

To the consistory of Hull PRC,

I am writing in response to the letter I received from you, dated 2/11/2021. I am overwhelmed with grief. My soul is troubled. I take upon my lips the confession of the Psalmist in Psalter 240. (Psalm 88)

‘Lord, the God of my salvation, day and night I cry to Thee,

Let my prayer now find acceptance, in Thy mercy answer me.

Full of troubles and affliction, nigh to death my soul is brought.

Helpless, like one cast forever, from Thy care and from Thy thought.’

I see with my own eyes disunity in the PRC. My eyes have been opened in the past six years by the grace of God to see that. Protests and appeals, many of which I have read and agree with, have flooded the meetings of our ecclesiastical assemblies. Many are not dealt with, being declared illegal before the assemblies. Many of them also have to deal with the preaching in the PRC. This is cause for concern for me, as it should be for all believers. Why so many protests against sermons? What is our faithful Father showing us through all of these doctrinal matters being brought via protests, appeals, or letters to the consistory?

The response I see to these questions from our denomination (by way of her ecclesiastical bodies) is one of sheer complacency. Our reports from Classis and Synod that are handed out, or emailed to the congregation are so generic. The report we all have recently received from Classis West is proof. At best, it explains the proceedings of classis, with no specific information pertaining to the issues of the protests and appeals. It is easy to see where any member of our church(es) would say “what is going on? Where are the issues in the PRC, doctrinally?” A layperson in the PRC today, as a member, has to seek out for themselves a copy of an agenda for Classis or Synod. It is “forbidden” to speak of these things, outside of consistory rooms or assembly meetings such as classis and synod. (Prof Dykstra, Standed Bearer 94, no. 18 [July 2018] p.415) Members of the of the PRC are being choked out by the Church Order, (esp Article 31) which you men clearly stand behind. You said in your letter, “The proper way, the Church Orderly way, is laid out in Church Order Art. 31”

This overwhelming trust in the ecclesiastical assemblies has a detrimental effect on the members of the PRC. The *preaching* is being protested, which means we face a *doctrinal* issue. This puts us in great danger of acting hierarchal as a church. Essentially, this type of attitude places ministers and elders in a greater capacity to understand and know the word of God than the members of the church itself. It does not promote unity, but rather schism. Why? Because this attitude very much belittles the work of the Holy Spirit in every child of God. Am I able from scripture to discern doctrinal matters? Or must I wait to see how classis and synod tell me to discern? Are we united as the Church of Christ by His Spirit? Or are we united by the decisions of our ecclesiastical bodies?

How can you explain Church Order Article 55 in connection with the deposition of Rev. Lanning? To me, he very clearly used the pulpit as it is intended, according to that article. He saw false doctrine in the church, and used his ministry to ward against it. He also is using his platform as editor of the Sword and Shield for this same purpose, which is a magazine I highly commend. I still cannot believe we did not so much as lift a finger to stop this unjust action of deposition.

True spiritual leadership is given by God himself, through Christ. The Church's Head. Her perfect leader. I need that spiritual leadership, so I again reiterate the words of the Psalter quoted above. The Lord uses a foolish means, the peaching, for spiritual leadership. (1 Cor. 1:21) To me, that means the Lord so works His Spirit and truth in a man that that man cannot help but completely humble himself before the face of God. So much so that in the true preaching of that word, man can only confess how totally depraved and sinful he is. In ALL his working here below. And in doing so he cries aloud to God for His great need of The True Savior from that sin. His overwhelming need for that One and Perfect Spiritual Leader. That clear message is always thundering in the Church of Christ. And only when the Lord is pleased feed His beloved sheep in those rich and luscious truths of His word, is there fruit in the life of the believer and the church.

I have access, as we all do in the age of the internet, to almost every sermon being preached in the PRCA. I do not shy away from listening to many sermons from many preachers in our churches. That great gospel message is hardly ever that clear and bold. It is being swept to the side. We already know those truths right? So now, I think we are focusing the preaching on *how* we can serve God, not *why* we serve God. Ministers focus on things we do, things we desire, and things we can do to serve God. A subtle mixing in of the work of man in the covenant, often only window dressed here and there with "we do these things by God's grace."

The gospel message, by God's boundless grace, is clearly and boldly being proclaimed in a tire shop in West Michigan. By a minister the PRC wants nothing to do with. This coming Friday, Rev. Andy Lanning has a lecture explaining the Act of Separation. I encourage you all to tune in. All of his sermons are available to listen to online, and I believe are soundly reformed. I believe what he is preaching, and I believe it is clearer and sharper than a vast majority of the preaching in the PRC today. I need direction. I wait upon the Lord and His will for me, as I find myself most content that even in doing so, he will feed my hungry and thirsty soul, for Christ's sake.

Sincerely,

Marcus Andringa