



GOOD NEWS ABOUT MY FAVORITE PURITAN AUTHOR

The most common question people ask me is this: *Who is your favorite Puritan?* My short answer: When I was teenager, it was Thomas Watson when I was converted; then, a year later, it was Thomas Brooks; and when I was seventeen, it became Thomas Goodwin after I read his *Christ Our Mediator*. About five years ago, it became Anthony Burgess (d. 1664), vicar of Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire, from 1635 to 1662. In my opinion, he is the most underrated Puritan of all time. I once asked Iain Murray why Burgess was not included in the nineteenth-century sets of the works of the best Puritans. He responded that he agreed that Burgess was the greatest glaring omission from those reprints.

In fifteen years (1646–1661), Burgess wrote at least a dozen books based largely on his sermons and lectures. His writings reveal a scholarly acquaintance with Aristotle, Seneca, Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, and Calvin. He made judicious use of Greek and Latin quotations while reasoning in the plain style of Puritan preaching. Burgess was a cultured scholar and experimental preacher who produced astute, warm, devotional writings.

Burgess's best and most extensive work, *Spiritual Refining: The Anatomy of True and False Conversion* (1652–54)—two volumes of 1,100 pages—has been called an “unequaled anatomy of experimental religion.” The first volume, subtitled *A Treatise of Grace and Assurance*, contains 120 sermons; the second, subtitled *A Treatise of Sin, with its Causes, Differences, Mitigations and Aggravations*, contains 42 sermons.

Burgess masterfully separated the precious from the vile in *The Godly Man's Choice*, based on thirteen sermons on Psalm 4:6–8. His detailed exegesis in his 145-sermon work on John 17, his 300-page commentary on 1 Corinthians 3, and his 700-page commentary on 2 Corinthians 1 are heartwarming. Several of Burgess's major works are polemical. His first major treatise, *Vindiciae Legis* (1646), based on twenty-nine lectures given at Lawrence-Jewry, vindicated the Puritan view of the moral law and the covenants of works and grace in opposition to Roman Catholics, Arminians, Socinians, and Antinomians. Two years later, Burgess wrote against the same opponents, plus Baxter, in his first volume on justification. He refuted Baxter's work for its Arminian tendencies in arguing for a process of justification that involves the cooperation of divine grace with human works. His second volume on justification, which appeared six years later (1654), discusses the natural righteousness of God and the imputed righteousness of Christ. Those two volumes contain seventy-five sermons. His 555-page *Doctrine of Original Sin* (1659) drew Anabaptists into the fray.

Now for the really good news: Chad VanDixhoorn, a premier Puritan scholar who recently discovered Burgess himself, wrote me a few months ago about his desire to personally edit the entire works of Burgess. I rejoiced (actually, chills ran up and down my spine)! The happy result is that Reformation Heritage Books hopes to publish Burgess in 14 volumes from 2025 to 2029, D.V.! Pray for God's rich blessing on this endeavor.

—JOEL R. BEEKE

PURITAN REFORMED CONFERENCE RECAP

August 24–26 marked the fifteenth anniversary of the Puritan Reformed Conference, and over nine hundred people from thirty-six states and half a dozen countries from around the world came out to hear messages from our nine gifted speakers on the theme of “Suffering and the Sovereignty of God.” Listeners from twenty-two countries were also watching via live stream.

The Heritage Reformed Congregation of Grand Rapids permitted us to host the three-day event in their beautiful facility in the heart of Grand Rapids. With the sanctuary practically filled to capacity, Paul Washer opened the conference with a message on “The Suffering Lamb



Paul Washer

in Gethsemane.” Afterward, a tornado warning lit up hundreds of cell phones throughout the sanctuary, and before Anthony Kidd could bring the second message on “Cultivating a God-Centered Theology of Suffering,” we all had to take refuge in the church basement until the warning expired, which was a good thing for the book vendors located there. Although the church and surrounding community were spared the brunt of the storm, those just a few miles away were less fortunate—trees were toppled, houses were severely damaged, and 374,000 residents, including the seminary, were without power.

Day two of the conference opened with beautiful blue skies and included plenary messages from Ian Hamilton, Joel Beeke, and Bruce Baugus and breakout sessions from Jonathon Beeke, Brian Cosby, and David Kranendonk. The plenary messages covered a range of topics, such as “The Mystery of Providence” by Ian Hamilton, “How to End in Christ with All Our Suffering” by Joel Beeke, and “Suffering’s Temptation: The Lion’s Mouth, Evil Deeds, and the Faithful Witness,” by Bruce Baugus. The breakout sessions were “The Paradox

of Suffering and Sovereignty in King Jesus” by Jonathon Beeke, “Prison Letters: Guido DeBres on Suffering, Sovereignty, and Solace” by David Kranendonk, and “Suffering and Sovereignty: John Flavel and the Puritans on Afflictive Providence” by Brian Cosby. Every message was warmly and passionately delivered and hopefully carried the Lord’s blessing to the hearts and minds of those hearing them for the first time. Maarten Kuivenhoven, who was scheduled to deliver a breakout talk on Friday afternoon, was unexpectedly called away due to the death of a dear one earlier in the week.

The second day of the conference also included a Q&A session (see cover picture), with Jonathon Beeke moderating, in which the speakers attempted, in a pastoral way, to bring the Word of God to bear upon the honest and sometimes anguish-filled questions submitted by members of the audience. At one point, it was suggested by a speaker that we stop and simply pray for an anonymous person who submitted just such a question. Even now, we pray that God would be the “after-preacher,” as the Dutch often say, so that Satan won’t steal the seed sown in the hearts and minds of those who sat under the preached Word.

The conference concluded on Saturday the 26th, with two final addresses: “Trusting God When All the Lights Go Out” by Ian Hamilton and “Suffering and Our Longing for Heaven” by Paul Washer. The three days of fellowship were great. Many new friends were made, and old friendships were renewed. There was an overwhelming sense of appreciation and gratitude for the conference and its God-glorifying content. On the opening day, prayers went up asking that we would be able to depart from the conference with the conviction that the triune God has visited us and that we would receive great help in understanding the relationship between God’s sovereignty and our suffering, and our prayers were surely answered.



Anthony Kidd



Ian Hamilton



If you would like to listen to any of the messages delivered at this year’s Puritan Reformed Conference, visit conference.prts.edu/archive/2023-suffering-and-the-sovereignty-of-god.

—Chris Hanna

Brian Cosby





Hello, my name is Denis Boris, and I am a Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary alumnus. I have been married to my beautiful wife, Zhanara, for nineteen years, and we have one daughter, Sophia, who is twelve years old. I graduated from Puritan Reformed in 2016. Upon my graduation, I returned to my home country of Kazakhstan. Since I was a young Christian, I believed I was being called to the pastorate. After graduating from seminary, we started a church with a small group of believers by God's grace. I have been pastoring Almaty Bible Church in Almaty, Kazakhstan, ever since. We are a church of thirty-two members with about forty-five people in attendance. I

love our church. As a community of believers, we strive to be a faithful witness to God here in Central Asia.

I would like to tell you how my training at Puritan Reformed has prepared me and still helps me in my ministry in Kazakhstan. First, no seminary can fully prepare a man for pastoral work in the church. However, if not for my studies at Puritan Reformed, I would have probably left the pastorate soon after I started. It was only after facing real challenges of a pastoral nature that I understood the importance of some of the classes I took at the seminary. My training at Puritan Reformed greatly equipped me, but most importantly, it taught me that I am *not* a professional. As of late, I have learned that Almaty Bible Church is God's church, and I am quite dispensable.

Our congregation is small, and I often need to remind myself that salvation is of the Lord. The number of people attending any given Sunday is not an indication of faithfulness, and yet I am called to be faithful. I first learned this lesson at seminary. It is liberating to remember that His sheep will hear His voice and follow Him.

Guests often tell me that our congregation is very patient. They make such a

comment because our sermons are around fifty minutes long and are not theatrical presentations. They are, on the other hand, fifty-minute-long expositions of the text. I was convinced at seminary that expository preaching is the way to preach the Word. So, I do it no matter what and trust the Lord for the outcome. Recently, I finished a sixty-one-sermon series on 1 Corinthians. I have to say, I think it was too "puritan" even for me. People love expository preaching and listen to it gladly. Our church is one of the few dedicated to this style of preaching in all of Kazakhstan.

By God's grace, we recently hosted our first Central Asia Simeon Trust workshop. The Simeon Trust workshop is geared toward equipping preachers with the tools necessary for expository preaching. For three days, our group studied the book of 2 Timothy. We heard excellent lectures and sermons and worked on expositing the text in small groups. Thirty-two pastors attended the workshop. Most were from Almaty, but there were also pastors from other cities throughout Kazakhstan. We had two men from Uzbekistan, one of whom is our current intern, and one pastor from Kyrgyzstan. We received many positive reviews and made new friends. What can be better than receiving deeper knowledge of God through His Word and doing it with other brothers?

I appreciate the love for reading instilled in me by my professors at Puritan Reformed. I read extensively and do my best to train my congregation to read. The first book we read in our church's small group was a systematic theology work, and if you think it's too much, you are wrong. Seven years later, I am still asked to go back to systematic theology. Christians love deep theology because they want to learn more about their God.

I don't believe there is an aspect of my ministry that my seminary training has not impacted. Thank you, Puritan Reformed—faculty and staff alike. I love you and am indebted to you for the rest of my life.



AUGUST INTENSIVES RECAP



Dr. Stephen Yuille

Here at Puritan Reformed, we are thankful for yet another successful summer semester that has come to a close. With increasing student counts in our degree programs and the increasing degree programs we are offering, this was our busiest summer to date, especially the case for our August courses. This August alone, we hosted the following twelve modular courses, many of which were taught by adjunct faculty members: The Life and Thought of William Perkins with Dr. J. Stephen Yuille; The Pauline Epistles with Dr. Guy Waters; Introduction to Reformation and Post-Reformation Studies with Dr. Jonathon Beeke; Speak the Word: A Study in Oral Communication with Dr. John Currie; Counseling and the Life and Teaching of Christ with Dr. Tim Yates; Research and Methodology courses taught by Dr. Daniel Timmer, Dr. Adriaan Neele, and our librarian; Reformed Experiential Preaching II: Historical and Practical Considerations with Dr. Joel Beeke; The Church Order of Dort with Rev. Bart Elshout; Marriage and Family with Rev. Keith Evans; and Introduction to Reformed Spirituality and Piety with Dr. Stephen Myers. We are incredibly grateful that God has provided us with such a gifted faculty here at Puritan Reformed. We also thank Him for provid-



ing continual connections with other wonderful adjunct professors worldwide who can help benefit our programs and promote our students' academic and spiritual formation. We believe that such connections will continue to

increase as the reach of Puritan Reformed extends further around the globe every year by God's grace.

We have also been so pleased to see God bless our continual efforts to make Puritan Reformed a place where communal practices become part of our lifeblood as a seminary community. Just as we've made efforts throughout the semester to gather together around meals and corporate prayer times, so we have also made this a regular part of our routine here during these modular course weeks. Certainly, many students can be drained after efforts to stay focused and disciplined during weeks where they're receiving twenty hours of lectures packed into five days, and we hope that, through providing a meal for students to gather around together as well as a chapel message, we're able to cultivate a place of rest through the ministry of the Word and body of Christ. Such an opportunity also allows students to connect with those outside their discipline or course of study, hoping to further enjoy one another as a seminary community.



Dr. Guy Waters

As the semester begins, we look forward to yet another year of God's unceasing faithfulness to us. Students have arrived from around the globe to study with us here in Grand Rapids, and our online courses, including our new global MA program, are up and running. We also have a few students who are enrolled in our new Church-Embedded MDiv program, and we pray that the launch of such a program will be a blessing to the local churches in which our students serve and that the name and glory of Christ will be spread throughout the world through their efforts. Do join us in prayer that the Lord will continue to bless our efforts—not simply by increasing numbers but by magnifying the person and work of Christ through our labors. Pray that our students will be strengthened and sanctified and walk in close communion with God throughout their studies here. “Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain” (Ps. 127:1).
—Isaac Bronkema, Registrar

“The harvest is truly plenteous, but the labourers are few” (Matt. 9:37–38). Jesus spoke these words to His disciples when He sent them out to proclaim the gospel, not only to Israel but to the rest of the world. At Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, we are confronted daily with the great global need for Reformed experiential theology. In some parts of the world, secularization has led people away from the church and decreased the number of students for pastoral ministry. In other parts of the world, where the church is growing rapidly, there is so much need for teachers, preachers, and theological resources that supplies are insufficient. Whether through our students’ testimonies, stories from our alumni who serve across the globe, or requests from seminaries abroad, we have been confronted with the tremendous global need. We have become convinced that we must share the vast amount of theological resources God has graciously granted us with others.

Based on this conviction, Puritan Reformed has begun hosting consultation meetings with like-minded seminar-



ies. These consultations are opportunities to strategize with mostly smaller seminaries on how to help one another make Reformed theology more available and accessible. Our first consultation meeting was in 2022 at our Grand Rapids seminary campus. Representatives from South America, Asia, and Europe were present during this meeting. The second consultation meeting we facilitated took place later that year in Latin America, followed by one in Europe this past summer. We are working on consultations in the future, God willing, in Asia and Africa as well. Sitting around the table with brothers and sisters in Christ, sharing aspects of their ministry and labor, and hearing their needs was both humbling and motivating to work together as one global church for the work of the kingdom of God.

Sharing our resources globally is not a new endeavor for us. For several years now, Puritan Reformed has worked closely with various international campuses through a

Masters of Theology (ThM) partnership. Such partnerships are active in South Africa, Egypt, China, Thailand, the United Kingdom, and Brazil. Having these global programs requires Puritan Reformed faculty to travel annually to teach ThM courses at these campuses and engage with the students of our global partner institutions. In this way, we can supply Reformed teaching material aimed at training pastors and teachers all over the world.

Since the spring of last year, Puritan Reformed has started to share another of its programs, namely the online Masters of Arts in Theology (MA). The MA program at Puritan Reformed is now fully available as an online program. This two-year program represents the academic core of the MDiv program, with courses ranging from biblical languages to extensive exegesis and systematic theology. Getting our MA program launched online meant that all our faculty members and teaching staff had to record their classes in the recording studio. After doing so, they have worked hard to create well-organized online lessons,

discussion boards, and digitized tests and quizzes. With these online classes, students worldwide can study and learn from our faculty, use our digital library, and interact with fellow students online. We are so thankful to share that, as of the fall of 2023, four European seminaries, one African seminary, and one Asian seminary have started using our online MA program. In the spring of 2024, eight seminaries in South America hope to start with our Global MA program, with courses fully translated into Spanish.

To support the endeavor of spreading theological teaching wide and far, we have encountered the need to translate our courses into local languages. Many smaller, local Reformed seminaries do not have the

English proficiency needed to study in our online classrooms. For this reason, a translation center has been established at Puritan Reformed. Teams of translators, both local and in our partner seminaries, are translating our online MA courses in their local languages. Our courses are currently being translated into Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, and Russian. This translation process is a detail-oriented, laborious process. We only use skilled, trained translators who are familiar with Reformed theology and have a robust theological vocabulary. The work of translators is reviewed carefully by editors and proofreaders, and only when a translation is accurate, adequate, and sound is the translation used for the subtitling of our lectures or the voicing over of the lecture material. The translation process needs a lot of care, wisdom, and prayer, but with God’s blessing, our Reformed, experiential theology in translation will reach our partner seminaries worldwide.



Please pray with us for our global endeavors as we seek discernment on who to reach and how to reach others with

the gospel of Jesus Christ and the training of Reformed pastors for pastoral ministry and the salvation of souls.

—Jo de Blois

GLOBAL MA UPDATE

Puritan Reformed is spreading its online MA worldwide

AFRICA

- Kenya
- Egypt
- Mozambique

LATIN AMERICA

- Chile
- Colombia
- Mexico
- Peru
- Brazil

EUROPE

- Spain
- Portugal
- Belarus
- Germany
- Hungary
- Latvia

ASIA

- Thailand
- South Korea
- China

WHY?

1. Lack of Reformed theology resources
 - Lack of literature in local languages
 - Secularization
 - Lack of ministers
 - Lack of skilled teachers
2. Be stewards over what God has given us
 - Sharing our available funds through donors
 - Sharing available resources and the library database
 - Training students from Puritan Reformed

HOW?

1. Connect with like-minded seminaries and partners—often through alumni
2. Discuss their needs for a localized MA degree
3. Map a joint curriculum between PRTS and global partner
4. Launch a joint program
5. Translate courses and course material in local languages

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

1. Pray that the Gospel and Reformed resources will reach those whom God chooses
2. Help us connect with seminaries and organizations who have needs
3. Help us by translating PRTS materials in your local language

DR. BRUCE BAUGUS | *Itinerary*

November 17–18: Houston, Texas: Teaching History of Philosophy and Christian Thought at Reformed Theological Seminary

DR. JOEL R. BEEKE | *Itinerary*

November 5: Grand Rapids: Redeemer Free Reformed Church
 November 10–12: Denton, Texas: Providence Chapel, conference for Mack Tomlinson
 November 13: Graham, Texas: pastor’s conference
 November 14–16: San Antonio, Texas: Evangelical Theological Society conference (presenting one paper)
 November 17: Dallas, Texas: 3 conference addresses for Chris Caldwell
 December 12–13: New York: conference for Steven Lee
 December 31: Kalamazoo, Michigan: preach New Year’s Eve service

Recent Publications

Evangelical Heroes, 2 vols., with Douglas Bond (RHB).
 “Calvin’s Sermons on Job,” *Ad Fontes* (Summer 2023).
 “A Succinct Puritan View of the Christian’s Mission in Society,” with Paul Smalley, *Puritan Reformed Journal* 15, no. 2 (July 2023).

DR. JONATHON BEEKE | *Itinerary*

November 3: Wellsboro, Pennsylvania: Reformation Conference

DR. ADRIAAN NEELE | *Itinerary*

November 14–16: San Antonio, Texas: Paper at Evangelical Theological Society
 November 30 – December 13: Bangkok, Thailand: Nazir College and Reformed Church

Recent Publications

“Whether there was a *Nadere Reformatie*: South Africa Religious History ca. 1650–1750,” in E. van Alten, E. de Boer, G. Duursema, Gravel Roads in *South African Church History* (Stellenbosch: Sun Media, 2023).
That which we have seen. Phenomenology and homiletics. Classic Theology and Contemporary Challenges (Kampen: Summum Academics, 2023).

DR. DANIEL TIMMER | *Itinerary*

November 18: San Antonio, Texas: Society of Biblical Literature, presenting the paper “‘Other’ Nations in Ancient Israelite Prophetic Oracles: Constructed Identities and Their Referents”

YOU ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US!

Imagine seeing the land of pyramids and plagues, the Nile and the first Passover! Egypt also was the land where Jesus spent his earliest years to fulfill prophecy, for out of Egypt God was to call His Son (Hos. 11:1). Moreover, Alexandria, near the Mediterranean, was a very important cradle of early Christianity.

We plan, however, not just to see Egypt and cruise the Nile, but also to “encamp” (hotel) at the Red Sea. Then too we plan to visit the most important mountain in the Old Testament, Mount Sinai, where Moses received the two tables of stone, written with the finger of God. We are excited that all this is included in two weeks with excellent guides!

A highlight will be spending the Lord’s Day in the congregation of Dr. Sherif Fahim, a recent graduate of Puritan Reformed and professor of theology in Egypt, who will accompany us on this trip with his wife Marianne. Dr. Sherif is very knowledgeable about every site we visit and passionate about the gospel, and all things Egyptian. God helping us, this should be an absolutely outstanding and unforgettable trip.

We have space for six more couples. What that means, practically speaking, is that it would be wise to complete your registration as soon as possible if you wish to accompany us—which we hope you do!

Warmly, Joel Beeke and Jerry Bilkes



BIBLICAL JOURNEY TO

EGYPT

MARCH 25-APRIL 6, 2024

LED BY DR. JERRY BILKES & DR. JOEL BEEKE,
TOGETHER WITH DR. SHERIF FAHIM

To see the brochure and to register online go to bookings.wittetravel.com and use the booking code 032524BEEK or call Kristina at 616-954-7492.

STEWARDSHIP

Managing God's Resources for His Glory

Stewarding what God has given us is an important task. As Jesus taught in the parable of the talents, God cares how we manage the gifts He has entrusted to us. One day, He will call us to give Him an account of our stewardship (Matt. 25:14–30; Luke 19:11–27).

God calls us to steward the “talents” He has entrusted to us—including resources like time, money, energy, and skills. At Puritan Reformed, we take our stewardship very seriously—both in stewarding our financial resources (such as buildings, technological equipment, and investment portfolios) and our human resources (such as the skills of our faculty, staff, and students).

At Puritan Reformed, we strive to create an environment where our faculty, staff, and students can grow, flourish, and work together for the glory of God and the advancement of His kingdom. We also strive to equip our students to serve the church and the world as pastors, counselors, instructors, and scholars by training them for biblical, Reformed, experiential, and practical ministry.

YES, I WOULD LIKE TO DONATE!

- I would like to financially support PRTS by giving \$ _____, designated for:
 - Operational Needs
 - Scholarship Fund
- I would like to enroll in the monthly giving program and give \$ _____ per month.
- I am enclosing \$25 USD for a 2024 US subscription to *Puritan Reformed Journal*.
(See *Journal* for international rates.)
- Send a free copy of *Wilderness*, by Joel Beeke and Nick Thompson

PAYMENT METHOD

- Check/cash enclosed
- Charge my credit/debit card:
 - Card type (circle one): Visa Mastercard Discover American Express
 - Card # _____
 - Exp. Date ____/____ Security Code _____

- Please send me a free copy of *The Reformation Heritage KJV Study Bible* (for donations over \$150).

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Phone _____ e-mail _____

Please include this form with your check.

Canadian and US donors please send your check to:
Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary
2965 Leonard Street, NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49525
For online gifts, please visit www.prts.edu/donate/overview.

International Bank transfer information:

- Beneficiary Bank: Mercantile Bank of Michigan
- Beneficiary's Bank Swift: MEMIUS33
- Beneficiary's Bank Fedwire ABA: 072413829
- Mercantile Bank: 100061175
- Beneficiary Customer: Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary

By God's grace, we strive to steward your financial gifts to Puritan Reformed by maximizing each donor's impact in our mission to equip the next generation of Christian leaders in their unique places of service in fulfilling the Great Commission. For example, the Lord continues to use your generosity to fund living stipends and academic scholarships for students, especially those from nations in the global south.

As you contemplate stewarding the financial resources God has entrusted to you, *please consider participating in monthly giving to Puritan Reformed*. Monthly gifts provide a reliable financial stream for the seminary and help us in our mission to promote a thriving environment for cultivating spiritual, pastoral, and academic growth for our students.

If the Lord has laid it on your heart to partner with Puritan Reformed, please contact me at karla.soule@prts.edu. You can also sign up for monthly giving at www.prts.edu.

—Karla Soule

YOUR YEAR-END GIFT WILL BE MATCHED!

Once again, Puritan Reformed Seminary's year-end goal for donations to the Operation Fund and the Scholarship Fund is 2.5 million. We are so grateful that generous donors stand ready to match your gifts up to one half of this amount. Any donation you make between now and December 31, 2023 will thus be doubled by these donors. Many thanks in advance for your prayers and year-end gifts.

—JRB

PURITAN REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

2965 Leonard Street NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49525
Tel: 616-977-0599 • Fax: 616-855-5740

Email: info@prts.edu • Web: www.prts.edu
Seminary EIN: 20-2394341
Foundation EIN: 20-2394946



Editor: Joel R. Beeke
Assistant Editor: Chris Hanna

To contact a PRTS faculty or staff member by email, please visit us online at prts.edu/about/contact-us. To phone the seminary, call (616) 977-0599.