

Reformed Christian Worldview

3 Points of a Reformed Christian Worldview

1. Creation
2. Fall
3. Restoration

Creation

Four Foundational Relationships in the Created Order

1. The Triune God created man for relationship with him
2. God created man in His image.
3. God created man to work with others.
4. God created man to have dominion over the creation (stewardship) by doing the things God did in Creation – making, filling, ordering, etc.

Fall

Result of the Fall

- ◆ Man's relationship with God is broken
- ◆ Man's understanding of himself as the image of God is broken
- ◆ Man's relationship with others is broken
- ◆ Man's relationship to the created order is broken

Restoration

Restoration

- ◆ Man's relationship with God is broken, but can be restored
- ◆ Man's self-conception is broken, but he can be restored to the image of God
- ◆ Man's relationship with others is broken, but it can be restored
- ◆ Man's stewardship in the creation is broken, but it can be restored

Restoration to God

- ◆ Sinners are restored in their Relationship to God by Redemption
 - ◆ Redemption is Applied to Sinners by Repentance and Faith
 - ◆ Restored to undertake Persevering Works
 - ◆ Complete Restoration is future
 - ◆ Counterfeit faith is present in the Church
- ◆ The Image of God is restored through Christ-likeness
 - ◆ Humble Servanthood
 - ◆ Dying to self

Remainder of our Study

- ◆ Man's relationship with others is broken, but it can be restored
- ◆ Man's stewardship in the creation is broken, but it can be restored

How do we restore others?

- ◆ By following the example of the Apostle Paul in his ministry to others
- ◆ By exercising stewardship in the creation, we play our role in restoring others

Restoring Others
through Paul-Likeness

Paul's Bold Declaration

"Be imitators of me"

1 Corinthians 11:1

What about Paul are we
to imitate?

Imitate Paul's Credentials?

Acts 22

3 "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city [Jerusalem], educated at the feet of Gamaliel according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God as all of you are this day.

Paul's Pedigree

- ◆ Jew - people of God
- ◆ Raised in Jerusalem, the city of David, the center of the Jewish religious and cultural life
- ◆ Studied under Gamaliel, one of the most renowned seminary professors of the day
- ◆ A Pharisee, a religious leader, teacher and meticulous follower of the Law

Paul does not commend his pedigree as something to be imitated

- ◆ Paul never commends Gentiles to become Jews
- ◆ Paul does not commend them to go to Jerusalem or one of the great Roman cities where they can be influential
- ◆ Paul does not encourage them to find the best religious teacher and become one of his disciples
- ◆ Paul does not encourage them to become religious professionals

What is it about Paul that we are to
imitate?

"Be imitators of me, as I am [an imitator] of
Christ"

1 Corinthians 11:1
(also 1 Corinthians 4:16)

What is it about Paul that we are to imitate?

- We are to imitate his Christ-likeness
- We are to imitate the imitator!

What about Paul Should We Imitate?

Imitate Paul's dependence upon the
Holy Spirit

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

1 And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. 2 For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. 3 And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, 4 and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Paul did not display his own abilities

- ◆ Not uppity or highfalutin language
- ◆ Not a polished speaker - Weakness, fear, trembling

Paul did not display his intellect

- ◆ He became a "know nothing" - the message of Jesus Christ crucified was all that was necessary
- ◆ Not plausible words of wisdom - philosophical speculation
- ◆ Paul displayed his dependence on the Holy Spirit

Paul depended on the Holy Spirit

- ◆ Because Faith does not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God
- ◆ We don't have to have all the answers
- ◆ We don't have to have it all packaged up in a slick and convincing presentation

Imitate Paul's lack of concern for his
reputation

1 Corinthians 4:9-16

9 For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. 10 We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. 11 To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless, 12 and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; 13 when slandered, we entreat. We have become, and are still, like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things. 14 I do not write these things to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. 15 For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. 16 I urge you, then, be imitators of me.

Paul's lack of concern for his reputation

- ◆ Paul's message was not popular
 - ◆ A spectacle
 - ◆ A Fool

Paul's lack of concern for his reputation

- ◆ Paul's lifestyle was not respectable
 - ◆ Poor and Homeless
 - ◆ Self-supporting with manual labor
 - ◆ Scum of the earth, garbage

Imitate Paul's Sensitivity toward the
Consciences of Others

1 Corinthians 8:7-13

7 But some, through former association with idols, eat food as really offered to an idol, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. 8 Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. 9 But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. 10 For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? 11 And so by your knowledge this weak person is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. 12 Thus, sinning against your brothers and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. 13 Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

Paul's Analysis of Life Situations

- ◆ Food is spiritually indifferent;
- ◆ I have the right to eat meat sacrificed to idols.

Paul's Analysis of Life Situations

- ◆ Some have weak consciences.
 - ◆ If I eat, the weak might follow my lead and eat against their conscience
 - ◆ Whatever is not of faith is sin.
- ◆ If I cause a brother to sin, I am sinning against my brother.
- ◆ If I sin against my brother, I am sinning against Christ.

Paul's Application

I will never do anything that will make my
brother stumble

Imitate Paul's Lack of Concern for
his Personal Rights

1 Corinthians 9:1-14

1 Am I not free? Am I not an apostle?

3 This is my defense to those who would examine me.

4 Do we not have the right to eat and drink? 5 Do we not have the right to take along a believing wife, as do the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas?

11 If we have sown spiritual things among you, is it too much if we reap material things from you? 12 If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we even more?

Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right [to get our living by the gospel], but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ.

Paul Gave up Personal Rights for the sake of the Gospel

- ◆ Paul gave up daily sustenance
- ◆ Paul gave up the right to marry
- ◆ Paul gave up the right of earning income from ministry

What rights do you have that you
may need to give up for the sake of
the Gospel?

1 Corinthians 9:15-27

15 But I have made no use of any of these rights, nor am I writing these things to secure any such provision. For I would rather die than have anyone deprive me of my ground for boasting.

18 What then is my reward? That in my preaching I may present the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel.

19 For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. 20 To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. 21 To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. 22 To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. 23 I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.

Paul conformed to his audience to win them

- ◆ He conformed to Jewish customs around Jews
- ◆ He conformed to gentile practices around gentiles
- ◆ He conformed to the practices of the weak around the weak (dietary issues)

Imitate Paul's Winsomeness

1 Corinthians 10:23-33

23 "All things are lawful," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful," but not all things build up. 24 Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor. 25 Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience. 26 For "the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof." 27 If one of the unbelievers invites you to dinner and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you without raising any question on the ground of conscience. 28 But if someone says to you, "This has been offered in sacrifice," then do not eat it, for the sake of the one who informed you, and for the sake of conscience— 29 I do not mean your conscience, but his. For why should my liberty be determined by someone else's conscience? 30 If I partake with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of that for which I give thanks? 31 So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. 32 Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, 33 just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved.

Paul became a servant to all

- ◆ Paul did not focus on what was allowable but on what would build others up
- ◆ Paul tried not to offend anyone inside or outside the church
- ◆ Paul tried to please everyone, not himself, in everything, that they may be saved.

Restoring Others to the Image of God through Paul-likeness

1. Imitate Paul's dependence upon the Holy Spirit, not upon human skill
2. Imitate Paul's lack of concern for his reputation regarding his message and his lifestyle
3. Imitate Paul's Sensitivity to the Consciences of Others
4. Imitate Paul's Lack of Concern for his Personal Rights
5. Imitate Paul's Winsomeness by serving the interests of others

For Further Study

- Allen, Roland. Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours? Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1991.
- Kane, J. Herbert. Christian Missions in Biblical Perspective. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1976.