear no evil and may surely know that nothing can snatch me out of His hands and nothing can separate me from His love.

Effectual Calling; Union with Christ

9. I believe that the **redemption wrought** by the Lord Jesus Christ is **effectually applied** to all His people by the **Holy Spirit**, who **works faith in me** and thereby **unites me to Christ**, **renews me** in the whole man after the image of God, and **enables me more and more to die unto sin and to live unto righteousness**; until, this **gracious work having been completed in me**, I shall be received into **glory**: in which **great hope** abiding, I must ever **strive** to perfect **holiness** in the fear of God.

Justification; Adoption

10. I believe that God requires of me, under the gospel, first of all, that, out of a true **sense of my sin and misery** and apprehension of His **mercy** in Christ, I should **turn** with grief and hatred **away from sin [repentance]** and **receive and rest upon Jesus Christ alone [faith]** for salvation; that, so being **united to Him**, I may receive **pardon** for my sins and be **accepted** as righteous in God's sight, only for the **righteousness** of Christ **imputed** to me and **received by faith alone**: and thus and thus **only** do I believe I may be received into the number and have a right to **all the privileges of the sons of God**.

Sanctification

11. I believe that, having been pardoned and accepted for Christ's sake, it is further required of me that **I walk in the Spirit whom He has purchased for me**, and by whom love is shed abroad in my heart; fulfilling the **obedience I owe to Christ my King**; faithfully performing all the duties laid upon me by the **holy law of God** my heavenly Father; and **ever reflecting in my life and conduct**, the perfect **example** that has been set me by Christ Jesus my Leader, who has died for me and granted to me His **Holy Spirit** just that **I may do the good works** which **God** has **afore prepared** that I should walk in them.

Means of Grace

12. I believe that God has established **His Church** in the world and endowed it with the ministry of the **Word** and the holy ordinances of **Baptism**, the **Lord's Supper** and **Prayer**; in order that through these as **means**, the **riches of his grace** in the gospel may be **made known** to the world, and, by the **blessing of Christ** and the **working of His Spirit** in them that by faith receive them, the **benefits of redemption** may be communicated to his people: wherefore also it is required of me that I attend on these means of grace with **diligence, preparation, and prayer**, so that through them I may be instructed and strengthened in faith, and in holiness of life and in love; and that I use my best endeavors to **carry this gospel** and convey these means of grace to the whole world.

Intermediate State; Christ's Return; Suffering Patiently

13. I believe that as Jesus Christ has once come in grace, so also is He to come a **second time in glory**, to **judge the world** in righteousness and assign to each his **eternal award**: and I believe that if I **die in Christ**, my soul shall be **at death made perfect in holiness and go home to the Lord**; and when He shall **return** in his majesty I shall be **raised in glory** and made perfectly blessed in the **full enjoyment of God** to all eternity: encouraged by which **blessed hope** it is required of me willingly to take my part in **suffering hardship here** as a good soldier of Christ Jesus, being assured that if I **die with Him I shall also live with him, if I endure, I shall also reign with Him.**

Doxology

And to **Him**, my *Redeemer*,
with the *Father*,
and the *Holy Spirit*,
Three Persons, one God,
be **glory forever**, world without end,
Amen, and Amen. [*Soli Deo Gloria!*]