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The Truth About NEW CALVINISM

Its History, Doctrine, and Character

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Volume One

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Paul M. Dohse Sr.

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Lara contributed to the first project, and wrote the poems on page 72 and 126. Then there is Professor K (a very long name beginning with K), the youngest English college professor in the US and one that God used along the way. And those who encouraged me to keep up the fight with my blog, *Paul's Passing Thoughts*. Their contributions to this book are invaluable. Jess and Bill together provided a dual perspective of communication and theology that was a very powerful help.

Cindy and Lydia both provided information that was included in the history section of this book. Then there is Brian who has coined a phrase that best describes why this book is important: "The most dangerous errors are closest to the truth."

This isn't just my work; it is theirs as well. I hope I have used their efforts well. But most of all, my deepest hopes are that my Lord is pleased with this effort to defend the truth He has delivered once to the saints. Glory to His name.

Paul M. Dohse Sr.

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“Consider carefully what you hear....” (Mark 4:24).

~ Christ

“There is an Athenian love of novelty abroad, and a morbid distaste for anything old and regular, and in the beaten path of our forefathers. Thousands will crowd to hear a new voice and a new doctrine, without considering for a moment whether what they hear is true.”

~ JC Ryle

Introduction

It's difficult, if not impossible to contend against something that has no identity. And if you want to contend against a threat to the Christian community, and its primary name is "gospel," well, good luck. But a massive movement that is upon us, and in fact has saturated contemporary Christianity, has stumbled—its proponents accepted a label other than "gospel-driven," "gospel-centered," gospel—you fill in the blank. So, the opportunity and time has come to contend against this new gospel.

The label is "New Calvinism." It is perhaps the most covert theological movement in church history. Its covert nature and the theologically dumbed-down parishioners of our day have made the movement's tsunami-like impact a possibility and reality.

It embodies a massive network of churches and organizations. It also has its own theology, hermeneutic, practical application, defined experience, ecumenical (inclusiveness) movement, "history," college, counseling organization—and now, its own systematic theology. New Calvinism has the dangerous opportunity to totally rewrite orthodox Christianity. It won't be long; those whom we minister to will have to be deprogrammed before we can help them, starting with convincing them that the Bible is to be taken as literal instruction from God as our authority for ministry. Not understanding New Calvinism beforehand will make any attempt to help people with the word of God—dead on arrival. The grim reality is that seminarians (some think 30% of all graduates) are emerging with the idea that they are the gatekeepers of a new Reformation. The arrogance that follows such a notion is never far behind.

New Calvinism's History will be examined first—a history that began long ago, and was predicted by prophets to be prevalent in the last days. Not by name in particular, but certainly by kind.

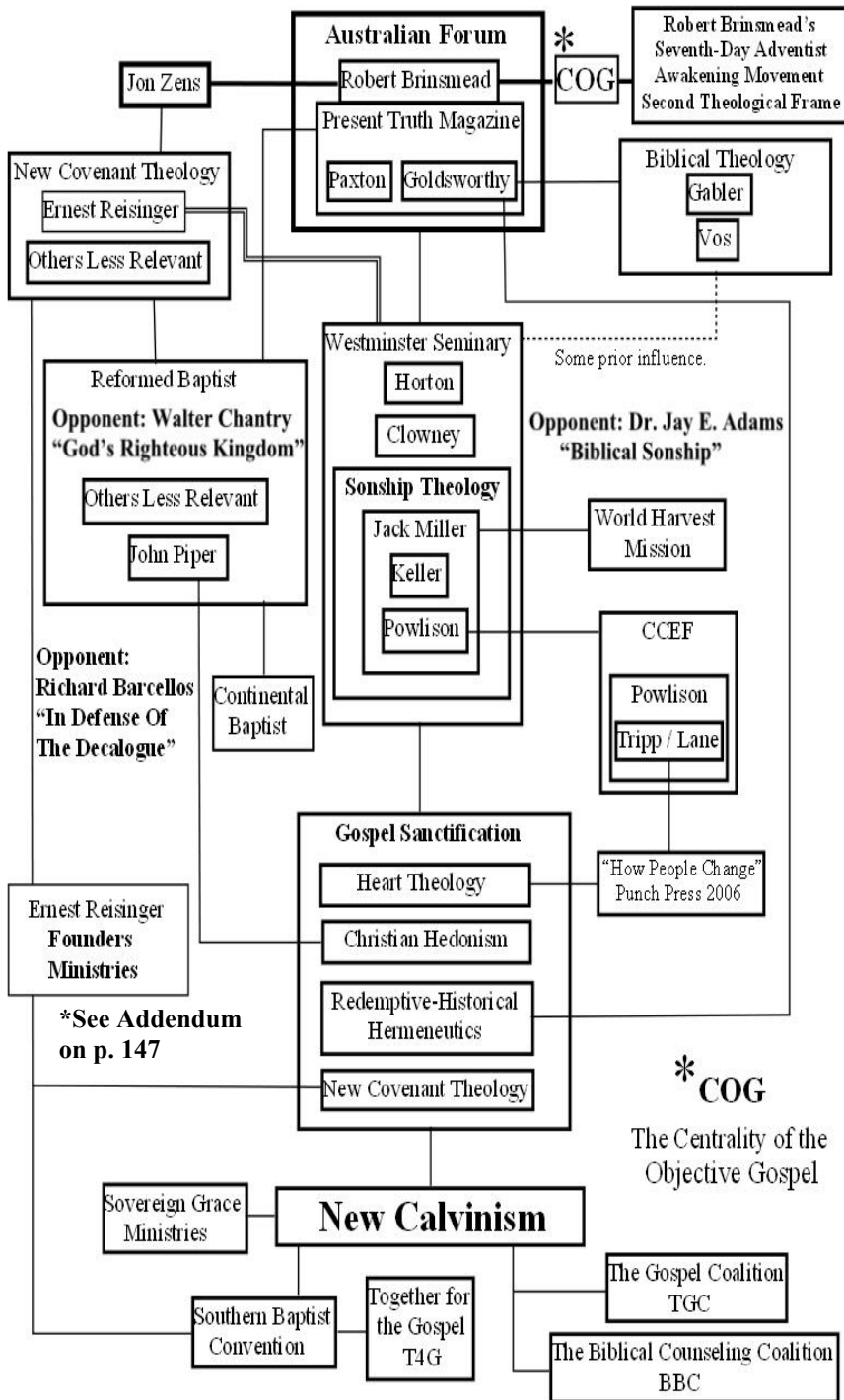
This will explain why phenomena like New Calvinism takes place. New Calvinism's contemporary history will receive the most attention and lend understanding to its present form. Secondly, the basics of the doctrine and its proposition will be stated, and lastly, its impact on real life.

In reading this book you are embarking on a journey that is the product of almost five years of intense research, but a warning: it will be nearly impossible to understand every nuance of the New Calvinist doctrine in this first volume. This first volume addresses the most important basics; the second volume will examine the doctrine in finer detail and re-explain the more difficult aspects of the first volume. Nevertheless, this volume is a critical introduction to one of the fastest growing movements in church history.

All this because truth, and only truth, sanctifies (John 17:17).

Paul M. Dohse Sr.

History



Conclusion

Robert Brinsmead's Australian Forum project, with the help of Jon Zens, Geoffrey Paxton, and Graeme Goldsworthy, built a theological framework unmatched in recent history. Much of the system was articulated in their theological journal, *Present Truth* (later: *Verdict*). Robert Brinsmead and Jon Zens were two men on theological journeys; and they crossed paths. It's difficult to tell which of the two influenced the other the most, but two very similar, and unique theological systems emerged: the *centrality of the objective gospel*, and *New Covenant Theology* (COG and NCT).

Zens spread the doctrine among Reformed Baptists amidst much controversy and COG found fertile ground in Presbyterian circles via Westminster Seminary. Those among Reformed Baptists who contended against it called it what it is, antinomianism. Presbyterians are apparently more tentative, but still, waged an aggressive war against it after COG became Sonship Theology. In fact, the bullet-ridden Sonship name was traded for "Gospel-Transformation." Who would argue with that? As the movement grew to the point where the world couldn't help but to take notice, it was dubbed New Calvinism.

The present-day New Calvinist Movement has no roots prior to the Forum, and their doctrines match to a "T," with elements such as: *the objective gospel outside of us*; the indicative/imperative; gospel interpretation; the Bible as historical narrative only; animosity towards evangelicalism; semper reformanda; denial of the new birth as part of the gospel; progressive justification and much more. Though New Calvinists claim Reformation roots, and indeed Robert Brinsmead borrowed some of their ideas, "preaching the gospel to ourselves," "the imperative command is grounded in the indicative event," "deep repentance" etc., are all things that cannot be traced back to the Reformers of old. Brinsmead claimed historical uniqueness, everyone knows NCT was born in 1981, and it's certainly no secret that Sonship Theology is a contemporary

movement. Then, of course, there is the data and various connections to consider as documented in this book.

The doctrine is not only new, but has taken over the church, rewritten orthodoxy, and rewritten church history. They have their own seminaries, network of churches, network of home churches, missionary organizations, promotion enterprises, publishers, counseling organizations, ecumenical movement, and systematic theology. It is a huge, *last days* antinomian blitzkrieg that the apostles predicted would come.

The Forum supplied a system that those enamored with theology were hungry for: a gospel contemplationism that appears orthodox. And New Calvinists have the whole church buried in discussion over their massive theological theories that attempt to make their doctrine feasible. Meanwhile, the Christian's biblical resources for contending in this world will be limited to embellished forms of what also saved us: faith and repentance. Something should alarm us about having the same *who needs it?* attitude towards the law that the world has. And saying the law is important because Jesus keeps it for us is a ridiculous notion; that's not only a relaxed attitude towards the least of all commands, it's a relaxed attitude towards the whole law. It's still antinomianism.

But the movement can be stopped by exposing its error, education, and calling it what it is—no matter how unpleasant: antinomianism. The movement is far less active in Reformed/Calvinistic Baptist circles because they recognized New Covenant Theology as such and made no apology for the accusations. Presbyterians will have to follow that example if they wish to stop this movement known as New Calvinism.

Lord willing, this book will help in that regard. The stakes are high; we will have lives built on a rock, or on sand. May His life-giving word prevail, and may those who have been given to love the truth stand.

Paul M. Dohse Sr.