

Freedom:

Seven Lesser Known Gifts of Our Reformation Heritage

Part 4

Our GCC Vision (Part 1)

Acts 20:18-32

Introduction:

The Biblical Vision of the Christian's Freedom (as Preserved in Our Reformation Heritage):

His Own Special People:

- I. The Priesthood of Every Believer
- II. The Freedom of the Individual Conscience
- III. The Perspicuity (Accessibility) of Scripture
- IV. The Primacy of Preaching

His Image Bearers:

- V. Our Union with Christ
- VI. Our Inheritance of the World
- VII. The Holiness of Everyday Life

Our Passion & Preoccupation

The Fundamentals of Our Faith:

- *The Glory of God*
- *The Gladness of God*
- *The Grace of God*
- *The Freedom of the Christian*
- *The Treasure of Christ*

The Call to Christian Maturity & Faithfulness -

The Case Against "Balance" -

The Case Against Our Vision -

Our Preaching & Teaching

The Primary Calling of a Pastor is the Prayerful Pursuit & Proclamation of the Word

Preaching & Teaching that Rightly Regards the High Calling of the listeners, is called:

1. To Point to Truth rather than Pre-package Truth.
2. To offer Principle more than Practice.
3. To Promote Thinking rather than Program Thinking
4. To Provoke Questions rather than Prevent Questions

Like Paul's Preaching (Acts 20) it is called to be:

- *Passionate & Personal*
- *Preoccupied with the Grace & Kingdom of God*
- *Thorough & Varied - "The whole counsel of God"*

Our Pastoral & Leadership Heart

Biblical Leadership is:

1. Recognized from Among God's People

- *Proven not Priestly*
- *Alongside more than Elevated*

2. Regarded with the Trust of God's People

Hebrews 13:7-9, 17; 1 Peter 5:1-4

Biblical "Authority" is:

- Earned
- Evaluated by God
- Engaged
- Eager

3. Rewarded by the Lord of God's People

A Personal Testimony of Grace & Gratitude

Next Week: Our Participation in One Another's Lives & Our Presence in the World

Acts 20:17-32

18 And when they had come to him, he said to them: "You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, 19 serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews; 20 how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, 21 testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. 22 And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. 24 But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

25 "And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. 26 Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. 27 For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. 28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. 29 For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. 31 Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

32 "So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

Hebrews 13:7-9, 17

7 Remember your leaders, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct. 8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. 9 Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them.

1 Peter 5:1-4

1 The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: 2 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, [a] not for dishonest gain but eagerly; 3 nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; 4 and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

17 Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

CSL

Do not be scared by the word authority. Believing things on authority only means believing them because you have told them by someone you think is trustworthy. Ninety-nine per cent of the things you believe are believed on authority. I believe there is such a place as New York. I have not seen it myself. I could not prove by abstract reasoning that there must be such a place. I believe it because reliable people have told me so.

1 Timothy 3

1 This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; 3 not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; 4 one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence 5 (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); 6 not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. 7 Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Titus 1:5-10

5 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you — 6 if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. 7 For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, 8 but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, 9 holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.