

NEWS AND UPDATES: WEST MICHIGAN CHAPTER OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR COMMUNITY BIBLICAL GOVERNANCE

August 2013 Edition

Communication to Zeeland

We have sent a communication to the City Council of Zeeland, asking them to pass the following resolution: "We proclaim and acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord of Zeeland, looking to Him as Savior from the transgressions committed by the people of the city, and resolving by God's grace to follow Him in gratitude in accordance with Biblical principles." This is the same resolution we are in process of requesting other towns in West Michigan to pass.

Historicism, Explicitly Reformed Christian Politics, and Educational Efforts Relating to Them

Historicism has been described by the Historicist Research Foundation (www.historicism.net) as holding to the following principles:

- The "Year-Day" principle - In prophetic language, a day of symbolic time represents a year of actual, historic time.
- The "Time, Times and Half a time," "3 1/2 years," "1260 days", and "42 month" time period, which occurs seven times in Daniel and Revelation, is understood by Historicists to be fulfilled in history.
- All Historicists believe that the Papacy is that Anti-Christ, the Man of Sin of II Thessalonians 2, and a Beast of Revelation 13.
- Historicists generally agree Revelation 9 speaks of the Muslim scourge which afflicted Christendom.
- All Historicists agree that the Book of Revelation prophesies the history of the Church from the Apostolic Era to the future Second Advent of Jesus Christ.
- The Historicist interpretation was the standard interpretation from Wycliffe to Spurgeon (500 years) and is known as the Protestant interpretation in distinct contrast to Preterism and Futurism which were Jesuit interpretations contrived during the counterreformation.

Historicism finds confessional expression in the Westminster Confession when it states: "There is no other head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ. Nor can the Pope of Rome, in any sense, be head thereof; but is that Antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalts himself, in the Church, against Christ and all that is called God." Like that deceptive son of perdition Judas Iscariot, the Pope sits within the visible church of Trinitarian Christianity, but his gospel and worship are false, damning the souls of those deceived into embracing it.

It is not an accident that reformed confessions like the Belgic Confession and the Westminster Confession treat the topic of the Papacy not only in their sections relating to the Church, but also in their sections relating to the State. For instance, article 36 of the Belgic on civil government reads: "...And the government's task is not limited to caring for and watching over the public domain but extends also to upholding the sacred ministry, with a view to removing and destroying all idolatry and false worship of the Antichrist..." The Anti-Christ mentioned here has special reference to the Pope. And the Westminster Confession's chapter on the civil magistrate reads: "...much less has the Pope any power and jurisdiction over them in their dominions, or over any of their people; and, least of all, to deprive them of their dominions, or lives, if he shall judge them to be heretics, or upon any other pretence whatsoever..." One reason it is necessary to include these statements in the sections relating to the civil magistrate is because the Papal Man of Sin claims to be in the place of Christ on Earth. This means that the Pope claims authority not only over all of the Church, but also over all nations, as symbolized by the Papacy's Triple Crown. Here is the current Coat of Arms of the "Holy See", with its Triple Crown:



What does the Triple Crown mean? The meaning is indicated in the words that often have accompanied the coronation of a new Pope: "*Receive the tiara adorned with three crowns and know that thou art Father of princes and kings, Ruler of the world, Vicar of our Saviour Jesus Christ.*" This is no modest claim by the Papacy, even to this day.

One logical implication of the statements in the Belgic and Westminster Confessions concerning the Papacy is that reformed believers ought not to enter into political confederacies with those members of the Papal kingdom (i.e., Roman Catholics). But Dr. Abraham Kuyper and the Anti-Revolutionary Party (ARP) in the Netherlands entered into political alliance with Roman Catholics in order to achieve certain political goals. Accordingly, they pressed for and obtained an amendment to Article 36 of the Belgic Confession in their denomination the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. The long term fruits of their error can be seen in the 1980 merger of the ARP with the Catholic People's Party to form the Christian Democratic Appeal party. Like Christian Democratic parties elsewhere, Rome dominates and *sola scriptura* is denied. (Dr. Kuyper's church denomination also fell into the theological ditch in time.) Rev. Kersten and other NRC ministers saw through the error of such amendment to the Belgic Confession and confederacies with Rome, and refused to go along.

But here in the USA, what is happening? Here are a sample of political parties and organizations that involve participants in alliance with Rome and Roman Catholics: the Republican Party, the Democratic Party, Right to Life, the Constitution Party, the Acton Institute based in Grand Rapids (led by Roman Catholic priest Robert Sirico), the Eagle Forum (led by Roman Catholic Phyllis Schlafly), the League of the South, and Michigan Family Forum. Over a decade ago I attended a Michigan Family Forum dinner, and guess who was invited to lead in prayer? A Roman Catholic priest. And who was asked to deliver the benedictions at the 2012 Republican and Democratic Party conventions? Roman Catholic Cardinal Timothy Dolan. The current Speaker of the House in Congress is Roman Catholic John Boehner (Republican), and the previous Speaker of the House was Roman Catholic Nancy Pelosi (Democrat). In joining political confederacies with Rome, American reformed Christians are walking through a deceptive trap door, not remembering that Satan often appears as an angel of light. Christians would be well advised to read Westminster divine George Gillespie's treatise "Forbidden Alliances: Concerning Associations and Confederacies with Idolators, Infidels, Heretics, or Any Other Known Enemies of Truth and Godliness", to become informed on this topic. Rather than joining in political confederacies with Rome, we should be helping Roman Catholics and non-Roman Catholics alike to see the Biblical path that leads to divine blessing. The loving thing to do is not to join Roman Catholics in political confederacies and alliances, but rather to encourage Roman Catholics to abandon Romanism and embrace the true reformed Biblical faith.

In order to try to disseminate information about historicism and the need for explicitly reformed Christian politics, efforts are being made to form a Reformation Party Youth League. This would seek through seminars and literature distribution at schools (especially Christian schools) to inform and recruit back to the old reformed paths of *Protestantism* and to avoid confederacies with the Anti-Christ's kingdom.

Letter to the NRC Consistories in the USA, including in West Michigan

The last several months have been spent drafting and finalizing a letter that is going out to the consistories of the NRC in the USA from the Council of Officers of the Reformation Party. A copy of the letter is attached to this Newsletter on the following pages. We are thankful to Rev. Cornelis Vogelaar for providing us feedback on the letter in its draft stage. We pray that God would use it as He sees fit.

This Newsletter is produced by the West Michigan Chapter of the Campaign for Community Biblical Governance. The Campaign for Community Biblical Governance is sponsored by the Reformation Party (www.ReformationParty.org) in an effort to promote Biblical reformation at the local level.

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The Reformation Party

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August 12, 2013

Dear Consistories of the Netherlands Reformed Congregations in the USA:

We would like to make our introduction to you and ask for the opportunity to present more information in the future.

The Reformation Party (www.reformationparty.org) is a small reformed Christian political party started in the USA, modeled after the Reformed Political Party (SGP) in the Netherlands. The Party has members in the USA as well as in the United Kingdom, Brazil and the Philippines. It has an elected council of officers as well as a Board of Theological Advisers. It has members from the following church denominations: Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, Free Church Continuing, Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, Puritan Reformed Church of Brazil, Netherlands Reformed Congregations, Heritage Reformed Churches, Westminster Presbyterian Church in the US, and some others. The list of ministers and theologians on its Board of Theological Advisers can be found at <http://www.reformationparty.org/board.htm> . We are a small political party, so while we pray for and seek to be a testimony for reformed Christian civil magistracy at the federal and state levels, our focus is primarily at the local level where our members reside, as well as to seek to inform the consciences of more Christians.

As previously mentioned, the Reformation Party has been modeled after the Reformed Political Party of the Netherlands (SGP). Indeed, one of the first things the Council of Officers did when it was first established was write the enclosed letter to the SGP leadership thanking them for their example (see enclosed letter). Like the SGP, we believe in order to be faithful to Biblical principles in matters pertaining to politics, it is necessary for a political party to be explicitly reformed, confessionally sound, and to avoid confederacies with infidels and heretics. We believe most American politics has fundamentally failed in these respects. We are aware of the special role that the Gereformeerde Gemeenten in the Netherlands have played in the SGP, starting with Rev. Kersten, and in assisting explicitly reformed Christian politics in the Netherlands. In our considered opinion, God has uniquely equipped the Netherlands Reformed Congregations in North America, as a sister church of the Gereformeerde Gemeenten, to help change the direction of political activity by professing reformed Christians here as well. The NRC have maintained their subscription to the original form of Article 36 of the Belgic Confession (as well as the original form of chapter 23 of the Westminster Confession), the NRC have a history of supporting explicitly reformed Christian politics, and the NRC have a sufficient number of members in the USA to begin to make a difference, at least at a local level. There are few other reformed denominations of which all of this can be said.

As we are sure you will agree, explicitly reformed Christian politics is the God-ordained avenue of political activity. Rev. GH Kersten explained it well when he said: "The entire Scriptures demand that all that has breath must glorify God. This applies first and foremost to the government. Calvin used the term *pastores populorum* (shepherds of the people) to refer to the government, and explains that, according to Psalm 2, the authority of kings is subordinate to the authority of Christ" (*Proceedings*, 1928-1929, p. 448, as quoted in *Rev. G.H. Kersten* by Rev. M. Golverdingen). As he implored, "let us seek God and His law" (*Ibid.*, p. 336).

One common objection to explicitly reformed Christian politics is that it is not practical, but we would argue it is the only form of politics that is practical. The fundamental problem of the USA, like other nations in the world today, is not economic but spiritual and moral. What we need is a reformation, and the only type of civil magistrate that is qualified and able to lead in Biblical reformation is one that is reformed Christian. To get some sense of how critical a reformed Christian magistrate is to Biblical reformation, consider this fact: In scriptural history there was probably not one major reformation of Israel or Judah (or Nineveh during the time of Jonah) without at least the cooperation if not the leadership of the civil magistrate. But how can we possibly hope to make a practical impact with a small reformed Christian political party when the major political parties which are not reformed Christian are so firmly entrenched? We always need to keep in mind that in redemptive history God has often used very humble tools to do great things in order to manifest His glory more clearly.

Rev. GH Kersten has pinpointed what can often be a chief hindrance for all of us, when he stated: "Reuben was pious, but this pious Reuben did wrong. He withdrew himself and stayed with his flocks. It was for this reason Deborah rebuked him...(Judges 5:16). Have we not frequently been like Reuben? We did indeed mourn over breaches among our people and in our government...so there was yet some concern among us...But notice why we are guilty regarding the coalition of a government at the local, provincial, and federal level which is hostile to God: we did not go out to battle!...No, we would not participate!...This may not continue" (J. Mulder, *Of Mercy and Faithfulness*, p. 19, as quoted in *Rev. G.H. Kersten* by Rev. M. Golverdingen).

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this letter. We would request an opportunity to present more information to you about this cause in the future, as well as solicit your support for our cause.

Sincerely,

Brian Hanley, Mark Hausam, and J. Parnell McCarter
Council of Officers of the Reformation Party

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February 3, 2012

Dear Officers of the Reformed Political Party in the Netherlands:

Greetings in the Lord Jesus Christ. We are sending you this letter to thank you for your example to us as an explicitly reformed Christian political party, to acquaint you with the Reformation Party, to inform you of our own prayers on your behalf, and to covet your prayers on our behalf.

We are thankful that the Reformed Political Party in the Netherlands (SGP) has stood for so long as a beacon of explicitly reformed Christian politics against the tide of secular humanism. We are grateful that you have not succumbed to the siren song of ecumenism, calling us to compromise or even forfeit reformed truth for the purpose of political expediency. Your testimony has been an inspiration in the formation and establishment of the Reformation Party based in the United States.

The Reformation Party has recently elected its first council of officers. Our website is www.reformationparty.org.

As the newly elected officers of the Reformation Party, we want you to know not only of our respect of your Reformed Party in the Netherlands, but also of our prayers on your behalf. We would hope that God would continue to use the Reformed Party to promote Christ's kingdom and as an instrument to bring the nation to kiss the Son. We would hope that we can be a good example to you and to stir you up in a godly manner in your labors, even as you have been an example to us and had a holy effect upon us.

Finally, we would covet your prayers on our behalf. We are in need of God's blessing if any good is to come from the Reformation Party.

We hope this letter represents only the beginning of our correspondence with one another.

Sincerely,

Mark Hausam, J. Parnell McCarter and Dustin Philips
Council of Officers of the Reformation Party