

# Humanism vs. Protestant Reformed Teachers: No R&R (3)

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Humanism vs. Protestant Reformed Teachers: No R&R

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That They May Teach Them to Their Children

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The Christian school teacher is engaged in an unceasing battle with humanism. The battles are fierce and the foe relentless because the stakes are high. All of secular education has been won over to the philosophy that man is the measure of all things. The one true God has been banned from the classroom, and many false gods have been set up in His place. Even in the realm of Christian education, humanism has made powerful inroads into the curriculum and instruction. Only in the faithful Christian school is God honored in all the Christ-centered instruction. The

Christian school teacher is duty bound to reject humanism in all its forms and set forth God and His law, not man, as the standard. Hence, Satan uses every means to wear down these teachers in order to influence their thinking and their instruction.

In the face of the unrelenting attacks that come from every side and the powerful tools used to promote humanism, teachers might well wonder what weapons are available for the battle. They are not to wonder—God has provided a powerful arsenal for both the Christian school teacher and the students.

First, God gives the subjective weapon of faith. Faith in Christ is the subjective principle that distinguished the Reformation from the Renaissance. The Renaissance placed its hope in Man. The Reformation, on the other hand, hoped in God alone.

Faith is not a blind belief in that which cannot be proved. It is rather a firm belief in the God who has clearly revealed Himself in Christ. And Jehovah God is so obviously real as to be beyond proof. Must Christians prove to the ungodly humanist that God exists? The believer replies—"Look about you, man. The creation testifies in innumerable ways that God is, and must be served. It is His handiwork. He governs the creation and history."

The point is that God's existence is so obvious that it is beyond proof. One might just as well ask a man to prove to his companion that it is raining, as they run into a building dripping wet from a torrential downpour. The evidence is all there. What could be added to prove it?

Faith is also the victory that overcomes the world. That, because faith is in Christ. In and through the cross, He has overcome Satan, the world of the ungodly, death, and hell. The gates of hell cannot prevail against the church. The victory is Christ's, and therefore it is ours. Christian school teachers, know this: You fight not for the victory, but in victory. So, likewise, do your students.

Faith is the subjective weapon or armor of the believer. And because it is God's work in us, it cannot be destroyed.

God gives more for the battle. The primary objective weapon is Scripture. The Bible is the believer's "source material" and standard of truth. Humanism draws from a different fountain. Humanism looks to the Greeks, to Darwin, to science falsely so called as perverted by unbelief, and to various philosophers.

Believers go back to the source, the infallibly inspired Word of God. With Jesus we confess: Thy word is truth. And with Him we add: Sanctify us, and our students, by thy truth.

A significant goal of all covenant instruction is to teach the students to think biblically! Every trend, every attitude, every advertisement, every outstanding man or woman set up by the world as admirable, must be evaluated in the light of the Bible. You as teachers must not in any way neglect your study of the Bible for your own personal spiritual growth. You must think biblically!

We do well to remember that the Bible is a spiritual weapon. It is not a mere book of rules. Scripture is the revelation of God and His will. And God uses the Bible to impress upon teachers and students alike His will and way.

Of course, teachers must use logic to show how the Word of God applies, that is, how Scripture exposes and condemns all humanism! However, good logic is not ultimately what will equip the

students to condemn the evil and forsake it. Rather, the Holy Spirit applies the Word to the hearts of believing students, opens their understanding, and gives them a love for God and His truth and a corresponding loathing of humanism. That fact gives teachers every reason to hope!

Teachers do not face the battle defenseless, nor in the hope of their own strength. They are equipped.

And yet, they must know more. God has given to Christian school teachers the perfect gift to enable them to be proactive, not merely defensive in the battle. It is what might be called the biblical alternative, or even, the antidote to humanism. That antidote is the covenant of grace that God establishes with His people in Christ.

That the covenant can play this role is easily apparent. Humanism is a way of life. So also is the covenant. Humanism and the covenant are at antipodes in every area of life.

The covenant is religion, that is, it is the living out of our beliefs. Consider that the covenant determines our lives as friend/servants of God. It defines our relationship to God, as well as our relationship to Christ. The covenant teaches us what is our relationship to our fellow saints. And the covenant demands that our relationship to the world of unbelief be antithetical.

## ***Our Relationship to God***

The right understanding of the covenant puts man in proper perspective. In this relationship, the covenant God is all. God is infinitely glorious. He is omnipotent. He has all wisdom and knowledge. He sovereignly establishes His covenant of grace for His own glory, and that one goal must be realized in the covenant.

Man, on the other hand, is creature. Far from being the independent master of his fate, man is dependent upon God for his life, health, strength, and well-being. Life and joy are not possible apart from God.

Contrary to the humanists, the covenant indicates that man is not free. Fallen in Adam, and apart from grace, man is bound fast in chains of sin and death. Although God delivers His covenant people from that dreadful bondage, yet the old man of sin is powerful, and can be overcome only by the power of sovereign grace.

Man is not free to determine his own world and place. God is sovereign over all of life, over history, and over the destiny of every living thing. No, God does not treat man as a block of wood, nor does He force man's will. The choices made by every man are his own choices. And yet, each choice has been determined eternally in God's counsel, and nothing thwarts the plan of God.

The covenant changes the minds and attitudes of believers. Believers are drawn out of the darkness of death. They no longer serve self. They are turned from their selfish desires, goals, and interests. Not death, but life they have—life with God. Seeking God means seeking the highest good that can be sought. The covenant creature lives unto God, not self.

Such a covenant believer rejects his former paths and the standards of men he previously esteemed, and adopts instead the standards of God. He recognizes that the law of God is the revelation of the righteous will of God, and he sings of his love for that law.

Students must come to see that the glitter of our culture is a false gold that soon loses its vaunted value. They must come to know that the world's laughter is vile and pretended, and that its pleasures are fleeting and deadly. But God is in every way the highest good, and His eternal treasures are greatly to be desired. They will do that as they consciously live in the covenant, for they live with God.

## ***Our Relationship to Christ Determined by the Covenant***

Within the glorious covenant of grace, Christ is our head, and we are members of His body. United to Him by faith, we live out of Him—His life is ours; His Spirit is in us.

The covenant members confess that Christ is everything. He is the Mediator of the covenant. He is the center of the counsel of God. He is the Elect, in whom we are chosen. In Christ we know God and experience His love for us. The bride of the King in the Song of Solomon expressed perfectly the feeling of believers for Jesus Christ—He is altogether lovely (5:16).

Teachers who live consciously as covenant members will be Christ-centered in their work, because Christ is the center of their lives.

Students must detect that God is everything to teachers. There is, of course, a false piety, a mysticism that is ever talking about God—"The Lord led me to do this or that." Not that.

Rather, as preaching is the Word of God brought through a particular preacher with all his gifts, background, and experiences, so teaching is Christ-centered instruction through a particular, individual teacher. Each teacher has his own gifts, background, and experiences. Yet, the teacher's religious life, his life with God, will drastically affect his teaching—either for good or for evil.

The people of God must see Christ in the minister (His love, compassion, detesting of sin, love for truth, wisdom, goodness, etc.). Likewise, students must see Christ in their teachers. They must witness that their teachers are excited about Christ. They must see the Christ-like qualities shining forth. Both by example and instruction, teachers must set forth Christ, the altogether-lovely One, so that students by God's grace seek Christ and desire to imitate Him. When they delight in the true beauty of Christ, they will not be swept away to pursue the ugliness of humanism.

## ***The Covenant Determines Our Relationship to Others***

We ought to notice that life in the covenant is the exact opposite of the dream of the humanists. It is never self-serving. Nor is it isolating. Nor does it cause the individual to be lost in the mass of the elect.

That covenant life does not result in self-absorbed isolation is evident from the fact that the members are knit together into one spiritual body of Christ. An inseparable bond forms a living union with Christ, and thus also to all other members of the church and covenant of God.

At the same time, he is not lost in the mass of the elect. Each child is unique, yet he is far from following the ideals of humanism, which teaches: Do your own thing; develop yourself and your

world. Rather, 1 Corinthians 12 <sup>[1]</sup> instructs: You are unique because God has given you natural abilities, and the Spirit has bestowed spiritual gifts for the purpose that you serve the other members of the body. This is antithetical to humanism. A conscious member of the covenant serves the good of the body, not himself.

Teachers, therefore, seek the development of all their students. But it is that they may serve each other, and the church, and thus Christ Himself. Once again, Christ must be set up as the model—the One who came not to be served, but to minister to others, and to give Himself a ransom for others (Matt. 20:28 <sup>[2]</sup>).

## ***The Covenant Defines the Believers' Relation to the World of Unbelief***

Covenant people are friends of God, and consequently friends of God's people. They are not friends of the world. Friendship with the world is enmity with God. The believer does not find his companions or his goals in the world.

This is the doctrine of the antithesis, always concomitant with the covenant, rightly understood. The covenant thus demands that instruction given in the Christian school be antithetical. Teachers set forth the truth of God in Christ over against the lie of man and the devil. Obviously, each lesson must be developed in harmony with the age and ability of the students—high school students will be provided more detailed treatment of the rejection of the errors than grade school students. Nevertheless, all instruction in the Christian school must be antithetical.

The covenant is an essential element in the battle against humanism. The covenant sets man in the proper perspective. It lifts up man's eyes to God and His glory. It causes the believer to live, not to self, but to God. It requires man to imitate Christ rather than the world about him. Living in the covenant, students are not isolated, nor self-seeking, nor lost in the crowd. This is the covenantal manner in which Christian teachers deal with their students and by which they seek to develop their talents.

Humanism's influence is great, and it can only grow, for the kingdom of Antichrist is the kingdom of man. That kingdom is developing. And the Beast means to press his man-centered message upon the souls of teacher and student alike. His means are powerful, his work highly effective.

But your weapons, teachers, are mighty. Subjectively, you and your covenant students have an indestructible faith in Christ. You cannot be moved. You have the objective testimony of the infallible Scriptures for your source material and standard of truth. And you have the God-given antidote to the poison of humanism—the covenant! Live the covenant. Teach the covenant.

May God bless your work and give you strength for the battles that lie ahead.

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### **Links:**

[1] <http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=9&search=1+Corinthians+12>

[2] <http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=9&search=Matt.+20:28>