

# The Community

*A publication of The North American Reformed Seminary <http://www.tnars.net>*

## **TNARS Distinctives:**

- Completely free
- Dedicated to the Westminster Standards
- Rigorous education

## **TNARS Starts “The Community”**

This is the first issue of “The Community,” a new publication from The North American Reformed Seminary (TNARS). The purpose behind this new publication is to build a community of TNARS students, faculty, and others with an interest in our school.

God has certainly blessed TNARS over the past year. As we are growing, both in numbers and in recognition, we felt that as

good stewards of God’s blessing it was incumbent upon us to grow TNARS as a community of God’s children rather than just as a school of faculty and students.

Our prayer is that God would be glorified in this endeavor.

--TNARS Administration

## **New V.P. of Academic Affairs**

TNARS is proud to announce our new V.P. of Academic Affairs, Barry Hofstetter. Mr. Hofstetter has been working as a mentor with TNARS for some time and has shown himself to be well equipped for the tasks that come with his new position.

This position opened up when David Petrie stepped down. Mr. Petrie now serves TNARS as both a mentor and an administrator.

Please keep Mr. Hofstetter and Mr. Petrie in your prayers as they seek to bring God glory through their work at TNARS.

--TNARS Administration

## Beza Translation Project



Dear fellow students and TNARS staff, I am currently undertaking a translation project for my coursework at TNARS. The book that I am translating is called "De Haereticis: A ciuili magistratu puniendis libellus," and was written by Theodore Beza, John Calvin's successor in the French church at Geneva. Beza was requested to write this book by Calvin, Melanchton, Capito, and

others to combat the upheaval against the execution of Servetus by the Geneva City Council.

This book explores the biblical teaching on our certainty of knowledge, and the general equity of the judicial laws of Moses. Beza was once considered one of the major influences on Reformed orthodoxy, both on the continent and in Britain. However, his

works (almost 100 in number) have been virtually left untranslated from Latin. One notable exception is Beza's biography of John Calvin. I pray that God will bless this translation project, and use it to advance His Kingdom.

--Adam Brink

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*'Since going live in January 2008 we have seen a steady increase in both students and mentors.'*

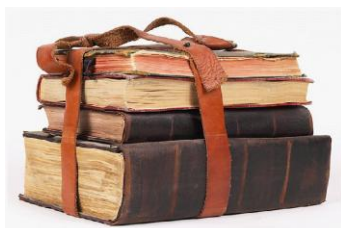
## Humble Beginnings of TNARS

It was three years ago to date that Dr. Larry Bray approached me with a project he was working on. As we continued the conversation over the next several months the idea began taking on twists and today it is known The North American Reformed Seminary. Since going live in January 2008 we have seen a steady increase in both students and mentors. We are also gaining respect in both the Reformed and academic communities. While I will admit that being a part of this both is rewarding and exciting, I will have to admit that the highest point in this process has

been when TNARS graduated the first of one of the students I had the pleasure of mentoring, Jerry Kinard. Jerry graduated June of this year, one year and nine months after enrolling, with an ATTS. While I know Jerry had a deep sense of accomplishment, I will have to say that I did as well. To see men emerge with a quality reformed education without acquiring debt is deeply satisfying. I want to encourage all mentors and students of what a great opportunity God has opened through TNARS. I want to thank each mentor

for your time and vision that is making this work. I pray that one day I will have opportunity to shake each hand that has helped make TNARS what it is today.

--Dr. Bill Bauerle



## TNARS Opened a Door for Me

I've been waiting for the opportunity to express what TNARS has meant to me. As my wife and I started praying about getting some formal education for myself, we were torn on how we would be able to afford it. Isn't just like our great God to provide something for one of the least of His kids, not only a chance for a great education, but one that is totally free! Can you believe it? I'm still amazed.

Glory to God our great provider. Being able to take classes from home is awesome. Being able to go at my own pace is also a blessing. I may be the worst student in TNARS history (slow), but I have the best Mentor PERIOD! I must give honor where honor is due. Not only has Dr. Bray been a great mentor, but also a great encourager, teacher, and a great example for me personally. I hope to get to

meet him as well as some of the other students, Lord willing, one of these days. Blessed be the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

--Chuck Higdon



## How I've Grown

Before I enrolled to TNARS, some friends labeled me as hyper-Calvinist, got into arguments with Christians a few times and non-Christians, in general were not interested to hear me talk. I longed to know how to communicate.

As I listened, read and did my assignment, I realized I made a lot of mistake in my talk. First, the theology courses cleared some issues I was not so sure how to explain. Second, the apologetic courses corrected me not to criticize about other people's religion or belief but to build relationship first. Most

people do not need to hear more moral laws and how to behave. Everyone is looking for acceptance, for love, for justice, for truth in a certain point of their life. Third, Christian education course, which I am currently doing, taught me to find equilibrium in love and doctrine. In all the studies, I find one thing in common, I am not to convert but that is the work of the Holy Spirit. I must sincerely pray for those I encounter who don't know Christ. Much that I love to teach, I must have genuine love for the people I am talking to, not just to get the message off my chest and being insensitive to individual's need. I also found out it

is more effective to ask question to provoke thinking than lecturing which sometimes end up in rejection. Jesus is the model I learn from when He talked to the Samaritan woman in John 4, one step at a time to build relationship and understanding from the listener's level. I am working on it with God's help.

--Florence Hu

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*"As I listened, read and did my assignment, I realized I made a lot of mistake in my talk."*

## Unity in the Spirit

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*"May we remember to fight hard for sound doctrine and graciously love for unity in the Spirit."*

To my surprise, I found a benefit of living in St. Louis, MO. Sure, we are usually voted on the top five of America's most dangerous cities, but I found something else to be an asset. As a recently new TNARS student, I am noticing that a lot of our classes are from Covenant Seminary, which is located in St. Louis. In the past few months, I have been meeting students from Covenant and people that personally know the professors that teach our classes. Though I only know his voice from my computer, one professor that I have learned greatly from so far is Dr. Robert

Peterson.

The specific lesson that I have learned so far from his teaching is the importance of unity within the Body of Christ. It is so easy for us to dwell on how we are "counter-cultural." In fact, we ought to be. But the danger of the other side of the ditch is to miss out on great fellowship with other believers due to secondary issues. He asked his class what a Reformed believer has in common with an Armenian believer. His answer was Christ, who is all. His purpose was not to throw doctrine out of the window, but rather to

embrace the practical doctrine of unity in the Spirit.

May we remember to fight hard for sound doctrine and graciously love for unity in the Spirit. Why? All of this is for the glory of God.

--Brady Hardin

## Accreditation

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*"Why am I finishing now with an unaccredited institution? The answer is simple: doctrinal integrity."*

I have recently begun my work with TNARS on my BATS. I am a transfer student, with 120 credit hours from accredited institutions. At one point, I only needed one class to finish my Bachelor's in Religious Education. At the time, I did not finish because of the exigencies of a full time ministry and family life. So why am I finishing now with an unaccredited institution?

The answer is simple: doctrinal integrity. When I graduated with a diploma in Bible from the aforementioned school, I was unregenerate. I was an adherent of the easy-believism gospel and therefore, without Christ. Now that I desire to finish a bachelor's degree, I want to finish it with an institution that accurately represents my theological framework, accredited or not. The coursework is far

superior compared to the accredited institution, as are the class expectations. The most important question is not whether the institution has engaged in formal hoop-jumping; the question is, "Are the academic standards high?" This is the bottom line and in that area, TNARS exceeds expectations.

--Jon Speed

## Log in the Eye

*He also told them a parable: "Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit? A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye. (Luk 6:39-42)*

After calling us to a heavenly standard of living, Jesus shows the absurdity of leading others while being blind. To correct this blindness takes more than mere knowledge, it takes a transformed life. It's not enough to know what is right, we must live out what is right if we are to lead others on the right path.

It is easy for us to see the log in our brother's eye, but not so easy to see the splinter in our own eye. From our perspective the sins of our brothers are often much larger than the sins in our own life. This is primarily caused by a

heart that is lifted up with spiritual pride. We act as the Pharisees when we judge others more harshly than we judge ourselves, especially when we claim to know the truth of our own sinful state apart from the mercy and grace of Christ.

When we pull the speck out of our own eye first two things happen. First, we are able to see the problem in our brother more clearly. Second, we are able to see the path that we are to walk on more clearly. In this way, pulling the speck out of our eye helps us to lead by example as we walk more circumspectly as an example to our brother while at the same time being better equipped for removing the log from our brother's eye.

Many today shy away from the responsibility that we have to confront our brothers and sisters in Christ with their sins. The Scripture makes it clear that we do have a responsibility to Christ and our brethren for such confrontation, but it must be done biblically. We must do it with the proper motivation of love and with the proper methods as laid out in Scripture.

*Pay attention to yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him, (Luk*

*17:3)*  
*But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. (Gal 2:11)*  
*Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment." (Joh 7:24)*

These verses give us ample evidence that Scripture wants us to judge, but it wants us to do so properly. In Luke 17:3 we are given a command to rebuke our brother when he sins. But this command is balanced with the further command to forgive him. Following the biblical method as set forth in the above passages helps us to rightly judge and rightly love our brethren.

Do you love your brothers and sisters in Christ? If so, then don't allow them to walk around with unrepentant sins in their life. Confront them in a direct and loving way, being ready to forgive as God moves them from prideful sinning to humble repentance. Rather than lording it over them come to them in humility, understanding that you too have sins that must be dealt with. Show your faith in God and His word by following His methods rather than the methods of men.

--Dr. Lawrence E. Bray



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**We're on the Web!**

*See us at:*

**<http://www.tnars.net>**

### ***About Us..***

We are a Reformed Christian seminary that seeks to educate the body of Christ completely free of charge. Our ministry will enable Christians to get a seminary level education without going into debt (Rom 13:8). This allows our graduates to focus on God's call in their lives instead of how they can best pay off their seminary

debt. Not only will this help our students by keeping them out of debt, it will also help small churches retain educated pastors without having to pay a large salary to offset their seminary education debt.

Our mission is to further the Gospel of Jesus Christ and strengthen His

Church through seminary level Reformed education. We seek to bring glory to God and expand His kingdom by training up Christians to minister in His name.