

WHY ANOTHER REFORMED JOURNAL?

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It is with thankfulness to God that we introduce this first issue of the *Journal* of the British Reformed Fellowship. There are many magazines of every sort on the market, nor is there a lack of religious magazines. Yet in our land, even in those areas which are faithfully Reformed, we have recognised a need. It is our prayer that this little magazine and the British Reformed Fellowship may help to meet that need.

One is reminded again that this is a "day of small things" (Zechariah 4:10). The impression is left, all too often, that what pleases God and what unites God's people must be BIG! Large rallies, great evangelistic meetings, flashy magazines - these catch the attention and influence people. One might think that unless we match what others do in this regard, we cannot succeed. Still, does not Scripture itself ever remind us that God uses, not the mighty and powerful to accomplish great results, but that which is small and insignificant. Did He not use a Gideon and his small band, a Samson, and others to deliver His people from the enemy? Did He not use a motley band of disciples to send forth His gospel to the four corners of the earth? So we also do not consider it a mark of assured failure that we begin in smallness and weakness. We introduce this little magazine and our British Reformed Fellowship with the confidence that the God Who blesses His people and their faithful efforts, will also bless this work.

We do not look for great things in terms of numbers and power. We do not expect to change the course of this world, which rushes madly to destruction. However, we do seek to bring into closer contact all those who still love God's Word as confessed historically by Reformed and Presbyterian churches. We have a glorious heritage. We have beautifully composed Confessions which express the faith of our forefathers. Sadly, we see today too many who are ready to sell this "birthright" for a "mess of pottage" (Genesis 25:31-34). We want no part in that,

but rather we desire to send forth the clear call to return to the "old paths" (Jeremiah 6:16). Let us together faithfully hold to that which God has entrusted to our care.

Is it true that the old *Reformed Faith* is not highly esteemed anymore? Compare what is being preached today with that which is stated in the Westminster Standards, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession or the Canons of Dort. Is there still heard that clarion call to hold to the absolute *sovereignty* of God? Is there still heard an emphasis upon the *five points of Calvinism*? Is there still that grand emphasis on the glorious *Covenant* which God has established with His people, in the line of their generations, through Christ? Or has that which is termed "Reformed" in fact altered its stance, so that there are now obviously elements of Arminianism within its ranks? None dare deny that God is Sovereign – but have not many doctrines been adopted contrary to the historic creeds, which nevertheless deny that Sovereignty, at least in part?

This little magazine comes therefore, first, with a call to reformation anew. There have been many reformations in the past. People of God have returned to the "old paths" in the way of leaving that which no longer teaches the truths of the gospel, or has distorted these truths beyond recognition. Revelation 3:20, so often misinterpreted by the Arminian, calls the faithful saint to come out of the false church and join with Christ in fellowship outside of its walls. Christ knocks, not at the sinner's heart's door, but at the door of the church of Laodicea. He knocks today at the doors of many of the churches where there is no room for Him within. Those who would truly fellowship with Christ are to come out to Him and sup with Him. As in the case of Laodicea, reformation all too often begins, not within that church, but requires a departing and a new beginning. So it was also in the days of Luther, Calvin and Knox.

Secondly, we come with a plea that all those of like mind join with us in the defence of the Truth. Victory is not in *our* strength but Gideon's band of three-hundred (Judges 7:7) must stand together. They are mocked because of their smallness and insignificance, yet the strength of Jehovah manifests itself with His faithful people – Christ's "little flock" (Luke 12:32). What appears hopeless in the face of the "host of the Midianites," is used by God to give His people the victory. We would co-operate with all those who still hold truly to the Reformed Confessions.

Thirdly and finally, in publishing this magazine and maintaining

a Reformed Fellowship in Britain, we have in mind the purpose of mutually encouraging and supporting one another. So often we hear of those having no opportunity for fellowship with other saints who confess the same truths of God's Word. We can be spiritually lonely. Moreover, we can think, like Elijah (1 Kings 19:10,14), that we alone are left and there are no others prepared to stand at our side in defence of the Truth. Yet there are the seven-thousand who have not bowed down to "Baal" (1 Kings 19:18). Together we can find encouragement in fellowship one with another and we can discuss the peculiar problems and trials that we face because of our love for the Truth. We can also encourage one another in the study of God's Word, as those who unitedly love His appearing.

We would also ask if you know of others who would joyfully join in the defence of Reformed Truth? You who receive this little magazine, have received it because in some way you have in the past indicated an interest in the Reformed Faith. Do you know of others, possibly not on our mailing list, who might also want to be part of this battle for the Faith? Please send us their names and addresses.

It is our prayer that God may grant His indispensable blessing upon this venture - for without it we have no hope.

COVENANT REFORMED FELLOWSHIP

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What are Your Objectives as a Fellowship?

In the short term our objective is to be constituted as a church in our own right. In the longer term we would like to see other churches established sharing our beliefs, not only in Northern Ireland, but throughout the United Kingdom, and to that end we aim to actively work and pray.

Our confidence is not in ourselves but in our great King and Head of the Church, the Lord Jesus Christ, who assures His people, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:20).