

RCM TEAM — Florida

serving and relying upon the Lord

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October-December 2008
RCM News and Prayer Letter



Reformation Christian Ministries

News & Prayer Letter

October - December 2008

Galatians 6:8-9 *For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*

Dr. J. I. Packer once said in a commentary on Puritanism: *The Puritan ethic of marriage was to look NOT for a partner whom you do love passionately at this moment, BUT RATHER for one whom you can love steadily as your best friend for life, and then to proceed with God's help to do just that.*

There is a certain parallel between investment strategy and approaches to marriage, which might also be helpful in light of the current financial "crisis." Investment decisions should not be based upon the passion of the moment (e.g. the latest hot tip), but good sound investment principles. Investment passions of the moment might be fear or greed rather than simple investment common sense.

Again this same principle can be used in starting a business, entering into a college study program, dieting, health-care or many other endeavors in life: it is imperative that you have a long term perspective and not function on the basis of the fleeting passions of the moment which are normally influenced far more by our sinful flesh than by wisdom through God's Spirit. Consequently, if we would prosper in our way and know the Lord's blessings, we must approach any endeavor wisely through prayer, supplication and with an attitude of being *not weary in well-doing*, even when things look a little sour or even desperate. Why? *For in due season we shall reap if we faint not.*

Missions must also avoid the "passion of the moment" approach. It takes time, consistency and commitment to see the desired results. True results rarely come quickly, even though our emotions, conditioned as they are in this age by television and the Internet, are prone to instant or near instant gratification (again, the flesh). This is as true for the missionary as it is for the supporter of missions.

It is during the times of the current "recession" that it is important to remember these principles of consistency and commitment—i.e. *being not weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap.* From the missionary's perspective, we need to be cautious about getting depressed when the finances

run low. From the supporter's standpoint, it is important to remember that God's work takes time and consistency.

In our thirty years in this work, God has brought us through the 1987 recession and the post-9/11/2001 financial worries. Each time, God has faithfully led His people to be faithful to Him by keeping RCM and its people going. We are again counting on Him to do the same this time.

It would be very marketing-wise for us to report some great new outreach or fantastic breakthrough that would appeal to *spiritual passions*. Yet, this somewhat reminds me of what Elijah experienced in 1 Kings 19:11-12 where God said, *Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.* Man's passions for some powerful demonstration (a sign!!) might well be impressed by the strong wind or the earthquake or the fire, but God was not in them. Instead, He was in the *still small voice*.

RCM is in the midst of developing a serious new outreach using the Internet and World-Wide-Web. This requires much work. Furthermore, courses are being developed and new approaches are being established for course delivery and gospel outreach into Italy, Albania, Russia, Suriname and elsewhere. These take long-term, dedicated commitment and staying power. We ask you to stand with us not because of the passions of the winds, the earthquakes or fires that we present to you, but rather due to your Spirit-driven unweariness *in well-doing* knowing that *in due season we shall all reap if we faint not.*

We need your continued perseverance so we ourselves can continue to persevere. Can you make some extra efforts to fill the gaps left by others unable to continue their support? Can you recommend us to others seeking a good, long-term relationship with a mission organization committed to the true gospel and its reformational implications? Perhaps you can get more people involved in prayer. But remember, our current stage will not appeal to those looking for fire, wind and earthquakes, but for those who understand His still small voice showing His strength and power far more in our weakness than in our passions. Through such efforts on your part, God will see us through. He will show us His power in ways far beyond that which we can imagine.

We seek a relationship with our supporters much like the Puritans did with their mates: one that is patiently, unwearily and steadily showing forth the love of the Lord by your support of RCM and by those means, our vigorous outreach.

 Geoffrey Donnan

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Fields: Albania, Italy, Russia, U.K., Europe and Suriname. Director of Missions: G. W. Donnan, Minister

Poettcker's Prayer Partners

September - October 2008 Update: Greetings in our Lord and King!

It is a great joy for me to report to you concerning my most recent trip to Suriname. I was there primarily to help open yet another school year, although I also serve in the church there (First Presbyterian Church—FPC) as an Elder/Minister on the Session.

This year we had a record for enrollment for the beginning of a school year and we now have quite a list of people waiting to be able to attend CLA (Christian Liberty Academy). We had some 320 students and most of our classes are full. As you see the table below, this is the first year we have had so many from Suriname; although many of them are also Chinese, but they have been born in Suriname. Speaking about Chinese students; I am pleased to tell you that these students are some of the happiest and most pleasant students to teach. There are of course exceptions, but they are diligent and hard-working.

As you look at the list of churches/religions represented, I trust you can once again appreciate how incredible it is to teach such a wide variety of students. I have the joy of starting off the year in teaching the Sr. High School Bible courses; namely "Ministry of Christ" (grades 9 & 10) and "Westminster Confession of Faith" (grades 11 & 12). As always, I begin teaching these by explaining to them that we are not here to make any personal attacks on anyone's religion but rather we are here to teach what God tells us in the Bible. I am repeatedly impressed by the way students listen and respond to the instruction. I commend this to your prayer; that the Lord might use His Truth to work in the hearts of students. Of course this is not meant to imply that this is the only "religious" course we teach at CLA! All our courses are "religious" but then all study of anything is religious! We are sincerely committed to be a truly "Christian School" by teaching all courses from a biblical perspective (as over against teaching from the perspective of the religion of humanism).

This year we had the joy of having two teachers from the U.S. return to teach; Courtney Withington is there for a third year, and Lance Visser for a second year. However we are in a great need of having one more teacher, especially for some Jr. High courses. Our prayer is that we might even find someone to begin teaching in January of 2009 and then commit to returning for the 2009-2010 school year (we prefer not to have someone come for only one semester). Please pray for this need and do what you can to help us find someone. I do have some ideas on how best to "market" this need for the future and I would invite anyone to help me in this. I am planning on contacting Education Departments in some Christian Colleges, in the hope that they might have graduates who would be interested in the experience of teaching in a foreign country for at least one year. I also would like to contact various Christian Schools in North America, and see if they might be willing to allow a teacher to take a kind-of sabbatical and use it to teach in Suriname. Please pray for this and provide me with any contact information you have.

I did have the privilege to preach in FPC for two Sundays and administer the Lord's Supper. The work of the church there is going well. Please continue to pray for Rev. Asgar



Hamid as he serves as pastor there and also is Administrator in CLA (I serve as the Headmaster of CLA). He and I are the only available Elders for the government of the church there. The church is a member church of the Covenant Reformed Presbyterian Church (American Synod), and Rev. Hamid attended our Presbytery meeting in November/08.

In addition to on-going work for Suriname, I continue to work in the production of courses and the administration of courses with students in both the B.Ed. and the M.Div. programs. We have four active B.Ed. students in Suriname and two inactive students. I also work with several M.Div. students in the U.S. and overseas. Thank you for praying for this work. There is a great need for it and I sincerely find it to be a fulfilling calling.

Praise the Lord that Sharilyn has been able to return to work (as nurse) and has been able to transfer to working on the heart unit, and is finding it much less stressful. She has had some recent pain in her groin (apparently from the change in walking with her newly replaced knees), and we appreciate your prayer for her in this.

Serving our Lord, with your prayerful support,

Rudy & Sharilyn Poettcker

[If you would like my brief regular prayer emails, to let me know by emailing me at rep@reformation.edu.]

CLA Students for School Year 2008-2009

Country of Origin		Religion/Denomination	
China	83	Unknown/undeclared	91
Suriname	72	Roman Catholic	59
Brazil	52	"Christian"	54
Guyana	49	Hindu	26
Holland	13	Assemblies of God	13
United States	13	Pentecostal	13
Indonesia	10	Reformed/Presbyterian	11
Haiti	7	Muslim	10
India	6	Buddhist	8
Korea	4	"Catholic"	7
Venezuela	4	Baptist	7
Canada	4	Moravian & Brethren	6
Peru	4	Cults & Misc.	6
Sri Lanka	3	Christian Miss'y Alliance	5
Trinidad	1	Nazarene	3
Columbia	1	Congregational	1
Nigeria	1	Church of Christ	1
		Seventh Day Adventist	1
		Church of God	1

RCM Update

HQ Briefs

Website: We have decided, after some frustrating times the past two months, to take few steps back to then move forward. We have now decided to scrap the packaged software approach and use the more traditional, but more controllable and flexible approach. Pray for Jack Snyder as he does the technical side and Geoff Donnan does the content. We are now making good progress. Our on-line bookstore for students and others is partly done, but not up yet because of the above delays. Albania, Italy and Good News Bible Study websites are next as soon as these are done. We are already seeing signs of more visitors to our website which is more outreach.

Courses developed: Rev. Rudy Poettcker has finished two more courses on exegesis and English. He now is focusing on the Education Practicum for the B.Ed. So much of what people think concerning North America and the world is based on very poor education. We have the privilege to educate in a biblical (true) perspective; and yes, this relates to educating others to teach (B.Ed.) and also to preach (M.Div.). Thank you for praying for these study programs.

Our director: For reasons as yet unknown, Rev. Donnan suffered three more heart artery blockages, again with no heart attack. In fact, his heart is much stronger. He was in the hospital one day and out the next. A much more aggressive program of diagnosis is now underway and many tests are scheduled. He also celebrated his 65th birthday on November 5 accompanied by the mad dash to line up Medicare and all related "age 65" issues, now completed.

WILD RIDES ON WALLSTREET: The Lord has blessed us with people finding it economically viable to donate stocks during such times. Just so you know, RCM can receive stock donations from both the U.S. and Canada and issue charity receipts. Talk to your investment advisor and <http://reformation.edu/content/view/429/550/>

Mission Field Briefs

Russia: There are concerns in Russia over the ease of changing constitutions to allow presidents to return to power and tensions with the West, especially the U.S.. Pray for all this. Pray also someone fluent in the Russian language to work with us on our upcoming Russian website greatly needed for educational outreach.

Italy: Giorgio Modolo and his wife Sabrina will be visiting Florida over the year-end. We hope to have some good progress on the Italian website by then and he hopes to spend time working on that during his several weeks here. Pray for Andrea's studies and the churches in Alpignano, Finale Ligure and Vittorio Veneto.

Albania: We continue preparing confessions and documents for the website. Keep Nardi Doka and his family in prayer.

Suriname: Rudy Poettcker will be going to Suriname in late November and returning mid-December. Pray for he and Asgar Hamid as they work together there, and for the school and church.

France: Pray for Dr. Annemei Godbehere and her work with RCM in the RITS program.

U.K.: Pray for Dr. Stephen Westcott who has unsuccessfully tried to get onto high speed internet access. He is also working on a Coverdale New Testament which we hope to publish for him in the near future. The book on Dr. John Owen, entitled *By Bible Alone*, is nearing completion. We hope to have it in print before year-end.

WEBSITE PROOF-READERS NEEDED

If you would like to help RCM by proof-reading our website pages, please contact Rev. Donnan for details. 772-571-8030 or gwd@reformation.edu.

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Oct.-Nov. 2008

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- \$ _____ Good News Bible Study Ministries
- \$ _____ Albania & Albania website
- \$ _____ Italy & Italian website
- \$ _____ Russia & Russian website
- \$ _____ Other

- I would like to teach at C.L.A. in Suriname.
- I would like to assist with the college and/or seminary program. I am sending a resume.
- Please add this/these person(s) on your newsletter/e-mail list:

RCM doesn't need a bailout, but we can use help!

RCM is not having one of its better years, BUT WE DON'T NEED A BAILOUT. We are quite solvent, but we definitely need your continued help to have a good closeout to 2008 and enable us to catch up and remain solvent. Unlike some, we don't fly private jets or have expensive parties for our executives. In fact, everyone of our U.S. based workers makes less than \$33,000 per year. We also have made some serious curtailments of expenses where possible to keep our cash flow liquidity.

The realities of our situation are reflected in the bar graphs (right). We do not as yet have figures for December in 2008. Aside from the recession, RCM has faced some major adjustments due to employee loss and gain which impacted the speed and frequency of our newsletters. Frequency of newsletters affects giving. Director Geoff Donnan has had to add desktop publishing to his skills in order to put out RCM's newsletters. That, coupled with some surgery and heart issues that arose this year, cut into his office time.

In spite of these slowdowns, very important things have been accomplished that will become very evident in the next few months as we relaunch our new website, our new on-line bookstore and our Albanian, Italian and Suriname websites. Great progress has also been made in the various undergraduate and graduate school programs. At a time when college and seminary tuition is raising substantially around North America, *RCM is able to offer affordable college and seminary tuition.* Check out our website if you are interested. We have nine books in various stages of publishing, which will complement our education programs and hopefully be well received by the public and supplement our income.

RCM is here for the long-run and is still an excellent missionary investment. Our commitment is to reach out through both personnel and especially via the Internet to provide both Gospel-centered education and outreach.

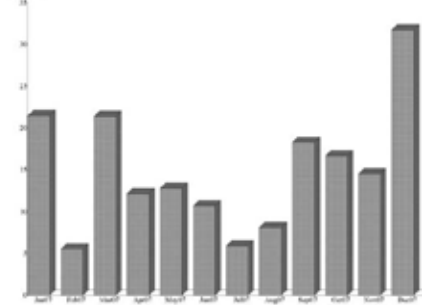
Please be as generous as possible in your year-end giving to RCM. We can use your help!

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