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*ADVANCING THE  
CHRISTIAN TRADITION  
IN THE THIRD MILLENNIUM*

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*ACT 3* is a ministry to advance the missional mandate of the Lord Jesus Christ in the third millennium, through the witness of Scripture and the wisdom of the Christian tradition.

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The conviction of the staff and editors of the *ACT 3 Review* is that the renewal of faith, church and culture must be deeply rooted in worship, spiritual formation and mission.

The views expressed in this publication should be considered as the personal opinions of the authors and are not to be taken as an official editorial perspective.



# ACT 3 Review

ADVANCING THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION  
IN THE THIRD MILLENNIUM

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**W**e can no longer take for granted that we share a common ground with our culture, a culture once solidly rooted in Christendom. Even a residual belief in God, in Christ, in the Bible and in the church can no longer be assumed as truly helpful by evangelists who wish to communicate effectively with unchurched people. Further, a new generation has arisen within the church that understands less and less of the language and importance of the historic Christian faith. This clearly demands that we stop assuming that we are being understood within our own household. This is a major reason why I use the term *missional* rather than *mission*, a word that notoriously carries the central idea of something we support and promote rather than something we are, the *missio Dei*. I believe the only solution is to teach church members how to be transformational missionaries in Western culture. Even more to the point of *missio Dei*, we must teach whole church communities how to become the mission of Christ in the world. This will require bold new explanations of doctrinal catholicity and fresh engaging studies of our regnant culture.

JOHN H. ARMSTRONG

**P**aul Hiebert has said that our culture is not what we think about, but what we think with. In a missional church, the Bible grows to have that quality for the church. It is not what we think or talk about, but what we think and talk with! Instead of interpreting the Bible through the lens we bring to the text, we interpret ourselves and our world through the lens of the Bible.

GEORGE R. HUNSBERGER

## INTRODUCTION



JOHN H. ARMSTRONG

**I**n 1987, a friend sowed a seed in my heart. Create a journal that was serious about scholarship but accessible to both scholars and non-scholars alike. The hope was for a publication that would attract fresh material and good writers who could speak to contemporary issues with candor and clarity. Make sure the focus was upon renewing the church doctrinally, ethically, and spiritually. Thus was born, in 1992, the *Reformation & Revival Journal*. Now, fourteen years later, this quarterly journal takes both a new name and a new look. The original vision remains unchanged, but the focus is now more precisely *missional*.

After a three-year process, the board of Reformation & Revival Ministries, the parent ministry of this quarterly journal, reached the decision to change our name on January 1, 2006. By this decision we became ACT 3. The new name is an acronym which represents our broader vision: *Advancing the Christian Tradition in the Third Millennium*. In the process of adopting this new name, we spent a considerable amount of

time writing our mission statement. We wanted it to be simple, clear, and memorable. The board and editorial staff of this publication hopes that our longtime readers, and a growing number of new readers, will resonate with our clear mission vision.

### OUR MISSION

*Act 3 is a ministry to advance the missional mandate of the Lord Jesus Christ in the third millennium through the witness of Scripture and the wisdom of the Christian tradition.*

Our missional vision for advancing Christ's mandate to make disciples in all the world will be advanced in three central areas, all of which will be regularly represented in this journal: **worship, spiritual formation, and mission.**

Further, our new tag line for this journal, as you can see on the front cover, says well what we hope to particularly address in the journal: *Faith, Church, and Culture*. If Christian leaders and thinkers are to intentionally impact the future, they must become better equipped to understand the Christian faith in all its rich aspects of truth. Further, we must better understand the doctrine and nature of the church and the processes by which it can be truly renewed. We believe this requires us to understand the various cultures in which this mission takes place and how the gospel shapes and changes culture when Christ's Lordship is truly lived out in a biblically informed faith. We pray that this "new look" and direction will increasingly make this quarterly journal a strong voice for an informed, biblical, and catholic evangelicalism that does what our mission statement clearly expresses. Please let us know what you think. And please introduce the journal to others who might be helped by understanding this vision.



Y'KNOW, HONEY, THAT BUMPER STICKER OF OURS JUST SEEMS A BIT TOO DANG SEMI-PELAGIAN FOR MY LIKING.