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Attack by Congregational minister upon our articles on Dr Joel Beeke

It has been drawn to my attention that Rev Paul Dowling, of Whiteabbey Congregational Church, has attacked me in a sermon he preached on January 19th this year.

He was highly critical of me because of the articles I have written about Dr Joel Beeke and his fellowship with certain individuals whose theology and associations are questionable, to say the least, his promoting of unscriptural writings through his book ministry and his links with highly unorthodox organisations in very recent days.

Mr Dowling said that I was guilty of "slander", in essence he is calling me a liar, and he also states that I am an "ex-Free Presbyterian minister"!

I do not consider myself to be either. I would be deeply grieved if it were manifested to me that I had deliberately told lies about any person, especially a minister of the gospel, in order to do harm to his good name or testimony, which is the legal definition of slander.

I am a retired minister of the Free Presbyterian Church and remain in good standing within that denomination. Mr Dowling is, I understand, in frequent fellowship with a number of Free Presbyterian ministers. They could have kept him right on my standing in the Free Presbyterian Church and they might even have given him some guidance as to whether or not I was a slanderer!

In his sermon attack, Mr. Dowling is very selective in his quotations from the articles on my "Burning Bush" website. So selective indeed that I feel that anyone who takes the time to read all of the articles they refer to, will see that Mr. Dowling's case against me is somewhat less than substantial.

I think that the most effective way of demonstrating the truth of what appears in our articles on Dr Beeke is simply to state that Dr Beeke has acknowledged that Pastor Ralph Ovadal and I were correct in our evaluations and criticisms of the Refo500 organisation, of which Dr Beeke was a prominent member, and stated that he would be leaving that organisation. That was back in the latter part of 2012. However, some 6 months later, it was seen that he still was linked to Refo500 and it is not yet absolutely clear that he has shed every link to that organisation.

Furthermore, Dr Beeke acknowledged that our criticisms of his book sales were correct and said that he would take immediate steps to remove offending publications. An examination of our articles on the matter will show that too seems to be questionable.

Again, Dr Beeke admitted that he had taken out membership in some organisations which he now regretted and would take steps to sever his links with them.

All told, Dr Beeke HIMSELF confirmed the accuracy of the main thrust of our articles and that in itself shows that we were not men bent on slander but rather, as we reiterated many times, men anxious about the witness and honour of the Lord Jesus Christ and the well-being of His flock.

It still remains to be seen if Dr Beeke has acted as did David or Peter when confronted with their faults.

An email exchange that I had with Dr Beeke proved to me, that he was a man who was very careful not to be forthright and open. Two features which are linked with that work of God's grace which moves men to repentance of sin and a repudiating of former wrongdoing.

I can only commend to our readers the articles on Dr Beeke listed below and ask them to judge the matter for themselves.

If they do that as a result of Mr. Dowling's base attack upon me I can but thank him for so doing and directing some of God's people at least to the truth concerning this ongoing controversy. Truly, we can apply Joseph's words to his brethren to this matter: "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant



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it unto good," Genesis 50:20.

Ivan Foster.

1st February 2014.

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