

The Reformed Pastor

Ian Hamilton



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Prototypical Reformed Pastor

INTRODUCTION

All pastors are to model the prototypical pastor, Jesus Christ. In this introductory lesson, Rev. Hamilton highlights the distinguishing characteristics of a servant of God with a view to the servant of God, Jesus Christ.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- 1. To answer the question, "What is a reformed pastor?"
- 2. To present Christ as an example for all truly pastoral ministry
- 3. To instill a deeper devotion and love for God's people

SCRIPTURE READING

For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

-Mark 10:45

LECTURE OUTLINE

- A. What is a reformed pastor?
 - 1. The term "reformed pastor" will be used throughout this series in the same way Richard Baxter used it in his book *The Reformed Pastor*.
 - a. The use of the word "reformed" does not simply point to an adherence to the doctrines of grace.
 - b. The use of the word "reformed" places an emphasis on the character of life the doctrines of grace inevitably produce.
 - 2. The reformed pastor is concerned that people will be shaped and styled into the likeness of Christ.

- a. The reformed pastor must model this transformed lifestyle to the people of God.
- b. God's grace is not passive or inert; it is transformative.
- c. The Holy Spirit establishes God's rule and reign in both the hearts and minds of believers.
- B. Servitude is the defining mark of the reformed pastor.
 - 1. The reformed pastor's life is modeled after Jesus Christ.
 - a. The Apostle Peter calls Christ the chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:4).
 - b. All undershepherds are therefore to be conformed to Him.
 - 2. Isaiah 42 is the template for the servant of God: "*Behold my servant*, whom I uphold . . ." (Isa. 42:1).
 - a. God's purpose in calling any man into Christian ministry is to lay the template of His Son's life upon his life.
 - b. Christ's life was a life of servitude.
 - i. Isaiah 42 is a prophecy fulfilled by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Matt. 12:18).
 - ii. The Holy Spirit aims to reproduce in us what He first produced in Christ.
 - iii. This is even more the case with the men set apart to be servants of Christ as undershepherds in the church of God.
 - c. God's pattern for bringing hope into the world has always been to raise up a servant—Jesus Christ.
 - i. God's answer to the futility of idolatry is Jesus Christ as a servant. (Is. 41:24, 29; 42:1)
 - 3. All pastors are to be modeled after the prototypical pastor.
 - a. The reformed pastor will have a lifestyle and mind-set of servitude (Mark 10:45; Luke 22:27).
 - b. If there is anything that disqualifies a man from pastoral ministry, it's the absence of a servant's heart.
 - c. Service, not status, is to be the primary mark of the reformed pastor.
- C. Isaiah 42 highlights five distinct characteristics of the reformed pastor as modeled on Christ.
 - 1. Reformed pastors recognize that they are upheld men: "Behold my servant, *whom I uphold*" (Isa. 42:1).
 - a. Jesus Christ was dependent on the Lord's Spirit, and in His humanity He was upheld by the Father.
 - b. Reformed pastors are Spirit-dependent servants (Isa. 42:1).
 - c. Reformed pastors understand that they can do nothing without the Spirit and so should give God all the glory (Ps. 115:1).

- 2. Reformed pastors are not self-promoters: "*He will not cry aloud, or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street*" (Isa. 42:2).
 - a. Jesus Christ did not come to be admired for His gifts and abilities.
 - b. Paul did not attempt to flaunt his Apostleship but identified himself as a servant (2 Cor. 4:5).
 - c. Reformed pastors are to be men who serve the people of God.
- 3. Reformed pastors are gentle and kind to the weak and needy: "a bruised reed he will not break, a faintly burning wick he will not quench."
 - a. Jesus Christ was accessible to the weakest, the poorest, and the most in need during His earthly ministry.
 - b. Paul stresses gentleness as an essential characteristic of the Lord's servant (2 Tim. 2:25).
 - c. The only quality of His own life to which Christ ever drew attention was His meek and lowly heart (Matt. 11:29).
- 4. Reformed pastors are undeviatingly faithful: *"He will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has establish justice in the earth"* (Isa. 42:4).
 - a. Jesus Christ was the perfect example of faithfulness.
 - i. He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil. 2:8).
 - b. Reformed pastors understand that faithfulness leads to fruitfulness.
 - i. If the faithfulness of every Christian pleases and honors God, how much more so the undershepherds in the flock of Christ?
 - c. Faithfulness is becoming more costly as the world becomes increasingly anti-Christian.
 - i. Christ's life provides the perfect example of faithfulness amid persecution for all Christians, especially pastors.
- 5. Reformed pastors are sustained by the knowledge that they are dearly loved: *"Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights"* (Isa. 42:1).
 - a. The love of the Father sustained Christ during His earthly life and ministry (Matt. 3:17).
 - b. God loves His children to the point that He rejoices over them with singing (Zeph. 3:17).
 - c. Reformed pastors, sustained by God's love, should take the greatest joy to be in service to all those dearly loved by God.
 - i. One of the principal notes of the reformed pastor will be to help his people understand God's love for them.

STUDY QUESTIONS

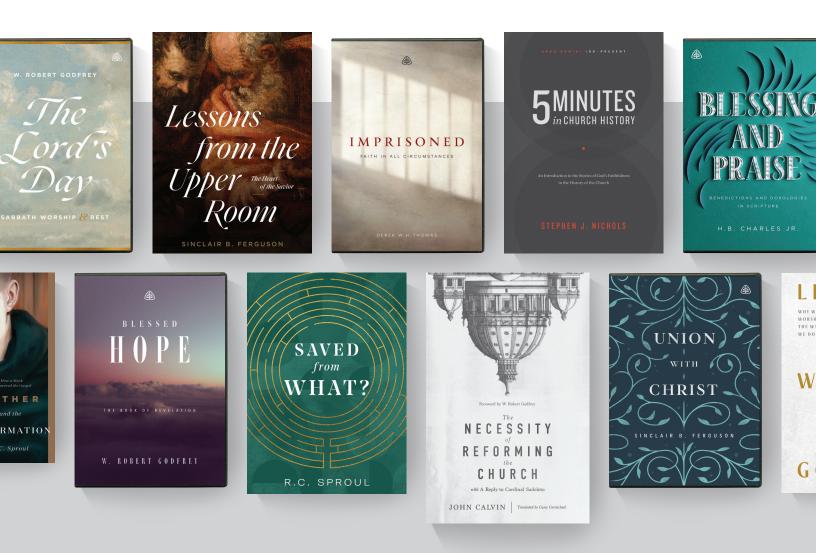
- 1. Richard Baxter titled his work *The Reformed Pastor* to stress the gospel minister's understanding of the doctrines of grace.
 - a. True
 - b. False

- 2. The only personal characteristics to which Jesus draws attention in the gospel of Matthew are ______ and lowliness of heart.
 - a. Kindness
 - b. Loveliness
 - c. Meekness
 - d. Gentleness
- 3. Isaiah 42 is commonly understood as one of Isaiah's _____ Songs.
 - a. Suffering
 - b. Prophetic
 - c. Messianic
 - d. Servant
- 4. Status is a primary mark of the reformed pastor.
 - a. True
 - b. False
- 5. Reformed pastors understand that ______ is the source of ministerial fruitfulness.
 - a. Prayer
 - b. Fasting
 - c. Faithfulness
 - d. All of the above
- 6. Jesus Christ is *the* _____.
 - a. Pastor
 - b. Shepherd
 - c. Servant of God
 - d. All of the above

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. What are the primary characteristics of the Servant of God in Isaiah 42?
- 2. Christ did not come to make a name for Himself. How should this influence your view of Christian ministry?
- 3. Where did Christ's faithfulness lead Him? What are the implications of this on the Christian life?
- 4. Why is the reformed pastor obliged to give all glory to God?

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