

**Burial or Cremation: Does it Matter? By Donald W. Howard. The Banner of Truth, P.O.Box 621, Carlisle, PA 17013. Date: 2001. Pb.32pp.
Review by J. D.Tangelder**

What's the Christian position on cremation? Does it matter one way or another?

Arguments for or against cremation reveal a specific worldview. Burning bodies in our Western society is promoted within the context of strong assaults from secular philosophy and scientific materialism. Spiritual decline and the progress of cremation run parallel with each other. When death is secularized, cremation doesn't matter. But Christians have an intuitive reservation. Donald W.Howard, retired minister of St.Peter's Church of England, Sydney, Australia, makes a convincing argument that burial alone has the endorsement of the Scriptures and the early church. Our treatment of the dead should ensure that the dignity of the divinely-created body is upheld to its earthly end. We have a high view of the body in the light of the resurrection of our Lord. Furthermore, the actual burial is a Gospel proclamation. Even in death we are able to proclaim the glorious truth that Jesus is the resurrection and the life and that we shall be raised when He returns again in glory. Howard also gives practical advice on the need to grieve and to plan for our funeral. Since more and more in our own Reformed community wonder what position to take on cremation, this clearly written booklet is a handy reference with solid Biblical answers.