

## Fall 2019 Theology Exam

### Section I: Reformed Confessional Heritage

As pastor of Second Presbyterian Church, you overhear several fifth-graders talking in the church hallway:

Andra: I wish our church would build a gym.

Sasha: My mom is an elder. That means she is in charge of the church so we could ask her to make it happen.

Andra: I thought our pastor is in charge of the church.

Kisung: No, Jesus is!

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:** (*Total responses in this Section not to exceed 1,200 words.*)

1. Write an essay discussing a Reformed understanding of **Christ as Head of the Church**. In the essay, identify and discuss at least one (1) citation (e.g., 0.000) from each of three (3) different documents in *The Book of Confessions*.
2. Building on the essay in Required Response 1, write an annotated lesson plan for a 30-minute Sunday School class appropriate for fifth-graders that explains what it means for Christ to be Head of the Church. Be sure to address Andra, Sasha, and Kisung's comments. (For this exam, an annotated lesson plan is a lesson plan with explanatory notes.)

## Section II: Constructive Statement of Christian Doctrine

The session of Forest Hills Presbyterian Church, where you serve as pastor, is meeting to review the recommended annual budget for the coming year. In the mission budget there are four line items:

- support of PC(USA) mission co-workers;
- inner-city justice ministries;
- a local ministry to homeless families;
- an international evangelistic organization that seeks to convert non-Christians to faith in Christ.

The following comments are made by members of the session:

- Vern: I don't understand how we can support the fourth budget item. So much damage has been done in the history of Christianity by trying to force our religion on others.
- Consuelo: Jesus told us to go into the world making disciples of all nations. That's the Great Commission. Just because some missionaries have done harm in the past doesn't mean we should stop doing what Jesus told us to do.
- Toni: We live in the greatest mission field in the world. I read recently that more teenagers claim to be atheists than ever before. I think just keeping the church doors open is our mission.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:** *(Total responses in this Section no to exceed 1,200 words.)*

1. Write an essay discussing a Reformed understanding of **mission**. In the essay, use at least two (2) of these resources: the Scriptures, classical theology, contemporary theology.
2. Building on the essay in Required Response 1, respond theologically to the three (3) elders.

### Section III: Application to Ministry

You are the pastor of Emmanuel Presbyterian Church. Maddie, a member of the congregation, is expecting a child, and she has been open about her utilization of in vitro fertilization (IVF) to get pregnant. Some members of the congregation are planning to throw her a baby shower at the church, but other members are not sure this is something they should be celebrating. The following discussion ensues:

Pat: The idea of making a baby in a petri dish seems unnatural. We're creating children like they are some kind of made-to-order product. Babies should be gifts we receive from God the old-fashioned way.

Luna: I agree that children are gifts, but I think IVF technology is a way God can bless more of us with that gift. We should celebrate Maddie's blessing, and thank God for the medical progress that allows her to have a child. Don't you agree, Pastor?

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:** *(Total responses in this Section not to exceed 1,200 words.)*

1. Write an essay discussing a Reformed understanding of **assisted reproduction**. In the essay, use at least two (2) of these resources: the Scriptures, classical theology, contemporary theology.
2. Building on the essay in Required Response 1, respond theologically to Pat and Luna, with appropriate pastoral sensitivity.