OUR MISSION IS TO SUPPORT THE CHURCH IN HER CHARGE OF PRESENTING EVERY PERSON MATURE IN CHRIST (COL. 1:28).

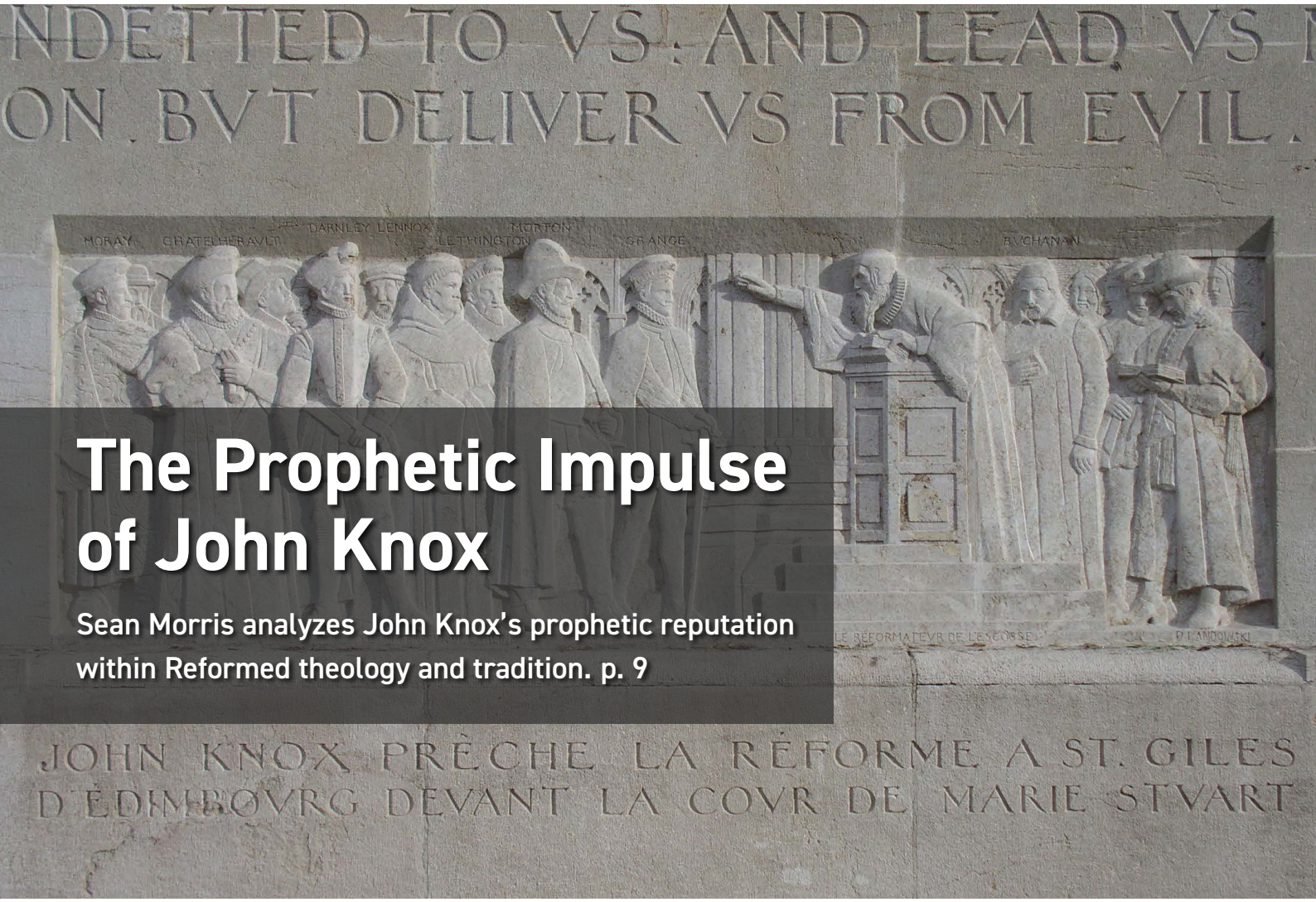
REFORMED FORUM

FALL/WINTER
2025
MAGAZINE

EDITOR'S PREFACE
Camden Bucey introduces the Reformed tradition's complex views on prophecy, providence, and Scripture's sufficiency. p. 4

REENCHANTING REFORMED ORTHODOXY
Derrick Brite probes Owen's and Vermigli's views on supernatural providences, dreams, and Scripture's authority. p. 5

NEW REFORMED FORUM PUBLICATIONS
Preview Danny Olinger's *Christ and His Church-Bride*, Jim Cassidy's *The Book of Job: Suffering unto Glory*, and Dan Ragusa's *Exploring 2 Peter: The Promise and the Path*. Now available. p. 12



The Prophetic Impulse of John Knox

Sean Morris analyzes John Knox's prophetic reputation within Reformed theology and tradition. p. 9

In many ways, this year felt like the beginning of a new chapter in the life of Reformed Forum—not a departure from the past, but a "leveling-up." Our mission has always been clear: to help believers see that **all of Scripture is about Jesus Christ.** From Genesis to Revelation, every passage bears witness to him who suffered and entered into his glory. This redemptive-historical conviction—shaped by the insights of Geerhardus Vos and Cornelius Van Til—remains at the heart of everything we do. To be mature in Christ, we must come to understand that **all of Scripture is Christian Scripture**, revealing to us "the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27).

This truth was wonderfully on display at our recent Reformed Forum Conference, where we gathered to explore Christ revealed in all of Scripture. The event was a tremendous encouragement, and I was delighted to see so many of you there. The new venue afforded many new opportunities for fellowship and connection, and the speakers opened God's word with remarkable depth and clarity. Yet more than anything else, it was the people—the fellowship of believers gathered in joy around the word of Christ—that made the conference such a special occasion.

As we look to the future, we want to build on this momentum. We are developing new introductory materials and resources to help people grasp the unity of Scripture and the centrality of Christ in all of God's revelation. Whether through books, courses, podcasts, or events, we want believers around the world to encounter the riches of God's word and to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I am filled with gratitude for the many ways the Lord continues to bless and grow the work of Reformed Forum. What began as a simple effort to encourage confessional conversation has, by God's grace, become a global ministry serving the church in her calling to present every person mature in Christ.

Through it all, we remain deeply thankful for your prayers and support. The Lord continues to open doors for fruitful ministry and to bring together a growing fellowship of people devoted to Christ and his kingdom. May he be pleased to use our collective efforts to strengthen his church and to make his truth known to the ends of the earth.

In Christ's service,

Camden M. Bucey
Executive Director

Scripture quotations are from The ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Cover graphic: Detail of John Knox in Edinburgh at the Reformation Wall in Geneva. Histoire - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=3175441

Graphic design by Jeanna Wiggins.

CONTENTS

4 **Editor's Preface**
Camden Bucey introduces the topic of the place of prophecy, dreams, and other extraordinary providences alongside Scripture's sufficiency within the Reformed theological heritage.

5 **Reenchanting Reformed Orthodoxy**
Derrick Brite surveys John Owen's and Peter Martyr Vermigli's views on God's working through dreams and other extraordinary means while affirming Scripture's sufficiency.

9 **The Prophetic Impulse of John Knox**
Sean Morris critically investigates John Knox's self-conception as a prophet in the vein of the biblical prophets, carefully examining Knox's own statements and predictions.

12 **NEW Reformed Forum Publications**
Danny Olinger's *Christ and His Church-Bride: Meredith G. Kline's Biblical-Theological Reading of the Book of Revelation* is a rich collection of Meredith Kline's writings, sermons, and studies. Jim Cassidy's *The Book of Job: Suffering unto Glory* and Dan Ragusa's *Exploring 2 Peter: The Promise and the Path* are part of Reformed Forum's Redemptive-Historical Bible Studies series—companion books to Reformed Academy courses on books of the Bible

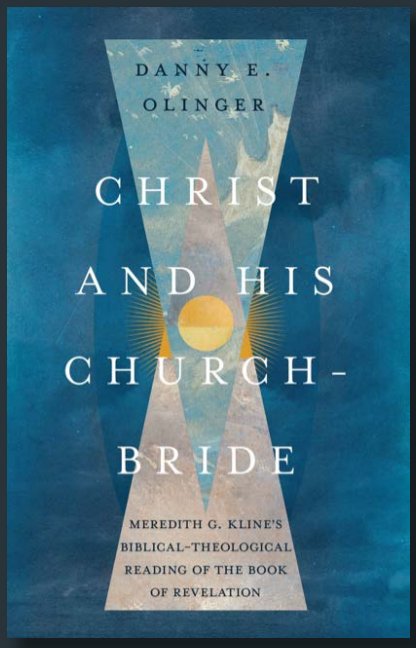
14 **Reformed Academy Update**
Ryan Noha describes the growth of Reformed Academy, including an update on course offerings, companion book translations, and new international cohorts.

16 **Course Highlight—Defending Our Hope: An Introduction to Christian Apologetics**
Camden Bucey introduces Defending Our Hope, a course on the foundations of Reformed, presuppositional apologetics, rooted in the biblical command to "always be ready to give a defense."

Behold the Triumph of Christ

Christ and His Church-Bride invites readers into the profound theological insights of Meredith G. Kline, one of the twentieth century's most original Reformed biblical theologians.

In this unique volume, Danny E. Olinger explores Kline's sustained engagement with the book of Revelation—a text Kline called "the fairest gem in Scripture." Drawing from Kline's unpublished student thesis, published writings, sermons, and archival materials, Olinger presents a comprehensive account of Kline's interpretation of the Apocalypse through a covenantal and redemptive-historical lens.



The book is organized in four parts: a survey of Kline's writings on Revelation, a collection of his sermons, a compact commentary built from Kline's own words, and a rich anthology of biblical-theological insights. At the heart of this study lies Kline's vision of the church as the Spirit-transformed bride of Christ, journeying from imperfection in this world to glorious perfection in the new heavens and new earth.

Olinger demonstrates how Kline's biblical theology—shaped by Geerhardus Vos, grounded in the Reformed tradition, and expressed through a distinctive covenantal framework—provides vital clarity to the complex imagery of Revelation. The result is a deeply edifying resource that equips pastors, theologians, and lay readers alike to behold the triumph of Christ and the eschatological hope of his church.



EDITOR'S PREFACE

CAMDEN M. BUCEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

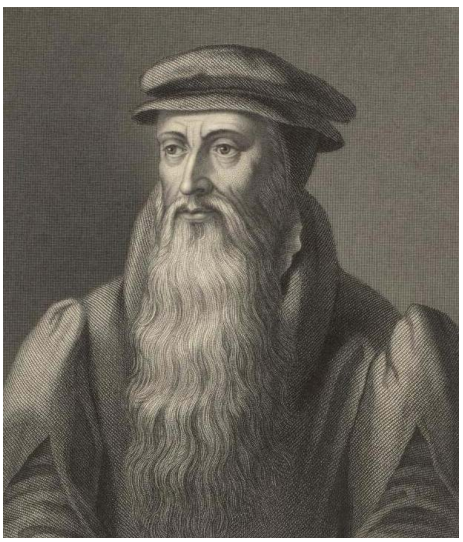
Groupe central du Monument international de la Réformation. Schweiz41, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

This issue includes two contributions exploring John Knox's prophetic self-understanding and the place of dreams and extraordinary providences in the thought of John Owen and Peter Martyr Vermigli. These themes may sound close to contemporary charismatic claims, but they deserve our attention precisely because they form part of our history.

The Reformers were not modern cessationists. While they rejected the continuation of apostolic office and new revelation, they lived in what David Hall has called an "enchanted universe"—a world where God's providence was sometimes perceived in extraordinary ways. Knox, Owen, and Vermigli demonstrate that our Reformed heritage contains a more textured understanding of prophecy and extraordinary experiences than many assume. These brief articles serve to introduce and develop historical and theological sensitivity, showing that our forebears wrestled with questions similar to those we face today. Exploring these dimensions of our past enriches our appreciation for *sola Scriptura*, deepens our grasp of redemptive history, and sharpens our ability to engage charismatics with historically informed and pastorally wise responses.

The Reformers were committed to the sufficiency of Scripture while remaining men of their own time—men who believed God's Spirit was active in ways that sometimes stretched their established theological categories. Understanding this strengthens rather than weakens our confidence in the word, as we learn to rest in God's final and complete revelation in Christ while acknowledging the surprising ways his providence unfolds.





Portrait of John Knox, Public domain.

REENCHANTING REFORMED ORTHODOXY

DERRICK BRITE

One of the more popular John Owen quotes shared on social media says: "If private revelations agree with Scripture, they are needless; and if they disagree, they are false." This quote is used as something of a trump card by many who would oppose any kind of extra-biblical revelation or supernatural work by the Holy Spirit outside of the written word of God. The quote is effective rhetoric, no doubt, and since it bears the name of one of the most influential and intellectually stimulating theologians in the Reformed tradition, it needs to be considered seriously.

Interestingly enough however, John Owen *never* actually said this. The aforementioned quote is a summary statement of Owen's position by J. I. Packer in his work *A Quest for Godliness*.[1] This in and of itself does not make the argument false, but it does show that there continues to be a great need to examine the sources carefully. This is perhaps especially true as the contemporary church wrestles with various issues, such as reports of Muslim conversion due to dreams. In this essay, I want to briefly lay forth some arguments from both John Owen and Peter Martyr Vermigli advocating for a more enchanted Reformed orthodoxy.

What John Owen Did Say

So, what *did* John Owen actually say? Though the original quote in question came from Packer, Owen has what appears to be a very similar statement. One that would at least lead one to conclude Owen would have agreed with Packer's assessment:

> Since the finishing of the canon of the Scripture, the church is not under that conduct as to stand in need of such new extraordinary revelations. It doth, indeed, live upon the internal gracious operations of the Spirit, enabling us to understand, believe, and obey the perfect, complete revelation of the will of God already made; but new revelations it hath neither need nor use of;—and to suppose them, or a necessity of them, not only overthrows the perfection of the Scripture, but also leaveth us uncertain whether we know all that is to be believed in order unto salvation, or our whole duty, or when we may do so; for it would be our duty to live all our days in expectation of new revelations, wherewith neither peace, assurance, nor consolation is consistent.[2]

Case closed, right? Well, not exactly. This is where reading Owen (and other theologians, for that matter), requires the ability to distinguish. Here, Owen is arguing against *immediate* revelation in defense of the authority of the Scriptures. Owen's position, however, does not preclude methods of *mediate* revelation. Thus, in the exact same volume, Owen can make something of an open-ended case for God using extraordinary means to call the Jews to the gospel while also denying apostolic succession or apostolic ministry:



Portrait of Sir John Owen Knt. James Caldwall, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

> *But this ministry of the apostles, with its powers and duties, this apostleship, which extended only unto the church of the Jews, ceased at the death of Christ, or at the end of his own personal ministry in this world; nor can any, I suppose, pretend unto a succession to them therein.* Who or what peculiar instruments he will use and employ for the final recovery of that miserable, lost people, whether he will do it by an ordinary or an extraordinary ministry, by gifts miraculous, or by the naked efficacy of the gospel, is known only in his own holy wisdom and counsel.[3]

This statement is consistent with his caution in his commentary on the book of Hebrews: To deny the mediate communication by angels would be to "unwarrantably limit the Holy One of Israel."[4] Owen's position seems to be a far more cautious position, allowing for things outside the normal means to accomplish God's providence. This no doubt has bearing upon how we Reformed believers receive reports of Muslim conversions due to dreams. Should we reject them outright, or cautiously consider them? It would seem that John Owen would argue for the latter.

Owen's position really should come as no surprise. David Hall's statement regarding Puritan New England applies well here: "The people of seventeenth-century New England lived in an enchanted universe. Theirs was a world of wonders."[5] The worldview of men like Owen was quite different than the modern age. Thus, it was not an all-or-nothing approach. Perhaps his position could be labeled "open but cautious." And Owen is certainly not alone in his views. Some went a lot further than Owen did on these things. So much so, that it could be said about men like Isaac Ambrose and Cotton Mather that their view of angelic experiences and the like sometimes "bubbled over into speculations and folklore."[6]

Vermigli: A Dream Weaver?

Another prominent Reformed theologian, Peter Martyr Vermigli, also discussed these issues. In his commentary on Judges 7:13, Vermigli takes up the subject of dreams, and whether they are a valid means of mediate revelation. After an extensive exposition of the Greek philosophical position on dreams via Aristotle and others, Vermigli then turns to the scriptural witness. Leaning upon texts such as Genesis 40 and Daniel 5, he offers a distinction between the

1. J. I. Packer, *A Quest for Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life* (Crossway Books, 1990), 86.

2. John Owen, *A Discourse Concerning the Holy Spirit—Continued*, Works of John Owen, vol. 4, ed. William H. Goold (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, n.d.), 4:62.

3. Owen, *A Discourse Concerning the Holy Spirit—Continued*, 4:440; emphasis added.

4. John Owen, *An Exposition of Epistle to the Hebrews* (Banner of Truth, 1991), 3:250.

5. David D. Hall, *Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment: Popular Religious Belief in Early New England* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1989), 71.

6. Joel R. Beeke and Mark Jones, *A Puritan Theology: Doctrine for Life* (Reformation Heritage Books, 2012), 188.



Portrait of Peter Martyr Vermigli. James Caldwall, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

receiving of a dream and the interpretation thereof. He notes that just receiving a dream does not make one a prophet, as "they have only a certain beginning and trace of prophecy."[7]

This is not a wholesale endorsement of all methods of interpreting dreams. Vermigli warns that one must avoid information and dreams gained by "evil and vain arts and associated with the worship of demons."[8] Aside from this, however, nothing should prevent us from judging our dreams as to whether they are from the Lord.

The question then is this: Aside from satanic influence, is there a guardrail or stipulation to the inquiry into our dreams to determine if they are in some way a form of mediate revelation? Vermigli issues another caution: One must not seek to "match their dreams to chance events about with they have no knowledge, either of the cause or of the effect."[9] In other words, believers should never attempt to play a type of matching game with their dreams and events of which they have no direct knowledge. Thus, dreams for Vermigli serve to enlighten a situation relevant to the believer in such a way that they can apply the word of God correctly to that issue. If this is true, then Vermigli's exhortation to believers is apt: They should pray that "they may be instructed even in their dreams, especially about those things they consider beneficial, and which they cannot untangle themselves."[10] Like Owen, Vermigli is not envisioning new doctrinal revelation, but rather, a situation in which under God's providence, a believer is given a dream that helps them resolve a situation in a way that accords with godliness.

7. Peter Martyr Vermigli, *Philosophical Works: On the Relation of Philosophy to Theology*, trans. and ed. Joseph C. McLelland (The Davenant Press, 2018), 162.
8. Vermigli, *Philosophical Works*, 167.
9. Vermigli, *Philosophical Works*, 167.
10. Vermigli, *Philosophical Works*, 168.

Conclusion

Nick Needham's assessment regarding the supernatural experiences of the early Reformers (such as John Knox) could certainly be true of men like Owen and Vermigli: "Some of the later 'cessationist' ideas should not be read back into the Reformation era. While the Reformers were quite clearly not modern charismatics, they were also not so suspicious of the supernatural as some modern anti-charismatic evangelicals have perhaps been."[11]

There is much more than can and must be said regarding this subject. No series of articles will clear up all questions and difficulties. And even if my essay on Owen convinces you that his position is far more complex than the simple cessationist versus charismatic battle lines allow (and I am under no delusion it will convince everyone), you're not obligated to believe it. Each man must do his own work, test everything by the Scriptures, and come to his own conclusion. However, as complicated as some of the historical positions may be, one thing remains clear: Reformed Christians must reckon with their own history in light of modern discussions. Even those who disagree with Owen or Vermigli on this topic will see that they were fully committed to the sufficiency of Scripture. God's extraordinary works of providence did not push them away from that commitment but, rather, drove them deeper into the text so that they may test everything, even their dreams, by that infallible standard. This part of our Reformed history should promote great humility in us, along with patience for those with whom we have strong disagreements, as we seek to navigate these nuanced issues with clarity and care.

11. Nick Needham, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 2000 Years of Christ's Power, vol. 3 (Christian Focus Publications, 2016), 406n29.



Rev. Derrick Brite is the pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Aliceville, AL, and professor of Systematic Theology at Birmingham Theological Seminary. He is currently pursuing a PhD at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. Derrick is the editor of A Pastor's Heart: Essays in Memory of Harry L. Reeder III, *and has written for Reformation21,* Credo Magazine, *and Ligonier Ministries, as well as authored several articles for academic publications. Derrick and his wife, Ashton, have lived in Aliceville since 2019.*



Het licht is op de kandelaar gestelt't Licht is op den kandelaer gestelt, Public domain.

GIVING HOPE | WORD & DEED GIFT CATALOG

BIBLES to be distributed at various projects.	**$5.00**
10 MEALS for a malnourished student in Colombia.	**$7.00**
A **CHRISTMAS GIFT** for a student (a toy and a practical item) in Guatemala.	**$14.00**
SCHOOL SUPPLIES for a student at Adoration Christian School in Haiti.	**$15.00**
110 LB **BAG OF MAIZE** for a center that supports vulnerable children in Malawi.	**$45.00**
Provide a **SEWING MACHINE** for a graduate of the sewing program in India.	**$75.00**
A year of **HOME-BASED CARE** for a patient of the Nakekela HIV/AIDS Clinic in South Africa.	**$115.00**
Translation of a **BIBLE CURRICULUM** book into Spanish to be distributed in several countries.	**$550.00**
Operation of a **VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM** in South Sudan for 20 youths for one month.	**$1,700.00**

Questions? Email dvandermeer@wordanddeed.org



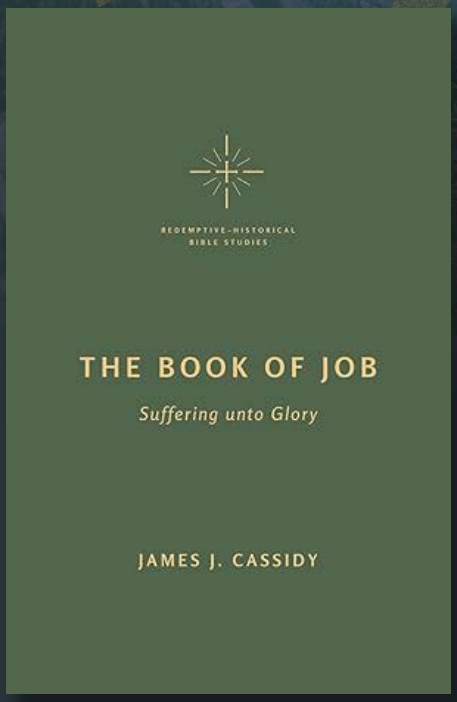
PLACING AN ORDER

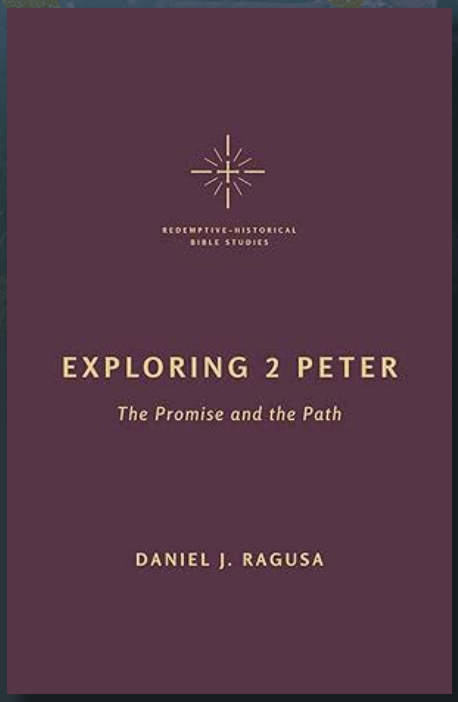
To place your order online, and to view the full catalog, visit **wordanddeed.org/givinghope**

Mail a check to:
PO Box 157
Hudsonville, MI 49426

New Series

Redemptive-Historical Bible Studies





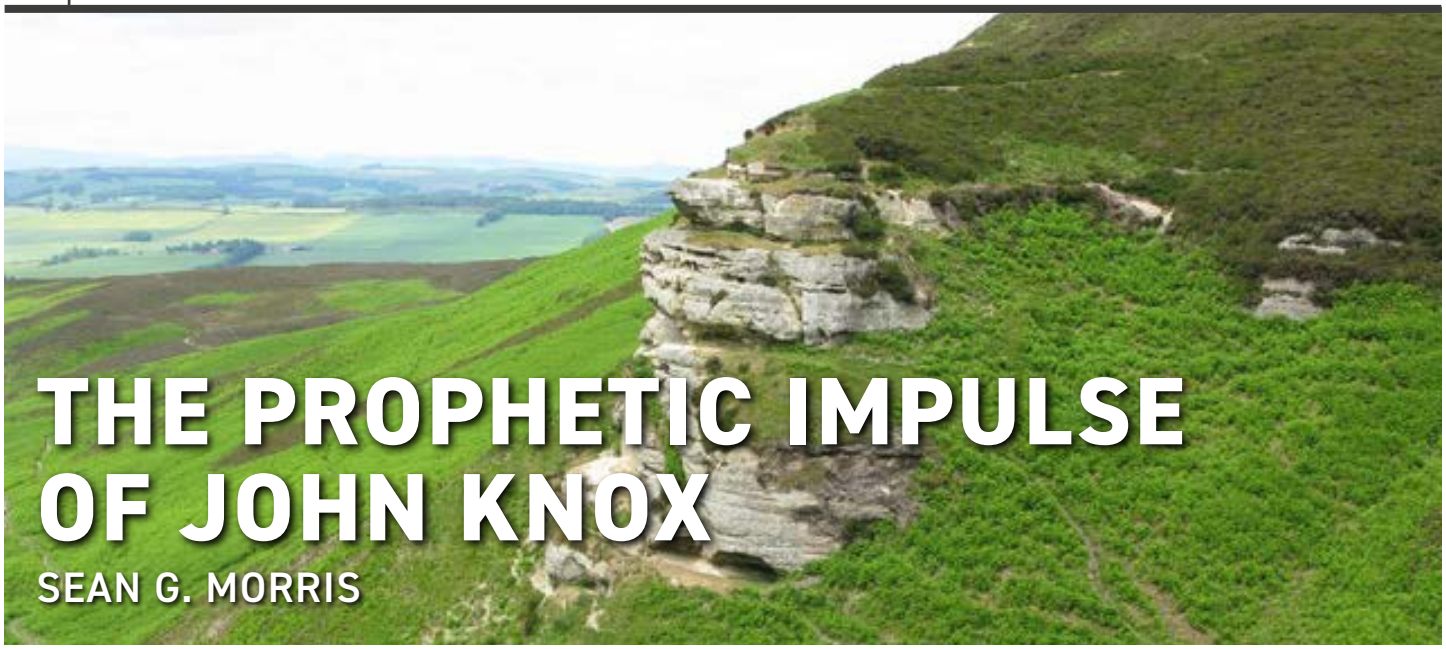
Why do the righteous suffer while the wicked prosper? How does God's sovereignty shape our afflictions? And how does Job's ancient story illuminate the path from suffering to glory?

By situating Job within Scripture's grand narrative, this accessible study illuminates how righteous suffering points us to Christ and the promise of resurrection glory. Whether you teach Scripture, minister to others, or simply desire to grasp Job's enduring relevance, *The Book of Job: Suffering unto Glory* offers fresh theological insight into this challenging portion of God's word.

With careful attention to Peter's imagery and argument, this accessible volume reveals how the apostle's final letter remains vitally relevant for Christians today.

Readers learn to recognize and resist false teaching while holding fast to the truth, understanding what it means to live as pilgrims awaiting the new heavens and new earth. *Exploring 2 Peter: The Promise and the Path* helps us grasp Peter's message of hope and his call to holy living as we await Christ's return.

To get your copies, visit **reformedforum.org/store.**



THE PROPHETIC IMPULSE OF JOHN KNOX

SEAN G. MORRIS

G Laird / John Knox's Pulpit, Wikimedia Commons.

John Knox saw himself as a prophet. This offers more than a curious detail about his personality; it reveals how he lived with a keen sense of urgency, convinced that the word of God must confront both church and nation. By examining this lesser-known side of Knox, we see how he wrestled with prophecy, revelation, and the sufficiency of Scripture—issues that continue to shape our conversations today.

John Knox is often rightly associated with the early Scottish Reformation and the formation of the Church of Scotland. Other than that, and his close association with Calvin—going so far as to declare Geneva the "most perfect school of Christ since the time of the apostles"—many regular members of Reformed churches may not know much about the Scottish Reformer. It may come as a surprise to our readers to learn that Knox was something of an eccentric man, and one of his particular eccentricities pertained to the spiritual gifts—namely, prophecy.

Believe it or not, Knox thought of himself as something like a modern-day prophet, cast in the mold of Elijah and Jeremiah. To be sure, Knox understood himself as possessing a prophetic quality of *forthtelling*—that is, proclaiming God's word with vigor and heralding warnings of judgment upon a people or a nation if it did not repent. Richard Kyle and others have well documented this penchant in Knox.[1] But his self-conception as a prophet was more than that. Knox was persuaded that he—along with others—possessed a knack for *foretelling*, receiving direct revelation from God; a spiritual second sight of sorts.

Where did Knox evidence this self-perception as someone with a kind of Old Testament-esque prophetic gifting? While Knox never *explicitly* claimed a constant, supernatural clairvoyance of some kind, he nevertheless believed himself to be a divinely appointed messenger, tasked with warning Scotland of God's will and impending judgments.

By the time of the Reformation, the general understanding among Protestants was that, as in the Old Testament, prophecy in the New Testament involved aspects of both forthtelling and foretelling. According to Richard Kyle, "nearly all of the Protestant reformers agreed that the miraculous gifts of the Spirit had ceased with the early church."[2] Nevertheless, for men like Calvin and Zwingli, preaching and teaching had become essentially synonymous with prophecy. For Zwingli, the term prophet was somewhat of an inclusive term, involving many aspects of the ministry. Calvin believed that prophecy was not the gift of foretelling future events, but rather the correct expounding of Scripture in its natural sense. Per Kyle, "he clearly regarded his preaching as a prophetic act."[3]

Calvin believed that God could raise up men for extraordinary purposes in unusual times, such as Martin Luther, appointed to combat the Roman Catholic antichrist who had led the church so astray. For Calvin, such a calling was not a regular office or function in the church but an extraordinary one.[4]

John Knox, then, saw himself in a long line of prophets—both biblical and extra-biblical—and believed that "he wore the mantle of a prophet in order to reform religion in England and Scotland along Protestant lines."[5] Believing that, as a minister of the gospel, he was God's mouthpiece, called to herald the truths of God's message and apply them to the context of his day, he likewise believed that this was the role of a prophet. In pronouncing admonitions, warnings, judgments, commandments, or even promises and predictions, Knox understood his present role as largely synonymous with that of the prophets of old—both in the dimensions of forthtelling and foretelling. In this regard, he took his understanding of *prophet* further than where Zwingli and Calvin were willing to go.

Knox had a prophetic hermeneutic of applying the Old Testament burdens of Israel almost literally and unequivocally to the religious and political situation of his day. His strong sense of the *apocalyptic* governed his understanding of his moment in history, of what God was doing in the Protestant Reformation to strengthen and advance the kingdom. And that keen apocalyptic awareness further strengthened his sense that God was operating in a particular way such that his Reformation-era ministers functioned in a prophetic capacity.[6]

Thus, this prophetic self-image, rooted in Old Testament archetypes, came forth in several instances where he appeared to predict events with uncanny accuracy. These instances, whether we view them as genuine insight, rhetorical strategy, or clever embellishment after the fact, underscore the eccentric impression that many have of Knox:

1. Richard Kyle, "Prophet of God: John Knox's Self Awareness," *The Reformed Theological Review* 61, no. 2 (August 2002): 85–101; cf. Dale W. Johnson, "Prophecy, Rhetoric and Diplomacy: John Knox and the Struggle for the Soul of Scotland," (PhD diss., Georgia State University, 1995).
2. Kyle, "Prophet of God: John Knox's Self Awareness," 87.
3. Kyle, "Prophet of God: John Knox's Self Awareness," 87.
4. Kyle, "Prophet of God: John Knox's Self Awareness," 88.
5. Kyle, "Prophet of God: John Knox's Self Awareness," 88.
6. Kyle, "Prophet of God: John Knox's Self Awareness," 91–94.

1. Concerning Thomas Maitland

One day after James Stewart, the regent of Scotland, had been assassinated by a firearm—the first recorded assassination of a head of government by a firearm in Western history, incidentally—Knox entered the pulpit and found a note. Thinking it was probably a prayer request, he silently read it. Instead, what he found was a slanderous note referring to his friend, Stewart. Not knowing who had written it, Knox said, concerning the note's author, "That wicked man, whosoever he be, shall not go unpunished, and shall die where there shall be none to lament him."[7] Thomas Maitland was the man who had written the note. Maitland went home and told his sister "that the preacher was raving, when he spoke in such a manner of a person who was unknown to him," but she, understanding that her brother had written the line, reproved him, saying with tears, that "none of that man's denunciations were wont to prove idle."[8] Maitland, according to John Spottiswood, later died in Italy, "having no known person to attend him."[9] Apparently, Knox's prediction proved true.

2. Concerning the Apostasy of the Church of England

In 1553, although no longer ministering in England, Knox still felt a deep bond of affection for the Protestants there. As persecution and apostasy swept across the land, Knox was unable to minister to the flock from the pulpit. Burdened for the souls of his people, the Reformer took pen in hand and addressed them in a series of public epistles. Knox's *Godly Letter of Warning or Admonition* is filled with urgency in view of the spreading apostasy in England. Knox called upon his readers to hold firm to their profession of the Protestant faith. He admonished them to flee from all practices of idolatry, especially the Mass.

Some had accused Knox of setting himself up as a prophet, presuming to intrude into the secret counsel of God, almost giddily predicting ruin to fall upon England should they fail to remove any remnants of idolatry from their land. Knox did make such predictions, and in light of these accusations levied against him, note here a brief quote in response:

> But ye would know the grounds of my certitude; God grant that hearing them ye may understand and steadfastly believe the same. My assurances are not the Marvels of Merlin, nor yet the dark sentences of profane Prophesies; But (1.) the plain truth of God's Word; (2.) the invincible justice of the everlasting God; and (3.) the ordinary course of his punishments and plagues from the beginning, are my assurance and grounds. God's Word threateneth destruction to all inobedient; his immutable justice must require the same. The ordinary punishments and plagues shows examples. What man then can cease to prophesy?[10]

In this instance, Knox seems to lean more heavily on the *forthtelling* dimension of prophecy, making the text of Scripture his sole authority in order to address these pressing issues. In this regard, Knox postured himself as first and foremost a man of the Bible.



John Knox preaching Regent Moray's funeral sermon from a window in St. Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh. CPClegg, CC BY-SA 4.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0>, via Wikimedia Commons

3. Concerning Magistrates and Monarchs

According to John Howie (citing a primary source recounting from Richard Bannatyne, Knox's colleague),[11] once, "when [Mary, Queen of Scots] refused to come and hear a sermon, he bade [attendants] tell her that she would yet be obliged to hear the Word of God whether she would or not; which came to pass at her arraignment in England. At another time, he thus addressed himself to her [second] husband, Henry, Lord Darnley, while in the king's seat in the High Church of Edinburgh: 'Have you, for the pleasure of that dainty dame, cast the psalm-book into the fire? The Lord shall strike both head and tail.' Both King and Queen died violent deaths."[12]

Indeed, both Mary, Queen of Scots, and Lord Darnley suffered violent deaths—Mary by execution via beheading (on account of suspected treason against her cousin, Elizabeth I) and Darnley by assassination involving an explosion and subsequent strangulation, his body being found in a nearby orchard outside his house.

Howie goes on, "[Knox] likewise said, when the Castle of Edinburgh held out for the Queen against the Regent [James Douglas], that 'the [Edinburgh] Castle should spue out the captain (meaning Sir William Kircaldy of Grange) with shame, that he should not come out at the gate, but over the wall, and that the tower called [David's] Tower, should run like a sand-glass."[13]

Again, this prophecy was fulfilled a few years later. Kirkcaldy surrendered Edinburgh Castle on May 29, 1573, after a prolonged siege and heavy bombardment by English artillery sent by Elizabeth I. The castle's defenses were crumbling, its water supply was cut off, and Kirkcaldy's position became untenable. He negotiated a surrender, and

7. Thomas M'Crie, *The Life of John Knox, the Scottish Reformer* (Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1839), 231.
8. M'Crie, *The Life of John Knox,* 231.
9. M'Crie, *The Life of John Knox,* 231.
10. John Knox, *Works of John Knox,* ed. David Laing (Banner of Truth, 2014), 3:168–169.
11. Richard Bannatyne, *Memoriales of Transactions in Scotland, 1569–1573,* ed. Robert Pitcairn (Edinburgh: Bannatyne Club, 1836), 274.
12. John Howie, *The Scots Worthies,* ed. W. H. Carslaw (The Banner of Truth Trust, 1995), 57.
13. Howie, *The Scots Worthies,* 57.



William Fettes Douglas (1822-1891) - Wishart Preaching against Mariolatry - NG 1020 - National Galleries of Scotland, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

Kirkcaldy was publicly executed by hanging in Edinburgh shortly after.

These incidents bolstered Knox's reputation among supporters as a man with a special gift and an insight into God's plans. Critics, however, argued that his predictions were self-fulfilling, as his inflammatory preaching fueled the unrest that destabilized Mary's reign.

To be fair to Knox, in some instances—such as with the *Godly Letter* to his brethren in England—Knox claimed no supernatural insight. Rather, this prediction grew out of his confidence in Scripture. However, in other instances, Knox would claim mystical revelations that he believed had been personally delivered to him by God.[14] Perhaps the most famous example of this is in the preface to his sermon on Isaiah: "I dare not deny . . . that God hath revealed unto me secrets unknown to the world; and also . . . to forewarn realms and nations. . . ."[15] Knox's prophetic self-conception had two dimensions, it would seem—predominantly Scripture-based admonition, but also, occasionally, prediction.

> All of this reinforced the perception of Knox as a kind of prophet of the Reformation era. Richard Kyle acknowledges the inconsistency of Knox's penchant in this regard. Kyle notes that the general Protestant conviction by that time was that the office of the prophet had passed away, at least in his revelatory capacity. Thus, ". . . in making such predictions, Knox ran counter to the general approach of the Protestant prophetic tradition. . . . Knox could be inconsistent in many areas, including this one. . . . And in doing so, he did not practice what he claimed, namely a subscription to *sola scriptura*."[16]

Again, one may wish to debate the legitimacy of Knox's prophetic predictions—whether they are genuine insight, rhetorical strategy, or simply clever embellishment after the fact. However, the fact remains that Knox did have a self-conception as a prophet, and this inclination persisted in the Scottish Presbyterian tradition long after his death.



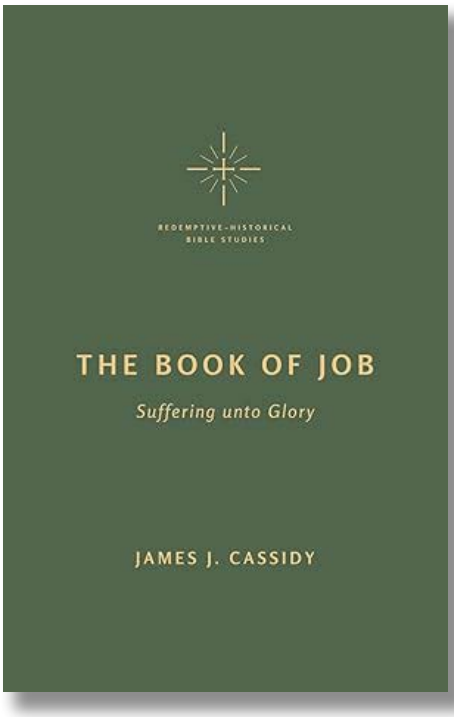
John Burnet after the painting of Sir William Allan, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

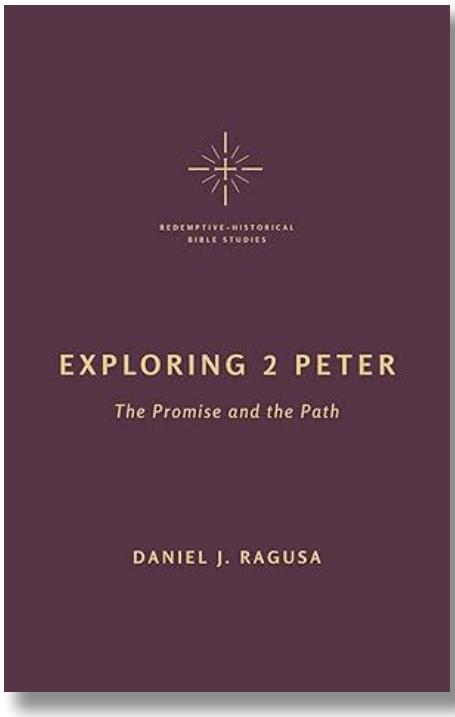


Sean Morris is a graduate of Grove City College, Reformed Theological Seminary (Jackson), University of Glasgow, and holds a PhD from Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. He is a teaching elder in the Presbyterian Church in America, and serves as a minister at the Covenant Presbyterian Church in Oak Ridge, TN. He also serves as the academic dean of the Blue Ridge Institute for Theological Education, has published numerous theological and devotional articles, and enjoys serving as one of the hosts on Larger for Life, *a podcast on the Westminster Larger Catechism. Sean lives in Oak Ridge with his wife, Sarah, and their children.*

14. Dale W. Johnson and James Edward McGoldrick, "Prophet in Scotland: The Self-Image of John Knox," *Calvin Theological Journal* 33, no. 1 (1998): 4–7; Johnson, "Prophecy, Rhetoric and Diplomacy," 69.
15. Knox, *Works*, 6:229.
16. Kyle, "Prophet of God: John Knox's Self Awareness," 87, 89, 93.

NEW REFORMED FORUM PUBLICATIONS





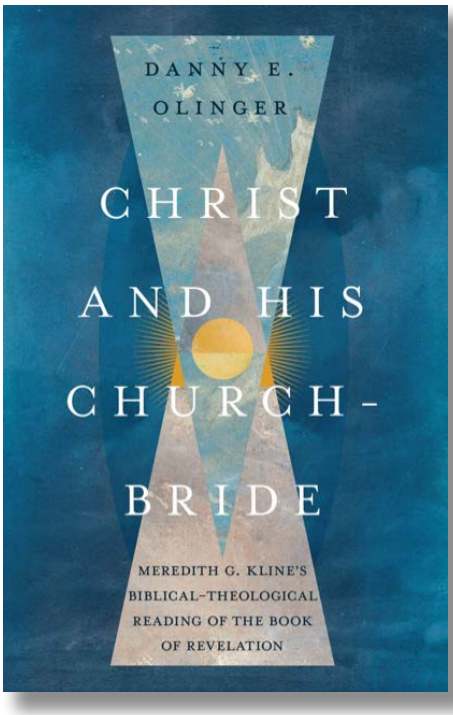
INTRODUCING THE REDEMPTIVE-HISTORICAL BIBLE STUDIES SERIES

The first two books in the series are now available: *The Book of Job: Suffering unto Glory* and *Exploring 2 Peter: The Promise and the Path*. These are companion books to free online courses available with Reformed Academy. The series will eventually consist of all books of the Bible and will complement the courses taught by Reformed Forum faculty and approved teachers.

In *The Book of Job: Suffering unto Glory*, James Cassidy offers a profound exploration of one of Scripture's most challenging books. Through careful examination of Job's trials, his friends' misguided counsel, and God's ultimate response, Cassidy reveals how this timeless narrative speaks to believers' deepest questions about faith, suffering, and divine wisdom. Cassidy demonstrates how Job's story transcends mere human endurance to become a prophetic window into God's redemptive plan.

In *Exploring 2 Peter: The Promise and the Path*, Daniel Ragusa guides readers along the path from corruption to glory, from present world to the eternal kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Drawing on the Reformed tradition and a redemptive-historical approach to Scripture, Ragusa uncovers the letter's central themes of promise and pilgrimage that have encouraged believers for centuries. His careful scholarship and pastoral wisdom make Peter's letter accessible without sacrificing depth, showing how this often-overlooked epistle speaks powerfully to the challenges and opportunities of following Christ in the twenty-first century.

These companion books are comprehensive guides for personal study, Sunday school, or classroom use. Be watching for more Reformed Academy courses on books of the Bible that will expand this companion series to all sixty-six books.



Danny Olinger describes how *Christ and His Church-Bride* came to be:

From the beginning, I became curious about how Kline's understanding of Revelation influenced his overall literary corpus. The more I read Kline's books and articles, the more I became convinced that it undergirded much of his writing. He would move—sometimes in brief paragraphs and other times in entire chapters—from the opening of Genesis to the Apocalypse all the while pointing to Christ as fulfilling the covenant promises of God. But what pushed me forward in particular was re-reading Kline's *Images of the Spirit*—which deserves a place alongside of Geerhardus Vos's *Pauline Eschatology and Biblical Theology*, Herman Ridderbos's Paul, and Richard B. Gaffin Jr.'s *Resurrection and Redemption* as one of the foundational Reformed biblical-theological works of the twentieth century—with an eye towards his interpretation of the Apocalypse. Kline's contention that the book of Revelation reveals that the Lord is recreating the church in his own image unto the end of fellowship with him forever in heavenly Jerusalem above provided a touchstone for me in drawing the material together. It was also the basis of the eventual name of the book before you, *Christ and His Church-Bride*.

—Excerpt from the Preface

This book by Danny Olinger will guide the reader through the rather large bits and pieces of Meredith G. Kline's work relating to the book of Revelation. As Meredith's student and eventually his colleague, I had a deep appreciation for his work and relied upon it heavily for my own teaching on Revelation for over thirty years at Westminster Seminary Escondido. People may know Meredith Kline more for his theological teaching on covenant or the Holy Spirit, but I knew him as an impressive and accomplished biblical exegete who had a way of making his own meticulous study of the Scripture understandable and edifying. It is true, Professor Kline may have occasionally looked at a note jotted down on a napkin during class lectures, but he always taught as someone who had the text of Scripture in its original languages deeply imprinted on his mind. Danny Olinger's book will be an invaluable help in conveying Meredith's teaching on the book of Revelation (and elsewhere in the Bible) that obviously intrigued him all his life. This is a most welcome presentation of the work of a great Bible student and teacher.

S. M. Baugh
Professor Emeritus of New Testament
Westminster Seminary California, Escondido, CA



REFORMED ACADEMY UPDATE

RYAN NOHA

As we stand on the threshold of a new era for Reformed Academy, I'm filled with gratitude and hope. Just five years ago, we cast our bread upon the waters with our first online course: Introduction to Covenant Theology by Camden Bucey. Today, by God's grace, we offer more than 30 free courses to 7,000 registered students in 96 countries. Through your prayers and support, the Lord is building up his church—across continents, in multiple languages, and through learners of all levels. As we rehearse his past mercies, which have so often exceeded all we could ask or imagine, we press forward with confidence that our most fruitful days in service to the church still lie ahead.

A New Platform for the Next Generation

This fall marks a major milestone: the launch of our new learning management system, LearnWorlds. Built around structured course pathways, the platform guides learners—from engaged laypeople to pastors and scholars—through a coherent theological journey. The new website is also designed to foster genuine community with features that support group enrollment, private discussions, and the potential for live webinars, reading cohorts, and faculty-led tutoring. With discussion boards and streamlined navigation, Reformed Academy now offers a more accessible and communal learning experience.

LearnWorlds

At the heart of this initiative is our Reformed Academy "Launch Kit," featuring two foundational courses taught by Camden Bucey: God's Gift of Himself: What Makes the Gospel Truly Good News and Discovering Christ in All of Scripture. Paired with free companion booklets, these resources introduce students to the heartbeat of our mission: the gospel of Jesus Christ revealed in all of Scripture. Through a biblical-theological approach, we are confident that students will see the unity of the Bible's redemptive story, find their place within it through faith in Christ, and grow in grace as they are equipped to share that story with others.

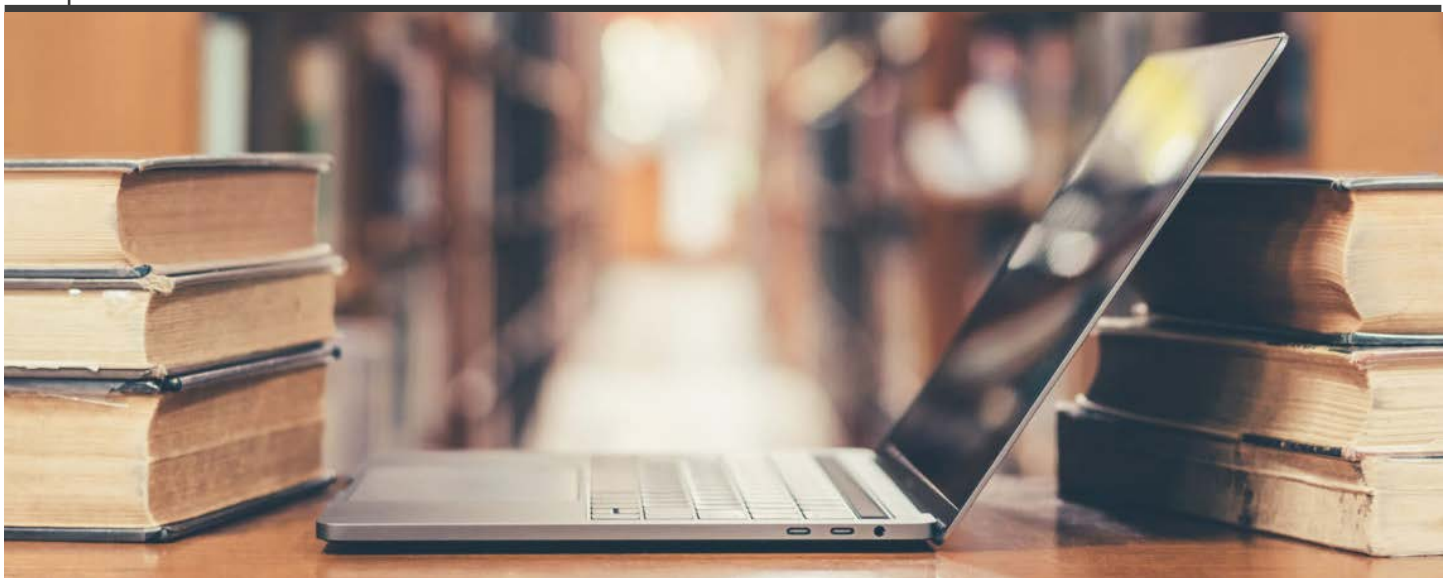
This advancement was made possible through our Unveiling Christ at Home and Abroad campaign that raised over $45,000 this summer. The campaign showcased the growing impact of Reformed Academy—from adult Sunday schools in Wisconsin to ministerial training in South Africa to missionary work in Brazil.

International Cohort Reading Groups

Our Colossians 1:28 mission has always been about more than better technology. It's about discipling those who will disciple others. Through free, continuing theological education, we aim to see faithful, Reformed, Christ-centered discipleship ripple outward into churches and communities—especially in places where robust training, sound resources, and confessional Reformed and Presbyterian structures are lacking.

This vision took concrete form this summer through our first International Cohort Reading Group. Eleven ministers and theological students—spanning five continents—gathered to study Edmund Clowney's *The Unfolding Mystery*





with Lane Tipton and Adam York. Some were already serving as pastors or missionaries; others were aspiring ministers seeking to ground themselves in a redemptive-historical hermeneutic for future ministry. One pastor shared, "I gained greater confidence that the Old Testament is all about the Lord Jesus Christ. I will apply this to my preaching to make sure that every sermon is Christ-centered and points to his gospel."

Building on this momentum, a fall cohort is now underway on *Resurrection and Redemption* by Richard B. Gaffin Jr., led by Camden Bucey and Marcus Mininger. And the video instruction from *The Unfolding Mystery* cohort will be released soon in Reformed Academy as a "Reader's Guide," complete with companion print materials. Convinced that the best way to read great books is with those more mature in the faith, we hope to add several of these guided studies to our digital bookshelf each year.

New and Forthcoming Courses

In 2025, we have released three standout courses:

- Defending Our Hope: An Introduction to Christian Apologetics (Camden Bucey)
- The Centrality of Eternal Sonship in Romans and Hebrews (Lane Tipton)
- The Doctrine of the Church (Jim Cassidy)

They reflect the breadth and depth of our mission—from accessible Sunday school content to advanced theological exposition. Defending Our Hope equips believers to share and defend the faith with winsomeness and doctrinal clarity, embodying Van Til's motto: *suaviter in modo, fortiter in re* (gentle in manner, strong in the thing). Lane Tipton's PhD-level course unfolds the theological riches of Romans and Hebrews through their opening verses, providing groundbreaking insights in systematic and biblical theology. Jim Cassidy's course—shaped by his experience training rural pastors in the Philippines—offers an accessible introduction to ecclesiology for citizens of heaven around the world.

Three more courses have already been recorded and are ready for publication later this year:

- The Gospel of John: A Study in the Truth (Chapters 11–21) (Jim Cassidy)
- The Theology of Heaven in the Book of Hebrews (Lane Tipton)
- Theological Topics in Romans (Lane Tipton)

Reaching the Nations through Translation

This year, we added seven new translations to Reformed Academy courses across three key languages: Simplified Chinese, Spanish, and Portuguese. Highlights include the Spanish edition of Calvinism: The Plan of Salvation, along with new subtitles for Fullness of Joy and God's Gift of Himself—a gospel presentation we hope to share in as many languages as possible in the years ahead. With the help of trusted missionaries and church leaders, we're now exploring translation partnerships in Amharic, French, Hungarian, and Italian.

Looking Ahead

Reformed Academy is growing, but not for growth's sake. Every course, cohort, and translation serves the singular vision of a global church, mature in Christ. With gratitude for your partnership, let us labor together—planting, watering, and trusting that the harvest belongs to the Lord.



Ryan Noha is Director of Education and Advancement for Reformed Forum.

Donate today to support global theological education.

REFORMED FORUM

1585 N Milwaukee Ave.
Suite 113
Libertyville, IL 60048



DEFENDING OUR HOPE: AN INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS



Taught by Dr. Camden Bucey, this course provides a clear and accessible introduction to Reformed apologetics thereby equipping believers to respond to questions, doubts, and challenges to the foundations of their faith with biblical clarity and theological depth. Grounded in Scripture and shaped by the insights of Cornelius Van Til, students will explore the nature of worldviews, the role of presuppositions, the significance of common grace, and the proper use of evidence in bearing witness to the gospel.

VIDEO LESSON TITLES:

- Foundations of Hope: Understanding Apologetics
- Seeing Clearly: Shaping a Biblical Worldview
- The One We Defend: The Doctrine of God
- God Speaks: The Doctrine of Revelation
- Bearers of His Image: The Doctrine of Man
- The Great Divide: Life In and Outside of Christ
- The Bridge: Finding a Connection Through Common Grace
- Starting Points: The Role of Presuppositions
- The Implementation Plan: Developing an Apologetic Method
- Standing Firm: Engaging in Spiritual Conflict
- Providing Testimony: The Role of Proof and Evidence
- Conclusion: A Vision for Faithful Apologetics

ACCESS THE COURSE HERE

Reformed Forum is an approved provider of Continuing Education Units through the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). As of 5/14/2025, this course is approved by ACSI for 6.22 Bible CEUs.