



COVENANT EVANGELICAL REFORMED CHURCH

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Beloved Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ,

In the past week, some of us have received invitations to attend a lecture entitled “Doctrinal Developments in CERC”. As watchmen who are set by God on the walls of Zion (Eze. 33), your office-bearers seek to sound the trumpet and to warn you of this group and this speaker. This lecture is organised by a schismatic group who has left CERC. The speaker is a former minister, justly deposed by our sister church in the PRCA.

The speaker is guilty of the sin of schism, of tearing apart the church, the precious body and bride of Jesus Christ. He has been working actively to condemn our sister church, the PRCA, calling her the “whore” and “Babylon”, and inciting many to leave a true church, to their spiritual ruin. In addition, the speaker, together with the RP group of which he is a part, contributed to a terrible schism in our sister churches of the PRCP (Protestant Reformed Churches in the Philippines), where there had been no controversy.

The speaker has also approved of inflammatory blogs, which propagate lies through the use of persuasive rhetoric and quotes uncharitably taken out of context.

Since the beginning of the RP group, it has become more and more evident that they walk, not only in schismatic conduct, but also in doctrinal error.

There is little doubt that his visit and lecture has as its purpose to further subvert the truth and bring greater schism to our land.

As a consistory, we warn you against extending the right hand of fellowship to this impenitent speaker and the group that has left. There are at least three reasons for doing so. First, and above all, this is the revealed will of God concerning one who is walking impenitently in the gross sin of schism. Romans 16:17: “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.” Beloved people of God, we understand the difficulty that you might face. The man is our former pastor who has done much good in the past for us as a church, and as individuals. We loved him, and still do. But sin is sin, and God’s Word is clear on our calling toward such a one who is impenitent in his sin.

Secondly, we mark and avoid them, precisely because we love them. True love is not to encourage those who are walking in sin to continue in sin, which we would be doing by our fellowship. True love, according to the Word of God, is to call them to repentance before God, repentance of their assault against the precious bride of Jesus Christ. True love is to pray for their genuine repentance.

Thirdly, we mark and avoid them, for the sake of our own souls. Do not underestimate the powers of persuasion wielded by this speaker and this group. One need only look at their trail of spiritual carnage to see that. Your pastors have personally witnessed sincere, godly Christians led astray by them. Here too, God’s Word is our guide. Proverbs 22:24-25: “Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go: Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.” (see also Pro. 4:14-16; 14:7). Our souls are safe in God’s hand; at the same time, let us not be foolish to tempt God, by going against His Word.

Marking and avoiding them also means that we do not attend the lectures organised by the group. Our attendance in person would be a show of support to their cause, which we

may not give. Neither should we listen to these lectures in order to take instruction from them. Let us not be as those who “heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (2 Tim. 4:3-4).

Beloved people of God, instead of heeding to and fellowshiping with this group, continue to take instruction from your office-bearers, God’s appointed watchmen over CERC. We have been working through the various aspects of the controversy, seeing God’s merciful hand in preserving the PRCA in the truth of His Word. Come 7 December, we plan to cover the sad but necessary deposition of a minister in the PRCA. We hope to show plainly the justice of his deposition for the sin of schism, which he perpetuates up to this day. In addition, do join us for our monthly prayer meeting on 6 December, to pray for our church, our sister churches, as well as the repentance of our former pastor and those who have followed him.

All of this is not to say that CERC is sinless, or worthy in herself. On the contrary, we have nothing of ourselves: no righteousness, no faith, no truth, no love of God. All of our salvation is in Jesus Christ alone, the only ground of our salvation and the experience of our salvation. We have been taught this by God Himself through our own bitter history as a church. May God give us courage now to stand for the truth over against the lie; to stand for righteousness over against sin.

Please do not hesitate to contact any of us personally for counsel on this matter.

Ezekiel 33:3-4: “If when [the watchman] seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people; Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head.”

Your unworthy servants in Christ,
The consistory (pastors and elders) of CERC
3 December 2022