

Trinity Reformed Church of Northwest Connecticut

Biblical, Traditional, Congregational

Lord's Day Worship for
July 7, 2024

"And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ." – Acts 5:42



trinityreformedct.org

“*” = Please stand if you are able.

Welcome, Greeting & Announcements

Call to Worship – 1John 3:21-24

Leader: Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us,

People: We have confidence before God;

Leader: And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments

People: And do the things that are pleasing in His sight.

Leader: This is His commandment,

People: That we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ,

Leader: And love one another,

People: Just as He commanded us.

Leader: The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him,

People: And He in him.

Leader: We know by this that He abides in us,

People: By the Spirit whom He has given us.

Prayer of Invocation and Confession

Gospel Absolution Text – 1Corinthians 6:11

***Hymn #580** (red hymnal) – *“Lead On, O King Eternal”*

Scripture Reading – Acts 3:1-26

Ancient Creedal Reading – Nicene Creed (pg#846 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 #96A** (see insert below) – *“O Sing a New Song”*

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), 2.5

Leader: *A Congregational church is by the institution of Christ*

People: **A part of the militant¹ visible² church,**

Leader: *Consisting of a company of saints by calling,*

People: **United into one body by a holy covenant,**

Leader: *For the public worship of God,*

People: **And the mutual edification of one another,**

Leader: *In the Fellowship*

People: **Of the Lord Jesus.**

Biblical References: Ex 19:5,6; Deut 29:1,9,15; Acts, 2:42; 1Cor 1:2; 12:27; 14:26,28,36

¹ "Militant" refers to the church on the earth now, fighting the good fight.

As opposed to the church "triumphant" which is in heaven, whose rest is won.

² "Visible" refers to the church we see, which is a mixture of true & false Christians.

As opposed to the church "invisible" which is the perfect church God sees.

Question: Why no reference to missions, outreach, evangelism and/or the Great Commission in these great creeds?

Ministry of the Word

Prayer of Illumination

***Sermon Text** – Acts 3:15-19

***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 – "Missions, Part II – The Great Commission"

Ministry of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Invitation & Warning

Scripture – Matthew 26:26-28

Prayer

Partaking of the Bread and then the Cup

Prayer of Thanksgiving

***Hymn #441** (red hymnal) – "Jesus Shall Reign"

***Benediction** – Numbers 6:24-26

Announcements

- Adult Studies will return this fall with the following topics:
Sunday Morning: Westminster Larger Catechism.
Women's Sunday Morning Study: A study on cults
Tuesday Morning: An introduction to medieval theology through reading sections from Aquinas.
Wednesday Evening: 2Peter, Jude, and an introduction to the origins of the Bible.
- Pastor Doug will be on vacation from July 8th through 22nd.
Elder Jon Haulenbeek will be preaching those Sundays.
- This summer we will be doing a short sermon series on the Book of Haggai, once Pastor Doug returns from vacation. This fall we will be going through a section of Revelation taken from the usually forbidden chapters 4-19!
- The Elders and Deacons are trying to think of a **local charitable outreach** TRC could do, either for someone in the church, or someone / something in the community - If you have any thoughts, suggestions, or requests, please see Pastor Doug.
- If you would like to **help the Franceschetti family** (Dave, Janelle & baby Caleb) there are a few options:
 - Prayer, which is always greatly appreciated.
 - The Franceschetti's have a gofundme account at: <https://gofund.me/1c7aaeb4>
(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)
- There are **Bibles** and "**Basics of the Faith**" pamphlets about various theological topics free if you are interested.

Upcoming Special Events

- On Thursday, **July 18th**, at **6:00 PM**, the Deacons will be replanting the flowerbeds outside the Grange as a way of **thanking the Grange** for their support. Though this is not a major labor, if you would like to help out, please see David Mattson. Also, if you would like to donate some money for the flowers that would be helpful too. (If you attend, please do not park in front of the Post Office.)
- 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, starting at **noon**. The address is: 101 Wallens Street, Winsted (it is a long driveway with the house a bit off the road.) You can park anywhere along the side of the driveway as well as at the end of the driveway where the 2-car garage is located. Hot dogs, burgers, drinks and an ice cream bar will be provided. If you are able, please bring a dish to share. We have a covered patio area and our pool house is air-conditioned for those who might need to be out of the sun and/or heat. The pool is surrounded by a deck and there is seating available for parents to watch their children and/or swim as well.
- On Saturday, **September 7th**, there will be a **picnic** for the church at the Winters' house, starting at noon.
- On Saturday, September 21st, will be a joint Elders & Deacons' meeting at Pastor Doug's house.
- After church on Sunday, **November 10th**, will be the **Annual Meeting**.

Online Resources

Internet Prayer Chain: If you have any prayer requests you would like the Internet Prayer Chain to pray for, please email them to Donna Ensminger at: trcnwprayer@gmail.com. (If you would like to join the Prayer Chain, also see Donna.)

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

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)
Jonathan Haulenbeek
(860-283-0224; jhaulenbeek@icloud.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

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Sermon Notes

Acts 3:14-19

"Overview"

A Mini-Sermon Series on Missions

July 7, 2024

Introduction

- 1) This is one of these sermons I like to apologize for.
- 2) We claim to be a biblical church: That we preach, teach, and follow, God's written word: The 66 books of the Holy Scripture.
- 3) One of the most important things a biblical church can do to make sure it is being biblical is to make sure the preaching is biblical.
 - a) 1Timothy 4:13 – *"Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching."*
 - b) 2Timothy 4:2 – *"preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction."*
- 4) The best way to have biblical preaching is **expository preaching**.
 - a) Going verse, by verse, through a section of Scripture.
 - b) Teaching, proclaiming, and applying what the text declares.
 - c) Simply explaining the text, however, is not expository preaching.
That is a commentary lecture.
 - d) The purpose of preaching is to exhort, reprove, rebuke and instruct from Scripture, as we just read above.
 - e) 2Timothy 3:16 – *"All Scripture is inspired by God (literally "God breathed") and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;"*

5) There is a time for **topical preaching**.

- a) Starting with a subject and trying to hear what the totality of the Bible teaches on it.
- b) This is appropriate for such occasions:
 - i) To teach a critical point of systematic theology such as the Trinity.
 - ii) Times of special need, such as the Sunday after 9.11
 - iii) To deal with a particular problem in the congregation.
 - iv) Or to explain something of importance to the church.
- c) So, a lecture about the history of Congregationalism and Presbyterianism is not usually appropriate for a sermon, unless for a church pondering what denomination, if any, it should join. (Which is coming in 2025!)
- d) Today, I want to give you my thoughts on missions, since the elders are pondering how TRC should do such labors.
- e) Trying to hear the big picture, the parameters Scripture gives, while looking back on how previous generations did missions for good and for ill.

The Purpose of the Church

1) The church's purpose is the following, in order of importance:

- a) **First – Worship** of the Triune Lord according to His word.
- b) **Second – Disciplining** the saints within the church.
 - i) This includes such “positive” actions as teaching, encouraging, supporting, etc.
 - ii) And also corrective actions like testing, correcting, rebuking and if necessary excommunication (i.e. removal from church fellowship).
 - iii) It also includes works of charity to the saints, both in this church, and the catholic (i.e. universal) church.
- c) **Third – Going out** (Outreach) and preaching the Gospel to the unbelievers to bring the repentant into the church.

2) The order is critical!

3) It follows the logic of God's Law, especially the Ten Commandments.

Ex 20:3-17

- a) The first four are about loving God: Having no other god, no idolatry, no taking God's name in vain, and remembering the Sabbath.
- b) The last six are about loving our neighbor: Honoring parents, no murder, no adultery, no stealing, no false witness, and no coveting.

c) This is taught by the Lord Jesus.

Matt 22:36-40

- i) The most important commandment is to love God.
- ii) The second most important commandment is to love our neighbor.

- And neighbor means everyone, including our enemies.

Lev 19:18; Prov 3:4; Matt 5:43-44;
Luke 6:27,35; 10:30-37; Rom 12:17-21;
Rom 14:18; 2Cor 8:21; Phil 4:5; Heb 12:14

- The Bible, however, puts a focus on first loving fellow Christians.

Lev 19:18; John 13:34; Rom 12:10; 14:19;
Gal 5:13-14; 6:10; 1Thes 4:9; Heb 13:1;
1Pet 2:17,22; 1John 4:7

- Galatians 6:10 – “So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.”

- 4) Changing the order will bring all sorts of problems.
 - a) We have seen this especially after WW2 in modern Evangelicalism.
 - i) There has been an intentional focus on changing the worship service to fit modern needs and tastes in order to bring “seekers” into the church.
 - ii) In the short term, this can work in the worldly sense, creating huge mega-churches that might last for a few years.
 - iii) Long-term it has transformed much of modern Evangelicalism into the world.
 - b) Worship becomes about entertainment and discipleship is just personal self-growth.
 - i) There is no repentance, no fear of the Lord, no teaching of God’s Law.
 - ii) No Gospel.
 - c) I love the saying: What you win them with, is what you win them to, and what you keep them with.
 - i) If you win them by the world, worldly ways will keep them.
 - ii) If you win them by the Word, the Word will keep them.

Biblical Outreach – Acts 3:15-19

- 1) As we talked about last week the church is clearly called to go out and evangelize the world. Matt 28:16-20; Mark 16:14-18;
Luke 24:44-49; John 20:19-23; Acts 1:4-8
- 2) Acts 3:15-19 is pretty typical of the pattern of outreach in the Book of Acts.
 - a) Here Peter preaches to his fellow Israelites at the Temple at the portico of Solomon. Acts 3:11ff
 - b) As the Book of Acts teaches, the New Covenant Gospel proclamation starts with the Jews in Israel and will go to all the Gentiles. Rom 1:16; 2:9-10
Acts 10:34-48
- 3) Things to note in Acts 3:15-19 which are themes throughout the New Testament:
 - a) The preaching is done by someone commissioned by the church. In this case it is the Apostle Peter directly commissioned by Christ Himself! Matt 16:18
John 21:15-17
 - b) The focus of the message is the proclamation that Christ was killed and has been raised from the dead.
 - i) As Peter declares: “*put to death the Prince of life, the one whom God **raised** from the dead, a fact to which we are witnesses.*” – Acts 3:15
 - ii) The focus on proclaiming the resurrection, thus showing Jesus is God, Savior and Lord, is central to the outreach.
 - iii) As found throughout Acts: 1:22; 2:24,31-32; 3:7,15,22,26; 4:2,10,33; 5:30; 7:37; 10:40; 13:22,30,33-34,37; 17:3,18,31-32; 23:6,8; 24:15,21; 26:8,23
 - c) The focus of the message is proclaiming the name of Christ.
 - i) As Peter declares: “*And on the basis of faith in His name, it is the **name** of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the **faith** which comes through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all.*” – Acts 3:16
 - ii) One of the key components of missions is to literally proclaim the name of Jesus, which in itself has great power.

- iii) As found throughout Acts: 2:21,38; 3:6,16; 4:7,10,12,17-18,30; 5:28,40-41; 8:12,14-16,21,27-28; 10:43,48; 15:14,17,26; 16:18; 19:5,13,17; 21:13; 22:16; 26:9
 - iv) To quote from Peter's Pentecost sermon: "*Repent, and each of you be baptized in the **name of Jesus Christ** for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*" – Acts 2:38b
 - d) The other main focus is the call for the world to repent and believe in Christ.
 - i) As we just heard in Acts 3:16.
 - ii) And is taught in Acts 3:19 – "*Therefore **repent** and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord*".
 - iii) This leads to baptism, the sign and seal of bringing the converted into Christ's church.
 - iii) Repentance, faith, and baptism is found throughout Acts: 2:38,41,44; 3:16,19; 4:4,32; 5:14,31; 6:7; 8:12-13,16,22,36-38; 9:18,26,42; 10:43,45,47-48; 11:16-18,21,24; 13:12,24,39,48; 14:1,9,22-23,27; 15:7,9,11; 16:5,15,31,33-34; 17:12,30,34; 18:8,27; 19:2-5,18; 20:21; 21:20,25; 22:16,19; 24:14,24; 26:18,20,27; 27:25; 28:24
- 4) What is not the focus of Acts 3:15-19? Doing works of charity.
 - a) There is very little in the New Testament about the organized/institutional church raising money and giving to the unbelieving poor.
 - b) Yes, individual Christians must do good works to our neighbors, as we read in Gal 6:10.
 - i) The church doing works of charity to unbelievers (e.g. soup kitchens, creating hospitals, etc.) is certainly not forbidden.
 - ii) Nor is combining charity and evangelism (e.g. handing out tracks in the soup kitchen) forbidden.
 - c) Yes, the Apostles did miracles of healing, out of charity and especially to establish their authority. Acts 4:14,22,30; 5:16; 8:7; 9:34; 10:38; 28:8,27
 - d) There is a trap to charity, however.
 - i) The most important thing is the proclamation of Christ's name!
 - ii) To say "don't tell me about Jesus show me Jesus by your actions" is ungodly.
 - iii) To be concerned what the unbelievers think about the church is ungodly.
 - e) Having a church whose main focus is giving money to the unbelieving poor is very pleasing to the world and it's prince (Satan).
 - i) It's easy and approved by the world.
 - ii) Unlike proclaiming Christ and calling the unbeliever to repentance and faith which will get you persecuted. Like what happened to the Apostles in Acts!
 - f) To be blunt, much of modern-day missions has little to do with proclaiming the name of Jesus.
 - i) Either it is all charity with no Gospel, as seen in liberal churches, or who have changed the Gospel to be only charity, i.e., the Social Gospel.
 - ii) Or the focus is charity and the Gospel-lite is tacked on at the end.

- 5) What is not the focus of Acts 3:15-19? Trying to get people saved.
- a) There is a subtle difference between proclaiming Christ and trying to encourage people to believe.
 - b) Yes, mindless yelling at people to repent is not how the Apostles did it.
 - i) They “*reasoned with them from the Scriptures.*” - Acts 17:2
 - ii) They showed respect for custom and authority, while at the same time never being afraid to proclaim Christ. Acts 4:19-20
Rom 13:7
 - c) If the focus becomes man and not God, the proclamation will get perverted.
 - i) Again, very much see this with the heresy of Theological Liberalism that has changed the Gospel to the Social Gospel.
 - ii) Or with much of modern Evangelicalism which tries to make the Gospel palatable to modern customers.
 - iii) What is lost? The call to repentance.
 - d) Or to give another example of a bad focus:
 - i) There was a lot of talk in the 19th and early 20th century about “*saving the next generation for Christ.*”
 - ii) This led to the creation of such para-church organizations as the YMCA.
 - Young Men’s Christian Association was created in 1844.
 - It does a lot of good work but now is almost completely pagan.
 - iii) Would the church have been better served, if instead of creating a para-church organization that is not under church authority and focused on a niche community, it focused on teaching and disciplining families?

How Should We at TRC Do Outreach?

- 1) First, focus on the most important things: Correct worship and discipleship.
 - a) If we do those well, I believe that is over half the battle.
 - b) How does that 1960’s hippie Roman Catholic song go, “*They’ll know we are Christians by our love*”?
 - i) Question, love for who?
 - ii) First God, then each other (i.e. the church), and finally for the world.
 - c) Establishing a “*house of public worship*” is no small thing and should not be scoffed at as “*just being inside four walls.*”
- 2) Personally, I don’t think we need to have a Missions Committee that spends most of its time trying to figure out how we give money to people.
- 3) Instead, I think the Elders should ponder, with any suggestions from the congregation, how we can engage the world.
- 4) If we do charity, I think the focus should be a church wide labor (e.g. staffing a soup kitchen), though this not just outreach, but also about discipline.
 - a) Yes, there is a place to support someone in the church if they want organize a charitable outreach (e.g. start a soup kitchen), even more so if someone wants to be an evangelist. However, they need to be tested, trained and under the authority of the church. Acts 6:6;
1Tim 3:10;
1Tim 4:14; 5:22;
2Tim 1:6

- b) Yes, there is a place to give money to unbelievers, such as someone who lives near the church whose house burned down.
- c) However, we must be vigilant about worldly mission creep.

Mark 8:36-38 – “And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, ‘If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it. 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? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.’”

- 5) The major question to answer, and it is a very hard one, is how can we as a church go and proclaim the name of Christ, His resurrection, and His Gospel, with a call to repent and believe, to the unbelievers around us.
 - a) This is very hard because there is no public square, unlike in the ancient world. (i.e. the synagogue or the public forum).
 - b) A denomination can really help here.
 - i) The pattern in Acts is the catholic/universal church sends trained people out.
 - ii) I think turning over missions to a generic evangelical para-church organization may not be wise or at least not the best.
 - iii) If we believe Reformed Theology is best for worship and discipline, then why don’t we think so when it comes to evangelism?
- 6) Personally, I believe we should think that we (TRC) are the mission.
 - a) Elders are working on getting the word out to the world, that at the very least we exist.
 - b) One thing everyone can do is leave a rating for TRC on Google, and/or subscribe, like, comment, share facebook posts, and/or subscribing, liking, commenting on youtube helps boost TRC's online outreach.
 - c) Historically, from NT times until early modern times, the main focus of outreach was creating churches.
 - d) As we just heard as we went through Titus.
 - e) That we publicly congregate to worship God, hear His Word and receive His Supper.