



THREE REMINDERS AS YOU ENTER THE NEW YEAR 2021

1. Don't Worry About the Year 2021.

Don't worry about what you will eat, drink, and wear this year. Your Father in heaven knows your needs. Instead of worrying, "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness" and all your needs will be given to you according to His will (Matt. 6:33).

After all, why worry about the unknown future of 2021 when you can pray? "O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer." Yes, what will take place this year is not known to us, but for us believers in Christ, we know that God is causing all things to work together for His glory and for our good (Rom. 8:28–29). And the word *good* in this passage ultimately refers to our conformity to the image of Christ. The bitter events of 2021 will only make us better believers. Let us therefore welcome the New Year without fear.

2. Don't Boast About the Year 2021.

Don't brag about what you will do in 2021; you don't know what will happen this year (Prov. 27:1). "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (James 4:14).

Don't act as if you can control the future. You are not in control of everything. Don't think that you can do and

get whatever you want this year. You are not all-powerful. Don't be overconfident about your future plans. You are not all-knowing. You don't even know if you will still be alive tomorrow. Thus, learn to qualify your plans by saying, "If the Lord wills, I will live and do this or that" (James 4:15). Nevertheless, no matter what happens, God's will is always best for us because He is all-wise and all-good.

3. Don't Waste the Year 2021.

You waste this year when you use it only for your own pleasure. Remember the rich fool who said to his soul, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." But God said to him, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be?" (Luke 12:19–20).

What a wasted life this rich fool had! He used his time, energy, and resources only for himself. With God's help, let's spend all the days of 2021 for God's praise. Let's also seize all God-given opportunities this year to "do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10). Remember, "Only one life, so soon it will pass; only what's done for Christ will last." A life spent in the service of Christ is the most meaningful life that anyone can live in this world.

—Rev. Brian G. Najapfour



Please share a little about your life (for example, about your family or ministry opportunities) since graduating from PRTS.

My name is Denis Boris, and I am a PRTS alumnus. I am married to my beautiful wife, Zhanara, and we have a nine-year-old daughter, Sophia. I graduated from PRTS in 2016. Upon my graduation, I returned to my home country, Kazakhstan. I have long felt called to be a pastor. So in September, 2016, by God's grace, we started a church with a small group of believers. I have been pastoring our church, Maranatha, in Almaty city, Kazakhstan ever since. We are now a church of 21 members with around 30 to 35 people in attendance. I love our church. We strive to bring glory to God together as His body here in Central Asia.

How I am using my PRTS degree in my ministry? I would like to start with an important preface. No seminary can perfectly prepare a man for pastoral work in the church. But if I had not studied at PRTS, I probably would have thought that pastoral work was relatively easy. Training at PRTS taught me much, but first and foremost it taught me humility. The more I studied, the more I realized how little I know and how much I need to rely on God in everything I do, especially in serving as God's under-shepherd.

With that major caveat aside, I now can tell you how my degree serves me in my ministry. First, I need to mention

my struggle with embracing two seemingly contradictory doctrines in the Bible: God's command to preach the gospel to every creature and the revelation about His sovereignty in salvation. The question I struggled with was how I could preach the gospel to everybody knowing that God had not elected everybody. Am I lying when I proclaim the good news without distinction? Some of the teachers were posing these questions to us as students. I am so grateful that I was pointed to the *Marrow of Modern Divinity* and Sinclair Ferguson's recordings on the Marrow Controversy. That study liberated me, and I was free to preach the gospel to every creature under heaven.

Practice-preaching sessions shaped my preaching. I am grateful that professors were patient enough to suffer through the shouting of my sermons, gently correcting my fiery, yet not always intelligent, attitude.

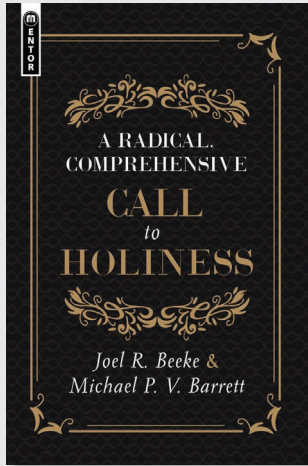
Another helpful lesson I learned is that studying the Word of God is vital for the ministry. In pastoral ministry, the needs of people are always there, and they are never-ending. It is important to remember that the primary qualification for the pastor of God's flock is love to God, which in turn is impossible without regular meditative time in the Word of God. I learned how to enjoy the study of the Word of God at PRTS. Greek, Hebrew, biblical theology, and exegesis classes were all geared toward equipping me to enjoy God's Word and to be able to relate that to the people. I am very grateful for the strong emphasis on the importance of languages and exegesis at my alma mater.

Another helpful course was biblical counseling. Those classes laid the foundation for further studies. I loved how balanced the training was and how very practical it was. Some of the most memorable lessons in my life were heard during those classes. With no touch of reality from "biblical counseling," pastors might run into the pitfall of being too harsh with their flock.

I am also grateful for the general attitude of the professors at the school. They were all available to us even though they maintain very busy schedules. They modeled the fact that I could be weak and still make it as a pastor. Observing them taught me a great lesson: our great God does not have great men of God but only weak and dependent servants.

Lastly, I would like to say that reading good theological books has become my habit because of my training at PRTS. Regular dialogues with the wisest of God's servants are so enriching and stimulating. All good students never cease to study. Thank you, PRTS staff and faculty. I love you and am indebted to you for the rest of my life.

With much love and appreciation,
Denis Boris



A RADICAL, COMPREHENSIVE CALL TO HOLINESS

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FACULTY ITINERARIES & PUBLICATIONS

MICHAEL BARRETT | *Itinerary*

January 4–8: London, UK: Issues in Exodus at the Pastor’s Academy

Recent Publication

“Pentecost and Other Blessings: Joel 2:21–28,” *Puritan Reformed Journal*, July 2020, vol. 12, no. 2

JOEL BEEKE | *Itinerary*

January 7–11: Los Angeles, California: preaching for Dr. John MacArthur and teaching a course in Reformed Experiential Preaching for his doctoral students

February 12–13: North Carolina: preaching for Scott Brown and doing a Marriage Seminar for married couples with him.

February 21: Bradenton, Florida: preaching

March 18–20: Nashville, Tennessee: Teach Them Diligently (home-schooling conference)

April 5–8: Florence, Mississippi: Twin Lakes Fellowship (ministers’ conference at First Presbyterian Church)

April 16–18: Kingsport, Tennessee: Westminster Presbyterian Church (conference)

April 30—May 2: Grand Blanc, Michigan: Berean Baptist Church (conference)

May 7–9: Calgary, Alberta: Calgary Reformed Conference

May 19–22: Ridgecrest, North Carolina: NCFIC (two conferences: singles’ and regular annual)

May 25–27: Grand Rapids, Michigan: HRC Synod

Recent Publications

A Radical, Comprehensive Call to Holiness, with Dr. Michael Barrett (Christian Focus)

GREG SALAZAR | *Itinerary*

January 9: Lansing, Michigan: PCA Great Lakes Presbytery meeting, University Reformed Church

January 12–15: Houston, Texas: Teaching “Puritan Theology and History” course at Reformed Theological Seminary

February 7: Holland, Michigan: New Life Fellowship OPC

February 21: Holland, Michigan: New Life Fellowship OPC

March 21: Holland, Michigan: New Life Fellowship OPC

DANIEL TIMMER | *Itinerary*

January–April: Faculté de théologie évangélique, Montreal: “The Writings”

FINANCIAL REPORT

For period 8/1/2020–11/30/2020

| Income | Year to Date Actual | Annual Budget | Variance | Percent of Annual Budget |
|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Donations | \$1,085,294 | \$ 2,410,030 | (\$1,324,736) | 45% |
| Tuition Income | 141,514 | 600,000 | (458,486) | 24% |
| Scholarship Donations | 46,769 | 500,000 | (453,231) | 9% |
| Other Income | <u>132,485</u> | <u>349,970</u> | <u>(217,485)</u> | <u>38%</u> |
| Total Income | \$1,406,061 | \$ 3,860,000 | (\$2,453,939) | 36% |
| Expenses | | | | |
| Instruction | \$ 605,790 | \$ 1,905,171 | (\$1,299,381) | 32% |
| Scholarships | 202,207 | 505,000 | (302,793) | 40% |
| Administrative | <u>495,650</u> | <u>1,449,829</u> | <u>(954,179)</u> | <u>34%</u> |
| Total Expenses | \$1,303,647 | \$ 3,860,000 | (\$2,556,353) | 34% |
| Net Income | \$102,414 | | | |

As we look forward to a new year might gratitude fill our hearts and govern our actions.

—CHRIS HANNA

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