

## Peculiar People

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# Leading Off

WITH THE PRESIDENT

## PECULIAR PEOPLE

### I grew up on the King James Version of Scripture.

There's something about the formality of approaching God that still makes me love that translation. I've certainly done my historical research on the benefits and shortcomings of the KJV, and for my daily devotional life I often find myself drawn to other translations and paraphrases to enrich my study. Yet, there is nothing like the KJV to give me a sense of "God being God"—his omnipotence, his majesty, and his power. Through the KJV I get a sense of what Moses must have felt when he was favored to hide in the cleft of the rock as God passed by him in Exodus 33.



Simply put, some KJV passages have a unique meaning that can't be captured as well by any other Bible translation or paraphrase.

As Dordt began the second semester with our first chapel, I used the KJV version of a text to challenge and remind the campus of God's call to us as his people in culture today:

*But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a **peculiar people**; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

*(1 Peter 2: 9-10, KJV)*

Taking that notion of being **peculiar people**, I asked our students and faculty to live this out in two distinct ways. First, to live with joy in the knowledge and confidence that our peculiarity is due to God having chosen us as his people. Yes, this is one of those wonderful Reformed concepts of election—but it wasn't the main point of my message.

It's that second definition of **peculiar** that I believe Dordt people have been known for and which I challenged the campus to live out: being unusual by not going along with what's happening in the mainstream of culture. Perhaps another way of saying it is that God calls us to be "*In the world, but not of the world.*" It's this second type of peculiarity we're called to be as Christians in this modern, post-Christian age.

I ended the chapel talk encouraging our campus community on why God calls us to be peculiar people—a few verses later, the Message puts it this way:

*Friends, this world is not your home, so don't make yourselves cozy in it. Don't indulge your ego at the expense of your soul. Live an exemplary life among the natives so that your actions will refute their prejudices. Then they'll be won over to God's side and be there to join in the celebration when he arrives.*

*(1 Peter 2: 11-12, The Message)*

It seems to me that the point of our peculiarity isn't simply to make ourselves feel holier than the sinful culture around us; it's to be joyfully evangelical—to have people see the love of Christ in us and through us, and in doing so perhaps they will want to get to know the Jesus we serve and to live in ways that honor God and his creation.

And if that happens through our lives in the communities in which God places Dordt alumni—then truly, we will be living out our motto: Soli Deo Gloria—"To God Alone Be All the Glory"!

DR. ERIK HOEKSTRA, PRESIDENT

# Voice

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#### Our Mission

As an institution of higher education committed to a Reformed Christian perspective, Dordt College equips students, alumni, and the broader community to work effectively toward Christ-centered renewal in all aspects of contemporary life.

#### On the Cover

Outside the Commons, a Dordt College-branded bike is blanketed with snow in early March. The Dordt community experienced many snowstorms this winter.

