



## The Burning Bush - Online article archive

### Dutch pastor insists he was right to 'come out of the closet'.

#### Insight into the Dutch denomination Dr Joel Beeke is anxious to promote closer links with!!!



Dustin Burggraaf

A minister in the Restored Reformed Church (HHK is the acronym from the Dutch form of the denominational name) Dustin Burggraaf, recently gave an interview to the Reformed Daily newspaper in the Netherlands. It was published on November 12th, 2016. He also published a fuller form of the interview on his own website. There follows below a translation of the version of the interview he has on his website rather than the version which appeared in print.

This matter is of great interest simply because Dustin Burggraaf came out as a homosexual in April 2014. He announced that decision in the same newspaper and the original report of that event is also posted on his website. His latest interview is a repetition of his original views and an insistence on the fact that he believes himself right to have done what he did. He indicates several times that he feels he is acting as a pastor when he speaks as he does of his homosexuality. He clearly regards this agenda as part of his ministry and calling! At another point in the interview he indicates that he believes he has the blessing, guidance and support of God in his life. It is surely the worst possible sin to claim the blessing of the thrice-holy Jehovah on the wickedness of sodomy! He goes on to encourage reformed young people to 'come out of the closet' like him and openly acknowledge their homosexual identity.

The HHK claims to be a conservative reformed church. Yet the public announcement of his homosexuality has never resulted in any church disciplinary action being taken against Rev. Burggraaf in spite of the fact that his case was examined by several judicial bodies within the HHK denomination. A church that does not discipline the wickedness of a public boast to be a sodomite, but allows this man to continue to act as a pastor leading others into his own sin, becomes a polluted organization and endorses behaviour that God consistently calls an abomination.

#### Important to Free Presbyterians

This becomes specially important to Free Presbyterians because on Sunday September 4th, 2016 Dr. Joel Beeke, who has some association with Free Presbyterian congregations and ministers in the FPCoU and the FPCNA, preached in three HHK congregations including one where one of the pastoral staff is on record as saying, as far back as 2011, that the offices of the church should be open to sodomites. Dr. Beeke also announced publicly on that occasion that his own denomination was actively pursuing formal fellowship links with the HHK. (For more on this, click [here](#).) This is unquestionably an instance of touching the unclean thing and becoming unclean as a consequence. For any to fellowship with Dr. Beeke while this matter is unresolved means that they too become a supporter of his disobedience, and of the wickedness in the HHK that he has tacitly supported by his presence.

The will of God for His people, and specially for those called of God to preach His word, is to *have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them*, Ephesians 5:11. In both aspects of duty set down in this text, Dr. Beeke has signally failed. He has entered preaching fellowship with a church body and at least one individual minister that endorse what has come to be known as 'gay christianity'. The folly and error of this association with wickedness has been pointed out to Dr. Beeke in both public and private correspondence but to date he has done little to explain or repent of this disobedience. He has certainly not obeyed God to reprove the sin he has become associated with.

What follows below provides further background to the articles already published about this controversy. Read carefully, the comments of Dustin Burggraaf will alarm God's people to distance themselves from anyone who promotes a tolerant view of this sin that has become one of the leading characteristics of the great apostasy of today. It is the compromise of Lot that calls the men of Sodom *brethren* (Gen 19:7). every child of God should desire the blessing of fellowship with God that Abraham enjoyed by keeping separate from



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Sodom, and which Lot forfeited by joining himself to that wicked society.

### **The pastor who came out of the closet. Being gay was the worst thing imaginable.**

[This article was originally published in Dutch [here](#) and the substance of it also appeared in The Reformed Daily newspaper, November 12, 2016.]

It all started with a serious car accident on 11 January 2008. Until that time, Dustin Burggraaf (36) led a quiet life as pastor of the Restored Reformed Church in Maartensdijk, a conservative orthodox denomination. The accident put his life completely on its head. Not only did he lose his rectory, Church congregation, good memory and concentration, he also discovered his homosexuality. "I often felt different from others, but gay, then just about the worst thing, I was certainly not."

When Burggraaf after a long journey accepted that he was gay, he kept it initially to himself. "It would be something between God and me and go with me to the grave." Yet he came out of the closet: two and a half years ago, he wrote an article in the Reformatorisch Dagblad in which he revealed his orientation. That coming out caused much commotion in orthodox Christian circles. He decided not to talk with the media. Now he looks back for the first time.

With a tense gaze preacher Burggraaf sits at the small kitchen table in his home village of Wijk en Aalburg. "For weeks, I have been apprehensive about this interview, because I realize what impact it may have." Still, he wants to tell his story in the hope that it will contribute to openness of discussion of the subject. "That pastoral intention, helping my struggling homosexual fellow man, I had in 2014 and I am still fully behind it."

Burggraaf chooses his words with great care, because he knows how sensitive the subject is for some. "I absolutely want to avoid unnecessary controversy, because no one is being helped by that." From experience he knows how sensitive it being gay in itself is in reformed circles. "This is sometimes underexposed. The impression can be that the debate among Christians just is about whether gays should be allowed to have a relationship. Accepting your orientation is for many reformed gays hard enough. In this retrospective interview that question therefore does not arise.

#### **How the accident led to the revelation of your orientation?**

"Through the accident, I was completely thrown back on myself. That was very confrontational, but in retrospect, also beneficial. One of the first memories I have of things after the accident, is that I lay on the stretcher and my black suit was removed. That was a lesson in itself putting things into perspective. Of course, I knew that a pastor is also only just a man, but at that time this was again underlined.

"In the heavy confrontation with myself and in learning to deal with the new situation, something else happened. I suddenly sort of fell in love. With a man. That was very strange, because such a thing had never happened to me before. That it could happen to me at all, is probably mainly due to the vulnerable situation in which I found myself after the accident. Various pieces of the puzzle fell into place, so that I could no longer avoid it and had to accept my homosexuality as a given."

Over six years later, Burggraaf, with an article in the Reformatorisch Dagblad, brought his orientation into the open. "In that article I wrote that I, during a visit to Dachau concentration camp, for the first time identified with my gay fellow human beings. I walked around there initially with the idea that I, as a Reverend would probably have had privileges, but a large poster with "Homosexual" made those dreamed-of privileges go up in smoke. On the back of that poster was a note that gays were particularly opposed by the SS. Gone were privileges! Instead of shelter because of the gown, a pink triangle would have been my part."



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"Even after the visit to Dachau I did not feel the need to make my homosexuality public. However, in the months after that, I heard stories of reformed young people who struggled with their orientation. That grabbed me, because I recognized something of my own struggle. For them I wrote the article. I was hoping to be able to contribute something to break the taboo around homosexuality. I realized that I could not remain silent."

### **In retrospect how do you view all the reactions?**

"Before I wrote the article, I had of course thought thoroughly about the consequences. Then I felt that my vocation was greater than the effects which my coming out might have. The need of some young people was so great that they balanced on the brink of the abyss. I felt I had a duty to remain silent no longer, even if only one person would be helped.

"I had expected negative comments and they came as well. They were not mild and sometimes far below level, but they confirmed all the more the need of my message. What surprised me was the large number of positive and supportive reactions. I received a lot of emails from people who wrote that thanks to the article they were for the first time able to talk with someone about their orientation. Others I was allowed to help pastorally for which I am grateful. That is why now all the commotion around it does not bother me any more. At the time yes, but now especially the positive and meaningful comments remain."

### **How has your coming-out changed how you experience your faith?**

"The last eight years I have felt that God leads my life. That I am here now is, given the seriousness of the car accident, a miracle. It will never be again what it was before, but I am thankful that I am still alive." Particularly I experienced God's guidance in the summer after my coming out. All the comments took a lot of energy and I had the idea that everything was getting too much for me. That was a really low point. When I was on my knees in front of my bed, I felt that the Lord never would lose control, even though I lost control. That gave rest. The consoling notion that God is above all and reigns over all, has grown over the years."

### **Do you picture yourself as a role model for reformed gay young people?**

"I would not use the word role model, because I cannot make the choice for another to come out of the closet. I recommend it for everyone, but in the end it depends on the individual situation. I could be open about it in my family, but that's not always the case. In many reformed families the word homosexuality brings silence. Sometimes, unfortunately, also from the pulpit there comes a verbal blow. Fortunately, there are also positive developments, but that suffering was the reason for my coming out. I felt that I as an orthodox Christian Pastor and gay, had the task to give that group a voice."

### **You stay a lot in Germany. How did you end up there**

"After the accident I lived with my parents for the first years. Mostly confined to bed, because in the beginning, as a result of my brain injury, I was not able to function well. Slowly it went better and I ended up in Germany. There I had acquaintances, who kept an eye on me where necessary, an ideal environment for further rehabilitation in peace."

"In the periods that I'm in Germany, I try to sort out everything, including my homosexuality, a bit more. That often costs a lot of energy and time, but I am thankful that I have that opportunity."

What message do you have for the reformed homosexual young person still in the closet?

"The psalm line 'Hope in God, look toward Him' I would like to give them. People can disappoint, also church people, but not God. Come to Him with your struggle, sorrow and questions. At the same time it is important to talk with someone about it. I realize very well that unfortunately not every elder or pastor is the right choice for that, but look around you and look for a trustworthy person for the talk of your life. It can help in



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the acceptance of who you are."