

The Gospel & Universal Rights

A wide-angle photograph of a church sanctuary during a conference. The room features a high, vaulted wooden ceiling with dark wooden beams and several small, square pendant lights. The walls are also wood-paneled. A large group of people, mostly men and women of various ages, are seated in rows of wooden pews, facing towards the front of the church. The pews have red book holders attached to them. In the foreground, a white cup and a water bottle are visible on a pew. The overall atmosphere is bright and formal.

2009 American
Vision Conference
Midway Presbyterian Church
Powder Springs, Georgia

June-July-August 2009
News and Prayer Letter



Reformation Christian Ministries

News & Prayer Letter

June-July-August 2009

Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. [John 8:31-32]

Truth and freedom are inseparably bound together in God and His word. First and foremost, the truth of the Gospel enables us to see our sinful condition in relation to God and our inability to personally do anything about it. Recognizing our miserable condition, the truth tells us that Jesus, the Son of God, died to save a people called **His own** by taking their penalty for sin upon Himself, i.e. to make them free. He then gave them His life by which they would believe and come unto Him. This freedom from the penalty of sin is the most basic freedom that exists and in that freedom, the disciples of Jesus "continue in His word" and follow His law.

As this freedom takes root in the true disciples of Jesus, it has a ripple effect through them. *Continuing in His word* means applying it to every area of their lives. Carry this far enough, and it begins to affect societies, nations and their laws, which in turn promotes freedom. This freedom enables the Gospel to be followed and applied in every aspect of the nation to increasing degrees. The laws of God then, to greater or lesser degrees, become the laws of nations. The last major example of this began at the Reformation and changed the world.

We are *Reformation Christian Ministries (RCM)*. **Reformation** is our objective with the **Gospel** as its foundation. While it starts first in man's spirit, it works itself out in his life. Consequently, the full scope of the Gospel brings about genuine transformation (Romans 12:2). Two ministries in which you may participate show the scope of outreach God has given us.

Good News Bible Study First Level of Truth & Freedom

Our work at the first level mentioned above is that which is done through our Good News Bible Study. To date, well over 35,000 students have been sent courses. Completions are much less, but those completing have been well above 4,000, many of whom have made confessions of faith in Christ.

We recently introduced our on-line version of the Bible course and have had over 200 sign-ups for the course, though only 15-20 have completed it, among whom was a Syrian believer who did quite well. We are working diligently to do the same in both Albanian and Italian to be managed directly by our colleagues in those countries. We also have just seen the completion of a translation into the Urdu and Punjabi, languages used in India and Pakistan (more on p. 2).

We have an increasing number of U.S. and Canadian based

Bible course students. **Qualified and interested churches are needed as Bible Course Grading Centers.** Join with us in sending forth the Gospel by means of these Bible courses so that the truth and freedom of the Gospel will continue to reach throughout North America.

Declaration of Universal Rights Advanced Level of Truth & Freedom

The freedom found in the Gospel is first and foremost spiritual, but we cannot avoid the practical implications of Christ's disciples living out that spiritual life He has given them. Such freedom within society increases as men acknowledge God's truth and justice and the absolute duty they owe to Him as their Creator. Man's duty toward God becomes the foundation for mankind's *unalienable rights*. All governments, whether family, church, civil or other, are to acknowledge these duties to the Creator, and in so doing, preserve and defend these rights -- *in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour* (Leviticus 19:15). This is especially believers for *the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit* (Romans 8:4). (See page 4 for more information.)

In 1985, the Lord opened our eyes to the need for a biblical basis for "unalienable rights" which did not exist in a compact and universally usable form. A coalition was later formed called *Christians for Justice International (CFJ)* which from 1988-1990 wrote a draft document entitled the *Declaration of Universal Rights (DUR)* a copy of which I personally presented to President Ronald Reagan at the White House. It's purpose was to set forth man's biblical duties toward God with regard to other men as the principles of justice for human society. From this obligation of love towards our neighbor, neighbors could assume certain freedoms under God which have been termed "rights" that our constitution calls "unalienable" (*incapable of being sold or forfeited*) and thus grant man his *right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness* under God and His law.



This is not a declaration of the articles of redeeming faith but of truths about simple justice and human dignity ordained by God at man's creation. God's gospel message liberates men's souls. This message deals with man created in God's image living in God's world. Although not a message designed to evangelize souls, it is nevertheless God's truth which men have the responsibility to believe and live. Both are duties toward God that result in rights for men. CFJ originally sought to define these rights, promote their instruction and aid in their defense. CFJ was unable to continue, but RCM has taken on the responsibility to continue the work on this declaration and its distribution to Christian and political leaders in scores of countries. We welcome your interest and involvement.

Our hope and desire is that the longing for truth and freedom will continue to ultimately lead back to the Gospel of God's grace and to the Creator of the world to whom all men must give account. Pray with us, that God's transforming spiritual power will bring about further Reformation especially for the glory of God but also for the good of mankind.

 Geoffrey Donnan

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The RCM News & Prayer Letter is available upon request without obligation
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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., Europe and Suriname. Director of Missions: G. W. Donnan, Minister

RCM Briefs & Updates

Do you need RCM reply envelopes?

Our cost-cutting efforts of less frequent newsletters and more received via email have left some donors without convenient return envelopes for monthly giving. Please email, call or your use coupon to indicate your need for RCM reply envelopes. We are happy to send them to you.

Mission Field Briefs

بائبل کا مطالعہ کرنے والوں کے لیے خوشخبری

Good News Bible Study in Urdu and Punjabi

URDU (above) and PUNJABI (below) titles for the Good News Bible study in those languages.

ਬਾਈਬਲ ਪੜਨ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਲਈ ਖੁਸ਼ ਖਬਰੀ

Urdu & Punjabi Bible Courses: Several years ago, Rev. Tony Zekveld and his team of Christian Indians and Pakistanis who are Christian asked permission to translate our Bible course into these languages for use in Toronto. However, since then, there has been increased interest in the courses in Pakistan, so now they are opening a Bible course grading center in Pakistan. As soon as this begins and we have the resources and time, we will supplement this with an on-line version of the Bible course in these languages. Please pray and support this effort as it is greatly needed. RCM has many Bible course students in both of these countries taking the Bible course in English, but they continue to insist that it would have a much greater outreach if it could be in the local languages.



Rev. Tony Zekveld and Ernest Paul (translator for both Urdu and Punjabi languages)

Suriname Update from Rev. Rudy Poettcker:

Praise the Lord! The school year at Christian Liberty Academy started well. Our enrollment is now 330, and the record is 350. We have more than 60 new enrollments. I am impressed by the over-all positive attitude of students, and have no doubt that a good deal of it has to do with the "competition" of other English schools (although one has now closed for various reasons). Because of these other schools students seem to see the value and quality of our education. A few graduates have come by to say how much they value what they have seen and learned while studying at Christian Liberty Academy (CLA). One graduate from last year came into the office with his mother (a Parliamentarian) with a letter of recognition from the Ministry of Education, which stated that they recognize

the training of CLA as adequate preparation for entering the University of Suriname. This is something that has been worked on for a long time and, in fact, is rather unique. If a student graduates from the public school system they still have to take further classes to gain entrance into the University (something like a "Junior College" program—usually two years). So this is truly a great recognition of the quality of CLA's education. The mother said she sees the value of CLA not only in the academics but also in the way we go about teaching and organizing the courses. So, praise God with us for this...it is to His glory.



We also thank the Lord for the safe arrival of Rachel Visser from Langely, British Columbia in Canada. She is quickly fitting in and working well teaching in our high school.

CLA is now celebrating its 30th year of ministry in Suriname, from September of 1979 when the Lord used the Donnans to start it with thirteen students.



Teachers still needed for Suriname.

<http://reformation.edu/suriname/pages/teachers-needed.htm>

HQ Briefs

OUR DIRECTOR'S HEALTH and vacation: Nothing to report which is very good news. Thank you for your prayers. Geoff and Nancy Donnan will be visiting family and churches in Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota, Michigan, Wisconsin and Georgia from late August to mid-September.

SOME OFFICE CHANGES: Meet Mia Dunaway—a single mother who stayed with the Donnans for a few months while looking for work in Palm Bay. She is quite skilled in areas needed for RCM administration. Dr. Jack Snyder is now working strictly on website matters. Both Mia and Jack work part-time with RCM. Pray also for one of our doctoral students with considerable educational administration experience interested in working with RCM. We are hopeful he might take on some directorial responsibilities. All we need are funds to start making some major strides forward. Pray.



HQ Briefs (cont'd)

During the month of June, we were invited to participate at the American Vision Conference at Midway Presbyterian Church, Powder Springs, Georgia. It was a great opportunity to meet new people and catch up with old acquaintances.



(left) Rev. Geoff Donnan discussing ministries with visitors to the RCM exhibit at the conference.



(right) Dr. Ted Baehr of Movie Guide Magazine with Rev. & Mrs. Donnan. Rev. Donnan serves on the Board of Advisors for Movie Guide.



(left) Dr. Joseph Morecraft and his wife Becky, long-time friends of the Donnans and early supporters of the work of Caribbean Christian Ministries, which later became Reformation Christian Ministries.

The Culvert Story

In late May, our 4 ft. X 60 ft. culvert collapsed cutting off vehicular access to our property. So, we took out the old,



reshaped the 15 ft. deep ditch and put in 80 ft. of new



culvert. It took two days of to replace the pipe, but a month before and two months after to complete the task of landscaping, re-fencing, putting up the gates and reseeding it. Geoff & Jason Donnan did most of that work, but several injuries to Geoff slowed him down for some weeks. All is well now. Only painting remains. Thanks for praying.



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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:

A Declaration of Universal Rights

Article 1 - Framework

Section 1: Purpose

This is a declaration of universal rights, rights which belong to all men everywhere, male and female, in every age, in every situation.

These rights are conferred upon men by God, and are thus immutable with respect to men. They were not devised by men nor can they be modified by men. They are not subject to change by governments. These rights are created by God and not by man. They are endowed by God at conception.

These rights are rights of the person, unalienable rights which a man is not permitted to transfer or surrender. No government can ever lawfully abridge these rights in any person, but must be careful to acknowledge and respect these rights.

Section 2: Construction

A right is a grant of authority given by God to man. Man has authority to live for God and to serve God according to His rules and plan. Man has a duty to exercise his God-given authority as a steward for God. Man has authority to do only that which is right. God has established what is just and right, and commands man to live justly and righteously. Man's duties to God proceed from the authority God confers upon him. That authority is also right, especially with respect to other men. Thus, man's authority or right is to do only that which is right. Man never has a right to do wrong.

The duties or obligations, and rights or just claims declared herein shall not be construed to deny or disparage other duties or rights not named.

The above section is a sample of one of the opening declarative articles. In addition to that, each section has a commentary further explaining the precise language. The following is an abbreviated Table of Contents of the entire document.

The full document is available for viewing on our website and for purchase in our bookstore.

<http://www.reformation.edu/rights/index.htm>

AN INTRODUCTION • PREAMBLE • WHY A DECLARATION OF RIGHTS • ARTICLE 1 - FRAMEWORK
ARTICLE 2 - SELF-GOVERNMENT • ARTICLE 3 - FAMILY GOVERNMENT • ARTICLE 4 - ECCLESIASTICAL GOVERNMENT
ARTICLE 5 - CIVIL GOVERNMENT

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