

Puritan Reformed Journal

JANUARY 2009



Volume 1 • Number 1



Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary

2965 Leonard St., N.E.

Grand Rapids, Michigan 49525

PURITAN REFORMED JOURNAL
Edited for Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary

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Puritan Reformed Journal is published semi-annually. The subscription price per year for individuals and institutions is \$20.00 in the United States, \$30.00 in Canada (payable in U.S. funds), \$35.00 foreign countries (surface mail). Back issues may be purchased at \$10.00 per copy.

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FROM THE EDITORS

In his little-known historical study of the important contributions made by the Puritans, Donald A. Carson concluded that it is “impossible to read them without feeling the fire burn within, without being humbled by their almost fantastic grasp of Scripture and of theology” and prayed that God would again give us “such abundant fruit of superior quality.”¹ Without claiming to be that fruit for which Dr. Carson prayed, the papers in this inaugural issue of *The Puritan Reformed Journal* do seek to undertake theological reflection along the very lines laid down by the Puritans: submitting to the Word of God as the final and all-sufficient source of truth about God and His salvation, and seeking to understand the many-splendored contours of the biblical witness about the Triune God in Scripture and history. As the Puritans well knew, this entails various realms of theological reflection: biblical, historical, and pastoral theology, and that jewel in the crown, systematic theology. It is the editors’ hope that, in issues to come, all of these realms of theology will be represented and help the church of Christ to increase in the knowledge of her God.

An essay by Joel Beeke provides an appropriate doorway into this inaugural issue by emphasizing our great need for a God-centered ministry. Through an exegetical analysis of 1 Corinthians 1:1–2:5, Dr. Beeke highlights the fact that such a ministry is inevitably Christological, for the great goal of all of God’s works is the glory of His Son. In a bibliothological study on preaching Christ from the Old Testament, David Murray continues this theme of the exaltation of Christ. He rightly shows that far too much gospel preaching bypasses the Old Testament altogether, despite Christ’s own declaration that all of the Scriptures of the Old Covenant spoke of Him.

Among the most neglected Old Testament books is Leviticus—though the writer of the letter to the Hebrews uses this book extensively. Johnny Serafini, a Brazilian student at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, seeks to rectify this lacuna by examining the Levitical prohibition on consuming blood, its New Testament fulfillment, and the godly reverence that should permeate our lives because of this command. The usefulness of the Old Testament for New Testament believers also informs the article of Gerald Bilkes on Ezra’s pattern for church reformation today. We delight in being Reformed believers, but we have

1. “The Puritans: What they have that the Moderns have not,” *Northwest Journal of Theology*, 1, 2 (July 1972), 92.

not arrived, and must ever search the Scriptures to know the paths God would have us take. Dr. Bilkes's article is a great help to this end.

In the first of two studies in historical theology, Michael Haykin looks at the *Scottish Confession of Faith* (1560) and the *Irish Articles* (1615) with regard to their teaching on regeneration and faith, key issues during the Reformation era. One of the great lines of Reformed witness from the Reformation is the Huguenots, whose history is a thrilling story of great exploits for God, horrific persecution, and God's succor of His people, great preachers, and revival. Among the most powerful of God's servants in this French community was the nineteenth-century Calvinist Adolphe Monod (1802–1856). Antoine Theron, a South African student at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, opens up Monod's Christology for us in an informative and insightful essay.

There are three church history studies in the present issue. First, a study of preaching in the Heidelberg Catechism by Daniel Hyde highlights not only the utterly vital role that preaching holds in this confessional document but also its importance in any worship that claims to be Reformed. Second, Randall Pederson offers a fascinating study of a little-known Puritan, Andrew Willet (1561/2–1621), and finally, we have an essay by John J. Murray on his famous namesake, John Murray, undoubtedly one of the key men responsible for the recovery of Calvinism in the latter half of the twentieth century.

If the Puritans were anything, they were preachers and pastors, and it is appropriate that this inaugural issue is rounded out with a trio of *pastoralia*: an examination of God-centered adult education by Joel Beeke; a meditation on ministerial pride by the Puritan Richard Baxter, who shines most brightly in his dealings with pastoral issues; and a look at pastoral counseling in the face of disease and death by Christopher Bogosh.

Please note that we have purposefully selected articles of varying levels, some being scholarly in nature, others being of a simpler and practical nature, hoping that all readers will benefit. We would love to hear from you as to how we can improve our journal, which we hope to publish twice annually. Meanwhile, if you are not a regular donor to our seminary, please send in your subscription today (regular donors will receive each issue as a complimentary gift) to ensure that you do not miss an issue.

As editors, we hope that you will be edified as you read this issue and that you will support this literary effort to glorify our great God, to whom be the glory now and forever.