

June 26, 2017

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Per our previous email exchange, I am submitting this letter in conjunction with my request for termination of my membership in ----- Presbyterian Church.

My objections to certain doctrines, policies, and allowances of the Presbyterian Church in America and of --- are as follows:

1. I object to the recent resolution on “racial reconciliation,” first introduced by the 43rd General Assembly of the PCA and adopted by the 44th General Assembly, and its accompanying claim that many of the founders of the denomination held sinful views on race and acted sinfully in their failure to support the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. I believe that these men rightly criticized the Presbyterian Church in the United States for its adoption of a position that had more in common with essential Communism than biblical Christianity (they would have been more accurate to refer to it as cultural Marxism, but I am not sure the term was in use at that time). In his 1966 book, *Bondage of the Free*, Kent H. Steffgan offered an extensive exposé of the Communist roots and agenda of the Civil Rights movement. Dr. Martin Luther King’s close ties with Communist groups has also been well-documented.

Blacks were frequently barred from entrance into PCA churches during this period primarily due to the increasing disruption of worship services by Civil Rights activists. The PCA founders were also concerned about a wide-spread acceptance among Christians of interracial marriage, which they believed violated God’s direct separation of the nations at Babel and His subsequent providential distinction between the races. Such had been the historic position of not only the Southern Presbyterian Church, but most (if not all) other orthodox Christian denominations up to the Twentieth Century. Maintaining a distinction between the races was also the traditional position of Protestant theologians and commenta-

tors ever since the 1500s, and is apparently what is being taught in Acts 17:26.

In a recent lecture posted to YouTube on February 6, 2016 entitled “Telling the Truth” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RvVWL2YTdeQ>), and an associated webcast posted to YouTube on January 15, 2016 under the title “Corporate Confession of Generational Sins” (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5bScR_nbS2E&t=16s), Mississippi PCA minister, Sean Lucas (co-author of the original resolution of 2015) charged PCA founders, namely Dr. L. Nelson Bell and Dr. Morton H. Smith, with “the idolatry of racial purity” and “denying the Gospel.” I believe that this charge is bearing false witness, setting forth an extra-biblical standard of orthodoxy, conflating the natural distinctions of the present age with the spiritual unity of the eternal Kingdom, and implicitly teaching a false gospel. The latter is the most serious error, for the true Gospel has to do with the imputation of Christ’s righteousness and substitutionary satisfaction of the law in behalf of the elect through faith alone, and has nothing to do with matters of racial politics.

Dr. Bell is deceased and can no longer defend his good name. Dr. Smith is in his mid-90s, and yet many young PCA ministers have been harassing him and calling for his repentance. Such unconscionable behavior denies him the honor due to one of his advanced age from younger men.

2. I object to the resolution adopted by the 30th General Assembly in 2002 and the 2004 “Pastoral Letter on Racism,” drafted by the 32nd General Assembly, which charges the ministers of the antebellum Southern Presbyterian Church with the sin of complicity in “oppression, racism, exploitation, manstealing, and chattel slavery.” Rev. Lucas reiterates this charge in the aforementioned YouTube videos. Specific to this charge are men such as Rev. Robert Lewis Dabney of Virginia, Rev. James Henley Thornwell of South Carolina, and Rev. Benjamin Morgan Palmer of Louisiana. Rev. Lucas does not produce a single direct reference to any writings of these men, or other ministers of the Southern Presbyterian Church, to support his charge. He also does not adequately define what he means by “racism,” and, repeating the words of the “Pastoral Letter,”

he inaccurately designates the labor system of the antebellum South as “chattel slavery.” Rev. Dabney’s book, *A Defence of Virginia and the South* (1867), as well as the writings of numerous other Southern apologists of that period, provides a thorough rebuttal of the usage of this term. Southern planters viewed their Negroes as servants and members of their families, not as mere objects to be bought, sold, or disposed of. The laws of the various Southern States also may be cited to prove that the Negroes, though denied participation in a political system for which they were unprepared at that time, were nevertheless viewed as human beings possessing the same natural rights as other human beings. They were viewed, both in law and in the culture, as being in the care of the dominant race for the benefit of themselves and society in general. Upon request, I will be happy to supply you and the session with the historical material relevant to this subject which I have published. I have already given you a copy of my two-volume book, *America’s Caesar: The Decline and Fall of Republican Government in the United States of America*, which also covers this subject matter.

I responded briefly to both above resolutions and the “Pastoral Letter” in my introduction to *Ex Uno Plures: Traditional Southern Presbyterian Thought on Race Relations*, which I published in October of 2015. In this book I included a number of essays by Southern Presbyterian ministers, spanning a period of one hundred years, to demonstrate that their views on and treatment of the Negro were paternal and never maliciously discriminatory, as alleged by Rev. Lucas and the above PCA documents. The charges of complicity in “oppression,” “racism,” and “exploitation” are completely false and slanderous. It is also untrue that Southern Presbyterians ever condoned the “man stealing” associated with the African slave trade. I refer you to Chapter Two of Rev. Dabney’s book in this regard.

3. I object to Rev. Lucas’ insistence in the aforementioned YouTube videos that advocating a continued distinction between the races, or any belief that “approaches” thereunto, constitutes a sin worthy of church discipline. Rev. Lucas offers no evidence from Scripture to support his claim, beyond a vague reference to the image of God in man and the

corresponding requirement to treat others with dignity. Seeking to maintain what God has providentially established does not preclude the recognition of the image of God in others who are different from ourselves and the proper treatment of them as required in the second “great commandment” (Matthew 22:39). Furthermore, there are varying degrees of segregationist thought, and it is unwise and uncharitable to associate the extremes with which the general public is most familiar with those holding more moderate views, particularly when the latter are ordained ministers of the Church. I believe that Rev. Lucas has introduced a simplistic and inquisitorial approach to what is a complex matter.

4. I object to the recent election of Dr. Alexander Jun as Moderator of the 45th General Assembly of the PCA. Dr. Jun openly promotes progressive (cultural Marxist) deconstruction of the dominant White culture in his book, *White Out: Understanding White Privilege and Dominance in the Modern Age*, and in a recent lecture delivered under the auspices of a PCA church in Richmond, Virginia and posted on YouTube on March 13, 2016 under the title, “Why Do We All Look the Same? A Cultural and Theological Analysis of Church Dynamics” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qxOrjgrxsZ&t=372s>. In the latter, Dr. Jun uses all the progressive buzzwords about “institutional racism,” “micro-aggressions,” “White privilege,” etc. and denies the existence of “reverse racism” by defining “racism” as “prejudice plus power” (i.e. “persons of color” cannot be racists, even when in the majority, because the system itself is a White power structure). My oldest son is currently hearing precisely the same dogma at the University of -----, the only difference being the former is presented by an ordained elder in an evangelical denomination and the latter by openly anti-Christian professors at a secular institution.

Near the end of his lecture, Dr. Jun claims that “working for racial reconciliation” constitutes “ushering in the Kingdom of God.” Because the Kingdom is ushered in only by the Holy Spirit through the regeneration of the elect, this statement is essentially a redefinition of the Gospel itself. Presbyterians of the past may have had grounds to bring Dr. Jun up on

charges of heresy for making such a statement.

5. I object to the toleration of support and promotion of Black Lives Matter in the Missouri Presbytery of the PCA, and specifically in the South City Church of St. Louis by Rev. Michael Higgins and his daughter, Michelle Higgins. BLM is an openly anti-Christian organization which not only promotes the deconstruction of American social institutions and teaches Black liberation theology, but also condones the LBGT agenda to undermine traditional sexual morals and family structure. Its adherents frequently incite and are personally involved in riots, civil disobedience, and other social disruptions, contrary to the clear commands of Scripture for Christians to live peaceably with one's fellow man in the present age (Romans 12:18) and to maintain a general attitude of submission to secular governing authority (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13ff).

6. I object to the continued toleration and elevation of the writings and public statements of Dr. Timothy Keller, who, in his book, *Reason For God*, openly admits that he was "heavily influenced by the neo-Marxist critical theory of the Frankfurt School" while in college and who has sought to utilize his ministerial platform to bring about "some major new religious, social and political arrangements" contrary to the traditional Reformed understanding of the spirituality of the Church and of the purpose of the ordained Gospel ministry. Dr. Keller describes Christ's earthly mission as "an infinitely costly rescue operation to restore justice to the oppressed and marginalized, etc." He furthermore writes that "God loves and defends those with the least economic and social power, and so should we. That is what it means to do justice"; that "He identifies with the powerless, he takes up their cause"; and that "God is on the side of the powerless, and of justice for the poor." This repackaging of the social gospel and of Marxist liberation theology is an implicit denial that Christ, as the Last Adam, came to fulfill the Covenant of Works (the law) and to suffer its penalty only in behalf of the elect, leaving the world at large under the judicial wrath of God. Not surprisingly, this essential Reformed doctrine seems to be largely absent in those PCA churches influenced by the teachings of Keller (at least in my experience). In his essay,

“Deconstructing Defeater Beliefs: Leading the Secular to Christ,” Dr. Keller advocates the tailoring of evangelism to conform to the “felt needs” of the hearer, rather than to their actual need of deliverance from the curse of the broken law of God. The Covenant of Works is nowhere mentioned in this essay.

Perhaps not unrelated to Dr. Keller’s neo-Marxism is his teaching of “progressive creationism,” which is really theistic evolution. This teaching undermines the doctrine of the historic Adam, is inconsistent with the doctrine of an historic Covenant of Works, and therefore is a covert denial of Christ’s substitutionary work as Surety for the elect. Furthermore, theistic evolution is contrary to a plain reading of the first two chapters of Genesis, as well as the Westminster Standards, both of which clearly teach that creation was completed “in the space of six days” and that the special creation of man occurred on the sixth day. To my knowledge, Dr. Keller has never been officially challenged for his views by any PCA judicial body.

7. I object to the social Trinitarianism taught by Dr. Keller (*Reason For God*, Chapter Fourteen), Michael Reeves (*Delighting in the Trinity*), and other authors promoted within the PCA. This doctrine conflates the economic relationship of the members of the Godhead with their ontology, and is contrary to the hierarchical Nicene and Athanasian formulations of the Trinity. Furthermore, it is derived from the writings of the Cappadocian (Greek Orthodox) fathers of the Fourth Century rather than the Western theology proper upon which the Reformed faith is founded. Steve ----- taught a Sunday School class on this very subject a few years ago at --- and was unchallenged by the leadership of the church. I believe that the implicit egalitarianism of social Trinitarianism is at least partially responsible for the promotion of the social gospel by many PCA ministers, particularly Dr. Keller.

Furthermore, in his essay, “The Gospel and Sex,” Dr. Keller compares the sexual relationship between husband and wife to the relationship existing between the Persons of the Trinity, contrary to the Apostle Paul’s restriction of the divine-human analogy to the relationship of the Church

to Christ (Ephesians 5:25ff). This implied homo-eroticism echoes the earlier sensual constructs of the “perichoresis,” “circumincession,” or “interpenetration” taught by the Greek mystics. Keller, Reeves and others teach that the purpose of redemption is to bring mankind into participation in this “divine dance” within the Trinity. I have heard this same idea taught during Sunday School and during public worship at --- on several occasions.

For my fuller treatment of the subject of social Trinitarianism and the related transformationalism of neo-Calvinism, see Chapter Four of my book, *Judicial Warfare: Christian Reconstruction and Its Blueprints For Dominion*.

Please include this letter with my previous email regarding my personal grievances when you present my request for withdrawal to the session.

In Christ,
Greg Durand