

Trinity Reformed Church of Northwest Connecticut

Biblical, Traditional, Congregational

Lord's Day Worship for
April 28, 2024

*"Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's;
and to God the things that are God's." – Matthew 22:21b*



"*" = Please stand if you are able.

Welcome, Greeting & Announcements

Call to Worship – Daniel 2:20b-23a

Leader: Let the name of God be blessed forever and ever,

People: For wisdom and power belong to Him.

Leader: It is He who changes the times and the epochs;

People: He removes kings and establishes kings;

Leader: He gives wisdom to wise men

People: And knowledge to men of understanding.

Leader: It is He who reveals the profound and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness,

People: And the light dwells with Him.

Leader: To You, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise,

People: For You have given me wisdom and power;

Prayer of Invocation and Confession

Gospel Absolution Text – Isaiah 43:25

***Hymn #64** (red hymnal) – *"God, the Lord, a King Remaineth"*

Scripture Reading – Romans 13:1-8; 1Peter 2:12-25

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!]

[Gifts labeled "Deacon's Fund go to aid those in need in the congregation.]

***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 #25a** (see insert below) – *"To You I Lift My Soul"*

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 – Savoy Declaration (1658 AD), 24.1,4a

Leader: *God, the Supreme Lord and King of all the world, has ordained civil magistrates (i.e. government authorities) to be under Him,*

People: **Over the people, for His own glory and the public good,**

Leader: *And to this end has armed them with the power of the sword, for the defense and encouragement of them that do good,*

People: **And for the punishment of evil-doers.**

Rom 13:1-4; 1Pet 2:13-14

Leader: *It is the duty of people to pray for magistrates,*

1Tim 2:1-2

People: **To honor their persons,**

1Pet 2:17

Leader: *To pay them tribute and other dues, to obey their lawful commands,*

Rom 13:6-7

People: **And to be subject to their authority, for conscience' sake.**

Rom 13:5, Titus 1:3

Leader: *Infidelity or difference in religion does not make void*

People: **The magistrate's just and legal authority,**

Leader: *Nor free the people from their due obedience to him: from which ecclesiastical (i.e. clergy) persons*

1Pet 2:13-14,16

People: **Are not exempted;**

1Kgs 2:35; Acts 25:9-11; Rom 13:1, 2Pet 2:1,10-11, Jude 1:8-11

Ministry of the Word

Prayer of Illumination

***Sermon Text** – Titus 2:15-3:2

***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 – “Obedience”

A Sermon Series on Titus

***Hymn #111** (red hymnal) – “This Is My Father's World”

***Benediction** – Numbers 6:24-26

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

Announcements

- If you would like to **help the Franceschetti family** (Dave, Janelle & baby Caleb) there are few options:
 - Prayer, which is always greatly appreciated.
 - The Franceschetti have a gofundme account at: <https://gofund.me/1c7aeb4>
(Or you can search for: “gofundme Franceschetti Family”)
 - If you would like to donate a meal see Julie Latina.
(julieannalatina@gmail.com; h=860-824-8410; c=860-480-1687)
- If a few people could help clean up at the end of **Coffee Hour** it would be appreciated.
- If you are interested in joining the prayer team for the **Internet Prayer Chain**, please email the facilitator, Donna Ensminger at: trcnwprayer@gmail.com.
 - Joining the prayer team means you promise to pray for the requests sent out by Donna by email.
 - We will be taking prayer requests shortly.
- There are **Bibles** and “*Basics of the Faith*” pamphlets about various theological topics free if you are interested.
- **Summer worship hours** will be at 9:30 AM for July and August.
Sunday School for All Ages will end sometime in June.

Upcoming Special Events

- There will be a **Special Congregational Meeting** on Sunday, May 19th, after church, to do the following business:
 - To examine and vote on the Elders’ recommendation that Jonathan Haulenbeek become a Ruling Elder of TRC.
 - To discuss and vote on the Elders’ recommended changes to the bylaws.
(If the bylaws are ready on time).
 - To receive the Elders’ “State of the Church” report.
 - To ask any questions the congregation might have of the Elders.
- On Saturday, July 20th (with a rain date of July 27th), there will be a **pool party and picnic** for the church at the Decker-Gabelmann house. (Time & details to be announced.)

Normal Weekly Schedule

Sunday

9:00-10:15 AM

Sunday School for All Ages

- Younger Children’s Class (Vika Winters)
- Older Children’s Class (Mason Goodell)
- Women’s Study (Verna Aldrich)
Taking Hold of God: Reformed & Puritan Perspectives on Prayer edited by Joel R. Beeke & Brian G. Najapfour
- Adult Study (Pastor Doug)
Christ & Creed: The Early Church Creeds & their Value for Today by Nate Pickowicz.

10:30 AM

LORD’S DAY WORSHIP

(Lord’s Supper on the 1st Sunday)

c.11:40 AM

Coffee Hour

Tuesday

10:30 AM – Noon **Christian Classic Study** (Pastor Doug's house)
Augustine's City of God

Wednesday

6:30 – 8:00 PM **Wednesday Bible Study** (Pastor Doug's house)
Book of Genesis

Friday

6:30 PM **YADG** – Young Adult Discussion Group (Pastor Doug's house)
1st & 3rd Fridays

Saturday

[*morning*] **Prayer Group** – Meets at the Decker-Gabelmann house.
If you are interested, please contact Sheryl Gabelmann.

Contact Information

Worship: Every Sunday at 10:30 AM (9:30 AM for July & August) 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

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 2:15-3:2

"Obedience"

A Sermon Series on Titus

April 28, 2024

Introduction

- 1) *"Be silent and listen, O Israel! This day you have become a people for the LORD your God. You shall therefore obey the LORD your God, and do His commandments and His statutes which I (Moses, the giver of the Law) command you today."* – Deuteronomy 27:9b-10
 - a) *"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother"* – Ephesians 6:1-2a
 - b) *"You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders (older people); and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."* – 1Peter 5:5
 - c) *"Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord."* – Ephesians 5:22
 - d) *"Slaves (employees), in all things obey those who are your masters (bosses) on earth, not with external service, as those who merely please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord."* – Colossians 3:22
 - e) *"obey your (church) leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you."* – Hebrews 13:17
- 2) And from today's sermon text: *"be subject to rulers, to authorities (political leaders/magistrate), to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed"* – Titus 3:1b
- 3) This clear biblical teaching to submit to authority is probably one of the hardest doctrines to hear for us moderns, including those in the (American) evangelical church.
 - a) Probably no other texts bring that *"yeah, but . . ."* reaction more than these.
 - b) This shows, in my opinion, the biggest idol of this modern age:
Hyper autonomous individualism.
 - c) Or we could go with the older, broader, word for it: Pride. Prov 11:2; 16:18; 18:12; 29:23
 - i) Pride leads to rebellion, such as with the fall of Satan. Is 14:12-14
 - ii) And what did Satan first say to Eve in the garden?
Genesis 3:1 – *"Is it really true that God said, 'You must not eat from any tree of the orchard'?"* (NET)
- 4) The idea of "authority", a command structure, an ordering to society and reality itself, is an important biblical doctrine, especially for the church.

Respecting Elder's Authority – Titus 2:15

- 1) We have seen this as we have been going through the Epistle (or Letter) of the Apostle Paul to Pastor Titus.
 - a) Chapter 1 deals with Pastor Titus' task to appoint elders in the new churches in Crete (1:5-9) and to deal with rebellious Christians who are upsetting the church (1:10-16).
 - b) Chapter 2, Paul focuses in on various groups of people and the respect they are to give or receive: Older men (2:2), older women (2:3), young women (2:4), young men (2:6) and slaves (2:9)

- c) Paul tells Titus to have Christians be holy: To die to sin and live for Christ, as he concludes in Titus 2:14b that Christ has “redeem(ed) us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.”
- i) Hear the danger of “lawless” deeds, which are by definition wicked.
 - ii) And the hierarchical language that we are to God’s “own possession” which is a great blessing.
- 2) Paul concludes chapter 2 with, “*These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you.*” – Titus 2:15
- a) Titus is to speak (preach / educate) to the saints on things taught in chapter 2.
 - b) Titus is to exhort (ask for earnestly / plead / urge / encourage) the saints to do these things.
 - c) Titus is to reprove, (expose / refute / show one’s fault) those Christians who do not listen and/or obey.
- 3) This is to be done with “*all authority*”.
- a) Literally, “*rebuke with all command.*”
 - b) Paul then adds, “*Let no one disregard you.*”
- 4) Paul writes similar advice to the young Pastor Timothy, “*Prescribe (to command / order / direct / give instruction) and teach these things. Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.*” – 1Timothy 4:11-12
- 5) How does this work?
- a) If you were a single 25 year old new pastor, right out of seminary, how would you preach/teach marriage to a 70 year old former Marine colonel and combat veteran, who has been married for 50 years, has 5 children, and has been a ruling-elder in the church for 40 years?
 - b) Yes, you do it respectfully, as Paul writes to the young pastor Timothy, “*Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but rather appeal to him as a father, to the younger men as brothers,*” - 1Timothy 5:1
 - c) First, it’s your (i.e. the pastor’s) job. You need to do your job. Titus 2:14; 2Tim 4:2
 - i) You should fear God far more then you fear any man. Prov 1:7; Acts 13:16
 - ii) Especially for those who lead Christ’s church. Heb 13:17; James 3:1
 - d) Second, you bring to bear the thing you have been trained in: 2Tim 3:16-17
The Word of God.
 - i) Scripture trumps all feelings, experiences or personal opinions. Ps 119
 - ii) Yes, there should be a give and take between pastor and parishioner, a mutual back and forth as you both wrestle with the Word of God. However, if the 70 year old rejects the biblical teaching of the pastor, that older man is not rejecting the pastor, he is rejecting the Almighty who has sent the pastor. Being on the other side of God is never a good place to be – You will always lose that fight. Ex 16:8
1Sam 8:7
Luke 10:16
Rom 13:2
1Thes 4:8
 - iii) If the 70 year old Marine is a godly man, he will respect authority. If he doesn’t, there is a bigger problem in the church.
 - e) In the bigger picture, God has ordained all authority and authorities, because He is God and is sovereign.

Respecting Government Authority – Titus 3:1a

- 1) This respect and submission to authority is not just for leaders in the church but for all authority.
 - a) Paul commands Titus to remind the saints *“to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient,”* – Titus 3:1b
 - b) Just like Peter commanded Christians to submit *“for the Lord’s sake to every human institution.”* – 1Peter 2:13
 - c) This is about respecting and obeying the “magistrate”, i.e. any civil/governmental authority, whether the local dog catcher or the President of the United States.
 - d) These teachings are explained in more detail in Romans 13 & 1Peter 2.
- 2) Everyone is *“to be in subjection to the governing authorities”* – Romans 13:1,5
 - a) Why?
 - b) *Answer:* Because *“there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.”* – Romans 13:1-2
 - c) All rulers are a *“minister of God”*. - Romans 13:4,6
 - i) They alone have the *“power of the sword”*. – Romans 13:4
 - This means they can use violence lawfully.
(Think police & military.)
 - Please note, the church does not have this power, Rom 1:16
we “just” have the Word of God (Law & Gospel). 1Cor 1:18,24
 - ii) Rulers go after the lawless, which is a blessing. Rom 13:3-4; 1Pet 2:14
 - Even in such evil regimes like Nazi Germany, the state went after real criminals.
 - That good part (going after real criminals) is a blessing from God.
- 3) We show our subjection by:
 - a) Paying taxes. Rom 13:6-7
 - i) Which is shocking since Roman coins were considered idolatrous.
 - They had the picture of Caesar, who was thought to be a god.
 - Roman taxes went to support pagan worship and the oppression of God’s old covenant people, Israel. (Remember Rome had conquered Israel in the century before Christ and the New Testament.)
 - ii) Because the Lord Jesus had already laid this apolitical foundation.
 - In Matthew 22:15-22; Mark 12:13-17; Luke 20:19-26.
 - *“Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”* – Mark 12:17
 - b) Giving any and all magistrates the custom, fear and honor due them. Rom 13:7; 1Pet 2:17
 - i) Such as using honorifics like “President Biden” and standing up when the President enters the room, even if you don’t like the President.
 - ii) Or treating a female police officer with all custom fear and honor, even if you think a woman should not be in a martial occupation. Why show this respect? Deut 22:5; Num 26:2; 1Sam 4:9; Is 3:8,12; Nah 3:13
Because that officer’s office and authority is from God!

4) Why submit to authority?

- a) First and foremost, it is commanded by God. Rom 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; 1Pet 2:12-20
- b) Also, to silence the foolish who might accuse Christians of hypocrisy. 1Pet 2:15-16
- c) To find favor with God because all authority is from God. 1Pet 2:20
- d) Because we are to put God, His Word, and His church, first:
 - i) *“So that the word of God will not be dishonored.”* – Titus 2:5
 - ii) *“So that the name of God and our doctrine will not be spoken against.”*
– 1Timothy 6:1b
 - iii) *“For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly. For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God.”* - 1Peter 2:19-20

5) You might say: But pastor, don't you know how bad it is today?!

- a) Though predicting the future is always a fool's game, and I am not a prophet, or a son of a prophet, it is helpful to try to discern the times. Clearly the USA, and the west in general, is becoming militantly anti-Christian and God will judge the wicked. 1Chr 12:32; Esther 1:13; Ps 9:17-18; 110:6; Prov 11:21; 27:1; Ezek 39:21; Amos 7:14; James 4:13-14
- b) If I was 25 and starting off as a new pastor, I would probably think there would be a great possibility I would end up in jail before the end of my career.
- c) However, none of this changes the word of God!

6) The church's default position is to give respect and submission to the magistrate.

- a) This is the clear teaching of the New Covenant: Romans 13:1-7; Titus 3:1 & 1Peter 2:13-20.
- b) Christ's kingdom is not of this world!
 - i) As the Lord Jesus said to the Roman governor Pilate: *“My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.”* – John 18:36b
 - ii) Or our Lord's statement: *“For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? For what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”*
– Mark 8:36-37
- c) Yes, we should be discerning.
 - i) For example, it might be a good thing we don't have a building.
 - ii) The whole Covid thing might have been a warning.
 - iii) It might be through zoning and insurance regulations that the secularists might try to impose their godless paganism on us.
- d) Should we obey wicked commands from the state that direct and demand us to deny God and His Law & Gospel?
 - i) No, of course not.
 - ii) In Acts 5, the Sanhedrin (the lawful authority for the Jews) ordered the Christians *“not to speak in the name of Jesus”* – Acts 5:40.

iii) Of course, the church ignored that and “*kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.*” - Acts 5:42

iv) However, they didn’t complain that they were flogged.

Acts 5:40

- Because the Sanhedrin had that authority.
- The Christians didn’t lead an insurrection.
- Instead, “*they went on their way from the presence of the Council (literally the “Sanhedrin”), rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name.*” – Acts 5:41b

7) Once you understand that Christ’s Kingdom is not of this world you can do both. You can give unto Caesar’s what is Caesar’s and give unto God what is God’s.

a) The church by default must give submission and respect to governing authorities.

b) And joyfully go to our deaths if they decided to kill us because we are Christians.

c) The apostles Peter & Paul, who wrote those clear texts about submission to authority, were both executed by the Roman state.

i) When they wrote Romans 13, 1Peter 2 and Titus 3:1, Nero was emperor of Rome!¹

ii) They very much understood what they were commanding the church to do.

d) Israel decided to go the political/military/warfare route against the Roman Empire.

i) They fought three very violent wars against the Empire and lost all three.²

ii) The Christian Church remained neutral, and though she suffered great persecution at the hands of the Romans, by God’s grace, the Roman Empire became Christian, at least in name, in the 4th century.

Conclusion – Titus 3:1b-2

1) The early church’s focus was Christ’s Kingdom, not this earthly kingdom of this present evil age, which is fading away. The early Christians did not wage war by the world’s standards.

John 18:36; Rom 8:4; 1Cor 7:31;
2Cor 4:4; 10:3 Gal 1:4; Eph 2:2;
Eph 6:12-17; 1John 2:17; 4:4; 5:19

2) Though the early church knew they were in a war, a war which will continue until Christ’s return, they also knew it was a spiritual battle and not a fleshly one.

3) That is why after Paul told Titus to remind the church to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, he continued with “*to be ready for every good deed, to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.*” - Titus 3:2b-3

a) Christians act appropriately, whether they are in power, or under authority, because we fear God. Knowing that all authority is from Him and He will judge.

Prov 1:7

b) This will cause us to do those good deeds, as listed above, again whether in power, or under authority.

c) What drives these good deeds, and is our primary concern, is the Gospel, which is how Paul ends his letter to Titus in chapter 3.

¹ Nero was emperor of the Roman Empire from 54 to 68 AD. Though he briefly started off as a competent and popular ruler he soon became one of the most infamous evil rulers of all time, known for his harsh persecution of Christians. Paul writes Titus and 1Timothy around 57-59 AD and Peter writes 1Peter around 65 AD.

² Great Jewish Revolt/The Jewish War of 66-74 AD.
The Bar Kokhba Revolt of 132-136 AD.
The Kitos War of 115-117 AD