

Limerick Reformed Fellowship  
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Dear saints in the  
Protestant Reformed Churches,

As you will remember from our last newsletter, baptism has been approved on the mission field here. Therefore, *the* highlight for the LRF in recent weeks was, of course, our first baptism, of 8-month old Sebastian Kuhs on 23<sup>rd</sup> March. I preached on “Our Children: Infant Citizens of Christ’s Kingdom” (Luke 18:15-17). The Kuhs invited family and friends to share the joy of this occasion (we had about 16 visitors) and the service was recorded and videotaped (all our sermons are, of course; but the video of the baptism [about 8 minutes long] is also available on YouTube. It is also on the PRCA website under “special features”). I



have not heard much feedback from outsiders on the sermon and service (many of the visitors were Baptists, whose only experience of infant baptism is Roman Catholicism, so the concept of “infant citizens” was foreign to them) but it was a time of immense encouragement for the core group, some of whom were barely dry-eyed during the service. We must remember, too, that baptism is a means of grace *to the whole*

*congregation*: it is a sign and seal to all of God’s children that our sins are washed away by the blood and Spirit of Jesus Christ (*Heidelberg Catechism*, LD 26). May the Lord be pleased to give us many more covenant children, and therefore many more baptisms.

To humble us the Lord mixes joys and sorrows. Mission work, as must be clear from the book of Acts, has its own discouragements. Sometimes opposition comes from outside. We expect it. But by far the greatest discouragement is from within, when people leave the group. Our core group is as rock-solid as ever by the grace of God and they are a constant encouragement to me; but we have seen others, who even attended for months and for whom we had hopes, depart for various reasons. The reason is always opposition to the preaching: some find antithetical (they call it “negative”) preaching distasteful; some find the strict preaching of the Law of God (*Heidelberg Catechism*, LD 44) too much to bear; and others are offended by the strict particularity of grace (they want to hang on to “common grace” and the “Well-Meant Offer”). It is discouraging for a group of our size to lose people, but we are constantly reminded of this truth: the preaching, a two-edged sword, *always* has its effect. Some are attracted by it; others are repelled by it; still others like certain aspects of the truth but will not embrace the whole truth. People who hold unbiblical ideas or want to live in a way contrary to Scripture can sit under biblical, Reformed, antithetical preaching for only so long. Eventually, something has to give. Besides those things, there are some who *could* come to hear the preaching, who claim to be Reformed or Calvinist, but stay away because of various prejudices against the LRF.

We do not allow such discouragements to dampen our zeal for the truth. We have even seen in recent weeks the tentative return of some who left us in the past. Some do not seem to have the strength to make a commitment to the work, but we welcome them whenever they come and hope that the preaching will be a means of grace to them to stir them up to greater faithfulness because “grace is conferred by means of admonitions” (*Canons*, III/IV, 17). Moreover, we strive to be a welcoming place for visitors, which, of course, does not mean the “seeker sensitivity” of modern evangelicalism. The members here are enthusiastic about inviting people, and welcoming them when they do come, even if that is only for a service or two.

On 19<sup>th</sup> February, I finished a six-part series on Psalm 23, and on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, I began a series on Esther, my first “historical narrative” series. Between those two dates I spent a few weeks addressing some of the key “Common Grace” (Matt. 5:44-45; Luke 6:35) and “Well-Meant Offer” texts (the trilogy of Ezekiel 18:23, 32, 33:11) to instruct the saints in the particularity of God’s grace (since some had just departed from us over that very issue). Catechism classes for the children and adults are also going very well. We have almost finished *NT History*

*for Juniors*, and after consultation with the parents we will, after a test, commence *OT History for Seniors* (D.V.), at least for another couple of months. The boys are actually disappointed if we cannot have catechism! And who would want to waste that enthusiasm? In *Essentials* we will soon be finished with Soteriology, the doctrine of salvation (Lessons 18-23), and we may well continue that through the summer months as well, depending on availability and interest. I also hope to begin a second *Essentials* class with another family who cannot attend the Wednesday night class. The outlines for the first 15 *Essentials* lessons (each lesson is a two-page summary of the material covered in the course) are now online ([www.limerickreformed.com/](http://www.limerickreformed.com/)) in the hope of educating a wider audience in the Reformed faith. We hope also soon to add the Lesson outlines for *OT and NT History for Juniors* (D.V.).

As always, I thank you for your continued, tireless, prayerful support, and for all the tokens of your love for me and the Fellowship here. The Lord bless you and keep you.

In Christian love,  
Rev. Martyn McGeown