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Dallas, Tx. 75201  
Dec. 29, 1994

Dr. R. C. Sproul  
P.O. Box 547500  
Orlando, FL 32854

Dear Dr. Sproul,

As far as I can recollect we have never met face to face, although I have read some of your writings and listened to some of your tapes with interest. Of course we do not agree on all areas of theology, but I sincerely say that I am grateful for your stand for the Word of God.

What prompts this letter is a response one of your associates, Mr. Gregory Barolet, wrote to Rev. Joel Andrus, who questioned something you said about me on a tape which was distributed widely. I am very concerned about the misrepresentations of my views in his letter and felt that you should know what was written as a reply on your behalf.

But before coming to particulars, may I affirm that I do believe salvation is by God's grace alone through (not because of) faith alone in Christ alone. Too, I am a four point Calvinist (affirming all but the "L") , not an Arminian as implied in his letter.

Here are some specifics.

Barolet: "Ryrie and other dispensationalists say works don't necessarily follow salvation."

Ryrie: "Every Christian will bear spiritual fruit. Somewhere, sometime, somehow. Otherwise that person is not a believer. Every born-again individual will be fruitful. Not to be fruitful is to be faithless, without faith, and therefore without salvation." (So Great Salvation, p. 45).

Barolet: "We say faith without works is a dead faith." I agree and use almost the same words, though Mr. Barolet's context implies I disagree with his statement.

Ryrie: "James is not saying that we are saved by works, but that a faith that does not produce good works is a dead faith." (Ryrie Study Bible, note on James 2:14).

Barolet: "Ryrie's gospel leads to what is called antinomianism and 'easy believe-ism...both of which drain of emotional and/or intellectual vitality the body of Christ and have a direct bearing on the truth of the Gospel..."

Ryrie: "Since all of this is involved [in the gospel], it is not easy to believe." (So Great Salvation, p. 118). Then I describe (in typical reformed fashion) the facets of faith as intellectual, emotional, and volitional (p. 120), and on this matter I quote with approval Hodge, Berkhof, and Murray.

Barolet: unless I misread him, he lumps me with those who teach "that election is based on God's foreseeing who would believe, and on the basis of that foresight He saves them."

Ryrie: I directly reject that view and opt for "Individual, Pretemporal Election" (Basic Theology, p. 310 for rejection of foresight election, and p. 311 for individual).

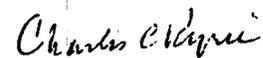
Barolet: "Ryrie maintains that faith precedes regeneration..."

Ryrie: "both regeneration and faith have to occur at the same moment." (Basic Theology, p. 326).

I think it is not too much to expect that Mr. Barolet and any others who respond for you demonstrate integrity and accuracy in what they say others believe. I hope you will counsel your associates in this regard. Anyone can slip occasionally, but Mr. Barolet's letter contained too many blatant errors to be considered "slips."

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter, and I hope it will further understanding within the body of Christ.

Sincerely,



Charles C. Ryrie



# Ligonier Ministries

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December 13, 1994

Pastor Joel T. Andrus  
Martensdale Community Church  
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Martensdale, IA 50160

Dear Pastor Andrus:

Thank you for the thoughtful letter you sent last month. We appreciate the interest in and support of Ligonier Ministries. Due to Dr. Sproul's extensive ministry demands at this time, he is unable to respond personally, but has asked that I reply for him.

This statement by Abraham Kuyper is apropos to these matters raised by Dr. Sproul's tape, "When principles that run against your deepest convictions begin to win the day, then battle is your calling, and peace has become sin; you must, at any price of dearest peace, lay your convictions bare before friend and enemy, with all the fire of your faith." Let me lay down some distinctions of historical theology so we can rightly understand the seriousness of the statements made.

First, we do not consign Dr. Ryrie to hell. However we are deeply troubled by what is being taught by him and others in his school of thought. This saddens us, and we do not delight in the least, having to contend for the faith like this, but as the quote I used above expresses, a stand must be made. As one scholar in Hinduism noticed: "The fraternal embrace of Hinduism will result in its own strangulation. For it cannot embrace everything. At some point in time you will have to say something is false and something is true." The same is true in Christianity, those who contend for accuracy, and constancy in the church, will find themselves labeled as argumentative (in the pejorative sense of the word), causing divisions, disrupting the unity of the church. The "politically correct" thing to do is love everybody and tolerate all the differences at the expense of truth. Because the church has lost its way, because so much has been lost, so much has been distorted, so much is confusing, most of the talk has to be in a corrective manner. The result of theological inexactitude has led to obfuscation and then indifference.

The biblical gospel says that following repentance there will be good works inherent in salvation. This salvation is by faith alone, but never by a faith that is alone. Faith itself is not meritorious. Salvation is by God's grace alone (*sola gratia*) through faith alone (*sola fide*) in Christ alone (*solus Christi*). Faith is the instrument by which one is saved, not the cause of one's salvation. True saving faith will yield good works. Justifying faith is not faith plus works (as per Rome); neither is it faith minus works (without necessary works as

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per Arminianism); it is faith that works. Says Calvin, "justification is by faith alone inseparably connected with works." Says Luther, "Works are not taken into consideration when the question respects justification. But true faith will no more fail to produce them than the sun can cease to give light."

Ryrie and other dispensationalists say works don't necessarily follow salvation. We say faith without works is a dead faith. It is a pseudo-faith. Further distinguishing Ryrie's gospel and our gospel, we say that "God chooses us," rather than "we choose God." We say regeneration precedes faith. Ryrie maintains that faith precedes regeneration, which means faith is looked on as the cause of one's salvation rather than an instrument of salvation.

What is the importance in these distinctions? Ryrie's gospel leads to what is called antinomianism and "easy believe-ism," both of which desiccate (i.e., to drain of emotional and/or intellectual vitality) the body of Christ and have a direct bearing on the truth of the Gospel, people's eternal destination, and the witness to the glory of Christ. Ryrie's gospel is traditionally semi-Pelagian which was condemned by the church in the synod of Orange and Valence in 529. It is a manifestation of Arminianism, which was condemned at the synod of Dort in 1619. We have the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Westminster Confession as the confessions that uphold the Reformed teachings of the Bible.

Arminianism teaches that man has the ability to choose God, that election is based on God's foreseeing who would believe, and on the basis of that foresight He saves them. This has always been condemned as heresy, from Pelagius to Arminius. So why do people think that it should be allowed and not contested today? Has the Gospel changed? The answer is no. What has changed is that Christians don't want to denounce something as being wrong, as you heard R.C. in the tape.

In the tape R.C. reiterates that Mr. Ryrie has said the Calvinistic doctrine we hold to, which incidentally the church has held since its conception, is "anathema." Because of the differences I stated above, we say any other gospel contrary to what Paul preached is anathema. This is why R.C. has said the things he has regarding Charles Ryrie. We don't enjoy doing this but it must be done. We are not saying that everyone who believes Arminian theology isn't saved, but that they should examine themselves "to see whether [they] are in the faith" (2 Cor. 13:5).

People who teach wrongly have made the divisions in the church and we seek to reform the church, bringing it back to its original teaching. These doctrines of Reformed theology are commonly articulated by the acrostic "TULIP": total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement (better known as particular redemption), irresistible grace, and the perseverance of the saints. Other words associated with Calvinism are predestination, sovereign grace, and the sovereignty of God. This last one is the *sine qua non* (that without

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which not, meaning an absolutely indispensable or essential part), without which the truths of the Bible and Calvinism would not exist or make sense. All these can be traced back through the early church fathers, to the apostles, to Paul, and to Jesus.

I hope these thoughts have been helpful. If we can be of further assistance please contact us.

Soli Deo Gloria,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gregory Barolet". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Gregory Barolet  
Ministry Associate

GB:dm