

## **A Young Minister's Look at the Bible Presbyterian Church**

**by Tito S. Lyro**

I came into the Bible Presbyterian Church in 1992 at the age of nineteen. The events that led me to the BP Church were clear evidence of God's sovereign hand working out his providence in my life. I was supposed to attend a school on the East Coast. However, in a space of two weeks all the plans changed drastically and I ended up in Olympia, Washington, at Pastor Dennis Leaman's home. Soon after my arrival, the Lord saved me and called me to serve him. In 1999, I was called to serve as assistant pastor at the Bible Presbyterian Church of Olympia, at which time the Northwest Presbytery ordained me. Now I am 30 years old and quite often find myself being asked about what I think of the Bible Presbyterian Church and what the opportunities are for young men that want to serve the Lord in this denomination.

When I look at the Bible Presbyterian Church, I see the place to be for a young pastor first and foremost because this denomination is faithful to the Word of God. About a year and a half ago, Pastor John Dyck<sup>1</sup> and I were involved in a cyber conversation with a young Bible Presbyterian man who was studying for the ministry. This young man asked us if the Bible Presbyterian was a successful denomination. He defined success as the amount of influence a denomination has on society. In answering his question, Pastor Dyck wisely pointed him to the fact that, according to the Scriptures, success is defined as faithfulness to God's Word. The Bible Presbyterian Church has been faithful to our Lord's Word, thus making it a very successful denomination. Young men who serve the Lord in the Bible Presbyterian Church will be challenged and encouraged to "keep the faith once delivered to the saints." This is something that must be attractive to every man who truly wants to serve the Lord.

The Bible Presbyterian Church is also a place for young pastors to be because of the opportunities that are available to them. Currently there are several vacant pulpits in the denomination<sup>2</sup>. Granted, some of the churches without pastor consist of two or three families; nevertheless, they have a building that can be used at no cost<sup>3</sup> at the very least. In addition to the vacant pulpits, there are those pulpits that will eventually become vacant. There are quite a few pastors who are nearing retirement and will be looking for a young man to take over the ministry. So, we need young men who will be ready for those pulpits.

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<sup>1</sup> Pastor John Dyck serves as pastor of the Edmonton Bible Presbyterian Church, Alberta, Canada.

<sup>2</sup> The following churches do not have a called pastor: Bible Presbyterian Church of Apollo, Pennsylvania; Trinity Presbyterian Church in Columbus, Ohio; Bible Presbyterian Church in Minerva, Ohio; Bible Presbyterian Church in Manchester, Missouri; Faith Bible Presbyterian Church, Falls Church, Virginia; Bible Presbyterian Church in Grand Junction, Colorado; The Columbia Bible Presbyterian Church in Scappoose, Oregon, has also a vacant pulpit; however, that congregation has asked Dr. John Battle to supply the pulpit indefinitely.

<sup>3</sup> The church would have to pay for utilities, but no rent or mortgage.

Another reason why young men should want to be part of the Bible Presbyterian Church is the concern that the ordained pastors exhibit for the men under their care. I experienced it first hand during my years as a candidate for the ministry in the Northwest Presbytery. Ministers would often call or visit me to see how I was doing. They would schedule study sessions to complement my seminary education. They would also simply pray for and with me. That is something I now try to do for the men that are under my care. I know that the care bestowed upon the young men is not peculiar to the Northwest Presbytery alone. I have heard testimonies from the Great Lakes, Florida, and South Atlantic presbyteries that confirm they follow the same practice as the Northwest Presbytery. This is very important for a young man to consider. The support and concern of several experienced pastors are invaluable for someone who is endeavoring to learn the ropes of the ministry.

Young men should look at the work of Western Reformed Seminary and Presbyterian Missionary Union and want to be part of the denomination that sponsors these agencies. PMU provides an excellent machine to help young men start new churches at home. Although the resources are limited, everything is in place to assist the planting of a new Bible Presbyterian church. New works are being started in Elma, Washington; Springville, New York; Chapel Hill, North Carolina; Sarasota, Florida; and in Southern California, with new contacts coming in every month. On another front, Western Reformed Seminary provides a learning environment conducive to academic excellence. From the small class sizes to the instructors' willingness to interact with the students, the atmosphere is one of scholarship and camaraderie. At this point one might say, "You don't have to be part of the Bible Presbyterian Church to attend Western Reformed." That is true. However, there is scholarship money reserved for Bible Presbyterian students. While any one would be welcome to study at WRS, only Bible Presbyterians would have access to those moneys.

Finally, young men should desire to be in the Bible Presbyterian Church because of its theological position. The Bible Presbyterian Church has come a long way through the years and is now more Reformed and Presbyterian than ever. There is a strong movement toward closer adherence to the Westminster standards and the Lord has thus far spared us from some of the theological struggles that have assailed other Presbyterian denominations. The Bible Presbyterian Church also offers a premillennial understanding of the Scriptures. Yet, it recognizes that there is much to learn in this area and acknowledges the liberty that each officer and church member has in it.

As I look at the Bible Presbyterian Church and think of the future ahead of me, I cannot think of any other group I would rather be associated with. The opportunities are great and the denomination is in a position to be mightily used by the Lord in advancing his kingdom. There is a lot of work available for young men who desire to serve the Lord in this portion of his vineyard.