

Summary of Dissertation ‘Paul Baynes’s Pastoral Teaching of Predestination’

The dissertation, entitled “Paul Baynes’s Pastoral Teaching of Predestination,” contributes to scholarship on the post-Reformation and especially puritan formulation and pastoral use of the doctrine of predestination. Examining the pastoral treatment of predestination in one theologian’s entire written corpus reduces the danger of culling quotations selectively and out of context, while providing conclusions concerning one theologian which clarify or correct current perceptions of the broader dynamics in early seventeenth-century puritanism. This study argues that Paul Baynes’s treatment of divine predestination evidences a pastoral approach which used orthodox scholastic precision to serve spiritual purposes so as to lead people neither to ignore nor to become obsessed with predestination, but glory in the triune God of sovereign grace.

Being the first monograph on this important theologian, this study explores his life within its academic, ecclesiastical, and theological context, to show he was deeply rooted in the puritan tradition of Reformed orthodoxy, committed to the very Church of England which silenced him as a preacher, and concerned to serve the spiritual welfare of those around him in whatever capacity he could. His practice is undergirded by his teaching concerning pastoral ministry as the exercise of those called and equipped by God to bring especially the fundamental truths of his Word home to the hearts and lives of their flocks as God’s means to regenerate, feed, assure, and sanctify his people. This understanding of pastoral ministry sheds light on the amount, placement, and content of Baynes’s treatment of predestination. Baynes’s corpus is neither obsessed by nor afraid of predestination. He engages in precise theological discussion within the polemical genre, expounds predestination where the text speaks of it, and generally neither imports it where the text does not mention it nor expounds it within basic instructional guides. His pastoral desire to edify his hearers is also shown in the variety of uses he draws from the doctrine of predestination, thereby confirming that the infrequency of his treatments of predestination was not due to a fear of its pastoral consequences. His uses show that even a Cambridge theologian with strong supralapsarian convictions could use predestination primarily as a graciously motivating, comforting, and doxological doctrine.

Thus, contrary to a scholarship, which assigns predestination a harmful, dominating place in puritan theology, Baynes did not give this doctrine a prominent place within his pastoral teaching, but let it function, in accordance with his view of pastoral ministry as teaching and applying God’s Word for the benefit of the church and the glory of God.

Curriculum Vitae

David Hugh Kranendonk was born on 19 February 1979 in Ontario, Canada. He received his Bachelors of Arts (History) degree from McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario (1999), his Master of Divinity degree from Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA (2003), and his Master of Theology degree from Calvin Theological Seminary also in Grand Rapids (2008). On October 17, 2003, he was ordained as minister of the gospel in the Free Reformed Church of Bornholm, Ontario. Since August 29, 2013 he has served the Free Reformed Church of Oxford County, Ontario. He also serves as a visiting instructor of Systematic Theology at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. He is married to Elly and together they have been blessed with seven children: Simon, Ruth, Elnathan, Leah, Thomas, Ezra, and Hannah-Jo.