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Reformation
& **REVIVAL**
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Reformation & Revival Journal is published four times each year by Reformation & Revival Ministries, Inc., a not-for-profit teaching ministry organized in the state of Illinois in 1991. The ministry is committed to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the infallible Word of God and is in essential agreement with the confessional statements of historic Reformation theology. The purpose of this ministry is centered in its name:

1. To encourage *reformation* in local Christian churches worldwide.
2. To promote the cause of *revival* and spiritual awakening through prayer and the provision of resources to aid Christian leaders.

Subscription rates are \$28 for one year, \$48 for two years. Special full-time student rate is \$18 for one year. Please remit in U.S. currency only. For overseas orders add \$4 for each year for postage. Canadian subscribers add \$2 per year for additional postage. Back issues and single issues are \$10 each. To order in other currencies contact the names below:

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Correspondence concerning articles, editorial policy, books for review, suggested manuscripts, and subscriptions should be addressed to the editor. Comments are welcome.

The conviction of the staff and editors of the *Reformation & Revival Journal* is that awakening, of the kind seen in the First Great Awakening in America, wedded to the doctrinal concerns of the historic Protestant Reformation as expressed in the terms *sola scriptura*, *sola gratia*, and *sola fide*, is needed in our generation.

The views expressed in this publication should be considered as the personal opinions of the authors and are not to be taken as an official editorial perspective.

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INTRODUCTION— UNDER RECONSTRUCTION



John H. Armstrong

Chicago, it has been said by more than one wag, has only two seasons—winter and road reconstruction! We who live here soon learn to avoid the roads that are being resurfaced and rebuilt for eight months of every year. Our sense of humor is often challenged, but in the end we survive and soon enjoy roads without potholes and journeys that transpire more smoothly. This analogy comes to mind as we undergo some major changes in the direction of this periodical in the coming months. Let me explain.

In the late 1980s the seed that became the *Reformation & Revival Journal* was planted in my heart. Some friends suggested that church leaders would profit by a journal that addressed issues of theology and pastoral practice with strong emphasis on reforming and renewing the church by Word and Spirit. This idea led to the birth of Reformation & Revival Ministries in 1991, when four men met with me in my home in Carol Stream, Illinois, to pray and plan for a new ministry to the church. Then, in 1992, this Journal was the first result of our planning. Thirteen-plus years later, the issue that you now read becomes the fifty-fourth quarterly issue that we have published.

This journal has undergone various subtle and minor changes over the course of thirteen years. This is to be expected

with any such journal. Publications must change, to some extent, or they die. An editor is faced with two goals in terms of readership. First he must seek to connect with those who already appreciate the publication so that they will choose to remain subscribers/readers. We have, generally speaking, done well at this goal. Most of our readers are deeply committed folks who love this journal. The second goal has not been reached quite so successfully. This goal is to write and publish so we can gain as many new readers as possible. This goal envisions that this publication will have an ever deepening impact upon a wider and wider segment of the church at large. Because we have not succeeded so well in reaching this goal, we began with the last issue (14.1) to make changes that will continue to unfold in coming issues as we undertake a serious reconstruction project. This Editor's Introduction will be used to explain where we are going and why.

First, there are some things that we will *not* change in the new *Reformation & Revival Journal*. We will retain our strongly Protestant and evangelical stance. Though we value a number of periodicals, and insights, that feed the mind and soul of Christian leaders from Roman Catholic and Orthodox sources, *our roots remain firmly planted in the Protestant Reformation and the great evangelical awakenings*. We still believe, now more than we did in 1991, that a serious periodical, from this tradition, needs to address the minds and hearts of thinking Christians who identify with evangelical churches and ministries. We believe this is our mission, and this has not changed.

We will not change our basic goals for publication as stated on the information page of this quarterly. We remain committed to biblical reformation and to true revival. We want to strengthen praying Christians in order to foster a movement of intercession. And we believe true revival should never be divorced from a serious encounter with the history and theology of the church. Simply put, academic theology and church ministry must not be divorced. These goals have been, and will remain, our commitments.

What will change, however, is quite substantial. Our format and style of writing is in need of a serious makeover if we

are to reach a wider and more diverse readership. To do this we will incorporate the following changes in the next several issues:

1. We will include a number of shorter, simpler, more reader-friendly articles in each issue. These will generally not be scholarly in style, thus there will be no endnotes or technical argumentation in most of these articles and short opinion pieces.
2. We will place two or three longer and more academic articles in an appropriate place within the journal so that the reader knows in advance that these may be a "reach" for some. The reader can choose to skip these articles and still profit immensely from about 70% of the Journal since the content will not be limited, as in the past, to this style alone.
3. We will add features that foster better dialogue and interaction. We invite your letters, personal submissions and suggestions, and the type of input that will make the Journal distinctly interactive.
4. We will seek to be current with trends, issues, interest in reformation and awakening, and vital missional news that impacts the church from a perspective that is plainly focused upon renewal in Protestant settings.
5. We will retain major book review articles, which are a hugely popular part of the journal. In fact, we will add even more to this part of the journal. Books are an important part of our contribution to the thinking Christian reader. We want this to be one of the first places a discerning reader goes to find out about new and important books. In this issue a review/critique of the popular book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, provides an example.
6. We will conduct open and engaging forums on various current topics. These will become more and more prominent in each issue of the journal. For example, in the next issue (14:3), we will have a major discussion

of Brian D. McLaren's important book, *A Generous Orthodoxy*. Three reviews of this book will appear followed by a very well-done response from Brian. This material is some of the finest content we have ever published. We believe the reader will benefit immensely through this type of exchange.

7. As you may have already noticed, we will not have themes on the cover of each issue. This doesn't mean that a theme will not sometimes emerge. It simply means that we will not be limited to that theme in a particular issue. Articles may cluster around one subject, now and then, but this will not be required. This frees us editorially to pursue a number of things in timely ways.
8. Important updates and news from Reformation & Revival Ministries, our parent organization, will appear in the journal. This will allow readers to connect our larger ministry with that of the quarterly journal. We will also include appropriate advertising for publishers and other ministries. This will help us expand our vision and promote our goals while it will also provide much needed funding for the publication.
9. The journal will become available online in 2005. Our plan is to provide an online subscription service that includes access to all back issues. Some readers will prefer this option to a print copy while others will desire both options. Watch our Web site for more information, www.reformationrevival.com.

So, our sincere hope is that this reconstruction period will go as smoothly as possible. There will undoubtedly be some bumps in the road as we work out these changes. We believe that in the end you, the reader, will have a much better quarterly journal, one that can be used widely to promote the great truths we still believe very deeply in—reformation and revival. Your comments, prayers, and help are appreciated by all of us who produce this quarterly for church renewal.