



INTERNATIONAL REFORMED THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

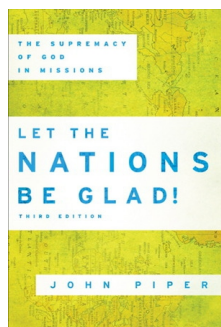
Bristol, VA, www.pro-rege.net

The IRTC provides a theological education online in Portuguese for students from Portugal, Brazil, Mozambique, and around the world who are unable to go to a seminary. We are praying for the Lord to raise up more supporters for this ministry.

March 2015 Newsletter

"Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you! Let the nations be glad and sing for joy. . .Sing praises to our King, sing praises! For God is the King of all the earth. . ."
(Psalm 67:3-4; 47:6-7)

Let the Nations Be Glad!



Let the Nations Be Glad, is part of the students' required reading for the Missions course taught by Prof. Pieter Koenraad Meijer. This book by John Piper talks about the supremacy of God in missions.

According to the book, the goal of the church ought to be worship and not missions. Mission outreach should focus on bringing more people to glorify God by worshiping Him forever. *"Missions exists because worship doesn't. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man... worship abides forever."*

This book encourages those of the Reformed faith to connect God's sovereignty in saving man with the importance of global evangelization. As Piper says, *"in the warfare of world missions, God bares his arm and triumphs for his own glory"*. Missions is supremely the work of God.

John Piper's book inspires and brings a biblical perspective on a subject that those of the Reformed faith have been accused of neglecting. Some non-Reformed people think that passion for missions is incompatible with the reformed doctrines related to the sovereign choice of God in man's salvation. They think that believing that God chooses and predestines His elect and that the elect are the only ones who will persevere to the end to be saved, leads to a church culture that gives little attention to the work of evangelism. This is a fallacy. It does not correspond to the biblical reality, nor to what happened in history, and even less to the current reality of churches and organizations in the Reformed tradition.

1) Biblical reality – We believe that the reformed doctrines are found in the Bible. There was a fervor in many biblical characters to bring the gospel to people who had never heard. We see that missionary work is a big part of the life of the apostle Paul. At the same time, it was Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit who wrote about God's unconditional election

(Romans 8, 9; Ephesians 1). His whole life was driven by a desire to make God's salvation known. *"To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some."* (1 Corinthians 9:22).

2) Historical reality – Church history says that most of the apostles died a martyr's death. All of them demonstrated great zeal for taking the good news to the ends of the world. Did not the apostles believe in the doctrines related to the sovereign choice of God in the salvation of man? Did they not go out in order to bring in the ones that God had predestined for eternal life? Besides the apostles and other contemporary disciples, history shouts the names of William Carey, David Brainerd, Adoniram Judson, Alexander Duff, David Livingstone, John Paton and a host of others who were missionaries in the Reformed and Puritan tradition.

3) Current reality – Today, churches and organizations in the Reformed tradition continue to put forth much effort to take the gospel to urban and unreached people groups. Missionaries are being trained and sent out around the world.

Finally, and most importantly, our Lord Jesus Christ, who was God's missionary *par excellence*, went out. He suffered and died, not for every person, but for the ones that God the Father gave to Him (John 17). In His prayer (recorded in this chapter), He included even those who would be saved in the twenty-first century. All Christ's disciples are called to go out with the gospel and see God do His work of rescuing His elect for His worship and glory. Reformed doctrinal understanding takes nothing away from this burden. The day is coming that there will be *"...a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!'"* (Revelation 7:9-10). Therefore, let the nations be glad!

Within and Outside the IRTC

Administrative Assistant for the President



The IRTC is thankful and pleased that our president now has an assistant, Pastor Ulisses Horta Simões from Belo Horizonte, Brazil. He has been a minister of the Word in the Presbyterian Church of Brazil since 1987 and has much academic and pastoral experience. He was a member of the founding committee of the IRTC and has been the moderator of the Board of Directors since 2005. For many years, he served as a professor of systematic theology at the Presbyterian Seminary Rev. Denoel Nicodemos Eller in Belo Horizonte. While there, he was an academic coordinator and also the supervising engineer for the construction of the seminary campus. He wrote several books, articles and journals of Reformed-confessional content such as an academic work in defense of full subscription to church confessional standards. As the president's assistant, he will be helping president Ralph Boersema from 10 to 20 hours weekly.

Update on Prof. Guimarães' Health



Prof. Sebastião Guimarães is still undergoing chemotherapy. He has had some health issues due to this treatment because it has lowered his immune system making him more vulnerable to infections. The chemo and infections have been severe burdens for our brother. Please continue to pray for his recovery.

Pray for the Persecuted Church



News channels around the world are reporting the atrocities that the "Islamic State" are committing against Christians in the Middle East. For several years, Syria has been in a civil war and the Syrian Christians are being trapped by the Islamic militias. They are losing their homes and struggling to survive. Some IRTC students have been participating in Christian organizations that are helping our brothers and sisters immigrate to Brazil and other

countries where church families are taking them into their homes and providing for their needs. We who live in free countries should pray and also consider how we may help those who are suffering because of their faith in the Lord Jesus.

Why and How to Support Us



We thank God that growth in receipts in 2013-2014 now permit us to provide gratuities for the teachers and staff. The revenue does not yet allow for a full-time president's assistant. However, the

IRTC reserves are sufficient to provide a decent bonus for our brother to serve part-time during 2015. Please pray for us and consider partnering with us to give a quality Reformed theological education to men and women of God around the world.

Our Board of Directors has adopted the amount of USD\$92,000.00 as the goal for receipts this year. This is a 50% increase from what was received last year, which is a large increase for the College. However, it has become very clear that the presidency and other administrative posts can no longer be left in the hands of volunteer part-time personnel. For more than three years we have been speaking of this urgent need. May the Lord grant that 2015 may become the year in which we are able to finally make some much-needed improvements!

"You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." 2 Timothy 2:1-2

We invite you to join us in honoring and preparing those who are striving to serve the Lord in teaching, preaching and sharing of the Word for the advancement of the Kingdom of God on earth. You can contribute financially, in prayer, and also in promoting our educational ministry to Portuguese-speaking people. If you would like to make a donation, visit the "Donations" page on our website (www.pro-rege.net/ds14.htm). There you will find all the information necessary for making your contribution in the USA. Canadian donors, please make your donations at www.irtcsociety.ca. All glory be to the Creator and Consummator of all things!

Clovis Alexandre Oliveira
IRTC Student