

# Our Mission Calling

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There are almost as many criticisms of the Protestant Reformed Churches as there are different denominations, but the universal complaint is that the Protestant Reformed Churches do not believe in missionary work. The claim is made that Protestant Reformed doctrine is incompatible with obedience to the various missionary commands in Scripture. Evidently, such accusers have foreign missionary work in mind when they make this accusation for the Protestant Reformed Churches do have their own home missionary and their own home missionary program. The accusation which we are really faced with, then, is that we do not believe in foreign missionary work.

Rev. C. Hanks presented a Protestant Reformed view of missionary endeavor in a speech to the young people at the Spring Mass Meeting. A summary of that speech follows:

True missionary work is preaching. Most radio sermons today are about the gospel but are not the gospel and thus not preaching in the true sense. That which must be preached is the gospel; Jesus Christ, crucified and risen. As alterations in the portrait of one's mother violently change the true portrait so also alterations in the preaching of Jesus affect the true preaching. Representing Jesus as a beggar is not preaching the true Jesus.

The purpose of mission work is to gather God's church unto the day of Christ. The purpose of most mission work is to achieve the kingdom of God on earth and to reform the world politically and culturally.

The field of missionary work is the whole world. We should not, however, race to the ends of the earth - we must spread out from home, keeping the home strong. The Protestant Reformed churches have a start in foreign mission work in the Virgin Islands. God gathers his church from the ends of the earth, preserves it against anti-christ unto the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This then is a summary of the Protestant Reformed view of missionary endeavor. And a strikingly unique view it is. The contemporary religious world, almost without exception, is carrying on a vast so-called missionary program in which all manner of Biblical distortions and downright heresies are not only permitted, but also advocated for the purpose of "evangelizing" more and more "souls". The Jesus of love and patience begs and pleads that everyone please relent and accept Him as their own personal Savior. He desperately desires that every single individual be saved. This diabolical Arminian doctrine has so pervaded the modern church world that one does not even hesitate to say that such "missionary work" is not missionary work at all, but instead false doctrine.

However, this rank heresy is not what troubles our churches. As is customary, the clever inroads which such heresy has made in our own Reformed back yard is that which has the greatest capability of affecting us. The apparent advantages of "lowering denominational barriers" and of recognizing and preaching general offers and promises of salvation in order to "gain more souls for Christ" can be very influential. Especially the youth of the Protestant Reformed Churches must be on guard. Such doctrines seem to advance the position that Arminianism is necessary to convert a person but after he is saved, Reformed preaching is again necessary. This is extreme inconsistency at the very least.

What then are the conclusions of the matter, also in connection with the original accusation that the Protestant Reformed Churches do not believe in foreign missionary work?

The Protestant Reformed Churches certainly must and certainly do believe in missionary work, also in foreign missionary work. The missionary commands in Scripture are very clear and very numerous. "Go ye therefore and teach all nations..." says Christ in Matthew 28:19. And in this connection, perhaps, the Protestant Reformed Churches have been too slow in involving themselves in sending missionaries to foreign lands.

Nevertheless, we may never compromise our doctrinal standard nor weaken our position at home by "lowering the denominational barriers". The missionary gospel must be the same as the gospel preached in church on Sunday. There is but one gospel and that is Jesus Christ. The truth of God's word as found in the Protestant Reformed Churches can never be incompatible with true missionary work. Because of their possession of the truth, the Protestant Reformed Churches have a special privilege, but also high obligation to carry on missionary work to the best of their ability both at home and abroad.

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