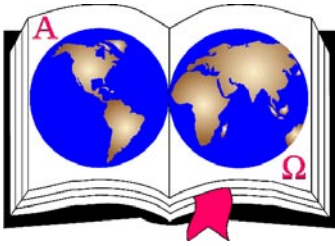




*Can the Gospel get too
Comfortable?*
August/September 2007
News and Prayer Letter

Good News Bible Study graduate receives certificate and requests church membership in Wisconsin.



Reformation Christian Ministries

News & Prayer Letter

August/September 2007

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.
Galatians 1:6-7

The Gospel to a true believer is always a comfort, for in its message is the only hope of salvation. Yet that comfort comes through the grid of a constant and grieving awareness of one's own sin (Romans 7:14, 18) which forces us to see the total lack of hope within ourselves (Romans 7:24)—Christ's work and obedience being our sole hope (Romans 7:25). Therein lies the comfort, but it arrives only through the discomfort of truly seeing ourselves as a "wretched men". The Gospel always confronts us with our sin so that our salvation is found in Christ alone.

There is, however, "another gospel"—it is more comfortable. It is a "gospel" which is merely believed, that involves more assumption than confrontation. Yes, sin must be confessed, but it is a more intellectual confession, *after all, nobody's perfect and I am a sinner just like everyone else is*. Such a "gospel" is largely one-sided, all "comfort" and no real and highly personal confrontation. Sin is narrowed into a set of do's and don'ts that can be kept and if one does pretty good, things are okay. It depends upon a Jesus who took all of our sin (i.e. discomfort) away. People don't like to be confronted, and if they are, they like to feel that they are on the right side. To be on the right side means you can define it, you may even memorize it. And when you do "sin", you can go through procedural maneuvers and apologies (*after all, no one is perfect*) and all is okay. You may be regular in church, or in a conservative, Bible-believing church, and people there do the right things. They read the Bible and pray regularly, their children are often in Christian schools (maybe even homeschooled), and most of their friends are Christian. They are in the right crowd and do the right things. Everything is so-o-o-o comfortable.

In our reformed churches, there is sometimes a tendency to equate salvation with the privileges of the covenant so that if we belong to the covenant, go through the right of passage (public confession of faith), and we keep ourselves officially clean thereafter, we are okay. Some who have been through this approach and find it a bit sterile will then seek to recover the "joy" by moving into more contemplative evangelical kinds of *mysticism*. The same problem exists in all groups where the Gospel begins to relax and become comfortable because people learn to say, do and "feel" the right things to pass muster and in order to "belong" or "fit in" and feel good.

Yet any true minister of Christ is often struck at how much like the Jews of Jesus' time, are many Christians of today. Some are more Pharisaical and others more Sadducean. Many have the right ancestry (John 8:39). They say and do the right things in order to be comfortable but any serious scratching beneath the surface is either resisted or avoided. Sadly, this problem gets passed onto many a mission field where converts learn what to say and do and this may have repeated itself for several generations. Visitors from abroad often bring all kinds of "new" things, but all seem aimed at a comfortable gospel full of peace, joy, good feelings and little or no pain.

In the scores of letters that I receive each month from Africa, India, Pakistan and many other places, **the word "gospel" is thrown around like it is some well understood term on which there is total unanimity and complete agreement when nothing could be farther from the truth.** The false gospel addressed in Galatians was not some weird cult. It entered into a church established by the Apostle Paul just three or four years before. You can't get better teaching than that.

Reformation Christian Ministries takes its name from the Reformation and has a strong commitment to the doctrines of the Protestant Reformation which initially stood juxtapositioned with the various false gospels of Roman Catholicism, Orthodoxism, Anabaptism and political expediency in the name of Christ. RCM is committed to the true Gospel and increasingly aware of the rarity of its existence abroad. Too much of this "comfortable gospel" exists and RCM remains committed to breaking through these often long-standing and subtle barriers which exist around the world as part of its mission to fulfill the Great Commission. **Preaching the Gospel involves confronting those who have never heard it, but also those who have been under false gospels.**

 Geoffrey Donnan

The RCM News & Prayer Letter is published monthly by
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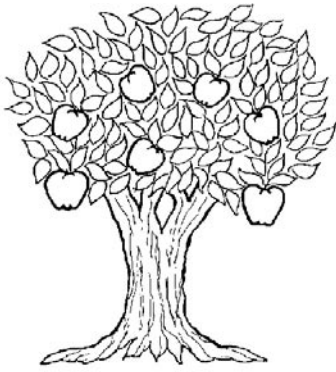
The RCM News & Prayer Letter is available upon request without obligation
(an annual donation of \$15.00 is suggested to cover costs).

Reformation Christian Ministries, an international, educational missions ministry, is under the oversight of The King's Reformed Presbyterian Church and Sharon Orthodox Presbyterian Church. RCM is eligible to receive tax-exempt donations in both the United States and Canada and is underwritten by donations from individuals and other churches. The Board of Directors for RCM in Canada is responsible for the affairs of RCM in Canada. RCM in the U.S.A. and Canada cooperate on like-minded projects. RCM cooperates by agreement with like-minded churches and denominations by assisting with mission work in specific fields and/or projects. Ecclesiastical authority for missionary ministers comes from their respective churches, not from RCM.

Fields: Albania, Italy, Russia, U.K., Congo, Zambia, and Suriname.
Director of Missions: G. W. Donnan, Minister

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Good News Bible Study Goes ON-LINE



RCM is positioning itself to re-introduce the Good News Bible Study's (GNBS) Basic course in an electronic form. For several years, Dr. Brian McRae (Ph.D. Chemistry who works as a college chemistry professor) has labored to produce an electronic version of the course. That version is now done in English. This is functional, but more students are needed to trouble-shoot

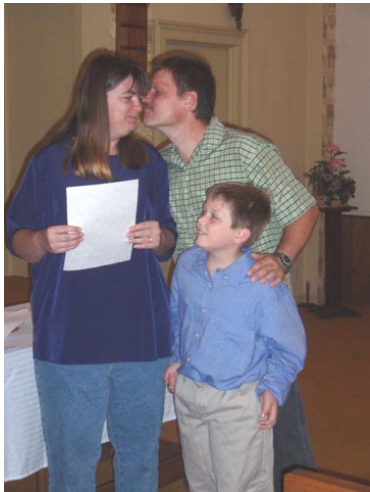
it before we make official and extensive use of it through advertising.

For those who may be interested in taking this course or seeing how the system works, you may use the following web address and follow the necessary links.

www.gnbstudy.org

Overseas students: We welcome the names and addresses of any English reading students interested in taking this Bible course who live in North America or overseas.

Wisconsin Church uses GNBS for local evangelism Adds attenders to church



Covenant Reformed Presbyterian Church of Milton, Wisconsin has begun an experiment in advertising the GNBS in their local small town newspaper. They have used both the printed and the electronic version of the Bible course. They have already had one family begin attending their church as a result of a GNBS student and several others seem likely.

The following is a article that has been submitted to the local newspaper in Janesville, Wisconsin:

Michelle Borowski of Milton, Wisconsin has been awarded a certificate for completeting the Good New Bible Study Course by Pastor Dan Gibson of Convenant Reformed Presbyterian Church of Milton, Wisconsin with Elder Jerry Clay looking on (see cover photo). Michelle is the first student in the Janesville, Wisconsin area to complete the demanding course and earned the grade of "A" for her work. Her husband, Tim, and son, Danny, were present and delighted to see her honored.

Covenant Reformed Presbyterian Church of Milton, WI has brought the internationally known Good News Bible Study course to the area as a

ministry of their church. The Course, now available in both correspondence and online versions, was created over twenty-five years ago for use in foreign missions and prison ministries. Over 30,000 students have taken the course to date.

The local Milton church has set up a grading center and pays for all costs associated with the course. Their goal is to bring the Word of God to all who ask without charge. Anyone can take the course and assistance is available for those who need it during their studies. Call (608) 756-8159 for the correspondence version or visit www.gnbstudy.org to take the course online.

The church has a number of other students taking the Bible course in printed form, and they are beginning to promote the use of the on-line version. The Borowski family has been attending the church ever since completing the course and has now asked for membership in the church.

Presently, electronic courses are graded on-line but go through a central processing overseen by Brian McRae, an RCM volunteer in Georgia. Pray for us as we begin to develop more of the programming to enable local churches to do their own grading of the electronic version of the GNBS. As soon as this is available, then any one of the local churches involved with RCM will be able to offer the GNBS in their own local communities for evangelistic and discipleship ministry.

Pray for us as we develop the computer link and system to enable churches to work with the electronic version of the course. Presently, this is all handled by Brian McRae, but we hope in the next few months to enable any qualified GNBS Grading Center with a computer and Internet access to manage their own administration of the electronic course in the same way that they presently do the paper version.

Currently, we have translations of the GNBS in a number of languages, but we are seeking to establish them electronically first in Italian and Albanian, since we have reliable personnel available in those countries ready to handle the administration.

Sermons from King's Reformed Presbyterian Church Palm Bay, Florida

The work of the King's Reformed Presbyterian Church in Palm Bay is one of the two churches which oversees the work of RCM, along with its mother church, Sharon Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Hialeah, Florida. It may be of interest to our readers to become acquainted with the preaching of two of our missionaries (Rev. Geoffrey Donnan and Rev. Rudy Poettcker) who pastor and preach at the church. You can find their sermons at

www.sermonaudio.com/krpc.

Visit our website at **www.krpc.us**. Please tell any of your Melbourne/Palm Bay, Florida, friends to pay us a visit.



First African Doctorate



Duncan Ibuuri from Kenya, presently residing in the U.K., after a number of years, receives his Doctorate of Ministry diploma from Dr. Stephen Westcott of Reformation International Theological Seminary at the Waterloo Hall, Weston-Super-Mare, U.K. during a short graduation service held in his honor (the only student) on August 2, 2007.

Dr. Ibuuri began his studies while a pastor of a Methodist Church. His intention is to return to Kenya to his tribe, which has been exposed to various kinds of missionaries for the last hundred years, and introduce to them the Gospel. He clearly believes that few if any have really understood the Gospel, though many churches have been started. Most of the churches have led to a better way of life for the people, and some Christian teaching that often was more equated with their dress and behavior than their genuine understanding and relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ.

RUSSIA TRIP RESCHEDULED

Rev. Donnan's trip to Russia was canceled due to arrangement difficulties. However, he is tentatively planning a trip in the latter part of November and early December to meet with the leaders of the churches there and lay the plans for future conferences. A news bulletin has been issued by the Union of Evangelical Reformed Churches of Russia. You may find this on our website:

www.refcm.org/russiainfo.html

Rev. Donnan to make trip to northwest US, southwest Canada.



RCM's Executive Director, Rev. Geoffrey Donnan will be traveling for speaking engagements on October 15 in or around Langley, BC (Canada) and October 20-21, in Lynden/Burlington, Washington (U.S.) If your deaconate, missions committee, elders, church or another group would like to arrange a meeting with him within a reasonable driving

distance of these areas between October 15 and October 28, please contact him immediately by phone (772-571-8030) or email (gwd@reformation.edu).

Philip Stott coming the U.S. & Canada

Professor Philip Stott will be speaking in Thunder Bay, Ontario during the latter part of October, and also has engagements scheduled in southern California. This announcement will be the last opportunity for other churches or groups who may wish to schedule in the last half of October.



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Aug/Sep 2007

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Contact me about working on the RCM Advisory Board I would like to teach at C.L.A. in Suriname.

I would like to assist with the college and/or seminary program. I am sending a resume.

Please add this/these person(s) on your newsletter/e-mail list:

RCM HQ Construction Complete (well, almost)

For the last year and a half, we have been reporting on the progress being made at the RCM HQ. At long last, the work is done, or at least done enough to report that it is done. We thank you for your prayers and contributions that have made this possible. (Right) The major work was that of adding three bedrooms and a full bath to the Card family home. Their growing family of eleven was living in a 3 bedroom 2½ bath house. The addition nearly joined their house to the office, but not quite. A larger and renovated kitchen was also included but not pictured here.

(Left) During the building of the Donnan's house in 2002, a north screen porch was built that was never able to be used because it was constantly being rained into through the screens. That screen porch was enclosed and now they have an additional room with much needed storage space.

(Below Right) During the hurricanes of 2004, the carports that had been built on both sides of the storage shed on the west side of the property had been destroyed. Those have now been replaced with a 3-bay tractor barn on right side

and a rebuilt and reroofed parking area on the left with one continuous metal roof. The Lord provided us with a donation of some extra metal roofing left over from a commercial bank job which we did not have to pay for, though we did pay for installation. We now have all the implement and storage space we could need. This still has a bit of work to complete and thus our "well almost" above. We hope now to concentrate on maintenance and no more construction for the foreseeable future. Praise the Lord!



Enclosed Porch



Office

Addition

Card Home



HELP FOR SUMMER SLUMP IN GIVING

RCM has had a serious summer slump in giving. Any help would be appreciated.

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