



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

"A Popish Octopus with a Very Long Reach"

The Transcript of a **Heart of the Matter Documentary on Refo500**. All facts stated in this documentary are from primary sources.

- Main speaker, Ralph Ovadal, pastor of Pilgrims Covenant Church
- Closing commentary by Rev. Ivan Foster, Free Presbyterian Church, Ret.



CONNECTING YOU,
THEN AND NOW

Hello, everyone; welcome to this special edition of the Heart of the Matter. For quite some time now, a few of us, a precious few of us, have been very concerned about a large, well organized, very far-reaching organization called Refo500. I hope you will take the time to listen well to this documentary, which is an in-depth look at a very deep well of ecumenical corruption, which is in truth nothing less than an instrument of popery, part and parcel of the strategy conceived and announced by Vatican II, and which has been so successfully carried out now for almost fifty years. I have spoken many times about that strategy, and I have written on it as well. It is hard not to speak on it now, but there are many facts I need to set before you in the next hour or so. Thus, I am going to only give you two quotes from two different Vatican II documents. These are things to keep in mind as we progress with this documentary.

Concerning "ecumenical dialogue" with "non-Catholic communities," especially, of course, evangelical Christians--this ecumenical dialogue which is at the heart of the Vatican II ecumenical cooperation strategy--we have this, that it "serves to transform modes of thought and behavior and the daily life of those Communities [that is, non-Catholic communities]. In this way, it aims at preparing the way for their unity of faith in the bosom of a Church one and visible: thus 'little by little,' as the obstacles to perfect ecclesial communion are overcome, all Christians will be gathered, in a common celebration of the Eucharist, into that unity of the one and only Church which Christ bestowed on His Church from the beginning. This unity, we believe, dwells in the Catholic Church as something she can never lose . . ." And of course, that is the Roman Catholic Church.

And then we have this: "ecumenical cooperation is a true school of ecumenism, a dynamic road to unity. Unity of action leads to the full unity of faith: 'Through such cooperation, all believers in Christ are able to learn easily how they can understand each other better and esteem each other more, and how the road to the unity of Christians may be made smooth.'"

The purpose of this special Heart of the Matter program is to give a much more in-depth report on Refo500 than we have ever done before, either on this program or in several articles in which Refo500 was not the sole subject. Those articles and at least one of the programs caused quite a bit of controversy and brought us a good deal of vitriolic criticisms. You can find the articles on our church web site at www.pccmonroe.org.



Vatican II

Refo500 is a very large topic; but I will strive to present enough information in the next hour or so to give the listener an understanding of the true, evil nature of Refo500, and in that, plenty of reason as to why faithful ministers, and all faithful Christians, must separate entirely from Refo500 or be in disobedience to the word of God and acting contrary to the honor of Christ Jesus, the good of His blood-bought flock, and the true faith once delivered unto the saints. We are going to close out this program with a brief commentary by my good friend Rev. Ivan Foster, a long-time, faithful contender for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

We do not expect to be widely commended for this program since names by necessity in such a warning



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

must be named. We are not out to "get" anyone any more than we have any interest in being respecters of persons. Our concern is for the honor of Christ Jesus who purchased us with His own blood, Christ Jesus and the authority of His word and the well-being of His own blood-bought church. This is what we're concerned with.

Now, I am a minister, a preacher of the word of God; but this particular program is a documentary, a fact-filled documentary. It is a rebuttal to those who have insisted ministers of Christ can be a part of Refo500. We are going to lay on the table exactly what Refo500 is. As a minister, I have preached many times on biblical separation, but today my aim is to expose and document as much as possible, in the time we have, the nature of Refo500. It is a cage of unclean birds; it is a haunt of Roman Catholics, apostate Protestants, and a few high-profile Reformed ministers who are sound in basic doctrine, but they are deeply, dangerously, treasonously, we might say, corrupted in practice.



Charles H. Spurgeon

With those men in mind, allow me to give you a quote from Charles Spurgeon, a minister who, unlike some Reformed ministers whose names you will be hearing soon, would have had nothing to do with Refo500, but rather he would have exposed it and rebuked it. This is from Spurgeon's morning sermon at the Metropolitan Tabernacle on October 7th, 1877. This is what he said during that sermon: "I know what would happen if we feared God more: we should sooner die than remain in any fellowship with popery. Every man who saw any fear of his being found in complicity with Antichrist would at once say, 'I will not have it. Popery is abhorred of the Lord, and they who help it wear the mark of the beast. I hate Antichrist, and therefore I denounce it and cry, Down with it, raze it even to the ground.' Everything that is of the Pope and popery would soon be put aside if men were but true to their consciences and their God." And what can I say but, "Amen and amen," to what Charles Spurgeon said?

Refo500: Some Foundational Facts

Refo500 is nothing less than a religious conglomeration reeking of Jesuitical intrigue. It is an ecumenical stewpot of Roman Catholic and, speaking in the general and broadest sense, Protestant churches, organizations, seminaries, and various institutions. The leadership of Refo500 includes both Roman Catholics and Protestants.

The title Refo500 refers to the 500th anniversary of what is known as the beginning of the Protestant Reformation, that is, when Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. However, the name is very deceptive. The reality, as is clear from the Refo500 official web site, is that Refo500 is about many so-called reformations of the 16th Century, including Rome's Counter-Reformation and the Council of Trent, which are discussed and analyzed in a very favorable light at various Refo500 events, including but certainly not limited to those hosted by Roman Catholic Refo500 partners, some of which I will list in a couple of minutes. But here is a quote off of the official Refo500 web site: "On the Roman Catholic side, the Counter-Reformation is considered as a consequence of the Catholic reform. In the latter case, one should consider that the church requires constant focus upon inner renewal to realize the Catholic [of course, that's Roman Catholic] ideal of life. As far as the Counter-Reformation is concerned, the Church had to maintain these in the struggle against Protestantism. The Council of Trent (1546-1563) occupies an important place in the history of the Counter-Reformation. It was, on one hand, preoccupied with the renewal of the church, but on the other hand, the various decisions reached that take the doctrine and ecclesiastical practice concern setting themselves against the Reformation again."



Also off the official Refo500 web site we have this: "Partners are free to bring their own projects into Refo500, giving their own interpretation of the term Reformation."



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

And we have this: "Out of the Reformation of the 16th century many Protestant churches did indeed arise.



"The Catholic Reformation and its Lustre"

This movement also had a significant impact upon the Roman Catholic church. Out of the Reformation, the Roman Catholic church also recognizes namely their own Roman Catholic reform (which is also known as the counter-Reformation). Refo500 also focuses on the Roman Catholic reform."

As we get started here, I do want to mention that all documentation presented in this program is accurate as of the date this program airs, and it has also been preserved.

Now, I want to read just a few more telling excerpts from the Refo500 web pages which tell about the organization, its nature, make-up, philosophy, aims, vision, partners, mission, and so forth. These are in-context excerpts,

representative of much, much more of the same sort of statements. Remember, Refo500 is a deeply ecumenical organization. So a few more excerpts from the Refo500 page which contains basic information about this ecumenical, in truth Romish octopus with many and far-reaching tentacles. The octopus, you know, uses its tentacles to grip its victims and pull them in toward its mouth in order to bite them with a poisonous bite. But, enough of metaphor, here are some additional excerpts from Refo500; I'm just going to read these excerpts; I won't tell what heading each one comes under to save time--just excerpts:

". . . the foundation's [that is, Refo500 Foundation] goal is to function as a platform for meetings and cooperative ventures for partners . . ." Now remember, Roman Catholic and Protestant partners.

"The foundation aims at: . . . (helping) . . . to create a platform and/or network of cooperation, consultation, and information exchange, with one another in the broadest sense."

"The partners collaborate upon the programs of Refo500 . . ."

"Refo500 . . . helps people to understand the meaning of the Reformation, to discover the relevance of the Reformation, and to see and experience the influence of the Reformation in several spheres. [Remember, when they're talking Reformation, they're talking about also the Counter-Reformation.] It pursues this exciting venture in a contemporary and fresh manner, with an open attitude towards the past and the present, towards church, culture, and society."

"Refo500 is working on this goal by creating an environment in which project partners can collaborate on the composition of the program and the products appearing within Refo500."

Under "Partnership Benefits," we have a number of things, including "Access to an international platform for cooperation and growing." It speaks here about working toward goals; the partners work toward their goals.

"Refo500 desires to make connections between themes from the time of the Reformation to our own. Here are the key words: renewal, change, and central relevance."

"Refo500 focuses on a broad audience and desires to reach everyone."

Before we go any farther, I should perhaps briefly introduce you to Dr. Herman Selderhuis. The very accomplished Dr. Selderhuis is the director of Refo500 and president of the Refo500 Reformation Research Consortium. He is also the professor of church history at the Theological University of Apeldoorn; it's in



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

the Netherlands. Dr. Selderhuis is a Protestant, speaking in the general sense as we will often be doing in this report; he is a deeply, unashamedly ecumenical Protestant. He is very open about this by word and association. As to the former--that is, word--consider just this Selderhuis excerpt from a 2012 interview he did with the Religion and Liberty publication of the ecumenical Acton Institute, headed up by Robert Sirico, a Roman Catholic priest. The particular question was on the state of Christianity in Europe. Included in Selderhuis's reply is this: ". . . Christianity as a way of life and a way of faith has a future and there are developments among young people. A perfect example is the young Catholic convention in Spain and the Pope attended the event there and hundreds of thousands of young people attended that Mass, and they were enthusiastic about it . . . now who will give us straight talk? Who tells us what way to go? There is a need for that and the Pope is preaching a clear message and young people are attracted to that."



Dr. Selderhuis in the center

As to his associations, Dr. Selderhuis is apparently more than happy to speak and preach with Roman Catholics, as he does in official Refo500 functions.

Remember Dr. Selderhuis as we go along here. He is very, very active and engaged in Refo500, and you are going to hear his name again as we mention just a few of many Refo500 events and just a very few of the many Roman Catholics and Protestants involved in those events all around the world.

Now, it is important to understand that Refo500, from top to bottom, is spiritually, religiously, ecumenically rotten to the core and that it has been so, and very openly, from its very beginnings. There is no way any minister could involve himself in this organization without knowing what he was involved with, and there is no way any minister would involve himself in this organization if he was determined to remain faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Official Refo500 Opening in 2010

The official Refo500 web site contains a very short report titled "2000 People Visit Refo500 Opening." This event took place in the fall of 2010 in the Netherlands. That's the headquarters, so to speak, of the Refo500 worldwide organization; it was just tempting to say, "one world organization."

Now for those with eyes to see, it is most revealing to consider those who were chosen to speak at this official and public opening of Refo500. Dr. Antoine Bodar was a speaker. According to his bio, this man was educated by the Jesuits, and he is an ordained Roman Catholic priest who currently spends about nine months of the year in Rome. In answer to the question of whether the Reformation was a mistake or progress, Priest Bodar replied in true Jesuitical fashion, "Because of reform [that is, certain superficial reforms in the Roman church]: progress; because of the schism [speaking here of those whom the Lord led out of the Roman church, saved, and gathered together in faithful churches]: a mistake."

And quoting also from the Refo500 article: "Other speakers that evening, including Mr. Kees van der Staay . . . and Dr. Anne van der Meiden, called the church division after the Ref-



Priest Antoine Bodar



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

ormation a negative result. There was a positive evaluation also, for example on the part of Dr. Heleen Dupuis (VVD), who dubbed Protestantism and liberalism 'obvious partners.'" So that's a good thing; that's a good thing she says. Well, yes, apostate Protestantism and liberalism are obvious partners; and that's called "positive" at the Refo500 event here, the official opening event. I don't have any information on the man I mentioned, van der Staay, and almost none on van der Meiden, other than he is a liberal Protestant.

Now as for Dr. Heleen Dupuis, this woman is involved in numerous, but not good, movements and groups, religious and political. In fact, she currently holds political office as well. She is emeritus professor of medical ethics, Leiden University, and she looms very large in the Dutch euthanasia movement, with all its horrors. In fact, she is the past chairman of the NVVE (Dutch Association for Voluntary Euthanasia). We do not have time to say more on Professor Dupuis other than to mention she holds a medal awarded to her by the Masons. Again, this is one of the people chosen to speak at the opening event of Refo500 in Europe.



Dr. Heleen Dupuis, past chairman of the Dutch Association for Voluntary Euthanasia

The Refo500 opening event program also included a roundtable discussion with a couple of Muslims, Sadik Harchaoui and Ahmed Akgunduz. The first was from the Institute for Multicultural Development; the second was the rector of the Islamic University of Rotterdam.



"Pastor" Christiane Berkvens performs rituals for those committing suicide and for sodomite weddings.

Another speaker at the Refo500 opening event was Dr. Christiane Berkvens. She is the emeritus professor of European culture at the Radboud University Nijmegen. She's an author; she's a "pastor" in the deeply apostate Remonstrant Church, which is a Refo500 partner I'm going to tell you about later. We talked about them on a previous show on Refo500 quite awhile ago. According to a translation of this woman's web site, she's titled Mother Superior. In that capacity, she performs various rituals, for instance for those committing suicide and for sodomite weddings. We have to move along, but this should suffice to define what sort of "Christianity" Dr. Christiane Berkvens practices and preaches. Again, she was another featured speaker at the official opening of Refo500 in Europe.

Three other speakers included representatives of the apostate, very pro-homosexual Protestant Church in the Netherlands (that's a denomination). There were Roman Catholic speakers also, including Mariska Orbán-Haas who was also at that time, and still is, the editor of a publication called the Catholic Newspaper.

Two speakers at this event, this opening event of Refo500 in Europe--two speakers, one Roman Catholic and one an apostate Protestant--spoke on the use of social media to reach youth. Quoting now from the Refo500 report: "According to these speakers, Twitter and other social media appear to function as a means to reach youth. Young people are looking for role models, which also can be found through social media. The church must therefore put forth inspiring leaders." "The church"--a Roman Catholic and a Protestant are giving this presentation--"the church." It is obvious that this dangerous error is foundational to Refo500, that is that Protestants and Roman Catholics are all part of "the church"; and what is obvious is that Refo500 is an ecumenical tool of popery to corrupt the Lord's flock, to further Romanize the thinking and understanding of evangelicals and bring Protestants home to Rome. Those Protestants involved with Refo500 are furthering the cause of Antichrist, the pope.

But I close this segment of our report on Refo500 with this telling last paragraph from that official report on the opening event of Refo500: "The Refo500 partners indicated that there was a great amount of interest among those who came by their booths. Many partners have also realized that Refo500 is a good platform



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

to collaborate with other organizations, despite their differences in religious background." Yes, indeed, collaborate with other organizations despite their differences in religious background, and the pope and the devil said, "Amen."

Official Refo500 Partners and Sponsors

I want to take now just a little time--and a little time is all we have for any one topic--and tell you about the official partners and sponsors of Refo500. These include a very broad range of organizations from North America, Europe, Asia, and elsewhere--Africa, for instance--including churches and seminaries and religious organizations, Protestant as well as Roman Catholic; and there is some Jewish involvement as well. There are also state universities and other secular organizations involved. As I talk about this, I'm talking about the specific partners and sponsors. There are other organizations, ministries, etc. involved in Refo500; they're just not partners or sponsors.



From the John XXIII Foundation for Religious Studies, Italy

Now, there are a couple different lists of Refo500 partners and sponsors on the official site. For whatever reason, they vary a little bit. What I'm saying is, several of the sponsors and partners do not appear on one list, yet they'll appear on another list. It doesn't mean they're not partners and sponsors; they are. We know that by seeing how active they are in this organization. You can find a list for partners and sponsors by going to the Refo500 home page, and then click on "Partners and Sponsors" at the top of that home page. Then you can go to another list of the partners and sponsors by clicking also on the same page on "Who What Where," and then you follow through on that, and you'll find lists that way too.

I am going to give you just a few examples of many official Refo500 partners, as of the date this program airs. And it

is important to remember that there are also many individuals involved in Refo500 events who are from organizations and seminaries and so forth which are not official Refo500 partners, for instance, the Roman Catholic Notre Dame University. And one more thing: again, the information on present and active Refo500 partners, like all information I am sharing, is well documented; it's checked and rechecked; it is the reality as of the date this program first airs.

Just a few then of the Roman Catholic Refo500 official partners and sponsors which are listed; they include:

- the John XXIII Foundation for Religious Studies, Italy
- the Jesuit Historical Institute in Africa, Kenya
- the Catholic University Leuven, the oldest extant Roman Catholic University in the world
- the Catholic Association for Ecumenism, Netherlands



The Jesuit Historical Institute in Africa, Kenya

Another organization we have here that we'll put under Roman Catholic Refo500 partners is Boston Theological Institute, an association of ten theological schools. We'll put this under Roman Catholic; these schools are Roman Catholic, but they're also Jewish, Orthodox, or Episcopalian! So we'll put it here, and we can put it a few other places as well, I guess.

Next, here is just a small sample of many of the Protestant Refo500 official partners and sponsors:

- Beeson Divinity School, Samford University, USA, Timothy George, dean



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

- Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary, Canada, Gerhard H. Visscher, principal
- Crossway book publisher, USA
- Fuller Theological Seminary, USA, Richard J. Mouw, president--the notorious Richard J. Mouw
- Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, Dr. Joel Beeke, president, and Reformation Heritage Books, Dr. Joel Beeke, editorial director, both USA
- Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, USA, Dr. Albert Mohler, president
- United Theological Seminary, USA: This is a United Methodist seminary which boasts, "United is a seminary of The United Methodist Church that welcomes students from many faith traditions."
- The Providence Forum, USA
- Westminster Seminary CA, USA, W. Robert Godfrey, president
- Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, USA, Peter Lillback, president
- The Remonstrant Church, Netherlands
- Theological University of Apeldoorn

As I alluded to earlier, there are official Refo500 partners which somewhat defy specific categories, such as the Ecumenical Institute for Inter-Religious Dialogue at the University of Trier; that's in Germany. There is the Boston Theological Institute, which I mentioned. There is the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty. The president of that is Robert Sirico--I mentioned this earlier--a Roman Catholic priest; but it is ecumenical with Protestants involved as well. We know that Lord Acton, of course, was a Roman Catholic, and so Acton Institute; but there are Protestants in this too; it's headed up by a priest.

Now Witte Travel & Tours, headquartered in Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA, is the official North American Refo500 travel agency. The Witte Travel & Tours web site states: "For more than three decades, Witte Travel & Tours has been designing and operating tours for pastors and their congregations, religious organizations, colleges and universities, scholars, historians, and family groups. Each tour is a made-to-order combination of religious activities, popular attractions, hidden treasures, and free time. Whether it's a pilgrimage to a holy site, an in-depth study tour, or an adventure amid the beauty, history, and culture of a region or country, it's a blessing on every level. . . . Witte Travel & Tours has arranged hundreds of tours for Reformed, Lutheran, Methodist, Catholic, Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Baptist groups . . ." We see here that the Witte Travel & Tours web site documents tours to such places as the Fatima Shrine in Portugal and various other Roman Catholic sites in other countries, including other shrines.



Priest Robert Sirico



Habemus Papam! First trip to Rome after the conclave already booked this morning!

Like · Comment · Share

3 people like this.

includes trips to Roman Catholic sites. So, even the travel agencies for Refo500 are deeply, deeply ecumenical in nature.

In Europe, Terra Lu Travel, headquartered in Germany, is also a Refo500 travel partner. I told you that Witte is the official North American Refo500 travel agency, and it takes people all over North America and really all over the world. Well, you also have Terra Lu involved; Terra Lu is a Refo500 travel partner. Terra Lu specializes in "Faith Based Travel," same as Witte Travel & Tours; and Terra Lu also includes



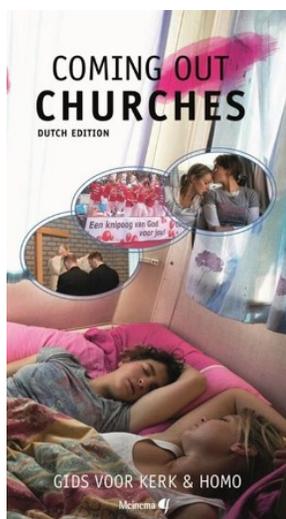
The Burning Bush - Online article archive

Now, in that partial list of Protestant Refo500 partners and sponsors, you heard a number of apostate Protestant organizations, including, but certainly not limited to, Beeson Divinity School and Fuller Theological Seminary. The Remonstrant Church, really a denomination, comes under the heading of apostate Protestant. The Remonstrants, one of the earliest Refo500 partners, deny any number of the essential doctrines of our faith; and on their web site, they boast of such accomplishments as these: "The Remonstrants were the first church in the world to open marriage for same-sex couples. It did so as early as 1986. The Remonstrants were one of the first churches in the Netherlands to ordain women as ministers. The Remonstrants are open for dialogue with members of other Christian denominations and of other religions. They were among the churches that established



The Remonstrants

the World Council of Churches in 1948." These are the bragging points, so to speak, of the Remonstrant Church. The Remonstrants' statement of faith includes this heretical declaration which denies the deity and penal atonement of Christ: "We believe in Jesus, a Spirit-filled human, the face of God, seeing us and disturbing us. He loved humanity and was crucified but he lives, beyond his own and our death. He is our holy example of wisdom and courage and he brings God's eternal love close to us."



A Remonstrant Facebook post

And let me just quote a little more from the Remonstrants' web site; here's one: "The Remonstrant Church is a community of faith which, rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and true to its principle of freedom and tolerance, seeks to worship and serve God. Ever since their foundation in 1619 the Remonstrant Church has been a community of discerning, curious, freethinking people, where a high emphasis is placed on tolerance, freedom of faith and thinking."

We have this about the Bible: "Remonstrants see the Bible as a special and inspiring collection of testimonies. It testifies of people's experience of a presence or absence of God in their lives and in the world. It is a special book, because its stories can still guide us today towards an understanding of how God and humanity can be united."

Official Refo500 Launch in North America in June, 2010

Well, I have already spoken briefly of the 2010 opening of Refo500 in Europe. Now let me tell you just a little bit about the launching of the North American manifestation of Refo500. I will mention here that this is all one organization, and the main players are active on both sides of the Atlantic, all around the world, in fact.

I have before me an official Refo500 press release; it's dated June 23, 2010 and titled "North American Launching of Refo500." It is relevant to note who was involved in that launch event, especially because they are called the staff and also the key North American leaders. Well, let's read a little bit from that press release: "The North American arm of a multi-year project to highlight and celebrate the relevance of the Reformation as a movement of renewal and change was launched in Atlanta, Georgia, on June 21-22, 2010. Meeting at the Emory University Center for the Study of Law and Religion, Dr. Herman Selderhuis, the International Director of the Refo500 project (www.refo500.com), introduced staff and key North American leaders."

And then we have the various staff and key North American leaders mentioned. You have Dr. David W. Hall; they say here he's the former director of Calvin500; he was appointed as the North American director for Refo500. You have here mention of Dan Hermen and Jan Peterson-Wayward of Witte Travel, Grand Rapids, Michigan. And then also you have Dr. Joel Beeke; in this case, they mention he's representing Refo500 partner Reformation Heritage Books. You remember Dr. Beeke's seminary is also a Refo500 partner. RHB and the seminary are currently found on the list one finds through the "Who What Where" link. On the main page



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

of the English Refo500 site, three out of four links going to partner lists go to that list with PRTS and RHB included. Later on, you will see that Dr. Beeke himself is very active in speaking with Refo500. Here he is called in this press release--he's not staff, so I guess, key North American leader of Refo500.

Let's go on here. The Refo500 press release says, "Project Leader Karla Apperloo summarized Refo500 as a project that 'wants to make connections between the past and the present, and also between partners working together. This Atlanta meeting shows perfectly how it works.'"



Refo500 launch in North America

We have a picture included with the press release; it shows the following Refo500 personalities posed together at the 2010 North American launching of Refo500. We have Frank James, Dan Hermen, Herman Selderhuis, David Hall, John Witte, Joel Beeke, Karla Apperloo-Boersma, John Thompson, Jan Peterson-Wayward, Michael Haykin, and Bob Godfrey.

The First-Ever Refo500 Conference in North America in September, 2010

Now the first Refo500 conference which took place in North America--this would be the first conference now, not the launching--was held at the campus of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. Now you know that Albert Mohler is the president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. This was held September 27-28,

2010. That seminary is also a Refo500 partner.

A report on this event is found on the Refo500 web site; it's titled "First Refo500 Conference in North America at Southern Baptist Seminary, September 28, 2010, Louisville, Kentucky, USA." Here is just the first paragraph of this Refo500 article: "A growing international network of leaders, scholars, and pastors, focusing on the abiding significance of the Reformation, held an enthusiastic conference at the campus of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, September 27-28. The first North American Conference assembled numerous speakers to launch the movement, which will sponsor a robust series of events through 2017 . . ."



Refo500 Conference, Louisville.

Here is a little information from that Refo500 report and the conference schedule on the various speakers at the conference. As might be expected, Herman Selderhuis spoke. Dr. Joel Beeke and Dr. Albert Mohler both spoke as did Frank James of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary; Dr. John Fesko of Westminster Seminary, California; Erik Herrmann, Concordia Lutheran Seminary; as well as a number of other personalities. Those last three speakers, James, Fesko and Herrmann, I am completely unfamiliar with; that's the first I've heard their names, as far as I know.



Dr. Timothy George

I am very familiar with the out-and-out apostate Protestant Dr. Timothy George, who was another speaker at this first Refo500 conference in North America. Dr. Timothy George is the dean and professor of divinity, Beeson Divinity School at Samford University, and he's the senior theological advisor for Christianity Today. He is also on the editorial boards of First Things and also Books & Culture, and he's currently the chair of the Doctrine and Christian Unity Commission of the Baptist World Alliance. It is an understatement to say, none of that is good! Timothy George, who



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

likes to speak of Mary as the "Mother of God," has also been very active in the International Baptist-Roman Catholic Dialogue and the Evangelicals and Catholics Together movement and documents. Timothy George also joined with the late Chuck Colson and the Romanist Robert George to co-author the Manhattan Declaration, which was made public at a news conference on November 20, 2009, ten months before this first Refo500 conference in North America at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Of course, Mohler also signed the Manhattan Declaration. Among Refo500 Protestants and Catholics, there are a number of Manhattan Declaration signers, and you would expect that, wouldn't you?

There were other speakers at this first North American Refo500 event. I certainly do not know anything about a number of them; I know very little about Clifton Kirkpatrick of the far from faithful World Alliance of Reformed Churches. The title of Mr. Kirkpatrick's message was "An Ecumenical Celebration? How to Work Together with Fruit and without Frustration." I have not heard or read that message, but I can tell you that the World Alliance of Reformed Churches for decades has been in ecumenical dialogue with a number of churches including the Pentecostals, the Orthodox, and more than any other church, with the Roman Catholic Church. The World Alliance of Reformed Churches has since that first Refo500 conference combined with another group to form the World Communion of Reformed Churches, which is no improvement whatsoever! Nevertheless, here is a quote from the web site of Mr. Kirkpatrick's organization at the time he spoke at the Louisville Refo500 conference with the individuals I mentioned: "Through international bilateral and multi-lateral dialogues, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches helps to foster deeper understanding and broader cooperation among different church families . . ." So it is not too hard to imagine what the subject matter of Mr. Kirkpatrick's message would be, that message he gave at the first North American Refo500 conference at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary with Mohler, with George, with Beeke et al.

By the way, the Refo500 report on that conference also includes this: "Among the widely published authors for a book signing at the Lifeway Bookstore at Southern's campus as part of this conference were: Herman Selderhuis, Timothy George, and Joel Beeke." So they teamed up to sign, autograph their books together at the far from faithful Lifeway Bookstore.

Now, I cannot report on every Refo500 event and conference held thus in North America, or for that matter, Europe and elsewhere. Nor do I have information on every such event planned. But, I'm going to mention just two official North American Refo500 gatherings which have taken place.

A Theological Menagerie with Refo500 in the Thick of It

But first, I want to tell you about an event in which Refo500 played a big part but was not an official sponsor. In October of 2011, Refo500 took part in an event put on by an organization titled the Sixteenth Century Society and Conference. That is the actual name of the organization, and it also puts on conferences. The one in October 2011 took place in Fort Worth, Texas. Refo500 is a very large independent organization; it's worldwide, just as I have described. But Refo500, along with a number of other organizations--Protestant, secular, and Catholic--are also affiliated with the Sixteenth Century Society and Conference. Now, this organization put on a multi-day conference, and Refo500 took part in it. This was back, again, in 2011. And in fact, they had a conference in 2012, I understand, as well, and Refo500 was there, but I have information on the 2011 conference. And it was quite a theological menagerie. Some speakers were from colleges, such as the Mormon Brigham Young University and the Roman Catholic University of Notre Dame. And then you had Fuller Theological Seminary represented, and you had Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary represented as well.

Here is a sampling of the titles of some of the many, diverse messages given during this particular conference; here we go: "Knowing God Through Dreams." Here's another one: "Professional Alliances: Whores, Petty Criminals, and Other Working Women." Here's another one: "'Amongst those Beds so bravely deckt': Isabella Whitney and the Construction of Female Narrative Authority." You have "The Roman Curia and 'Works' of Conversion under Gregory XIII." You have one called "Heavenly Witchcraft" which has to do, apparently, with "the Divine Feminine," we're told. "Poetry and Mysticism: Women's Catholic Activism under



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

Hapsburg Rule." You have "Stylizing Sainthood: The Beatification Process and the Autobiography of Agueda de la Cruz."

One segment of the conference was titled "The Implementation and Interpretation of Tridentine Reform in Early Modern Europe"; so that's the Decrees of Trent, and they call this reform. This segment included messages with titles such as "From Discipline to Mercy: Model Tridentine Bishops in Italy." Here's one: "A Jesuit textual reading of Christ's Passion and Mary from the Ceiling Paintings at the Church in Antwerp."

Now, it bears mentioning that this conference boasted both a Roman Catholic mass and a Protestant church service. But what of the Refo500 speakers; what about that segment of the conference? They were Randall Zachman, from the Roman Catholic University of Notre Dame; Benjamin Mayes, Concordia Publishing House (that would be Lutheran); and last, but not least, Dr. Joel Beeke, Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. Karla Apperloo-Boersma, the project manager for Refo500, was the chair.

Refo500 also had another section of the conference as well. The organizer of both of these Refo500 sections at this conference was Herman Selderhuis. The speakers of the other Refo500 section included a Norwegian and a Swede whose names I'm not going to attempt and then also Charles Cortright, Wisconsin Lutheran College.

Just a Few of the Many Refo500 Events Held Thus Far

The apostate Beeson Divinity School (Refo500 partner) was the host of a Refo500 Reformation Spirituality Conference November 1-2, 2011 in Birmingham, Alabama. The official Refo500 Internet promo for that event sports--and it's not surprising--an idolatrous, very Romish picture of "Christ" on the cross. Speakers at this event were Carl Beckwith, Gisela Kreglinger, Timothy George (there he is again), Gerald Bray, Herman Selderhuis, Karla Apperloo-Boersma, Graham Cole, Piotr Malysz. This conference featured a "Vespers Service" and "Homily offered by Ed Hurley, Senior Pastor, South Highland Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, Alabama."



Now, on this side of the Atlantic, Refo500 events are not restricted to the USA. I've given you a couple, just a couple, examples of some of the events that have taken place; but they're not restricted to just the USA on this side of the Atlantic. For instance, this past January 18-19, 2013, the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary in Hamilton, Ontario, a Refo500 partner, hosted a special event called Your Only Comfort Conference. The speakers included Lyle Bierma of Calvin Theological Seminary, Herman Selderhuis, Jason van Vliet of Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary, and then again, Dr. Joel Beeke.

Dr. Joel Beeke, Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary; Benjamin Mayes, Concordia Publishing House; Randall Zachman, University of Notre Dame.

For our American listeners, I am going to mention here, based on the great many official Refo500 Internet documents we've read, we've researched, if I had to name the two Americans most involved in Refo500 here in North America and elsewhere, and right from the birth of the beast, I would have to say Dr. Timothy George and Dr. Joel Beeke. The latter, that is Dr. Beeke, appears to range far and wide, speaking at Refo500 events; I've mentioned a couple he's spoken at. Of course, he was at the official launch of Refo500 in North America. But I say, he ranges far and wide. For instance, he was a speaker at the May 25-26, 2012 Refo500 Asia Annual International Conference at Chongshin University in Seoul, Korea. In a minute, I'm going to briefly fill you in on an upcoming Refo500 event, a big one and very much promoted, that will take place in Europe which Dr. Beeke is going to be leading and, of course, doing a lot of speaking during that multi-day event.

Due to time constraints, we need to then turn our attention, very briefly, to Refo500 events in other parts of



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

the world. I have already told you about the official launch event for Refo500 in Europe. There have been quite a number of Refo500 events since that day in 2010. For instance, we could jump to 2012. February 9, there was an official Refo500 meeting in Leuven, Belgium organized by Refo500 partners, the Catholic University of Leuven, John XXIII Foundation for Religious Studies, and the Evangelical Theological Faculty. I doubt the names of the speakers at this event would ring a bell with many, if any, of you listeners. Suffice it to say, they were from those three organizations, two Roman Catholic, one evangelical, so-called. Some titles of the messages included "The Roman Lenten Synods of 1074-1075 and the Impact of the Reform Ideas of Pope Gregory VII on the Local Churches." We have "Protestant Confessions in Ecumenical Perspective." We have "The Critical Edition of the Vatican II Documents." We have also "The Council of Trent Revisited." Those are some of the names of the messages presented.



Karla Apperloo-Boersma at the Reformation Spirituality Conference



RC University of Leuven

The Roman Catholic University of Leuven has been from the start a very big Refo500 player, already hosting a number of Refo500 events and with more in the works.

We certainly do not have time to consider all those events and everything about them. But I want to just quote one telling statement from an official Refo500 promotion of a Refo500 conference which was held at the Leuven University from the 29th of November through December 1st, 2012. Here is that statement: "In the religious developments in Northwest Europe, the Bible has often been instrumental, whether as a point of reference, as a stumbling block, or simply in and of itself." The organizers of that particular Refo500 event were from the Catholic University of Leuven, the Netherlands Bible Society, the VU University of Amsterdam, Johannes a Lasco Library, Emden; and then also included was Refo500 director--here he is again--Herman Selderhuis, the man who seems to be everywhere.

A Few of Many Upcoming Refo500 Events

In scanning upcoming Refo500 events already being promoted, one finds Roman Catholic organizations and speakers; a great number of out-and-out apostate Protestants, organizations and speakers; and then also a few high-profile Reformed ministers and teachers--a few--who have the reputation of being solid as a rock in doctrine, but they clearly are badly corrupted as to practice.

We really do not have time to run through all of the other events which Refo500, on various web sites, is promoting, including a number of grossly ecumenical and, in some cases, heavily Roman Catholic events, including events favorably dealing with the Council of Trent. One of those upcoming events dealing favorably with Trent is titled "1563 - Heidelberg and Trent. Evangelical and Catholic Boundaries and Approaches." That's September and then also in October of 2013. It's put on by several "Protestant" institutions and the Ecumenical Institute University of Trier. A Refo500 promo says, "Above all, the central question is this: what boost for the ecumenical dialogue of Heidelberg and Trent went out?"

At least two upcoming Refo500 conferences are being sponsored directly by Jesuit organizations; I mean, they are, by definition, Jesuit organizations, openly Jesuit. But then again, this whole Refo500 ecumenical stew reeks of Jesuitical intrigue, doesn't it?

In the time we have left, I'm going to mention one heavily promoted Refo500 European event since it's going to be taking place in just short of seven weeks now and then also mention a strange Refo500 Train tour coming up, strange for a number of reasons, including the musical performers. And then we are going to have to wrap this very large, troubling subject up.

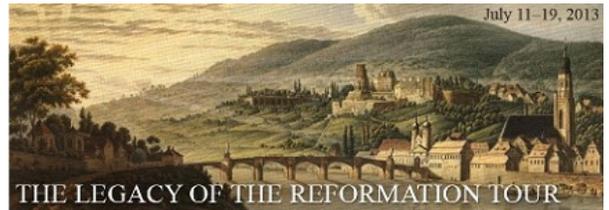
This July, the 11th through the 19th, Dr. Jason Van Vliet, Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary, and Dr. Joel Beeke, Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, will be leading an official Refo500 tour through historic sites in Germany and the Netherlands. Of those speakers, Dr. Beeke seems to be the one most heavily,



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

very heavily, promoting this tour--on his personal blog, on his seminary web site, and then also on his church denomination web site.

The tour is titled The Legacy of the Reformation. In addition to the tour guide leaders and speakers, the two I mentioned--that is, Dr. Jason Van Vliet and Dr. Joel Beeke--Dr. Herman Selderhuis is going to come around on the Lord's Day morning of the tour, July 14, and preach; and then Dr. Beeke is going to lead the evening service, we're told.



Legacy of the Reformation tour

This particular Refo500 event, The Legacy of the Reformation, appears to be Protestant in nature. Some Refo500 events are Romanist; some are grossly ecumenical, mixing Romanists and Protestants and others; and some are Protestant. But all are part and parcel of the one corrupt whole. Of course, this is the seductive, Vatican II nature of Refo500. It is an absolute desensitizing, devil's brew of truth and error, of Romanism and Protestantism. It is a your truth is truth, and my truth is truth; it is a smorgasbord of doctrine and ideologies. It is an eclectic religious, spiritual egalitarianism in action; it is a dialogue between supposed theological equals, per the Vatican II strategy.



Now, just a few words on this Refo500 Train tour which takes place in May of next year: it's described as a "Rail Cruise to the Reformation Cities in Europe." There are a number of speakers here; some are from other countries, such as South Korea. I'll mention some of the names that

are going to sound familiar to many of you: Timothy George--there he is again. You have Robert Godfrey, Westminster Seminary; you have Michael Haykin, of course the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. There's Peter Lillback, Westminster Theological Seminary; and you have a number of others here. There's Herman Selderhuis again, of course. So those are some of the men who will be on this tour; they'll be doing the leading, and they'll be doing the preaching.

A Refo500 promotion of the train tour declares its purpose to be "Travel, Ecumenical Fellowship and Knowledge." Music on this train tour is going to be provided by a group called Lost and Found. Now, I am going to play you a sample of this group's very bizarre music. **Listen to this.** Yes, you heard what you just heard. That's from the group Lost and Found; and they're going to be playing the music, providing the music on this Refo500 Train tour. It seems to me that bizarre music is just about right for the unsightly Refo500 conglomeration, no doubt cooked up by Rome.



Lost and Found

But I want to mention just one more thing about the Refo500 Train tour next May. On the official agenda of the train tour is this: "Evening worship: Baptism Remembrance at St Peter and Paul Center for Baptism." This is in Eisleben, Germany. So what is this baptismal remembrance which is on the Refo500 Train tour schedule here? I had never heard of such a ritual; perhaps some of you have. We did some research, and we found out that the United Methodist Church, the United Church of Christ, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America all use the baptismal remembrance rite. So what I am going to do is just read you some excerpts from an ELCA web site description of a baptismal remembrance ritual. There is going to be one on this Refo500 Train tour; it says, "Evening worship: Baptism Remembrance at St Peter and Paul Center for Baptism." Let's read this from the ELCA web site, a description of baptismal remembrance, of that ritual.

"Baptism is the foundational event that brings us into the community of faith and gives us our identity as God's people. . . . There are times and occasions when the sprinkling with water of an entire assembly can provide a powerful sign and symbol for the affirmation and renewal of baptism. . . . It is a good thing for communities of faith to affirm their baptism at various times throughout the year. The most important



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

time for the affirmation of baptism is at the Easter Vigil. On this night God makes new Christians, and those of us who are already baptized renew that covenant. Sprinkling with water . . . helps to emphasize and make real the affirmation and renewal taking place. The sprinkling usually happens after the assembly has responded to specific questions affirming their intention to continue to live as God's people. As music is sung . . . an acolyte holding a bowl of water and the Presiding Minister move together throughout the assembly. The Presiding Minister may use a pine branch or a special sprinkler . . . The Presiding Minister dips the branch or sprinkler in the bowl of water as necessary. It is helpful for the Presiding Minister to sprinkle the water using a large arc-type action with the arm rather than just flicking the wrist. In that way large groups of people can feel the touch of the water at the same time. Some people have found it helpful to trace the sign of the cross on themselves as they are sprinkled, thus reminding themselves that they have been baptized into Christ's death and resurrection. Some congregations, especially in new or renewed buildings, gather in worship spaces that are flexible and provide for easy movement of the assembly. An alternative to sprinkling in these settings is to invite the entire assembly to come to the font and renew their baptism by placing their hand in the water and making the sign of the cross or simply touching the face. . . . Other appropriate times for sprinkling are the Day of Pentecost, the Baptism of our Lord, and All Saints Sunday. It is also a powerful sign and a comforting gesture to sprinkle the coffin at the beginning of the funeral service . . ."



Baptism remembrance rite

Now keep in mind that list of the Refo500 Train tour leaders and speakers. They were all Protestants, yet the itinerary of that Refo500 event includes that very Romish baptismal remembrance rite. But again, this is part and parcel of the rotten, deceptive, ecumenical heart of Refo500.

Between now and through 2017, there are already a great number of official Refo500 events planned, with more to be announced. Time just does not permit us to list, let alone speak about, any more of them. I do want to mention though, according to the official Refo500 web site, there is even a Refo500 Summer School coming up this summer. This Refo500 school is going to be held August 26-31--where?--at the John XXIII Foundation for Religious Studies. Among the teachers and teaching units will be Professor Violet Soen, Catholic University Leuven; she's going to be speaking and teaching on the Tridentine decrees. You have a professor here from Bologna, the director, in fact, of the John XXIII Foundation for Religious Studies; he'll be teaching on the Second Vatican Council. You have another teacher from the same place; he'll be teaching on the Latin works of Benedict XIV.

Closing Comments

We have focused on the organization, the nature, the personalities, and the events of Refo500. The Scriptures which plainly, clearly, forcefully forbid Christians from having any part in and with such an organization are plentiful. For instance, one immediately thinks of that passage in 2 Corinthians chapter 6, verses 14 to the end of the chapter, ending with "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." And of course, it's very, very relevant to go on into that first verse in chapter seven: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." We have been speaking about spiritual fornication here as we're speaking about Refo500. Now, I have preached on biblical separation many times, and right now, time necessitates that I move to wrap this documentary on Refo500 up and bring things to a close.

Refo500 is a very real and present spiritual danger, a tool of Rome in her relentless quest to subvert the authority of the word of God, to desensitize the Lord's people to Romish blasphemy and idolatry, to corrupt the Lord's blood-bought church, to lure evangelicals into spiritual fornication, to overturn the Reformation. To those brethren who cannot seem to understand this, we say, in the words of the inspired Apostle, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

been evidently set forth, crucified among you?"

I have asked Rev. Ivan Foster, who shares my concerns over Refo500 and has stood with me together on this issue, to also share some thoughts in closing.

The text of Rev. Ivan Foster's commentary at the conclusion of the Heart of the Matter broadcast, "A Popish Octopus with a Very Long Reach"

"The underlying spirit of Refo500"

Paul the apostle, when speaking of the spirit of antichrist and rebellion at work amongst the nations said this to the church at Thessalonica: "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way," 2 Thessalonians 2:7.

Paul refers here to what I might call 'the workings of the spirit of lawlessness' which has been active amongst the nations since the fall of Adam.

The activities of this spirit of lawlessness is termed a 'mystery' because of its secretive, clandestine and covert enterprises. This is a spirit which stands in complete contrast to the spirit in which the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ functions.

Openness marks the gospel.

It is written of the Saviour that He "went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people," Matthew 4:23.

When on trial before the High Priest, He answered a question about His doctrine with these words: "I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said," John 18:20-21.

There was no concealment, no cunning craftiness, no hidden agenda with the Saviour and His disciples. Paul says of the ministry of the apostles and early church: "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God," 2 Corinthians 4:1-2.

Craftiness is the way of the devil.

Hear Peter's definition of the servants of the devil against whom he warns his readers. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not," 2 Peter 2:1-3.

There will ever be this contrast between the workings of God's Kingdom and the workings of the devil and his agents. One is marked by forthrightness and plainness while the other is marked by secretiveness and underhandedness and deceit.

By bearing this in mind we may rightly evaluate the activities of the organisation called Refo500. It states its purpose in this fashion - and we quote. "Refo500 is the international platform for knowledge, expertise, ideas, products and events, specializing in the 500 year legacy of the Reformation. On the platform all kinds



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

of partners from all over the world work together, to offer a program for a wide audience and to show the relevance of the reformation. Refo500 participants include Protestant and Catholic organizations, universities, seminaries, museums and so on. The platform is open to every organisation that agrees with the goal of Refo500." However, Dr Joel Beeke would place Refo500 at the heart of the celebration of God's wonderful work of grace in setting free the nations of Europe from the yoke of papal bondage. (See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LTnWXnmYgB8>).

But despite Dr Beeke's claims, its evangelical leaders are working with papal institutions and organisations and these agents of Rome, in keeping with their ancient purpose, are clearly seeking to re-establish themselves as bona fide representatives of the Kingdom of Christ.

This is that spirit of which Jude warned.

"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ," Jude 1:3-4.

Refo500 facilitates the "creepers" of popery and liberalism as they seek to turn the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Against such there must be the voice of a Jude raised to warn the flock.

Furthermore, against such there must be the work of digging and an uncovering that the prophet Ezekiel was directed by God to undertake in order that the hidden things of darkness be brought into the light.

Hear these words from Ezekiel chapter 8:6-12. "He said furthermore unto me, Son of man, seest thou what they do? even the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary? but turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations. And he brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall. Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall: and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door. And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here. So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, pourtrayed upon the wall round about. And there stood before them seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel, and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, with every man his censer in his hand; and a thick cloud of incense went up. Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth."

This work of digging in order to uncover the hidden things of darkness and dishonesty is a necessary labour in such days as these. The task of naming the guilty, as did Ezekiel, is commanded of God today.

Those who are of God will rejoice in the exposure of sin while those whose sympathies lie with the enemy will rage at the uncovering of the secret machinations of lawlessness.

There are some confused souls who dither and totter about in the 'no man's land' of bewilderment and indecision.

Light as ever divides men as the dawn brings forth the creatures of the day while banishing the creatures of the night to their shadows.

Just what impact does the light of truth have upon you? Where do you stand regarding Refo500 and those professing 'Fundamentalists' promoting the sham that it is?