

Trinity Reformed Church of Northwest Connecticut

Biblical, Traditional, Congregational

Lord's Day Worship for
February 18, 2024



"For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart." - Hebrews 4:12

“*” = Please stand if you are able.

Welcome, Greeting & Announcements

Call to Worship – Psalm 119:9-16

Leader: How can a young man keep his way pure?

People: **By keeping it according to Your word.**

Leader: With all my heart I have sought You;

People: **Do not let me wander from Your commandments.**

Leader: Your word I have treasured in my heart,

People: **That I may not sin against You.**

Leader: Blessed are You, O LORD;

People: **Teach me Your statutes.**

Leader: With my lips I have told of

People: **All the ordinances of Your mouth.**

Leader: I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies,

People: **As much as in all riches.**

Leader: I will meditate on Your precepts

People: **And regard Your ways.**

Leader: I shall delight in Your statutes;

People: **I shall not forget Your word.**

Prayer of Invocation and Confession

Gospel Absolution Text – John 15:3

***Hymn #642** (red hymnal) – “*Be Thou My Vision*”

Scripture Reading – John 1:1-5,14-18

Ancient Creedal Reading – Apostles Creed (pg#845 in the red hymnal)

Offerings Presented

[Please put your tithe/offering in the plates before or after the service – Thank you!]

***Doxology #731** (red hymnal)

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

***Prayer of Dedication**

***Sung Psalm #119Q** (see insert below) – “I’ve Judged Rightly”

Prayers of the Church & Lord’s Prayer (sins)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Reformation Creedal Reading – Cambridge Platform (1648 AD), Of Ruling Elders & Deacons, 7.2

Leader: *The Ruling Elder’s work is to join with the Pastor and Teacher in those acts of spiritual rule, which are distinct from the ministry of the word and sacraments committed to them;*

People: **Of which sort these be as follows.**

Leader: *1) To open and shut the doors of God’s house, by the admission of members approved by the church: by ordination of officers chosen by the church: and by excommunication of notorious and obstinate offenders renounced by the church; and by restoring of penitents,*

People: **Forgiven by the church.**

Leader: *2) To call the church together when there is occasion,*

People: **And seasonably to dismiss them again.**

Leader: *3) To prepare matters in private, that in public they may be carried to end with less trouble,*

People: **And more speedy dispatch.**

Leader: *4) To moderate the carriage of all matters in the church assembled; as to propound matters to the church; to order the season of speech and silence; and to pronounce sentence according to the mind of Christ,*

People: **With the consent of the church.**

Leader: *5) To be guides and leaders to the church, in all matters whatsoever,*

People: **Pertaining to church administrations and actions.**

Leader: *6) To see that none in the church live inordinately, out of rank and place,*

People: **Without a calling, or idly in their calling.**

Leader: *7) To prevent and heal such offenses in life, or in doctrine;*

People: **As might corrupt the church.**

Leader: *8) To feed the flock of God*

People: **With a word of admonition.**

Leader: *9) And as they shall be sent for,*

People: **To visit and pray over their sick brethren.**

Leader: *10) And at other times*

People: **As opportunity shall serve thereunto.**

Ministry of the Word

Prayer of Illumination

***Sermon Text** – Titus 1:9

***Gloria Patri #735** (red hymnal)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

Sermon – “*The Faithful Word*”

A Sermon Series from the Letter of Paul to Titus

***Hymn #92** (red hymnal) – “*A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*”

***Benediction** – Numbers 6:24-26

[After service, until 12:30 PM, there is coffee hour fellowship downstairs – Everyone is welcome!]

Announcements

• **Church starting time will change in March!**

9:00 – 10:15 AM

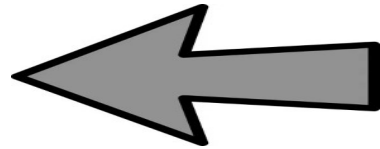
10:30 – c.11:40 AM

c.11:40 AM – 12:30 PM

Sunday School starts!

Worship

Coffee Hour



Events

- **Sunday School Teacher Training** will be this Saturday (Feb 24th), from 3:30 to 5:00 PM, at Pastor Doug’s house.
- **Sunday School** for all ages will start on **March 3rd** from 9:00 to 10:15 AM. The following classes will be offered:
 - » The **Younger Children’s Class** will be taught by Vika Winters.
 - » The **Older Children’s Class** will be taught by Mason Goodell.
 - » The **Women’s Study** will be lead by Verna Aldrich and will be reading through Taking Hold of God: Reformed & Puritan Perspectives on Prayer edited by Joel R. Beeke & Brian G. Najapfour. (\$16 for the book).
 - » The **New Members Class** will meet on March 3rd, 10th, 17th & 24th will be lead by Pastor Doug.
 - » The **Adult Study Class** for March 3rd, 10th, 17th & 24th will be lead by Pastor Jon Haulenbeek. After that Pastor Doug will be leading a study on the Great Creeds of Congregationalism.
- **New Members Classes**: Will meet on Sunday from 9:00 to 10:15 AM on March 3rd, 10th, 17th & 24th, lead by Pastor Doug. If you have not been baptized, please mention this. New members will be joining on Easter Sunday (March 31st)
- **Tuesday Classics Study**: Augustine’s City of God. Every Tuesday from 10:30 AM to noon at Pastor Doug's house.
- **Wednesday Bible Study**: Genesis. Every Wednesday from 6:30 to 8:00 PM at Pastor Doug's house. Baby sitting will be provided by Verna.
- **Saturday Prayer Group**: Gathers on Saturday Mornings for informal prayers and fellowship. All are welcome and prayer participation is optional. The usual location is at the Decker-Gabelmann household. Start time is variable. If you are interested contact Sheryl Gabelmann by phone or text at 860-309-7250 the preceding Friday for start time and directions.

- **YADG:** The Young Adult Discussion Group, i.e. college age adults, will meet on the 1st & 3rd Fridays at Pastor Doug's house at 7:00 PM.
- **Upcoming Social Events:** A Movie Night.
- If anyone is interested in hosting an event at their house, especially those who live in the farther away regions of the church's membership, please contact Pastor Doug.
- **Snow Policy:** Though we loath to cancel Lord's Day worship, because we are in someone else's building, and Winchester Center is rural and gets more snow, we might have to cancel due to bad weather. If there is a cancellation, I will email and/or call everyone and post it on Facebook, the webpage and Channel #3. With regards to Bible studies, we are much more liberal about cancellation. When in doubt, give Pastor Doug a call: 860-379-1147.

Contact Information

Worship: Every Sunday at 10:00 AM at the Winchester Grange
100 Newfield Rd, Winchester Center, CT 06098

Church's Mailing Address: Trinity Reformed Church; P.O. Box 343; Riverton, CT 06065

Pastor Doug: (860) 379-1147; douglas_aldrich@sbcglobal.net

Online Resources

Church's Facebook Page: facebook.com/people/Trinity-Reformed-Church/61554974150922/

Church's Webpage: TrinityReformedCT.org (*under construction*)

Church Youtube Channel: youtube.com/@TrinityReformedCT

Pastor Doug's Youtube Channels:

Simply Reformed: youtube.com/simplyreformed

Pilgrims of Plunder: youtube.com/@PilgrimsofPlunder

Liking, Commenting, Sharing facebook posts and Subscribing, Liking, Commenting on youtube helps boost TRC's online outreach.

Leadership

Teaching & Preaching Elder: Pastor Doug Aldrich
(860-379-1147; douglas_aldrich@sbcglobal.net)

Ruling Elders: Bob Ensminger
(860-485-8738; robert.ensminger@arthurgrossell.com)
Rich Gabelmann
(860-605-7852; rgabelmann0415@gmail.com)

Deacons: David Mattson (*chair*), Carl Bierce, Caleb Goodell,
Mason Goodell, Dean Winters

Music Coordinator & Treasurer: Cindy Rines

Clerk: Sheryl Gabelmann

Sunday School: Verna Aldrich, Mason Goodell

Sermon Notes

Titus 1:9
"The Faithful Word"
A Sermon Series on Titus
February 18, 2024

Introduction

- 1) When you hear the word "words" do you have a positive or negative reaction?
 - a) Probably for most moderns it is neutral or negative.
 - b) We might hear "noise", "jargon", or "blathering".
 - c) What is the old movie axiom? Show don't tell.
(Which has some truth to it but there is a dogma behind it too.)
- 2) How about this word: "Teaching"?
Probably positive, because it is "neutral."
- 3) How about these words: "Doctrine" or "Dogma"?
Probably negative, especially the last one.
- 4) The fact we have a negative reaction to these words shows how much the dogmas of the worldly religion of secularism have indoctrinated us.
- 5) For Christians, "word, doctrine, dogma" are very positive things.
 - a) We read in our sermon text: *"holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict."*
 - b) The fact that God has spoken with clarity is hated by the world.
- 6) Remember the first words of Satan in the Garden of Eden: *"Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?'"* - Genesis 3:1b
 - a) Note that question mark! The Prince of Lies is trying to confuse Eve about God's word.
 - b) Or when the Devil (mis)quotes Scripture to Christ in the wilderness. Matt 4:6

The Purpose of Elders

- 1) The main purpose of any organization can be seen in what its leaders do.
 - a) What is the main purpose of a general? To win the war.
 - b) This involves not just the leaders but everyone.
 - i) A private sweeping a floor is still part of the war effort.
 - ii) If the war is lost, that is bad for both general and private.
- 2) We see this for the church in Titus, the book we have been preaching through.
 - a) Titus is one of the "pastoral epistles", letters by the Apostle Paul to pastors on how to govern the church. Titus 1:1-5
 - b) This is not a narrowly focused bureaucratic question.
 - c) This is critical for all Christians to understand what the church's main purpose is, which will be worked out for good or evil depending on what type of leaders it follows, supports and creates. Godly men or the blind leading the blind?

- 3) Normally, a local church is governed by a plurality (i.e. more than one) elders. Phil 1:1; 1Tim 4:14; 5:17;
Titus 1:5; James 5:14
- a) With two different types of elders:
 - i) **Teaching & Preaching Elder**, i.e. pastor, who focus on worship and doctrine, and are specially trained clergy called (hired) by the church.
 - ii) **Ruling Elders** focus on governing, who are elected from within the congregation
 - b) They form the elder board which deals with the daily governance of the church.
- 4) Paul gives three broad criteria on how to judge an elder:
- a) First, you look at how a man governs his family. Titus 1:6
 - b) Next, the moral qualities an elder should possess. Titus 1:7-8
 - c) Finally, does an elder have the abilities to do the job. Titus 1:9ff
The thing we are going to ponder today.
- 5) What adjective would you use to describe the main job of the elders in their governance of the church?
- a) "Godly?" Okay, not bad, but that is a moral description not a job description.
 - b) How about this: "Dogmatic"?
 - c) Or the older word: "Dogmatical"?
 - d) The fact we only hear this as a negative word has been one of the great tricks of the Devil through the religion of secularism.
- 6) The 1828 Websters Dictionary defines "dogmatic/dogmatical" as both positive and negative.
- a) The negative, the only version we moderns think about, is being arrogant and/or overbearing when asserting one's opinions.
 - b) However, Websters, first gives the positive definition:
 - i) To be magisterial pertaining to settled opinion.
 - ii) "Magisterial" means "*pertaining to being a master.*"
 - iii) To be authoritative (in a good way) in a matter.
 - iv) Pertaining to be a master about that issue, i.e. authoritative.
 - v) To put it simply, "*knowing what you are talking about when you speak.*"
- 7) Do you hear what is important?
- a) It is about words, proclaiming knowledge.
 - b) And words mean things.

"The Word"

- 1) First, and foremost, the elder must hold "*fast the faithful word*" - Titus 1:9a
- 2) This leads to questions:
 - a) How can a "word" be faithful?
 - b) Which leads to the question, what is the "word"?
- 3) The simple English definition of "word" is . . .
 - a) "*Something that is said,*" or . . .
 - b) "*Something written that represents a spoken word.*"

- 4) In Greek, the language of the New Testament, has several words that can mean “word.”¹
- a) The word for “word” in Titus 1:9 is “*logos*” (λόγος).
 - b) It can simply mean “word,” “speech,” “account” or “reason.”
 - i) It focuses more on the expression of thought not just the mere name of an object.
 - ii) It shows a conception, or idea, of something; The embodying of an idea.
- 5) For the ancients (Jewish & Christian theologians and pagan philosophers) “*logos*” took on a very deep theological and philosophical meaning.
- a) The article defining “*logos*” in the famous Kittel’s Theological Dictionary of New Testament is 67 pages long!²
 - b) It is where we get our word “*logic*” from.
(Logic is “the science of the formal principles of reasoning.”)
 - c) It is where we get the suffix “-ology” from.³
 - i) It means to explain/to understand something.
 - ii) Usually translated the “*study of...*”⁴
 - d) There is no meaning with words.
 - e) Notice it doesn’t say “a faithful word” but “the faithful word”.
- 6) The “word” is faithful because its not any word but “*the*” Word of God.
- 7) Genesis 1 to Revelation 22 is a testimony that God has spoken.
- a) How did God create everything out of nothing? By speaking. Gen 1:3ff; Ps 33:6,9
 - b) When the King speaks, His Word is Law, and powerful. Ex 20:22-23
- 8) God’s Word is so important, the Word Himself (not itself!) is God, John 1:1-5,14,18
the second Person of the Trinity.
- a) This eternal Word took on human flesh and is Jesus Christ, our Lord.

¹ The other major word for “word” in the NT is “*rhēma*” (ῥῆμα) which denotes a “spoken word uttered in either speech or writing.” It can also mean “a statement,” “event,” “matter” or “thing.” Both *logos* and *rhēma* can mean the mundane word for “word” (*Rhēma*: Matt 12:36; 27:14; *Logos*: Matt 22:46; Mark 5:36) or it can mean “the Word of God.” (*Rhēma*: John 3:34; 8:47; *Logos*: John 1:1-5,14; 10:35).

² The Dictionary of Biblical Languages – Greek, by James Swanson, briefly defines *logos* as:

- a) Statement, that which is said. (John 4:41)
- b) Speech, the act of speaking. (Acts 14:21)
- c) Gospel, the content of what is preached about Christ. (Acts 19:20; Col 3:16; Mark 16:20)
- d) Treatise, systematic treatment of a subject. (Acts 1:1)
- e) Word, Message, a title for Christ. (John 1:1,14; 2Tim 4:2; 1John 1:1; Rev 19:13)
- f) Account, a record of assets and liabilities. (Phil 4:17)
- g) Reason, a cause for something. (Matt 5:32; Acts 10:29; 1Pet 3:15)
- i) Event, matter, thing. (Acts 8:21)
- j) Appearance, to seem to be. (Col 2:23)
- k) Accusation, legal charge of wrongdoing. (Acts 19:38)

³ “-ology” technically comes from the word “*logia*” (λογία), which is the accusative form of “*logion*” (λόγιον), which is a diminutive of *logos*. *Logion* means “sayings” or “an oracle” and can be found in Acts 7:38; Rom 3:2; Heb 5:12; 1Pet 4:11.

⁴ For example:

καρδία (kardia) + λόγια (logia) = heart + study = cardiology (the study of the heart)
 ψυχή (psychē) + λόγια (logia) = soul + study = psychology (the study of soul/mind)
 θεός (theos) + λόγια (logia) = God + study = theology (the study God)

- b) Christ is the only eternally “*begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.*” - John 1:18b
- 9) We read about God, His Law, His Gospel, in the written word of God, Ps 119; Matt 22:31;
1Cor 4:6; 2Tim 3:16
the Holy Scriptures.
- a) This is a fundamental belief of Christianity that God has spoken with clarity.
- b) Thus, the first job requirements of elders, as listed in Titus 1, is to hold fast to the faithful word.
- 10) Faithfulness to the word is required for all levels of leadership, with increasing levels of ability and commitment:
- a) For the **deacons** (those who take care of the temporal things of the church so that elders can focus on governing and the ministry of the word) they must hold “*to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.*” Acts 6:1ff
- 1Timothy 3:9
- b) For ruling **elders**, they must be “*able to teach.*” - 1Timothy 3:2
- c) Finally, the **teaching & preaching elders** (i.e. pastors) must “*work hard at preaching and teaching.*” - 1Timothy 5:17

The Teaching

- 1) This being faithful to the word is not being faithful to any opinion but that which is “*in accordance with the teaching.*” - Titus 1:9b
- a) Again notice, it doesn't say “*teaching*” implying “*a teaching.*”
- b) It states “*the teaching*”.
- 2) One of the greatest dogmatic lies of the religion of secularism is the myth of neutrality.
- a) That teaching can be neutral devoid of doctrine and dogma.
- b) Even though, historically, teaching, doctrine and dogma are basically the same thing.
- c) We used to know that all teaching is dogmatic and the main purpose of teaching was morals.
- i) Now we believe teaching is just about giving facts to individual consumers.
- ii) If you just teach “*facts*” to children without reference to where those facts come from are you not teaching the dogma of secularism?
That God is at best optional?
- iii) And if it is just about information then why not have your own morality?
Or even your own facts? Your own truth? As we see today on college campuses.
- iv) We see this in how many churches do Bible Study – Everyone just sits around and gives their opinions.
- d) There is no neutrality, either there is knowledge based on God or on mere feelings.
There is either light or darkness.
- e) How did the Lord Jesus put it, “*I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.*” - John 14:6b

Exhort & Refute

- 1) This means the elders must “*be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.*” - Titus 1:9

- a) How many in the modern church actually think this is a key role of not just the pastor but the board that governs the church?
- b) We might like the idea of “exhortation” (i.e. encourage, console, urge) but we think that has nothing to do with “sound doctrine.”
- c) How many moderns can’t fathom how an elder is supposed to be “*not self-willed, not quick-tempered . . . not pugnacious*” (Titus 1:7) and yet is supposed “*to refute those who contradict*” (Titus 1:9) let alone the elders must “*silence*” (Titus 1:11) those who are heretical and “*reprove them severely*” (Titus 1:13)?

2) Why is this?

- a) That other pernicious dogma of the worldly religion of secularism: Hyper-individualism. That the final authority is with the self.
- b) What is really twisted, and not surprising when the devil is involved, is that the secularists actually engage in silencing those they disagree with while all the while claiming to be open minded and tolerant.
 - i) Go to any college campus and start proclaiming that male & female are biological facts.
 - ii) Or go into a liberal church and proclaim the Gospel.
 - iii) You will quickly be silenced.

3) The question is not “will there be exhortation and refutation?” but is it done correctly?

- a) Is it in accordance with “sound doctrine” or “unsound doctrine”?
- b) According to the faithful word or the lies of the world?

4) Remember that preaching, teaching, exhorting and correcting is a two-way thing.

- a) The church needs elders who will work hard at teaching and preaching the Word.
- b) That requires saints who want to hear all of the Word.
- c) Remember the Bereans, who “*received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures* (literally, “the writings”, which means words) *daily to see whether these things were so.*” - Acts 17:11

5) It is by the rebuking and exhortation to do good works by God’s Law that elders spiritually govern the church.

Ps 94:12 – “*Blessed is the man whom You chasten, O LORD, and whom You teach out of Your law;*”

6) But the true power is with the proclamation of the Gospel, the main purpose of the church.

7) As the Apostle John wrote to the church: “*What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life—and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us—what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.*” - 1John 1:1-4