

THREE EQUALS ONE

Mathematicians and Christians will likely differ about the truth of our title. Yet, the religious truth of this statement is not hard to explain to a believer. Which Christian will not agree with the Biblical doctrine of the Trinity? Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three distinct persons, yet one, holy God. ‘...We believe in one only God, who is one single essence, in which are three persons, really, truly, and eternally distinct according to their incommunicable properties;’ (Art.8 B.C.).

But, this formula appears more frequently in the reformed Christians life. There are the three witnesses to our Saviour, Jesus Christ. They are the Spirit, the water and the blood. In 1 John 5 we read, “There are three witnesses, the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree. If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater.” These three are the one testimony of God for His Son.

We have also learned that the three marks of the one true church are the Preaching, the Sacraments and Church Discipline. In our one life we must deal with the three realities of sin, redemption and thankfulness. We even have, for the one Reformed faith, three Forms of Unity and three Creeds..

What may we conclude from this little exercise? In Matthew 18:16 the Lord gives instruction with regard to Church Discipline. He says, “...take one or two others along with you, that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses.” In 1 Cor.13:1 we read, “This is the third time I am coming to you. Any charge must be sustained by the evidence of two or three witnesses.” A third reference to this subject can be found in Deut. 19:15. It says, “A single witness shall not prevail against a man for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed; only on the evidence of two witnesses, or of three witnesses, shall a charge be sustained.”

In light of this principle it becomes a bit more understandable why God presents Himself to us as three distinct persons. In the same light we might also begin to see more clearly the reason behind the fact that our faith is strengthened by the three witnesses - the Spirit (the preaching), the water (baptism), and the blood (the holy supper). Carrying on with this principle we may also learn to be thankful for the Three Forms of Unity and three Creeds that bear witness to God’s holy Word. Not one confession, not one person’s ideas, but three different sources, still one united witness.

Finally, our life as Christians is not a one-sided affair where we always live in despair because of our sins, or always do good works out of thankfulness, or only glorify God because of the redemption by His Son. Rather, our life consists of a three sided mandate where we must be truly sorrowful because of our depraved nature, believe in Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, and Him crucified as the only solution for sin, and at the same time do good works out of thankfulness for such a great redemption.

Let us go forward living our lives in the three-fold harmony taught in the Scriptures, confessed by the Church, witnessed of in the Church, to the glory and honour of the Triune God.

PdB

The Sinews of the Church (2)

The responsibility of the congregation with regard to church discipline

Introduction

It is not for nothing that the Lord Jesus discussed church discipline with His disciples. In a previous article we saw how this discipline can be referred to as the sinews of the church. We also looked at the importance and procedure of church discipline. This time we will have a close look at the steps involved in that procedure.

Step One

Once we have determined that it is, indeed, our task to go to our brother, we must first pray for him. We must also ask God for a blessing over the visit. In addition, we must be properly prepared, perhaps we should do some Bible study about the subject we are going to address him on. It is a very serious business when we go to admonish someone. Therefore, it is necessary that we take our Bible along. After all, that's what it is all about - obedience to the Word of God. Note well, that the Lord Jesus says, "Go". It is not a matter in which you can just send a message, or something that can be handled by telephone. "Go, and admonish him personally!" The person you want to deal with must notice that you consider it a serious matter, but be careful, for you must also come in humbleness of heart. It would, therefore, be good to explain your motivations to the person you wish to address, in order to make clear that it is a matter that concerns Christ's honour and not that we feel ourselves to be better than the other. We must act with much love, wisdom and tact!

If we do not succeed in convincing our brother at such a visit, the Lord Jesus gives us a second step. We must take one or two witnesses. But please note well, in the Greek it is very clear that the Lord Jesus did not mean that we could consider the first step finished after only one visit. It is a process in which you, time and again, try to convince your brother. "Go, continuously, admonish him, time after time!" After your first visit you give your brother/sister opportunity to consider what you have said. You should make an appointment for a few days hence to talk about it again. Only after it becomes clear that you will not be able to convince your brother, or if he stubbornly refuses to listen to you, must you go over to the second step.

Step Two

This step requires a careful selection of one or two brothers or sisters to come along and to try again. With this step the Lord Jesus uses a different form of verb. The repetitive nature of the visits is not emphasized here. It is possible that after only one visit it becomes clear that no new ground will be broken with the addition of the witnesses. On the other hand, the words of the Lord Jesus do not exclude repeated visits.

Step Three

When we come to taking the third step we are confronted by the question as to what the Lord Jesus meant by the words "tell it to the congregation." We should be careful here. It is too simplistic a conclusion to just say that this means the consistory. That's not what the Lord Jesus is saying. On the other hand it does not do justice to the text if we conclude that we should publish all the details of the case to the whole congregation.

We should return, for a moment, to the context of the text. A few observations will suffice. To whom did the Lord Jesus speak these words? To His disciples. What did He mean, then, with the

word “congregation?” Certainly not the church congregation as we know it. It didn’t even exist at that time! It only came into existence after Pentecost. The Lord Jesus said to His disciples that if it came to such a point that one of them would not listen to the admonition of an other (with witnesses), then his sin must be exposed to the whole gathering of disciples.

But how must we deal with such a situation today? We do have to keep in mind what the Lord Jesus, later instituted via His apostles, namely elders to be shepherds over the various congregations. These shepherds or elders must take care of the congregation. They must rule the congregation. They, according to Scripture “watch over our souls” (Heb.13:17) - and that with the authority of the Lord Jesus. That’s why it is necessary for us, in the next step, to take our brother to the consistory. The elders must take on this matter and continue to try to bring the brother back from his sinful way. The churches together have established a procedure for handling such admonition. We can find that in the Church Order (Art.66-73). If the consistory, as the result of its official visits can not bring such a brother to repentance, then it is forced to withhold him from the Holy Supper. This immediately shows how dangerous such a sin has become. The guilty person puts his own forgiveness and salvation at risk.

The congregation is not yet advised of the situation when someone is withheld from the Lord’s Supper. The consistory still tries to bring the sinner to repentance without having to publicly expose his sin. Still if no repentance results, the consistory must proceed to the excommunication of the brother from the congregation of Christ. This is very sad, but failure to repent from a sin, whatever that sin might be, puts our complete salvation at risk.

Before someone is actually excommunicated from Christ’s congregation there is a procedure consisting of three announcements that must be followed (cf. Book of Praise, pp 607-614). Gradually the congregation is brought up to date about such a person and their sin (in accordance with the command of Christ in Matthew 18). In the first announcement the congregation is informed that there is a brother or sister with whom the consistory has been dealing. The nature of the sin (e.g. which of the 10 commandments is involved) is also made known and the congregation is called to prayer so that the (non-identified) brother/sister might, as yet, come to repentance. At the second announcement the name of the person involved is also made known so that the congregation can seriously admonish the brother or sister and pray specifically for him/her. Before such a second announcement can be made the Classis must give its approval. This is a safety measure to ensure that the accused receives just treatment, in order that his church membership not needlessly be terminated. With the third announcement the actual date of the forthcoming excommunication is announced

This is the manner in which the churches have worked out the command of Christ that the name and sin of someone who refuses to repent must be made known. In this way they also include the task of the eldership that was instituted later. This procedure, together with the safety measure of the approval of Classis, is sometimes, sad to say, circumvented by the sinner himself.

A person who is under discipline can, as was already mentioned, short circuit his own rights by announcing that he/she no longer wants to remain a member of Christ’s church. The popular term for this is “withdrawing”.

On this point we must clear up a deeply imbedded misunderstanding, for it is not true that membership in Christ's church can just be cancelled at one's own whim. The church is not merely a club or association. The congregation of Christ is ruled by the elders He has appointed. Just as membership is established by a decision of the consistory so also (by the means of discipline) membership is ended by a decision of the consistory. This fact is underlined by the Catechism in Lord's Day 31 The keys of the kingdom are the preaching of the holy gospel and church discipline - both are matters that fall under the mandate of the consistory who, in the name of Christ, watch over the congregation. No one has the right to exercise these keys by themselves. Neither the Bible, nor the confessional documents give even the slightest indication that a person is able to place himself outside of the Church of Christ.

This means that when a consistory, with sadness, accepts the request for withdrawal from a church member, it is doing nothing short of declaring such a person as being outside of the communion of Christ's Church, that is to say, to shut him or her out of the Church.

In part, for this reason, the Church at Katwijk decided, in early 1997 to use a new form when announcing a withdrawal. In this way we make clear that what is happening is in principle of the same nature as what is described when the form for excommunication in the Book of Praise is used. We do not make use of the form in the back of our church book as that form is meant for those of whom we believe that they wish to remain members of the Church but, in spite of that, must be placed outside of it.

Normally, the form that is used in Katwijk on the occasion of a withdrawal reads as follows:

Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The consistory informs you with sadness that br/sr xxx has expressed his/her desire to withdraw him/herself from the communion of Christ's Church. After serious efforts to call this br/sr back to the grace and salvation of our God this br/sr continues to harden him/herself in his/her intention. For this reason the consistory, in accordance with Scripture and our Catechism (Lord's Day 31), is forced to shut br/sr/ xxx out of the communion of Christ.

Christ teaches us in Matthew 18:17 that, unless there is repentance, he/she shall be to you as a heathen and a tax collector. Do not, however, consider him/her as an enemy, but point him/her to the path of righteousness as a brother/sister (2 Thess. 3:15). Let us also strive the more to let the love of Christ work in us and show in our lives as a communion of saints, and let us consider this sad occasion as a warning for ourselves.

In special cases some changes can be made. As a rule, when it is clear that the person involved has decided to join a false (i.e. unlawful) church, then that is also announced.

The excommunication of a brother or sister from the Church of Christ is always a sad business. But we should not try to get around it by making a mere business-like announcement. The sorrow of the occasion must be expressed. Only when the congregation sees and feels what the consequences of such a "withdrawal" are can its members be motivated to pray for such a person. The members of Christ must share in both joy and sorrow (Rom. 12:15).

A second matter that is raised by the use of this type of form is how the congregation should deal with such a brother/sister. Our Lord Jesus states that we should consider the brother or sister as a heathen and a tax collector (Matt. 18:17).

What does Jesus mean with that? In this century, especially in the Netherlands, it has become popular to explain this verse as follows: The Lord Jesus means that we should consider such a person as an unbeliever. In that case he has become an object for evangelization. We must deal with this person in the same way that the Lord Jesus dealt with sinners and tax collectors.

No matter how attractive this interpretation may be, we must make a number of critical remarks. In the first place the comparison with Jesus' association with sinners and tax collectors is completely false. Jesus associated expressly with those sinners and tax collectors who were willing to listen to Him. The sinners and tax collectors whom He gathered around Himself wanted to hear His words, the words concerning forgiveness and reconciliation with God. A brother who doesn't want to listen to Scripture, nor to those who bring the Word of the Lord Jesus, namely the elders, is in a completely different position. He is more appropriately to be compared to the Pharisees in Jesus' time.

But, in the second place, we should note that Jesus did not say, "he shall be to you as the sinner and the tax collector." He said, "he shall be to you as the heathen and the tax collector." Now we all know how the Lord dealt with heathens. He avoided them. He said that He had come for the lost sheep of Israel. Consider how He dealt with the Canaanite woman who begged Him concerning her daughter (Matt. 15:21-28). The Lord Jesus did not answer her a word! He commanded His disciples to send her away, "It is not good to cast the bread for the children to the dogs!" Only after she had shown her great faith in Him did He comply with her request. Now, it is not the Lord Jesus' meaning that we should accuse the excommunicated person of being a heathen. Many excommunicated sinners do not want to leave their faith - that's why they so often seek membership in other church communities. They have not been excommunicated because they don't believe in anything anymore, but because they did not want to repent from a particular sin. Jesus says, "let him be to you as the heathen and the tax collector." He mentions two categories of people who would obviously be avoided in those days. Jews did not associate with heathens. Nobody associated with a tax collector. They were known to enrich themselves through usury.

We come to the conclusion that the Lord Jesus must have meant "avoid this brother. Don't associate with him. Behave just as you would to a heathen and a tax collector." And we know from Scripture that true Jews (like Peter) would not even dare to eat with heathens (Acts 10:28).

Dr. R. D. Anderson

"Sweeter than Honey"—A Meditation on Psalm 19:7-10

Psalm 19:7-10

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb."

Every student of the Belgic Confession knows that God has revealed Himself in two wondrous ways: in His creation and in His written Word. Living in such a beautiful country as Canada, we have countless opportunities to appreciate God's so-called general revelation. Even if we live in cities such as Vancouver, Hamilton, Edmonton or Winnipeg, we're never far from a brilliant testimony to the wisdom and creative genius of our God. But do we get as excited about God's special revelation? Do we delight to the same degree in Scripture as we do in Creation? God's revelation in His Word should actually be MORE stunning and MORE exhilarating for us than the beauty of Canada. In Psalm 19 we see the Psalmist praising God's revelation of Himself in both Creation and Scripture, but he saves his greatest superlatives for God's Word. Our lives should be super-saturated with the Word of God. If we're being faithful in our corporate Bible study in the church, our personal devotions and family worship, we should be busy with God's Word all the time. Do you ever just stop in amazement? God's Word is incredible, and there are always new and fascinating insights for students of Scripture. But note: God's Word is very familiar to us, and we all know the cliché about familiarity. Could it be that Scripture, God's revelation of Himself, is not being loved to the degree that it ought? This is a problem which has occurred before. Consider these words written by Nathaniel Hardy in the 17th century: "How odious is the profaneness of those Christians who neglect the Holy Scriptures, and give themselves to reading other books! How many precious hours do many spend, and that not only on work days, but holy days, in foolish romances, fabulous histories, lascivious poems! And why this, but that they may be cheered and delighted, when as full joy is only to be had in these holy books. Alas! The joy you find in those writings is perhaps pernicious, such as tickleth your lust, and pleaseth the fancy and affecteth the wit; whereas these holy writings are 'right, rejoicing the heart.'"

If we translate Hardy's culture into ours, we're looking at people who, for example, prefer to watch movies or television to reading God's Word in family worship or in personal devotions. They prefer baseball and hockey to Men's Society and weight-loss groups to Women's Society. They spend much time on personal leisure and personal "development" and little time with Scripture. And we know for ourselves that the natural man does not care to read God's Word for often it pricks too much. Scripture wounds us. Too often it contradicts us and what we would like. But in spite of that we are commanded to love it dearly. God's covenant people, His bride, must love His Word. The example of David in this Psalm is plainly before us. He begins by praising God's revelation of His glory in the natural realm. It's interesting that the one time David mentions Him, he uses the name "God" (El) rather than Jahweh, God's covenant name. This indicates that there is a progression from the revelation in nature to the revelation in Scripture. This progression is indicative of the unity of the psalm. The Psalmist has one purpose: to glorify God's self-

revelation. In the process, he teaches us that Scripture is more comprehensive in its revelation about God than nature is, for Scripture reveals Jahweh, the covenant God. For that reason, David pushes the limits of his poetical abilities in his praise of Scripture.

Notice the parallels in verses 7-9. As we'll see, everything fits together here. It is truly a literary masterpiece. Christian author and literary critic C.S. Lewis said about Psalm 19, "I take this to be the greatest poem in the Psalter and one of the greatest lyrics in the world."

Verses 7 and 8 are the most closely parallel, verse 9 follows the parallel fairly closely, and then verse 10 rounds it off with what has been called climactic parallelism.

The first noun of each verse is a synonym for God's Word; it's difficult to isolate each word as referring to a particular part. The Psalmist starts by speaking of the law or the Torah. That he says is perfect, it is complete and nothing is lacking. David does not have the attitude of a critical scholar, but rather he is beginning with superlatives in his praise of God's Word. He is the humble child before God, adoring His revelation. He has been brought to that position by God's written revelation. That's why he says that God's Word converts or restores the whole life.. God's Word is the means by which sinners are brought back to life, turned back to God through Christ. Nature cannot do that, but thanks to God, Scripture can! We can also give our enthusiastic Amen to the Word of God, according to David. Scripture can be trusted, it is reliable. When one follows Scripture properly, one is never led astray. We can see this in something so simple as faithfully following the command of our Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 18 when we see a brother or sister sinning. Doing that isn't easy in our day, but it is so absolutely necessary and it is the trustworthy and reliable way. God knows best for He is the source of all wisdom. He put much of His wisdom into Scripture for us. That's why David says that Scripture makes the simple wise. The simple here is someone who is immature; he is not morally culpable for his condition.

For that reason, William Tyndale translated this line, "And giveth wisdom even unto babes." We grow up and mature through the reading and study of Scripture, it has that effect on us. David goes on to confess that the precepts of Jahweh are upright and correct, nothing can ever be alleged against them. Moreover, they make the hearts of the covenant people rejoice. When we study Scripture, we should feel joy and pleasure of the most sublime variety. Sometimes we need to remind ourselves of that. We need to marvel at the purity of the commandments of our covenant God; we need to stand in awe of the fact that He has used His Word to bring light to our formerly blind eyes. Our God stooped down, grabbed our heads, pried open our eyelids and made us see once more with the healing light of His Word. He made us see Christ. Scripture has what someone once referred to as nuclear firepower. It can annihilate the resistance of any sinner.

Scripture also contains pure religion or what David calls "the fear of Jahweh." This phrase does not break with the parallelism, for the "fear of Jahweh" is occasionally used in place of the Torah or Law in Scripture, for instance in Psalm 111:10. The fear of Jahweh is clean; the doctrine of pure worship (which is God's Word) is ritually set apart. Therefore, it stands unto eternity. The covenant people of Israel would inevitably become unclean as a part of everyday life, but God's Word was and is different. His judgments also are totally righteous and true, there is no falsehood or hypocrisy is to be found among them and no unrighteousness. David marvels at the Word of God in the six lines of verses 7 to 9. He spares no superlative in praising it and succinctly describes what

it does to us. Clearly the attitude of the covenant people should be the same as that of the covenant king: what a God and what a revelation from Him!

The last verse we want to meditate upon reflects that attitude. David uses two images to speak of the value of Scripture. Scripture is to be desired more than the finest, most purely refined gold. Would we trade a Fort Knox full of gold for Scripture? For those of us who have so many Bibles around us, it's difficult to answer such a question. But imagine that you had the only Bible in your community. Would you trade that one book for all the worldly riches imaginable? More than one martyr answered a similar question with his or her life.

David's next image is one we are mostly familiar with; he says that Scripture is sweeter than honey, even sweeter than the honey straight from the honeycomb. Apparently, the most delicious honey in the Ancient Near East was considered to be the milk-white combs which still had the un-hatched young bees in them. This was considered to be a delicacy.

God's Word is better than that. Tastier than the best delicacy you can imagine! Do we feel that way about Scripture? We can have cravings for certain foods, but what about for Scripture? Scripture should make us feel excited, like we're still in love for the first time.

And what if somehow Scripture was taken from you? That could happen. It did happen to Bob Shenk. Bob was working in the basement of his home in Kansas City when a natural gas explosion robbed him of his eyesight and the use of his hands. Bob had just become a Christian and suddenly he wasn't able to read Scripture for himself. Sure, others could read it to him, but it wasn't the same as reading it on his own. Then Bob heard of a woman who learned how to read Braille with her lips. This made him excited and soon he had the Bible in Braille. However, he was disappointed to learn that this would be impossible for him since the nerve endings in his lips had also been destroyed in the explosion. After several vain attempts at reading with his lips, Bob stuck out his tongue and found that he could feel the letters with his tongue. He learned to read Braille with his tongue and has since read through the Bible a number of times. Bob had a strong desire to read the book which mattered most in his life, and he persevered. We don't face the same obstacles as Bob did, we can pick up Scripture any time we want and start reading. If we truly love this book because of the God who gave it to us as His self-revelation, then we ought to be diligent students of Scripture. Regular reading and meditation of Scripture ought to be an unchangeable part of our daily schedules. God's Word is truly beautiful and the more we come to know it the more we should love it. Christians must regularly prove the old cliché about familiarity to be a hasty generalization.

NEWS

Classis Chicago South Criticizes Hope Church's Homosexuality Conference but Won't Require Pastors to Explain Views

After a Chicago-area Christian Reformed church touched off nearly a year of controversy by sponsoring a conference on homosexuality, Classis Chicago South has voted to declare that "the conference did not provide for the proclamation of the Christian Reformed position on homosexual acts." However, the classis rejected a request to require two ordained ministers involved in the conference "to explain to classis their belief and teaching on chastity and to state clearly whether or

not they believe and teach that all homosexual erotic acts are unchaste.” The “Conference of Hope,” held in April 1998 and sponsored by Hope CRC of Oak Forest, Illinois, led to a number of complaints by Chicago churches, informal meetings between pastors and church councils, and a formal call to rebuke the sponsoring church, pastor, and organizers of the conference. Among the protesters is Rev. David Feddes, who as the broadcast minister for the English language radio and television ministry of the 275,000-member denomination, is one of the most-recognized names on the CRC’s ministerial roll. Feddes’ church, Faith CRC of Tinley Park, submitted a strongly-worded overture to Classis Chicago South’s fall meeting which was tabled until an advisory committee could evaluate the overture and submit recommendations for classis’ March 4 meeting.

The United Reformed News Service

A Letter

The reading of this year’s Christmas issue of Clarion aroused various emotions of incredibility, astonishment, surprise and even some fear. I refer specifically to the articles pertaining to the Acts of General Synod Fergus. On a positive note; the reading of these articles caused me to reread sections of the Acts of last synod as well as certain sections of previous synods. It also fortified in my mind the true benefit of printing a copy of the Acts for each family.

The article entitled “Access to the Table” by Rev. J. Visscher especially captured my attention. The question is asked if we, as Canadian Reformed Churches, are turning the matter of fencing of the Lord’s Supper Table into the fourth mark of the True Church. This is surprising since the second mark of the True Church, as we profess it in the Belgic Confession, is “to maintain the pure administration of the sacraments as Christ instituted them”. It is in this light that Synod Fergus received 12 appeals that expressed concerns with the issue of fencing of the Lord’s Table. Why now for argument’s sake would we bring up the formation of a fourth mark? Why; when a Synod deals with appeals from local churches which are based on, or motivated from what we profess in our doctrinal standards, would we term this “a bridge too far”? This expression alludes to a mortal mistake, a fatal misjudgment. Is this what Synod Fergus has really done? Maybe we haven’t crossed enough bridges yet.

In the latter part of his article, Rev. Visscher outlines some of our own shortcomings. He sums it up with these words, “Our own house should be in order before we go about trying to arrange the furniture in our neighbour’s house”. This is a good point and indeed one that we as federated churches should consider very carefully. My surprise and disappointment stems from the fact that Rev. Visscher, in conclusion, only and I stress the word only urges us as churches “to practice a greater degree of consistency in our inter-church relations”. Rightly so, we have to be fair in our dealings with other churches. But when we conclude that our own house is not in order; the first thing that we, as faithful children of God should do is to take steps to indeed set our house in order.

There is nothing wrong with informing the OPC that, in light of the ongoing discussions, we have discovered shortcomings on our part. We should ask for a 3 or 6 year recess period in order to come

to grips with our own shortcomings. Our shortcomings should never become the yardstick that governs our actions or understanding, but rather they should be the springboards that propel us to strive for greater faithfulness. We, as Churches, are governed by God's Word and not by our contrived sense of fairness; right though that sense may be. I think here of Matthew 7:5 where we are instructed to "first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye". Scripture does not say "because you have a plank in your eye, kindly leave the speck in your brother's eye alone".

Rev. Visscher ends his article with a strong statement, "It is not right for us to demand of other churches that they must accept our extra-biblical position on access to the Lord's Table before we can enter into Ecclesiastical Fellowship with them". Just a few comments. Firstly, Rev. Visscher has; in no way, shape or form, exhaustively proven that our position on access to the Lord's Table is extra-biblical. Yes, I agree that there is no specific verse or group of verses in the Bible that explicitly tell us to hand in our attestation before we can partake as guests at the Lord's Supper Table. But that our current practices are not based on sound biblical principles is definitely not shown.

In fact his arguments are rather shallow. He states that yes "the biblical principle is that the sacrament should be kept holy, but the Bible does not say exactly how. Therefore, in effect, any certain practice becomes supra-scriptural and thus exceeds the demands of God's holy word. This sort of reasoning leaves the door open for many diverse practices, in fact so wide open that we run the risk of loosing sight of the door. Secondly, if our position on access to the Lord's Supper Table is truly extra-biblical, then why do we enforce these positions within our own circles. In fact, if Rev. Visscher's supposition is indeed true, then we should change our practices, change them to true biblical ones.

Now someone will say that an extra-biblical position or practice is not the same as an unbiblical position or practice. Yet, in all honesty, we must admit that "extra-biblical" in the true sense of the word, is not biblical.

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