

The Reformed Pastor

Richard Baxter

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THE REFORMED PASTOR RICHARD BAXTER



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This is a true and accurate reproduction of Baxter's work, 'The Reformed Pastor'. It is brand new without blemish or markings. Publishers Note: This book was produced by a team of hard-working volunteers in an effort to keep books of antiquity alive and well among our modern day readers. We are grateful for the hard work and effort that went into the reproduction of these classics. We make a concerted effort to achieve a high quality product while at the same time offering these precious books at lower prices to reach the widest readership possible. Our prayer is that you will find them honoring to the name of Christ and share these rich Christians books with others.

About the Author Richard Baxter (1615-1691) was a prominent English churchman of the 1600s. He was a peacemaker who sought unity among Protestants, and yet he was a highly independent thinker and at the center of every major controversy in England during his lifetime. Born in Rowton to parents who undervalued education, Baxter was largely self-taught. He eventually studied at a free school, then at royal court, where he became disgusted at what he saw as frivolity. He left to study divinity, and at age 23, he was ordained into the Church of England. Within the Anglican church, Baxter found common ground with the Puritans, a growing faction who opposed the church's episcopacy and was itself breaking into factions. Baxter, for his part, did his best to avoid the disputes between Anglicans, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and other denominations, even convincing local ministers to cooperate in some pastoral matters. Among his more than 200 works are long, controversial discourses on doctrine. Still, he believed society was a large family under a loving father, and in his theology, he tried to cut between the extremes. Baxter also found himself as a peacemaker during the English Civil Wars. He believed in monarchy, but a limited one. He served as a chaplain for the parliamentary army, but then helped to bring about the restoration of the king. Yet as a moderate, Baxter found himself the target of both extremes. He was still irritated with the episcopacy in 1660, when he was offered the bishopric of Hereford, so he declined it. As a result, he was barred from ecclesiastical office and not permitted to return to Kidderminster, nor was he allowed to preach. Between 1662 and 1688 (when James II was overthrown), he was persecuted and was imprisoned for 18 months, and he was forced to sell two extensive libraries. Still, he continued to preach: "I preached as never sure to preach again," and he wrote, "and as a dying man to dying men." Baxter became even better known for his prolific writing. His devotional classic *The Saints' Everlasting Rest* was one of the most widely read books of the century. When asked what deviations should be permitted from the Anglican Book of Common Prayer, he created an entirely new one, called *Reformed Liturgy*, in two weeks. His *Christian Directory* contains over one million words. His autobiography and his pastoral guide, *The Reformed Pastor*, are still widely read today.