

What does it mean to be Associate Reformed Presbyterian (ARP)? This is a question that I have asked, that I have been asked, and I believe we should be asking ourselves. Looking at our deep roots of the ARP Church, we can see where we came from, what our traditions were (and are today), and where our Christian heritage began. We can dig into the history books and see how our forefathers of the ARP, dating all the way back to the 1600's, were concerned for the future of the Church, their congregation's spiritual health, and the truth of the Gospel to be heard. We can see the wonderful traditions that were established and maintained as they trekked to America. But what does it mean to be an ARP Church? Is it just about the traditions? It is just about our heritage? By no means should we forget either of these. However, I do believe we need to challenge our own thinking and look at the even deeper roots of the ARP and ask the question, what caused the men who started the ARP to do what they did? I think we will find the answer very applicable to ourselves actually.

The men who help start the ARP were born out of a desire as well? Our ARP forefathers were desperately trying to challenge the Church and reform the Church so that it would be more reliant upon the Word of God and less reliant upon the state and man's false motives. They were dedicated to Scripture alone. As the Westminster Shorter Catechism tells us, "*The Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament is the only rule to direct us on how may we are to glorify and to enjoy Him.*" So, what does it mean to be ARP at its core? It's more than history, traditions, and being Scotch-Irish. It means to be deeply rooted in the Word of God.

Let us be as the Psalmist writes in the first Psalm, "*firmly planted in streams of water, which yields fruit in its season.*" Let us as Shiloh ARP Church not lose sight of our roots. Let us say as the Psalmist does in Psalm 19, "*The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure making wise the simple.*"

In Christ,
Pastor Dean