

## 2015/P: Our Views - Preface

by BS Poh

Many new Christians find it confusing when faced with so many “brands” of Christianity around them. It can be distressing for even those who have been Christians for longer to find churches disagreeing with one another over so many issues. The better-informed Christians would know that there are nuances (i.e. finer shades of differences) even between Reformed Baptist churches worldwide. The older members (i.e. those who have been members longer) of our church would know that we have been cultivating certain characteristics that mark us out as a grouping of churches. All Christians will be helped to know the similarities and differences that exist between the churches, and how best to respond to them.

### Aim and Objectives

The aim of this series of talks is to clarify our views on issues that Reformed Baptists are disagreed about, for the comfort and strengthening of the faith of our church members, and those who are associated with us.

To achieve this aim, the following objectives will be pursued:

- (i) To show where the Reformed Baptists stand in relation to other churches.
- (ii) To show what constitute the irreducible characteristics of a Reformed Baptist church.
- (iii) To explain our views on issues that Reformed Baptist churches are disagreed about.

### Biblical Basis

Throughout, we would want to be guided by biblical principles, and not by our preferences or church tradition.

- (i) The sole authority of Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16-17; Rev. 22:18-19).
- (ii) Contending for the faith (Jude 3; Gal. 1:9).
- (iii) Fundamentals & non-essentials (Heb. 6:1-3; 1 Cor. 3:1-3).

### Issues Treated

1. Ecumenism & Separation
2. Bible Version - which, why, inerrancy, inspiration, transmission.
3. The Eldership of the Church - forms of government, Independency.
4. The Lord's Day - which day, how to keep, work, play, dress, the spirit.
5. Congregational Singing - the matter, the manner, the choir, the music, our anthems.
6. Tithing and Collections - the principle, the manner of collection, self-support & mutual support.
7. Baptism and Lord's Table - who & how, open & closed communion.

8. Corporate Prayer & Fasting.
9. Weddings - why, where, how, preparation.
10. Thanksgiving for Babies - why, how, no infant baptism or confirmation, no consecration.
11. Deaths And Funerals - why burial, not cremation, infant salvation & burial.
12. Family Worship - why, how, materials to help.
13. Christmas, Easter, Reformation Day, plays, Sunday Schools pictures of Christ.
14. Home schooling, Christian schools.
15. Good Works - in local church, wider needs, disasters, outreach.
16. Evangelism and Missions - local growth & wider church planting, missionaries sent & supported.
17. Head covering? Roles of women. women ministers.
18. Appropriate dressing - Sunday best, decency vs. trend, for men & ladies.
19. The call to the ministry. Calling, stand-ins, full-time workers. Theological degrees, their value & abuse, training in church or college, accreditation or none.
20. Finance - Self-supporting & being supported, fund raising methods. Treasurer & trustees.

## **Conclusion**

- Not all churches are agreed on all these issues. The more issues we are agreed upon, the sweeter will be our fellowship.
- If a church does not have a stand on all these issues, it will be more open to problems arising from them. Furthermore, the members will not be helped much when they are confronted with these issues.

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