

Supplement (message from Prof. Dykstra to all the PRC ministers):

“Go to sermonaudio.com. Pull up reverent ___’s sermon from tonight at ___ PRC and start listening at minute 44.’

“Gentlemen,

That is a message texted out on a recent Sunday night by an unknown member of the PRC to an unknown recipient and passed on Monday morning to how many more unknown recipients. How can this behavior be characterized as Christian?

When a minister says something that raises an eyebrow, or even stirs the Reformed antennae, (Did I hear that right? What does he mean by that?) the basic principles of Christian behavior demand that a member contact the minister and go talk to him before taking to anyone else about it. But apparently those who do this texting rather follow the unbelieving world’s principle – get the “damning” information out as soon as possible, regardless of the ninth commandment’s requirement to speak the truth in love and to judge no man rashly or unheard. Text out the message. Spread the word. Start listening at minute 44. You need not even get the context.

And, by the way, this is how some are listening to sermons Sunday after Sunday. They are coming to determine whether the minister said everything exactly according to their extra-confessional formula.

They are not being edified. And their bitterness rises week by week. And yet they claim THEY are standing for GOD’S TRUTH. James say something different. James 3:6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

And Paul warns us as he did the church in Galatia -- But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. (Gal. 5:15)

There is more than one way for Satan to attack the church. Satan as liar has not been able to get the PRC to adopt false doctrine to this point. He will not stop trying. But God in His mercy and by His grace has kept the PRC faithful to the confessions and to the Reformed doctrines that He entrusted to our care. Not because we ministers were so good or so faithful or always so careful. Satan is also a murderer. One of the current attacks is the intense spirit of suspicion found in the churches. This suspicion is deadly. No marriage can endure when there is unceasing suspicion between husband and wife. Both will be looking constantly for unfaithfulness. Both will interpret all things in terms of their suspicion. He said that because.... This proves that she.... That is precisely what is happening in the PRC.

Brothers, we know that we must be on guard, for the Bible and history tells us that false doctrine, and false teachers, can come from within. By all means, be on guard. By all means speak the truth clearly and sharply; warn against errors, and by all means let us warn each other (warn the brother himself) when we hear something that does not sound right, even if it is not contrary to the confessions. And if there is a clear error, bring it to the assemblies out of love for the church and the brother. But to be suspicious of your fellow ministers because they say something in a different way is wrong. It feeds the radicals in the churches; it promotes party spirit and division. This cannot carry away the blessing of the King of the church, the faithful and true witness to the truth.

Beloved brothers, take heed to yourselves, and to the doctrine. Let us preach and lead by example. I do not accuse any – that is not the point. But if we do not condemn this kind of behavior, and lead by example, we will be responsible for the damage done to our churches and schools.

In the love of Christ,

Russ

P.S. If you are wondering, I did what I could to follow up on that text in order to bring a brotherly admonition.”