



RFPA update

ISSUE
29

Spring 2016

Children's Book Division Coordinator

By Gordon Schipper, vice-president of the RFPA board and a member of the Book & *Standard Bearer* Committee

The last issue of the RFPA *Update* generated a very enthusiastic response to the request for authors and illustrators of children's books. Since that time we've successfully published *Gottschalk: Servant of God*, and many of you have provided positive feedback. As we have considered your responses to the concept of children's books, feedback on *Gottschalk*, and our own learnings, it became very evident that the realm of children's literature is new and different for the RFPA. What type of children's books do we want? What expertise and criteria should we use to evaluate and develop a manuscript? We sensed the need to have good planning and careful development of a children's book division. However, our current staff and committees are too busy with current projects to devote the time and energy needed to create a new division.

Given the need and interest in children's books and the limitation of our current staff, the RFPA board made a decision to invest in a children's book division. The main element of this investment is a part-time, two-year staff position that will develop the mission and initiate the publication and promotion of RFPA titles for covenant children. The goal of the children's book division coordinator is that at the end of two years a sustainable children's book division will be part of the RFPA. The potential for a permanent position will be evaluated at the conclusion of this two-year investment.

The RFPA would like to hear from individuals who have formal education that applies to publication of children's literature. We are looking for a person who understands the genre and has some exposure to manuscript evaluation and development. In addition, we would like to see some familiarity with the publishing process, ideas on how to

coordinate illustrations and artwork, and ideas on how to promote a children's division.

The goals for the first year include developing the mission of the RFPA's children's book division, creating selection criteria for manuscripts, and evaluating existing manuscripts based on these criteria. The person in this position would also be developing the publishing process for children's literature and starting to work on a marketing plan that would work toward a young reader's membership program. If possible, publication of one book would mark a successful year.

Goals for the second year would center on publication of two or three books as well as refinement of the work done in the first year. We would expect to see a pipeline of manuscripts that are in various stages of development along with an established membership program.

The RFPA has allocated funds from an estate gift to support this position. We think that this role will take approximately twenty hours per week over a two-year period. Pay rate will depend on the level of education and experience the applicant brings to this position. The RFPA thinks this position will benefit from location in the Grand Rapids area. Observing our current staff and being mentored by them will be very valuable. But we will not rule out an applicant from outside the area if he or she has compelling qualifications and experience. Please contact the RFPA business manager, Tim Pipe, (tim@rfpa.org) if you are interested in applying for the position of children's book division coordinator. We hope to interview candidates and make a selection by September.

The RFPA thanks all those who responded to the request for authors and illustrators for children's books.

Children's Book Division Coordinator, cont.

Manuscripts have been submitted as well as ideas for more. There has been a lot of interest in providing the art work for these books as well. The RFPA did not expect the amount of feedback received nor fully appreciate how much additional work that publishing a children's book would create for the board and staff when we made the request. We now realize that we had the cart before the horse. We need to put the infrastructure for a children's division in place before we can succeed. With the approval of the children's book

division coordinator position, we are attempting to restart this new endeavor correctly. We humbly ask for patience on the part of the authors who took the time to submit a manuscript. We will respond to your manuscripts once the new RFPA staff member is in his or her role.

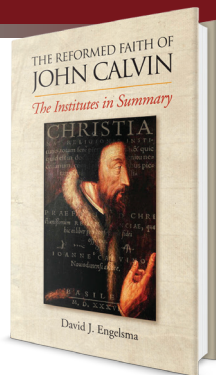
May we be good stewards of God's good gift of reading by providing our young readers with titles that reflect the distinctive and God-glorifying worldview of the Reformed faith.

Iron Sharpens Iron Radio Interviews Professor David Engelsma

In late February, Prof. Engelsma informed the RFPA that he was to be interviewed by Chris Arnzen, a national, religious radio host from the Pennsylvania/New York area. Chris Arnzen had approached Prof. Engelsma, asking him if he would do a series of live radio interviews on various books Prof. Engelsma has authored.

The interview was live-streamed on Arnzen's website, <http://www.ironsharpensironradio.com>. This interview was on Prof. Engelsma's book, *The Reformed Faith of John Calvin*, and it took place on Wednesday, March 2, from 4 to 5 p.m.

The recorded radio interview is now posted at the RFPA website on the blog, and there is a possibility of subsequent interviews on other books authored by Prof. Engelsma.



New Book/Ebook Release: God's Goodness Always Particular

God's Goodness Always Particular

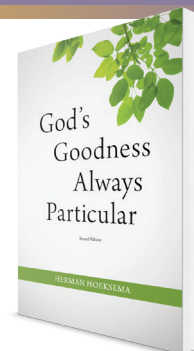
Paperback & ebook. 144 pages.

Retail: \$14.95, Book Club

USA \$9.72 | International \$10.46

Paperback edition expected

release date: July 2016



What does the Bible teach regarding God's attitude to the reprobate ungodly? What are the implications that God has an attitude of favor to the wicked? Do the Psalms support or give the lie to the theory of common grace? Does Zwier's "triple cord" of biblical texts hold firm, or is it cut to ribbons? Read and gain new appreciation for the truth that God's goodness is always particular.

RFPA Warehouse, Mailing Room, and Packing Room



The Reformed Free Publishing warehouse measures 48' square and is 20' from floor to ceiling. The warehouse contains 62,520 volumes of precious Reformed literature. There are 95 titles, stored on pallets, which are moved by a forklift. The inventory is priceless. For bookkeeping and insurance purposes, the inventory is valued at approximately \$330,000.



In the mezzanine area above the warehouse, *Standard Bearer* inventory dating back to 1924 is stored. There are complete sets, loose issues, and bound volumes for each of the 91 years of publication. This inventory is also priceless and has a book value of \$18,000.



Book orders and the *Standard Bearer* mailings are completed in the packing room. On average, 8,500 books are mailed out each year. The *Standard Bearer* is mailed 21 times a year to about 2,230 subscribers, which means that over 46,830 copies are mailed each year.

New Book Release: *Christianizing the World*

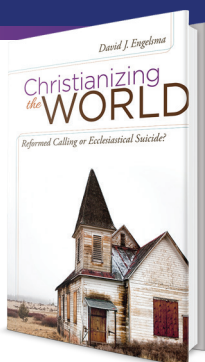
Christianizing the World: Reformed Calling or Ecclesiastical Suicide?

By David J. Engelsma

Hardcover. ISBN 978-1-944555-02-3
192 pages. Retail: \$19.95, Book Club
USA \$12.97 | International \$13.96

A critique of Abraham Kuyper's cultural theory of a common grace of God, of the grandiose mission of this grace, and of those who confess the theory and intend to promote it so that it accomplishes the end Kuyper claimed. The book exposes Kuyper's biblical basis for his theory and its practical mission.

The first and main part of the book is a much-expanded version of the public lecture given in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 2014 under the auspices of the evangelism society of Southwest Protestant Reformed Church in Wyoming, Michigan. The second part of the book consists of questions raised by the audience at the conclusion of the lecture and of the answers by the speaker at the lecture.



Hope PR Church 100th Anniversary Book

A Spiritual House Preserved: A Century in the River's Bend

Edited by Calvin Kalsbeek

Hardcover. ISBN 978-1-944555-06-1
752 pages. Retail: \$44.95, Book Club
USA \$29.22 | International \$31.46
Expected release date: June 2016

This book will not be automatically sent to Book Club members. However, Book Club discount may be used on this title.

This is the story of a true church of Jesus Christ with very humble beginnings. The congregation of mostly poor farmers faced and survived many challenges, some due to her isolated location in a hook-like bend in the Grand River. But this one-hundredth anniversary book of Hope Protestant Reformed Church is more than a record of Hope's history. More importantly, it reveals the secrets of her continuance as a faithful church today: secrets which if heeded give Hope and like-minded churches hope for tomorrow.



RFPA Ebook Policy Change

Effective immediately are changes to the RFPA ebook policy that will provide added benefit to the RFPA Book Club members and keep ebook prices closer to other publishers. Book Club members who purchase the hard copy of a new RFPA book or a hard copy of a second or revised edition will now be offered a free ebook of the same title. Old RFPA titles newly offered in ebook format can be purchased by Book Club members for \$2.99. All that is required is a call or email to the RFPA office. The ebook downloads will then be emailed directly to you.

Unchanged is the policy for Book Club members who are enrolled as ebook only members. Those members may purchase the hard copy of the same title for \$4.99 during the first 30 days after publication.

In the past, RFPA ebook prices were generally the same as hard copy prices. For the first six months after the release of a new ebook the pricing did not change. With the new policy, after six months, ebook prices that had been over \$25.00 will be 70% of the former value. (Example: a \$30.00 ebook price reduces to \$21.00.) After 12 months, all ebook prices will be 50% of the price of the hard copy. (Example: the \$30.00 ebook price reduces to \$15.00.)

Large Shipment of Books to the Philippines

In February we were busy filling a large book order for the Philippines Bookstore run by Rev. Daniel Kleyn and his wife Sharon.

Three boxes were filled with 254 Reformed books. They were shipped by sea freight which usually takes two months for the boxes to arrive at their destination.

It is always quite something to see this many books being sent to this part of the world. The printed page is being spread to the four corners of the world!

We recall to mind the speech that Rev. Smit gave this past year at the RFPA Annual Meeting, "The Role of Reformed Literature in Foreign Missions." You can access and read the full speech as it was published in the *Standard Bearer* magazine through our blog post at the RFPA website.



IN REVIEW: GOTTSCHALK: SERVANT OF GOD

A STORY OF COURAGE, FAITH, AND LOVE FOR THE TRUTH

Connie L. Meyer. Jenison, MI: Reformed Free Publishing Association, 2015. Hardcover. 160 pages. \$17.95.

Reviewed by Ryan Schipper, member of Southwest Protestant Reformed Church

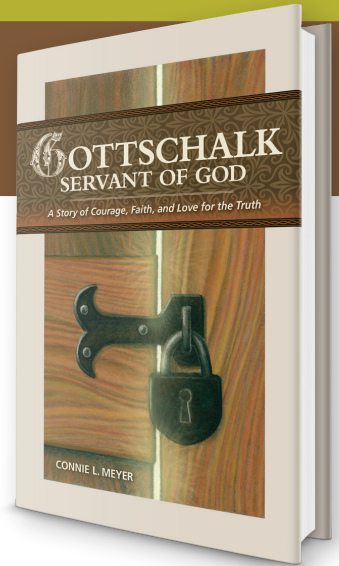
Gottschalk: Servant of God, A Story of Courage, Faith, and Love for the Truth by Connie L. Meyer recounts the life, faith, doctrine, and suffering of a little known but mighty servant of God, Gottschalk of Orbais. Written from a perspective that puts the reader inside Gottschalk's mind, the book details his monastic upbringing which provided the opportunity for him to read the works of church fathers, particularly Augustine, which would bring him to a knowledge of and love for the truth of predestination. It then explains the negative attention this drew from the apostate leaders of the church. Always contrasting the truth that Gottschalk maintained with the hate-filled accusations of these leaders, the book provides a valuable demonstration of how unjustly the righteous can be and are treated, and strikingly presents the necessity of a sure and firm knowledge of the truth for all of God's people.

The real points of interest in the book are the details regarding the various synods to which Gottschalk was summoned. Already at quite a young age he was called before kings, priests, and emperors for an explanation of his teachings. Who among the book's readers can imagine being on trial before kings? Yet Gottschalk had numerous such encounters, and indeed admirably represented and defended the truth. This, of course, escalated the conflict with those who opposed him, and ultimately brought about his martyrdom. Yet therein lies the tremendous merit of this little book. Its record of such Spirit-granted courage, boldness, and strength in a suffering saint is encouraging and comforting, while also causing the reader to look inward, to examine his own spiritual growth. It is an exhortation to hold the truth dear, and to hold it in absolute surety.

Throughout, the book provides the historical context which helps to place the events into our understanding of the time

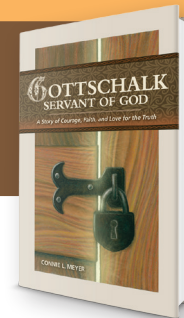
period. It clarifies the often scattered facts and murky information that most tend to have about the so-called Dark Ages, placing the events of the book into their proper historical position alongside Charlemagne and the political strife between his sons. Encouraging about this aspect of the book is the glimpse it provides into perhaps the scale of the true church of those days. From the perspective of our day, the Dark Ages were indeed dark. I dare say that most readers would scarcely need two hands to list off every man of the church they could think of between Augustine and Wycliffe. Yet God's church existed somewhere! By reading about Gottschalk's wide-ranging preaching and the influence of his many writings, the reader is encouraged to bring to mind the certainty of God's faithfulness to his church. Even amid darkness, God will maintain the light of the gospel, the light of his church.

Taken together, the fine research that is evident in this book, the easy flow and interesting perspective of the writing, and the detailed account of this great story of faith make it valuable for all ages. Also, the narrative frequently digresses to draw the reader's attention out of the mere story and into the larger reality. God's people can only have confidence in the truth. Therefore, when the truth is at stake, God's people must be bold to stand for that truth, to fight for it and defend it. The truth is opposed today, opposed on many fronts. Take up, therefore, and read of a man gone long before us, who stood for the truth as we must stand for the truth. Take an example, as well as encouragement, from Gottschalk, the servant of God.



IN REVIEW: GOTTSCHALK: SERVANT OF GOD

A STORY OF COURAGE, FAITH, AND LOVE FOR THE TRUTH



Connie L. Meyer. Jenison, MI: Reformed Free Publishing Association, 2015. Hardcover. 160 pages. \$17.95.

Reviewed by Dr. Julian Kennedy, member of Covenant Protestant Reformed Church in Northern Ireland

Connie Meyer has penned this short and beautifully illustrated biography of a virtually unknown saint of the medieval period to ostensibly reach more young people in the church but it is a profitable read for all ages. Gottschalk born 806 AD, was a man of the stature of Augustine and the sixteenth century Reformers, who stood for exactly the same truths they did and suffered greatly as a result. The short chapters make for easily digested bite-sized chunks of material. She herself is the talented illustrator, mainly with pencil.

Gottschalk ought to be remembered for his unwavering stand for double predestination in a church that largely was dismissing all the doctrines of grace. Despite the fact he was a monk, was a member of the Roman Catholic church, and likely partook of the mass regularly, he was a man in

whom God by his Spirit, revealed the great truth of the sovereignty of God in salvation and all its facets, namely the five points of Calvinism. As with his Lord he was accused of heresy, found guilty at various synods, flogged, imprisoned for many years and indeed ended his days more or less in solitary confinement. Connie Meyer brings out the many similarities between his experiences and sufferings and that of Christ himself.

The book will encourage boldness, bravery and perseverance in those who read it and clearly demonstrate that even in the apparently darkest hours of true Christendom God has his faithful servants able to stand and defend the faith among kings, ecclesiastical leaders and the common people of their day.

New RFPA Blog Writers

We are excited to introduce you to two new writers that have agreed to write for the RFPA blog. The first is Rev. Joshua Engelsma, pastor of Doon Protestant Reformed Church (Doon, Iowa). The second is Rev. McGeown, missionary-pastor of the Covenant Protestant Reformed Church in Northern Ireland stationed in Limerick, Republic of Ireland. They will both be contributing blog posts along with our existing writer Rev. Clayton Spronk. Join our email mailing list at www.rfpa.org to have these blog posts delivered directly to your inbox!



Rev. Engelsma



Rev. McGeown



Rev. Spronk

RFPA Staff

(L-R): Evelyn Langerak, Paula Kamps, Rachel Maatman, Tim Pipe Sr.

Evelyn: Book Publication Business Manager since October 1995.

Paula: Administrative Coordinator since October 2002

Rachel: Part time help since August 2008

Tim: Business Manager since March 2004





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RFPA update

Reader Feedback on *The Rock Whence We Are Hewn*

What an absolute joy to read! I am now much better informed on the heroic struggles of Hoeksema and Danhof. Though I have almost every PRC publication this one affected me like no other. So many of my own struggles are reflected (dimly of course compared to these two) in this collection. Indeed I read many passages with a tear in my eye as I lament the loss of the Reformed heritage in this country (Australia), if ever one truly existed.

With little place to go in this country to attend upon reformed worship in the PRC direction and not even an EPC congregation in this state there is only struggle ahead. For this reason I am thankful for all the spiritual food that comes via the PRC whether sermons or publications. They sustain my wife and I and many of our family and we are eternally thankful for this avenue of grace.

I look forward to your publications and pray that God will grant you much blessing as you continue to diligently labor in the name of Christ. Your work is appreciated even in this far flung corner of the world.

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