

INTRODUCTION TO THE PURITANS

Memorial Edition



ERROLL HULSE (1931-2017)

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TO THE
PURITANS

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*A Tribute to the Life and
Ministry of Erroll Hulse*

Dedicated to the memory of Erroll Hulse with great joy and gratitude for his life and ministry. Many around the world will continue to benefit for many years to come from his untiring service. Those who knew him, and those who read this volume, will be blessed by his Christ-honoring life, a life well-lived to the glory of God.

*The following Scripture verses,
psalm, and hymns were
among his favorites.*

ISAIAH 11:9

They shall not hurt nor destroy
in all my holy mountain:
for the earth shall be full
of the knowledge of the LORD,
as the waters cover the sea.

HABAKKUK 2:14

For the earth shall be filled
with the knowledge
of the glory of the LORD,
as the waters cover the sea.

PSALM 72

¹Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son. ²He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment. ³The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness. ⁴He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. ⁵They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations. ⁶He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth. ⁷In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. ⁸He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

⁹They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust. ¹⁰The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. ¹¹Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.

¹²For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. ¹³He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. ¹⁴He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight. ¹⁵And he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for him continually; and daily shall he be praised. ¹⁶There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. ¹⁷His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.

¹⁸Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. ¹⁹And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen.

HYMNS

Jesus Shall Reign (reflecting Psalm 2)

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
does its successive journeys run,
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
till moons shall wax and wane no more.

To Him shall endless prayer be made,
and praises throng to crown His head.
His name like sweet perfume shall rise
with every morning sacrifice.

People and realms of every tongue
dwell on His love with sweetest song,
and infant voices shall proclaim
their early blessings on His name.

Blessings abound where'er He reigns:
the prisoners leap to lose their chains,
the weary find eternal rest,
and all who suffer want are blest.

Let every creature rise and bring
the highest honors to our King,
angels descend with songs again,
and earth repeat the loud amen.^a

^a Isaac Watts, 1719 (1674-1748) – English hymn writer and theologian; recognized as the “Father of English Hymnody.”

Hail to the Lord's Anointed

Hail to the Lord's Anointed,
great David's greater Son!
Hail in the time appointed,
His reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression,
to set the captive free;
to take away transgression,
and rule in equity.
He comes with succor speedy
to those who suffer wrong;
to help the poor and needy,
and bid the weak be strong;
To give them songs for sighing,
their darkness turn to light,
whose souls, condemned and dying,
are precious in His sight.
He shall come down like showers
upon the fruitful earth;
love, joy, and hope, like flowers,
spring in His path to birth.
Before Him on the mountains,
shall peace, the herald, go,
and righteousness, in fountains,
from hill to valley flow.
To Him shall prayer unceasing
and daily vows ascend;
His kingdom still increasing,
a kingdom without end.
The tide of time shall never
His covenant remove;
His name shall stand forever;
that name to us is love.^a

^a James Montgomery, 1821 (1771-1854) – Scottish-born hymn writer and poet.

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I am among many who depend upon the excellent service provided by the Evangelical Library in London and especially so in the loan of rare Puritan books. I thank the Library staff.

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Finally, I appreciate the ministry of Dr. John Armstrong who urged me to write "The Story of the Puritans" for the quarterly journal *Reformation and Revival* (Spring 1996). That 47-page article formed the springboard for this book.

—*Erroll Hulse*

FOREWORD

When Erroll Hulse was riding a train through Spain in the early 1990s, a lay evangelist walked the cars passing out tracts. To Erroll's surprise, they were solidly Reformed and written by Spurgeon, Pink, Ryle, Bonar, and the Puritans, and available in both English and Spanish. All were printed by Chapel Library in Pensacola, Florida. He made it a point to visit Chapel Library on his next trip to the USA, where he began a long friendship of encouragement and support. With conviction that good Christian literature was vital to both churches and missions, he was Chapel's best ambassador worldwide.

The Puritans represent the best not only of Christian literature, but also of Christian living. No better honor can be given to Erroll than to link his life with those he most admired. *Introduction to the Puritans* will challenge and edify its readers. In addition, eighteen Puritan works are excerpted in Appendix Two. Tributes to Erroll's exemplary service and life principles are in Appendix Three. Appendix Five highlights eight of his written works. Thus, this volume is given to today's Christians to learn from the Puritan legacy—and from the modern example of one who followed in their steps.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE PURITANS

Contents

INTRODUCTION: THE RELEVANCE

<i>OF THE PURITANS</i>	19
1. Puritanism and the World Today	19
2. Puritanism and the Church Today.....	21

PART ONE: THE STORY OF THE PURITANS..... 31

1. Overview	31
2. Who Were the Puritans?	33
3. The Puritan Movement in Time	34
A. Antecedents to the Puritan Movement.....	35
B. The Development of the Puritan Movement until the Spiritual Brotherhood (1558-1603).....	39
C. The Full Flowering of Puritanism (1603-1662).....	44
4. An Explanation of the Puritan Story	54
5. The Legacy of the Puritans.....	55

PART TWO: THE LIVES OF THE PURITANS..... 60

1. Martyrs	60
2. Three Generations of Puritans.....	63
A. The First Generation.....	64
B. The Second Generation	73
C. The Third Generation	80
3. The Demise of the Puritan Movement	100

PART THREE: HELP FROM THE PURITANS.....104

1. The Westminster Confession and Justification.....	104
A. Justification by Faith Alone	104
B. A Modern Challenge to Justification.....	111

C. How Much Should We Care about Justification?..	112
2. The Puritans and a Stable Doctrine of Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility	114
A. Wrong Thinking about Free Will	115
B. Wrong Thinking about God's Sovereignty	117
C. Conclusion.....	120
3. The Recovery of the Lord's Day.....	121
4. Marriage and the Family	126
5. A Biblical Basis for Spiritual Experience.....	130
6. A Robust Doctrine of Assurance	134
7. Hope for the Future of the Church	138
8. The Warrant of Faith and the Way to Faith	143
A. The Issue	143
B. The Warrant of Faith.....	145
C. The Way of Faith.....	145
D. Preparation on the Way to Saving Faith	147
E. The Warrant of Faith and the First London Confession	149
9. The Primacy of Preaching.....	149
A. Unique Place of Preaching.....	150
B. Radiating Reality	152
C. Prayer and Bible Study.....	153
10. Imaginative Expository Preaching	155
A. Guidelines.....	155
B. Examples.....	157
 APPENDICES	160
Appendix 1: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES	160
1. Were the Puritans Narrow-Minded Bigots?.....	160
2. How Do Baptists Relate to the Puritans?.....	162
3. The Reformation in Scotland.....	165
4. Oxford and Cambridge Universities.....	167
Appendix 2: A PURITAN SAMPLER	169
1. The Mute Christian under the Smarting Rod Thomas Brooks (1608-1680)	170
2. The Pilgrim's Progress John Bunyan.....	173
3. The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment Jeremiah Burroughs (1599-1646)	176
4. Charity and Its Fruits Jonathan Edwards	179

5. The Fountain of Life Opened John Flavel.....	184
6. The Vanity of Thoughts Thomas Goodwin.....	188
7. Of Domestical Duties William Gouge	192
8. The Lord's Supper Matthew Henry	196
9. A Treatise of Self-denial Thomas Manton	201
10. Christ Receiveth Sinners Walter Marshall.....	206
11. Almost a Christian Matthew Meade.....	210
12. Temptation John Owen (1616-1683).....	214
13. The Letters of Samuel Rutherford (1600-1661)	219
14. Duties of Husbands and Wives Richard Steele...	225
15. God's Grace in Justifying the Sinner Robert Traill	228
16. The True Christian's Love to the Unseen Christ Thomas Vincent (1634-1678).....	232
17. The Doctrine of Repentance Thomas Watson ...	237
18. Honey Out of the Rock Thomas Willcox.....	243
Appendix 3: TRIBUTES TO ERROLL HULSE	246
1. A Christ-honoring Life Kees van Kralingen.....	246
2. A Biographical Overview Sharon James	248
3. Psalm Seventy-two Bill James.....	257
4. The Need for Reformation and Revival Kees van Kralingen	262
5. Prayer for Revival Jonathan Bayes	268
6. The Priority of Evangelism Sharon James.....	271
7. A Tribute to Lyn Hulse Sharon James	281
8. A Beautifully Proportioned Life Tom Nettles .	284
Appendix 4: CONTINUING MINISTRIES	292
1. Reformation Today	292
2. African Pastors' Conferences.....	293
Appendix 5: AN ERROLL HULSE SAMPLER	300
1. Adoniram Judson and the Missionary Call	300
2. A Catechism for Boys and Girls.....	304
3. Fellowship with the Trinity.....	307
4. Let's Pray for Global Revival	310
5. The Only Savior	314
6. Postmodernism.....	318
7. The Vital Place of the Prayer Meeting	320
8. The Story of the Puritans	323

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Please see also *The Only Savior* by Erroll Hulse, *The Vanity of Thoughts* by Thomas Goodwin (1600-1680), *The Christlike Husband* by William Gouge (1575-1663), *The Letters of Samuel Rutherford* (extracts) (1600-1661); and Free Grace Broadcaster 185, *Persecution*—all available from Chapel Library. The *FGB* is a quarterly digest of six to ten messages from prior centuries, all on one theme, with a different theme each issue. Request a subscription

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INTRODUCTION

THE RELEVANCE OF THE PURITANS

Who were the Puritans? When did they live? What did they accomplish? What did they teach? History is not a popular subject; we cannot assume that those who are British are automatically well-educated in English history. And it is rare for those outside Britain to know English history. How can we introduce Christians to the best theological inheritance ever?

My concern extends beyond narrating the story. I want to create enthusiasm for the Puritans in order to profit from their practical example, and benefit from their unique balance of doctrine, experience, and practice. The Puritans were men of deep theological understanding and vision, who prayed for the earth to be “filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea” (Hab 2:14).

Today, missionaries are involved as never before in taking the gospel to all the world. Bible-based Christianity is spreading gradually in most of the 240 nations of the world. Believers have multiplied in great numbers, especially in sub-Sahara Africa, the Far East, and South America. Teaching that engenders holy living and stability is vastly needed. Historically, the Puritan epoch^a is best able to supply this need, for they were strongest where the churches in general are weakest today.^b

1. Puritanism and the World Today

In face of the philosophic and religious trends of today, the Puritans are certainly relevant. Gradually from the 1960s and 1970s, the Western world has moved philosophically from Modernism to

^a Lettered footnotes are added by CHAPEL LIBRARY. Numbered endnotes are by the author (see *References* at the end of each Part).

epoch – particular period of time as marked by distinctive character or events.

^b See *Ten Indictments Against the Modern Church* by Paul Washer, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

Postmodernism.^a For about two centuries, thinking has been shaped by the Enlightenment,^b with its emphasis on human reason and optimism about human ability and achievement. This arrogance has by-passed God and His revelation and led to the collapse of morality. Is Puritanism relevant within the present philosophical climate of Postmodernism? Writing on the subject of Postmodernism, Andrew Patterson suggests that the Puritan approach is relevant. He maintains,

Genuine spirituality consists in a rediscovery of the cohesive and comprehensive nature of the grace of God in the life of believers. [This] rejects the isolating, fracturing, and compartmentalizing effects of the last two centuries, and looks back to the time of the Puritans and Pietists, when there was an approach that was far healthier, vibrant, holistic, real, scriptural, and God-honouring.^c

With the demise of Modernism (the Enlightenment), we now have a vacuum. This provides us with a unique opportunity to rebuild the foundations. We are challenged to understand and apply the Word of God today. As we do so, we can look back and draw on the legacies of the Puritans. We can avoid their mistakes and weaknesses, but learn a great deal from their strengths. Part Three consists of ten subjects in which we can obtain help from the Puritans.

Postmodernism is fiercely antinomian.^d It is admitted that people make mistakes, but the word “sin” is seldom mentioned; and the idea that we all sin against God is avoided. Right and wrong are judged according to human feelings. The idea that God has an un-

^a **Postmodernism** – philosophy that there are no absolute truths or moral values, that each person can decide for themselves what is true for them. See “Postmodernism” by Erroll Hulse, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^b **Enlightenment** – philosophical movement of the 1700s that emphasized the use of reason and science to scrutinize previously accepted doctrines and traditions, and that brought about many humanitarian reforms, in effect reducing society’s reliance upon God.

^c Andrew Patterson in *Foundations*, Autumn 1997; pastor of Kensington Baptist Church, Bristol, England.

^d **Antinomian** – from the Greek *anti*, against, and *nomos*, law; antinomianism basically means “against law.” It generally means one who holds the theological view that God’s Law has no place in the life of a believer. See *The Law and the Saint*, by A. W. Pink, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

changeable, holy, Moral Law^a by which He will judge every person is unpopular.

2. Puritanism and the Church Today

What does Puritanism have to say to the different evangelical sectors of the church world-wide today?

Neo-orthodoxy—Of the theologians classified as Neo-orthodox,^b Karl Barth (1886-1968) is the most significant as he, more than any other this century, affected the course of Protestant theology in Europe and beyond. He set some on the road of studying Luther, Calvin, and the Reformation of the 16th century.^c But while Barth challenged the liberal^d establishment, he failed to set the record straight with regard to liberal views of the Bible. For instance, it is absolutely vital to believe in the historicity of Adam

^a **Moral Law** – God’s Law was given by Moses to the nation of Israel at Mount Sinai. The books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy contain its provisions. The laws can be generally placed in three groups, although Scripture does not use these terms: 1) Ceremonial laws pertaining to the worship connected with the Old Testament Tabernacle and Temple (see Heb 8-9). The requirements of the ceremonial laws for Temple worship ceased when Christ fulfilled their intent and became the final sacrifice once for all (Heb 9:11-28). 2) Civil laws were given to govern relationships between men in society. Many believe these ceased when the nation of Israel fell under Gentile rule in AD 70, when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans. The moral principles of the civil laws still apply today. 3) The moral laws were given special place in their summary as the Ten Commandments. While Jesus Christ fulfilled all the Law in His life of perfect obedience, He emphasized the Moral Law in His teaching as applicable to the Church. The Moral Law continues into the Christian era to govern believers in their moral choices for holy living. See *London Baptist Confession of 1689*, chapter 19, “Of the Law of God.”

^b **orthodox** – pertaining to the essential doctrines of the Christian faith, implying consistency with the revelation of Holy Scripture in belief and worship. **Neo-orthodox** – holding many essential doctrines of the Christian faith, but denying Creationism, supernaturalism, and the inerrancy of the Scriptures.

^c **Martin Luther** (1483-1546) – German Roman Catholic monk, theologian, university professor, and church reformer, whose messages inspired the Protestant Reformation and changed the course of Western civilization.

John Calvin (1509-1564) – Father of Reformed and Presbyterian theology. Calvin lectured to theological students and preached an average of five sermons a week during his 25 years serving in Geneva.

The Reformation – the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century led by Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Knox, and many others, which sought to reform some of the erroneous beliefs and practices of the Roman Catholic Church to the truths of the Bible, especially justification by faith alone (Rom 3:24, 28).

^d **liberal** – holding theological views that the Bible contains errors and supernatural events have natural explanations, some even denying the deity of Christ.

and Eve.^a It is essential to endorse the supernaturalism^b that pervades the biblical records. With Neo-orthodoxy one is never sure about the foundations; it is like walking on sinking sand. Puritanism shares with Neo-orthodoxy the challenge to use the mind, to think, and to analyze. But the strength of the Puritans is that they never questioned the validity of the Scriptures. They always walk on the solid rock of the infallible^c Word of God.

Fundamentalism—Thankfully, the church of Jesus Christ on earth is always wider and larger than any one segment or denomination. The evangelical movement known as Fundamentalism is only a part of the wider body. That movement gathered momentum in the 1920s and 1930s. Fundamentalists came together into a movement out of the need to combat modernist theology. The leaders drew up a list of basic truths designed to keep intact doctrines that were denied or undermined by liberals. Fundamentalism was strong in the USA and spread to other countries. The Puritans would agree with their passion to defend and promote basic truths, such as the reliability of Scripture, the Trinity, and the deity of Christ.

Unhappily, Fundamentalism added to the “basics” a premillennial^d view of prophecy and in some cases Dispensationalism,^e which divides redemptive history into specific time periods. The biblical basis for these periods is tenuous to say the least,^f yet the system is imposed by its propagators in an arbitrary way on the Bible. The Puritans were mostly postmillennial.^g A small number were premil-

^a **historicity of Adam and Eve** – Creationism, as opposed to evolution. See *Evolution or Creation?* and *Understanding the Times* by Ken Ham, both available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^b **supernaturalism** – God’s working miracles apart from natural laws.

^c **infallible** – not capable of error.

^d **premillennial** – pertaining to the belief that 1) Christ will rule in a literal earthly kingdom lasting 1,000 years, and 2) Christ’s second coming will occur before He begins this earthly kingdom.

^e **Dispensationalism** – system of theology that divides the Word of God into arbitrary periods with supposed differences in the way God saves men from their sins. It proposes that the Old Testament saints were not a part of the Church of God, and that the Law pertained only to the nation of Israel, having little or no bearing on the Christian as a guide to moral living.

^f See *A Candid Examination of the Scofield Bible* by Albertus Pieters; available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^g **postmillennial** – doctrine in which the kingdom of Christ and the Church will experience much more expansion on earth before the Second Coming. The

lennial. Eschatology^a was not made a point of division. We can learn from the Puritans not to major on minors. Christ's second coming to judgment; the end of the world; the universal, physical resurrection from the dead; eternal heaven and hell are major issues in which we cannot compromise. But apart from a general outline, we cannot map out the future. Evangelical unity is a precious commodity; we should avoid damaging unity over matters that are not central.

Fundamentalists have also been inclined to add such issues as a ban on alcohol, card-playing, tobacco, dancing, and theater going. This has been the cause of endless strife and division. For instance, concerning alcohol, the Bible teaches temperance, not total abstinence (Eph 5:18). Wine is used at the Lord's Table. Some fundamentalists even try to change the meaning of the word *wine* to uphold their total abstinence view. Puritanism is a wonderful antidote to the harmful and needless divisions that are caused by adding man-made rules to Scripture. Worldliness is an enemy; but the cure for it is in the heart. A man can keep many rules but be worldly still, and at the same time possess a deadly spirit of Pharisaic^b self-righteousness.

Puritanism concentrates on the great issue of the state of a person's soul. When a soul is truly joined to Christ, every part of him—his thoughts, his words, and his actions—will be subject to the Word of God. While he makes rules for his own life, he will avoid making them for others. The Puritans included a chapter in the *Westminster Confession*^c on the subject of Christian liberty and liberty of conscience. The Puritan message is one of liberty combined with self-control and discipline. The Puritan confessions of faith—Presbyterian, Congregational, and Baptist—are silent where

thousand years are understood by some as a final period of earthly Christian triumph following the spread of the gospel. Others agree with amillennialists in identifying Revelation 20:1-6 with the entire period that begins with the resurrection of Christ, without a literal 1,000 year period.

^a **eschatology** – the part of systematic theology that deals with last things.

^b **Pharisaic** – pertaining to the ancient Jewish sect noted for strict obedience to Jewish traditions, and which came to be self-righteous and sinfully proud of their religion as compared to others.

^c ***Westminster Confession of Faith*** – one of the great confessions of the Christian faith, produced in 1645-1646 by an assembly of 121 theologians appointed by the "Puritan" Long Parliament to make proposals for reforming the Church of England.

the Scripture is silent. For instance, there is nothing in the Bible about smoking, but there are passages which urge that we should care for our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit (1Co 6:19). Liberation from harmful habits comes through the freedom imparted by Christ. That freedom comes by the inward persuasion of the Holy Spirit.

The New Evangelicalism—Fundamentalism has worn an angry face, being fiercely separatistic, intolerant, and aggressive. It has been viewed as the religion of the clenched fist. It was inevitable, therefore, that more friendly and reasonable avenues of expression would be sought. This came in the form of The New Evangelicalism: broad, scholarly, and friendly. However, this movement within evangelicalism has been troubled by compromise on the central issue of the inspiration and authority of Scripture. The New Evangelicalism split over the issue of the inerrancy of Scripture. Again Puritanism is commended. While the Puritans could not anticipate the details of this controversy, we appreciate the solid foundation they laid regarding the nature and authority of Scripture in the opening chapter of *The Westminster Confession*.

Pentecostalism—The Pentecostal movement, which is as wide and diverse as a rainbow, is noted for emphasis on three important subjects: the reality of spiritual experience, the demonstration of spiritual power, and joy in public worship. These matters were also stressed by the Puritans.

First, the Puritans placed great stress on the spiritual experience of God's free grace in conversion. The parameters of spiritual experience for joy in justification, the love of the Father in adoption, patience in tribulation, and enjoyment of Christ were explored to the full by the Puritans. The Puritan view is that we are now complete in Christ. Spiritual experience consists in the ongoing application of the believer's experimental^a union with the three Persons of the Trinity. The New Testament does not suggest or command a specific second experience after conversion—as though something must be added to what we already are in Christ. Many in the Pentecostal movement concede that all who are in Christ have been baptized spiritually into Christ (1Co 12:12). No second specific experience is mandatory, and no second experience is to be regard-

^a experimental – experiential.

ed as a type of “open sesame” to a Pandora’s box^a of new experiences. The Puritans would concur that spiritual power or the anointing of the Holy Spirit is needed not only for preaching, but generally for service and endurance in tribulation. The Holy Spirit is always at work in the believer to correct, guide, comfort, and empower.

Second, there is a stress in some Pentecostal denominations on the continuation of signs, wonders, and miracles. The Puritan view is that the apostles and prophets of the New Testament were extraordinary. They were given a special enduement for the work of setting the foundations [before the New Testament Scriptures were written]. We do not have to repeat their work. It is not necessary to vindicate^b the Word of God with new signs and wonders. Puritan teaching is wonderfully liberating because spiritual leaders are not required to walk on water, replace missing limbs, raise the dead, or perform stupendous miracles such as creating fish and bread. The Word of God is all-sufficient, and we do not need to exercise the supernatural gifts of prophecies, tongues, and interpretation of tongues.

As we examine the history of the Christian church through the centuries to the current time, the absence of miracles is evident. A major ethical embarrassment takes place when miracles are offered, especially miracles of healing, and then failure is evident. How sad it is to claim to be a miracle-worker and then to disappoint the hopes of hurting people. When such promises fail, disillusionment sets in that is very deep and wounding. We do not make promises we cannot fulfil. Rather, we point to the promise that will never fail, and that is the promise of the gospel: eternal life to everyone who repents and believes (Mar 1:15).

Third, there is the need for joyful public worship. Dull, lifeless worship is a contradiction of the joy of salvation. The regulative principle is important. This is a principle by which public worship is regulated according to the specifics of the New Testament. In other words, we should engage only in spiritual worship that is specified by Scripture: the public reading of Scripture, preaching, intercessory prayer, and singing. There is no specification as to how

^a **Pandora’s box** – from the Greek myth of Pandora in Hesiod’s *Works and Days*; now an idiom meaning a source of many varied, great, and unforeseen troubles.

^b **vindicate** – prove; defend.

these elements are to be arranged. This suggests freedom. There is no reason why we should not have great joy and edification in our public worship. We do not need to resort to imitating the world or to entertainment. We can combine dignity and reverence with joy and gladness. Stephen Charnock (1628-1680), in an exposition on John 4:24, places the focus on God as central in worship when he refers to some of the essential elements involved:

God is a Spirit infinitely happy, therefore we must approach Him with cheerfulness. He is a Spirit of infinite majesty, therefore we must come before Him with reverence. He is a Spirit infinitely high, therefore we must offer up our sacrifices with deepest humility. He is a Spirit infinitely holy, therefore we must address Him with purity. He is a Spirit infinitely glorious, we therefore must acknowledge His excellency. He is a Spirit provoked by us, therefore we must offer up our worship in the name of a pacifying Mediator and Intercessor.^a

Needless to say, tedium must be avoided in worship. The challenge for preachers not to weary their hearers will be addressed in a separate chapter on preaching.

Shallow evangelism—Possibly here more than anywhere, the Puritans can help evangelicals who use the altar call and too readily pronounce people converted, simply because a decision^b for Christ has been recorded. One of the legacies of the Puritan era is a stable doctrine of divine sovereignty and human responsibility to insure against the errors of Arminianism,^c on the one hand, and Hyper-Calvinism^d on the other.

^a **Mediator** – Jesus Christ in His role as a go-between; the One Who intervenes between two hostile parties, God and man, for the purpose of restoring them to a relationship of harmony and unity. See Free Grace Broadcaster 183, *Christ the Mediator*; available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

Intercessor – Jesus Christ in His role as One Who pleads with someone in authority (God the Father) on behalf of someone else (men) (Heb 7:25).

^b See *Decisional Regeneration* by James Adams, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^c **Arminianism** – doctrinal system taught by Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609), Dutch theologian of the Netherlands. He rejected the Reformers' understanding of salvation by God's sovereign election, teaching instead that God's election of individuals was based on His foreknowledge of their accepting or rejecting Christ by their own free will. See *Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility* by J. I. Packer, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^d **Hyper-Calvinism** – belief that God's election of His people negates Christ's "Great Commission" commands for Christians to make disciples of all nations by evangelizing everywhere (Mat 28:19-20, etc.). See *The Killing Effects of Hyper-Calvinism*, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

Reconstructionism—This is a movement emanating out of America that stresses the importance of the Moral Law. It holds to a postmillennial position which foresees that Christianity will prevail to the point where civil governments around the world will become Christian. Reconstructionism stresses the application of biblical teaching to every facet of life, private and public, and by exposition of the Scriptures seeks to equip politicians to apply biblical law to public life. Puritanism would endorse the emphasis on the Ten Commandments, and the need to persuade and teach politicians to apply these commandments in legislation. However, the Puritans would part company with any who sought to follow “theonomy,” the [direct] application of Old Testament laws to public life. Regarding the future, as has already been pointed out, the Puritans varied. They were mostly postmillennial, but their optimism was centered in the transforming power of the gospel and the building up of churches, rather than preoccupation with the powers of civil government.

Broad evangelicalism—Broad evangelicalism is innocuous^a and no threat to the world, to sin, or the devil. The Puritans exercised spiritual power. They brought down the opposition of darkness. The English Puritans gave to England high views of the Christian family and the Lord’s Day. Allied also to broad evangelicalism is impotent scholarship that is undisciplined and effete.^b

Allied too to broad evangelicalism is shallow evangelism. In a recent book *Are You Really Born Again? Understanding True and False Conversion*,^c Kent Philpott testifies how he has moved in his ministry from shallow evangelistic practice, with its altar call, to Reformed and Puritan practice. In their scholarship, the Puritans were full of practical application. Sadly, often where we find substantial evangelical scholarship today, it can be lacking in application.

Calvinistic Sovereign Grace-ism—Some readers may wonder what this is. The fact is that many churches disown the description “Reformed” because they disagree with the Law and Lord’s Day chapters (chapters 19 and 21) in *The Westminster Confession of*

^a **innocuous** – having no adverse effect; harmless.

^b **effete** – depleted of vitality, force, or effectiveness.

^c Published by Evangelical Press, www.epbooks.org.

Faith or its Baptist counterpart *The 1689 London Confession of Faith*.^a They embrace the five points of Calvinism. These five points are easily remembered by the acrostic TULIP: total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, perseverance of the saints.^b This formulation originated at the Synod of Dort in Holland in 1618-19.^c

The five points highlight the truth that we are saved by grace alone. There are, however, dangers in a simplistic reduction of Calvinism to five points. In Scripture, wherever the truth of salvation by grace alone is stated, it is in the context of practical application. Without spiritual application there is the danger of being merely academic or intellectual. This was largely characteristic of Fundamentalism. As with other groupings of churches, Sovereign Grace churches vary widely in character. A few have fallen prey to a cultic spirit by implying that only those who believe in the five points are true, born-again Christians. Puritanism corrects such error by keeping to the biblical centrality of union with Christ as the main feature of the Christian, a union that brings with it, at one and the same time, justification imputed^d and holiness of life shown by fruitfulness (Rom 6:1-18). The Puritans were careful not to add to justification by faith alone. In some instances, “Calvinistic Sovereign Grace-ism” adds to justification by faith by insisting that a true believer one must possess the five points. But faith alone joins the believer to Christ (Rom 5:1). To that nothing must be added.

Hyper-Calvinism—The essence of Hyper-Calvinism is to deny common grace of the love of God to all men. In other words, God only loves the elect and only hates the non-elect. Further, Hyper-Calvinism denies the sincere free offers of the gospel to all men. C. H. Spurgeon^e was a Puritan in every fiber of his being. In his preaching we have wonderful examples of the five points of Calvinism preached evangelistically. For instance, Spurgeon poured scorn

^a *London Baptist Confession of 1689*, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^b See *The Doctrines of Grace in the Gospel of John*, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^c See *The Canons of Dort*, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^d **imputed** – given by God apart from men’s works; put onto one’s account apart from one’s earning it.

^e **Charles H. Spurgeon** (1834-1892) – influential English Baptist minister who preached weekly to 6,000 at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London; his collected sermons fill 63 volumes. CHAPEL LIBRARY publishes more than 250 Spurgeon tracts, booklets, and paperbacks.

on a general redemption that supposedly made salvation possible but does not in fact actually save anyone. Spurgeon preached particular redemption^a in a most powerful evangelistic manner. The Puritans can provide stability today

- in the biblical manner in which they held to the different facets of the love of God, and
- in the way in which they held in harmony the doctrines of divine sovereignty and human responsibility.

The church of Christ on earth at the end of the 20th century is larger and more diverse than it has ever been. Only some aspects and strands of that huge body have been referred to, yet from these descriptions it should be evident that the Puritan writings are relevant today.

^a **particular redemption** – doctrine that Christ died for a particular group of people, the elect chosen by God before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:4-7), thus rendering His redemption effectual in every instance. See *Particular Redemption* by Charles Spurgeon, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

Popular Chart of English Monarchs 1491-1689

The Tudor line

HENRY VIII (born 1491, 1509-1547) *key: Divorced, Beheaded, Died, Survived*

- | | | |
|----|-------------------|--|
| Dv | wife number one | Catherine of Aragon, who bore Mary,
later to become queen |
| B | wife number two | Anne Boleyn, who in 1533 bore Elizabeth,
later to become queen. |
| D | wife number three | Jane Seymour, who bore Edward,
later to become king |
| Dv | wife number four | Anne of Cleves, marriage supposedly
not consummated |
| B | wife number five | Catherine Howard |
| S | wife number six | Catherine Parr |

EDWARD VI (born 1537, 1547-1553) died at age 16. During his reign England moved politically in the direction of Protestantism.

MARY (1553-1558) nicknamed 'Bloody Mary' because of her cruelty.
Burned about 270 at stake for their faith. Mary married Roman Catholic Philip son of Emperor Charles V in 1554.

ELIZABETH (1558-1603) principal events:

- 1559 The *Elizabethan Settlement*
- 1570 Elizabeth excommunicated by the Pope of Rome
- 1588 Attack by the Spanish Armada

The Stuart line

JAMES I (1603-1625)

- 1604 The Hampton Court Conference
- 1611 Publication of the King James Bible (Authorised Version)
- 1618 The Synod of Dort rejects Arminianism
- 1624 Richard Montagu's anti-Calvinist treatise points to the rise of Arminianism

CHARLES I (1603-1640)

- 1629 For eleven years Charles rules without Parliament
- 1637 Imposition of new *Prayer Book* provokes riots in Edinburgh
- 1640-1660 Rule by Parliament
- 1642 Civil War
- 1643-1647 The Westminster Assembly
- 1645 Archbishop William Laud executed
- 1649 Charles I executed
- 1658 Death of Oliver Cromwell

CHARLES II (1660-1685)

- 1662 *Act of Uniformity* and the Great Ejection of Puritan pastors

JAMES II (1685-1688)

WILLIAM III (1689-1702)

PART ONE

THE STORY OF THE PURITANS

1. Overview

“Almost no one reads their writings now.” So wrote William Haller in his 1957 book, *The Rise of Puritanism*. His comment was true then. It is not true now. Since 1957 there has been a Reformed theological renewal that has its roots in Puritan books.¹ In addition to the extensive publishing achievement of the Banner of Truth in the UK and Soli Deo Gloria^a publishers in the USA, there are other publishing houses in the business of reworking and publishing the Puritans.^b

Included in the republication of Puritan writings is the translation of Puritan expositions in other languages. For instance, Jeremiah Burroughs’ *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*^c has recently been published in Albanian, Arabic, French, Indonesian, Korean, Persian, Portuguese, and Spanish.² The need for a popular historical background into which we can readily set the Puritan authors is one of the reasons for this presentation.

I would urge newcomers to the Puritans to memorize the names and dates of the English monarchs for the 16th and 17th centuries. The time grid is essential. Each monarch put his or her own peculiar stamp on that part of the story. Compared to the monarchy today, the kings and queens of that era seemed to wield supreme authority. In fact their powers were ill-defined. They had no standing army, were often short of money, and had to govern bearing in mind the goodwill of the land-owning classes, who were the natural leaders in society.

^a Now part of Reformation Heritage Books, www.HeritageBooks.org.

^b This Part One, *The Story of the Puritans*, is available as a 32-page booklet from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^c Abridgement available from CHAPEL LIBRARY. See excerpt in Appendix 2.

In his *A Short History of the English People*, J. R. Green declared,

No greater moral change ever passed over a nation than passed over England during the years which parted the middle of the reign of Elizabeth to the meeting of the Long Parliament (1640-1660). England became the people of a book, and that book the Bible.³

This may sound exaggerated, but we can be sure that what Green meant is that the Puritans eventually came to wield a spiritual influence well beyond their proportion, for they always formed a minority. It will help to see the story in perspective by recalling that the population of England in the year 1500 was about two million and in 1600 approximately four million. As for religion, in spite of enforced church attendance, it is doubtful whether more than a quarter of the population of England during that period could be said to have any religion at all.⁴ It is interesting to observe that the population of England is now about 49 million^a and has 13,000 parishes with 10,000 clergy, 8,000 of whom are paid. This general observation needs to be remembered not only for the whole time that we will be viewing, but even more so today, when those who profess and practice the Christian faith constitute probably less than ten percent. Ralph Josselin in his Essex parish did not celebrate communion for nine years, and when he did in 1651, only 34 qualified! Josselin spoke of three categories of parishioners: first, those who seldom hear preaching; second, those who are “sleepy hearers”; and third, “our society,” a small group of the godly.⁵

Nominalism^b has always characterized the great majority of Anglicans. It was so then as it is now. By about 1600, the number of Puritan ministers had increased to about ten percent; that is about 800 of the 8,000 Church of England clergy. By 1660 this proportion had increased to about twenty-five percent. Then, between 1660 and 1662, about 2,000 were forced out of the National Church.⁶

Before the Reformation, the English Church was Roman Catholic. In character, it was “a collection of practices, habits, and attitudes rather than an intellectually coherent body of doctrine.”⁷ The Protestantization of England was essentially gradual, taking place

^a As of 2000, the date of writing.

^b **nominalism** – false outward profession of faith without heart commitment.

slowly throughout Elizabeth's reign, "here a little and there a little," and very much in piecemeal fashion. From about 1600 growth accelerated. At the time of Henry VIII's breach with Rome, England was officially completely Roman Catholic. But by 1642, it is estimated that not more than two percent were Catholic, but ten percent of the peerage^a was still so. Throughout the period I will outline, England was a sacral society; everyone was required to conform to the Church of England. This resulted in "recusants" who refused to attend the Church of England services, either for Puritan reasons or out of loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church. From 1570 to 1791, this was punishable by a fine and involved many civil disabilities. Recusants tended to lie low and keep out of trouble. It was during the period 1640 to 1660 that Christian denominations surfaced: Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, and Quakers^b (all these together representing only about five percent of the population).⁸ The *Toleration Act* of 1689 marked the end of the Church of England's claim to be *the* single all-inclusive church of the English people, although it remained the church established by law.

2. Who Were the Puritans?

In 1568 there were "many congregations of the Anabaptists in London, who called themselves 'Puritans' or 'the unspotted lambs of the Lord.'"⁹ It has been widely accepted that the word *Puritan* first came into use in connection with these groups.¹⁰ It was during the Elizabethan period (1558-1603) that the Puritans grew increasingly as a distinct brotherhood of pastors who emphasized the great centralities of Christianity: faithfulness to Scripture, expository

^a **peerage** – nobility.

^b **Presbyterians** – those whose church practice includes baptism of infants and elders in each local church, under the authority of a presbytery composed of elders from multiple like-minded churches that have covenanted together.

Congregationalists – those whose church practice combines the Presbyterian baptism of infants and the Baptist teaching that each local church is self-governing under Christ's authority.

Baptists – those whose church practice embraces believers' baptism and independent local congregations under Christ's authority, although such churches may associate with like-minded others for specific, non-binding purposes such as evangelistic outreach and fellowship.

Quakers – those whose church practice has a primary focus on Inner Light, direct illumination from God, which they elevate to a place of spiritual authority, superior even to Scripture.

preaching, pastoral care, personal holiness, and practical godliness applied to every area of life. The word *Puritan* began to be used to refer to these people who were scrupulous about their way of life. “The ‘godly,’ or those who were not nominal, were dubbed *Puritans*.”¹¹ Those who cared about the gospel (gospellers) and who sought to propagate the gospel were Puritans. As the Scriptures warn, the godly can expect to bear reproach for their holy way of life. The godly of that time were derided as killjoys and nick-named *Puritans*.

A new meaning developed that came about through the Arminian/Calvinist controversy. Those ministers in England who subscribed to the doctrines of grace^a were called *Puritans*. When submitting a list of names for preferment (promotion), the dogmatic Arminian Archbishop William Laud^b placed a “P” beside the Puritans, thus warning against their convictions, and an “O” beside others for orthodox^c (as Laud interpreted that term), conveying the meaning that they were acceptable.

The word *Puritan* has been used much as a term of derision. In 1641, Henry Parker complained that

Papists, bishops, court flatterers, stage-poets, minstrels, jesting buffoons, all the shameless rout of drunkards, lechers, and swearing ruffians, and many others took delight in deriding people as Puritans.¹²

3. The Puritan Movement in Time

We will tell the story of the Puritans in three parts:

- A. Antecedents^d to the Puritan movement
- B. The development of the Puritan movement

^a **doctrines of grace** – system of theology usually known as Calvinism, which emphasizes that salvation is all of grace, by the merit of Christ alone, without any addition from the works of man. See *God’s Astounding Grace* by D. Scott Meadows; available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^b **William Laud** (1573-1645) – English churchman and academic, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1633 (head of the Church of England). In theology, Laud was accused of being an Arminian and opponent of Calvinism, as well as covertly favouring Roman Catholic doctrines. On all three grounds, he was regarded by Puritan pastors and laymen as a dangerous opponent.

^c **orthodox** – that which pertains to the body of doctrines that are essential to the Christian faith; this implies consistency with the revelation of Holy Scripture in belief and worship.

^d **antecedents** – what has gone before in time, leading to the current state.

through the spiritual brotherhood (1558-1603)

C. The full flowering of Puritanism (1603-1662).

A. Antecedents to the Puritan Movement

1). William Tyndale and the Supremacy of the Bible

The first feature of the Puritan movement was a love for the Word of God. Before the rise of Puritanism, ignorance of the Word of God was widespread. In 1524 William Tyndale (c. 1495-1536) made a brave decision to defy the law forbidding Bible translation and the law forbidding Englishmen to leave the country without permission.

Born in Gloucestershire, Tyndale was educated at Oxford, where he gained his MA in 1515. Thereafter he came into conflict with the local clergy who avowed their loyalty to the Pope and tradition in preference to the teachings of the Bible. Tyndale was appalled by the prevailing ignorance and, in an argument with an opponent, asserted in the home of his patron Sir John Walsh at Little Sodbury in Gloucestershire,

If God spare my life, ere many years, I will cause that a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scripture than thou dost!

On the Continent, Tyndale was hounded from one place to another. Eventually he was betrayed and suffered in prison. At Vilvorde, near Brussels, in 1536 he was put to death by strangling and burning. Thus ended the life of one of England's greatest heroes.

William Tyndale was a talented theologian. His theological writings, gathered and published in 1572, represent a formative contribution in the development of Protestant Christianity, especially on the central issue of justification by faith alone, by grace alone. This can be seen in a competent reply made to Sir Thomas More (1478-1535), English Lord Chancellor, who wrote books against Tyndale.

Tyndale succeeded in translating and printing the New Testament plus the Pentateuch and the book of Jonah. These were smuggled back into England. The ex-friar Miles Coverdale (1488-1568), an associate of Tyndale's, turned to Switzerland for protection. There, using Tyndale's work, he translated the whole Bible. Henry VIII approved this translation. By 1537 two editions had been published in England. Later, the 1560 Geneva Bible became a

favorite Bible with the Puritans. Between 1579 and 1615 at least 39 editions of the Geneva Bible were printed in England. A predestinarian catechism was included in the Geneva Bible and there were marginal notes.¹³ For instance, the locusts of Revelation 9:3 were identified as bishops and archbishops, monks and cardinals!¹⁴

2). Role of the Martyrs and the Crucial Ministry of John Foxe

During the short reign of Edward (1547-1553), the Protestant position was consolidated. At the death of Queen Mary (1553-1558), England was technically re-aligned with Rome. It was during the reign of Mary, nick-named “Bloody Mary,” that more than 270 Protestant martyrs were burned at the stake. Included among these were artisans and ordinary people. Among those put to death for their faith were leaders of great stature like John Bradford, as well as distinguished bishops including John Hooper, Hugh Latimer, Nicholas Ridley, and Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury.^a

Thus, under Mary, some of England’s noblest sons lost their lives. The gruesome scenes of human bodies burning alive were etched into the minds of the people; they must be the primary influence molding the Puritans who followed from 1558 to 1662 and beyond. The effect of this to turn the people from Roman Catholicism to Protestantism is beyond calculation. During her reign, Mary was Rome’s greatest asset in England. Since her death, her memory has always been Rome’s greatest liability in England.¹⁵

The testimony of the martyrs was extraordinary. Their impact was greatly increased through the industrious writing of John Foxe. Born in Lancashire in 1517, Foxe began studies at Oxford at age 16. His studies were instrumental in his conversion by the time he had earned his MA. Because of his Protestant convictions, Foxe suffered acute poverty. Scholars in those days depended on wealthy patrons to give them lodging and meals in exchange for teaching services. Unable to find such a position in London, Foxe nearly starved to death. One day he sat disconsolate in St Paul’s churchyard. A stranger came up to him and placed a generous sum of money in his hands. Three days later, he obtained a position in the

^a **Archbishop of Canterbury** – senior bishop and principal leader of the Church of England, answerable to the reigning monarch of the UK, who is the “supreme governor” of the Church.

home of the Earl of Surrey at Reigate, where he taught the earl's children.

When Mary came to the throne, Foxe left for the Continent, where he joined English refugees—first at Frankfurt and then at Basel. He had already begun to collect materials for his work on the martyrs from the time of the apostles to the reign of Queen Mary. Foxe was essentially a literary man, meticulous in detail. His reliability for accuracy has been questioned but not refuted. Foxe's work eventually expanded to 1,700 folio^a pages, published in 1563 as *The Acts and Monuments of these latter perilous days*, but popularly known then and now as *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*. It was placed in the cathedrals, in parish churches, and in the halls of public companies. Never had such a work on such a scale appeared in English before, certainly never at such a moment. Daniel Neal declares,

No book ever gave such a mortal wound to popery^b as this. It was dedicated to the queen; and was in such high reputation that it was ordered to be set up in the churches, where it raised in the people an invincible horror and detestation of that religion which had shed so much innocent blood.¹⁶

Along with the Bible, Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* became a family book in many homes.¹⁷ It was the principal practical means of turning England to Protestantism. The powerful testimony of the Marian martyrs in their agonizing deaths moved hearts and turned minds to consider the reasons that inspired such faith. In addition, Foxe's writing was used to instill into Puritanism the ideal of the Christian hero: the person who bears faithful witness to Christ, even to death. It was glorious to them that the martyrs could triumph over the last and most dreaded enemy. Dying well was part of the Puritan mentality. We see this in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*^c description of the various characters who come to cross the River of Death. Remember Mr. Despondency? His last words were: "Farewell night, welcome day!"

^a **folio** – book with pages of the largest size.

^b **popery** – devotion to the Pope; Roman Catholicism.

^c *The Pilgrim's Progress* – classic Christian allegory written by John Bunyan (1628-1688) while he was imprisoned. First published in 1678, it has been in print continuously ever since. Some believe it to be the second best-selling English language book in the world after the Bible. Part One is available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

Foxe immortalized the dying sayings of the martyrs, such as Bishop Hugh Latimer's words to Bishop Ridley when they suffered together at the stake:

Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England as, I trust, shall never be put out!

A memorial stands at the spot in Oxford where this took place.

John Foxe inspired and promoted the idea of England as an elect^a nation, a people set apart from all others, a people specially called to preserve and promote the Word of God.¹⁸

3). *The Lutheran and Genevan Reformation Movements*

Momentum for reform came to England from the writings and example of the Continental Reformers as a whole. Martin Luther (1483-1546) was the dominant early influence, but later John Calvin (1509-1564) exercised a profound effect in England. Calvin's style of preaching straight through text by text, book after book in Scripture, and his example of reformation at Geneva impressed the English refugees. There were about one hundred English refugees in Geneva at the time of Mary's reign of terror. These refugees caught the vision for the complete reformation of the church in its form of government and its form of worship. Several of the refugees who returned at the time of Elizabeth's accession were given high and privileged office in the Established Church. To their disappointment, they realized that radical reform would be blocked.

In due course, the vision of a church reformed after the Genevan pattern and made Presbyterian was taken up by Thomas Cartwright (1535-1603), a popular teacher at Cambridge. Cartwright's lectures on the *Acts of the Apostles* in 1570 made a tremendous impact and encouraged attempts to bring about reformation in church government. Two of his disciples, John Field and Thomas Willcox,^b wrote in detail on this theme in 1572 under the title *An Admonition to Parliament*. This was forceful and uncompromising

^a **elect** – chosen by God for special blessing and usefulness in the world.

^b **Thomas Willcox** (1621-1687) – English Baptist pastor; born at Linden in Rutlandshire; served in Baptist churches in London. He was imprisoned in Newgate for Nonconformity. He was in favour with all denominations and preached frequently among Presbyterians and Independents. His tract, *Honey Out of the Rock*, was reprinted and translated often in his day; excerpts appear in Appendix 2.

writing, but exceedingly unpopular with the government. Field and Willcox soon found themselves in prison.

When Cartwright was challenged and charged with error, he answered by drawing up a statement that summarized the issues as follows:

1. Archbishops and archdeacons (the Episcopal system) ought to be abolished.
2. The officers of the church should be patterned on the New Testament model. Bishops,^a or elders, should preach and deacons take care of the poor.
3. Every church should be governed by its own minister and elders.
4. No man should solicit for ecclesiastical preferment.
5. Church officers should be chosen by the church and not the state.

B. The Development of the Puritan Movement until the Spiritual Brotherhood (1558-1603)

1). Historical Context

When Elizabeth rode into London on 23rd November 1558, she was twenty-five years old. Exceptional in her ability to measure political forces, she grasped well the emotions and desires of her people. More than any other Tudor monarch, she controlled both government and church policy. She spoke Latin, French, and Italian fluently and could read Greek. Elizabeth resolved to work for the establishment of a strong united nation with one united national church. William Cecil, Elizabeth's chief minister, believed that "the state could never be in safety where there was toleration of two religions."

At the time of Elizabeth's accession to the throne, the contest between Catholicism and Protestantism to win the hearts of the people was undecided. Most were ready to conform either way. Elizabeth's administration was moderately Protestant. She excluded fully committed Roman Catholics, but neither were there any Protestants from the Genevan camp. Elizabeth maintained a balance between the Roman Catholic and Protestant constituencies.

^a **bishops** – New Testament title given to the church office of elders, spiritually mature men chosen to lead the local congregation (1Ti 3:1-11; Ti 1:5-9). See *Biblical Eldership* by Alexander Strauch, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

Even in the matter of marriage she kept everyone guessing. Marriage to a foreign prince would have enormous political and religious implications. In any event, she never married. She was less violent than her half-sister Mary. Nevertheless, at least two Anabaptists^a were burned at the stake in 1575; and Separatist^b leaders such as Greenwood, Barrowe, and Penry were executed by hanging in 1593.

The Pope excommunicated Queen Elizabeth in 1570. This strengthened opposition to the Pope and assisted the Protestant cause in England. In 1588 a massive effort was made by Spain to invade England. The Spanish Armada consisted of an impressive fleet of 130 ships intended to convey 50,000 soldiers as an attacking force. The Armada suffered an overwhelming defeat. Less than half the Spanish ships returned home. This event further strengthened the Protestant party in England, since the English then, as now, prize their nationhood. They resented the threat from Roman Catholic Spain, a nation notorious for the Inquisition,^c a most hideous and devilish system of persecution.

To appreciate the conditions under which the brotherhood of godly Puritan pastors formed, it is important to understand the *Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity* and the new *Prayer Book*, which were imposed upon England in 1559. The effect of the *Act of Supremacy* declared Elizabeth to be “Supreme Head of the Church of England.”

The way in which we worship God is a sensitive issue. It is not surprising that pressure for ministers to wear the surplice (a loose white over-garment) caused resentment. Most conformed for the

^a **Anabaptists** – (*literally* “re-baptizer”: Greek *ana* “again” and *baptizo* “baptize”) originally a term of contempt during the Reformation for those who rejected infant baptism and established churches based on believers’ baptism. German, Swiss, Polish, Dutch, and numerous other groups emerged, often with widely different theology.

^b **Separatists** – English Christians in the 16th and 17th centuries who wished to separate from the Church of England and form independent local churches. They were influential politically under Oliver Cromwell, who was himself a separatist, and were eventually called Congregationalists.

^c **Inquisition** – group of institutions begun in the 12th century within the Roman Catholic Church whose aim was to combat heresy. Its scope significantly expanded in response to the Protestant Reformation, often using brutal interrogations and torture, and sentencing those “guilty” to death.

sake of peace. Others refused. A Manchester curate^a preached that “the surplice is a rag of the pope and a mighty heresy in the church, and he who maintains it cannot be saved!” A minister appearing before the Bishop of Lichfield in 1570 called it “a polluted and cursed mark of the beast” and warned that thanks to the use of “such rags of antichrist, the people will fall away from God into a second popery that will be worse than the first!”¹⁹ The application of the laws enforcing conformity varied from place to place. Many bishops had little desire to persecute ministers who, after all, were fellow-Protestants.

2). *Formation of the Brotherhood*

The inception of the Puritan movement is found in a spiritual fellowship of gifted pastor and preachers that emerged in the 1580s and 1590s. Some of the best known were Richard Greenham, Henry Smith, Richard Rogers, Laurence Chaderton, Arthur Hildersam, John Dod, John Rogers, and William Perkins. Puritans multiplied through the work of these leaders, who became famous not only for their preaching but as physicians of the soul. I will briefly describe four leaders of that early brotherhood.²⁰

Firstly, there was *Richard Greenham (1531-1591)*. Greenham left the academic atmosphere of Cambridge, where he had been a tutor in 1570, to take up pastoral work in the humble village of Dry Drayton about five miles from Cambridge. There he labored for twenty years, preaching away only occasionally. Greenham was a pastor *par excellence*, a spiritual physician able to discern the deep experiences of the soul, an expert in counselling and comforting. He constantly rose, winter and summer, at 4 am. He refused several lucrative promotions and abounded in acts of generosity to the poor.

Young men came to live at Dry Drayton, forming a “School of Christ,” devoting themselves to the Scriptures and to the outworking of the Word in their own souls and the souls of others. Why should a village situation be exciting? The answer is that here we see a microcosm^b of a wider work—the rooting of the gospel in rural England. Richard Greenham was criticized for his Noncon-

^a **curate** – cleric, especially one who has charge of a parish.

^b **microcosm** – smaller system that represents a larger.

formity^a and the way he conducted worship services. He was passive in his resistance. He did not wish to argue about things he regarded as *adiaphora*, that is, things indifferent (Rom 14:5). He preached Christ and Him crucified, and simply pleaded for tolerance that he should continue to be a faithful minister of Christ. He enjoyed the friendship of men of influence, who always managed to put in a good word for him and thus keep him out of trouble.

Secondly, there was *Richard Rogers (1550-1620)*. In 1574 Richard Rogers became a preacher of God's Word in the village of Wethersfield. There he labored for the conversion of souls, but also to work at mortification of sin^b in his own soul. Like Greenham, he kept a school in his house for young men.

Having first committed himself to the rigors of the godly life, he wrote in detail on practical godly living. This was called *The Seven Treatises*, a work that went through seven editions before 1630. His close friend and neighbor, Ezekiel Culverwell, expressed the wish that readers of the book could have seen its author's practice with their own eyes and heard his doctrine with their own ears. Here we see illustrated a fascination with the essence of godliness. Rogers kept a diary; from it can be seen a man walking as closely as possible with God. One of his series of expositions, his discourses on the book of Judges, became quite famous.²¹

We should not imagine that Rogers led an easy life, being waited on by servants so that he could give himself to spiritual exercises. Besides the care of his immediate large family, we read of him,

He regarded it as his duty to meditate, study, and write at the same time that he carried on no less conscientiously the activities of a householder, a farmer, a figure in the countryside, a preacher, a pastor, a reformer, a head of a boarding school.^c

Thirdly, there was *William Perkins (1558-1602)*. Perkins labored at Cambridge with remarkable effect. Combined in him, to a remarkable extent, were the spiritual qualities and ministerial skills typical of the brotherhood. He excelled both in the pulpit and with

^a **Nonconformity** – refusal to accept or conform to the doctrines, usage, or polity of 16th and 17th century Church of England.

^b **mortification** – putting temptation of sin to death in its influence (Col 3:5). See *Mortification of Sin* by John Owen (1616-1683) and Free Grace Broadcaster 201, *Mortification*; both available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^c William Haller, *Rise of Puritanism*, 38.

the pen, keeping the university printer busy with many books. More than those of any other minister of his time, his published works were found on the shelves of the generation that followed him. He was the first to write a full exposition of preaching in *The Art of Prophesying*.²² Typical of the Puritans, Perkins' approach to preaching was essentially applicatory. In preparation, he considered the needs of every kind of hearer in the congregation. Although he died so young, his writings exceeded in quantity and quality all other Puritan authors up to that time.

William Perkins was no ivory tower academic. For example, he made it his business to obtain permission to minister to the prisoners in jail. He won souls to Christ from among them just as he did among the huge crowds who came to hear him preach at St. Andrews. It is said of him that his sermons were, at one and the same time, all Law and all gospel—all Law to expose the shame of sin, and all gospel to offer a full and free pardon for lost sinners. His was an awakening ministry that stirred lost souls to see the reality of eternal condemnation. Perkins was so gifted in eloquence, it was said that the very way he uttered the word *damn* made sinners tremble. Perkins died young. His loss was sorely felt.

Fourthly, there was *Laurence Chaderton (1537-1635)*. Laurence Chaderton lived to be almost a hundred years old. He published little. He came from a wealthy Roman Catholic family by which he was "nuzzled up in popish superstition."^a He suffered disinheritance when he embraced the gospel and Puritanism. A well-known benefactor of that time was Sir Walter Mildmay, who founded Emmanuel College at the University of Cambridge. Sir Walter chose Chaderton to be master of that college,^b which position he filled for forty years. He was a lecturer for fifty years at St. Clement's Church, Cambridge. When he eventually came to give up his lectureship at St. Clement's, forty ministers begged him to continue, claiming that they owed their conversion to his ministry. There is a description of him preaching for two hours when he announced that he would no longer trespass on his hearers' patience; where-

^a Thomas Fuller, *History of the Worthies of England*, Vol. 2 (London 1840), 208.

^b **college** – one of several schools within a larger university. Each college provided its students with lodging, board, social activities, faculty, and specific studies.

master – head administrator and director of faculty and policy.

upon the congregation cried out, "For God's sake, sir, go on! Go on!"

The growth of Puritanism was due to pastors of this kind, whose lives and godly example captured the imagination of many. However, as we have seen in the case of William Perkins and Laurence Chaderton, the role of Cambridge University was tremendous in advancing Puritanism. Puritan endowed colleges such as Emmanuel and Sidney Sussex produced a steady supply of talented Puritan pastors and preachers.

3). *Other Factors*

In tracing the rise of Puritanism, we must reckon too with the role of *lectureships*. In market towns, magistrates engaged their own preachers and organized weekday sermons. Lectureships were established that were a means of by-passing the system of conformity to the *Prayer Book* and church ceremonial, which were required of all official parish ministers. Richard Rogers of Wethersfield and Henry Smith at St. Clement Danes in London officially acted as lecturers. Between 1560 and 1662, at least 700 clergymen held lectureships at one time or another in London. Of these, at least 60 percent were Puritans.²³ The patronage of nobles and gentry played an important role in the advance of the Puritan movement. Wealthy patrons supported and protected Puritan preachers.

During Elizabeth's reign, the place of *prophesyings* loomed large. These were meetings for preaching expository sermons and discussion, which became very popular. Elizabeth felt threatened and sought to suppress the prophesyings. Archbishop Edmund Grindal refused to carry out her will and argued in favor of the prophesyings. For his faithfulness, he was suspended from office for the last seven years of his life and confined to his house for most of that time. In May 1577, the queen herself sent letters to the bishops ordering them to suppress the prophesying meetings.

C. The Full Flowering of Puritanism (1603-1662)

This period from 1603 to 1662 was turbulent, a time when conflict between Crown and Parliament came to a climax in the civil war. Religious pluralism^a surfaced in the 1640s. The story of the Puritans reached its apex in this period, especially as is seen in the

^a **pluralism** – condition in which numerous groups are present and tolerated within a society.

Westminster Assembly. It is vital to know the history, which we will now sketch in five phases:

1. James I
2. Charles I and Archbishop Laud
3. Civil war and the rise of Oliver Cromwell
4. Puritan ascendancy
5. Restoration of the monarchy and decline of Puritanism.

1). *James I*

Elizabeth I died in 1603. She had purposed to make England great, and in that she saw success to considerable measure. Despite her personal tantrums, sulks, and irrationalities, her reign was a period of political stability, especially so in the light of what was to follow in the mid-17th century. As already noted, at the beginning of the 17th century, the Puritans represented about ten percent of the body of Church of England clergy.

The Puritans fostered high hopes that James (James VI of Scotland, James I of England), coming from Presbyterian Scotland, would herald church reform. They were sadly disappointed. A petition known as the *Millenary Petition*, believed to represent about 1,000 Puritans, was presented to James I on his way from Scotland to London. This petition urged reformation and led to the conference known as the Hampton Court Conference. This took place on three separate days in January, 1604, at Hampton Palace in London.

James was highly intelligent. He understood well the intricacies of church government. He believed in the “divine right of kings,” that is, to disobey the king is to disobey God. James had every intention of maintaining supreme power, having had enough of cantankerous Presbyterians in Scotland! It was clear as daylight that the Puritans wished to “Presbyterianize” the Church of England. As the Hampton Court Conference went on, so King James became more and more bad tempered. He made dogmatic assertions such as, “No bishop,^a no king!” and “Presbytery agrees as much with monarchy as God with the devil!” And to the Puritan divines^b he said, “You had better hurry up and conform, or you will

^a **bishop** – church office in some denominations. In the Church of England, head of multiple parishes.

^b **divines** – theologically learned men.

be harried out of the land!" The conference ended in a right royal flurry of bad temper! However, the King was agreeable to a new translation of the Bible known as *The Authorized Version* (or King James Version), which was completed in 1611. Otherwise, concessions were few and insignificant.

Between 1604 and 1609, about eighty clergy were deprived of their livings for their Nonconformity, most of these before 1607. The bishops had been told to persuade rather than coerce subscription to Anglican practice. In Parliament, the godly campaigned for the reinstatement of deprived ministers.²⁴

King James sent delegates to the Synod of Dort. Held in 1618-19 in the Netherlands, this was an important event in the history of the Christian church. The conference affirmed the orthodox Calvinist position on the sovereignty of God^a over against the tenets of Arminianism. James supported the Calvinist position against the Arminians. Subsequently, he became ambivalent on the issue. In 1624 Richard Montagu published an anti-Calvinist treatise with the title *A New Gagg for an Old Goose*. This was part of an increasing trend toward Arminianism in the National Church.²⁵

2). *Charles I and Archbishop Laud*

James I died in 1625. Charles I—handsome, dignified, chaste—was enthroned king. However, unlike Elizabeth and his father James, he lacked political skill and especially so in the art of keeping checks and balances, which is essential in politics. Charles married Henrietta Maria, sister of the reigning French king Louis XIII. Maria was an ardent Roman Catholic. She meddled with state affairs. This created constant suspicion among members of Parliament and in the nation. These suspicions were mixed with fear as the cause of Protestantism on the continent of Europe was receding, which placed many Protestants in danger.

William Laud became Charles' trusted adviser. From the time of the accession of Charles to the throne in 1625, Laud was exercising power, but this was formalized when he became the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1633. James had warned Charles that Laud did not understand the Scottish people: "He kenned^b not the stomach of

^a See the Christian classic, *The Sovereignty of God* by A. W. Pink (1886-1952), available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^b **kenned** – knew.

that people.” This was a warning that Charles did not heed. Laud was hostile in every way to the Puritan teaching. One of his first acts as archbishop was to encourage games and pastimes on the Lord’s Day, which antagonized the Puritans. He was an avowed Arminian, with its emphasis on free will and rejection of predestination. Laud was superstitious. He embraced the outward forms of Roman Catholic worship, but rejected the authority of the Pope. His idea of what he called “The Beauty of Holiness” (Psa 29:2) consisted of rituals and ceremonies. To this day, many Anglican churches have altars at the east end. Although the canon law^a always refers to “the holy table,”^b the idea of the altar is perpetuated. The message of an altar is that of sacrifice. Laud believed the altar was “the greatest place of God’s residence upon earth—yea, greater than the pulpit.”²⁶

The famous historian Lord Thomas Macaulay (who did not comprehend the spirituality of the Puritans) certainly had the measure of William Laud and wrote of him,

Of all the prelates of the Anglican Church, Laud had departed farthest from the principles of the Reformation, and had drawn nearest to Rome...He was by nature rash, irritable, quick to feel for his own dignity, slow to sympathize with the sufferings of others, and prone to the error (common in superstitious men) of mistaking his own peevish and malignant moods for emotions of pious zeal. Under his direction, every corner of the realm was subjected to a constant and minute^c inspection. Every little congregation of separatists was tracked out and broken up.²⁷

Macaulay’s hyperbole^d accurately depicts the zeal of the persecutors, but we can be thankful that by no means all separatist assemblies were broken up.

As archbishop, Laud wielded power to arrest and imprison those who would not conform. He used a court called “the Star Chamber” to interrogate and persecute. An example of the cruelty of Laud is seen in the case of a Dr. Alexander Leighton, father of the well-known bishop Robert Leighton. Without any defense or right of appeal, Leighton was sent to Newgate Prison. When brought be-

^a **canon law** – body of rules governing the faith and practice of members of the Church of England.

^b **holy table** – place where the Lord’s Supper is served; communion table.

^c **minute** – detailed.

^d **hyperbole** – exaggeration for effect, not meant to be taken literally.

fore an arbitrary court, he was condemned to have his ears cut off, his nose slit on both sides, be branded in the face with a double S S (sower of sedition), be twice whipped, be placed in the pillory,^a and then be subject to life imprisonment! When this outrageous sentence was pronounced, Laud gave thanks to God!²⁸ Other well-known characters who received similar barbaric treatment were William Prynne, John Bastwick, Henry Burton, and John Lilburne.

Bitter persecution raged against the Puritans. Between 1629 and 1640, 20,000 men, women, and children left for New England, including seventy-nine ministers, twenty-eight of whom returned when conditions improved at home.²⁹ Many made their exodus through the Netherlands. Among the most famous leaders to settle in New England were Thomas Hooker, John Cotton, and Thomas Shepard. The role of William Ames (1576-1633) is noteworthy. He was a Puritan whose principal ministry was exercised in Holland, but his writings were very popular in New England. *The Marrow of Theology* was his most influential book.

Charles ruled the country without Parliament from 1629 to 1640. Administration was maintained through county courts. Political power lay largely in the hands of about 60 noblemen or peers, very wealthy aristocrats who owned most of the land. Below them were the gentry. When the Civil War began in earnest in 1642, peers and gentry were about evenly divided in their loyalties to the king.

3). *Civil War and the Rise of Oliver Cromwell*

When Laud attempted to enforce the Church of England's *Prayer Book* and *Liturgy* on (Presbyterian) Scotland in 1638, it was like striking a match to dry gunpowder! This is highlighted by a famous incident in St. Giles Church, Edinburgh. Jenny Geddes, infuriated by a pompous dean in a white surplice walking down the aisle to announce the reading, took hold of her stool and hurled it at him! In today's idiom, she cried out, "You miserable upstart! Will you say mass in my ear?" Jenny's example greatly heartened others to resist imposition of popish rituals that they hated. In 1638

^a **pillory** – wooden framework on a post with holes for the head and hands, in which offenders were formerly locked to be exposed to public scorn as punishment.

Charles mobilized an army to subdue Scotland, but the English army was soundly defeated, and in 1639 a truce was negotiated.

Tensions between Parliament and the king increased. Demonstrations in London against royal authority and popery were quickly put down. The king tried to assert his own authority over Parliament. On January 4th, 1642, with a band of armed men, he entered the House of Commons in order to arrest the leader of Parliament, John Pym, and four other leaders. This backfired. The five had been forewarned. Just in time, they escaped by barge down the River Thames and hid in the city. This action by the king incited much more opposition to himself. A revolution was brewing. For his own safety, Charles was obliged to leave London. By May 1642, he had set up his headquarters in York.

The first battle of the Civil War, which ensued, took place at Edgehill in October 1642. This resulted in a draw. At first there seemed to be a balance of power between the Royalists (Cavaliers) and the parliamentary forces (Roundheads). In an attempt to break what was a military deadlock, Parliament signed the *Solemn League and Covenant* with the Scots.^a

In January 1644, a Scottish army crossed the border. In July 1644, the Battle of Marston Moor was fought and won by the combined armies of Scotland, Yorkshire (led by Sir Thomas Fairfax), and the Eastern Association, led by Oliver Cromwell and the Earl of Manchester. It was Oliver Cromwell's role and success in this battle that created his military reputation and won his soldiers the nickname "Ironsides."

This victory was not followed up. Some of the Parliamentary leaders, especially the Earl of Essex, were weak and indecisive. Parliament realized that a more determined and resolute leadership was needed. Victory could not be achieved without better generals and the reorganization of the army. Cromwell blamed one of the leaders, the Earl of Manchester, for retreating instead of attacking the enemy. Manchester made a reply that is very revealing, because it shows what was at stake if the Roundheads were to lose this war to the Cavaliers:

^a *Solemn League and Covenant* – treaty of 1643 between English and Scottish parliaments allying Scotland with the English parliament against King Charles I; provided for the protection of reform in the Scottish and English churches.

If we beat the King 99 times, yet he is King still, and his posterity; and we are his subjects still. But if the King beat us *once*, we should be hanged and our posterity undone.

In 1645 the army was reorganized as the New Model Army. The commander-in-chief was Sir Thomas Fairfax, only thirty-three years old. His cavalry general was Cromwell. In the Civil War battles from this point forward, it was Cromwell's military discipline and strategies that proved decisive. Lord Macaulay describes Oliver Cromwell as one who feared God and was zealous for public liberty. He writes,

With such men he filled his own regiment, and, while he subjected them to a discipline more rigid than had ever before been known in England, he administered to their intellectual and moral nature stimulants of fearful potency...Fairfax, a brave soldier, but of mean^a understanding and irresolute temper, was the nominal Lord General of the forces; but Cromwell was their real head... Cromwell made haste to organize the whole army on the same principles on which he had organized his own regiment... That which chiefly distinguished the army of Cromwell from other armies was the austere morality and the fear of God that pervaded all ranks. It is acknowledged by the most zealous Royalists that, in their singular camp, no oath was heard, no drunkenness or gambling was seen, and that during the long dominion of the soldiery, the property of the peaceable citizen and the honour of women were held sacred.³⁰

Cromwell surrounded himself with men of prayer. He led his men into battle. He possessed an astonishing ability to measure the morale of his soldiers and knew just the right moment to strike for victory. Cromwell fought many battles and never lost one. When we remember that he did not train in a military academy but was his own architect in warfare, he must go down as one of the greatest generals of all time. Roman Catholic author Lady Antonia Fraser in her biography³¹ says of Cromwell as a strategist:

To achieve what was necessary to do, and achieve it perfectly, is a rare distinction—whatever the scale. It is that which gives to Cromwell, him too, the right to be placed in the hall of fame.

^a **mean** – common.

4). *The Puritan Ascendancy*

Archbishop Laud was imprisoned by Parliament in 1641 and executed for treason by beheading at the Tower of London in January 1645. Government of the church by bishops was abolished in 1646. Progressive victory for Parliament in the war brought a new set of problems. There was a division in Parliament between the Presbyterians and the Independents. The Presbyterian majority in Parliament disliked and feared the army in which the Independents dominated. There was unrest in the army due to unpaid wages. In 1647, Charles negotiated a secret treaty with the Scots, which led to a renewal of civil war. Charles' duplicity led to the army bringing him to trial, and on January 1649 he was executed as a traitor to the Commonwealth of England.

Charles II was recognized in Scotland. The army supporting him was defeated by Cromwell at the battle of Dunbar in 1650. Exactly a year later, armies in favor of Charles II were routed by Cromwell at Worcester. That victory for Parliament ended the Civil War. Charles II escaped to France. Cromwell became the Lord Protector and ruled through Parliament. He was a firm believer in religious liberty—and was in that respect ahead of his times.

On 12 June 1643, Parliament passed an ordinance calling for an assembly of learned and godly divines for the settling of the government and liturgy of the Church of England. On 1 July the Westminster Assembly convened, the first of 1,163 meetings until February 1649. There were 151 nominated members, 121 of whom were divines, and 30 laymen. The Assembly completed the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, the *Larger and Shorter Catechisms* and the *Directory of Public Worship*.^a The influence of these materials, particularly the *Confession*, on subsequent generations around the world has been immense. Congregationalists in 1658 and Baptists in 1677 embraced the same confession, making amendments for church government and baptism that would constitute about ten percent of the whole.

The depth and quality of leadership among Puritan pastors in the mid-17th century is unique in the history of Christ's church in England. Some of the better-known Puritans of this time were

^a See *The Ten Commandments from the Westminster Larger Catechism*, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

Robert Bolton, Robert Harris, Jeremiah Burroughs, and William Gouge. Among the more famous Puritans who lived through the period 1640-1660 and beyond, whose works have been republished in entirety or substantially in our generation, are Thomas Goodwin, Thomas Manton, Stephen Charnock, John Owen, Richard Baxter, John Bunyan, John Flavel, William Bridge, David Clarkson, George Swinnock, Richard Sibbes, and John Howe.

Of the leaders involved in the Westminster Assembly, William Gouge is one of the best known. He sustained the longest and most powerful ministry, possibly ever, in the history of London. Edmund Calamy, whom some esteemed as the leader of the Presbyterian party, stands out. He preached frequently to Parliament. Hanserd Knollys and Henry Jessey were Baptists. Their biographies have inspired Baptists in recent years.³² In addition to the immortal works of John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *The Holy War*, there are many famous books that continue to be republished. Thomas Watson's *Body of Divinity* is one example and Baxter's *Reformed Pastor* is another.³³

5). *Restoration of the Monarchy and the Decline of Puritanism*

In 1658 Oliver Cromwell died. It was soon evident that Richard Cromwell could not fill the leadership role of his father. To avoid further upheaval, the option to restore the monarchy was pursued. At Breda in Holland, Charles II promised to respect tender consciences. When he came to power, his promise was soon overruled by fierce urges for revenge among the Anglicans who now had the upper hand. From 1643 to 1654, about 34 percent of the 8,600 parish clergy had suffered harassment of some kind; as well as ejection for legitimate reasons of incompetency, but also for giving support to the royalist cause or for popery.³⁴

In January 1661, Thomas Venner, a leader of the Fifth Monarchy^a movement, became prominent. He had been arrested on a previous occasion for planning an insurrection against Cromwell, but was spared execution. Led by Venner, about fifty followers terrorized parts of London. Twenty-two people were killed. Wild elements and civil disorders by fanatics of this kind played into the hands of the ruling Anglicans. They did not discriminate. Anarchy provided

^a **Fifth Monarchy** – extreme Puritan sect active in armed rebellion from 1649 to 1660, seeking to honor Christ by ending earthly rule of carnal human beings.

an excuse for the authorities to clamp down on all Nonconformists. In vain the Baptists tried to dissociate themselves from Venner. On January 10, 1661, a royal proclamation was passed forbidding all meetings of "Anabaptists, Quakers, and Fifth Monarchy men." Within a short time, over 4,000 Quakers were imprisoned. Armed soldiers dragged Baptists out of their beds at night and thrust them in prison. This was the time when Bunyan spent twelve years in prison. He survived; many did not.

There followed legislation against all Nonconformity known as the *Clarendon Code*, so named after the Earl of Clarendon. In 1662 an act was passed that required strict conformity to the Church of England. If clergymen had not been episcopally ordained, they were required to be re-ordained. Consent was required to every part of the *Book of Common Prayer*. Every minister was required to take an oath of canonical obedience and to renounce the *Solemn League and Covenant*.

These demands had a devastating effect on the Puritans, whose consciences could not submit to these conditions. Estimates vary, but it is reckoned that about 2,000 were forced out of their livings.³⁵ Included were some in teaching posts. We can only guess how many Puritans chose to remain in the National Church in spite of the pressures to conform.³⁶ Included among those who remained was the well-known William Gurnall, author of *The Christian in Complete Armour*.

1662 marks the beginning of decline for the English Puritans. The period that follows is known as the era of "dissent." The last well-known Puritans to pass from this world were John Howe (who died in 1705) and Thomas Doolittle (who died in 1707).³⁷

1662, then, is an important turning point in the story of the Puritans. The influence of their preaching waned then, but their writing ministry continued. Some of the most valuable Puritan treatises were penned in the post-1662 period. An example is that of John Owen. For instance, his monumental commentary on Hebrews, his book on indwelling sin,^a and his exposition of Psalm 130 were written after 1662. John Owen deserves the title "Prince of the Puritans." His entire works of 25 volumes probably constitute the

^a *Indwelling Sin*, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

best repository of reliable theology in the English language. He is viewed as *the* theologian of the Puritan movement.³⁸

Why did the Puritan movement decline sharply after 1662? Persecution of Dissenters was severe and relentless. Nonconformists were barred from the universities, and this had an adverse effect on the standards of the ministry. The cogent^a spiritual unity that had been characterized and encouraged by the growing spiritual brotherhood of the Puritan pastors during the reign of Elizabeth, and that had flowered in the growing Puritan movement which followed, declined after 1662. In 1672 the king issued a *Declaration of Indulgence*, which for a short time eased the lot of Dissenters and Roman Catholics.

A principal reason for the decline of the Puritan movement was their loss of unity. Dr. Lloyd-Jones^b placed the main blame with the Presbyterians. Instead of holding fast to the unity spelled out so clearly in passages like John 17, Presbyterian leaders resorted to political expediency. They lost sight of spiritual constraints.³⁹ A further reason contributing to the decline of Puritanism in the latter part of the 17th century is the fact that, when the famous leaders whose books we enjoy today passed on, there were very few of similar caliber to take their place.

4. An Explanation of the Puritan Story

In an article published in the *Evangelical Quarterly* in 1980, James I. Packer^c described Puritanism as a movement of revival.⁴⁰ He carefully defined what he meant as revival. I would argue that, measured in terms of the 18th century awakening, the story of the Puritans as I have outlined it was not a revival in spectacular

^a **cogent** – convincing.

^b **David Martyn Lloyd-Jones** (1899-1981) – well-known expository Welsh preacher; successor to G. Campbell Morgan as minister of Westminster Chapel, London, England, 1938-1968. After successful medical studies, he nearly became a physician when God called him to preach the gospel; known for his Christ-centered expository preaching.

^c **J. I. Packer** (1926-2020) – English-born Canadian evangelical theologian in the low-church Anglican and Calvinist traditions. He served as theologian emeritus of the Anglican Church in North America. In later years he endorsed an unbiblical ecumenicalism with Roman Catholicism.

“Whitefieldian”^a fashion. There were some remarkable preachers like Richard Baxter, John Bunyan, and John Rogers; and lesser known pastors like Samuel Fairclough of Kedington (not far from Cambridge) and his son Richard of Mells (a village in Somerset)—men with powerful awakening ministries who reaped rich harvests. But it would be difficult to show that this was typical of all the Puritans.

The explanation of the story of the Puritans is that here we have a race of preacher-pastors who believed in expounding and applying the whole counsel of God’s Word, with all the hard work that requires. This was a labor in which they sought the closest conjunction of the Holy Spirit with the Word.⁴¹ Sometimes more, sometimes less, the Holy Spirit *did* breathe upon the Word, and He breathed new life into dead souls. The Puritans did not seek a new age of wonders, signs, and miracles. Their view of a church is that it rises or falls as the ministry of the Word rises or falls in that church.⁴² Essentially, they believed in breaking up fallow ground (Hos 10:12). In this general character, the Puritans are an example to every succeeding generation of pastors—whether they be pastors laboring at home or in remote areas where the indigenous people are receiving the Word for the first time.

5. The Legacy of the Puritans

As we view the whole story of the Puritans in perspective, I will point to three Puritans who lived at the apex of the movement and offer a present-day definition. Puritanism is John Owen for profundity^b and reliability in theological formulation, Richard Baxter for evangelistic and pastoral zeal, and John Bunyan for compelling, powerful preaching. These three were very different personalities. But this is a reminder that, for the most part, the mainline Puritans were tolerant over differences, whereas fundamentalists today are not.

The Church of England has never recovered from the Ejection of 1662. From time to time there have been exceptional leaders like

^a **George Whitefield** (1714-1770) – English evangelist, best known of the 18th century, and an itinerant preacher that God greatly used in England and the American Colonies during the “Great Awakening.”

^b **profundity** – great depth of thought.

Bishop J. C. Ryle (1816-1900).^a Ryle followed the emphases of the Puritans and wrote in the style of the Puritans. His well-known book *Holiness* is typical and expounds the Puritan doctrine of progressive sanctification.^b But enthusiasm for Puritanism is rarely found in the Church of England.

The legacy of Puritan *theology and devotion* has from time to time given birth to extraordinary preachers and leaders. Such was Charles Haddon Spurgeon,^c correctly described as an heir of the Puritans. Another exemplar of Puritanism is Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, who recommended Puritan books and followed them in his theology and style of expository preaching. In his leadership of pastors, Dr. Lloyd-Jones was similar to the founders of Puritanism: William Greenham, John Dod, and Laurence Chaderton. As was the case with leading Puritans, Dr. Lloyd-Jones' pulpit ministry formed the basis of his writings, which have been influential around the world.

The Puritan testimony of *godliness and sound doctrine* is more relevant than ever as we approach the end of the millennium. The English Puritans gave England [respect and an example for] the Christian family and the Lord's Day. They were balanced Calvinists: they left us an example of a stable doctrine of divine sovereignty and human responsibility. Preserved through their writings is the biblical doctrine of sin, which in this era of Postmodernism we are in danger of losing entirely. Added to this was their view of the Moral Law as binding, not for salvation, but as a principle of conduct for the regenerated heart to glorify God in the obedience of faith. The Puritans call us to a robust prayer and devotional life. They remind us of the importance of keeping the heart with all diligence, of the reality of spiritual warfare, and of the need to be watchful.^d

^a More than 25 Ryle titles are available from CHAPEL LIBRARY; including *Holiness*, which also is available as a study course.

^b **progressive sanctification** – process by which the Holy Spirit makes believers more and more like Christ in holiness; as distinct from *positional sanctification*, when God sets the believer apart to Himself at the new birth.

^c More than 200 Spurgeon titles are available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^d See *Guarding Your Heart* by A. W. Pink, *Satan Considering the Saints* by C. H. Spurgeon (1834-1892), and *Temptation* by John Owen (1616-1683); all available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

The Puritan hope for the *future growth* of the church was God-centered and founded on promises that cannot fail. The Puritan doctrine of the last things inspired prayer, motivated effort, inculcated^a endurance, and strengthened patience. One of the first to implement this outlook in practice was the Puritan John Eliot. In 1631 at the age of 27, he sailed for Massachusetts. He became pastor of a new church a mile from Boston. Burdened for the Indian tribes, he set himself to master Algonquin. He began at the age of 40 and eventually translated the entire Bible into Algonquin. Converts were made, churches planted, and Indian pastors trained. By the time of his death, at the age of 84, there were many Indian churches.

Puritanism is eminently biblical and *balanced* in its proportion of doctrine, experience, and practical application. For that reason it is very attractive to the godly. Of its future place in the world, who can tell? If the mainline Puritans were correct in their biblical optimism, we can be assured that the whole earth will be filled with a knowledge of Christ's glory as the waters cover the sea (Hab 2:14). As the prophet declares,

My name will be great among the nations, from the rising to the setting of the sun. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to my name, because my name will be great among the nations, says the LORD Almighty (Mal 1:11).

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These numbered endnotes are from the author.

Lettered footnotes on each page have been added by CHAPEL LIBRARY.

- ¹ Robert Oliver, *The Recovery of the Reformed Faith in Twentieth Century England*, Evangelical Library Lecture for 1997. See also "The Theological Renewal 1950-2000," *Reformation Today* 162.
- ² Burroughs' classic is abridged and simplified with the title *Learning to Be Happy*; distributed by Evangelical Press.
- ³ J. R. Green, 1878 and 1909, p 460.
- ⁴ M. M. Knappen, *Tudor Puritanism* (Chicago Press, 1939), p 380.
- ⁵ John Spurr, *English Puritanism 1603-1689* (Macmillan, 1998), pp 37, 41.
- ⁶ Commended reading on the Great Ejection is Daniel Neal, *History of the Puritans*, volume 3.
- ⁷ Kenneth Hylson-Smith, *The Churches in England from Elizabeth I to Elizabeth II*, volume 1, 1558-1688, p 240; citing Loades, *The Mid-Tudor Crisis*, p 161.
- ⁸ Michael Watts, *The Dissenters – From the Reformation to the French Revolution* (Oxford, 1985). Watts provides a detailed analysis of statistics.

^a **inculcated** – taught or impressed by frequent repetitions or admonitions.

- ⁹ Ibid [i.e., same as before], p 20, citing J. Stowe, *Three Fifteenth Century Chronicles*, ed. J. Gardiner (Camden Society, 1880, new series, xxviii), p 143.
- ¹⁰ Hylson-Smith, op.cit. [i.e., in the work cited], p 61.
- ¹¹ Patrick Collinson, *Godly People – Essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism* (Hambledon Press, 1983), p 1.
- ¹² Spurr, op.cit., p 17.
- ¹³ Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinist – The Rise of English Arminianism c. 1590-1640* (Oxford, 1987).
- ¹⁴ Spurr, op. cit., p 171.
- ¹⁵ S. T. Bindoff, "Tudor England," *Pelican History of England*, p 179.
- ¹⁶ Daniel Neal, *History of the Puritans*, volume. 1, p 124.
- ¹⁷ William Haller, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation* (Jonathan Cape, 1963), p 220ff. Neville Williams, in a lecture published in 1975 by Dr. Williams' Library, helpfully summarizes the development of Foxe's ever increasing manuscript and its editions. The best edition of eight massive volumes was edited by Josiah Pratt and published in 1853, a set of which can be found in the reference section of the Evangelical Library, London.
- ¹⁸ Ibid, p 224ff.
- ¹⁹ Ibid, p 30.
- ²⁰ I have drawn most of my material on the spiritual brotherhood from William Haller's *The Rise of Puritanism* (Harper Torchbook, 464 pages, 1957), a most valuable resource that needs to be republished.
- ²¹ Richard Rogers, 970 page facsimile exposition of Judges was republished by the Banner of Truth in 1983.
- ²² This title has been republished as a paperback by the Banner of Truth Trust.
- ²³ Paul S Seaver, *The Puritan Lectureships*, "The Politics of Religious Dissent, 1560-1662" (Stanford University Press, California, 1970), p 172ff.
- ²⁴ Spurr, p 61.
- ²⁵ Tyacke, p 47ff; cf. Spurr, p 81ff.
- ²⁶ Spurr, op. cit., p 86.
- ²⁷ Macaulay, *The History of England*, volume 1 (Longman, 1856), p 88.
- ²⁸ Neal, op. cit., volume 1, p 538ff.
- ²⁹ Spurr, p 91.
- ³⁰ Ibid, p 117ff.
- ³¹ *Cromwell Our Chief of Men* (Panther, 1975), p 390.
- ³² Michael A. G. Haykin, Kiffin, Knollys, and Keach, *Rediscovering our Baptist Heritage* (Carey Publications, 1996).
- ³³ John Bunyan's *Complete Works* is published in three large handsome volumes by the Banner of Truth Trust, and by the same publisher the very popular *Body of Divinity* by Thomas Watson, and Richard Baxter's *The Reformed Pastor*, the latter as a paperback.
- ³⁴ Hylson-Smith, p 225; cf Spurr, p 118.
- ³⁵ Martyn Lloyd-Jones, "From Puritanism to Nonconformity," provides a stirring account of the Great Ejection and its implications, Evangelical Library Lecture for 1962.
- ³⁶ David L Wykes, "To Revive the Memory of Some Excellent Men," Dr. Williams' Library Lecture for 1997. This paper approaches to the most accurate count for the 1662 Ejection that we are ever likely to achieve. Dr. Wykes outlines the history of biography on this subject with special reference to Edmund Calamy's work, Edmund Calamy being the grandson of the well-known Puritan of the same name.

- ³⁷ Thomas Doolittle's sermon "Eyeing Eternity" is found in volume four of the six large volume set known as *The Morning Exercises – Sermons Preached by the Puritans at Cripplegate, London* (Richard Owen Roberts, Wheaton, Illinois, 1981). "Eyeing Eternity," it has been suggested, may be the most awesome Puritan sermon ever preached! Thomas Doolittle's work on the ordinance of the Lord's Supper was published by Soli Deo Gloria in 1998.
- ³⁸ Sinclair Ferguson, *John Owen on the Christian Life* (Banner of Truth, 1987), p 19.
- ³⁹ Martyn Lloyd-Jones, "Puritan Perplexities," Puritan Conference Paper, 1962
- ⁴⁰ J. I. Packer, *Among God's Giants – The Puritan vision of the Christian Life* (Kingsway, 1991), p 41ff.
- ⁴¹ Geoffrey F. Nuttall, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience* (Chicago University Press, 1992).
- ⁴² J. I. Packer, op.cit., p 45.

PART TWO

THE LIVES OF THE PURITANS

Against the overview of the history of the Puritan era, I now present some short biographical sketches. Two factors dominate my choice of subjects. My first goal is to acquaint my readers with those Puritans whose writings have been republished. Who were these preachers and what were they like? My second goal is to capture the character of the movement through some of the leaders who, while not known for their writings, made an impact in other ways. Benjamin Brook provides brief sketches of the lives of about 450 Puritans in his three volumes.^a Here I will introduce two Reformers, four Elizabethan Puritans, five pre-1662 Puritans, and twelve who lived through the climactic ejection of 1662 and beyond. In this way we will keep in step with the story already told, seek to enter into more of the struggles of these ministers of the gospel, and gain an appreciation of the inheritance they have left us by the example of their godly lives and in their expository writings.

1. Martyrs

As we have seen, antecedent to the great Puritan movement was the Reformation. From among many martyrs, including foremost leaders such as Bishops Hugh Latimer, Nicholas Ridley, and Thomas Cranmer, I have chosen to describe John Bradford and John Hooper since they are especially prototypical^b of what was to follow. John Bradford was the first Englishman to expound in detail on the nature of evangelical repentance. Bishop John Hooper was outstanding in his pastoral concern for the parishes over which he had oversight. The ignorant state of the clergy at that time highlights the change that was eventually to be achieved. Hooper was a

^a Benjamin Brook, *The Lives of the Puritans* (three volumes, 1813) (Soli Deo Gloria, 1997).

^b **prototypical** – forming the essential features of something to follow.

man aflame with zeal for God and amazingly energetic in his labors for his people. This makes it all the more incredible that a leader of such quality should be condemned to burn at the stake.

The saying that “the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church” is true of the Puritans. When Mary came to the throne, she was determined to return England to Rome. Superstitious, devious, and unfaithful to her promises, she relentlessly persecuted all who stood in her way. Before her enthronement, she promised a group of stalwart believers in Suffolk that religion would remain as it was under her brother Edward. When she began to renege on her promise, a delegation was sent from Suffolk to plead with her. The outcome was that she accused the leader of defamation and ordered that his ears be cut off! It is little wonder that, anticipating cruel persecution, 800 Protestants fled to the Continent.

The gruesome scenes of human bodies burning in public places were etched into the minds of the people, bringing about a deep detestation of Romish superstition and cruelty. The faith, constancy, and courage of those who died was the talk of the nation. We have seen the remarkable life of John Foxe, and the crucial role he fulfilled in recording the details of the lives and deaths of these martyrs in his *Book of Martyrs*, which had such an effect on the nation.

All these martyrs bore a glorious testimony. John Bradford and John Hooper especially exemplify characteristics that were typical of the Puritanism which was to develop. They and the other martyrs provided the bedrock upon which Puritanism was built.

1). *John Bradford (1510-1555)*

Bradford was born in Manchester of wealthy parents, who sent him into the army for experience. He decided to follow law, but in 1547 was dramatically converted through the testimony of a friend, Thomas Sampson, who later became an exile during Mary’s reign. Bradford sold some valuable possessions, gave the proceeds to the poor, and began to train for the ministry at Cambridge. He advanced rapidly in godliness. There he was influenced by the famous continental Reformer, Martin Bucer,^a who was teaching at Cam-

^a **Martin Bucer** (1491-1551) – German Protestant reformer who influenced Lutheran, Calvinist, and Anglican doctrines and practices. He was exiled to England, where he worked with Thomas Cranmer.

bridge at that time. Bradford was ordained in 1550. Under the young King Edward, he was chosen to be one of six travelling chaplains preaching the gospel and teaching the doctrines of the Reformation. He was a powerful preacher. Foxe wrote of him,

Sharply he opened and impugned sin, sweetly he preached Christ crucified, pithily he reproved heresies and errors, earnestly he persuaded the godly life.

Bradford was cogent with his pen. Having preached often on repentance, he also wrote on it. It was the first written exposition in England on that central subject. Bradford inspired the Puritan emphasis on repentance.

He was a pioneer in the Puritan practice of constancy in prayer: prayer upon rising, prayer before and after meals, prayer before work and before retiring at night. Bradford was also an example in the art of maintaining piety by way of daily turning from sin and keeping a written spiritual diary of daily devotion.

Bradford's correspondence reveals him to be a leader of exceptional spiritual caliber. His letters show us how the leading Christians of that time encouraged each other. Also in Bradford's letters we have a preview of what was to come in the bonding together of the Puritan pastors during the reign of Elizabeth.

With John Bradford when he was burned at the stake in 1555 was a young apprentice, aged nineteen, named John Leaf. As they died together, Bradford encouraged this young martyr with the words: "Be of good comfort, brother: we shall have a merry supper with the Lord this night!"

2). *John Hooper (1495-1555)*

John Hooper, the only son of wealthy parents, was born in Somerset in 1495. He studied at Merton College, Oxford. On leaving he became a monk in the Cistercian order, which stressed poverty, simplicity, and solitude. On the dissolution of the monasteries, he went first to London and then returned to Oxford. Being a diligent student of the Scriptures, especially of Paul's letters, he came to see the errors of Rome and became an ardent advocate of the Reformation. He had to leave England in 1546 and spent time at Strasbourg and Zurich. During his stay on the Continent, Hooper fully imbibed the spirit of the Reformation. Jan Laski (1499-1560), son of one of the richest aristocratic families in Po-

land, was his closest friend. Laski pastored a church made up of foreigners in London during the reign of Edward. This church was thoroughly reformed in character and had a powerful influence on Hooper's thinking.

Hooper returned to England after the death of Henry. In 1551 he became bishop of Gloucester. Controversy, requiring some compromise, surrounded his ordination because of his refusal to follow an order of service that contradicted his principles. Hooper was an excellent, powerful, and popular preacher. Large crowds came to hear him. He was deeply exercised about the ignorance and corruption of the clergy and made it his habit to tour his diocese visiting the ministers.

One of his efforts aimed at local reformation was to send out a questionnaire to the 311 clergy of his diocese. Nine basic questions included:

- How many commandments are there?
- Where are they to be found?
- Can you show where the Lord's prayer is found?
- Who is the author of the Lord's prayer?

Nine did not know how many commandments there were, 39 did not know the location of the Lord's prayer, and 34 did not know who the author was! Eight could not answer any of the questions. Such was the state of the clergy of the Church of England! This is important because it highlights vividly the change that was to come about: from biblical illiteracy to England's being the land of the Bible.

Hooper's evangelistic and pastoral passion and his zeal to reform the church were powerful influences on the Puritan movement, as was his death by burning.

2. Three Generations of Puritans

Taking the lives of the Puritans of Elizabeth's reign as the first generation, the second can be regarded as those who followed in the first half of the 17th century but who did not live up to the time of the Great Ejection in 1662. The principal event of this period was the Westminster Assembly (1643-47). The third generation can be taken as those who lived through the Ejection and beyond. It was in

the latter period when most of the “writing” Puritans lived, whose works have been republished.

A. The First Generation

As we saw in the story of the Puritans, a spiritual brotherhood developed in the 1580s and 1590s that was to provide the seedbed of the next generation of godly pastors. I described the lives of William Greenham, Richard Rogers, Laurence Chaderton, and William Perkins. The godly influence of these leaders formed a foundation for the future. Today we do well to ask if the next generation of our ministers will be well grounded and powerful in the main principles of the Christian faith. We have already seen how Richard Greenham trained young men in the village of Dry Drayton in his “School of Christ,” and William Perkins influenced many young men at Cambridge. Perkins’ books were very popular and largely shaped the thinking of the next generation of preachers. We remember too Laurence Chaderton and his long ministry at Cambridge. When he came to retire, forty people who had been converted through him came, begging him to continue his ministry. We saw too the influence of Richard Rogers of Wethersfield, who was deeply exercised about the necessity and development of vital godliness as applied to every area of life.

We start with the short life of Edward Dering, which illustrates the Puritans’ battle to reform the church—a work in which they did not succeed.

Then follows John Dod, who reminds us of the main ingredients of the spiritual lives of the brotherhood. Dod was an outstanding leader. He lived long and exercised a wide and pervasive influence as a powerful preacher, a godly pastor, and an example of what it is to use hospitality to advance the cause of Christ. An often-forgotten mark of an elder is that he must be hospitable. In this Dod excelled.

Next, we look at Arthur Hildersam, who was a great encouragement to his brother-pastors. It is important to note that his life reflects the major shift away from Roman Catholicism that was taking place throughout this period. He was disinherited, and even though he was connected in background to the royal family, he suffered much for his testimony. Some enjoyed protection on ac-

count of rich, sympathetic, and aristocratic patrons. Hildersam did not.

Finally, there is John Rogers. Every time I think of Rogers, I think of the necessity of life and power in preaching. There are some preachers you will never forget. Holy Spirit anointed preaching is the need of this hour. In John Rogers' day, there were those who travelled a long way to Dedham to hear him preach. They said that they went "to fetch fire" at Dedham. So too, *we* need "to fetch fire" from heaven so that our preaching will be alive and convey life to our hearers.

1). *Edward Dering (1540-1576)*

Edward Dering was born into a distinguished family in Kent. In 1572 Dering married Anne Locke, a wealthy widow who admired the preaching of John Knox and had spent time in Geneva. The Puritan scholar Patrick Collinson calls Dering

The archetype^a of the Puritan divine, whose life and works were a model for many who would come after him in the 17th century... an incomparable illustration of some of the more positive qualities of the Puritan spirit.

Dering studied at Christ's College, Cambridge, early in Mary's reign—at which time Cambridge was a seedbed of Puritan religion. By the manner in which he wrote to his brothers, we can tell that he was fervent in his evangelical faith. His main passion was the question of salvation from sin:

- how through a true faith in Christ we can be sure that we will be saved in the great Day of Judgment, and
- how the believer can be assured of his standing before a holy God.

Dering was esteemed as one of the outstanding Greek scholars of that time. He was chosen to make a Greek oration on the occasion of Queen Elizabeth's visit to the university in 1564. He was privileged in his friendship with the archbishop and enjoyed opportunities to preach on important occasions. There came a kind of mysterious watershed in his career in 1570, when Dering became indignant about the debased state of the ministry in the country.

^a **archetype** – ideal example of a type; quintessence.

According to his friends, he expressed this indignation too forcibly in his preaching. In a sermon preached before the queen in her chapel on 25 February 1570, he reproved Her Majesty for neglect in her duty to rid the churches of unworthy incumbents, some of whom he described as ruffians, hawkers, and dicers.^a He pictured these ministers as blind guides and dumb dogs that will not bark. He told her to her face,

And yet you, in the meanwhile that all these whoredoms are committed, you at whose hands God will require it, you sit still and are careless, and let men do as they will!

Unlike Whitgift (later to be promoted to archbishop), who used his opportunity to preach before the queen to impress her, Dering seemed impervious to the consequence of reminding her that great power involved commensurate responsibility. Perhaps Dering was free of the temptation of ambition and self-interest, as he sensed that he would not live long because of tuberculosis. That disease was in fact to take him to an early grave. No Elizabethan sermon was more reprinted than Dering's remarkable oration in which he confronted the queen with her responsibilities.

Courageous preaching of this kind that exposed the dreadful spiritual state of the clergy embarrassed Parker, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Cecil, Elizabeth's first minister. It is not surprising that Dering's influence declined. However, he continued to enjoy the confidence of Sandys, Bishop of London, who gave him the privilege of preaching in St. Paul's Cathedral, London. There Dering preached an outstanding and powerful series of sermons on Hebrews, which accorded him the reputation of being the greatest preacher of his day.

Dering, in his direct style and passionate preaching, was similar to Henry Smith (1560-1591), whose ministry made its impact in London in the next decade. Smith, a student of William Greenhill, was called to St. Clement Danes, London, where capacity crowds—grocers, locksmiths, tradesmen, people of every sort—flocked to hear him. He was a wonderful preacher and was nick-named “the silver-tongued Smith.” Such was his power in preaching that he could hold the hearts of his hearers in his hands and steer them wherever he pleased, and he was pleased to steer them only to

^a **dicers** – those who gamble with dice.

God's glory and their own good. He was proficient in the business of redemption. He died at age only 31, but, like Edward Dering, "he lived long in a little time."

In 1570 to 1572, controversy about church government raged, fueled by the writings of Cartwright, Field, and Thomas Willcox. Dering was called to declare where he stood in relationship to these writings. Unlike Perkins, Dering was not a systematic theologian and was fairly ambivalent about church government. His enemies were determined to have him removed from privilege and office. However, Dering was so well connected and protected by men of high rank that it was difficult to suspend him. All efforts to silence him failed. Queen Elizabeth ordered that Dering not only be silenced but removed from his lectureship. Even that failed as her deputies could not agree among themselves as to the formulation of the charge to be brought against him.

Letter writing formed an important part of Dering's ministry. This included letters of spiritual counsel to women of high standing and influence. It is a feature of the Puritan movement that often the most enthusiastic supporters of Puritan ministries were women, some of whom were deeply committed to reformation, whereas their husbands were less so. One of his correspondents was Mrs. Honywood, a lady who was plagued about her assurance of salvation. Mrs. Honywood once told John Foxe that she was as surely damned as the glass that she held in her hand. She then hurled the glass violently to the floor. Amazingly, the glass bounced up without any damage!

When dying at age 36, Dering was surrounded by fellow-preachers who wrote down his last words. He left this world having contributed wonderfully to the Puritan movement.

2). *John Dod (1550-1645)*

Born in Cheshire, John Dod went to Cambridge to study at Jesus College. While he was "in his natural state of sin," he flew into such a temper when accused of not paying the college steward that he was overcome with a fever. It is reported that it was then that "his sins came upon him like an armed man, and the tide of his thoughts was turned." His conversion was real and new life began. An interesting record shows that the steward later remembered that he had, after all, been paid.

Dod was much in demand as a popular preacher. He settled at Hanwell in Oxfordshire, where he exercised a powerful preaching ministry for twenty years that was instrumental in the conversion of hundreds of souls. With four other preachers, he set up a lectureship at Banbury. Like Hildesam, he experienced fierce persecution from 1604 onwards.

William Haller, in his book *The Rise of Puritanism* (1938), describes Dod as the chief holy man of the spiritual brotherhood; and says of him, "He had the English gift of humour and the knack of salty speech." Cartwright describes Dod as being "the fittest man in the land for a pastoral function, able to speak to any man's capacity." According to one of his disciples,

All his discourses were sermons, and that with such a mixture of delight as would take any man; so facetious and pithy that, if all his sayings were collected, they would exceed all that Plutarch in Greek or others in Latin have published.

Another reported,

Poor simple people that never knew what religion meant, when they had gone to hear him, could not but choose to talk of his sermon. It mightily affected poor creatures to hear the mysteries of God brought down to their language and dialect.

One of Dod's sayings was that he would rather preach an old sermon ten times, than speak any new thing without preparation.

John Dod preached twice on Sunday and once during the week. After every sermon his wife opened the house to all comers. We read of him,

He brought in many to dinner, including four to six widows who helped him as deaconesses would. If his wife began to doubt that there would be enough food to go round, he would respond, "Better want meat than good company, but there is something in this house even though cold." Eating little himself but bidding the rest fall to, he would go on talking. He had plenty to say; and when he was faint, he would call for a small glass of wine mixed with beer, and then talk again till night.

Many looked to Dod for wisdom. Two well-known Puritans, Job Throckmorton and John Preston, both seeing in the same year that their lives were drawing to a close, settled in Dod's area in order to have the advantage of his spiritual counsel. Unusual for a Puritan minister, Job Throckmorton experienced a major problem concern-

ing his personal assurance of salvation. Shortly before he died he asked Mr. Dod, "What will you say of him who is going out of this world, and can find no comfort?" Replied Dod,

What will you say of our Saviour Christ, Who, when He was going out of the world, found no comfort, but cried, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

This administered comfort to Throckmorton's troubled soul; and when he died soon after, he was rejoicing in the Lord.

Since Dod lived to 95, we are not surprised to discover that he was, in addition to his own pastoral work, a counsellor to those who had to weigh up the factors about leaving England to cross the Atlantic for a new life in America.

3). *Arthur Hildersam (1563-1631)*

Hildersam was related to the royal family. His parents were Roman Catholic. Steeped in the doctrines of Rome, he was taught to repeat his prayers in Latin. He chose to study at Cambridge, where he was converted. His father was furious and determined to send him to Rome for reclamation. Arthur refused—and was disinherited. However, one of his wide circle of wealthy relatives—the Earl of Huntingdon, who sympathized with his dilemma—sent him back to Cambridge endowed with generous support.

In 1588, Hildersam was charged with the transgression of preaching before he was officially ordained. He was ordered to make a public confession of repentance. A statement in abject penitent style survives as a printed document, but there is doubt that Hildersam ever read this out in a public apology.

It was while under the shadows of this public reproach that he was called to a church in Ashby-de-la-Zouch in Leicestershire, where he continued to the end of his life, a period of forty-three years. During that time he often suffered persecution. The influence of his preaching was profound and widespread, but it also stirred in those who rejected his message the most virulent hatred toward him. When King James came to power, Hildersam was esteemed a foremost leader of the Puritans, and was appointed representative to present the *Millenary Petition* signed by over 1,000 clergy. This petition pleaded for reformation.

He married in 1590, and this union was greatly blessed. His wife proved to be a constant comfort and strength in the persecu-

tions that he suffered. During his subsequent ministry, he suffered several periods of being silenced. For instance, in 1616 he was excommunicated, degraded from the ministry, and ordered to be thrown into prison for not submitting to the rites of the Church of England. At the same time he was fined the outrageous sum of £2,000, a vast sum of money in those days that was entirely beyond his means.

Hildersam was not guilty of drunkenness, adultery, or any such immorality. It was only due to his refusal to conform to the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England that he suffered these extreme penalties. He was resented on account of his very widespread spiritual influence, and was dubbed “a ringleader of all schismatical^a persons in that part of the country.” The manner in which he faced this trial, which threatened to destroy him, is instructive. It reminds us that when we face extraordinary problems, we must persevere in prayer and deal with each factor one by one. Prayerfully, Arthur set about extricating himself step by step. The first move was to get out of prison. This was by appeal to influential friends. The previous year, when he was in prison on a similar charge of refusing to conform, a friend had written to Archbishop Abbot, who had responded with impatience saying that Arthur would die in prison if he did not conform. He was released, but still had to face the fine that was completely above his ability. He wrote to a Lady Fielding asking that she use her influence to reduce the fine. Along similar lines, he wrote to the Earl of Suffolk seeking his help. Eventually the fine was reduced, but he still had to pay an exorbitant sum of money.

During his last illness, Hildersam was noted for his spiritual, holy, and heavenly conversation. To his son he gave a solemn charge to take heed to the flock. It was while he was praying with his son that he entered upon the joy of his Lord. He was outstanding in the attribute of meekness. He was not flamboyant or aggressive in his Nonconformity, but firm and patient. The quality of his humility is seen in one of his statements that he always sought to benefit from the preaching of others. He declared that he never failed to be edified by faithful preaching, even when the preacher was not endowed with natural talent.

^a **schismatical** – causing factions or disunity.

Among the admirers of Arthur Hildersam were William Gouge, John Preston, and John Cotton. His disciples saw in their ideal spiritual physician one who was always willing, in his own words,

To instruct the ignorant, to satisfy the doubtful, to settle the wavering, to comfort the dejected, and to encourage all sorts in the exercises of religion.

We see exemplified in Hildersam the advantages of spending a lifetime in one pastorate, enduring and surviving enormous oppositions and distractions; but always patient and steadfast, a wonderful example of godliness. He did not leave written works apart from two substantial expositions, one on John chapter four and the other on Psalm 51. In his *Lives of the Puritans*, Benjamin Brook devotes twelve pages to Hildersam.

4). *John Rogers (1566-1636)*

John Rogers of Dedham, Essex, was a near relative of Richard Rogers of Wethersfield, whose life we have already remembered. Richard supported John Rogers in his studies at Cambridge and persevered with him, even though he was so given to sin that he sold his books to follow his pleasure-loving worldly habits. Eventually, John provoked Richard Rogers to the point of giving him up, but Richard's wife persuaded him to try once more, which reminds us of the parable of the fig tree:

Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down (Luk 13:7-9).

This persevering concern of Mrs. Richard Rogers was rewarded, for John was converted and in due course became one of the most powerful of all the Puritan preachers.

The gift of preaching was given to John Rogers in such a marked way, it was said of him that few heard him preach without trembling. Many souls were converted through his preaching, and he was regarded as one of the most awakening preachers of his age. Bishop Brownrigg used to say, "John Rogers will do more good with his wild notes, than we [bishops] with our set music!" People crowded to hear him from a wide area. Often many were disappointed at not being able to gain admittance. A well-known Puritan minister, Giles Firmin, records that he owed his conversion to the

first sentences he ever heard from John Rogers. Some young men went to hear him preach and, although they were late, managed to squeeze in. Seeing them come in, John Rogers cried out, "Here are some young ones come for Christ. Will nothing serve you but you must have Christ? Then you *shall* have Him!" Giles Firmin was gripped at once and converted.

John Rogers' power in preaching is illustrated by an occasion when the famous Puritan Thomas Goodwin (then a young man) was reduced under his preaching to helpless tears of repentance and gratitude toward God. Goodwin himself told the story to the renowned John Howe years later. Howe recalls the incident:

Mr. Rogers was...on the subject of the Scriptures. And in that sermon he falls into an expostulation^a with the people about their neglect of the Bible...He personates God to the people telling them, "Well, I have trusted you so long with my Bible: you have slighted it; it lies in such and such a house all covered with dust and cobwebs. You care not to look at it. Do you use my Bible so? Well, you shall have my Bible no longer."

And he takes up the Bible from his cushion and seemed as if he were going away with it and carrying it from them. But immediately [he] turns again and impersonates the people to God, falls down on his knees, cries and pleads most earnestly,

"Lord, whatsoever Thou dost to us, take not the Bible from us. Kill our children, burn our houses, destroy our goods; only spare us Thy Bible, take not away Thy Bible."

And then he personates God again to the people,

"Say you so? Well, I will try you a little while longer; and here is my Bible for you. I will see how you use it, whether you will love it more, whether you will practice it more, and live more according to it."

By these actions (as the Doctor told me), he put the congregation into so strange a posture that he never saw in any congregation in his life. The place was a mere *Bochim*,^b the people generally (as it were) deluged with their own tears. And he told me that he himself, when he got out and was to take horse again, was fain to hang

^a **expostulation** – earnest reasoning with someone against something they are doing; earnest protest.

^b **Bochim** – (*Hebrew*: weepers) place near Gilgal where an angel of the Lord charged the Israelites with having disobeyed God in making leagues with the inhabitants of the land. The people wept and repented (Jdg 2:1-5).

a quarter of an hour on the neck of his horse weeping before he had the power to mount—so strange an impression was there upon him, and generally upon the people, having been thus expostulated with for neglect of the Bible.

The greatest need of our times is the recovery of true Holy Spirit unction in preaching the gospel to the saving of sinners. The fervor, power, and expressiveness of John Rogers in the pulpit was typical of the Puritans.

B. The Second Generation

In Part One, The Story of the Puritans, I described the events leading up to the Civil War. It was during that time, on 12 June 1643, that Parliament passed an ordinance calling for an Assembly of learned and godly divines for the settling of the government and liturgy of the Church of England. On 1 July the Westminster Assembly convened. *The Confession of Faith* and *Catechisms* that were drawn up by them and endorsed by Parliament have had a profound effect on subsequent church history. Whole books have been devoted to a description of the Westminster Assembly. Those ministers involved needed to be within reasonable travelling distance of London in order meaningfully to attend the sessions and debates of the Assembly. Of the five ministers that I describe now Robert Harris, Jeremiah Burroughs, and William Gouge were members of the Assembly. Richard Sibbes, a very well-known Puritan on account of his writings, died in 1635. Robert Bolton was known especially as a physician of the soul. He was typical of the Puritans that were multiplying during this phase of history, a multiplication that can be seen in the number of outstanding ministers available to participate in the Westminster Assembly.

1). Robert Bolton (1572-1631)

Robert Bolton was a well-known Puritan, and his fame continues today mainly because of the republication of his best-known work, *A Treatise on Comforting Afflicted Consciences* (first published in 1626). John MacArthur, Jr., says of this book, “It remains a definitive study in how to deal practically with guilt.” Writing in the foreword of the 1991 *Soli Deo Gloria* reprint, MacArthur points out that he does not know of a single book published in the previous 20 years that explains in depth how to respond biblically to a grieved or wounded conscience! Bolton wrote a number of books.

In addition to the above (which edition is now depleted), his works *A Comfortable Walking with God* and his *Four Last Things: Death, Judgment, Hell, and Heaven*, have been republished by Soli Deo Gloria.

Robert Bolton was born in Blackburn in Lancashire in 1572. His parents observed that he was exceptionally gifted. They were poor, but they sacrificed financially for him to be well-educated. In grammar school he attained the status of best scholar. At the age of 20 he went to Lincoln College, Oxford, where he proved to be an outstanding student. He mastered the Greek language and, such was his ability, he was able to support himself as a teacher until he became a tutor in the university at the age of thirty.

In all this time he was not converted. Indeed, he loved this present evil world and was hostile to the ministry of godly preachers like William Perkins, the well-known Puritan teacher at Cambridge. However, Bolton came under deep conviction of sin. This lasted for several months and was so intense and painful that his experience has been compared to that of Martin Luther.^a Eventually he came into peace through faith in Christ, and trusted only in that righteousness which is the gift of God. At age 35 he was ordained into the Christian ministry. When he was 40 he married, and was wonderfully blessed in his wife, who enthusiastically supported him in his ministry. Bolton was outstanding in the quality and energy of his labors. It is said of him that his entire aim in preaching was to convert his hearers, and under God's blessing hundreds were savingly converted. He spent 20 years in a vigorous ministry in the parish of Broughton in Northamptonshire.

Having been a slave of worldly pleasures, he knew firsthand how to expose sin in all its deceptive, destructive, and poisoning powers. Bolton was bold and uncompromising in his style of preaching. He prepared by rehearsing his sermons to himself in private first before preaching them in public. Like John the Baptist and our Lord, he was fearless and had no regard for the hatred and resentment that can be aroused through a faithful ministry. It was noted that he was thoroughly at ease in preaching the free and full offer of the gospel to all without exception. He was wholly commit-

^a See *Luther's Conversion* by Horatius Bonar (1808-1889), evangelistic tract available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

ted to a life of prayer, and made it his habit to pray six times in the day. He also observed special days for humiliation and prayer, especially before leading the Lord's Supper.

In his last illness, at age 60, Bolton bore a glorious testimony to his people and family. He fervently prayed for them all, and was very direct with them personally about salvation, commending each in prayer to the Lord. He was full of personal assurance of his acceptance with God and expressed his great longing "to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Phi 1:23).

2). Robert Harris (1578-1658)

Born at Broad Camden in Gloucestershire, Robert Harris went to school at Chipping Camden, then to Worcester, and from there to Magdalen Hall, Oxford. There he was taught by Goffe, who was a Puritan. Harris was not a believer, but he bought a Bible and some theological books that led to his conversion. With his tutor, he studied Greek, Hebrew, and Calvin's *Institutes*.^a

He was invited to preach at Chipping Camden. Such was the ignorance in that area that no Bible could be found to use in the pulpit. The clergyman had lost his Bible! A search was made and eventually the lost Bible was found. Harris then preached from Romans 10:1: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved." At that time, Harris persuaded his father to support him further in his studies at Oxford.

Not long after, an epidemic of the plague broke out—in those days, the plague could destroy more than half the population [in a community]. Harris found lodging about five miles from Oxford, where opportunities to preach opened to him.

The years 1604-1605 marked a period of severe persecution. About 300 ministers were suspended from office. Among these was the famous John Dod, minister of Hanwell. The ministry of Dod had been extraordinary, and hundreds of souls had been converted through his preaching. The outstanding talents and learning of Robert Harris constrained the bishop in charge of Hanwell to agree to his being ordained there. About this time he married. Also at that time a close friendship developed between John Dod and Harris. Here we have an example of the way in which the Puritans

^a See *Calvin on Self-denial, Calvin on Prayer, Calvin on The Mediator*, taken from *The Institutes of Christian Religion* and available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

strengthened each other in unity and vision for the gospel and for reformation.

Harris continued to minister in Hanwell for about 40 years. As many used to come to John Dod for spiritual counsel, so likewise many young preachers sought the wisdom and leadership of Robert Harris. He was blessed with many children; all of them followed in the pathway of righteousness and honored Christ in their callings. Harris was very disciplined in his lifestyle. Of liquor, he said he would rather pour it into his boots than into his mouth between meals! He allowed himself half of Saturday for physical recreation. He observed that the humblest preachers were instrumental in converting souls, rather than the greatest scholars who were proud. Nevertheless, he himself worked hard in his study, and his scholarship and preaching ministry were much valued by the whole university fraternity in Oxford. His gifts were recognized in London, and he was frequently invited to preach before Parliament. He also participated in the work of the Westminster Assembly.

In 1644 at the onset of the Civil War, he lost all his possessions in the upheaval. A company of soldiers strongly opposed to Harris were living in the town. Their evil language constrained him to preach a sermon on James 5:12 entitled "Swear not at all" (Mat 5:324)! This so offended the soldiers that they swore they would shoot him if he preached again from the same text. Undismayed by their threats, he did just that the following Sabbath. As he was preaching, he noticed a soldier preparing his weapon as if to shoot. Not perturbed, Harris completed his sermon.

In his last illness, Robert Harris testified, "I never in all my life saw the worth of Christ, nor tasted the sweetness of God's love in that measure as now I do."

3). *Richard Sibbes (1577-1635)*

Richard Sibbes was educated at St. John's College, Cambridge. He was called to be lecturer at Trinity College, where his preaching was instrumental in the conversion of many. John Cotton, afterward to become a famous leader in New England, was one of the students converted under his ministry. His reputation as a preacher and teacher spread, and this led to a regular ministry in London at Gray's Inn. Gray's Inn was then, as now, one of the most important centers for legal study and practice. Benjamin Brook says,

Besides the learned lawyers, many of the nobility and gentry as well as citizens flocked to hear him; and great numbers had abundant cause to bless God for the benefit which they derived from his ministry.

He was careful always to lay a good foundation in the heads and hearts of his hearers. In private life, he was charitable to the poor and an excellent pastor.

In 1626, Sibbes became master of St. Catherine's College. The terms of his ministry in London required that he should hold no other ecclesiastical living, but since he had an assistant at Gray's Inn, and since he never married, it was practical for him to travel to Cambridge during the week. St. Catherine's had passed through a long period of decline when Sibbes took up the mastership. Finance was at a low ebb and there were few students. Sibbes was used to turn this situation round and lead the college into the most brilliant period of its history.

Sibbes' influence in Cambridge as a *pastor pastorum*, a maker and shaper of ministers, was second only to that of William Perkins. His preaching in the same church where Perkins had ministered, St. Mary's, had widespread influence, as did his ministry at Gray's Inn in London.

Inasmuch as Richard Sibbes was a physician of the heart who expounded the soul's conflict, he anticipates the ministry a century later of Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) and his most famous book *The Religious Affections*. The best-known books by Sibbes are *The Bruised Reed and the Smoking Flax*, *The Returning Backslider*, and *The Soul's Conflict*. Sibbes is one of the best-known Puritans; his influence pervaded every part of the Puritan movement.

4). *Jeremiah Burroughs (1599-1646)*

Burroughs is described by Benjamin Brook in his three-volume work, *The Lives of the Puritans*, as a very amiable divine who was educated at Cambridge (Emmanuel College). But he quit the university, and afterwards England, on account of his Nonconformity. He assisted Edmund Calamy at St. Edmunds, and then enjoyed a five-year lectureship in Tivetshall, Norfolk. When persecution increased, he was deprived of his living and in 1636 fled to Holland. There he assisted William Bridge, who was pastor of a church of English exiles in Rotterdam.

With the commencement of the Civil War, the power of the bishops to persecute subsided. Burroughs then returned to England where he ministered to the London congregations of Cripple-gate and Stepney, which were reputed to have the largest attendances in England. He took the 7:00 am service at Stepney and William Greenhill preached at 3:00 pm. The saying spread that Burroughs was the morning star and Greenhill the evening star of Stepney.

Burroughs was chosen to be one of the divines for the Westminster Assembly. He was a man of peace. Richard Baxter, who knew his virtues well, maintained that

If all the Episcopalians had been like Archbishop Ussher; all the Presbyterians like Mr. Stephen Marshall; and all the Independents like Mr. Jeremiah Burroughs—the breaches of the church would soon have been healed.

Burroughs was an exceptionally fine preacher who wrote as well as he preached. He was a prolific worker; his extensive writings were consistently penetrating and spiritual. It is quite remarkable that at the time of his death, at the early age of 47, he left so much writing of enduring quality. The Banner of Truth published his best known work, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*.^a Soli Deo Gloria (USA) has republished a number of his books, including *A Treatise on the Evil of Evils* (a study on sin), *The Excellency of a Gracious Spirit*, *A Treatise on Earthly-Mindedness*, *Gospel Worship*, *Gospel Fear*, *Gospel Remission*, *Gospel Conversation*, *The Saints' Happiness* (The Beatitudes), and *The Saints' Treasury*.

His work on peace—*Irenicum: To Lovers of Truth and Peace; Heart-divisions opened in the causes and evils of them; With cautions that we may be hurt by them; And endeavours to heal them*—is a work of about 400 pages published by Soli Deo Gloria. Of Burroughs' four-volume work on Hosea, Spurgeon declared: "Masterly. A vast treasure house of experimental^b exposition." This was published by Soli Deo Gloria during the early 1990s, but the entire edition sold out.

^a Excerpts from *Rare Jewel* appear in Appendix 2.

^b **experimental** – experiential; practical.

5). *William Gouge (1575-1653)*

Born at Bow in Middlesex, William Gouge^a was educated at Eton School and then St. Catherine's College, Cambridge. He was blessed with a fine intellect and was exceedingly disciplined in study. In nine years he was never absent from college prayers at 5:30 AM unless sick. He made it his habit to read fifteen chapters of the Bible a day. At college he was chosen as reader of logic and philosophy. Those who were envious nicknamed him the "arch-Puritan."

In 1608 he was chosen as minister of Blackfriars Church, London. There he ministered for 46 years until his death in 1653. Many offers to become minister in other churches came to him, but he used to say, "It is my highest ambition to go from Blackfriars to heaven!" For 35 years, Gouge maintained a Wednesday morning lecture. Benjamin Brook writes of Gouge,

So great was his fame that, when religious persons from distant parts of the country went to London, they did not think their business finished unless they had attended a Blackfriars lecture.

The success of his ministry was also very great. It is said that thousands were converted and built up under his ministry.

Assessment of conversion was quite different in those days. A convert was one who demonstrated in his life that he was a new person in Christ. Today, simple "decisions" are reported as though they were conversions. Sadly, very few decisions can be equated with true conversion.

Gouge was a peaceable man and described as being the very picture of Moses for a meek and quiet spirit (Num 12:3; 1Pe 3:4). He was never observed by his family or by his servants to speak in anger with his wife. Yet in spite of his peaceable disposition, he was thrown into prison for nine weeks simply for republishing a book on the calling of the Jews. He was also persecuted for opposing the Arminianism and ritualism of Archbishop Laud.

An early riser throughout the year, Gouge was troubled if any person should be at their work before he was at his. He was a fer-

^a Today Gouge is best known for his classic *Of Domestic Duties*, a thorough examination of biblical teaching on all aspects of family life. See *The Christlike Husband*, a modernized excerpt from *Of Domestic Duties* available from CHAPEL LIBRARY. An excerpt from *The Christlike Husband* appears in Appendix 2.

vent believer in the Lord's Day and made sure that his servants were able to have full profit from that day. He was deeply exercised about the welfare of overseas churches; he would weep, fast, and pray when he heard bad news of the suffering of believers in foreign countries.

William Gouge was a member of the Westminster Assembly and often filled the moderator's chair when that gentleman was absent. His most famous series of sermons was on the letter to the Hebrews. This 1,100 page, double-column commentary has been republished by Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, USA, and is a most practical and useful work.

C. The Third Generation

It is evident that the Puritan movement reached an apex from about 1640 to 1660, after which the number of gifted ministers declined. This apex is seen in the quality of written works during these times, and especially by very well-known Puritans who are noteworthy still. We will now consider brief biographies of the best known, such as Goodwin, Bridge, Manton, Charnock, Owen, Baxter, Bunyan, Flavel and Howe—all of whose *Complete Works* have been republished since about 1965. Thomas Watson is a favorite Puritan author on account of his easy-to-read colorful style and pithiness in doctrinal definition. His writings have not been gathered into one uniform set. I have included details of his principal works (not as footnotes but as part of his life) because his books are descriptive of his ministry.

Bunyan, Owen, and Baxter are the most famous of the Puritans. Jessey and Knollys, both Baptists, are less known. I have included them to illustrate the diversity of character that prevailed among these men. Jessey, out of devotion to his work, chose not to marry. He was exemplary in caring for the poor and, in addition, took measures to assist Jews in their practical needs. Knollys is included not only because of the exceptional nature of his versatile ministry, but because he was involved in both *The First* and *Second London Baptist Confession of Faith*.

1). Dr. Thomas Goodwin (1600-1679)

Thomas Goodwin^a has been accorded his doctorate of divinity title here only to distinguish him from another notable Puritan of the same name, who ministered in the county of Essex. Dr. Goodwin had the advantage of godly parents who secured for him the best classical education in the neighborhood, so that before he came to his thirteenth birthday he entered Christ's College, Cambridge. At that time, the whole of Cambridge was affected by the powerful ministry of William Perkins. Looking back on his experience, he maintained that, although he attended holy communion and was religious, he was legalistic in spiritual matters and unconvinced. At the age of 20 he experienced deep conviction of sin under a sermon on Jesus' tears over Jerusalem (Luk 19:41-42). He testified that the Holy Spirit directed his focus away from looking within, to looking to Christ alone. This ended seven years of bondage for him. His own painful conviction had much to do with his becoming a preacher, which was exceedingly useful in the conversion of sinners and the guidance of enquirers.

Following his conversion, Goodwin allied himself to the Puritan party. In due course, he followed Richard Sibbes as master of St. Catherine's College, Cambridge. Persecution intensified at this time and he resigned his position in 1634. We know that Goodwin settled for a while in Amsterdam, where he had fellowship with Nye, Burroughs, Bridge, and Sympson. Later, at the Westminster Assembly, these men, being Independents rather than Presbyterians, became known as the "dissenting brethren." At the Assembly, Nye was a powerful speaker, Burroughs an acute reasoner, Bridge a persuasive pleader, but Goodwin was the strength of the party. Such was the gracious and gentle character of Goodwin that even those who differed most from him regarded him with esteem. He was very close to Oliver Cromwell and ministered to him when he was dying.

In 1649 Goodwin was appointed president of Magdalene College, Oxford. He loved to assist young men in preparation for the ministry and, when in dark times he had left Cambridge, he confessed that he had not expected ever to recover such a position.

^a See Goodwin's *The Vanity of Thoughts* and *How Faith Prepares the Soul for Christ* (tract), both available from CHAPEL LIBRARY. Excerpts from *Vanity* appear in Appendix 2.

With the return of royalty the political situation changed, and in 1660 Goodwin moved to London where he ministered steadfastly even through 1665, the year of the Plague.^a In the following year, in the Great Fire,^b he lost half his library in the flames. This was the occasion of his writing a wonderful work with the title *Patience and Its Perfect Work under Sudden and Sore Trials* (Jam 1:4). I well remember an unforgettable impression being made on the Whitefield Fraternal in Sussex in the 1960s. About forty ministers were deeply moved when Ferrell Griswold described the sufferings of Christ: His physical and His spiritual sufferings. Pastor Griswold, deeply read in the Puritans, ascribed the power of those expositions to the writings of Thomas Goodwin.

Goodwin's writing, like his preaching, is experimental in tone. He wrote as he felt. Highly commended in Goodwin's works is his experimental exposition titled *The Return of Prayers*.

2). *William Bridge (1600-1670)*

Bridge was educated at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, where he began his studies at age sixteen. He was evidently gifted in academic work and became a fellow of the college, remaining there until the age of twenty-six. He ministered in Essex and then in Norwich as rector of St. Peter's. It was there that he was silenced by Bishop Wren for his Nonconformity, and then excommunicated. This severe treatment drove him into exile, and he took refuge in Holland where he settled at Rotterdam. There he became pastor to the English church and was associated with Jeremiah Burroughs. He renounced the ordination that he had received in the Church of England and was re-ordained in the Independent style by Samuel Ward (1577-1639), a well-known Puritan of Suffolk who had suffered imprisonment for his faith.

William Bridge returned to England in 1642. He frequently preached before Parliament and was chosen as one of the members of the Westminster Assembly. He was called to be the minister of a

^a **Plague** – The Great Plague was the last major epidemic of the bubonic plague to occur in England, lasting from 1665 to 1666. It killed an estimated 100,000 people—almost a quarter of London's population—in 18 months.

^b **Great Fire** – fire in London's central parts from September 2-6, 1666, which gutted everything inside the old Roman city wall. It destroyed 13,200 houses (housing 70,000 of the 80,000 inhabitants), 87 parish churches, St Paul's Cathedral, and most of the buildings of the City authorities. The death toll is unknown.

church in Yarmouth, where he continued until ejected in 1662. His writings were gathered into five volumes in 1845 and republished by Soli Deo Gloria in 1989. Typical of the Puritans, he preached first and wrote his materials from those manuscripts. His style is richly experimental and practical, and often characterized by the most tender pastoral concern. This latter quality is seen especially in his most famous single piece of writing, *A Lifting up for the Downcast*, which has been kept in print as a paperback by the Banner of Truth.

3). *Thomas Manton (1620-1677)*

Thomas Manton^a was privileged to have a father and both grandfathers as ministers. He was endued with much natural ability and was ready for university at the early age of fourteen; but his parents kept him home for a further year before he entered Wadham College, Oxford. After basic studies, he concentrated on theology. He was ordained to the ministry by the famous Joseph Hall, then Bishop of Exeter. After a three-year ministry in Devon, he moved to a church in Stoke Newington, London. Seven years later, he took over from the aged Obadiah Sedgwick^b at Covent Garden, where he continued until his death in 1677.

Manton had a high esteem for Christopher Love (1618-1651), a young minister who was executed by beheading in 1651 for allegedly conspiring with the royalist cause. Manton attended Mr. Love on the scaffold. We can admire the courage of Manton in preaching the funeral sermon of Love even though soldiers threatened to shoot him. Dr. Manton suffered imprisonment during the post-1662 period.

While he was minister at Covent Garden, many of high rank attended his ministry, and he was called at times to preach before Parliament. He became one of Oliver Cromwell's chaplains. An incident is on record which shows that the best men can fail at times. Manton was invited to preach before the Lord Mayor. He chose a difficult subject in which he could display his learning. For this the Lord rebuked him, in the form of a poor man who reproached him later that day, complaining that he had come to get food for his

^a See Manton's *A Treatise of Self-denial*, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY. An excerpt appears in Appendix 2.

^b **Obadiah Sedgwick** (1600-1658) – Presbyterian minister and member of the Westminster Assembly; born in Marlborough, Wiltshire, England.

soul but was greatly disappointed. Dr. Manton was truly grieved and replied,

Friend, if I did not give you a sermon, you have given me one; and by the grace of God I will never play the fool to preach before my Lord Mayor in such a manner again!

Thomas Manton was a zealous believer in family worship. He began morning and evening with a short prayer, then read a chapter from the Bible, and required that his children and servants remember some part of it. He would then comment in an easy and pleasant style on what had been read, concluding with a longer prayer. He was ardent in the ministry on the Lord's Day, both in public worship and in his family, and was noted for the lively and affectionate way in which he administered the Lord's Supper. He rested on Mondays and received visitors.

In 1871, the complete works of Thomas Manton were republished. As part of the introduction, Bishop J. C. Ryle wrote an estimate of Manton in which he stated, "The Puritans, as a body, have done more to elevate the national character than any class of Englishmen that ever lived." A hundred years later a further edition of the 22 volume *Works* of Manton was published by Maranatha Publications in the USA. He was only thirty when his commentary on James was published. His commentaries on 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12, James, Jude, and Psalm 119 are particularly valuable.

4). *Stephen Charnock (1628-1680)*

Born in London, Stephen Charnock studied at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, where he experienced the saving change of salvation by grace. He took his first pastorate at Southwark in London.

Shortly after, age only 24, he was appointed to a senior position at New College, Oxford. This was followed by service in a high-ranking family in Dublin.

Difficult days lay ahead, because the restoration of Charles II meant that Charnock was without a pastoral charge in London for fifteen years. He labored for a short period in a Congregational church before his death, at age only 52. Very little is known of his personal life. His title to fame lies in the excellence of his written works. The Banner of Truth has published three volumes of his discourses, including a wonderful series on the new birth. His most

famous work is an extended series of expositions in four volumes, *The Existence and Attributes of God*.

Charnock's *Complete Works* were gathered and published in 1815. The editor wrote,

Holiness was the ornament of his life; usefulness the character of his ministry; the gospel he had so often preached the consolation of his dying hours.

5). *Thomas Watson (about 1620-1686)*

Thomas Watson's^a dates of birth and death are uncertain. We do know that he graduated from Emmanuel College, Cambridge, with a bachelor of arts degree in 1639 and a master's degree in 1642. He was recognized as an excellent student. In 1646 he became the rector at St. Stephen's in the ward of Walbrook, London. He was implicated in Christopher Love's plot (referred to above) in 1651, spent six months in jail, and was then released. He was one of the ministers who suffered the notorious Great Ejection of 1662.

The church that he pastored was destroyed by the fire of 1666. After the Ejection, Watson preached wherever it was possible. Those who loved his preaching would gather in barns, kitchens, in back rooms, and in the woods to hear the Word of life. In 1675 he and Stephen Charnock licensed Crosby Hall for services. In 1686 Watson and his wife, Abigail, retired to Barnston in Essex, where her father was minister. The church building, designed in the old "meeting-house" style, still exists, and it was here that Watson was buried when he died while in prayer later that year.

Watson is highly esteemed as the most readable of the Puritans. He wrote in an original, concise, pithy, pungent, racy, rich, and illustrative style. Out of the heart proceeds character. It is in Watson's writings that we detect a minister of superb quality.

The first book to be published in 1958 by the Banner of Truth Trust was Thomas Watson's *A Body of Divinity*. That was followed by *The Lord's Prayer* and *The Ten Commandments*. These books are based on the Westminster Shorter Catechism. The Banner has also published Watson's *All Things for Good* (sometimes called *A Divine Cordial*) and *The Doctrine of Repentance*. There are two

^a See Watson's *The Duty of Self-denial*, *The Doctrine of Repentance*, "Test of Assurance," and "Self-examination" (tracts); all available from CHAPEL LIBRARY. Excerpts from *Self-denial* appear in Appendix 2.

remaining treatises that have not been republished. One is *Jerusalem's Glory*, a copy of which is at Dr. Williams's Library in London. The other is *The Witnesses Anatomized*, the only known copy to exist being at Dulwich College in London.

Don Kistler, founder of Soli Deo Gloria, has majored on publishing the writings of Watson. The following are included:

The Sermons of Thomas Watson

(A Christian on the Mount, The Saints' Spiritual Delight, The Christian's Charter of Privileges, God's Anatomy of Man's Heart, A Christian on Earth Still in Heaven, Christ's Loveliness, The Upright Man's Character, The One Thing Necessary, The Godly Man Drawn with a Scripture Pencil)

The Art of Divine Contentment

Gleanings from Thomas Watson

Heaven Taken by Storm

A Plea for the Godly (17 previously unpublished sermons)

The Duty of Self-Denial^a (and ten other sermons)

The Mischief of Sin (appendixed is Watson's treatise on *The Mystery of the Lord's Supper*)

The Fight of Faith Crowned (his remaining sermons).

6). *John Owen (1616-1683)*

John Owen^b is deservedly known as "The Prince of the Puritans." His *Works* are first choice for those who prize sound divinity. Today his writings are available in 25 volumes; these together form the best source of theology in the English language. Owen is also called the King David of the Puritans. We can ascribe this to his overall reliability. He wrote books in response to the challenges and pressures of his times. But in all his writings there is power and cohesion of thought, and always total faithfulness to the authority of Scripture. Many examples can be cited in which Owen is unrivalled for balance and penetration of thought. One example is his great work on *The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit* (*Works*, volume 3); others are *The Glory of Christ* (volume 1), *The Mortifica-*

^a *The Duty of Self-denial*, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^b See Owen's *Mortification of Sin, Temptation, Indwelling Sin, Church Discipline, and Worship and Order in the Church*; all available from CHAPEL LIBRARY. Excerpts from *Temptation* appear in Appendix 2.

tion of Sin (volume 6). His writing on *Liberty of Conscience* (volume 13) is as relevant now as it was in his time.

Of Welsh noble background, Owen was so brilliant in intellect that he was sent to Oxford University at the age of twelve. There he studied for ten years. He enjoyed hurling the javelin and competed in the long jump. He also played the flute. His nature as an intense scholar was such that sometimes he allowed himself only four hours' sleep a night; that kind of daily program does not make for Olympic champions!

While on a visit to London, Owen and some of his friends went to hear the famous preacher Edmund Calamy. They were disappointed when Calamy did not arrive. He was replaced by a country preacher. The Holy Spirit used the visitor to bring Owen to personal assurance of salvation.

Owen's first pastorate was at Fordham, a village in Essex. At that time he married Mary Rooke. His family life was immensely sorrowful in a way we can scarcely understand in our day of modern medical science. Of eleven children, only one, a girl, survived into adulthood. Her marriage did not work out; she returned to her parents and shortly afterwards died of consumption.^a

In 1646, Owen was called to a London congregation where 2,000 attended each Lord's Day. In June 1648, General Fairfax besieged Colchester and Owen was invited to preach to the soldiers. He became friends with many of the officers, including Oliver Cromwell's son-in-law Henry Ireton. Owen's gifts were soon recognized. He was invited to minister before Parliament where he became the favorite preacher and was appointed chaplain to Oliver Cromwell. In 1652 he was installed as vice-chancellor of Oxford University. This position involved a wide range of administrative responsibilities. During his six years of tenure he made theology, preaching, catechism, and prayer central. The discipline at Oxford was poor, and Owen was effective in restoring it—being tolerant but firm. There was an incident when a student uttered obscenities in a debate. He was warned but he continued. Finally, Owen himself thrust the student physically from the room!

In 1658, Owen took part in a meeting of ministers from Congregational churches. This conference took place at the Savoy Pal-

^a **consumption** – pulmonary tuberculosis that wastes the body.

ace in London. He was appointed—with Dr. Thomas Goodwin, Philip Nye, William Bridge, William Greenhill, and Joseph Caryl (all of whom had been members of the Westminster Assembly)—to prepare a confession of faith for the Congregational churches based on *The Westminster Confession*. This became known as *The Savoy Declaration*.

In 1676 Owen lost his excellent wife by death. Eighteen months later he remarried. His second wife was a woman of wealth. By this time his health was failing, and he was able to enjoy the luxury of a carriage for travel.

Owen's writings reveal an analytical, formative, and majestic mind. Foundational to all his works is a profound grasp of the doctrines of grace. The depth and length of Owen's work is the subject of Sinclair Ferguson's^a book *John Owen on the Christian Life*. After describing the life and ministry of Owen, Ferguson expounds his teaching on the covenants, sanctification, communion with God, conflict with sin, fellowship in the church, the doctrine of Scripture, apostasy, perseverance, and initiation into covenant life and the Lord's Table. The Banner of Truth has published excellent transpositions into modern English of some of Owen's works. These are popular paperbacks abridged and modernized by R. J. K. Law: *The Holy Spirit, Communion with God, Apostasy from the Gospel*, and *The Glory of Christ*.

In 1661 Owen wrote, in Latin, a treatise on biblical theology—an overview of the history of God's revelation of Himself to mankind. The importance of biblical theology has been championed this century by authors such as Geerhardus Vos, and more recently Graeme Goldsworthy. Three centuries ago, John Owen anticipated the centrality of this subject. We are indebted to Soli Deo Gloria for the translation from Latin of Owen's work on the nature and progress of theology, which reveals a delightfully lucid style, like the clearest mountain stream. As J. I. Packer puts it, "His Latin is taut, clear, brisk, and tidy." What a pity he did not write all his works in Latin, and then have them translated into English!

^a **Sinclair Ferguson** – Scottish Presbyterian pastor and theologian known for his teaching and writing. He is visiting Professor of Theology at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

7). Richard Baxter (1615-1691)

Unlike many Puritan leaders who enjoyed the advantage of education in the prestigious universities of Cambridge or Oxford, Baxter^a had to find his own way educationally. By dint of self-discipline, he acquired learning that put him on a par with the best Puritan writers.

He was ordained in the Church of England and called to minister in Kidderminster. When he arrived, the place was a spiritual desert. He set about his work of visiting and evangelism with incredible zeal. This was used to bring about a marvellous change in the town and necessitated a greatly enlarged auditorium. The Puritans did not use the word "revival." Perhaps this work of God's Spirit might be better termed "a visitation of the Spirit." There was something about what happened in Kidderminster that has stimulated and fired the imagination and fervency of believers ever since.

Baxter married in 1662. His wife, Margaret, was a woman of outstanding spiritual and natural talent, and after her death Baxter wrote her biography. Dr. Packer eulogizes this biography and suggests that it helps to destroy the caricature that Puritans were not human. Baxter, more than most, experienced persecution and was subject to imprisonment after the Great Ejection.

During the Civil War, Baxter became chaplain to a regiment with Cromwell's forces. For about 25 years following the Great Ejection of 1662, Baxter was a leading spokesman for the Nonconformists. He was essentially comprehensive in his approach, seeking to keep the various streams together as much as possible. But he was as poor in leading in the wider field as he was successful on the pastoral side. In May 1685 Baxter was charged before the Lord Chief Justice Jeffreys on account of his criticisms of the Church of England. Jeffreys, notorious for his hatred of all Puritanism, raved against Baxter and called him "an old rogue who poisoned the world with his Kidderminster doctrine...a conceited, stubborn, fanatical dog!" Jeffreys also expressed his desire that Baxter be hanged! Had it not been for the influence brought to bear by more reasonable men of power, Baxter might have been whipped through the streets.

^a See Baxter's *Directions for Profitable Hearing and Reading* and "Self-losing" (tract); both available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

During the time when he was silenced in his preaching ministry, he concentrated on writing. His *Christian Directory* is unique because it covers every aspect of Christian life from a practical point of view. It is the great “how to” book of the Puritans. How does the Christian relate to God, to himself, his family, his church, his work, and his nation? With a standard sized page, the book would come to about 2,000 pages! It is all practical and helpful, and provides a guide for us today. We need to cover all these practical basic subjects such as marriage and the family today, but at the same time grapple with a different set of social problems. The biblical principles are the same, but the application needs to be contemporary.

Richard Baxter’s evangelistic book, *A Call to the Unconverted*, was a best-seller. Its usefulness continues today. The British evangelist, John Blanchard, has transposed it into modern English and called it *An Invitation to Live* (Evangelical Press). Baxter’s outline of Ezekiel 33:11 is extraordinarily perceptive and gripping, typically Puritan. Another outright winner is Baxter’s *The Reformed Pastor*. If he attained in pastoral work anything like the standards set in this classic, it is little wonder that he was wonderfully used at Kidderminster. Another famous best-seller was Baxter’s *The Saints’ Everlasting Rest*. Baxter’s reputation as a Christian writer is based on his devotional and pastoral expositions rather than his works on theological themes.

In his theology, Baxter was individualistic, eccentric, and disinclined to submit to others. His errors are not easily detected. In reading the books recommended above, we need to learn how to benefit from writers while at the same time avoiding their errors. Packer, who is an expert on the Puritans and very especially so on Baxter, says of him,

Baxter was a great and saintly man. As pastor, evangelist, and devotional writer, no praise for him can be too high. But as a theologian he was, though brilliant, something of a disaster. He was Neonomian and Amyraldian.^a

^a **Neonomianism** (Greek: new law) – in Christian theology, the doctrine that the gospel is a new law, the requirements of which humanity fulfills by faith, repentance, and imperfect obedience, which are substituted in the room of the perfect and perpetual obedience required by the original Moral Law.

This was the cause of doctrinal confusion in the next generation. Those ramifications are beyond our scope, but from Baxter's example we are reminded that great care is required in theological formulation. This is precisely why John Owen is so highly valued.

Baxter was not only concerned for evangelism at home; he was just as zealous for missionary work and was a moving power in the establishment of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. John Eliot, famous as the apostle to the American Indians, found in Baxter a sterling supporter. In his last illness, Baxter read the *Life of Eliot* and wrote to the author, Increase Mather,

I thought I had been near dying at twelve o'clock in bed; but your book revived me. I knew much of Mr. Eliot's opinions by many letters that I had from him. There was no man on earth I honored above him. It is his evangelical work that is the apostolic succession for which I plead.

8). *John Bunyan (1628-1688)*

In spiritual experience, in doctrine, in preaching style, and in life, John Bunyan^a is *the* perfect exemplar of the Puritans.

Born at Elstow, near Bedford, of very poor but respectable parents, Bunyan received a very limited education. At 16 he lost his mother, and a month after that his sister. Within a month his father remarried. Bunyan became wild and wilful. We know little of Bunyan's army experience, but at the age of 16 he was recruited into the army by the Parliamentary forces for between two and three years.

John Bunyan's testimony of conversion is described in his book *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*. Having heard a sermon on the importance of the Lord's Day, he went home burdened in spirit. However, he sallied out to join in a game of "cat." As he was in process of striking the stick, he seemed to hear a voice from

Amyraldism (Amyraldianism; also known as the School of Saumur) – doctrinal system known as post-redemptionism, moderate Calvinism, four-point Calvinism, or hypothetical universalism: God ineffectually decrees that all men be saved; but because God knows that some men will not have faith, He makes an effectual decree to save those whom He predestines to salvation.

^a See Bunyan's *Christian Behavior*, *Heavenly Footman*, *Family Duty*, *Justification by an Imputed Righteousness*, *The Saints' Knowledge of Christ's Love*, and *The Pilgrim's Progress* (Part One); all available from CHAPEL LIBRARY. In addition, many other Bunyan titles are available online at www.ChapelLibrary.org. Excerpts from *The Pilgrim's Progress* appear in Appendix 2.

heaven, “Will you leave your sins and go to heaven, or have your sins and go to hell?” He left the game at once and said he saw the Lord Jesus looking down on him. Yet for all that, he returned to his habit of playing on the Sabbath and continued unconverted. Later, overhearing some women speaking about the new birth, he was convicted once more. These same women introduced him to their pastor in Bedford, an excellent man named John Gifford. He was instrumental in leading Bunyan to repentance and faith.

Bunyan’s writing style is powerful, and his use of English is a delight to every reader. All the phases of prevenient grace^a appear in *Grace Abounding*: knowledge, illumination (Bunyan never argued with election and predestination or any other Christian doctrine), reformation of life, and conviction of sin.

In 1653 Bunyan became a church member, and a year later moved to Bedford with his wife and four children, all under six years of age. In 1655 he became a deacon of the church and began to preach. At that time his wife died. In 1660 he was arrested and imprisoned for preaching. Some time before this, a godly young woman agreed to marry him. Although his second wife cared for his children, Bunyan was much needed at home. It was agonizing, but he refused to compromise his conscience and preferred imprisonment rather than attending the Church of England or quitting his preaching. Twelve years of confinement in prison ensued, from the age of 32 to 44. He especially loved his blind daughter, who would come to the prison to work with him to tag shoelaces, in this way to help feed the family.

In prison, where he wrote many fine works, his library consisted of his Bible, a concordance, and Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs*. In 1674 he was arrested again for preaching the gospel. At that time he began his best known work, *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, a masterpiece and best-seller of all time, second only to the Bible. After the Scriptures, it has often been the next book to be translated into other languages. Thankfully, through the influence and intervention of John Owen, Bunyan was released and saved from a further long term in prison.

^a **prevenient grace** – divine grace that precedes human decision; God’s work in drawing the sinner to Himself (Joh 6:44).

As with John Rogers of Dedham, an extraordinary unction attended the preaching of John Bunyan. Overall, he was the most imaginative, eloquent, and compelling preacher of his time. His use of allegory was unique. John Owen said that he would gladly trade all his learning if he could only preach like Bunyan. When he visited London, his preaching drew thousands rather than hundreds. The sheer gripping power of Bunyan's preaching of the gospel is illustrated in his sermons, *The Life and Death of Mr Badman*, *The Jerusalem Sinner Saved*, and *Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ*. The latter is on John 6:37. It combines the election of the Father with powerful persuasions to sinners to close with Christ, on the basis that if they come they must know that Christ will never cast them out. His theology was robust, and his written works enjoyed popularity equal to any of his peers. In the sermon *The Jerusalem Sinner Saved*, Bunyan enacts the various objections made by the sinners of Jerusalem, disarms those objections, and persuades to faith in Christ—stressing throughout, “Repent and be baptized every one of you” (Act 2:38)!

Objector: “But I was one of them that cried out, Crucify Him! Crucify Him! And desired that Barabbas, the murderer, might live, rather than Him. What will become of me, think you?”

Peter: “I am to preach repentance and remission of sins to every one of you!” (see Luk 24:47).

I remember hearing a certain Mr. Ford who had a fine deep voice and, oddly enough, looked like John Bunyan. He made a special study of Bunyan and memorized sections of Bunyan's sermons. In a lecture at the Evangelical Library in London, he acted out Bunyan's preaching. He included the sermon *The Barren Fig Tree, Being the Doom and Downfall of the Fruitless Professor*. Bunyan depicts the deathbed of the fruitless professor, at the same time depicting the cutting down of the barren fig tree. I do not think I have ever in my life heard anything as awesome as that.

Bunyan's complete works have been published in three handsome illustrated volumes by the Banner of Truth Trust.

9). *John Flavel (1627-1691)*

Flavel^a was born of godly parents who died together in 1665 of the plague while in prison in London for their faith. John was educated at Oxford, after which he became a curate at Deptford. He was deprived of his living in 1662 by the *Act of Uniformity*, and subsequently, under much persecution, labored as a Nonconformist pastor in Dartmouth. He enjoyed exceptional unction in prayer, and on one occasion wrestled with agonized pleading in public prayer for those going into a sea battle from Dartmouth. The Lord answered his prayer in that there was not one casualty among those who engaged in the battle. His labors were crowned with many conversions, some of which were extraordinary.

It is for his writing that he is now remembered. His works were published in six volumes in 1820. Again in 1968 these were published in handsome volumes by the Banner of Truth. Typical of the Puritans, all his works in writing were first in sermon form. Flavel's writings are of outstanding quality. Most compelling is his exposition of Revelation 3:20,

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

Eleven superb expositions of Proverbs 4:23, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life," total about 260 pages. Best known of all Flavel's writings is his *The Mystery of Providence*,^b a popular paperback published by the Banner of Truth. Of prime place in his works is *The Fountain of Life*, expositions on the life and sayings of Christ.

10). *Hanserd Knollys (1599-1691)*

Like John Bunyan, Hanserd Knollys was a Puritan; and like Bunyan, he was a Baptist. Through Knollys, Baptists today can trace their own historical connections to the vast and rich legacy of the Puritan testimony and the inheritance of Puritan literature.

^a See Flavel's *The Fountain of Life Opened*, excerpt available from CHAPEL LIBRARY; see Appendix 2.

^b **providence** – God's works of providence are His most holy (Psa 145:17), wise (Isa 28:29), and powerful (Heb 1:3), preserving and governing all His creatures and all their actions (Psa 103:19; Mat 10:29). (*Spurgeon's Catechism*, Q.11; see also *God's Providence* by Charles Spurgeon; both available from CHAPEL LIBRARY). Excerpt from *The Fountain of Life* also available.

Knollys died at the advanced age of 93. His life spans the 17th century. He was one of seven who signed *The First London Baptist Confession of Faith* in 1646, and his name is the first of 37 to record agreement and unity in the publication of *The Second London Baptist Confession of Faith* in 1689. Indeed, although advanced in age, Knollys was a prime mover in organizing a National Assembly of Calvinistic Baptists on the occasion of the accession to the throne of William III and the passing of the *Toleration Act* in 1689. *The 1689 Confession* was actually formulated in 1677, but persecution prevented it from being published. This Confession follows *The Westminster Confession* in all chapters, except four that concern believers' baptism, the nature of the church, and church government.

Hanserd Knollys was one of the few Baptists in the line of the Puritans who received a university education. He studied at St. Catherine's College, Cambridge. He testified,

I prayed daily, heard all the godly ministers I could, read and searched the holy Scriptures, read good books, and got acquainted with gracious Christians then called Puritans.

Knollys was ordained and appointed minister of a parish in Lincolnshire. He resigned in 1631 because of Puritan convictions. He could not in good conscience follow the rituals required and could not agree to "admitting wicked persons to the Lord's Supper."

Benjamin Brook devotes eleven pages to Knollys in his three volume work *The Lives of the Puritans*. Brook writes,

About the year 1636, Knollys left the Church [of England] entirely. He renounced his Episcopal ordination and joined himself to the Puritans. This exposed him to numerous difficulties and hardships. He was driven out of Lincolnshire and, at length out of the kingdom for his Nonconformity.

When he arrived in America, he had no money; but his wife, unknown to him, had saved five pounds.

In 1641 he returned to England in poverty; but he opened a school that after a year was attended by 156 scholars. It was at this time that he associated with the Calvinistic Baptists. Knollys was a courageous preacher. On one of his preaching tours in Suffolk he was stoned. During the 1640s, Knollys was a leading apologist in defending the Reformed position (as held by John Calvin and Mar-

tin Bucer) from the fanatical claims of the Seekers. Their claims were the same as those of extreme charismatics today. The Seekers claimed that because of apostasy God had withdrawn signs, wonders, miracles, raising of the dead, and prophecies. Knollys' very able defense of the orthodox position—that the apostolic age and apostolic gifts (Heb 2:4; 2Co 12:12) were unique—was set out in his book *The Shining of a Flaming Fire in Zion*.

Knollys maintained that James 5:14 is our guide in the case of special need. He himself possessed an unusual faith and gift of prayer seen in many remarkable petitions, especially during the time of the great plague. Toward the end of Knollys' life, the famous leader Benjamin Keach^a was taken ill to the point of death. Knollys visited him and implored the Lord to spare him in the same way that he had spared King Hezekiah. Keach recovered and lived another fifteen years.

During the unsettled time of 1660, Knollys was imprisoned for 18 weeks in Newgate Prison. Later, when he was in Holland, his property was confiscated. He opened a school again in order to recover financially. He was imprisoned again in 1670. He possessed exceptional bodily stamina. In prison he would preach every day. Out of prison, he preached three or four times every Lord's Day and many times during the week. He was noted for the cheerfulness and courage in which he bore persecutions and sufferings. Right to the end of his life, he was actively encouraging his flock and advancing the wider cause of Christ.

11). Henry Jessey (1601-1663)

In his *History of the Puritans*, Daniel Neal describes Henry Jessey as "an eminent divine among the Puritans." He was born in 1601 near Cleveland, Yorkshire, where his father was minister. At seventeen years of age, he was sent to St. John's College, Cambridge. When his father died in 1623, Jessey was left with only three pence a day to live on. While at university, he showed mastery in the biblical languages and later, with friends, set himself to translate the whole Bible. This enterprise, though almost completed, did not result in publication. It was said of Jessey that the original lan-

^a **Benjamin Keach** (1640-1704) – important Particular Baptist preacher, author, and defender of Baptist principles. His name is associated with the Baptist Catechism, which was modified by Spurgeon and still in use today; available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

guages of the Old and New Testament were as familiar to him as his mother tongue. After leaving Cambridge, he worked as a chaplain in an aristocratic home. He was ordained in 1627. In 1633 he took the living of Aughton in Yorkshire. Soon he was in trouble. His Puritan convictions caused him to take down a crucifix, and he refused to follow the prescribed order of service. He was dismissed, but thereafter received into the home of Sir Matthew Bointon in Yorkshire, from where he preached frequently in two parishes.

In 1635, Jessey was invited to be pastor of the congregation formed in 1616 by Henry Jacob. He continued in this position until his death. A number in the congregation had accepted believers' baptism and this stirred Jessey to study the subject. Neal says,

After great deliberation, many prayers, and frequent conferences with pious and learned friends, he altered his sentiments—first concerning the mode, and then the subjects of baptism. But he maintained the same temper of friendship and charity towards other Christians, not only as to conversation, but church-communion. When he visited churches in the north and west of England, he labored to promote the spirit of love and union among them. He was a principal person in setting up and maintaining, for some time, a meeting of some eminent men of each denomination in London.

In June 1645 he was baptized by Hanserd Knollys. In London, in addition to his own pastorate, he ministered regularly at St. George's Church, Southwark, and at other places during the week.

He deliberately chose to be single so that he could devote his life to serving others. Perhaps his experience of extreme poverty as a student was partly responsible for his sympathy for and amazing generosity to the poor. Thirty poor families received their support from him. So remarkable was his passion to help the needy that he collected £300 (a large sum in those days) for Jews in desperate need in Jerusalem. With this gift he sent letters of concern. Later he wrote a treatise proving that Jesus is the true Messiah. This was prepared in Hebrew for distribution among Jews wherever they may be found.

Upon the Restoration, he was ejected from his position at St. George's. He was silenced in his ministry and committed to prison. About six months later, he died full of peace and joy. Neal reports

that several thousand from many different persuasions attended his funeral.

12). John Howe (1630-1705)

John Howe was a graduate of Cambridge and Oxford. At the early age of 26, he became a domestic chaplain to Oliver Cromwell. In 1662 he was ejected from Torrington in Devon and subsequently became one of the foremost leaders of Nonconformity.

For several years before a call in 1671 to Antrim in Ireland, Howe struggled to support his increasing family. The call was to become chaplain to Lord Massarene. Howe was described by a friend as an incomparable preacher, and this is illustrated by an incident on the journey to Ireland. Bad weather delayed the ship, and Howe was invited to preach in the town. A large crowd gathered. Such was the impact made that the next week, when the ship was still delayed, a huge crowd gathered. Although Howe was ill, he sought the Lord's enablement and preached again with great freedom. He testified that never in his experience had he seen a congregation so moved or receiving the Word with such pleasure. Permission was obtained—without Howe having to compromise his principles of Nonconformity—to preach every Lord's Day in the parish church at Antrim.

In 1675 he was called to a church in London. Some of his sermons created much interest, and after his death his principal works were gathered together for publication in two volumes in 1724. In 1990 Soli Deo Gloria published Howe's writings in three volumes. These include two of his most famous expositions, *Delighting in God*, and *The Redeemer's Tears Shed over Lost Souls*. Somehow fifteen sermons on Ezekiel by Howe were missed in this three-volume set first published in 1848. They were reprinted separately by the Religious Tract Society under the title *The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit* with a subtitle *The Prosperous State of the Christian Interest before the End of Time, by a Plentiful Effusion of the Holy Spirit*.

13). Other well-known Puritans

The writer of the letter to the Hebrews expressed his dilemma as he described believers in the Old Testament. His dilemma concerned omission. There were so many worthy characters who excelled in the exercise of their faith; he mentions the names of just a few and then has to leave it (Heb 11:32). Many worthy Puritans

have not been described in this book because of space. It will help at this point to mention some of the better known of these.

William Ames (1576-1633) took refuge in Holland, where he spent most of his ministerial career. His book *The Marrow of Theology* was extraordinarily popular, especially in New England. Some of the better-known New England Puritans were Thomas Hooker, Thomas Shepherd, John Davenport, Increase Mather, and Cotton Mather.

Among the Puritans who participated in the Westminster Assembly were William Twisse (chairman), Anthony Burgess, Edmund Calamy, Joseph Caryl, Simeon Ashe, Philip Nye, Obadiah Sedgwick, and Stephen Marshall. Daniel Cawdrey and Herbert Palmer were delegated the task of writing on the Sabbath, on which subject they produced two volumes. There were five representatives from Scotland at the Assembly, among whom were Samuel Rutherford^a and Alexander Henderson.

William Gurnall is famous for his classic *The Christian in Complete Armour*, William Jenkyn for his commentary on Jude, Thomas Taylor for his on Titus, and Richard Alleine for his book *Heaven Opened*. The Northern Puritan Isaac Ambrose was well known, especially for his classic *Looking unto Jesus*. Oliver Heywood, also of Northern England, kept diaries that form a valuable source of information about the Puritan way of life.

Matthew Poole (1624-1679) is renowned on account of his complete commentary on the Bible, as is Matthew Henry for his commentary on the whole Bible.^b The latter was the son of the Puritan Philip Henry. John Owen was followed in his last pastorate in London by David Clarkson, whose writings have been republished in three volumes.

^a **Samuel Rutherford** (1600-1661) – Scottish Presbyterian theologian, author, and Commissioner to the Westminster Assembly. Andrew Bonar published his collected extremely valuable *Letters of Samuel Rutherford*; excerpts available from CHAPEL LIBRARY, three of which appear in Appendix 2.

^b **Matthew Henry** (1662-1714) – Presbyterian preacher and author. His *Exposition of the Old and New Testament* (1710) easily holds first place among devotional commentaries for its blending of good sense, original and felicitous remark, and genuine insight into the meaning of the sacred writers. See also *The Lord's Supper*, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY. An excerpt appears in Appendix 2.

Christopher Love (1618-1651), a wonderfully gifted young Welsh preacher, was executed in 1651 by beheading at age 33. He was charged for being involved in raising money to restore the monarchy. Arrested at the same time on suspicion of conspiracy were Puritan pastors Thomas Watson, William Jenkyn, and Ralph Robinson; but they were released. Ralph Robinson's sermons on the glory of Christ have been republished. He said once to an intimate friend that he loved fasting and prayer with all his heart.

Some well-known Puritans died young: James Janeway at 38, and the very able and popular preacher John Preston at 31. In Scotland, James Durham died at the age of 36 and Hugh Binning at only 26—both gifted preaching and writing Puritans. Joseph Alleine departed to be with Christ when he was only 34. He is famous on account of the popularity of his book *An Alarm to the Unconverted*. Hundreds of editions have been published.

3. The Demise of the Puritan Movement

As we saw in “The Story of the Puritans,” an act was passed in 1662 that demanded conformity to the Church of England. Clergymen who had not been episcopally ordained^a were to be reordained. Consent was required to every part of *The Book of Common Prayer*. Every minister was required to take the oath of canonical obedience, and to renounce *The Solemn League and Covenant*, which was a pledge for reformation usually printed alongside *The Westminster Confession of Faith* and *The Westminster Catechisms*. The new *Act of Uniformity* was aimed to ensure that reformation would be renounced.

Of course, the consciences of the Puritans could not submit to these requirements. About 2,000—nearly all ministers, but also men who held positions of authority, like headmasters and teachers in schools—were forced out of their occupations. To avoid destitution they had to resort to any kind of work they could find. It was a terrible time.

It was the end of Puritanism as such. A new era known as “Dis-sent” began. By the end of the seventeenth century, the demise of Puritanism was complete. Of the well-known Puritans who saw the

^a **episcopally ordained** – officially authorized to minister in the Church of England by one of its bishops (who supervised parish priests within his district).

eighteenth century were John Howe (died 1705), whose life we have just reviewed, and Thomas Doolittle (died 1707). Matthew Henry, famous for his commentary on the whole Bible, was the son of Philip Henry (1631-1696), one of the Puritans ejected in 1662.^a Matthew, who for a while studied under Thomas Doolittle in Islington, London, was born in 1662 and died in 1714.

The sufferings caused by the Great Ejection of 1662, and the severe and relentless persecution that ensued until 1688, broke up the unity of the evangelicals and severely restricted the benefits of a well-trained ministry. Nonconformists were barred from the universities; this had an adverse effect on the standards of the ministry. The cogent spiritual unity of the Puritans that had characterized their ministries went into steep decline after 1662. The Calvinism of the Puritans had been well-balanced and evangelistic. After the 1662 Ejection, Arminianism began to predominate in the churches; and in due course, that gave way to Unitarianism.^b Those faithful pastors who were ejected continued to write, but when that generation of great leaders passed away, there were few to take their place.

The Church of England has never recovered from the Ejection of 1662. From time to time there have been exceptional leaders, like Bishop J. C. Ryle (1816-1900). Ryle followed the emphases of the Puritans and wrote like a Puritan. His well-known book *Holiness* provides expository material on the Puritan doctrine of sanctification.

The brightest son born to Puritanism in the nineteenth century was C. H. Spurgeon, and in the twentieth Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones. Spurgeon was steeped in and fashioned by the writings and principles of the Puritans, and can only be understood in that light.¹ [Interest in] Puritanism went into steep decline and was almost extinct for the first half of the twentieth century. Spurgeon anticipated this decline when he declared,

Out of the present contempt into which Puritanism has fallen, many brave hearts and true will fetch it, by the help of God, ere

^a See *Lives of Philip and Matthew Henry* in two volumes (416 pages and 310 pages); republished in one volume by Banner of Truth in 1974.

^b **Unitarianism** – heretical theological movement holding that God is one person, in direct contrast to the biblical doctrine of the Trinity. It also rejects several other orthodox Christian doctrines, including original sin, predestination, and biblical inerrancy.

many years have passed. Those who have daubed up the windows will yet be surprised to see heaven's light breaking forth from it to their own confusion.²

Interest in the Puritans and their literature began to spread in the late 1950s and has increased since. Without a theological renewal, this would not have been possible.³ Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones' interest in the Puritans was first awakened in 1925 when he read a biography of Richard Baxter. Dr. Lloyd-Jones propagated interest in the Puritans on a wide scale. His papers delivered at the annual Puritan Conference, nineteen in all, have been printed in a volume with the title *The Puritans*.⁴

Dr. James I. Packer has contributed much to encourage interest in the Puritans. As a first-year student at Oxford in 1944, he was appointed a junior librarian to assess and house a Puritan library that had been donated to the Oxford Inter-Collegiate Christian Union. It was then he discovered the 24-volume set of John Owen. The pages were uncut. The contents were summarized on the spines. In order to read about mortification of sin, Packer first cut his way into volume six. That was his rediscovery of the Puritans. Later he wrote a doctoral thesis on Richard Baxter. In due course, Packer's contribution toward a revival of interest in the Puritans was immense. His work on the Puritans is gathered together in his book *Among God's Giants*.⁵

Puritanism brings together in beautiful proportion the precious truths of Scripture: a proportion of doctrine, experience, and practice that exalts Jesus Christ, Who is the Truth (Joh 14:6). It is the will of the Holy Spirit to glorify Christ. For this reason, we can be sure that the promises will be fulfilled, as Isaiah and Habakkuk declare,

The least of you will become a thousand, the smallest a mighty nation. I am the LORD; in its time I will do this swiftly...For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea (Isa 60:22; Hab 2:14).

References

¹ Ernest W. Bacon, *Spurgeon – Heir of the Puritans* (Eerdmans, 1968), p 7.

² C. H. Spurgeon, *The Early Years* (Banner of Truth, 1962), p 11.

³ For a description of this renewal, see Robert Oliver's Evangelical Library publication *Our Glorious Heritage – The Recovery of the Reformed Faith in the Twenti-*

eth Century; and article “The Theological Renewal 1950-2000,” Erroll Hulse, *Reformation Today* 162.

⁴ Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *The Puritans* (Banner of Truth, 417 pages, 1987).

⁵ J. I. Packer, *Among God’s Giants – Aspects of Puritan Christianity* (Kingsway, 442 pages, 1991).

PART THREE

HELP FROM THE PURITANS

1. The Westminster Confession and Justification

The Westminster Confession of Faith forms the doctrinal basis of many Presbyterian denominations. Its equivalents, *The 1689 London Baptist Confession* and *The Savoy Confession* (Congregational), have been adopted by Reformed Baptist and Congregational churches.

Beside serving as a doctrinal basis for local churches, the Puritan confessions serve to give a sense of historical continuity. A confession of faith provides a useful teaching aid to ensure that the whole counsel of God's Word is preached. The Puritan confessions can be useful to express the unity of Reformed churches, which was the original principal purpose of *The 1689 London Baptist Confession*. A confession is also a means by which doctrinal integrity can be maintained. It was the grief of Charles Haddon Spurgeon during the Downgrade controversy of 1887 to 1892 that the Baptist Union would have nothing to do with defining doctrine. It is impossible to defend the truth without being definitive. We will see how important clarity and definition are as we take up justification by faith, which is God's way of salvation.

We can gain help from many chapters in the Puritan confessions, but here because of its cardinal^a place we will examine justification and observe its relevance for today.

A. Justification by Faith Alone

1). *What Justification Is*

From their writings, we can see that the Reformers and Puritans regarded justification as *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae*, "the point on which depends the standing or falling of the

^a cardinal – of most importance.

church.” Enshrined in the heart of Protestant confessions of faith, especially those mentioned above, is the doctrine of justification by faith alone. It would be difficult to find any Puritan as eloquent on justification as the Reformer Martin Luther, but in principle they followed him. Thomas Watson asserted that “justification is the very hinge and pillar of Christianity,”¹ and John Owen found time to expound and defend the doctrine in a four hundred-page treatise.²

Luther declared,

This is the chief article from which all other doctrines have flowed ... It alone begets, nourishes, builds, preserves, and defends the church of God: and without it the church cannot exist for one hour...When the article of justification has fallen, everything has fallen.³

The reason for this is that justification is the only way of salvation. To be obscure at this point is to open the door to darkness and confusion. Justification by faith alone concerns the very character and attributes of God, because justification shows that God requires perfect holiness. Justification directly concerns all the work of Christ, since the righteousness that is imputed to the believer consists of the active and passive obedience^a of our Redeemer.

The Westminster Confession (transposed into modern English) defines justification as follows:

God freely justifies the persons whom He effectually calls. He does this, not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins and by accounting them and accepting them as righteous. This He does for Christ’s sake alone and not for anything wrought in them or done by them. The righteousness which is imputed to them—that is, reckoned to their account—is neither their faith, nor the act of believing, nor any obedience to the gospel which they have rendered, but Christ’s obedience alone. Christ’s one obedience is twofold: His active obedience rendered to the entire divine Law, and His passive obedience rendered in His death.

The confession goes on to assert,

^a **active and passive obedience** – active obedience consists of His keeping the whole Law during His earthly life. His passive obedience consists of His making the perfect sacrifice at the cross.

The faith that receives and rests on Christ and His righteousness is the sole means of justification. Yet it is never alone in the person justified, but is invariably accompanied by all other saving graces.

The Puritans maintained firmly the necessity of clarity and the primacy of forensic justification,^a yet they constantly maintained the juxtaposition of justification and sanctification.

In Romans chapter 6, Paul deals with the objection made to justification; namely, if a person is forgiven all his sins past, present, and future, and is justified once and for all, will that not make him careless? Will he not say, “Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound” (Rom 6:1)? The answer Paul provides is that union with Christ simultaneously brings both justification *and* sanctification. The moment a person is joined to Christ by faith, he receives righteousness, which is the ground of his justification. At the same time, the Holy Spirit takes up residence within him to commence the work of holiness. Any person united to Christ will have both justification that is forensic,^b external, and perfect (positional sanctification), and sanctification that is experimental, internal, and imperfect (progressive sanctification). Hence, James insists that any justified person must produce good works as a proof of the reality of his faith (Jam 2:26).

The clearest definition of justification is found in *The Westminster Larger Catechism*:

Question 70: What is justification?

Answer: Justification is an act of God’s free grace to sinners, in which He pardons all their sins and accepts them as righteous in His sight; not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but only for the perfect obedience and full satisfaction of Christ imputed to them by God, and received by faith alone.

2). *Justification and Sanctification*

Having surveyed the Puritan teaching, we will summarize the doctrine by comparing justification and sanctification, both of which are brought into existence simultaneously as the believer is united to Christ by faith.

The Puritans set us an example in upholding the following four principles necessary for a healthy doctrine of justification.

^a **forensic justification** – legal declaration of righteousness as in a court of law.

^b **forensic** – legal in a court of law.

a). Justification in the context of all of Scripture

Justification must be kept in context of Scripture as a whole. Abraham was justified by faith: Abram “believed in the LORD; and he counted [i.e., credited] it to him for righteousness” (Gen 15:6). Abraham is a prototype for all who believe, which is why he is called “the father of all them that believe” (Rom 4:11). Note that righteousness is not infused^a into Abraham, but rather is credited to his account (imputation). Abraham, as the prototype of justification, is taken up by Paul (Rom 4:3; Gal 3:6) and by James (2:23). Noah is described as an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith (Heb 11:7), and so preceded Abraham, as did Abel (Heb 11:4). But for clarity, Abraham is the primary model referred to in the New Testament.

The letter to the Romans introduces God’s salvation as the good news that is the revelation from heaven of God’s righteousness which saves. It is a righteousness that He puts to the account of everyone who believes (Rom 1:16-17). This righteousness was procured by the propitiation^b of Christ’s death (Rom 3:25). Paul demonstrates that this way of justifying sinners was not new; it is the way Abraham and David were justified (Rom 4:1-8). The words used to describe justification are words used in a law court.

Paul’s explanation of justification is expressed in three epistles. Justification is unfolded systematically in Romans, defended in Galatians, and extolled in Philippians (Phi 3:4-11). Paul declares that if anyone could have followed the way of human merit, he could, because with regard to the Law he was legalistically faultless—but he came to regard all his self-righteousness as rubbish.

To the question put by Job, “How should man be just with God?” (Job 9:2), only two ways are known. The first is self-justification on account of good works of one kind or another. The second is God’s justification on account of the righteousness that He has provided in His Son. Universally, mankind by nature seeks the way of self-justification. This reality is stressed in the New Testament. The apostles clearly taught that human merit is doomed as

^a **infused** – poured into.

^b **propitiation** – Propitiation has reference to the wrath or displeasure of God. To propitiate is to satisfy the divine justice and thus to appease His wrath. In the biblical usage of the term, the justice of God is satisfied by the propitiatory sacrifice. (Morton H. Smith, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 1, 382)

a basis of justification. Paul tried the way of human merit, and he said that Israel went about to seek their own righteousness because they were ignorant of God's righteousness (Rom 10:3).⁴

b). Justification dependent on fidelity to biblical terms

Justification is essentially forensic. As Thomas Watson says in his quaint way, "It is *verbum forense*," a word borrowed from the law courts.⁵ Justification concerns a person's legal standing, not his internal condition. When we have uncertainty about the ownership of our property, we visit a lawyer—not a medical doctor.

The meaning and use of the Greek verb *dikaioo*, to justify, and its derivatives are essentially legal in character. John Owen, more than any other writer, examines in detail both the Hebrew and Greek words used in this doctrine. He demonstrates that these terms denote a legal status employed to mean acquittal or pronouncing righteous.⁶

For instance, we read in Luke 7:29,

And all the people that heard him [John the Baptist], and the publicans, *justified* God, being baptized with the baptism of John.

This does not mean that the tax collectors did something inside God, but rather this justification was declarative, declaring that God is right. A striking example of sinners being declared righteous on account of another is 2 Corinthians 5:21,

For he [God] hath made him [Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that *we might be made the righteousness of God* in him.

The nature of the transaction is complete and perfect. Justification admits of no degrees. I am not partially justified, or half-justified. I *am* justified! I am "in Christ," and on that basis His righteousness is imputed to me. Similarly, there is the example of a man being accused by Satan on account of his guilt; but God justifies that man because His Son bore the penalty that is his due (Rom 8:33). Justification is the act of God the Father. If He justifies the sinner, who can refute that? A further outstanding example is the illustration of our Lord when He describes the Pharisee and the tax collector who went up to the Temple to pray (Luk 18:10-14). The Pharisee congratulated himself on his superiority, but the tax collector prayed, "God be merciful [i.e., propitiated] to me a sinner." Jesus assures us that the tax collector went home justified.

There are two aspects of justification. The first is acquittal, the remission^a of all sin. The second is the constituting of the sinner as righteous. This meaning is powerfully asserted in Romans 5:19, "By the obedience of one shall many be made [*katastathesontai*, will be constituted] righteous."

The picture used in Revelation 3:5, "He that overcometh ...shall be clothed in white," is a most appropriate portrayal of Christ's righteousness. The remission of sin proceeds from the passive obedience of Christ, His offering up of Himself as the propitiation for our sins. Christ's active obedience [to all the Law perfectly] provides that righteousness which constitutes the believer righteous. It is human righteousness. The incarnation was essential. As man He lived out righteousness for us throughout His life on earth.

William Bridge states the matter clearly. He poses the question, "Are we justified by the passive righteousness of Christ only?" and continues,

I answer, we are not justified by the passive obedience of Christ only: there are two essential parts in justification, namely remission of sin, and imputation of righteousness. By Christ's redemption, the guilt is taken away; and by His active obedience, the believing person is made completely righteous in the sight of God.⁷

c). Justification related to the Christian life

Justification must be related to the Christian life. Paul continues his systematic thesis on justification in Romans 5 to outline the blessings of justification. From his description it is clear that the whole Christian life is based on justification. According to Paul in Romans 5:1-11, each of the following aspects of the Christian life springs directly from the foundation of justification.

- The Christian's relationship with God is peace.
- The Christian is privileged to enjoy a life of prayer with immediate access to God.
- The Christian is assured that his sufferings produce perseverance and character.
- The Christian enjoys the love of the Father, a love of adoption poured into his heart.

^a remission – forgiveness.

- The Christian is assured that he will persevere. His union with Christ, by which he received justification, is the union that guarantees his perseverance.

d). Relationship of justification to sanctification

The relationship of justification to sanctification must be maintained. The fact that the church in the early and middle centuries was not clear about forensic justification does not alter the fact that the Scripture places justification in a primary position.⁸ Due to Augustine's^a ignorance of Greek, a crippling error was perpetuated. Augustine interpreted the Latin verb *justificare* as "to make righteous." Justification, as we have seen, means "to declare righteous." Thus, instead of promoting the glorious, liberating doctrine of justification, which was so powerfully proclaimed by Martin Luther, the focus was on the inward and the subjective.

As we have seen, justification is the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the believer. If a good work of any kind whatsoever is added as necessary for justification, that immediately nullifies the doctrine. As Paul says, "For if righteousness come [i.e., could be gained] by the law, then Christ is dead in vain" (Gal 2:21).⁹

Justification is destroyed if it is confused with sanctification and made to *be* sanctification; that is the unchanging and unchanged doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church. John Owen shows that the whole Roman doctrine is based on the idea of two justifications.¹⁰ The first is baptism defined as that infusion of grace in which original sin is extinguished and all habits of sin are expelled. The second justification is the righteousness of good works whereby the righteous merit eternal life. The second stage of justification is regarded as a process throughout life, which includes the "sacrament of penance" and, after death, the fires of purgatory.

An examination of the new Roman Catholic Catechism of 1994 shows that there is no change whatsoever in the above understanding of justification.¹¹

John Owen shows how the Roman Catholic teaching supplants justification by faith alone. "The gratuitous pardon of sin and imputation of Christ's righteousness once and for all is utterly defeat-

^a **Augustine** (AD 354-430) – Bishop of Hippo in Northern Africa, early church leader and theologian known by many as the father of orthodox theology; born in Tagaste, North Africa.

ed.”¹² The assurance of eternal life is eliminated by dependence on this uncertain process, which in the end requires to be completed in the fires of purgatory. However, the biblical doctrine of justification nurtures assurance so strong that, in Romans chapter 8, all opposition is defied:

Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us (Rom 8:33-34).

B. A Modern Challenge to Justification

In America, there is a movement known as ECT—*Evangelicals and Catholics Together*. On November 20, 1998, a group of evangelical and Roman Catholic leaders convened a conference in which they presented two documents that, they contended, spelled out a basis of co-operation and unity which would include joint evangelism. Father Francis Martin represented the Roman Catholics and Dr. James I. Packer represented Evangelicals. Dr. Robert Godfrey, president of Westminster Seminary West, represented Evangelicals with “serious concerns” about the statements undergirding ECT.

ECT produced a five-point statement that affirms several notable truths about justification, yet falls short of the biblical doctrine of justification by faith alone. The Roman Catholic Church has always contended that Christ's righteousness is *infused* rather than *imputed*. The decrees of the Council of Trent^a anathematized all who hold to justification by faith alone:

Canon 9. If anyone says that the sinner is justified by faith alone, meaning that nothing else is required to cooperate in order to obtain the grace of justification, and that it is not in any way necessary that he be prepared and disposed by the action of his own will, let him be anathema.

These canons have never been renounced, and Dr. Godfrey exposed the fact that the new statement opens the door to infused righteousness and does nothing to renounce the canons of Trent.

^a **Council of Trent** – Roman Catholic Church council (1545-1563) called by Pope Paul III to respond to the need for reform in light of the Protestant Reformation, and to control the spread of Protestantism. It did make some reforms, but installed as Roman doctrine the supremacy of the pope and the whole system of salvation by meritorious works and the seven Roman sacraments.

For those reasons, he expressed his utter opposition to the present stance of ECT. He deplored the fact that Dr. J. I. Packer, while agreeing with the biblical doctrine of justification by faith alone, is prepared to compromise when it comes to practice.

This movement of ECT, which originated in America, has a world-wide impact. For example, Noel Espinosa, principal of Grace Ministerial Academy, reports,

Traditional evangelicals and evangelical charismatics have found justification for their inclusivist approach in the document *Evangelicals and Catholics Together*. No longer are Catholics seen as the objects of gospel mission; they have become fellow missionaries!¹³

C. How Much Should We Care about Justification?

John Owen declares that justification by faith alone includes a sincere renunciation of all other ways and means.¹⁴ No greater sacrifice could be made but that of God's Son. That is the heart of the matter. The gift of God's Son was a perfect gift and His sacrifice a perfect sacrifice (Heb 10:5-18). When this Priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, He sat down at the right hand of God. In the Father's wisdom, He has made Him to be our righteousness (justification), holiness (sanctification), and redemption (1Co 1:21).

When we embrace this sacrifice and receive the righteousness of the Son, Who made the sacrifice, we renounce all other ways. Hence Peter insists, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Act 4:12). He is "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Jer 23:6). The psalmist declares, "I will make mention of [i.e., proclaim] thy righteousness, even of thine only" (Psa 71:16). Accompanying this righteousness is a repudiation of all self-righteousness: "All our righteousnesses [i.e., our "righteous" acts] are as filthy rags" (Isa 64:6).

After the demise of Puritanism, a period of deep spiritual depression followed. But then came the evangelical revival of the 18th century, the hymns of which extol the truths of imputed right-

eousness. John Wesley^a translated von Zinzendorf's great hymn, the following verses of which epitomize our subject:

Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
 My beauty are, my glorious dress;
 Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
 With joy shall I lift up my head.
 This spotless robe the same appears
 When ruined nature sinks in years;
 No age can change its spotless hue,
 The robe of Christ is ever new.^b

Many seek the power of God today in miracles, signs, and wonders, but our God constantly reveals His power *in the gospel*, which Paul proclaims to be God's power in the salvation of everyone who believes. He goes on to declare that in the preaching of the gospel, the "righteousness of God [*is being*]" revealed," present tense (Rom 1:16-17).¹⁵ In the preaching of the gospel of justification by faith alone, the church of Christ possesses her greatest asset for changing the whole world.

References

- ¹ Thomas Watson, *Body of Divinity* (Banner of Truth, 1970 edition), p 226.
- ² John Owen, *Works*, volume 5 (Banner of Truth, 1965).
- ³ Martin Luther, *What Luther Says: An Anthology*, volume 2, p 702ff; cited in *Foundations of the Christian Faith*, James Montgomery Boice (IVP, 1986).
- ⁴ E. P. Sanders' treatise *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 1977, has made a major impact on New Testament scholarship. Sanders' thesis was that Judaism of the first century was not a religion of works. I am entirely unimpressed by his thesis since it flies in the face of what the New Testament everywhere asserts, and also because Sanders rests his case on very limited data.
- ⁵ Thomas Watson, *ibid*, p 227.
- ⁶ John Owen, *ibid*, p 125ff.
- ⁷ William Bridge, *Works*, volume 5, p 378.
- ⁸ Alister McGrath, *Iustitia Dei* (Cambridge), is a major (532 pages) work describing the doctrine of justification and the place of that doctrine in the history of the church from Augustine to recent ecumenical debates.
- ⁹ Robert Traill (1642-1716) defended the doctrine of justification in six sermons on Galatians 2:21, *Works*, volume 4, p 157ff.

^a **John Wesley** (1703-1791) – Anglican minister and theologian; largely credited with founding the English Methodist movement, which began when he took to open-air preaching in a similar manner to George Whitefield.

^b Hymn "Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness" (1739) by **Nicolaus von Zinzendorf** (1700-1760) – German religious and social reformer, bishop of the Moravian Church, founder of the Christian settlement at Herrnhut, Christian mission pioneer, and a major figure of 18th century Protestantism.

¹⁰ John Owen, *ibid*, p 137ff.

¹¹ Philip Eveson, *The Great Exchange*, justification by faith in the light of recent thought, 225 page paperback (Day One Publications, 1996). The author reviews justification briefly in the new *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Geoffrey Chapman editor, 690 page large-size paperback, 1994.

¹² *Ibid*, p 137ff.

¹³ A report on the Philippines by Noel Espinosa was emailed in April 1999 to Roger Fay of the *Evangelical Times*.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, John Owen, p 100.

¹⁵ *apokaluptetai*: “is being revealed”; the verb is a frequentative present.

2. The Puritans and a Stable Doctrine of Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility

The errors of Arminianism have prevailed in western Christianity over the last hundred years or more. Inevitably these errors have been carried to the mission fields. The theological renewal since the 1960s has seen a recovery of the Reformed faith. However, in this recovery a small minority has fallen into Hyper-Calvinism.¹

A most important legacy from the Puritans is a stable doctrine of divine sovereignty and human responsibility. The Puritans were well-versed in the debate over Arminianism that took place at the Synod of Dort (1618-1619) in the city of Dordrecht, the Netherlands. William Laud (1573-1645) was Archbishop of Canterbury from 1633. He was the arch-promoter of Arminianism. From about 1633, the Puritans were put to the test regarding Arminianism.

In our generation, a decisive book in the Puritan tradition is *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* by J. I. Packer. This exposition has been widely used to preserve the Reformed movement from Hyper-Calvinism.² Packer uses the term “antinomy” to describe two seemingly contradictory concepts which are in fact not contradictory but fully compatible.^a He uses the analogy of light. As light consists of rays and particles in a way that is inexplicable to human reason, so divine sovereignty and human responsibility exist together in a way that can be held only by faith (Isa 55:8-9). To the human rationality of the Hyper-Calvinist, that is intolerable. The title of a sermon by Richard Greenhill, “What Must and Can Persons Do toward Their Own Conversion?” illustrates the parameters of responsibility.³

^a See “Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility,” which is the key chapter on “antinomy” from Packer’s book; available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

A stable view will prevent wrong conclusions and misguided practice. Divine sovereignty in salvation and human responsibility must be held together. Wrong conclusions can easily destabilize the truth of the gospel.

The first set of wrong conclusions concerns the nature of man as a consequence of the Fall. Does man have free will toward God or is he crippled by his enmity to God and His Law? If he is crippled, is he still fully responsible for his attitudes and actions?

The second set of wrong conclusions concerns the sovereignty of God. Does not God's sovereignty in salvation lead inevitably to a fatalistic mind-set? The reasoning here is that if God is sovereign, then there is nothing that man can do.^a Also, if God is sovereign and alone decides the issue of salvation, does that mean His love is limited only to the elect, or does He love all mankind?^b Does His sovereign purpose to save only some mean that He is insincere in the free offers of the gospel to all sinners indiscriminately?

A. Wrong Thinking about Free Will

The Puritan doctrine of salvation by grace is enshrined in *The Westminster Confession of Faith* and its parallel expression in *The London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689*.^c A number of chapters are devoted to salvation: chapter 9 to free will, chapters 10 to 14 to the redemption God bestows by grace, and chapters 14 to 17 to the graces man exercises. In this compass we see the necessity of divine intervention to save fallen man. We observe at the same time that the Fall into sin does not annul human responsibility.

The *Confession* devotes a chapter to free will. This was a central issue in the Reformation. In his response to Erasmus, Martin Luther wrote a book titled *The Bondage of the Will*.^d In this Luther asserted that free will was the hinge on which the whole controversy about the source of salvation turned. That is as true today as it was then. J. I. Packer said of Luther's *Bondage of the Will* that it is the classical elucidation of what the Reformation conflict was all

^a See "What If I'm Not Elect?" by Walter Marshall (1628-1680), available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^b See *The Atonement* by John Murray (1898-1975) and FGB 227, *The Atonement*; both available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^c *The London Confession of 1689* is available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^d The key chapter in *Bondage of the Will* is available as a booklet from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

about, and B. B. Warfield^a said of it that it is in a true sense the manifesto of the Reformation. The Arminian idea is that salvation is decided by the free will of man and not by the sovereign grace of God. In other words, salvation is *of* man and not of God, whereas the Scripture makes it clear that it is by grace that we are saved and not of ourselves (Eph 2:8-9).

The *Confession* (chapter 9) has five paragraphs on free will. We are reminded that our first parents possessed free will but there was the possibility of falling. As a consequence of the Fall, man plunged into the bondage and slavery of sin that is now the state of his will—a will ruled by the sinful disposition of his heart. In regeneration^b and conversion, man is made free in his will, but not entirely so. The *Confession* cites Romans chapter 7 as a reminder of the conflict that continues in the believer. The fifth paragraph declares,

It is not until man enters the state of glory that he is made perfectly and immutably free to will that which is good, and that alone.

Writing in 1957 in the introduction to a new translation of Luther's *Bondage of the Will*, J. I. Packer and O. R. Johnston wrote as follows:

To accept the principles that Martin Luther vindicates in *The Bondage of the Will* would certainly involve a mental and spiritual revolution for many Christians at the present time. It would involve a radically different approach to preaching and the practice of evangelism, and to most other departments of theology and pastoral work as well. God-centered thinking is out of fashion today, and its recovery will involve something of a Copernican revolution^c in our outlook on many matters.⁴

Is this an exaggeration? Not so, because wrong doctrine leads to erroneous practice. From a correct or erroneous conception of

^a **B. (Benjamin) B. Warfield** (1851-1921) – American professor of theology at Princeton Seminary from 1887 to 1921, and its principal from 1886 to 1902.

^b **regeneration** – God's act of creating spiritual life in a sinner by the Holy Spirit's power; the new birth (Joh 3:3); see Free Grace Broadcaster 202, *The New Birth*; available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^c **Copernican revolution** – extreme change in frame of reference; paradigm shift. The phrase has its roots in the scientific shift from the Ptolemaic model of the heavens, which described the cosmos as having earth stationary at the center of the universe, to the heliocentric model with the sun at the center of the solar system. Major contributors included Galileo, Nicolaus Copernicus, and Isaac Newton.

man's ability in the matter of salvation proceeds either a correct or erroneous method of gospel preaching, together with right or wrong practices in the churches.

When the reality of sin and its radical effects on the whole man is by-passed, the idea takes over that it simply takes a man's decision for Christ to bring about the new birth. A decision for Christ is all that is needed. This is "easy-believism" in which repentance from sin is side-lined.^a Salvation is pronounced for those who make a decision. This proves premature,^b and false converts are the outcome. The theory of the carnal^c Christian has been invented in order to accommodate those who have made a decision but who bear no marks of the new birth.^d *Are You Really Born Again?* by Kent Philpott⁵ is a powerful contemporary book that describes and illustrates with many examples the damage done by misguided methods which stem from an inadequate view of man in sin. The altar call is the device most commonly used to exert psychological pressure in order to induce decisions.⁶ The outcome is seen in the back door to some churches being as large as the front door. In other words, many come in and make decisions, yet are not changed, not born again, and leave by the back door disillusioned.

B. Wrong Thinking about God's Sovereignty

As stated above, the second set of wrong conclusions concerns muddled thinking about the sovereignty of God. The areas that need clarification concern fatalism, the free offers of the gospel, and the extent of His love toward mankind.

1). With regard to ***fatalism***, the Puritans countered this mindset by concentrating on what we call the means of grace.^e On sav-

^a See "The Dangers of Delaying Repentance" by Thomas Boston (1676-1732), *The Doctrine of Repentance* by Thomas Watson (1620-1689), "Decisional Regeneration" by James Adams, and Free Grace Broadcaster 203, *Repentance*; all available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^b **premature** – before the true state of their hearts is demonstrated by repentance and a love for God and His Word, or a lack thereof.

^c **carnal** – fleshly; worldly; governed by fleshly appetites.

^d See *Present Day Evangelism* by A. W. Pink and *The True Gospel of Christ versus the False Gospel of Carnal Christianity* by L. R. Shelton, Jr.; both available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^e **means of grace** – "means" are actions or instruments revealed in Scripture that God is pleased to use (1) to accomplish salvation—for example, the preaching, reading, studying God's Word, and prayer—and (2) sanctifica-

ing faith, the *Confession* teaches that this is wrought by the Holy Spirit through the preaching of the Word. The book of Acts illustrates well that the church grew and spread through the active efforts of the apostles and believers. Organized evangelism and enterprise in missions is the responsibility of every church, and without such effort there will be no growth.^a A sovereign God achieves His purpose through the work of His people.

2). Regarding the *free offer of the gospel*,^b the Puritans were not inhibited in the way they addressed the unconverted. Examples

tion—preaching, reading, studying God’s Word, prayer, baptism, the Lord’s Supper, and fellowship with God’s people.

^a See *Soul Winning* by Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892) and *Words to Winners of Souls* by Horatius Bonar (1808-1889); both available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^b **free offer of the gospel** – The “Free Offer,” or sometimes the “Well-meant Offer,” was a controversial subject among the Puritans and continues to be among other Reformed believers. For example, Puritans who held to the “Free Offer” included Obadiah Sedgwick, *The Riches of God’s Grace Displayed, in the Offer of Salvation to Poor Sinners* [Seven Sermons on Rev. 3:20] (London: n.p., 1658); David Clarkson, *The Works of David Clarkson* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1988) 2:34–100; John Flavel, *The Works of John Flavel* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1968) 4:1–267. Numerous others such as James Durham advocated that view.

While this is a complex debate because of all the doctrines it necessarily involves, the main issues may be stated this way: How can someone who believes in radical depravity, sovereign election, and particular redemption sincerely preach the promises of the gospel and call for repentance and faith to any sinner anywhere, knowing that sinner might be reprobate and left in his sins? In other words, can a Christian rightly say that God sovereignly determines whom He will save and whom He will reject yet sincerely offer Christ to everyone who hears the gospel? Furthermore, does God have a genuine desire for the salvation of all men, even though He has not decreed the salvation of all men?

One critic of the “Free Offer” sees such a view as contradictory to Scripture and irrational: “Some Reformed theologians teach that God can and does earnestly desire, ardently long to see come to pass and actually work to effect things which he has not decreed will come to pass. Basing his conclusions on his expositions of Deuteronomy 5:29, Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11; Matthew 23:37; and 2 Peter 3:9, John Murray states in “The Free Offer of the Gospel,” *Collected Writings of John Murray* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1982), that God represents himself as ‘earnestly desiring the fulfilment of something which he had not in the exercise of his sovereign will actually decreed to come to pass,’ that he ‘expresses an ardent desire for the fulfillment of certain things which he has not decreed in his inscrutable counsel to come to pass,’ that he ‘desires ... the accomplishment of what he does not decretively will,’ that Christ ‘willed the bestowal of his saving and protecting grace upon those whom neither the Father nor he decreed thus to save and protect,’ that ‘God does not wish that any man should perish. His wish is rather that all should enter upon eternal life by coming to repentance,’ and finally, that ‘there is in

are Richard Baxter's *A Call to the Unconverted* and Joseph Alleine's *An Alarm to the Unconverted*. Baxter's *Call* is a classic and has been transposed into modern English by John Blanchard.⁷ The Puritans regarded all preaching as evangelistic, sometimes more and sometimes less, depending on the subject in hand. The Lord Jesus Christ, said Robert Bolton, is

Offered most freely, and without exception of any person, [on] every Sabbath, every sermon, either in plain and direct terms, or implied at the least.⁸

John Flavel illustrates well the unction of the Puritans in pressing home the gospel to all without exception in his 265-page exposition of Revelation 3:20,⁹

God a benevolent lovingkindness towards the repentance and salvation of even those whom he has not decreed to save' (4:119, 130, 131–32)...If one followed this trajectory of reasoning to its logical end, one might also conclude that perhaps Christ, though he knew the futility of his endeavor, did after all die savingly for those whom his Father and he had decreed not to save. But all such reasoning imputes irrationality to God, and the passages upon which Murray relies for his conclusions can all be legitimately interpreted in such a way that the Christian is not forced to impute such irrationality to God" (Robert Reymond, *A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith*, Nashville: T. Nelson, 1998).

By now, the reader may see something of the difficulties facing either side of this debate. For further discussion of this issue, modern Calvinists who advocate the "Free Offer" include John Murray's *The Free Offer of the Gospel*, Ken Stebbins' *Christ Freely Offered*, David Silversides' *The Free Offer: Biblical and Reformed*, Sam Waldron, *The Crux of the Free Offer of the Gospel*, Curt Daniel, *The History & Theology of Calvinism*, Donald Macleod, *Compel Them to Come In*, R. Scott Clark, "Janus, the Well-Meant Offer of the Gospel, and Westminster Theology" in David VanDrunen, *The Pattern of Sound Doctrine*, and Erroll Hulse, *The Free Offer*. Modern Calvinists that reject the "Free Offer" include Herman Hanko, *The History of the Free Offer*, David Engelsma, *Hyper-Calvinism and the Call of the Gospel*, and George Ella, *The Free Offer and the Call of the Gospel*, Robert L. Reymond, *A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith*, Raymond Blacketer, "The Three Points in Most Parts Reformed: A Reexamination of the So-Called Well-Meant Offer of Salvation" in *Calvin Theological Journal*, April 2000, Vol. 35, Number 1; Sean Gerety, "Janus Alive and Well: Dr R. Scott Clark and the Well-Meant Offer of the Gospel" *The Trinity Review*, Number 300, June-July 2011.

Many who embrace the doctrines of grace can agree with the Synod of Dort: that "the promise of the gospel, together with the command to repent and believe, ought to be declared and published to all nations, and to all persons promiscuously and without distinction, to whom God out of his good pleasure sends the gospel" (MacLeod, Donald. *Compel Them to Come In: Calvinism and the Free Offer of the Gospel*. Christian Focus Publications).

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

Sinners are to be invited to come to Christ (Mat 11:27-28). They are to be reasoned with (Isa 1:18-20), persevered with (Rom 10:21), warned (Luk 13:5), and implored to be reconciled to God (2Co 5:20).¹⁰

In the Puritan tradition, George Whitefield wonderfully exemplified in his preaching a stable understanding of divine sovereignty and human responsibility. He used to place lost sinners in a vice, as it were, pressing home the necessity of repentance. But the lost sinner is a slave; he cannot repent. Yet to be saved he must repent. He cannot; yet he must! His only recourse is to look away from himself to the One Who can save. His escape route is cut off; there is no help in himself. His only hope is to call on God for mercy. And a God of mercy will never cast out those who come to Him in faith (Joh 6:37).

3). There is also the question of *God's love*.^a If God only loves the elect and only hates the non-elect, what constraint is there for the sinner to turn and believe? Richard Baxter in his *Call to the Unconverted* drives home the strong language and reasoning used by the Sovereign Lord as expressed in Ezekiel chapter 18. He has no pleasure in the wicked that he should die, but rather His pleasure is that the wicked person should turn from his wicked way and live (Eze 18:32). Our Lord made it clear that we are to love our enemies because God loves them (Luk 6:35).¹¹ The love of God for all mankind, even for the most terrible sinners, is well expressed by the Puritan John Howe in his sermon, *The Redeemer's Tears Shed over Lost Souls*.¹²

C. Conclusion

The Puritans were blessed with a stable doctrine of divine sovereignty and human responsibility. This enabled them to persevere

^a God's love was an important discussion point for the Puritans. Some held that while God calls all sinners to the blessings of salvation, only the elect are properly the objects of God's love. John Owen argues that the elect alone can be said to be the objects of God's love; see his discussion of John 3:16 in *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ*, Book 4, Chapter 2. Arthur W. Pink followed in Owen's footsteps with *Does God Love Everyone?*, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

in their work; knowing that in spite of the discouragements, a harvest would be reaped. In our time there is so much that seems impervious^a to the gospel. We too need a stable doctrine in which we trust in God's sovereign power to give the increase, but at the same time know that persevering labor is imperative. Like the sower in the parable (Luk 8:1-15), we must sow the seed knowing that there will be a harvest in due course.

References

- ¹ Spurgeon, an heir of the Puritans, fought the battle against both Arminianism and Hyper-Calvinism. Iain Murray brilliantly sums up the issues involved in his book *Spurgeon v. Hyper-Calvinism - The Battle for Gospel Preaching* (Banner of Truth, 164 page paperback, 1995).
- ² J. I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*, was first published by IVP in 1961. It is currently available as a 128 page paperback.
- ³ *Puritan Sermons 1659-1689*, popularly known as *The Morning Exercises at Cripplegate* (Richard Owen Roberts, Wheaton, Illinois, USA, 1981).
- ⁴ J. I. Packer and O. R. Johnston in introduction to the new translation of Martin Luther's *The Bondage of the Will* (James Clark, London, 1957).
- ⁵ Kent Philpott, *Are You Really Born Again?* (EP, 140 page paperback, 1998).
- ⁶ Erroll Hulse, *The Great Invitation* (EP, 184 page paperback, 1986); showing the biblical warrant, or otherwise, for the altar call and history of that practice.
- ⁷ John Blanchard, *Invitation to Live*, a modernization of Richard's Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted* for today's reader (EP, 144 page paperback).
- ⁸ Robert Bolton, *Instructions for a Right Comforting of Afflicted Consciences*, 1640 edition, p 185.
- ⁹ John Flavel, *Works*, volume 4. A 400 page pocket size paperback was published by Baker Book House in 1978 with the title *Christ Knocking at the Door of Sinners' Hearts*.
- ¹⁰ Two articles in *The Banner of Truth* magazine pointed the way for the recovery of the Reformed faith in England. In June 1958 (issue 11), the free offer of the gospel was clearly expounded. In February 1959, an exposition was republished by John Bonar with the title *Universal Gospel Invitations Consistent with Total Depravity and Particular Redemption*. In this way Puritanism was placed in the driving seat as far as gospel preaching is concerned.
- ¹¹ Bob Sheehan expounds on this theme in, "Is There a Love of God for All Mankind?" *Reformation Today* 138, and "God's Love for the Non-elect," *Reformation Today* 145. The subject is developed further in *Reformation Today* 135 in an article titled *John 3:16 and Hyper-Calvinism*.
- ¹² John Howe, *Works*, volume 2, p 316ff.

3. The Recovery of the Lord's Day

The battle for the Lord's Day was initiated toward the end of Elizabeth's reign and was won decisively during the first half of the

^a **impervious** – incapable of being affected.

17th century. The Puritans gave England the English Sunday. The advantage of a whole day for worship and fellowship was immense.¹

D. L. Moody^a was not in the Puritan tradition, but I quote him as a pointer to illustrate the practical importance of this issue today. Said Moody, “You show me a nation that has given up the Sabbath, and I will show you a nation that has got the seeds of decay.” And to quote an enemy of the gospel, Voltaire declared, “If you want to kill Christianity you must abolish Sunday.”² The restoration of a Christianity in decline will go hand in hand with the restoration of the Lord’s Day.^b

Patrick Collinson maintains,

The essence of this early Puritan Sabbatarianism^c was the conviction that the fourth commandment is a perpetual Moral Law originating with the Creation and antedating the Mosaic Law. Recognition of Sunday as the Christian Sabbath was reputed to be of divine and apostolic appointment, not ecclesiastical tradition. Sabbatarianism also entailed the conviction that the entire day had to be set aside for the public and private exercise of religion, with no time devoted to labor, idleness, or recreation.³

We may be tempted to think that observance of the Lord’s Day in Western society has declined to such an extent that it will never be recovered to its former position. Richard Baxter recalled his childhood experience in an English village:

We could not on the Lord’s Day either read a chapter, or pray, or sing a psalm, or catechize or instruct a servant [because of] the noise of the piper and taber, and shouting in the streets, continually in our ears. We were the common scorn of all the rabble in the streets, and we were called Puritans, precisionists, hypocrites because we chose on the Lord’s Day to read the Scriptures rather than what they did.⁴

A great change came about during the time of the Puritans. How did that reformation take place? The story of the change can

^a **D. L. Moody** (1837-1899) – American evangelist who conducted many evangelistic campaigns, founded the Moody Church, the Moody Bible Institute, and Moody Publishers.

^b See *The Holy Sabbath* by A. W. Pink (1886-1952); *The Lord’s Day: Its Presuppositions, Proofs, Precedents, and Practice* by Sam Waldron; and FGB 233, *The Lord’s Day*; all available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^c **Sabbatarianism** – belief that the Lord’s Day is the Christian Sabbath and should be strictly observed throughout the entire day.

be traced to Richard Greenham, who influenced his son-in-law Nicholas Bownde. Bownde preached on the subject of the Sabbath in 1586. He then marshalled the Sabbath-law arguments in a book that he published in 1595. This was a straightforward and balanced work on the text of the fourth commandment. It became enormously influential, appearing in an expanded edition in 1606. According to historian Daniel Neal, “a mighty reformation was wrought.”⁵

Bownde proclaimed that the fourth commandment to rest on the Sabbath Day was moral and perpetual. To follow studies, do worldly business, or engage in recreations or pleasures (such as shooting, hawking, tennis playing, fencing, and bowling) was discouraged. “Men must not come to church with their bows and arrows!”⁶

Bownde’s brother-in-law, John Dod, nicknamed John Decalogue^a Dod, published his work on the Ten Commandments later. The book was very popular, going to forty editions. Concerning harvesting on Sunday, Dod wrote,

“What about reaping our harvests endangered by ill weather?” ask some. “Trust in providence” is the reply. Better we hazard some part of our estate than the wrath of God fall on us!

Two members of the Westminster Assembly, Daniel Cawdrey and Herbert Palmer, collaborated to produce *Sabbatum Redivivum, The Christian Sabbath Vindicated* (1645). In two volumes this work came to 1,050 pages. The authors begin by establishing the distinction between ceremonial, judicial, and moral law, and early define what they mean by “moral.” Solemn worship they upheld as a moral and perpetual obligation. The Decalogue represents the summary both Godward and manward of perpetual and moral obligation. The fourth commandment, being part of the first table, they assert as moral and perpetual. In 1655, a significant work by Thomas Shepard, the New England Puritan, was published. Shepard expounds the morality, change of day, beginning of, and sanctification of the sabbath.

In 1668 *The Practical Sabbatarian* appeared. This was a 787 page exposition of instructions on the duties of Sabbath observance, written by John Wells of St. Olave Jewry, London. Wells was

^a **Decalogue** – Ten Commandments given by God through Moses (Exo 20).

ejected in 1662. His work is an exposition of Isaiah 58:13-14. He contends that sports and recreation on the Lord's Day easily remove the sweetness of the Word and are the debasements of spiritual mercies. The law of nature requires a total abstinence from all works of labor and pleasure during the time allotted and consecrated to God's service (pages 26-28). The very essence of the day, argues Wells, is apartness or holiness from the other days. "Shall men fix days for themselves," he asks, "and shall not God have one?" We must prepare for this day. "Was not Mary Magdalene last at the cross and first at the sepulchre?" (page 241). And then with this choice saying, he stresses the delight of the Lord's Day: "Joy suits no person so much as the saint, and no day so well as the Sabbath" (page 267). In support he quotes Psalm 118:24, "This is the day that the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." Between morning and evening service, he advises that we indulge in luscious, sweet, holy discourse (page 320).

A typical outline of advice would run as follows:⁷

- 1). Prepare well for the Lord's Day by prayer and meditation. "If thou wouldst leave thy heart with God on the Saturday night," says Swinnock, "thou shouldst find it with Him on the Lord's Day morning," "Go seasonably to bed so that you may not be sleepy on the Lord's Day."

- 2). Heads of homes should gather their families in good time on Sunday mornings and prepare them all to receive maximum spiritual edification throughout the day. Public worship is central on the Lord's Day.

- 3). Heads of families should make sure that the sermon materials are retained. Encourage lively discussion and repetition of the main heads of the exposition at the meal table.

- 4). Seek to retain the teachings received and blessings of the Lord's Day during the week that has begun.

It is misguided to think that Puritan teaching on the Lord's Day is only negative. It is negative in the sense that we must forsake pleasing ourselves and rather seek the Lord's will for the best use of His day. The power of Puritan teaching lies in its expressions of enjoyment and zeal for the Lord's Day. The advantages of this day well spent are enormous. Thomas Watson calls it "the market-

day of the soul.” We can see from the following quotations the zeal that Watson felt for the Lord’s Day:

The Sabbath is the market-day of the soul, the cream of time. It is the day of Christ’s rising from the grave and the Holy Ghost’s descending upon the earth. It is perfumed with the sweet odour of prayer, which goes up to heaven as incense. On this day the manna falls, which is angels’ food. This is the soul’s festival day, on which the graces act their part. The other days of the week are most employed about earth, this day about heaven; then you gather straw, now pearls. Now Christ takes the soul up into the mount and gives it transfiguring sights of glory. Now He leads His spouse into the wine-cellar and displays the banner of His love. Now He gives her His spiced wine and the juice of the pomegranate (Song 2:4; 8:2).

The Lord usually reveals Himself more to the soul on this day. The Apostle John was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day (Rev 1:10); he was carried up on this day in divine raptures toward heaven. This day a Christian is in the heights; he walks with God and takes, as it were, a turn^a with Him in heaven (1Jo 1:3). On this day holy affections are quickened; the stock of grace is improved; corruptions are weakened; and Satan falls like lightning before the majesty of the Word. Christ wrought most of His miracles upon the Sabbath; so He does still—dead souls are raised and hearts of stone are made flesh.

How highly should we esteem and reverence this day! It is more precious than rubies (Pro 3:15). God has anointed it with the oil of gladness above its fellows (Psa 45:7). On the Sabbath we are doing angels’ work. Our tongues are tuned to God’s praises. The Sabbath on earth is a shadow and type of the glorious rest and eternal Sabbath we hope for in heaven, when God shall be the temple, and the Lamb shall be the light of it (Rev 21:22-23).⁸

References

- ¹ The best contemporary treatment in short compass today is Joseph A. Pipa’s *The Lord’s Day* (Christian Focus, 252 page paperback, 1997). See also J. I. Packer, *Among God’s Giants* (Kingsway), p 309ff; and Erroll Hulse, “Sanctifying the Lord’s Day: Reformed and Puritan Attitudes,” Westminster Conference Papers 1981.
- ² These quotations are from John Blanchard’s *Gathered Gold* (EP, 1984).
- ³ Patrick Collinson, “The Beginnings of English Sabbatarianism,” 1964, which was an article that appeared in an American periodical *Studies in Church History*, volume 1, pp 207-221.

^a takes a turn – spends personal time.

⁴ Daniel Neal, *History of the Puritans*, volume 1, p 560.

⁵ Ibid, p 367.

⁶ Nicholas Bownde, early edition in British Museum, p 132.

⁷ George Swinnock, *Works*, volume 1, p 222.

⁸ Thomas Watson, *The Ten Commandments* (Banner of Truth), p 97.

4. Marriage and the Family

The statistics for the break-down of family life in Britain and America are startling. In America, 31 percent of American children have parents who were never married. Over 50 percent of couples live together before marriage. Sixty percent of marriages fail: 50 percent ending in divorce, 10 percent in separation. Those who have sex before marriage have a 60 percent higher divorce rate than those who do not.¹

Against this dark background, we have much to learn from the Puritans.^a Suggests Dr. Packer,

Under God, they were creators of the English Christian marriage, the English Christian family, and the English Christian home...The Puritan ethic of marriage was to look not for a partner whom you do love passionately at this moment, but rather for one whom you can love steadily as your best friend for life,^b and then to proceed with God's help to do just that.²

The Puritan ethic of nurture was to train up children in the way they should go, to care for their bodies and souls together, and to educate them for sober, godly, socially useful adult living. The Puritan way of home life was based on maintaining order, courtesy, and family worship. Goodwill, patience, consistency, and an encouraging attitude were seen as the essential domestic virtues.

^a See *Family Duty* by John Bunyan (1628-1688); *Preserving the Honor of Marriage: Biblical Guidance from the Puritans* by James A. La Belle and Joel R. Beeke; FGB 170, *The Godly Home*; and FGB 200, *Marriage*; all available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

A definitive work on the Puritan views of family life has been compiled into a 750+ page hardback, *A Theology of the Family*, composed of 16 Free Grace Broadcaster issues from CHAPEL LIBRARY. It includes short articles by 60+ authors from five centuries, most of whom were Puritans, covering every aspect of family life, including fatherhood, motherhood, parenting, family worship, and duties of children. It is published by and available from the National Center for Family-Integrated Churches, www.ncfic.org.

^b See *Pathway to Christian Marriage* by John Thompson, and *Preparing for Marriage: Biblical Guidance from the Puritans* by James A. La Belle and Joel R. Beeke; both available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

William Gouge³ preached on marriage and the family, and wrote a treatise on this theme of over 600 pages. Thomas Manton⁴ preached 32 consecutive sermons on Ephesians 5:1-27. In Puritan expository style, Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones expounded Ephesians 5:1-27 at Westminster Chapel on Sunday mornings during 1959 and 1960. Those materials were later published in a series of volumes.⁵

The aptitude and readiness to preach on the practical aspects of marriage and the family is seen in some of the famous sermons published under the title *The Morning Exercises at Cripplegate*. For example Richard Adams preached on, “What are the duties of parents and children and how are they to be managed according to Scripture?”^a and “How may child-bearing women be most encouraged and supported against, in, and under the hazard of their travail?”^b

We should remember that Puritan teaching on marriage and the family was in stark contrast with centuries of Roman Catholic tradition. It was a major break with the medieval idea that celibacy is the best way to holiness when Martin Luther married ex-nun Katherine von Bora.^c The Puritans carried forward the example begun by the 16th century Reformers; they went on to open up in more detail the biblical passages relating to husbands and wives and the family. In so doing, they taught that marriage was not God’s second best, but His very best.

For instance, Thomas Gataker (1574-1654) extolled marriage thus

There is no society more near, more entire, more needful, more kindly, more delightful, more comfortable, more constant, more continual than the society of man and wife, [which is] the main root, source, and original of all other societies.⁶

Thomas Manton declared that marriages are made in heaven before they are made on earth.⁷ And George Swinnock (on “The exercise of godliness in the relationship of husbands and wives”) points out,

Adam was married to Eve before he broke his covenant with his God. He was married to a wife before he was marred by the wicked one. Surely those popish doctors who term it filthiness and pollu-

^a *Duties of Children and Parents* by Richard Adams (1626-1698); available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^b See Free Grace Broadcaster 224, *Babies*; available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^c See *Life of Martin Luther* by Joel Beeke, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

tion, do not consider that it was ordained before man's fall and corruption.⁸

And on this theme Richard Sibbes declared, "It was the devil that brought in a base esteem of that honourable condition."⁹

Thomas Manton raises marriage to the highest conceivable level when he opens up the text, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (Eph 5:25). He cites Luther, "I see nothing in Christ but a prodigality^a and excess of love," and endorses that by saying, "Love will in time beget love, as fire kindleth fire," and affirming that with 1 John 4:19, "We love him, because he first loved us."

The paragraphs in *The Westminster Confession* on marriage stipulate that Christians are to marry only "in the Lord." In reasons for marriage, "mutual help of husband and wife" are placed first and "the increase of mankind" second.

Family worship^b was regarded as a vital daily duty and took place morning and evening. Children were brought up in the fear and nurture of the Lord. The advantages of a thorough knowledge of Scripture from an early age are illustrated by the example of Matthew Henry, son of the Puritan Philip Henry, who from childhood imbibed a living and amazing knowledge of Scripture. This enabled him later to write his wonderful commentary on the whole Bible, which continues to be in demand. In his commentary on Genesis 2:22, Matthew Henry comments on the relationship of the man to the woman,

The woman was made of a rib out of the side of Adam: not made out of his head to top him, nor out of his feet to be trampled on by him; but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be loved by him.

Matthew Henry's commentary on Proverbs 31:10-31 shows that all the duties of the home are pleasing to God. Grace permeates the whole of life and inspires all living. Grace or spirituality is not against nature, or above it, or even alongside it, but rather permeates it. The Puritans stressed that marriage was essentially a

^a **prodigality** – giving or given in abundance; lavish.

^b See *Family Worship* by J. Merle D'Aubigne (1794-1872); *Family Worship* by A. W. Pink (1886-1952); and FGB 188, *Family Worship*; all available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

partnership. Samuel Sewall in his diary records that the family finances were delegated to his wife for the reason that she had “a better faculty than I for managing affairs.”¹⁰

The Puritans taught that every physical and spiritual provision was to be made for children, including instruction

In some honest lawful calling, labour or employment, either in husbandry, or in some other trade profitable for themselves and the commonwealth.¹¹

With regard to discipline, Richard Greenham counselled that it be exercised with “the mildest means and with the least rigour.”¹²

Since about the 1960s, a massive spiritual attack has been made on the Christian view of marriage and the family. The constant stream of anti-Christian propaganda from the mass media can be countered with biblical teaching with special emphasis on practical application. The Puritans set a good example by applying their minds to this subject and expounding it with clear applications. Pastors should preach regularly in a lively and practical way on the relevant passages of Scripture on marriage and the family. Richard Baxter preached and wrote evangelistically on the subject of marriage and the family.¹³ He taught that the Christian family is a role model for society. In the Christian family, we can see the work of Christ in action visibly. This is tremendously relevant today. In a world in which many leaders who have a high profile set an appalling example, Christians should set a godly example in their family lives.

References

- ¹ Thomas K. Johnson, “Responding to the Sexual Revolution,” *Outlook Magazine*, March 1998, USA.
- ² J. I. Packer, *Among God’s Giants, The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life* (Kingsway, 1991), p 342.
- ³ William Gouge, *Of Domestic Duties*, 600 pages, 1634.
- ⁴ Thomas Manton, *Works*, volume 19.
- ⁵ Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Marriage, Home, and Work* (Banner of Truth, 1974).
- ⁶ Thomas Gataker, *A Wife Indeed* (Schnucker), pp 139-140.
- ⁷ Thomas Manton, wedding sermon on Genesis 2:22, *Works*, volume 2, p 162ff.
- ⁸ George Swinnock, *Works*, volume 1, p 467.
- ⁹ Richard Sibbes cited in Leland Ryken’s *Worldly Saints* (Zondervan, 1986), p 42.
- ¹⁰ Ryken, *ibid*, p 78.
- ¹¹ *Ibid*, p 80.
- ¹² *Ibid*, p 81.

¹³ Richard Baxter, *The Poor Man's Family Book*, in Baxter's *Practical Works*, volume 4, pp 165-289.

5. A Biblical Basis for Spiritual Experience

Behind the drug and sex revolution of the 1960s lies the driving desire for experience. The spirit of the world has flooded into the churches, and that spirit is the spirit of Postmodernism, in which what people feel is esteemed as paramount. If it feels right, it must be right! Since the 1970s, the influence of the Charismatic Movement^a has escalated: during the 1990s the experience called the “Toronto Blessing” was widely acclaimed—although many, including numbers in Pentecostal churches, rejected Toronto Blessing experiences as fanatical and unbiblical. Doctors have diagnosed these excesses and described them as epidemic hysteria.¹

The subject of spiritual experience is foremost in worldwide evangelicalism today. A clear line of division can be drawn between a) those who insist that the Bible must be the basis by which all spiritual experience is tested, and b) those who regard experience as pre-eminent and resist the tests of Scripture. Is the Word our authority or is spiritual experience our authority? The Puritans were strong in knowing God by heart experience, but they sought to test everything by Scripture. We do well to follow their example.

What do we understand by *experience*? Experience is what I feel in my soul. Experience has to do with my emotional life. Christianity is a religion of the intellect, heart, and practice. Experience is not omitted. Christianity is a “felt” religion. Paul says,

The love of God is shed abroad in [i.e., poured into] our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us (Rom 5:5).

We understand Pentecost to be a time of intense spiritual experience. The disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit. Their hearts and minds were greatly empowered.

There is a tendency to think of experience exclusively in sensational terms. The day of Pentecost is one example. Isaiah's experience of being overwhelmed by the glory and majesty of God in the Temple is another (Isa 6:1-6). Spectacular experiences are few and

^a See *The Spirit of Truth* by John R. Broome (1931-2013), available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

far between. For instance, John Flavel describes how, on a journey by horseback, his

Thoughts began to swell, and rise higher and higher, like the waters in Ezekiel's vision, till at last they became an overflowing flood.

He came to a spring where he sat down and washed, and earnestly desired that he might die. But having drunk of the spring, he felt revived and continued his journey. He came to an inn where he spent the night, but did not sleep at all, though he never had a sweeter night's rest in all his life! Still, the joy of the Lord overwhelmed him, and he seemed to be an inhabitant of another world! Many years after, he called that day one of the days of heaven on earth, and professed he understood more of the light of heaven by it, than by all the books he ever read or discourses he had entertained about it.²

In their thinking, the Puritans did not confine experience to extraordinary occasions like this one described by Flavel, nor did they think in terms of a second mandatory experience called "the baptism of the Spirit." Rather, they viewed spiritual experience along the lines of the Psalms, which describe the whole range of experiences: the highs and lows, the exquisite joys as well as the desperate depressions of the soul. Later, in the Puritan tradition, Jonathan Edwards^a (1703-1758) wrote his classic work *The Religious Affections*, probably the most penetrating analysis of Christian inward experience ever written.³ Edwards commences his work with an exposition of 1 Peter 1:8,

Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. "True religion," suggests Edwards, "in great part consists in holy affections," by which he means the experience of the heart; in other words, a felt religion.⁴

The Puritan writers addressed every kind of spiritual experience: joy, love, depression, desertion, tribulation, conflict, contentment, and chastening.⁵ Foundational to all experience is the believer's experience of union and communion with God. Begin-

^a See Edwards' *Charity and Its Fruits* (selections), *Heaven – A World of Love* (chapter in *Charity and Its Fruits*), *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, *Farewell Sermon*, *Fleeing Out of Sodom*, *The Trinity*, and "Resolutions" (tract); all available from CHAPEL LIBRARY. Excerpts from *Charity* appear in Appendix 2.

ning with an exposition of 1 John 1:3, John Owen explains that communion is with each Person of the Godhead individually.⁶ In communion with the Father, Owen suggests that “the chief way by which the saints have communion with the Father is love—free, undeserved, eternal love.” The glories and excellences of Christ are unfolded, and the believer is encouraged to deepen his experience of union and communion with Christ. Owen explains the ways in which we have communion with the Holy Spirit. He is very practical and delineates how we enjoy such fellowship.

Delighting in God, an exposition of Psalm 37:4 (“Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart”) by John Howe,⁷ is an outstanding example of Puritan exposition of Christian experience. “God’s pleasure is that He Himself would be the great object of His people’s delight.”

Stress on meaningful, rich fellowship with the three Persons is never far away in Puritan exposition. For instance, Thomas Brooks^a takes Lamentations 3:24, “The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.” The Lord as the believer’s portion is what Brooks calls “an ark for all God’s Noahs.”⁸ He divides the text as follows:

First, an assertion: *The LORD is my portion*

Second, a proof of it in those words: *Saith my soul*

Third, the inference from these premises: *Therefore will I hope in him.*

Brooks reminds us that the experimental relevance of this lies in the context. The Israelites had lost everything:

Grievous calamities and miseries had befallen the Jews...The prophet bewails the ruin of their state, the devastation of their land, the destruction of their glorious city and Temple.

The reasoning is that when a believer has lost everything and stands amidst the ruins of this world, he has the Lord as his portion. If he has the Lord, he has everything.

What kind of portion is Jehovah? In experimental style, Brooks expounds our God as a present portion. He is with us now! He is

^a See Brooks’ *Cabinet of Jewels: Touchstone of Sincerety; Consolations from Christ’s Imputed Righteousness; The Mute Christian under the Smarting Rod; Remedies for Division among God’s People; and A Believer’s Last Day, His Best Day*; all available from CHAPEL LIBRARY. Excerpts from *The Mute Christian* appear in Appendix 2.

immense. He is all-sufficient. He is glorious, happy, and blessed. He is soul-satisfying. He is incomparable. These are some of the 15 aspects of the Lord's character opened up by Brooks.

An outstanding example of Bible-based experimental exposition is found in Isaac Ambrose's work. Born in 1591, Ambrose settled in Lancashire. He was among the ejected clergy in 1662. As he recovered from a severe illness, he experienced a lively sense of what Jesus had done for his soul. He was gripped by a desire to reciprocate Christ's love and expressed this by way of expositions of the life of Christ. A classic work of 700 pages with the title *Looking unto Jesus* was the outcome.

What is it to "look unto Jesus"? First we must look to Him in each phase of His life and ministry, from His pre-existence to His conception, His birth, then through each year of His ministry, His rejection and suffering, His crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, exaltation, and present ministry of intercession for us. At each point, Ambrose requires that we consider Jesus, desire Him, hope in Him, believe in Him, love Him, joy in Him, call on Him, and conform to Him.

The subject of experience is closely joined to that of assurance of salvation. Thomas Brooks declares,

Assurance will give you a possession of heaven...An assured soul lives in paradise, and walks in paradise, and works in paradise, and rests in paradise. He hath heaven within him, and heaven about him, and heaven over him.⁹

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- ¹ Gaius Davies, "The Toronto Blessing: A Discussion," *Reformation Today* 144.
- ² John Flavel, *Works*, volume 3, pp 57-58.
- ³ Jonathan Edwards, *The Religious Affections* (Banner of Truth, 382 pages, 1961).
- ⁴ *Ibid*, p 23.
- ⁵ Thomas Manton, "On rejoicing in God at all times and under all conditions," two sermons on 1 Thessalonians 5:16, *Works*, volume 17, p 469-89.
 Thomas Vincent, "Concerning Christ's Manifestations of Himself to Them that Love Him," an appendix to *The True Christian's Love to the Unseen Christ*, p 100-127; book available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.
 William Bridge, *A Lifting Up for the Downcast* (Banner of Truth, 287 page paperback).
 Joseph Symonds. *The Case and Cure of a Deserted Soul* (Soli Deo Gloria, 346 page hardback).
 Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment* (Banner of Truth, 228 page paperback); abridgement available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

Thomas Brooks, "The Mute Christian Under the Smarting Rod," *Works*, volume 1, p 415-597; available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

⁶ John Owen, *Communion with God*, abridged to an easy to read 200 page paperback by R. J. K. Law (Banner of Truth, 1991).

⁷ John Howe, *Works*, volume 1, p 474-664.

⁸ Thomas Brooks, *Works*, volume 2, p 11ff.

⁹ Thomas Brooks, *Heaven on Earth* (Banner of Truth paperback), p 139.

6. A Robust Doctrine of Assurance

Heaven on Earth is the title given by Thomas Brooks to his famous treatise on the subject of Christian assurance.^a

To be in a state of grace is to be miserable no more; it is to be happy forever. Now, assurance is a reflex act of a gracious soul whereby he clearly and evidently sees himself in a gracious, blessed, and happy state. It is a sensible feeling and an experimental discerning of a man's being in a state of grace, and of having a right to a crown of glory. This rises from the seeing in himself the special, peculiar, and distinguishing graces of Christ, or from the testimony and report of the Spirit of God, "the Spirit itself bearing witness with [his] spirit," that he is a son "of God," and an heir-apparent of glory (Rom 8:16-17).

It is one thing for me to have grace; it is another thing for me to see my grace...Now this assurance is the beauty...of a Christian's glory in this life. It is usually attended with the strongest joy, with the sweetest comforts, and with the greatest peace. Assurance is not of the essence of a Christian. It is required to the *bene esse* (well-being), to the comfortable and joyful being of a Christian. But it is not required to the *esse*, to the being, of a Christian. A man may be a true believer, and yet would give all the world...to know that he is a believer.¹

Thomas Brooks unfolds what he terms "the things that accompany salvation," namely faith, repentance, obedience, love, prayer, perseverance, and hope. Typical of the Puritans, he unites the direct witness of the Holy Spirit—"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom 8:16)—with inferred or deduced assurance. The Holy Spirit, Who gives spiritual

^a See *Assurance* by Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892); "A Test of Assurance" by Thomas Watson (120-1686); *The Doctrine of Assurance* by A. W. Pink (1886-1952); *Am I Really a Christian?* by Thomas Boston (1676-1732); and Free Grace Broadcaster 179, *Assurance and Perseverance*; all available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

life, enables the believer to recognize that spiritual life. Thus, in his first epistle, John speaks of the direct witness of the Holy Spirit:

Hereby [i.e., this is how] we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us (1Jo 3:24).

But John at the same time gives tests for assurance: the three tests known as a) the doctrinal test, b) the moral test, and c) the social test. I know that I have eternal life because a) I believe that Jesus is the Son of God (1Jo 5:1), b) I love God and carry out His commands (1Jo 5:3), and c) “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren” (1Jo 3:14). There must be no conflict between direct and inferred assurance. The Holy Spirit, Who assures me directly in my heart that I am a child of God, is the same Spirit Who has worked new life in my heart and conduct. The two go together and complement each other.

At least twenty-five members of the Westminster Assembly had written treatises relating to faith and assurance prior to the Assembly. The 16th-century Reformers virtually equated faith with assurance; but as we see from Brooks quote above, the Puritans made a clear delineation between the two. Saving faith and assurance must be distinguished.

The Puritan doctrine of assurance is formally outlined in chapter 18 of *The Westminster Confession*.² The subject is addressed in four paragraphs: 1) The possibility of assurance, 2) The foundation of assurance, 3) The cultivation of assurance, and 4) The renewal of assurance. Of these paragraphs, the second is the most important, as assurance is united on three bases:

- First, the basis of the promises to those who believe in the objective reality of the Word of God;
- Second, the subjective basis of inward evidence; and
- Third, the subjective testimony of the Spirit of adoption witnessing with our spirits (Rom 8:16).

The way in which the Puritans expounded assurance is highly relevant in today's evangelical climate.

An outstanding feature in Puritan theology was the ability to distinguish principles, and hold these in tension or balance. An example, as we have seen, is divine sovereignty and human responsibility. Another is the warrant of faith and the way to faith. In this question of assurance, the Puritans distinguished between direct

assurance and inferred, or deduced, assurance—and would not allow any conflict between the two. The same Holy Spirit Who assures directly in the heart (“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God,” Rom 8:16), enables believers to live the life of faith and produces fruit in their lives. The stronger the spiritual life in practice, the more likely the direct witness of the Spirit in the heart will be.

The believer can look for his assurance to his life of loving fellow Christians and obeying God’s precepts. Some object that exhortations to do so tend to legalism and to self-righteousness. How do we deal with this objection? The answer is that the Holy Spirit enables Christians to do good works so that we never esteem our good works to be the basis of our justification. We rest only on the righteousness of Christ imputed to us. Christ our righteousness is our only justification. Yet it is imperative to our assurance that we evidence our reciprocal love to Christ, which emanates in obeying His commands.

Brooks’ counsel to believers as to ways and means of gaining a well-grounded assurance is as follows: Be active in exercising grace; follow the path of obedience; follow diligently the instructions of the Holy Spirit; be diligent in attendance upon ordinances; pay particular attention to the scope of God’s promises of mercy; distinguish those matters in which believers are different from all others; seek to grow in grace; seek assurance when the soul is in its best frame; and ascertain whether you have the things that accompany salvation (knowledge, faith, repentance, obedience, love, prayer, perseverance, and hope).

It is possible to lose assurance and suffer much conflict of soul as a result. Brooks suggests six methods whereby souls that have lost assurance may be kept from fainting, and offers five suggestions whereby they may recover it. One support of the person exercised by lost assurance is to remember that eternal happiness does not depend upon assurance, and another is that though assurance may be lost,

Blessed breathings and sweet influences of the Spirit upon them [are not lost]. Witness their love to Christ, their longing after Christ, their fear of offending Christ, their care to please Christ.

While we agree with Brooks in most of his exposition, we cannot concur with him on the idea that God removes assurance. For instance, Job experienced the most acute sense of desertion (expressed in Job 23:8-10 and 30:9-19); yet always possessed the strongest assurance. He could say,

I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth (Job 19:25).

We should always think in terms of God's giving assurance, and not confuse loss of assurance with desertion—to which we now give our attention.

Wherever shallow evangelism with its practice of easy-decisionism has prevailed, the danger exists of a false assurance of salvation.^a Connected to shallow evangelism is the "Lordship" controversy.^b A number of books have appeared recently on this theme.³ In order to include those who have made a profession of faith but show no spiritual progress, the idea has been promoted that as long as a person has made a decision for Christ, then he is saved. Even though that person has not received Christ as Lord and shows no spiritual life, he is still to be esteemed a Christian. But the Scripture declares that without holiness "no man shall see the Lord" (Heb 12:14). How does a person know that he is saved? If he claims that he has a strong inward feeling, and calls this the Spirit witnessing with his spirit that he is a Christian, yet at the same time lacks a credible Christian life, we may conclude that he is deceiving himself. The message of the first epistle of John provides adequate material to prove that a Christian lifestyle is essential for a well-grounded assurance.

Although written in the mid-seventeenth century, I know of no better, clearer, or more relevant book on assurance than Brooks' *Heaven on Earth*, which is kept in print by the Banner of Truth.

^a See "Be Sure," "Almost a Christian" (tracts) by Matthew Meade (1621-1699), "Self or Christ: Which Is It?" by Horatius Bonar (1808-1889); "Another Gospel," "Spiritual Faith and Outward Profession" by A. W. Pink (1886-1952); "Useless Kinds of Religion," "Are You Born Again?" by J. C. Ryle (1816-1900); (booklets) *Receiving Christ and Walking in Him* by Ralph Erskine (1685-1752); *The Withered Fig Tree, A Caution to the Presumptuous* by Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892); all available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^b See "Is Christ Your Lord?" and "Lord and Savior" (tracts) by A. W. Pink (1886-1952), available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

References

- ¹ Thomas Brooks, *Heaven on Earth, A Treatise on Christian Assurance* (Banner of Truth, 319 page paperback), pp 14-15. The first modern reprint of this work, which was first published in 1654, appeared in 1961. The most recent reprint is dated 1996.
- ² Joel Beeke, *Assurance of Faith: Calvin, English Puritanism, and the Dutch Second Reformation* (Peter Lang Publishers, 518 page paperback). Joel Beeke's treatise is very thorough, but readable and edifying throughout. A shorter treatment by Beeke of the Westminster Confession chapter 18 on assurance can be found in the Westminster Conference papers for 1997 under the title "Anthony Burgess on Assurance."
- ³ The two leading "non-lordship" authors are Charles C. Ryrie, *So Great Salvation* (Victor Books, Wheaton USA, 1989), and Zane C. Hodges, *Absolutely Free! A Biblical Reply to Lordship Salvation* (Dallas: Recension Viva, 1989). The best-known book defending the view that a Christian must have Christ as both Savior and Lord is John MacArthur's *The Gospel According to Jesus* (Zondervan, 1988). Highly recommended is *Lordship Salvation* by Robert Lescelius (Revival Literature, PO Box 6088, Ashville, NC 28816, USA; 1992). This 217 page book has the advantage of holding the previous mentioned titles in view, and is a model of lucidity in the Puritan tradition. A fine study by Ernest Reisinger, *Lord and Christ*, was published by Presbyterian & Reformed in 1994, 178 pages, which is commended especially for the section that explains the confusion wrought by Dispensationalism, and for the chapter on assurance.

7. Hope for the Future of the Church

As we approach the third millennium, the foremost issue facing the church is the completion of the great mandate to take the gospel to all nations. In China, Africa, and Central and South America, there has been rapid growth during the 20th century. Will the gospel continue to spread until the whole world is filled with the truth of Scripture? The Puritans were optimistic.¹

Question 191 of *The Larger Westminster Catechism* sums up the Puritan view.

Question: What do we pray for in the second petition of the Lord's prayer? ["Thy kingdom come" (Mat 6:10).]

Answer: We pray that the kingdom of sin and Satan may be destroyed, the gospel propagated throughout the world, the Jews called, and the fullness of the Gentiles be brought in.

This answer expresses the program of God for the nations. Foundational to the sovereign program of the Father is the exaltation of Jesus. In his exposition of Psalm 110, Edward Reynolds (1593-1676) observes that "this reign at the right hand of the majesty and glory signifies to us the great exaltation of the Lord Christ."²

The Puritans varied in their view of prophecy, but the majority, as expressed above, believed that the cause of Christ would be victorious in the world.³ Psalm 110:1 describes the throne from which Christ initiates and pursues His conquest, “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” Puritan expositors such as Reynolds, Matthew Henry, and Matthew Poole subscribed to the following principles:

1. There will be one final period known as the last days, from the first to the second advent of Christ.
2. Christ will employ His power increasingly during that time to subdue His enemies.
3. Christ’s power is exerted to subdue His enemies in order that His kingdom can extend and His church be built among all nations.
4. This will be accompanied with conflict. Psalm 110:1 is the most cited Old Testament text in the New Testament. In 1 Corinthians 15:25, Paul declares that Christ must reign at the Father’s right hand
Till he hath put all enemies under His feet...The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death (1Co 15:25-26).

The second principle stated above concerns the enemies of Christ. These include powers of evil and apostasy^a that have worked in the church to destroy it. The most telling passage concerning the man of sin is commonly termed “the little apocalypse of 2 Thesalonians 2:1-12.” Thomas Manton expounds these verses in ten sermons.⁴ He demonstrates that the apostasy described by Paul is an apostasy from apostolic Christianity that took place over the centuries. It is seen in the development of the Roman Catholic Church and the Papacy, which usurped the gospel. This was the teaching of mainline Puritanism and is enshrined in *The Westminster Confession of Faith*.

John Calvin interprets the passage as apocalyptic in style and not literal. Concerning the man of sin, he says,

Paul is not speaking of one individual, but of a kingdom that was to be seized by Satan for the purpose of setting up a seat of abomination in the midst of God’s temple. This we see accomplished in popery.

^a See Free Grace Broadcaster 205, *Apostasy*; available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

Concerning the antichrist, Calvin asserts,

Quite certainly Paul meant that antichrist would seize the things which belong to God alone, his purpose being to exalt himself above every divine power, so that all religion and all worship of God should lie beneath his feet.

This interpretation is followed by John Owen.⁵ No apostasy from apostolic Christianity can be compared to the Papacy. For over a thousand years, the gospel became more and more subverted and covered over with error. The Church became the monolithic, sacral persecutor of the faithful, driving them to death or into the wilderness, as described in Revelation chapter 12.

If texts that describe antichrist are taken out of context, then the future is one of fearful doom and gloom. However, if these texts are taken as warnings within the framework of God's overall purpose, and within the context of the advance of the gospel worldwide, we may be more optimistic. Two principles are working side by side. The first is that evil-doers will get worse and worse. We see this in drug traffic and the Mafia and in vastly corrupt civil governments, as well as in the landslide of personal morality. The second is that in spite of huge opposition, our Lord will have the victory over His enemies, and will not return until they have become His footstool (1Co 15:25). The third principle above is that the gospel will triumph throughout the world.

The glory of Christ in the victories He is given for His holy gospel must be commensurate with the horrendous nature of His sufferings. His reward is described in Psalm 22:27-31 and Isaiah 49:1-7. The salvation He brings will not be in a corner. His salvation will go to the ends of the earth. Kings will acknowledge the glory of Christ. This will be through the prayers and efforts of His people. Psalm 2 urges prayer that the nations be given to Christ, and the uttermost parts of the earth become His possession (v. 8). His kingdom will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure for ever (Dan 2:44). The stone that struck the feet of the image itself grows and fills the whole earth (Dan 2:35).

Many other passages run parallel to this, such as Isaiah chapters 2 and 11, 60 and 61. John Howe—in an exposition titled *The Prosperous State of the Christian Interest before the End of Time, by a Plentiful Effusion of the Holy Spirit*—opens up Isaiah 2:2. He

makes it clear he understands that “in the latter part of the latter time” there will be a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit resulting in a cessation of wars, “such a time as the world hath not yet known.”⁶ Psalm 72 confirms that the whole earth is to be filled with the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Psalm 72 and Isaiah 64 provide models as to how we are to pray for this to take place. These are not descriptions of heaven, but rather prayers that involve terrific conflict, the struggle for justice, and the relief of the oppressed.

Elnathan Parr (1597-1632) exercised a powerful ministry at Palgrave in Suffolk. In his commentary on Romans 11, Parr develops the contrast between the Jews and Gentiles.

The casting off of the Jews was our calling, but the calling of the Jews shall not be our casting off, but our greater enriching in grace⁷...[On verse 15] For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?... The calling of the Jews seems a thing impossible, yet it is not so to God, Who can as easily call them to Christ as raise the dead...Here we are put in mind to pray for the Jews.

Life from the dead, Parr suggests, is revival, life, vigor, vivacity. On verse 25,

And so all Israel will be saved...Before the end of the world, the Jews, in regard to their multitude shall be called...The calling of the Jews is a mystery. If you ask how and when, I know not...The fullness of the Gentiles...[is] a full and plentiful propagation of the gospel whereby many of all of the nations shall be converted to God.

Parr suggests, as do modern commentators on Romans 11, that the comparison of Jews and Gentiles is sustained throughout the passage and therefore this argument is irresistible.⁸

The Puritan doctrine of the last things is a doctrine that inspires prayer, motivates effort, inculcates endurance, and strengthens patience. Battles may be lost, but there is absolutely no doubt about who will win this war! It is this view of the promises of Scripture that inspired and motivated the pioneer missionaries such as William Carey, Adoniram Judson, and Henry Martyn. One of the first to implement this outlook in missionary work was the Puritan John Eliot, who in 1631 at the age of 27 sailed for Massachusetts. He became pastor of a new church a mile from Boston. Burdened

for the Indian tribes, he set himself to master Algonquin. He began at the age of 40 and eventually translated the entire Bible into Algonquin. Converts were made, churches planted, and Indian pastors trained. By the time of his death, at age 84, there were many Indian churches.

Surely, as has taken place before, powerful forces of motivation and determination will be unleashed once the church grasps hold of this fact: It is truly our Father's intention and purpose to subdue and overcome all those systems of false religion arrayed against His Son. He urges in the second Psalm,

Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance,
and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession (Psa 2:8).

And through Malachi He declares,

From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same,
my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts (Mal 1:11).

References

- ¹ The Puritan hope was taken up and expounded by Jonathan Edwards in his book *The History of Redemption*. Edwards earned the title "The Theologian of Revival." Several modern expositions that develop the "Puritan hope" are available today. See Iain Murray, *The Puritan Hope* (Banner of Truth, 328 pages); Marcellus Kik, *An Eschatology of Victory* (Pres. & Ref., 268 pages); John Jefferson Davis, *The Victory of Christ's Kingdom* (Canon Press, 92 pages); and Erroll Hulse, *Give Him No Rest* (EP, 144 pages).
- ² Edward Reynolds, *An Exposition of Psalm 110*, being the second volume in six (*Soli Deo Gloria*, 466 pages, 1993), p 25.
- ³ While the Puritans varied in eschatology, most would be denominated post-millennial, not that there is a specific 1,000 years, but rather that Christ would return only after the world has been evangelized. A minority were pre-millennial, the best-known being Thomas Goodwin, William Tiswe, Jeremiah Burroughs, and William Bridge. They taught that Christ will come personally to fulfil the grand promises that are made concerning the extension of His kingdom. Both these views do not spiritualize away the promises as mere poetry, but rather grapple with them.
- ⁴ Thomas Manton, *Works*, volume 3; cf. *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, chapter 25, paragraph 6; and *The 1689 London Baptist Confession*, chapter 26, paragraph 4. The latter is available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.
- ⁵ John Owen, *Works*, volume 14, pp 241ff and 534ff.
- ⁶ John Howe's "Prosperous State" is not included in his three volume *Works*, but is published as an appendix in Iain Murray's *The Puritan Hope*.
- ⁷ Elnathan Parr, *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans*. My copy is an edition published in 1651; Romans chapter 11 occupies pages 138 to 183.

- ⁸ Charles Hodge, Robert Haldane, Frederic Louis Godet, Prof. John Murray, Leon Morris, and James Dunn are among commentators that stress the contextual argument developed by Paul in Romans 11. Godet refers to “the two portions of mankind that Paul has been contrasting with each other throughout the whole chapter. Paul teaches only one thing here: that at the close of history of mankind on this earth, there will be an economy of grace in which salvation will be extended to the totality of the nations living here below.”

8. The Warrant of Faith and the Way to Faith

A. The Issue

Clarity in the distinctions between the *warrant of faith* and the *way to faith* is vital to the Christian, and in this matter the Puritans can help us. We will approach this subject through Spurgeon, who loved the Puritans.

One of the famous sermons by Charles Haddon Spurgeon was called “The Warrant of Faith.”^a This he preached on Lord’s Day morning September 20, 1863, the sermon being number 531 in the series that eventually reached 3,492. Spurgeon was young, only 29 years old. In this sermon, he criticized some of the Puritans. This is what he said:

The warrant of our faith in Christ reasons thus: “You are not saved by what you do, but by what Christ did. But then you have no right to trust in Christ unless there is something good in you that shall entitle you to trust in Him.” Now, this legal reasoning, I oppose. I believe such teaching to contain in it the essence of popish self-righteousness. The warrant for a sinner to believe in Christ is not in himself in any sense or in any manner, but in the fact that he is commanded there and then to believe on Jesus Christ (Act 16:31; Rom 10:9).

Some preachers in Puritan times, whose shoe latches I am not worthy to unloose, erred much in this matter. I refer not only to Alleine and Baxter, who are far better preachers of the Law than of the gospel, but I include men far sounder in the faith than they, such as Rogers of Dedham, Shepherd (the author of *The Sound Believer*), and especially the American, Thomas Hooker, who has written a book upon qualifications for coming to Christ. These excellent men had a fear of preaching the gospel to any except those whom they styled “sensible sinners.” And consequently, [they] kept hundreds of their hearers sitting in darkness when they

^a This Spurgeon sermon and 200+ others are available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

might have rejoiced in the light. They preached repentance and hatred of sin as the warrant of the sinner's trusting to Christ. According to them, a sinner might reason thus: "I possess such-and-such a degree of sensibility on account of sin, therefore I have a right to trust in Christ." Now, I venture to affirm that such reasoning is seasoned with fatal error.

Was the young Spurgeon right in his criticism? Now, we can well understand why Spurgeon was critical. The subject of preparation to conversion is not an easy one, as we will see in due course. However, when we have reviewed the principles involved in this subject, you may agree with me that Spurgeon needed to make an adequate distinction between two vital principles, namely, the warrant of faith and the way of faith.

I will explain this distinction clearly, but at the outset will put it simply like this: When you teach your children, you read the Bible to them and teach them to read it. You pray with them and teach them to pray themselves. You, with countless other parents, probably use a catechism,^a and seek that they should benefit from that as it leads to further questions and answers and discussion. You may also sing with them and worship the Lord with them by way of singing. Yet you do not teach them that their doing these things earns them credit, nor that they in themselves have the right to come to God the Father through Jesus Christ for salvation.

No, all these means form the *way* to faith, and that is a very different thing from the *warrant* of faith. The warrant of faith is God's command to all people everywhere to repent and believe only on account of what He, the Almighty One, has provided in the great sacrifice of His Son.

When we read the Puritans, or any other body of worthy Bible expositors for that matter, we will find frequent exhortations by them to attend to the ways by which faith comes. Attend to preaching. Mix with Christians. Read your Bible. Seek the Lord while He

^a **catechism** – written method for teaching the essential doctrines of the Christian faith by question and answer, used and proven effective for many centuries. Several are available from CHAPEL LIBRARY, including *Spurgeon's Catechism*, similar to the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* but tailored to the *London Baptist Confession of 1689* and updated by Charles Spurgeon for his congregation; *A Catechism for Boys and Girls* by Erroll Hulse, which is a simplified version of *Spurgeon's Catechism*; and *Gadsby's Catechism* by William Gadsby (1773-1884).

may be found. Call on Him while He is near. All that forms the way of faith, but all that does not constitute the warrant of faith. When the Philippian jailer cried out in an agony of conviction, “What must I do to be saved?” the shortest, clearest, and best answer was given, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Act 16:30-31). Paul and Silas did *not* say, Go and read the prophet Isaiah and he will show you the way of salvation. They did *not* say, Wait until next Lord’s Day and go to church and you will be saved. There is nothing wrong with counsel about the way of faith and what we need to do as means by which God may give saving faith, but that counsel always needs to be given in the light of the warrant of faith. God will always have all sinners believe at once and trust only in what He has provided for them in the person and work of His Son. Let us look more closely at the distinction between the warrant of faith and the way of faith.

B. The Warrant of Faith

What is the warrant of faith? Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary gives six categories of usage for the noun *warrant*. The Oxford Reference Dictionary gives two, the first of which accurately describes the theological meaning we ascribe to the word *warrant*: a thing that authorizes an action. For instance, for a police officer to arrest a person for an offense, he requires to have a warrant authorizing his action. When we come to faith, what right does the sinner have in order to believe in Christ? The answer to that can be provided in the text: “And this is his [God’s] commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ” (1Jo 3:23). The warrant is God’s command that we believe—and nothing we do in ourselves provides the warrant to believe. There is no merit of any kind whatsoever in ourselves that gives us the right to believe. The fact that we are altogether sinful points to our need to repent and believe.

C. The Way of Faith

What is the way of faith? There is a faith that is only nominal,^a and there is a faith that joins the sinner to Christ, which is thereby saving faith. There is a faith that is no more than mental assent; an easy faith that we call “easy-believism faith.” Multitudes today are

^a **nominal** – existing in name only; not real.

led by the altar call system into easy-believism, and thereby to the fatal peril of false assurance. That is misguided and cruel. We know from the Scriptures that we are always to encourage all sinners to believe; but if we are to be faithful to them, we first must show them who Christ is and how great their need is. We must not indulge in short cuts or over-simplifications. That is why we have to be careful about the way of faith.

The way of faith is really the way to saving faith. That way comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom 10:14). Hence, we have to exhort unbelievers to hear and heed the Scriptures. In this regard we can note passages like Proverbs 1:20-33 and 8:1-36. Wisdom, which we can take as Christ personified, pleads with all sinners everywhere to listen to instruction. Wisdom urges that the hearer heed godly counsel until salvation is assured. Likewise, in the great mandate of the free invitations and offers of the gospel contained in Isaiah 55, there is exhortation to listen, to hear, to seek, to call, to turn. Listening, hearing, seeking, calling, turning—all these are the way to faith, but in and of themselves they never form the warrant of faith.

Jesus dealt with Nicodemus (Joh 3) by showing him the way of faith and that he was powerless to save himself. He told him to look to the serpent raised up on a stick and urged that he look outside himself to the Father's provision of salvation. Jesus did not try to rush him into something he did not yet understand; rather, He guided him in the way of faith.

Likewise with the rich young ruler (Mat 19:16-22), Jesus showed him the way of faith by pointing him in the direction of learning the futility of his own riches. He told him to go home and sell all, and then come to be a learner. That was pointing him to the way of faith. Some would fail this test of Jesus: leaders who incessantly attempt to get people to make a profession of faith, before such people know what faith is or the demands of the life of faith. Making a decision is one thing; the possession of a faith that unites the sinner to Christ for time and eternity is another. There must be care and prayer about teaching the way of faith.

Hence when the Puritans or other preachers urged the use of what we call the means of grace, they did not intend that those means were to be regarded as a qualification to believe. They never

taught that the means were to be esteemed as meritorious. Attending church, listening to preaching, reformation of life, self-examination in the light of the Ten Commandments, meditation on the coming great Judgment Day—these are all to do with the way of faith. Yet, without intermission there is always that call of God to the immediate^a duty of repentance and faith. This in itself is the warrant of faith.

Christian parents soon discover that it is impossible to create saving faith in their offspring. Only God can do that. A child can walk down the aisle and make a decision many times, but that does not create saving faith. Yet godly parents never cease to urge that children to walk in the way of faith, that is, always follow the means of grace by which saving faith is bestowed by God.

D. Preparation on the Way to Saving Faith

Before regenerating sinners, the Holy Spirit imparts knowledge. How can a person believe unless he knows what to believe? In most cases, the Holy Spirit engenders a conviction of sin and of need for salvation from sin's penalty, and in some cases brings about quite a degree of reformation of life in the sinner before the new birth. Some have been known to quit blaspheming, to become truly attentive and serious about spiritual subjects, before actually experiencing that great change we call the new birth. This work is sometimes called "prevenient grace," and sometimes it is known as preparation to conversion.

John Owen describes the preparation wrought by God in a soul prior to the new birth:

There are certain internal spiritual effects wrought in and upon the souls of men whereof the Word preached is the immediate instrumental cause, which ordinarily do precede the work of regeneration, of real conversion to God. And they are reducible unto three heads: 1) Illumination, 2) Conviction, 3) Reformation.

He then expounds these in detail.

If God prepares sinners to conversion, what part do we play to prepare for it? The Puritans are sometimes charged with what is termed "preparationism." By this is meant that, instead of urging immediate repentance and faith in Christ to save, they urge various

^a **immediate** – direct; without need of anything in between.

duties as described above: attending church, listening to preaching, reformation of life, self-examination in the light of the Ten Commandments, meditation on the coming great Judgment Day. But as I have shown, there need not be tension between two facts: namely the way to faith (“faith cometh by hearing,” Rom 10:17) and the warrant of faith (there is always the immediate, urgent command to believe and be saved, Act 16:31).

Thomas Hooker was a Puritan who ministered in Chelmsford, Essex, where he exercised a powerful ministry. Cotton Mather declared that

A great reformation was wrought, not only in the town but in the adjacent country, from all parts whereof they came to hear the wisdom of the Lord Jesus Christ [when Hooker preached].¹

In 1633 with 200 others, Hooker sailed to America. There he wrote the book, *The Soul's Preparation for Christ*.² It is possible to criticize Hooker and accuse him of directing men more to their duties than to Christ. That is all very well, but the necessity of persevering under the means of grace applies to all—especially to those who have not closed with Christ or who say they have (but in evidence lack) the fruit of the Spirit, and who may be deceiving themselves. We will avoid confusion as long as we hold firmly at the same time:

- that there is no contradiction whatsoever in directing unsaved persons to attend to every means of grace that will enlighten and convict them, and
- to the urgency and necessity of repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for immediate salvation.

The way to faith and the warrant of faith to be saved *now*, are complementary, not contradictory.

It is possible to fall into the trap of thinking that a deep conviction of sin provides the right, or warrant, of faith in such a way as to think that it is no earthly use trusting in Christ for my salvation *until I first* have a previous deep conviction and sorrow for my sin. That is erroneous. But even if it were correct, who could ever tell whether he had enough conviction or sufficient sorrow? If acceptance has to come by something I have to perform, or some quality in myself, then my position is hopeless.

E. The Warrant of Faith and the First London Confession

Paragraph 25 of the *First London Confession of Faith of 1646* expresses clearly that the warrant of faith is God's command and lies in nothing we can do ourselves:

The preaching of the gospel to the conversion of sinners is absolutely free; no way requiring as absolutely necessary any qualifications, preparations, or terrors of the Law, or preceding ministry of the Law; but only and alone the naked soul, a sinner and ungodly, to receive Christ crucified, dead, and buried, and risen again; Who is made a prince and a Saviour for such sinners as through the gospel shall be brought to believe on Him.

Augustus Toplady, the famous hymnwriter of the 18th century, admirably expresses the truth of the sinner's emptiness and the manner in which he needs to apply for mercy. As we come to Christ for mercy, and by Him to our heavenly Father for salvation, we know that our guilt is the only qualification we have:

Nothing in my hand I bring, Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress; Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly; Wash me, Saviour, or I die!^a

References

- ¹ Cotton Mather, *The Great Works of Christ in America*, volume 1 (Banner of Truth, 1979), p 335.
- ² The subject of preparation is opened up by Robert Horn in "Thomas Hooker: The Soul's Preparation for Christ," Westminster Conference Papers, 1976; and by Iain Murray in a series of articles in *The Banner of Truth* magazine, issues 195, 196, 197, 199, and 206.

9. The Primacy of Preaching

Many pressures, as I will show, are at work today to downgrade preaching, to give a subservient place to that function in the churches. We can be inspired by the example of the Puritans, who maintained the primacy of preaching. Important principles or axioms undergirded their view of preaching; our purpose here is to examine these. In this way, we shall see why we should maintain

^a Hymn "Rock of Ages," third stanza, by **Augustus Montague Toplady** (1740-1778) – Anglican cleric and hymn writer, many of which are still sung today. He opposed the Arminianism of John Wesley. Born in Farnham, Surrey, England.

preaching as the high point of the worship service, and the primary means of conversion and edifying God's people.

Underlying the preaching of the Puritans are three basic axioms:¹

- A. The unique place of preaching is to convert, feed, and sustain.
- B. The life of the preacher must radiate the reality of what he preaches.
- C. Prayer and solid Bible study are basic to effective preaching.

A. Unique Place of Preaching

The unique place of preaching is to convert, feed, and sustain. The Puritans worked hard in study in order to be exemplary preachers. They maintained that this was their primary calling, and they labored to maintain the primacy of preaching. No other means of grace addresses the whole person—mind, affections, conscience, and will—like powerful preaching. Nothing else is used by God the Holy Spirit in the unique way that preaching is. The Son of Man Himself came to preach; as did John the Baptist, who prepared the way for Him. The multitude did not go out into the wilderness to hear a classroom lecture from John the Baptist. A rock formed his pulpit and the heavens his sounding board. He preached in such a fashion that multitudes were prepared to walk many miles to hear him. And when these hearers arrived, John did not flatter them or set out to make them feel good. He aimed straight at their consciences; he addressed them as the needy lost sinners that they were.

1) Tremendous forces impede the prime place of preaching today. In America more than in Britain, there is the tendency to displace preaching with *entertainment* in the form of song and musical items, so that preaching is just tagged on at the end. In some charismatic churches, the Bible is hardly featured—let alone expository preaching. Healings and signs and sensational testimonies form the main attraction. This reminds us of Paul's saying that the Jews demand miraculous signs, to which the apostle responded, "But we preach Christ crucified" (1Co 1:22-23).

2) The primacy of preaching in the preacher's own life is often usurped by *programs*. His energies are sapped and his time consumed by administrative duties. These deprive him of an effective preaching ministry. In this matter, it is necessary to avoid the ex-

treme illustrated by the preacher who was described as “invisible for six days of the week and incomprehensible on the seventh!” A balance is to be kept. Pastoring and caring for people is vital, but the imperative exercise of study must not be neglected. The Scriptures liken the expositor to an ox treading out the grain (1Ti 5:18). Don Carson of Trinity College, Deerfield, maintains that he does not know of one effective expository Bible preacher in the USA who has not taken rigorous measures to protect the primacy of prayer and study (Act 6:2). There are mega-congregations in the USA that have been built up through expository preaching.

3) Sometimes Christians have a *distorted view of how the Holy Spirit works*. I heard of a pastor who announced that from now on he was going to get his sermons directly from heaven! He abandoned the work of the study. Immediately his ministry became repetitive and shallow; and after six months of starvation, the church officers asked him to leave. It is misguided to imagine that a) the Holy Spirit directly communicates and inspires preaching, and therefore b) it is unspiritual to write out sermons or to follow carefully prepared outlines. The Holy Spirit honors prayerful, dedicated work:

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing [i.e., correctly handling] the word of truth (2Ti 2:15).

Effective expository preaching requires enormous discipline of mind and heart. When the preacher decides on a series of expositions, this is a major undertaking that will be arrived at only after fervent prayer and meditation. When a series is begun, the preacher is wise to keep his options open. If he and the congregation do not experience the blessing of the Holy Spirit, another direction can be taken, for the Scripture is an inexhaustible source of truth and edification.

4) A further subtle undermining of the primacy of preaching is by the concept that *discussion groups* serve the interests of Christ's kingdom better than preaching. Occasional discussion groups can be useful to debate relevant issues—especially congregational issues or practical issues that affect the life of the church or the community. But when it comes to knowing and applying the Bible, discussion groups must rate a third best. Each person brings an

“itsy bit”—a good thought here and a wee thought there. That is a poor substitute for preaching. When the preacher brings the Word to bear in its context, and applies it with spiritual power to the congregation, they are lifted up—encouraged by the sense of God’s presence, and motivated and renewed in a way that is unlikely in a discussion group.

B. Radiating Reality

The life of the preacher must radiate the reality of what he preaches. Prominent in the minds of hearers, especially visitors, as they listen to a preacher is the question, “Does this man live out what he preaches?” Moses’ companions had no doubt about whose company Moses had kept when he came down from Mount Sinai (Exo 34:29-30)! Paul exhorted Timothy:

Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee (1Ti 4:16).

Addressing ministers, Richard Baxter wrote,

Content not yourselves with being in a state of grace, but be also careful that your graces are kept in vigorous and lively exercise, and that you preach to yourselves the sermons which you study, before you preach them to others.^a

The apostle Paul was able to commend his way of life to Timothy:

But thou hast fully known my doctrine, *manner of life*, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions (2Ti 3:10-11).

The close connection between the holy life of the preacher and the flock to which he preaches is apparent in a further statement from Baxter:

If we let our love decline, we are not likely to raise up theirs. If we feed on unwholesome food, either errors or fruitless controversies, our hearers are like to fare the worse for it. Whereas if we abound in faith, love, and zeal, how would it overflow to the refreshing of our congregations, and how would it appear in the increase of the same graces in them!^b

^a Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, 1862 edition, p 100.

^b Ibid.

If hypocrisy is to be avoided, then the preacher needs to epitomize the message that he is preaching in his lifestyle and in his demeanor.

C. Prayer and Bible Study

Prayer and solid Bible study are basic to effective preaching. It was while facing conflict and criticism that the apostles asserted their priorities were prayer and study:

It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word (Act 6:2-4).

What minister is not the object of criticism, some of it warranted? We cannot please everyone, but we must seek to please the Lord in everything. How do we answer criticisms? Our answer is: prayer. We are not above contradiction; indeed, we should encourage our hearers to share their criticisms with us. With some we can use humor about ourselves so they may see that we genuinely seek to strive after humility. But spiritual attitudes can only be maintained through a life of prayer.

As a race of ministers, the Puritans excelled in holding to the prime place of preaching, but they did so in a balanced way. They did not neglect their role as physicians of the soul to counsel and encourage personally the members of the church. We live in very different times with a different set of pressures. Nevertheless, we can derive inspiration from their example. For instance, at a little village in Somerset called Mells was a minister, Richard Fairclough. When he died in 1682, at age 61, John Howe preached the funeral sermon, from which we are informed that people from miles around used to throng to hear Fairclough preach.

O how that congregation hath been wont to^a melt under his most fruitful ministry. His prayers, sermons, and other ministerial performances had that strange pungency, quickness, and authority with them at some times; that softness, gentleness, sweetness, alluringness at others—[so] that one would think it scarcely possible to resist the spirit and power by which he spoke. And the effect did in blessed measure correspond: they became a much enlight-

^a **hath been wont to** – has been prone to; has tended to.

ened, knowing, judicious, reformed, religious people. His labours were almost incredible. His whole heart was in his work. Every day, for many years together, he used to rise at three in the morning, or sooner, and to be with God (which was his dear delight) when others slept.²

This example illustrates that the Puritans succeeded in their ministries because they excelled in the basics. We can do as well as they did if we maintain a balance in the work of prayer and preaching, together with the care of souls. With regard to the principle of basics, there is the analogy of music or sport. A musician will never excel unless he is proficient and disciplined in basic skills. Expression in rendering pieces can only follow expertise in basic skills. The same is true in sports. A player will never excel at a game like golf unless he masters the basics. In the ministry, a man is called to be spiritual. He must excel in godliness and holiness of life. That is basic. Then he must work in prayer and intercession, and *at the same time* discipline his mind incessantly in study and meditation, as he prepares for the pulpit. He must think about his calling and apply himself to it constantly.

Prayer embraces the people to whom we minister. "God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you" (1Sa 12:23). By prayer, we relate to the lives and needs of the people we address in preaching.

References

- ¹ J. I. Packer, in his article *Puritan Preaching (Reformation Today 68)*, outlines four axioms: 1. The primacy of the intellect, 2. The supreme importance (primacy) of preaching, 3. Belief in the life-giving power of biblical truths, 4. The sovereignty of the Holy Spirit. With regard to the first, compared to our feelings-centered age, the Puritans were robust in their demands on the mind, but I do not think for one moment that they were self-consciously saying, "I must direct this to the mind." In his writings on the Puritans, Packer (cf. *Among God's Giants*, p 79) shows that hearers were addressed affectionately and intellectually. Geoff Thomas, in the book *Preaching* (Evangelical Press), says, "One of the great perils that faces preachers of the Reformed faith is the problem of a hyper-intellectualism; that is, the constant danger of lapsing into a purely cerebral form of proclamation that falls exclusively upon the intellect. Men become obsessed with doctrine and end up brain-oriented preachers. There is consequently a fearful impoverishment in their hearers emotionally, devotionally, and practically. Such pastors are men of books and not men of people; they know doctrines, but they know nothing of the emotional side of religion. They set little store upon experience or upon constant fellowship and interaction with almighty God" (p 369).

² John Howe, *Works*, volume. 3, p 389ff.

10. Imaginative Expository Preaching

A. Guidelines

The practice of systematic expository preaching has become much more widespread in recent years. Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones is regarded as the foremost preacher in the British Isles during the 20th century. He followed the systematic expository method and, in so doing, inspired a whole generation of preachers to follow that method—a way that was exemplified by the Puritans. Spurgeon did not use the systematic procedure of preaching through books or sections of Scripture. He explained that he needed freedom as, week by week, he was confronted with the huge challenge of being an evangelist. At every meeting thousands gathered to hear him, many being visitors from other places or countries. The Tabernacle was filled twice on Sunday and then again at a preaching service on Thursday evening. Although he loved the Puritans, in this particular matter Spurgeon felt the necessity of complete freedom to take a different text every time he preached. In preaching a series of sermons, it is necessary to recap, whereas Spurgeon could proceed straight to his subject.

For the great majority of preachers the systematic method is best. The essential ingredients of powerful, effective preaching can be summarized as follows.

1. Expository
2. Progressional or systematic
3. Exegetical
4. Doctrinal (instructional)
5. Structural
6. Applicatory (pastoral)
7. Practical
8. Experimental
9. Trinitarian
10. Evangelistic
11. Powerful (spiritually compelling)
12. Popular (relevant and attractive)

These characteristics can be used like a check list. When a preacher is coming near to completing the preparation of his sermon, he may well ask the following questions.

1. Is this sermon really expository?
2. Is my text in harmony with the context?
3. Is it exegetical?^a Have I fathomed the precise meaning of the text or am I making it say what I would like it to say?
4. Is there doctrinal instruction? Will my hearers be built up in the great central truths of the faith?
5. Have I assembled my material with the best structure—easy to follow, logically connected, easy to remember?
6. As I preach this sermon, am I dealing with my people pastorally? Am I mindful of and sympathetic with their struggles and temptations?
7. And is this exposition practical? What are they expected to do about it?
8. Is my sermon experimental? Will hearts be warmed?
9. Will Christians be delighted in their union with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?
10. And what about those in the congregation who do not believe? How will this affect them?
11. Will it be powerful? How can I bring my hearers to repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ? Will I be used to “compel them to come in” (Luk 14:23)?
12. What is there about my sermon that makes it appealing and attractive? Our Lord used references to nature, and Thomas Watson used delightful pithy metaphors and similes.^b How can I emulate my Master (and some of His best servants) to make my preaching a) the effective vehicle of salvation and b) edifying to believers?

It is difficult if not impossible to do justice to all these requirements all the time. It is a mistake to over-pack a sermon. The average person is limited in the amount of material he can absorb in one sitting. The best kind of preaching, rarely achieved, is the

^a **exegetical** – pertaining to the analysis and interpretation of Scripture.

^b **metaphor** – figure of speech in which a term or phrase is applied to something to which it is not literally applicable, in order to suggest a resemblance.

simile – figure of speech in which two essentially unlike things are compared.

kind in which one principal point is driven home so that the hearers never forget the impact.

The task is exceedingly difficult. Paul says, “And who is sufficient for these things?” (2Co 2:16). Although John Bunyan was the most under-privileged of the Puritans in the formal sense of university education, he came closest to exemplifying all the features outlined above. Bunyan can be an encouragement to many who feel inferior because they have lacked the advantages of seminary training.

B. Examples

The Puritans are especially helpful when it comes to structure in expository preaching. They developed a knack of opening up the text and the application called for by that text. Some examples will illustrate this.

For instance, take John Flavel on “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Mat 11:28). Says Flavel: Three things are especially remarkable,

1. The soul’s distress: labour [weary] and heavy laden.
2. The invitation to come to Christ with that burden: *Come to me.*
3. The encouragement from Christ: *I will give you rest.*

A further example is Stephen Charnock on Matthew 12:20, “A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.”

1. First, the subject: A bruised reed and a smoking flax.
2. Second, the act: He will not break and He will not quench .
3. Third, the continuance of it: Till He sends forth judgment unto victory.

Richard Sibbes, opening up this same text, makes his application like this:

1. Doctrinal: Grace is little at firsthand; Christ will not quench small and weak beginnings.
2. Practical: Tenderness is required in ministers toward young beginners.
3. Experimental: Christ is a physician expert in treating all diseases, especially at the binding of a broken heart.

Thomas Brooks, in his *Precious Remedies against Satan's Devices*, commences with 2 Corinthians 2:11: "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices." Setting the text in context, Brooks then proceeds,

1. To prove that Satan uses devices,
2. To show what these devices are, and
3. To expound the remedies against Satan's devices.

In this way Brooks laid a foundation for a short series on the subject. For consistent structured and balanced outlines that draw out the meaning and message of the text, Thomas Manton is recommended.

Scripture varies a great deal in character. There is history, doctrine (like Romans and Ephesians), narrative, wisdom literature, the parables of our Lord, and apocalyptic writing (like Daniel chapters 7-12 and Revelation chapters 4-22). The diverse nature of Scripture demands great versatility in expository methods. The expositor must pray for freedom and flexibility in setting out the salient points and in extracting and applying the main truths intended.

It is evident that after preaching, the Puritans selected their materials for further development and publication. In this way we have preserved to us the legacy of Puritan literature, almost all of which originated in their preaching.

Concerning writing, Francis Bacon (1561-1626) declared, "Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man." While it may not be possible to write out every sermon in full, it is important for the expositor to construct the framework, and then write out the sections in which there may be weakness, obscurity, or lack of clarity. Calvin's commentaries are still sought after and highly valued today because he is noted for getting to principal points with maximum lucidity. He exemplifies Bacon's "exact man." We cannot edify when we are obscure.

In our day, special skill is needed to arouse interest and keep attention. We who are called to preach will do better at it if we follow the Puritan method of using compelling headings and structures that are true to the text, but handled in an imaginative and versatile way. A most important part of expository preaching is the use of illustrations that fit the subject in hand. If we can draw our illustrative material from the Scriptures, all the better. The Puri-

tans varied in how much illustration they used, but they excelled in drawing their material from the Scriptures. However, illustrations can also be taken from current events in order to drive home the relevance of the gospel message.

Note the effect of the best preacher of all, our Lord Himself. When the chief priests sent Temple guards to arrest Jesus, they were helpless to carry out the command and testified, “Never man spake like this man” (Joh 7:46). It will be a great day when preaching is revived as God’s instrument to convict the world of guilt, righteousness, and judgment (Joh 16:8). We can be sure that it will be imaginative preaching which arrests the hearts and minds of the hearers.



May the Lord prosper His church as it continues to reform under the bright lights of the Puritans, who give us a rich legacy of truth for the ages by the example of their lives during very difficult times, and in the immense treasures of their excellent writings.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

by Erroll Hulse

Erroll included these historical perspectives to correct common misimpressions about the Puritans, to clarify their universal value, and to further amplify their amazing accomplishments and legacy.

1. Were the Puritans Narrow Minded Bigots?
2. How Do Baptists Relate to the Puritans?
3. The Reformation in Scotland
4. Oxford and Cambridge Universities

1. Were the Puritans Narrow-Minded Bigots?

To most people today, the Puritans were a narrow-minded bigoted body of people who dressed in black and hated fun. This is a popular caricature. A scholarly volume has been written that examines carefully what the Puritans were really like. Leland Ryken's book *Worldly Saints: The Puritans as They Really Were* (Zondervan, 281 pages, 1986) corrects ill-informed views of the Puritans. It draws from both the English Puritans and the Puritans who settled in America, known as the New England Puritans. I have confined this book to the English Puritans. In 1990 Baker Book House published an excellent book called *Puritan Christianity in America*, with the sub-title, *Religion and Life in Seventeenth Century Massachusetts*, by Allen Carden. By 1996, this book was sold out and I had the greatest difficulty to obtain a copy, eventually borrowing this book from Prof. Tom Nettles. The New England Puritans developed their own character. Nevertheless, bearing that in mind, Ryken's observations help us gain a balanced picture of

Puritan character. In very abbreviated form, Ryken's assessments [of modern caricatures] look like this:

- The Puritans were against sex. Ridiculous.
- The Puritans never laughed and were opposed to fun. Only partly true. The Puritans were serious people, but they also said such things as this: "God would have our joys to be far more than our sorrows."
- The Puritans wore drab, unfashionable clothes. Untrue. The Puritans dressed according to the fashion of their class and time.
- The Puritans were opposed to sports and recreation. Largely false. A booklength study has shown that the Puritans enjoyed such varied activities as hunting, fishing, a form of football [i.e., soccer], bowling, reading, music, swimming, skating, and archery.
- The Puritans were money-grabbing workaholics who would do anything to get rich. Generally untrue. The Puritans were obsessed with the dangers of wealth.
- The Puritans were hostile to the arts. Partly true, but not as true as most moderns think. The misunderstanding stems from the fact that the Puritans removed music and art from the churches. But this was an objection to Catholic worship and ceremony, not to music and art themselves.
- The Puritans were overly emotional and denigrated reason. Nonsense. They aimed at a balance of head and heart.
- Puritanism was an old-fashioned movement that appealed only to people over seventy suffering from tired blood. Absolutely wrong. Puritanism was a youthful, vigorous movement. C. S. Lewis calls the early Puritans, "young, fierce, progressive intellectuals, very fashionable and up-to-date."^a
- The Puritans were repelled by the human body and the physical world. Not true. [But they were clearly opposed to seductive sensuality and worldliness.]
- The Puritans were intolerant toward people who disagreed with them. True by modern standards, but not by the standards of their day. No group in the sixteenth and seventeenth

^a C. S. Lewis, *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge University Press, 1966), p 121.

centuries was prepared to grant full religious and political toleration.

- The Puritans were overly strict. Often true. Samuel Ward's college diary consists of a cataloguing of his failings, and his self-accusations include such offences as these: going "to bed without prayer," falling asleep without his last thought "being about God," "unwillingness to pray."
- The Puritans repressed normal human feelings in the name of religion. Not so. The Puritans were warmly human in their feelings.
- The Puritans were legalistic moralists who judged people by their external behavior only. Largely untrue of the original Puritans.
- The Puritans indulged in too much self-loathing. Partly true. Cotton Mather wrote this type of thing in his diary: A Christian ought always to think humbly of himself, and be full of self-abasing^a reflections. By loathing of himself continually, and being very sensible of his own loathsome circumstances, a Christian does what is very pleasing to heaven.
- The Puritans were ignorant people who opposed education. Absolutely untrue. No Christian movement in history has been more zealous for education.

2. How Do Baptists Relate to the Puritans?

We have seen that John Bunyan was an exemplar of Puritanism in preaching, in lifestyle, and in writing. As pointed out, he was not a Puritan in the church sense because of his Baptist convictions. For his unwillingness to compromise, he suffered twelve years imprisonment.

Baptists grew out of Puritanism and multiplied especially during the 1640s and 1650s. We have seen this in Hanserd Knollys and William Kiffin. A detailed account of the emergence of the Baptists from the Puritan times is provided by Prof. Michael Haykin in his book *Kiffin, Knollys, and Keach* (1996, A Reformation Today title available from Evangelical Press). In scintillating fashion, Prof.

^a **self-abasing** – lowering or degrading of oneself in one's own esteem or opinion.

Haykin describes the lives of “the three Ks.” A brief look at one of these will give an idea of the story.

Hanserd Knollys (1599-1691) studied for the ministry at Catherine Hall, Cambridge, and entered the ministry in Lincolnshire. However, in 1635 his Puritan convictions led him to make a complete break with the Church of England. He left for America in the same year, but returned in 1641. He worked with the Baptists and became one of their outstanding leaders, being one of those who signed the *1646 Baptist Confession of Faith*. Knollys pastored a large Baptist church in London, attended by about one thousand.

An account of the developments preceding the formulation of the *1677 London Baptist Confession of Faith* is provided in the book *Our Baptist Heritage* (1993). When conditions improved in 1688, it was possible to publish the *Confession*—which had been formulated earlier, but persecution made it inexpedient^a to circulate the work widely. The *1677 Confession* became known as *The London Confession of Faith of 1689* only because of its wider publicity at that time. *The Westminster Confession* represents the doctrines of the Puritans. The Baptists based their confession of faith on the Puritan formulations of the *Westminster Confession* and the *Savoy Declaration* (the Congregational version of the *Westminster Confession*). Within the story of the Puritans, it is fascinating to note that the leading non-Presbyterian divines involved in the Savoy version of the *Westminster Confession* were John Owen, Thomas Goodwin, Philip Nye, William Bridge, Joseph Caryl, William Greenhill, and John Howe. 120 churches were represented.

The three Puritan confessions of faith are the same in essence and differ [primarily] in terms of church government and baptism.

Persecution and the Unfinished Reformation

As we have observed, the story of the Puritans is a story of constant persecution and harassment. In several ways, this was worse after the restoration of the monarchy and the coming of Charles II. Appalling conditions of persecution continued right up to the time of the Revolution in 1688.^b A brilliant book that covers the period

^a **inexpedient** – inappropriate; disadvantageous.

^b **Revolution of 1688** (also, *The Glorious Revolution*) – deposition and replacement of James II and VII as ruler of England, Scotland, and Ireland by his daughter Mary II and his Dutch nephew and Mary's husband, William III of Orange, which took place between November 1688 and May 1689.

from 1660 to 1689 is by Michael Watts.^a This is scholarship at its best, and at the same time provides gripping reading.

The persecution of the Puritans, separatists, and Baptists is simply a further miserable chapter in the history of that unholy alliance of church and state which began with Constantine in the fourth century.^b The church-state union virtually changed the face of Christianity for the next thousand years. The 16th century Reformation was only partial. The Continental Baptists, dubbed Anabaptists, wished to go all the way and separate the church from the state. Zwingli and Luther could see that they could not succeed in the Reformation without the support of the secular powers. From a pragmatic point of view they were right.

Christianity cannot be forced. Discipleship is essentially a voluntary matter. The story of the struggle between a) believers seeking freedom and seeking to maintain the biblical position of the church as a gathered body called out of the world, and b) secular or magisterial^c Christianity, is told by Leonerd Verduin in his books *The Reformers and their Stepchildren* and *The Anatomy of a Hybrid*. These books are classics that explain the history and the issues with wonderful lucidity.

From the time of King Henry VIII onwards, we observe the granting of supreme power and authority over the Christian church to a monarch, irrespective of his character or ability. It is easy to see how ludicrous that is when we read, in 1 Timothy 3, that every elder and deacon in Christ's churches should be of exemplary spiritual character. When the Pope conferred upon Henry VIII the title *The Defender of the Faith*, Henry could not restrain his delight, whereupon his court jester said to him, "My good Harry, let me and thee defend each other, and let the faith alone to defend itself."

^a Michael Watts, *The Dissenters – From the Reformation to the French Revolution* (Oxford, 542 pages, 1978).

^b **Constantine the Great** (c. 272-337) – Roman Emperor from 306 to 337 and the first Roman emperor to convert to Christianity. He issued the *Edict of Milan* in 313, which proclaimed tolerance for Christianity throughout the empire. By following Christianity himself, and by his direct intervention in affairs of the Church (appointing and presiding in Church councils), many began attending churches in order to gain influence, and Christianity became the *de facto* religion of the state.

^c **magisterial** – pertaining to magistrates; administered by governmental powers.

We see in the Puritan story a great deal of misery inflicted upon Christians in the interests of vested political power. It is the tradition in the Church of England that the monarch is the head of that Church. At this time Prince Charles is heir to the throne. He will automatically become head of the Church of England. He has stated that he is not interested in being “Defender of *the* Faith,” but simply “Defender of Faith.” He does not understand the nature of evangelical biblical Christianity.

As Professors James McGoldrick^a and Michael Haykin have shown, historical evidence is lacking to prove a connection between the Continental Anabaptists of the 16th century and the English Baptists. Yet both held firmly to the concept of the gathered nature of the church, and to baptism being for believers only. Both held firmly to the separation of church and state. Both believed in liberty of conscience.

In his book *Kiffin, Knollys, and Keach*, Haykin traces the emerging of two groups of Baptists in mid-seventeenth century England. The Arminian or General Baptists formed a smaller group, while the Puritan or Calvinistic Baptists formed the major group, which followed the Bunyan-Puritan tradition. Baptists around the world today are rediscovering their roots and the richness of the legacies of Puritanism.

3. The Reformation in Scotland

In 1971 Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones gave a paper at the Westminster Conference, London, with the title “John Knox, The Founder of Puritanism.” That is correct as far as Scotland is concerned. The Reformation in Scotland has its own distinctive character and it is better for the sake of clarity to think in terms of two separate reformational movements. There are parallels, but the Reformations in England and Scotland need to be traced out separately. Scotland became the land of Presbyterianism. That has never been the case in England. Today there are very few viable Presbyterian churches in England. Several hundred churches have as their confession *The 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith*. Without

^a James McGoldrick, *Baptist Successionism: A Crucial Question in Baptist History*, 1994, Atlanta, ISBN 0-8108-2726-3.

these churches, Puritanism at the end of the 20th century would be almost extinct in England.

Scotland, on the other hand, has a wonderful history of theological faithfulness to the Bible, a testimony that has enriched the wider church. When the churches in England declined during long periods in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, there remained a solid core of Presbyterian orthodoxy in Scotland, a nation that also enjoys an outstanding history of revival. There is a lesson here. Fidelity to a confession is important. Whenever the Particular Baptists have wandered away from their Puritan heritage, represented by *The 1689 Confession*, they have fallen into decline. When they have returned to those moorings, they have revived and prospered.

While John Knox did exercise an influence in the progress of the Reformation in England, it is appropriate that we should view John Knox as a principal leader in the Scottish Reformation. When we look to the antecedents in England, we rightly acclaim William Tyndale as the antecedent of Puritanism. Tyndale gave the common people of England the Bible. He was the first in a new line to defy the absolute power of the English monarch.

Characteristic of the Scottish Reformation was the manner in which the godly banded themselves together under the Lord. They did this by solemn oath for mutual assistance and support in the defense of the gospel and the advance of reformation. The earliest known bond or "covenant" was made under the leadership of John Knox in 1556.

A National Covenant of about 1,000 words was written in 1580; it renounced Roman Catholicism root and branch. Alexander Henderson, a Reformed leader in Scotland in the 1630s, drew up *The Solemn League and Covenant* in 1638. This covenant was approved at the General Assembly of Scotland in 1643, and again at a joint session of the English House of Commons and the Westminster Assembly. The subscribers swore to preserve the Reformed doctrine in Scotland, to aid reformation in England and Ireland, and to endeavor to remove all contrary systems including Romanism, Episcopacy, and heresy.

The *Act of Uniformity*, which drove out over 2,000 ministers from their churches in 1662 in England, also affected Scotland. Nearly 400, about a third of the ministers, were forced out of their

churches. Draconian measures were taken against those who gathered in unauthorized meetings (conventicles). Fines, imprisonment, banishment, and even slavery were suffered by those who continued to practice their faith according to their consciences. This period, known as the time of the Dissenters in England, was the time of the Covenanters in Scotland. The period 1685-1688 was especially cruel and became known as "the killing time." Many were put to death by soldiers, without any recourse to law or civil trial. Doctrinally, the Covenanters held to the *Westminster Confession of Faith*. Many covenanting ministers were shot, hanged, or sent into banishment until there were hardly any leaders left.^a

4. Oxford and Cambridge Universities

Readers will have observed that almost all the Puritans were educated at Oxford or Cambridge Universities. In present-day terms, that sounds prestigious in the extreme since Cambridge and Oxford, in that order, top the table of excellence in a league table covering over one hundred British universities. Today, to enter Oxford or Cambridge requires top examination grades plus passing special entry examinations, or else winning scholarships (of which there are a variety, both in Britain and overseas).

It may come as a surprise to some readers, but in England during the days of the Puritans there were no other choices. Oxford and Cambridge were the only universities! The academic standards and the discipline varied considerably. In the short sketch of the life of John Owen, I referred to the difficulties he encountered as vice-chancellor in effecting much-needed reformation in the university. (The chancellor is often a famous personality to give prestige to a university, while the vice-chancellor is the person who has to do the actual work of administration.)

There is a fair amount of mythology about the emergence of Oxford and Cambridge Universities. This is cleared away in *The Medieval English Universities: Oxford and Cambridge*.^b This book shows that these institutions, like Paris and Bologna in France be-

^a The story is told by Alexander Smellie, *Men of the Covenant* (Banner of Truth), 525 pages.

^b Alan B. Cobban, *The Medieval English Universities: Oxford and Cambridge* (Scolar Press, 1988).

fore them, gained university status gradually. Both Oxford and Cambridge became universities shortly after 1209. Before the emergence of universities, advanced education was provided at cathedral schools. The population of England in the fourteenth century could not easily justify a third university, especially when considered that both Oxford and Cambridge were under the jurisdiction of the Roman Catholic Church. The collegiate system developed—which, apart from Durham University, is unique to Oxford and Cambridge. Each college is essentially independent while a central administration only collates matters of common interest. Colleges were originally founded and endowed by kings, queens, high-ranking statesmen, and aristocrats.

There are about forty colleges at Oxford. We name a few with their dates of inception to give an idea of just how old, and how new, some of the colleges are: Bailliol (1263), Merton (1264), Magdalen (1458), Wadham (1612), Pembroke (1624), Worcester (1714), Regent's Park (1810), Keble (1868), and Wolfston (1965).

The colleges at Cambridge number about twenty-four. These include Peterhouse (1284), Gonville and Caius (1384), King's (1441), Queen's (1448), Jesus (1496), Trinity (1546), Emmanuel (1584), and Sidney Sussex (1596)—the latter two having originally been endowed as Puritan colleges—Selwyn (1882), and Churchill (1960).

Some Scottish universities also boast great antiquity: St. Andrews (1411), Glasgow (1451), Aberdeen (1495), and Edinburgh (1583).

After Oxford and Cambridge, London University is the oldest in England. It has the largest number of students, the most colleges, institutes, and medical and dental schools. The University of Manchester was founded in 1851, and the Universities of Newcastle-on-Tyne in 1852, Birmingham 1900, Liverpool 1903, Leeds 1904, Sheffield 1905, Bristol 1909, Reading 1926, and Nottingham 1948. A university now has been established in almost every major city in England.

Appendix 2

A PURITAN SAMPLER

The following are brief excerpts from various Puritan writings, as examples of the tremendously valuable legacy brought to the Christian church today through the republishing of their works. These titles are available without charge from Chapel Library.^a

1. The Mute Christian under the Smarting Rod Thomas Brooks
2. The Pilgrim's Progress John Bunyan (1628-1688)
3. Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment Jeremiah Burroughs
4. Charity and Its Fruits Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758)
5. The Fountain of Life Opened John Flavel (1627-1691)
6. The Vanity of Thoughts Thomas Goodwin (1600-1680)
7. Of Domestical Duties William Gouge (1575-1653)
8. The Lord's Supper Matthew Henry (1662-1714)
9. A Treatise of Self-denial Thomas Manton (1620-1677)
10. Christ Receiveth Sinners Walter Marshall (1628-1680)
11. Almost a Christian Matthew Meade (1621-1699)
12. Temptation John Owen (1616-1683)
13. The Letters of Samuel Rutherford (1600-1661)
14. Duties of Husbands and Wives Richard Steele (1629-1692)
15. God's Grace in Justifying the Sinner Robert Traill (1642-1716)
16. True Christian's Love to the Unseen Christ Thomas Vincent
17. The Doctrine of Repentance Thomas Watson (1620-1686)
18. Honey Out of the Rock Thomas Willcox (1621-1687)

^a Available worldwide at www.ChapelLibrary.org for eBook and PDF downloads, and in print upon request.

1. The Mute Christian under the Smarting Rod

Thomas Brooks (1608-1680)

Brooks comforts, encourages, and challenges the believer in 44 short devotionals on a wide variety of subjects, each employing his masterful figures and illustrations.^a

All the hell that you shall ever have!

Consider Christian, that all your...

- trials and troubles,
 - calamities and miseries,
 - crosses and losses, which you meet with in this world
- are all the hell that you shall ever have!

Here and now, you have your hell. Hereafter you shall have your heaven! This is the worst of your condition; the best is yet to come!

Lazarus had his hell first, his heaven last; but Dives^b had his heaven first and his hell at last. You have all your pangs, and pains, and throes here that you shall ever have! Your ease, and rest, and pleasure are yet to come!

Here you have all your bitters; your sweets are yet to come! Here you have your sorrows; your joys are yet to come! Here you have all your *winter nights*; your *summer days* are yet to come! Here you have your evil things; your good things are yet to come!

Death will put an end to all your sins and to all your sufferings! Death will be an inlet to those joys, delights, and comforts which shall never have an end!

Who can seriously meditate upon this and not be silent under God's most smarting rod?

Then the scum appears!

Few Christians see themselves and understand themselves rightfully. By trials, God reveals much of a man's sinful self to his pious

^a CHAPEL LIBRARY's 32-page edition includes the complete work.

^b **Dives** – Latin word for “rich (man)” occurring in the Vulgate, Luke 16:1; commonly taken as the proper name of the rich man in that parable and used generically for “rich man.”

self. When the fire is put under the pot, *then the scum appears*. So when God tries a poor soul, Oh! how does...

- the scum of pride,
- the scum of murmuring,
- the scum of distrust,
- the scum of impatience,
- the scum of worldliness,
- the scum of carnality,^a
- the scum of foolishness,
- the scum of willfulness

—reveal itself in the heart of the poor creature!

Trials are God's looking glass, in which His people see their own faults. Oh! that looseness, that vileness, that wretchedness, that sink of filthiness, that gulf of wickedness, which trials show to be in their hearts!

"Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction" (Isa 48:10).

When Munster lay sick

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."—Revelation 3:19

"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."—Hebrews 12:6

All the afflictions which come upon the saints are the fruits of divine love.

When Munster^b lay sick, and his friends asked him how he did and how he felt, he pointed to his sores and ulcers, whereof he was full, and said, "These are God's gems and jewels with which He decks His best friends, and to me they are more precious than all the gold and silver in the world!"

"It is good for me that I have been afflicted" (Psa 119:71).

God afflicts you, O Christian, in love! Therefore Luther cries out, "Strike, Lord, strike, Lord! And spare not!"

^a **carnality** – state of being fleshly; sensuality.

^b Possibly **Sebastian Munster** (1488-1522) – a Hebrew scholar and an early associate of the Reformer Martin Luther. Munster died of the plague in 1552 and Brooks' reference possibly relates to the sores and ulcers resulting from the disease of which he died.

Father knows best!

“For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.”—Hebrews 12:10

What God our Father wills is best. When He wills sickness, sickness is better than health. When He wills weakness, weakness is better than strength. When He wills poverty, poverty is better than wealth. When He wills reproach, reproach is better than honor. When He wills death, death is better than life.

As God is wisdom itself, and so knows that which is best, so He is goodness itself and therefore cannot do anything but that which is best; therefore remain silent before the Lord.

Everything on this side of hell is mercy

Oh! Labor every day to be more humble and more low and little in your own eyes. “Who am I,” says the humble soul, “but that God should cross me in this mercy, and take away that mercy, and pass a sentence of death upon every mercy? I am not worthy of the least mercy; I deserve not a crumb of mercy; I have forfeited every mercy.”

Only by pride comes contention. It is only pride that puts men upon contending with God and men. A humble soul will lie quiet at the foot of God; it will be contented with bare necessities. A dinner of green herbs relishes well with the humble man’s palate, whereas a stalled ox^a is but a coarse dish to a proud man’s stomach. A humble heart thinks none less than himself, nor none worse than himself. A humble heart looks upon small mercies as great mercies, and great afflictions as small afflictions, and small afflictions as no afflictions—and therefore sits mute and quiet under all. Do but keep humble, and you will keep silent before the Lord.

Pride kicks, and flings,^b and frets;^c but a humble man has still his hand upon his mouth. *Everything on this side of hell is mercy*, much mercy, rich mercy to a humble soul; and therefore he remains mute under the smarting rod.

^a stalled ox – an ox fattened in a stall for killing.

^b flings – flies out into violent and irregular motions.

^c frets – worries.

2. The Pilgrim's Progress

John Bunyan (1628-1688)

This classic work is an analogy of the Christian life, from conviction of sin, to doubts, on to salvation in Christ, through a life of sanctification, unto the Celestial City. This excerpt begins just after a man leaves the City of Destruction in quest of removing the burden (of sin) on his back.^a

An Unfriendly Neighbor (Obstinate and Pliable)

The neighbors also came out to see him run; and, as he ran, some mocked (Jer 20:10), others threatened, and some cried to him to return. Two resolved to fetch him back by force—the name of the one was OBSTINATE, and the name of the other PLIABLE. Now by this time the man was a good distance from them; but, however, they were resolved to pursue him; which they did, and in a little time they overtook him. Then said the man, “Neighbors, wherefore are ye come?” They said, “To persuade you to go back with us.” But he said, “That can by no means be. You dwell in the city of Destruction, the place also where I was born. I see it to be so; and dying there, sooner or later, you will sink lower than the grave into a place that burns with fire and brimstone: be content, good neighbors, and go along with me.”

“What!” said OBSTINATE, “and leave our friends and our comforts behind!” (Mat 19:22). “Yes,” said CHRISTIAN, for that was his name; “because that all which you shall forsake is not worthy to be compared with a little of that which I am seeking to enjoy (2Co 4:18). And if you will go along with me, and hold it, you shall fare as I myself; for there where I go is enough and to spare (Luk 15:17). Come away, and prove my words.”

“What are the things you seek, since you leave all the world to find them?” (Luk 14:33). “I seek an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fades not away (1Pe 1:4). It is laid up in heaven,

^a CHAPEL LIBRARY publishes three versions: “Pilgrim’s Progress in Pictures,” aimed at children 7 to 12; “Pilgrim’s Progress for Everyone,” an abridgement in 48 pages; and *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, the entire Part One in a 172 page paperback that includes George Offor’s explanatory footnotes from the 1849 edition. A course is also available for independent or correspondence study.

and safe there, to be bestowed, at the time appointed, on them that diligently seek it (Heb 11:16). Read it so, if you will, in my book.”

“Tush,” said OBSTINATE, “away with your book! Will you go back with us or not?” “No, not I,” said CHRISTIAN, “because I have laid my hand to the plow” (Luk 9:62). Then said PLIABLE, “If what the good CHRISTIAN says is true, the things he looks after are better than ours: my heart inclines to go with my neighbor.”

“What! more fools still?” said OBSTINATE. “Well, neighbor OBSTINATE,” said PLIABLE, “I begin to come to a point. I intend to go along with this good man, and to cast in my lot with him. But, my good companion, do you know the way to this desired place?”

“I am directed by a man whose name is EVANGELIST,” said CHRISTIAN, “to speed me to a little gate that is before us, where we shall receive instructions about the way.” “Come then, good neighbor, let us be going.” Then they went both together.

“I will go back to my own place,” said OBSTINATE. “I will be no companion of such a misled, fantastic fellow.”

Now when OBSTINATE was gone back, CHRISTIAN and PLIABLE went talking over the plain: and thus they began their discourse. “Come, neighbor CHRISTIAN, since there is none but us two here, tell me now further what the things are, and how to be enjoyed, whither we are going.” CHRISTIAN said, “There is an everlasting kingdom, and an everlasting life to be given us, that we may inhabit that kingdom for ever” (Isa 65:17; Joh 10:27-29).

“Well said. And what else?” “There are crowns of glory to be given us; and garments that will make us shine like the sun in the firmament of heaven” (Mat 13:43; 2Ti 4:8; Rev 3:4).

“That is very pleasant. And what else?” “There shall be no more crying nor sorrow; for he that is owner of the place will wipe all tears from our eyes” (Isa 25:8; Rev 7:16-17; 21:4).

“Well, my good companion, glad am I to hear of these things: come on, let us speed our pace.” Said CHRISTIAN, “I cannot go so fast as I would, by reason of this burden that is on my back.”

The Slough of Despond

Now just as they had ended this talk, they drew near to a very miry slough that was in the midst of the plain; and they being

heedless, did both fall suddenly into the bog. The name of the slough was Despond. Here, therefore, they wallowed for a time, being grievously bedaubed with the dirt because they missed the stepping stones in the middle; and CHRISTIAN, because of the burden that was on his back, began to sink in the mire.

Then said PLIABLE, "Ah! neighbor CHRISTIAN, where are we now?" "Truly," said CHRISTIAN, "I do not know."

At that PLIABLE began to be offended, and angrily said to his fellow, "Is this the happiness you have told me of all this while? If we have such ill speed at our first setting out, what may we expect between this and our journey's end? If I get out again with my life, you shall possess the brave country alone." And with that he gave a desperate struggle or two, and got out of the mire on that side of the slough which was next to his own house: so away he went, and CHRISTIAN saw him no more (Luk 8:13).

Wherefore CHRISTIAN was left to tumble in the Slough of Despond alone. He still endeavored to struggle to that side of the slough that was farthest from his own house, and next to the wicket gate. Which he did, but could not get out, because of the burden that was upon his back.

But I beheld, in my dream, that a man came to him whose name was HELP, and asked him what he did there. "Sir," said CHRISTIAN, "I was bidden to go this way by a man called EVANGELIST, who directed me also to yonder gate, that I might escape the wrath to come; and as I was going thither, I fell in here."

"But why did you not look for the steps?" "Fear followed me so hard, that I fled the next way and fell in."

Then said HELP, "Give me thy hand." So he gave him his hand, and he drew him out; and set him upon some ground, and bade him go on his way (Psa 40:2).

Then CHRISTIAN stepped to him that plucked him out, and said, "Sir, wherefore, since over this place is the way from the city of Destruction to yonder gate, is it that this place is not mended, that poor travelers might go thither with more security?"

"This slough," said HELP, "is caused by the many fears and doubts which settle here. It has swallowed up at least twenty thousand carloads of wholesome instructions. It is such a place as cannot be mended: it is the descent whither the filth that attends

conviction for sin doth continually run; and therefore it is called the Slough of Despond. For as the sinner is awakened about his lost condition, there arises in his soul many discouraging apprehensions, which all of them get together, and settle in this place: and this is the reason of the badness of this ground.”

3. The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment

Jeremiah Burroughs (1599-1646)

This classic work challenges the believer to come to a complete Christ-honoring contentment, with no exceptions! Eight chapters define, describe, and explain contentment and murmuring, with insightful applications.^a

A. How Christ Teaches Contentment: The vanity of the creature

Whatever there is in the creature has emptiness in it. “Vanity of vanities; all is vanity” (Ecc 1:2) is the lesson that the wise man learned: the creature in itself can do us neither good nor hurt; it is all but as wind. There is nothing in the creature that is suitable for a gracious heart to feed upon for its good and happiness. My brethren, the reason why you do not have contentment in the things of the world is *not* that you do not have enough of them. The reason is that they are not things proportional to that immortal soul of yours that is capable of God Himself.

B. How Christ Teaches Contentment: The one thing necessary

Christ teaches a Christian what the one thing necessary is. “Thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful” (Luk 10:41-42). Before, the soul sought after this and that. But now it says, “I see that it is not necessary for me to be rich, but it is necessary for me to make my peace with God. It is not necessary that I should live a pleasurable life in this world, but it is absolutely necessary that I should have pardon of my sin. It is not necessary that I should have honor and preferment, but it is necessary that I should have God as my portion and have my part in Jesus Christ. It is necessary that my soul should be saved in the Day

^a Burroughs’ 120-page original, in his effective preaching style, repeats almost every point in sometimes comparing and sometimes contrasting parallel sentences. CHAPEL LIBRARY’s edition is a 64-page condensation, with every point carefully preserved by omitting repetitions.

of Jesus Christ! The other things are pretty fine indeed, and I should be glad if God would give me them: a fine house, income, clothes, and advancement for my wife and children. These are comfortable things, but they are not the *necessary* things. I may have these and yet perish forever, but the other is absolutely necessary. No matter how poor I am, I may have what is absolutely necessary”—thus Christ instructs the soul.

Many of you have had some thoughts that it is indeed necessary for you to provide for your souls. But when you come to Christ's school, Christ causes the fear of eternity to fall upon you. [He] causes such a real sight of the great things of eternity and the absolute necessity of those things that it possesses your heart with fear and takes you off from all other things in the world.

It is said that when Pompey^a was carrying corn to Rome at a time of dearth,^b he was in a great deal of danger from storms at sea. But he said, “We must go on; it is necessary that Rome should be relieved, but it is not necessary that we should live.” So, certainly, when the soul is once taken up with the things that are of absolute necessity, it will not be much troubled about other things. A man who lies at home and has nothing to do finds fault with everything. So it is with the heart: when the heart of a man has nothing to do but to be busy about creature comforts, every little thing troubles him. But when the heart is taken up with the weighty things of eternity, the things of here below that disquieted it before are things now of no consequence to him in comparison with the other. How things fall out here is not much regarded by him, if the one thing necessary is provided for.

C. How Christ Teaches Contentment:

The soul comes to understand its relation to the world

By this I mean God comes to instruct the soul effectually through Christ by His Spirit on what terms it lives here in the world. While I live in the world, my condition is to be but a pilgrim, a stranger, a traveler, and a soldier (Heb 11:13; 1Pe 2:11; 2Ti 2:3-4). Now rightly to understand this—not only being taught it by rote so that I can speak the words over, but when my soul is possessed with

^a **Pompey the Great** (106-48 BC) – Roman general and political leader who quarreled with Caesar and fled to Egypt, where he was murdered.

^b **dearth** – famine.

the consideration of this truth: that God has set me in this world, not as in my home, but as a mere stranger and a pilgrim who is traveling to another home, and that I am here a soldier in my warfare—a right understanding of this is a mighty help to contentment in whatever befalls one.

Thus, it should be with us in this world; for the truth is, we are all in this world but as *seafaring men*, tossed up and down on the waves of the sea of this world, and our haven is heaven. Here we are *traveling*, and our home is a distant home in another world. Though we meet with travelers' fare sometimes, yet it should not be grievous to us. The Scripture tells us plainly that we must behave ourselves here as *pilgrims* and *strangers*: "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1Pe 2:11).

Consider your condition: you are *pilgrims and strangers*—so do not think to satisfy yourselves here. When a man comes into an inn and sees there a fair cupboard of plate, he is not troubled that it is not his own. Why? Because he is going away. So let us not be troubled when we see that other men have great wealth, but we have not. Why? Because *we* are going away to another country. You are, as it were, only lodging here for a night. If you were to live a hundred years, it is not as much as a night in comparison to eternity. It is as though you were traveling and had come to an inn; what madness is it for a man to be discontented because he has not got what he sees there, seeing he may be going away again within less than a quarter of an hour! You find the same in David: this was the argument that took David's heart away from the things of this world and set him on other things: "I am a stranger in the earth: hide not thy commandments from me" (Psa 119:19). [As if to say,]

I am a stranger in the earth—what then?—then, Lord, let me have the knowledge of your commandments, and it is sufficient. As for the things of the earth, I do not set store by them, whether I have much or little; but hide not Thy commandments from me, Lord! Let me know the rule that I should guide my life by.

Then again, we are not only travelers but *soldiers* also. Therefore, we ought to behave ourselves accordingly. The Apostle makes use of this argument in writing to Timothy: "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2Ti 2:3). The very thought of the condition of a soldier is enough to still his disquiet

of heart. When he is away, he does not enjoy such comforts in his quarters as he has in his own home. Perhaps a man who had his bed and curtains drawn about him and all comforts in his chamber has now sometimes to lie on straw. He thinks to himself, "I am a soldier and it is suitable to my condition." He must have his bed warmed at home, but he must lie out in the fields when he is a soldier; and the very thought of the condition in which he stands, calms him in all things. Yes, and he goes rejoicing to think that this is only suitable to the condition in which God has put him. So it should be with us in respect of this world. What an unseemly thing it would be to see a soldier go whining up and down with his finger in his eye,^a complaining that he does not have hot meat every meal and his bed warmed as he did at home! Now Christians know that they are in their warfare: they are here in this world fighting and combating with the enemies of their souls and their eternal welfare, and they must be willing to endure hardness here. A right understanding of the fact that God has put them into such a condition is what will make them content, especially when they consider that they are certain of the victory and that ere long they shall triumph with Jesus Christ. Then all their sorrows shall be done away, and their tears wiped from their eyes. A soldier is content to endure hardness though he does not know that he shall have the victory; but a Christian knows himself to be a soldier and knows [also] that he shall conquer and triumph with Jesus Christ to all eternity!

4. Charity and Its Fruits

Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758)

Although Jonathan Edwards was born, reared, educated, and served in the American Colonies after the Puritan era, he is included here to represent the American Puritan tradition. Many consider him to be among the finer theologians from either side of the Atlantic in the Puritan tradition. The classic exposition of 1 Corinthians 13, Charity and Its Fruits is one of the best examples of his work. This excerpt is from the section on humility. Other sections

^a finger...eye – weeping.

include grace, selfishness, anger, judging, and heaven as a world of love.^a

The Spirit of Charity Is an Humble Spirit

“Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly.”—1 Corinthians 13:4-5

In the words of the text we may observe that a spirit of Christian love is spoken of as the opposite of a proud behavior, and that two degrees of such a behavior are mentioned. The higher degree is expressed by a man’s “vaunting himself,” that is, by his so carrying himself as to show plainly that he glories in what he has or is. The lower degree is expressed by his “behaving himself unseemly,” that is, by his not conducting himself in a becoming and decent manner in the enjoyment of his prosperity, but so acting as to show that he thinks the mere fact of his being prosperous exalts him above others. And the spirit of charity or love is spoken of as opposed not only to a proud behavior, but to a proud spirit—or pride in the heart—for charity “is not puffed up.” The doctrine we are taught in these words, then, is this:

The spirit of charity, or Christian love, is an humble spirit.

Humility may be defined to be a habit of mind and heart A) corresponding to our comparative unworthiness and vileness before God, or a sense of our own comparative meanness^b in His sight, and B) with the disposition to a behavior answerable thereto. The first thing in humility is,

A. A sense of our own comparative meanness

Humility is an excellence proper to all created intelligent beings, for they are all infinitely little and mean before God, and most of them are in some way mean and low in comparison with some of their fellow creatures. Humility implies a compliance with that rule of the apostle that we think not of ourselves more highly than we ought to think, but that we think soberly, according as God hath dealt to everyone of us the measure not only of faith, but of other things (Rom 12:3). And this humility, as a virtue in men, implies a sense of their own comparative meanness, both as compared with their fellow creatures and as compared with God.

^a CHAPEL LIBRARY’s 36-page edition includes portions from each section.

^b **meanness, mean** – less deserving of honor or esteem.

As compared with God, a truly humble man is sensible of the *small extent of his own knowledge*, and the great extent of his ignorance, and the small extent of his understanding. He is sensible of his weakness, how little his strength is, and how little he is able to do. He is sensible of his natural distance from God: of his dependence on Him, of the insufficiency of his own power and wisdom, and that it is by God's power that he is upheld and provided for. He is sensible that he needs God's wisdom to lead and guide him, and His might to enable him to do what he ought to do for Him. He is sensible of his subjection to God, and that God's greatness does properly consist in His authority, whereby He is the sovereign Lord and King over all. He is willing to be subject to that authority, as feeling that it becomes him to submit to the divine will and yield in all things to God's authority. Man had this sort of comparative littleness before the Fall. He was then infinitely little and mean in comparison with God. But his natural meanness has become much greater since the Fall, for the moral ruin of his nature has greatly impaired his natural faculties, though it has not extinguished them.

The truly humble man, since the Fall, is also sensible of his *moral* meanness and vileness. This consists in his sinfulness. His natural meanness is his littleness as a creature; his moral meanness is his vileness and filthiness as a sinner. Unfallen man was infinitely distant from God in his natural qualities or attributes. Fallen man is infinitely distant from Him also as sinful, and thus filthy. And a truly humble person is in some measure sensible of his comparative meanness in this respect, that he sees how exceedingly polluted he is before an infinitely holy God, in Whose sight the heavens are not clean.

As humility consists in a sense of our comparative meanness, so it implies,

B. A disposition to a corresponding behavior and conduct

Without this there is no true humility!

1. Toward God

First, consider some things in our behavior toward God to which humility will dispose us. As the first of these, humility disposes a person heartily and freely *to acknowledge his meanness* or littleness before God. He sees how fit and suitable it is that he should do this, and he does it willingly, and even with delight. He freely confesses his own nothingness and vileness—and owns him-

self unworthy of any mercy and deserving of all misery. It is the disposition of the humble soul to lie low before God and to humble himself in the dust in His presence.

Humility also disposes one *to be distrustful of himself*, and to depend only on God. The proud man, who has a high opinion of his own wisdom, strength, or righteousness, is self-confident. But the humble are not disposed^a to trust in themselves, but are diffident^b of their own sufficiency. It is their disposition to rely on God, and with delight to cast themselves wholly on Him as their refuge, righteousness, and strength.

The humble man is further disposed *to renounce all the glory of the good he has or does*, and to give it all to God. If there be anything that is good in him, or any good done by him, it is not his disposition to glory or vaunt himself in it before God, but to ascribe all to God. In the language of the psalmist he says, “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy and thy truth’s sake” (Psa 115:1).

It is the disposition, again, of the humble person, *wholly to subject himself to God*. His heart is not opposed to a full and absolute subjection to the divine will, but inclined to it. He is disposed to be subject to the commands and laws of God, for he sees it to be right and best that he who is so infinitely inferior to God, should be thus subject; and that it is an honor that belongs to God to reign over and give laws to him. And he is equally disposed to be subject to the providence and daily disposal of God, and to submit cheerfully to His will as manifested in what He orders for him. Though God orders affliction and low and depressed circumstances as his lot in the world, he does not murmur. Feeling his meanness and unworthiness, he is sensible that afflictions and trying dispensations^c are what he deserves, and that his circumstances are actually better than he merits. And however dark the divine dealings, with the faith which we so often see manifested in those who are eminent in grace, he is ready to say with Job, “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him” (Job 13:15).

2. Toward men

Secondly, humility disposes to a behavior toward men answerable to our comparative meanness. And this I shall show by point-

^a **dispose** – set the mind in a particular frame.

^b **diffident** – distrustful; doubting.

^c **dispensations** – dealings of God with His creatures.

ing out what kind of behavior humility tends to prevent. It tends, in the first place, *to prevent an aspiring and ambitious behavior* amongst men. The man that is under the influence of an humble spirit is content with such a situation among men as God is pleased to allot to him, and is not greedy of honor, and does not affect to appear uppermost and exalted above his neighbors. He acts on the principle of that saying of the prophet, “Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not” (Jer 45:5); and also of that injunction of the apostle, “Mind not high things” (Rom 12:16)...

Humility tends also *to prevent an arrogant and assuming behavior*. He that is under the influence of an humble spirit is not forward^a to take too much upon him, and when he is among others, he does not carry it toward them as if he expected and insisted that a great deal of regard should be shown to himself...

Humility tends also *to prevent a scornful behavior*. Treating others with scorn and contempt is one of the worst and most offensive manifestations of pride toward them. But they that are under the influence of an humble spirit are far from such a behavior. They do not despise or look down on those that are below them with a haughty supercilious^b air, as though they were scarce worthy to come nigh them or to have any regard from them. They are sensible that there is *no* such vast difference between themselves and their fellowmen as warrants such a behavior...

Humility tends also *to prevent a willful and stubborn behavior*. They that are under the influence of an humble spirit will not set up their own will either in public or private affairs. They will not be stiff and inflexible, and insist that everything must go according to what they happen first to propose...

On the contrary, humility disposes men to be of a yielding spirit to others—ready, for the sake of peace and to gratify others, to comply in many things with their inclinations, and to yield to their judgments wherein they are not inconsistent with truth and holiness. A truly humble man is inflexible in nothing but in the cause of his Lord and Master, which is the cause of truth and virtue. In this he is inflexible because God and conscience require it...

Humility also tends, once more, *to prevent a self-justifying behavior*. He that is under the influence of an humble spirit, if he has fallen into a fault—as all are liable at some time to fall, or if in any-

^a **forward** – bold; eager.

^b **supercilious** – prideful.

thing he has injured another, or dishonored the Christian name and character—will be willing to acknowledge his fault, and take the shame of it to himself. He will not be hard to be brought to a sense of his fault, nor to testify that sense by a suitable acknowledgment of his error (Jam 5:16)...

It is pride that makes men so exceedingly backward^a to confess their fault when they have fallen into one, and that makes them think that to be their shame which is in truth their highest honor. But humility in the behavior makes men prompt to their duty in this respect, and if it prevails as it should, will lead them to do it with alacrity^b and even delight. And when anyone shall give such a person a Christian admonition^c or reproof for any fault, humility will dispose him to take it kindly, and even thankfully. It is pride that makes men to be so uneasy when they are reproved by any of their neighbors, so that oftentimes they will not bear it, but become angry, and manifest great bitterness of spirit. Humility, on the contrary, will dispose them not only to tolerate such reproofs, but to esteem and prize them as marks of kindness (Psa 141:5).

5. The Fountain of Life Opened

John Flavel (1627-1691)

Flavel's classic work beautifully examines Christ's essential glory, the Covenant of Grace, and His offices of Prophet, Priest, and King.^d

The Kingly Office of Christ as Providentially Executed for the Redeemed

"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church."

—Ephesians 1:22

The foregoing verses are thankful and humble adoration of the grace of God in bringing the Ephesians to believe in Christ. This effect of His power is compared with that other glorious effect, the raising of Christ Himself from the dead; both are from the same

^a **backward** – reluctant.

^b **alacrity** – readiness.

^c **admonition** – counsel to correct a fault.

^d CHAPEL LIBRARY's 20-page excerpt is from the section on Christ's rule as King.

efficient cause. It raised Christ from a low estate, even from the dead, to a high, a very high and glorious state, to be the head both of the world and of the church: the head of the world by way of dominion, the head of the church by way of union and special influence, ruling the world for the good of His people in it. "He gave him to be head over all things to the church." And here let these four things be seriously regarded:

1. *The dignity and authority committed to Christ*: "He hath put all things under His feet;" which implies full, ample and absolute dominion in Him, and subjection in them over whom He reigns. This power is delegated to Him by the Father; for besides the essential, native power and dominion over all, which He hath as God (Psa 22:28), there is a dispensed authority which is proper in Him as Mediator, which He received as the reward or fruit of His suffering (Phi 2:8-11).

2. *The recipient of this authority is Christ*, and Christ primarily and only: He is the first receptacle of all authority and power. Whatever authority any creature is clothed with is but ministerial and derivative. Christ is the only Lord (Jude 1:4), the fountain of all power.

3. *The object of this authority* is the whole creation; "all things" are put under His feet: He rules from sea to sea, even to the utmost bounds of God's creation. "Thou hast given Him power over all flesh" (Joh 17:2): all creatures, rational and irrational, animate and inanimate, angels, devils, men, winds, seas, all obey Him.

4. *And especially notice the end for which He governs and rules the universal empire; it is for "the church,"* that is, for the advantage, comfort and salvation of those for whom He died. He purchased the church; and that He might have the highest security that His blood should not be lost, God the Father has put all things into His hands, to order and dispose all as He pleaseth. Hence, all the affairs of the kingdom of providence are ordered and determined by Jesus Christ, for the special advantage and everlasting good of His redeemed people. "As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him" (Joh 17:2). Hence it comes to pass that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom 8:28).

That Jesus Christ providentially controls all the affairs of this world is evident from both Scripture assertion, and from the observations of events...

But my business, in this discourse, is not to prove that there is a Providence, which none but atheists deny. I shall show by what acts Jesus Christ administers this kingdom and in what manner; and what use may be made of this subject.

Jesus Christ Rules All Providence

Jesus Christ rules and orders the Kingdom of Providence by supporting, permitting, restraining, limiting, protecting, punishing and rewarding those over whom He reigns providentially.

1. He supports the world and all creatures in it by His power.

"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (Joh 5:17). "By Him all things consist" (Col 1:17). It is a considerable part of Christ's glory to have a whole world of creatures owing their being and hourly preservation to Him. He is "given for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth" (Isa 49:8).

2. He permits and suffers the worst of creation in His dominion to be and act as they do.

"The deceived and the deceiver are His" (Job 12:16). Even those that fight against Christ and His people receive both power and permission from Him. Say not that it is unbecoming the Most Holy to permit such evils, which He could prevent if He pleased. For as He permits no more than He will overrule to His praise, so that very permission of His is holy and just. Christ's working is not confounded with the creature's. Pure sunbeams are not tainted by the noisome vapors on which they shine. His holiness hath no fellowship with their iniquities; nor are their transgressions at all excused by His permission. "He is the Rock, His work is perfect" but "they have corrupted themselves" (Deu 32:4,5). And yet should He permit sinful creatures to act out all the wickedness in their hearts, there would remain neither peace nor order in the world. Therefore,

3. He powerfully restrains creatures by the bridle of Providence from the commission of those things to which their hearts are inclined.

"The remainder of wrath Thou wilt restrain" (Psa 76:10); allowing just so much as shall serve His holy ends, and no more. And truly this is one of the glorious mysteries of Providence, which

amazes the serious and considerate soul; to see the spirit of a creature fully set to do mischief; power enough, as one would think, in his hand to do it, and a door of opportunity standing open for it; and yet the effect wonderfully hindered. The strong propensities of the will are inwardly checked, as in the case of Laban (Gen 31:24); or a diversion is strangely cast in their way, as in the case of Sennacherib (2Ki 19:7, 8), so that their hands cannot perform their enterprises. Julian had two great designs before him: one was to conquer the Persians, the other to root out the Galileans, as he, by way of contempt, called the Christians. But he would begin with the Persians, and then make a sacrifice of all the Christians to his idols. He did so, and perished in the first attempt. Oh the wisdom of divine Providence!

4. Jesus Christ limits the creatures in their acting, assigning them their boundaries and lines of liberty to which they may go, but beyond which they cannot go.

“Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer; behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days” (Rev 2:10). Their enemies would have them cast into their graves, but it shall only be into prison; they would have stretched out their hands upon them all; they would have kept them there perpetually; no, it must be but for ten days. Four hundred and thirty years were determined upon the people of God in Egypt; and then, even in that very night, God brought them forth; for then “the time of the promise drew nigh” (Act 7:17).

5. The Lord Jesus providentially protects His people amidst a world of enemies and danger.

It was Christ that appeared unto Moses in the flaming bush, and preserved it from being consumed. The bush signified the people of God in Egypt; the fire flaming in it, exquisite sufferings they there endured; the safety of the bush amidst the flames, the Lord's admirable care and protection of His poor suffering ones. None so tenderly careful as Christ. “As birds flying, so will the LORD of hosts defend Jerusalem” (Isa 31:5); that is, as they fly swiftly towards their nests, crying, when their young ones are in danger, so will the Lord preserve His. They are “preserved in Jesus Christ” (Jude 1:1), as Noah and his family were in the ark.

6. The Vanity of Thoughts

Thomas Goodwin (1600-1680)

The Puritans gave special attention to the believer's inner life and guarding the heart. Goodwin devoted these several sermons to the condition of the heart and its thought life, showing us the tendency of our minds to vain thoughts and encouraging us with victorious remedies to keep our minds stayed on the Lord.^a

Men's Hearts Are Full of Speculative Evil

There is much speculative enjoying of sinful pleasures, much acting-over of sinful acts. The mind of man is full of it, as will appear in many particulars.

1. We proudly rehearse our endowments

Whatever comforts men may have at present in their possession, whatever excellencies or endowments they may have, they love to be alone to study and think of them. When they are separated from the present use of them, they will still be recounting and casting them up in imagination, surveying their happiness in them, applauding their own hearts in their conditions. Just as rich men love money—love to be always looking at it, counting it over—so men love to be always summing up their comforts and privileges, those that are lacked by others especially: as how rich they are, how great, how they excel others in parts and gifts, etc. O how much of that precious sand of our thoughts runs out^b this way! So the man in the gospel keeps an audit in his heart, “Soul,” he said, you have “much goods laid up for many years” (Luk 12:19). So Haman took an inventory of his honors and goods, talking of all “the glory of his riches...and all the things wherein the king had promoted him” (Est 5:11). So Nebuchadnezzar, as it may seem, was alone walking and talking to himself like a fool, saying, “Is not this great Babylon...that I have built by the might of my power, for the honor of my majesty?” (Dan 4:30).

And it is not only upon their comforts, but they also do this in regard to their excellencies, as their learning, their wisdom, etc. Men love to stand looking upon these in the mirror of their own speculation, as fair faces love to look often and long into glass mir-

^a CHAPEL LIBRARY's 28-page edition is the complete work.

^b **sand...runs out** – figure from an hourglass showing the passing of time.

rors. This all comes from the self-flattery in men, they desire to keep their happiness still fresh and continued in their eye. But these thoughts—when they do not raise up in the heart thankfulness to God, when they are not used for that end—are the bellows^a of pride. They are vain and abominable thoughts in the eyes of God, as would appear from God's dealing with those mentioned before. For to the man in the gospel, He says, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee" (Luk 12:20). And to Nebuchadnezzar, while "the word was in the king's mouth," giving him no further warning, God struck him with madness and beastliness (Dan 4:31). As for Haman, you know that he was like a wall that swells before it breaks and falls into ruin and decay (Isa 30:13).

2. *We rehearse our future desires*

This speculative enjoying of pleasures, this acting of sins in our imaginations, appears in regard to things to come also. For men view them afar off, their hopes going forth to meet them in their thoughts...When men rise up in the morning, they begin to think ahead with much pleasure about the carnal pleasures which they have the promise of for that day or week (Jam 4:13; Isa 56:12)... "Their inward thought is that their houses shall continue for ever" (Psa 48:11), and this thought pleases them...This comes from the vastness and greediness of men's desires, which is the cause of it. So it is written, he "enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto himself all nations, and heapeth unto him all people" (Hab 2:5)—he swallows them up in his thoughts.

3. *We rehearse the past*

a. How rehearsing of the past works in our minds

This speculative wickedness is also exercised toward things that are past. It recalls and revives in our thoughts the pleasure of sinful actions that happened in the past. The mind runs over the passages and circumstances of those sins which were long ago committed, taking new and fresh delight in thinking of them. Men raise their dead actions, long since buried, in the same likeness they were transacted in—and they parley with them as the witch and Saul did with Satan in Samuel's likeness (1Sa 28). And when

^a **bellows** – instrument for producing a strong current of air aiding to start a fire (consisting of an expandable chamber that can be collapsed suddenly).

they should draw cross lines over them, when they should blot out these things through faith in Christ's blood, they would rather copy and write them over again in their thoughts, and with the same contentment...

Just as a good heart recalls and repeats good things that have been heard and read, remembering what liveliness of the spirit resulted, with what affections they were warmed when they heard them (or, as when Hezekiah recalled with comfort the actions of a well-passed life, "Lord, I have walked before thee...with a perfect heart," Isa 38:3), so, on the contrary, do wicked men usually recall and revive the most pleasing sinful happenings in their lives, trying to suck new sweetness out of them.

b. Why this rehearsing of the past is so evil

Nothing would argue more hardness or wickedness of heart, nothing provokes God more, than this recalling and reviving of sinful acts with as much or more pleasure than in the original happening. For,

1) *It argues much wickedness of heart to do this.* And if this is ordinary with a heart to do this, it is not compatible with grace. For in Romans 6:21, the apostle shows that a good heart does not usually repeat or desire the fruit of past sinful actions, "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?"...

2) *It argues much hardness of heart.* Nothing can be more opposite to the truth and practice of repentance, for the foundation of repentance is to call to mind the acts and thoughts of sin with shame and sorrow, and to recall it with more grief than ever there was pleasure in the committing of it. It is the property of repentance to hate the very "appearance" of sin (1Th 5:22), to inflame the heart with zeal and revenge against it...But if we recall the sins of the past with grief, this is to "remember [it] no more" (Jer 34:30; Heb 10:17).

3) *To delight in past sins is to rake in those wounds* which we have already given Christ. To view the sins of others with pleasure is made more than to commit them (Rom 1:32). How much more to view and revive our own with a fresh delight! Know this, that whatever delight you may take here in repeating your old sins to yourself, yet in hell nothing will gall you more than the remembrance of them. Every circumstance in every sin will then be as a

dagger at your heart. This was the task and study given to the rich man in hell, to remember the “good things” he had received” (Luk 16:25), and his sins committed in the abuse of them...

4) *The fourth way in which the speculative vanity appears is in the acting of sins upon mere imaginary suppositions.* Men pretend to themselves, contriving a supposition to themselves in their own thoughts both of what they want to be and of what they want to do. Men create fool's paradises to themselves, and then they walk up and down in them. They say to themselves, “If I had money enough, what pleasures I would have! If I had such and such an appointment, then how well I would carry myself!” To allude to Scripture, Absalom said, “Oh that I were judge in the land,” I would do this and that, etc. (2Sa 15:4). Men do this with a great deal of pleasure, almost as much as those that really enjoy them.

This may well be the meaning of Psalm 50:18, which pictures a hypocrite who outwardly abstains from gross sins, but God says, “When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers.” That is, in his heart and in his imagination, supposing himself to be with them, he desired to be doing what they were doing...

In a word, whatever the inclinations and dispositions of a man (let the impossibilities and improbabilities be never so great against what he desires), in his fancy and thoughts he will make all things to be what he wants them to be. Men will always be drawing maps of their desires, calculating their own inclinations, cutting out a condition of life which suits their hearts, and they please themselves with such things. And there is no surer way to know a man's natural inclination than by this.

4. Summary

a. This is foolishness: [in it men are] imitating children. For is it not childish to make clay pies and puppets (what else are such fancies as these?) and to be acting the parts of ladies and mistresses as children often do? Yet such childishness is in the heart of man.

b. This is a vanity also, because a man is setting his heart on something that does not exist. The things are worthless in themselves; “Wilt thou set thine eyes on that which is not?” (Pro 23:5). They are of no value even if a man has them. But to please himself with mere supposition is much worse indeed.

c. The greatest condemnation of such vain thoughts, however, is that men desire in their thoughts and hearts to put themselves into another condition than God has ordained for them.

7. Of Domestic Duties

William Gouge (1575-1653)

For years, this classic work has stood as the foremost Puritan treatment of Christian family life. In a mentoring and pastoral style, Gouge first presents family life in a helpful exposition of Ephesians 5:21–6:4, where he lays out the wife’s voluntary submission to her husband, the husband’s sacrificial love for his wife, the child’s obedient honoring of parents, and the parent’s nurturing of children.

In a second part,^a Gouge gives detailed counsel about the most important relationship in the family—husband and wife. He carefully describes a fit marriage and the proper way to enter into one. He then discusses the mutual duties married couples share in order for marriage to survive and thrive, as well as the duties specific to men and women respectively.^b

In a third part, Gouge offers wise and practical advice to both children and parents on how to relate to each other with love and honor. Drawing from a wealth of biblical principles and examples, he fleshes out how a household of affectionate authority provides for children and prepares them to live as God’s servants in this world.

A Husband’s Humble Gentleness to His Wife

Peter gives a general rule for a husband’s outward conduct to his wife, which is that he dwell with her “according to knowledge” (1Pe 3:7). This is a man that is able to order his conduct wisely, to

^a CHAPEL LIBRARY’s 68-page excerpt is from the second part, entitled *The Christ-like Husband*. Due to the original’s size and antiquated expression, Scott Brown and Joel R. Beeke divided Gouge’s work into three manageable volumes and updated the language to modern standards, with the title *Building a Godly Home*. It is available at www.heritagebooks.org and at bookstores.

^b The National Center for Family-Integrated Churches has a free insightful six-part video series based on this section of the book (www.ncfic.org).

his own honor and his wife's good, so that she may have good reason to bless God that ever she was joined to such a husband...

Thoughtful Acceptance of Her Goodness

The first particular in which a husband shows himself to be a man of knowledge in walking before his wife, is by *a kind and thoughtful acceptance of every good duty that his wife performs*. Abraham, to testify of his good acceptance of Sarah's work in nursing her child, made a great feast when the child was weaned (Gen 21:8), and Elkanah in a similar respect gave liberty to his wife to do what seemed her best (1Sa 1:23)...It quickens the spirit of a wife to think that her concern and labors in pleasing her husband shall not be in vain.

Against this is the practice of those who, thinking all that a wife does to be just her duty, take little or no notice of it; or if they cannot help taking notice of it, regard it as of little importance and pass it over with scarcely a thought. This often makes a wife even regret the good she has done, as David regretted the service that he had done for Nabal (1Sa 25:21). The truth is that wives ought to look to God for His acceptance rather than to their husbands...

[Also consider] the aloof conduct to their wives of husbands who overlook all respect showed by wives, treating their wives in this case no better than children or servants, or no better than kings do respect the honor shown them by their subjects...

Ready Yielding to Her Humble Desires

Again, it being a sign of respect in a wife humbly to make known her desire to her husband, he ought to show so much courtesy as willingly to grant her desire. This courtesy Ahasuerus afforded to Esther (Est 5:3), David to Bathsheba (1Ki 1:28-30), Isaac to Rebekah (Gen 27:46-28:1), Abraham to Sarah (Gen 16:6), and many other husbands to their wives. Abraham showed such respect to his wife that, though the thing which she desired grieved him, he yielded to his wife (Gen 21:10-11)...^a

Against this is the harshness of their disposition who yield to their wives' request as a cow that yields her milk with difficulty, with much trouble, by which the grace of all their yielding is taken away. There can be no courtesy in yielding when it is forced from

^a Though the primary reason given in the passage for granting her request is the calling of Abraham's seed in Isaac (see Gen 21:10-13).

them against their mind and will. Their wives must ask, and beg again and again, even be forced to use the mediation of others to persuade their husbands to yield to their requests before they will yield, if at all they yield. What is this but to proclaim to all the world that there is no affection in them to their wives?...

Refraining from Demanding All That He May

A husband ought to be sparing in demanding too much of his wife. He ought so to frame his conduct towards her that her service may rather come from her own voluntary disposition, from a free conscience toward God and from a wife-like love, than from any demands on her husband's part, and as it were by force...

For example, 1. Though the wife ought to go with her husband and dwell where he thinks fitting, he should not (unless by virtue of some urgent calling) move her from place to place, and carry her from that place where she is well settled without her glad consent. Jacob consulted with his wives and tested their willingness, before he carried them from their father's house (Gen 31:1-16).

2. Though she should cheerfully show hospitality to whatever guests he brings into the house, he should not be painful and burdensome to her. The greatest care and labors for serving guests lay on the wife; she should therefore be treated tenderly here.

If he sees that she is conscientious and wise, well able to manage and order matters about the house yet hating to do anything without his consent, he ought to be ready and free in yielding his consent and satisfying her desire, as Elkanah (1Sa 1:23). If she is bashful and backward in asking consent, he ought voluntarily to offer it, and to give her a general consent to order and manage matters as in her wisdom she sees fitting, as Elkanah did, and the husband of that good housewife which Solomon describes (Pro 31:11).

A general consent is especially required for the ordering of household affairs, for it is a charge laid upon wives to "guide the house" (1Ti 5:14), by which it appears that the businesses of the house most properly belong to the wife. Husbands ought to refer matters to their ordering there, and not restrain them in every particular matter from doing anything without a special permission and direction...

He should together with his general consent put trust in his wife (Pro 31:11), as Potiphar did in Joseph (Gen 39:6), making here

a difference between a wife and all others, whether adult children or friends...

Too much strictness

Against this is the rigor and austerity^a of many husbands who stand upon the uttermost step of their authority and yield no more to a wife than to any other subordinate. Such are they:

1. Who are never contented or satisfied with any duty the wife performs, but always demand more and more.

2. Who do not care how painful and burdensome they are to their wife—painful by bringing such guests into the house as they know cannot be welcome to her; burdensome by too frequent and untimely inviting of guests, or imposing other similar extraordinary businesses over and above the ordinary affairs of the house. Too frequent imposing of such things cannot but cause much fatigue. Demanding things with poor timing—as when the wife is weak by sickness, child-bearing, nursing, or other similar means, and so not able to serve as well as otherwise she would—will certainly greatly disturb and offend her.

3. Who hold their wives under as if they were children or servants, restraining them from doing anything without their knowledge and particular, explicit consent.

4. Who are too busy in prying into every business of the house and will have their hand in them all. Besides that such husbands give no opportunity to their wives of giving proof of the understanding, intelligence, wisdom, care, and other gifts with which God has blessed them. Additionally, they take away that main end for which a wife was given to man, namely, to be a help (Gen 2:18). Such husbands cannot but neglect other more weighty matters that more properly belong to them...“Every fool will be meddling” with things not his responsibility (Pro 20:3)...

Encouraging Her in Good Things

The love that a husband owes to his wife further requires that he wisely *praise* and *reward* what she has well done. That which the apostle says of the magistrate’s authority may appropriately be applied to a husband’s in relation to his wife: “Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same” (Rom 13:3). It is plainly noted in the description of a good husband that he praises his wife

^a **austerity** – harshness.

(Pro 31:28-29). In that he says, “Give her of the fruit of her hands” (Pro 31:31), it is implied also that he rewards her.

This is an undeniable evidence of his good acceptance of her duty, and a further encouragement to stir her up to go on and continue in doing well. This is also an evidence of his joy and delight both in her person and also in her doing well. If there is no delight in one’s person, doing well will stir up envy rather than joy. And they that envy a man’s doing well will never praise or reward him for it.

In a husband’s praising of his wife, this caveat^a must be put: that he so order his praise as it does not tend to flattery, or excessive or foolish affection, nor yet stirs up coveting or envy in others...

Gentleness in Performing His Duties

A husband must further give good attention to that which as duty he does to his wife. As *kindly* he must accept duty at his wife’s hands, so *gently* he must perform that duty which he owes to her.

This gentleness is a special fruit and evidence of love and a notable means to take away all offense that otherwise might be taken from many things that he does. Sugar and honey are not more pleasant to the tongue than gentleness to the heart. It causes such things as otherwise are annoying and painful to the soul to be well taken and applied—even as bitter pills dipped in sweet syrup (or rolled up in the soft pulp of an apple) are soon swallowed down and well digested. If a husband desires to be counted a servant of the Lord, he must learn this lesson; for “the servant of the Lord must...be gentle unto all men” (2Ti 2:24). If any other servant of the Lord, much more husbands; if to “all men,” most of all to their wives.

8. The Lord’s Supper

Matthew Henry (1662-1714)

Matthew Henry is rightfully known for his masterful commentary on the entire Bible. It provides an exhaustive verse-by-verse study of the Bible that is primarily exegetical, dealing with the Scripture

^a caveat – caution.

text as presented, with his intention being explanation for practical and devotional purposes.

Yet Henry also authored many other works. The Lord's Supper is representative of his keen insight and pastoral style. Sections include the various scriptural names given the supper (one being "feast"), the nature of the supper, invitation to the supper, and self-examination.^a

The Feast

We call the Lord's Supper "the feast," the Christian feast (1Co 5:8). "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (1Co 5:7). In this ordinance, we keep the feast. They that communicate are said to feast with us. This name, though not commonly used, yet is very significant, for it is such a supper as is a feast. Gospel preparations are frequently compared to a feast: "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees; of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined" (Isa 25:6). The guests are many, the invitation solemn, and the provision rich and plentiful, and therefore it fitly is called a feast of souls.

"A feast is made for laughter" (Ecc 10:19); and so is this for spiritual joy, [as] the wine in Isaiah 25 [is] designed to make glad the heart. A feast is made for free conversation, so is this for communion between heaven and earth. In this banquet of wine, the golden sceptre is held out to us and this fair proposal made, "What is thy petition, and it shall be granted thee?" (Est 5:6). Let us see what kind of a feast the Lord's Supper is.

A. A royal feast

It is a royal feast, a feast like the feast of a king, that is, a magnificent feast. It is a feast like that of King Ahasuerus: "a feast for all his servants," and designed, as that was, not only to show his good will to those whom he had feasted, but to show "the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honour of his excellent majesty" (Est 1:4). The treasures hid in Christ, even His unsearchable riches, are here set open, and the glories of the Redeemer illustriously dis-

^a CHAPEL LIBRARY's edition includes the complete work in 48 pages. It is one of 20+ Chapel titles aimed at building up pastors and defining the doctrine and practices of the church.

played. He Who is King of kings and Lord of lords, here issues out the same order that we find him giving: “Come and gather yourselves together to the supper of the great God” (Rev 19:17), and that must needs be a great supper. The wisest of kings introduces Wisdom herself as a queen or princess making this feast: Wisdom “hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine” (Pro 8:2). At a royal feast, the provision, we may be sure, is rich and noble, such as becomes a king to give, though not such beggars as we are to expect. The welcome also, we may be sure, is free and generous. Christ gives like a king.

Let us remember that in this ordinance we sit to eat with a Ruler, with a Ruler of rulers, and therefore must “consider diligently what is before” us, and observe a decorum (Pro 23:1). He is a king that comes in to see the guests, and therefore we are concerned to behave ourselves well.

B. A marriage feast

The Lord’s Supper is a marriage-feast. It is a feast made by a King at the marriage of His Son. So our Savior represents it, not only [as] exceeding rich and sumptuous, and celebrated with extraordinary expressions of joy and rejoicing, but also because the covenant here sealed between Christ and His church is a marriage-covenant—such a covenant as makes two one. It is a covenant founded in the dearest love, founding the nearest relation, and designed to be perpetual. In this ordinance,

1st. We celebrate the memorial of the *virtual espousals* of the church of Christ when He died upon the cross, to “sanctify and cleanse it...that he might present it to himself” (Eph 5:26-27). That was “the day of his espousals...the day of the gladness of his heart” (Song 3:11).

2nd. The *actual espousals* of believing souls to Christ are here solemnized, and that agreement ratified: “My beloved is mine, and I am his” (Song 2:16). The soul that renounces all other lovers who stand in competition with the Lord Jesus, and joins itself by faith and love to Him only, is in this ordinance presented “as a chaste virgin” to Him (2Co 11:2).

3rd. A *pledge and earnest* of the public and complete espousals of the church of Christ at His second coming is here given. Then

“the marriage of the Lamb” comes (Rev 19:7), and we, according to His promise, hereby declare that we look for it.

If we come to a marriage-feast, we must not come without a wedding garment—that is, a frame of heart and a disposition of soul agreeable to the solemnity, conformable to the nature, and answering the intentions of the gospel as it is exhibited to us in this ordinance. Holy garments and garments of praise (Isa 61:3) are the wedding garments. “Put on Christ...put on the new man” (Gal 3:27; Col 3:10)—these are the wedding garments. In these we must, with our lamps in our hands as the wise virgins (Mat 25:4), go forth with all due observance to attend the royal bridegroom.

C. A memorial feast

The Lord’s Supper is a feast of memorial, like the feast of the Passover, of which it is said, “This day shall be unto you for a memorial, and you shall keep it a feast to the Lord...a feast by an ordinance for ever” (Exo 12:14). The deliverance of Israel out of Egypt was a work of wonder never to be forgotten. The feast of unleavened bread was therefore instituted to be annually observed throughout all the ages of the Jewish church as a solemn memorial of that deliverance. This was so that the truth of it, being confirmed by this traditional evidence, might never be questioned; and so that the remembrance of it, being frequently revived by this service, might never be lost.

Our redemption by Christ from sin and hell is a greater work of wonder than that was, more worthy to be remembered, and yet (the benefits that flow from it being spiritual) more apt to be forgotten. This ordinance was therefore instituted. It was instituted at the close of the Passover supper (as coming in the room of it) to be a standing memorial in the church of the glorious achievements of the Redeemer’s cross, the victories obtained by it over the powers of darkness, and the salvation wrought by it for the children of light. Thus the Lord “hath made his wonderful works to be remembered” (Psa 111:4).

D. A dedication feast

The Lord’s Supper is a feast of dedication. Solomon made such a feast for all Israel when he dedicated the Temple, as his father David had done when he brought the ark into the Tabernacle. Even the children of the captivity “kept the dedication of the house of

God with joy" (Ezr 6:16). In the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, we dedicate ourselves to God as living temples, temples of the Holy Ghost (1Co 3:16)—separated from everything that is common and profane, and entirely devoted to the service and honor of God in Christ. To show that we do this with cheerfulness and satisfaction, and that it may be done with an agreeable solemnity, this feast is appointed for the doing of it that we may, like the people of Israel when Solomon dismissed them from his feast of dedication, go to our "tents joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the Lord had done for David his servant, and for Israel his people" (1Ki 8:66).

E. Feast upon a Sacrifice

The Lord's Supper is a feast upon a Sacrifice. This, methinks, is as proper a notion of it as any other. It was the law and custom of sacrifices, both among the Jews and in other nations, that when the beast offered was slain, the blood sprinkled, the fat and some select parts of it burnt upon the altar, and the priest had his share out of it, then the remainder was given back to the offeror. On it, he and his family and friends feasted with joy. Hence we read of Israel after the flesh, eating the sacrifices, and so partaking of the altar: "Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?" (1Co 10:18)—that is, in token of their partaking of the benefit of the sacrifice and their joy therein.

This eating of the sacrifice was a religious rite, expressive of their communion with God in and by the sacrifice.

1). Jesus Christ is the great and only sacrifice, Who by "one offering...has perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb 10:14). And this offering need never be repeated; that once was sufficient.

2). The Lord's Supper is a feast upon this sacrifice in which we receive the atonement, as the expression is: "And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement" (Rom 5:11). That is, we give consent to, and take complacency in, the method which infinite wisdom has taken of justifying and saving us by the merit and mediation of the Son of God incarnate. In feasting upon the sacrifice, we apply the benefit of it to ourselves, and ascribe the praise of it to God with joy and thankfulness.

F. Feast upon a covenant

The Lord's Supper is a feast upon a covenant. The covenant between Isaac and Abimelech was made with a feast. So was that between Laban and Jacob, and their feasting upon the sacrifices was a federal rite, in token of peace and communion between God and His people. In the Lord's Supper we are admitted to feast with God, in token of reconciliation between us and Him through Christ. Though we have provoked God and been enemies to Him in our minds by wicked works, yet He thus graciously provides for us, to show that now He "hath reconciled us to himself" (2Co 5:18). His enemies hungering, He thus feeds them; thirsting, He thus gives them drink (Rom 12:20). If, like coals of fire heaped upon their heads, this melts them into a compliance with the terms of His covenant, they shall henceforth, as His own familiar friends, eat bread at His table continually till they come to sit down with Him at His table in His kingdom.

9. A Treatise of Self-denial

Thomas Manton (1620-1677)

The Puritans gave balanced attention to both doctrine and practice. They understood carnal human nature and did not fail to warn and educate their hearers about it. Several taught on the Lord's command in Matthew 16:24 to "deny" oneself, including Manton and Watson, both following the lead of John Calvin.^a

Manton explores the nature, reasons, means, and marks of self-denial, and then convincingly explains our need to deny self-dependence, self-will, self-love, and self-seeking.^b

A. Exclusive Marks Showing the Lack of Self-denial

These tell us how we may know when self is still in dominion and sovereignty.

^a See *The Duty of Self-denial* by Thomas Watson (1620-1686); *Calvin on Self-denial* (excerpted from *Institutes of the Christian Religion*) by John Calvin (1509-1564); and Free Grace Broadcaster 218, *Self-denial*, with articles by Kyle, Spurgeon, Pink, Baxter, à Brakel, Manton, and Whitefield—all available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^b CHAPEL LIBRARY's edition includes the complete work in a 168-page paperback.

1. Never thwarting own desires

It is a sign self is exalted and in dominion when a man has never set himself to thwart his own desires. Carnal indulgence makes lust wanton. When we indulge our lusts, they grow rebellious and stubborn. Those who gratify their senses and wallow in all fleshly delights never knew what it was to be exercised in Christ's school. A man that cannot deny his ease and pleasure is not fit for Christ, "Whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them; I withheld not my heart from any joy" (Ecc 2:10). When men can remit^a nothing of their vanity and luxury, they make Christianity to be but a notion and an empty pretence. They are men and women of pleasure, when Jesus Christ was a man of sorrows. The children of God always tend to cross themselves in things that they most desire, as David poured out the water of Bethlehem when he longed for it (2Sa 23:15-17). It is good sometimes to make such an experiment upon ourselves. We may find out many idols if we would test whether we could deny ourselves in what we most desire.

2. Impatience when crossed by others

It is a sign self is exalted and in dominion when there is an impatience in our natures when we are crossed by others. Self seems to be a very delicate and tender thing; we cannot endure to be crossed in our opinions and interests, or in the accomplishment of our lusts. Haman was full of wrath because he wanted Mordecai's reverence (Est 3:5). Our affliction always exposes the greatness of our affection. It should be "the smallest thing," as the apostle says, to be judged by men (1Co 4:3). When men have set a high price and value upon themselves, they are vexed when others will not come up to their price! John died for crossing Herod in his Herodias. Jonah made his gourd to be a piece of himself; he prized it too much, as appears by his great vexation when God had smitten it (Jon 4:9). Fretting and murmuring show what is the tender part of our souls, and what we have made to be part of ourselves.

3. Loathing to be a loser by religion

It is a sign self is exalted and in dominion when a man is loath to be a loser because of his religion. Some are of cheap and vile spirits; they love a gospel without costs. They can be content to serve God as long as they bear no expense for God. Look, as we

^a **remit** – lay aside.

should count and reckon upon the costs before we profess religion, so after profession we should ask conscience what it has cost us to be godly, and what expense we have incurred for Jesus Christ, since we have espoused Christ. David would not serve God with that which cost him nothing (2Sa 24:24). If a man were told that his way to such a place is overgrown with briars and thorns, and that he must ride through many dirty lanes, and must watch out for scratching brambles and many miry places, when he sees nothing but a green and pleasant path, he would think he had mistaken and lost his way! So when you are told your way to heaven is a narrow way (Mat 7:14), and that religion will put you upon self-denial of your pleasure, profit, and carnal desires, and yet you never wrestled with your lusts, nor quitted anything for Christ, and meet with nothing but pleasure, profit, and delight in the profession of religion, you may well think that you have missed the way. Then it is a great sign that you are yet to seek in the duty that Christ's students must practise.

4. *Grieving over the good of others*

When the heart is grieved when others experience good, it is a sign self is then in dominion. Many can rejoice and please themselves when God has been glorified by some act of their own, but they are grieved when the work is done by others! Selfish and carnal men would gladly make a monopoly of religion. Oh consider, such an attitude is a sign that self is too dear and near to us. We should be as glad when God is glorified by others as when we ourselves are the instruments of His glory. Martin Luther^a said, "My design is that the work of God may be done; and if I be not worthy, let the work of God be done by others." So Paul: "Many preach the gospel, supposing to add affliction to my bonds; yet if the gospel is preached, I therein rejoice, and will rejoice" (see Phi 1:14-18). It is a Pharisee's spirit to malign and envy the good of others: "Behold, all the world goes after him, and we prevail nothing" (see Joh 12:19). They were grieved that Christ had so much of the respect of the people. Men would monopolize all respect to their faction and

^a **Martin Luther** (1483-1546) – German Roman Catholic monk, theologian, university professor, who rediscovered the doctrine of justification by faith alone and became a reformer whose ideas inspired the Protestant Reformation and changed the course of Western civilization.

keep up a devotion to their interest; this made the elder brother envy at the prodigal's return (Luk 15:28)...

B. Inclusive Marks Showing Self-denial

As there are exclusive marks that show a man *not* to be denying himself, so there are inclusive marks also that show a man in fact to be practicing self-denial. I shall name but three.

1. Swayed by conscience rather than interest

It is a mark of self-denial when a man, in all his purposes, in every actual choice, is swayed by reasons of conscience rather than by reasons of interest; when he is contented to be anything, so that he may be serviceable to God's glory and Jesus Christ may be all in all. Consider Paul when he was in a strait whether to die or remain alive: "It is no matter which it be, so Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or death" (see Phi 1:20-25). In effect he was saying, "If my body be spent with labour, or fall as a burnt-offering in martyrdom, it is no matter, so long as Christ still is magnified." We deny self when we are contented that self should vanish, so that Christ may appear and shine in all His glory, just as the stars vanish when the sun displays its beams.

When we are put upon any choice of life, whether we shall do this or that, still we are not to measure it by self-interest, but with respect to God's glory. Seneca^a says, "A magnanimous man cares not, does not look, where he may live most safely, but most honestly." In the disposal of his affairs, a child of God looks where he may have most work and do most service, and not merely to provide for ease and safety. When two ways are proposed to a traveler, one pleasant and the other very craggy and dangerous, he looks not to which way is most pleasant, but which way best brings him to his journey's end. In the same way, a child of God looks not to what is most gratifying to his flesh, but to how he may do the most work and service to glorify God upon earth.

2. Swayed by a humble submission to God's will

It is a mark of self-denial when a man is swayed by a humble submission to God's will. It is a great conquest over ourselves when we can conquer our own will. Now, the children of God speak as if they had no will of their own at all. Before providence is past, they

^a **Lucius Annaeus Seneca** (c. 4 BC-AD 65) – Roman philosopher, statesman, and orator; Rome's leading intellectual of his day.

absolutely give up themselves to God's disposal, either for deliverance or trouble. King David said, "Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I shall find favour in the eyes of the LORD, he will bring me again, and shew me both it, and his habitation: but if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him" (2Sa 15:25-26). David speaks as if he had no will of his own, and gives up himself to the disposal of God.

So also after the event, when God has declared His will, His children silence all the murmuring of their spirits, "It is the LORD: let him do what seemeth him good" (1Sa 3:18). There is enough to calm all the discontent of their mind because God is in the providence.

A child of God can lose nothing by force. Men may take away his estate by violence, but he resigns it to God. God may take away his friends, but he resigns them; they are taken away with the consent and resignation of a sanctified will. So for their lives, they resign themselves up to God. Therefore it is notable, when the Scripture speaks of wicked men, it is said, "For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?" (Job 27:8); and, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee" (Luk 12:20).

Upon the call of providence, the children of God consent to give up their souls, estates, and friends. There is a subscription to God's will: "It is the Lord." Nay, there is not only patience, but they can even bless God, because His will is accomplished: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21). They can see as much cause of blessing God, not only when He enriches them, but when He impoverishes them and lays His hand upon them. This is to cause our wills to be swallowed up in the will of God, and this is to be like the great pattern of Christ Himself, "Not my will, but thine, be done" (Luk 22:42). We would not be like our great Master if we did not do this. Christ indeed prays against affliction; so may we. We should not have known the greatness of His self-denial if He had not manifested His natural desires. But He refers Himself to God, and so must we also.

3. *Vile in one's own eyes*

It is a mark of self-denial when a man is vile in his own eyes, and reflects with the most indignation upon his own sins. There are

none that condemn themselves more severely than do the children of God when they have sinned against God; they need no other judge than their own consciences to pass a sentence upon them. Men naturally are apt to favour themselves; they are slight in self-humiliation and deep in censure of others. With indignation they reflect upon the sins of others, but with indulgence upon their own. As Judah, when it was told him, “Tamar thy daughter in law hath played the harlot; and also, behold, she is with child by whoredom. And Judah said, Bring her forth, and let her be burnt” (Gen 38:24). But when she showed him the evidence that he had been the one who defiled her, then he was calm enough. It is otherwise with God’s children; there are no sins so odious to them as their own. “Jesus Christ came...to save sinners, of whom I am chief” (1Ti 1:15). Paul in effect says, “Oh, there is no such sinner in the world as I am...”

Well, if your heart is brought to this place, where the heat of indignation is spent upon your own sins, and these things be spoken not by rote and imitation but out of deep sense and feeling, it is a comfortable sign that self is dethroned in you.

10. Christ Receiveth Sinners

Walter Marshall (1628-1680)^a

After a conversation with Thomas Goodwin while serving in a parish of the Anglican Church, Walter Marshall realized that he had been trying to make personal righteousness the ground of his peace. Consequently, he had not submitted to the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ. When he focused upon Christ, he found holiness, peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost. The respected Gospel Mystery of Sanctification was the fruit of that experience.^b

^a **Walter Marshall** (1628-1680) – English, Nonconformist Puritan pastor and author; studied at New College, Oxford; appointed to the vicarage of Hursley, Hampshire; ejected from his parish with the Act of Uniformity in 1662. Then he served as minister of an Independent congregation at Gosport, Hampshire, for eighteen years.

^b CHAPEL LIBRARY’s 24-page excerpt is from the section examining the relationship between faith and holiness.

A. Holiness is included in salvation by faith

We are to look upon holiness as a very necessary part of that salvation which is received by faith in Christ. Some are so drenched in a covenant of works^a that they accuse us for making good works needless to salvation, if we will not acknowledge them to be necessary, either as conditions to procure an interest in Christ, or as preparatives to fit us for the receiving Him by faith. And others—when they are taught by the Scriptures that we are saved by faith, through faith, without works—do begin to disregard all obedience to the Law as not at all necessary to salvation, and account themselves obliged to it only in point of gratitude. If it be wholly neglected, they do not doubt but free grace will save them harmless. Yea, some are given up to strong antinomian^b delusions, that they account it a part of the liberty from the bondage of the Law, purchased by the blood of Christ, to make no conscience of breaking the Law in their conversation.^c

One cause of these errors, which are so contrary one to the other, is that many are prone to imagine nothing else to be meant by salvation, but to be delivered from hell, and to enjoy heavenly happiness and glory. Thus they conclude that, if good works are a means of glorification and precedent to it, they must also be a precedent means of our whole salvation; and that, if they be not a necessary means of our whole salvation, they are not at all necessary to glorification. But, though salvation is often taken in Scripture, by way of eminency, for its perfection in the state of heavenly glory, yet, according to its full and proper signification, we are to understand by it all freedom from the evil of our natural corrupt state, and all those holy and happy enjoyments that we receive from Christ our Saviour—either in this world by faith, or in the world to come by glorification. Thus justification, the gift of the Spirit to dwell in us, [and] the privileges of adoption, are parts of our salvation that we partake of in this life. Thus also, the conformity of our

^a **covenant of works** – agreement God established with Adam in the Garden of Eden before his fall into sin. It established man's obligation to obey God with the penalty of death for disobedience (Gen 2:16-17); cf. *The Covenants of Works and of Grace* by Walter Chantry, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

^b **antinomian** – from the Greek *anti*, against, and *nomos*, law; “antinomian” basically means “against law.” It generally means one who holds the theological view that God's Law has no place in the life of a believer.

^c **conversation** – life experience; conduct.

hearts to the Law of God, and the fruits of righteousness with which we are filled by Jesus Christ in this life, are a necessary part of our salvation.

God saves us from our sinful uncleanness here by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, as well as from hell hereafter (Eze 36:29; Ti 3:5). Christ was called *Jesus*, that is, a Saviour, because He saved His people from their sins (Mat 1:21). Therefore it is a part of our salvation to deliver us from our sins, which is begun in this life by justification and sanctification, and perfected by glorification in the life to come. Can we rationally doubt whether it be any proper part of our salvation by Christ

- 1) to be quickened, to live to God, when we were by nature dead in trespasses and sins
- 2) to have the image of God in holiness and righteousness restored to us, which we lost by the Fall
- 3) to be freed from a vile dishonourable slavery to Satan and our own lusts, and made the servants of God
- 4) to be honoured so highly as to walk by the Spirit, and bring forth the fruits of the Spirit?

And what is all this but holiness in heart and life?

We then conclude that holiness in this life is absolutely necessary to salvation, not only as a means to the end, but by a nobler kind of necessity: as part of the end itself. Though we are not saved *by* good works, as procuring causes, yet we are saved *to* good works, as fruits and effects of saving grace, which God has prepared that we should walk in them (Eph 2:10). It is, indeed, one part of our salvation to be delivered from the bondage of the covenant of works; but the end of this is, *not* that we may have liberty to sin (which is the worst of slavery), but that we may fulfill the royal law of liberty, and that we may serve in newness of spirit and not in the oldness of the letter (Gal 5:13; Rom 7:6).

Yea, holiness in this life is such a part of our salvation as is a necessary means to make us suitable to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in heavenly light and glory. Without holiness we can never see God (Heb 12:14), and are as unfit for the glorious presence as swine for the presence chamber of an earthly prince. I confess, some may be converted when they are so near the point of death that they may have little time to practice holiness in this

world, but the grace of the Spirit is active like fire (Mat 3:11), and, as soon as it is given, it will immediately produce good inward working of love to God, Christ, and His people. This will be sufficient to manifest the righteous judgment of God in saving them at the great day, when He shall judge every man according to His work (1Pe 1:17); though some possibly may not have so much time to discover their inward grace in any outward works, as the thief upon the cross (Luk 23:40, 43).

B. Seek holiness by faith

The third and last thing to be noted in this direction is that holiness of heart and life is to be sought for earnestly by faith, as a very necessary part of our salvation. Great multitudes of ignorant people that live under the gospel harden their hearts in sin, and ruin their souls forever, by trusting on Christ for such an imaginary salvation as does not consist at all in holiness, but only in forgiveness of sin and deliverance from everlasting torments. They would be free from the punishment due to sin, but they love their lusts so well that they hate holiness and would not be saved from the service of sin. The way to oppose this pernicious delusion is not to deny, as some do, that trusting on Christ for salvation is a saving act of faith, but rather to show that none do or can trust on Christ for true salvation, except they trust on Him for holiness. Neither do they heartily desire true salvation, if they do not desire to be made holy and righteous in their hearts and lives. If ever God and Christ give you salvation, holiness will be one part of it. If Christ does not wash you from the filth of your sins, you have no part with Him (Joh 13:8).

What a strange kind of salvation do they desire that do not care for holiness? They would be saved, and yet be altogether dead in sin, aliens from the life of God, bereft of the image of God, deformed by the image of Satan, his slaves and vassals to their own filthy lusts, utterly unsuitable for the enjoyment of God in glory. Such a salvation as that was never purchased by the blood of Christ, and those that seek it abuse the grace of God in Christ and turn it into lasciviousness. They would be saved by Christ, and yet out of Christ in a fleshly state—whereas God frees none from condemnation but those that are in Christ, that walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit—or else they would divide Christ and take a part of

His salvation, and leave out the rest. But Christ is not divided (1Co 1:13)! They would have their sins forgiven, not that they may walk with God in love in time to come, but that they may practice their enmity against Him without any fear of punishment.

But let them not be deceived; God is not mocked. They do not understand what true salvation is, neither were they ever yet thoroughly sensible of their lost estate, and of the great evil of sin. And that which they trust on Christ for is but an imagination of their own brains, and therefore their trusting is gross presumption. True gospel faith makes us come to Christ with a thirsty appetite, that we may drink of living water, even of His sanctifying Spirit (Joh 7:37-38), and cry out earnestly to save us, not only from hell, but from sin. [They] say, "Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness" (Psa 143:10). "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned" (Jer 31:18). "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Psa 51:10).

This is the way by which the doctrine of salvation by grace necessitates us to holiness of life, by constraining us to seek for it by faith in Christ—as a substantial part of that salvation which is *freely* given us through Christ!

11. Almost a Christian

Matthew Meade (1621-1699)^a

One of Meade's better known works is The Almost Christian Discovered, the substance of which came from seven sermons at St. Sepulchre's, Holborn, based on King Agrippa's sad confession in Acts 26:28: "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." It is a strong dose of needed spiritual medicine for those professors who

^a **Matthew Meade** (1629-1699) – English Puritan preacher; born in Bedfordshire; studied at King's College, Cambridge. Preached in Anglican churches until ejected by the Act of Uniformity of 1662. Along with numerous other Puritans, he was forced to flee to Holland to avoid persecution, but in 1669 was called back to assist William Greenhill at the church in Stepney. Upon Greenhill's death, Meade was called to be the pastor, and was ordained by Joseph Caryl and John Owen to that work.

do not exhibit a saving faith and who, though enlightened, are in no better condition spiritually than the unbelieving Agrippa.^a

There are two questions of very great importance that we should every one of us put to ourselves: "What am I?" and "Where am I?" Am I a child of God or not? Am I sincere in religion, or am I only a hypocrite under a profession? Am I yet in a natural state, or in a state of grace? Am I yet in the old root, in old Adam; or am I in the Root, Christ Jesus? Am I in the covenant of works that ministers only wrath and death, or am I in the covenant of grace that ministers life and peace? I press this upon you that are professors, because many rest in a notion of godliness and an outward show of religion, and yet remain in their natural condition. Many are hearers of the Word and not doers of it, and so deceive their own souls (James 1:22). He that slights the ordinances cannot be a true Christian, but yet it is possible a man may own them and yet be no true Christian.

Errors in the first foundation are very dangerous. If we be not right in the main, the fundamental work, if the foundation be not laid in grace in the heart, all our following profession comes to nothing. The house built upon a sandy foundation, though it may stand for a while, yet when the floods come and the winds blow and beat upon it, great will be the fall of it. There are many things like grace that are not grace. Now it is the likeness of things that deceives. Many take gifts for grace; common knowledge for saving knowledge; whereas a man may have great gifts and no grace, great knowledge and yet not know Jesus Christ. Some take common faith for saving; whereas a man may believe all the truths of the gospel, all the promises, all the threatenings, all the articles of the creed to be true, and yet perish for want of saving faith. Some take morality and restraining grace for renewing grace; whereas it is common to have sin much restrained where the heart is not at all renewed. Some are deceived with a half-work, making many mermaid Christians, or like Nebuchadnezzar's image, head of gold and feet of clay. Endless are the delusions that Satan fastens upon souls for want of this self-search. Satan will try us at one time or other. He will win-

^a CHAPEL LIBRARY's short excerpt is available as a tract and reprinted here in its entirety.

now us and sift us to the bottom, and if we now rest in a groundless confidence, it will then end in a comfortless despair. Nay, God Himself will search and try us, at the Day of Judgment especially, and who can abide that trial, that never tries his own heart?

Whatsoever a man's state be, whether he be altogether a Christian or not, yet it is good to examine his own heart. If he finds his heart good, his principles right and sound, this will be a matter of rejoicing. If he finds his heart rotten, his principles false and unsound, the discovery may be in order to a renewing. If a man have a disease upon him and know it, he may send to the physician in time, but what a sad vexation it will be not to see the disease till it be past cure! So for a man to be graceless and not see till it be too late, to think himself a Christian when he is not; that he is in the right way to heaven when he is in the ready way to hell, and yet not know it till a death bed or a judgment day confute his confidence, this is the most irrecoverable misery. These are the grounds upon which I press this duty of examining our state. Oh, that God would help us in doing this necessary duty!

You will say: But how shall I come to know whether I am almost or altogether a Christian? If a man may go so far and yet miscarry, how shall I know when my foundation is right, when I am a Christian indeed?

Christ is a King, Priest, Prophet, and all as Mediator.^a Without any one of those offices, the work of salvation could not have been completed. As Priest He redeems us, as Prophet He instructs us, as King He sanctifies and saves us. Therefore the apostle says He is made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (1Co 1:30). Righteousness and redemption flow from Him as Priest, wisdom as a Prophet, sanctification as a King. Now many embrace Christ as a Priest, but yet they own Him not as a King and Prophet. They like to share in His righteousness, but not to partake of His holiness. They would be redeemed by Him, but they would not submit to Him. They would be saved by His blood, but not submit to His power. Many love the privileges of the gospel, but not the duties of the gospel. Now these are but almost Chris-

^a **Mediator** – Jesus Christ in His role as a go-between; the One Who intervenes between two hostile parties, God and man, for the purpose of restoring them to a relationship of harmony and unity (Gal 3:20; 1Ti 2:5; Heb 8:6; 9:15).

tians, notwithstanding their close with Christ; for it is upon their own terms but not upon God's. The offices of Christ may be distinguished, but they can never be divided.

But the true Christian owns Christ in all His offices. He does not only close with Him as Jesus, but as Lord Jesus. He says with Thomas: "My Lord and my God" (Joh 20:28). He does not only believe in the merit of His death, but also conforms to the manner of His life. As he believes in Him, so he lives in Him.

The altogether Christian has a thorough work of grace and sanctification wrought in the heart, as a spring of obedience. Regeneration is a whole change. All old things are done away, all things become new. It is a perfect work as to parts, though not as to degrees. Carnal men do duties but from an unsanctified heart, and that spoils all. A new piece of cloth never does well in an old garment, for the rent is made worse (Mat 9:16). When a man's heart is thoroughly renewed by grace, the mind savingly enlightened, the conscience thoroughly convinced, the will truly humbled and subdued, the affections spiritually raised and sanctified—when the mind and will and conscience and affections all join issue to help on and with the performance of the duties commanded—then is a man altogether a Christian. Here the almost Christian fails. He does the same duties, but he does them not in the same manner. If he pray, he regards not faith and fervency in prayer; if he hears, he does not mind Christ's rule: "Take heed how ye hear." If he obeys, he looks not to the frame of his heart in obedience; therefore mis-carries in all he does. These defects spoil all.

The altogether Christian is much in duty and yet much above duty in regard of dependence. He lives in his obedience, but not upon his obedience. He lives upon Christ and His righteousness. The almost Christian fails in this: He is much in duty, yet not above it, but rests in it. He works for rest, and he rests in his works. He cannot come to believe and obey too. If he believes, then he thinks there is no need of obedience, and so casts off that; if he be much in obedience, then he casts off believing, and thinks there is no need of that. He cannot say with David: "I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments" (Psa 119:166). The altogether Christian is universal in his obedience. He does not obey one command and neglect another, do one duty and cast off another; but he has respect to all the commandments. He endeavours to leave every sin

and love every duty. The almost Christian fails in this. His obedience is partial and piecemeal. If he obeys one command, he breaks another. The duties that least cross his lust, he is much in; but those that do, he lays aside. The Pharisees fasted, paid tithes etc., but they did not lay aside their covetousness, their oppression; they “devoured widows’ houses”; they were unnatural to parents.

The altogether Christian makes God the chief end of all his performances. Now, the almost Christian fails in this. For he that was never truly cast out of himself, can have no higher end than himself. It is dangerous to be almost a Christian in that it stills and serves to quiet conscience. It is very dangerous to quiet conscience with anything but the blood of Christ. It is bad being at peace till Christ speaks peace. Nothing can truly pacify conscience less than that which pacifies God, and that is the blood of Christ (Heb 9:14). Now the almost Christian quiets conscience but not with the blood of Christ; it is not a peace flowing from Christ’s propitiation, but a peace rising from a formal profession; not a peace of Christ’s giving, but a peace of his own making. He silences and bridles conscience with a form of godliness and so makes it give way to an undoing soul-destroying peace. He rocks it asleep in the cradle of duties, and probably never wakes more till death or judgment. Ah, my brethren, it is better to have a conscience never quiet than quieted in any way but by the blood of sprinkling. A good conscience is the greatest affliction to the saints; and an evil conscience, quiet, is the greatest judgment to sinners.

12. Temptation

John Owen (1616-1683)

After the Holy Spirit-inspired apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, we believe John Owen knew the heart of man as well as any writer past or present. His insights are not only in-depth, they provide a framework for application of the Scriptures for significant spiritual growth. This shows itself in his respected trilogy on the soul and sin: Indwelling Sin, Temptation, and Mortification.^a

^a All three are available from CHAPEL LIBRARY in carefully edited, readable, unabridged editions. This excerpt is from *Temptation*, a 94-page paperback.

How to Know We Have Entered into Temptation

A. Drawn into Any Sin

When a man is drawn into any sin, he may be sure that he has entered into temptation. All sin is from temptation (Jam 1:14). Sin is a fruit that comes only from that root. Even when a man is suddenly or violently surprised in or with any sin, it is from some temptation or other that he has been so surprised. So says the apostle: If a man be surprised and overtaken with a fault, yet he was tempted to it; for says he, “Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted” (Gal 6:1)—that is, tempted as he was when he was so surprised, as it were, at unawares.

Men sometimes take no notice of this consideration, to their great disadvantage. When they are overtaken with a sin, they set themselves to repent of that sin. But they do not consider the temptation that was the cause of it, in order to set themselves against that also, to take care that they enter no more into it. Therefore, they are quickly again entangled by it, though they have the greatest detestation of the sin itself that can be expressed. He who would indeed get the conquest over any sin, must consider his temptations to it and strike at that root. Without deliverance from this, he will not be healed.

This is a folly that possesses many who have yet a lively sense of sin. They are sensible of their *sins*, but not of their *temptations*. They are displeased with the bitter fruit, but cherish the poisonous root. Therefore, in the midst of their humiliations for sin, they will continue in those ways, those societies, in the pursuit of those ends that have occasioned the sin. I will say more about this later.

B. Degrees of Temptations

Temptations have several degrees. Some arise to such an height, do so press on the soul, so torment and disquiet it, so fight against all opposition that is made to it, that it must needs be past all doubt, to him who is so assaulted, that it is a special power of temptation that he is to wrestle with. When a fever rages, a man knows he is sick, unless his disease has made him mad. The lusts of men, as James tells us, “entice,” draw away, and seduce them to sin (Jam 1:14); but this they do of themselves, without peculiar instigation, in a more quiet, even, and sedate manner. If the lusts grow violent, if they hurry the soul up and down and give it no rest, the

soul may know that these lusts have got the help of temptation to their assistance.

Take an empty vessel and put it into some stream that is in its course to the sea, it will infallibly be carried thither, according to the course and speed of the stream. But let strong winds arise upon it, it will be driven with violence on every bank and rock, until, being broken in pieces, it is swallowed up of the ocean. Men's lusts will infallibly (if not mortified in the death of Christ) carry them into eternal ruin, but oftentimes without much noise, according to the course of the stream of their corruptions. But let the wind of strong temptations fall upon them, then they are hurried into innumerable scandalous sins—and so, being broken upon all accounts, are swallowed up in eternity.

So is it in general with men; and so in particular. Hezekiah had the root of pride in him always, yet it did not make him run up and down to show his treasure and his riches until he fell into temptation by the ambassadors of the king of Babylon (2Ki 20:12-13). David also had this root of pride; yet he could keep from numbering the people until Satan stood up and provoked him, and solicited him to do it (2Sa 24:1-4). Judas was covetous from the beginning, yet he did not contrive to satisfy his covetousness by the selling of his Master until the devil entered into him, and he thereby entered into temptation. The like may be said of Abraham, Jonah, Peter, and the rest.

Therefore, when any lust or corruption disquiets the soul and sets it in an uproar, and puts it with violence onto sin, let the soul know that the lust has got the advantage of some outward temptation, though as yet the soul does not perceive it. Or at least the temptation has become itself a peculiar one by some prompting or provocation that has befallen it, and is to be looked into more than ordinarily.

C. Secretly Liking Sin

Entering into temptation may be seen in the lesser degrees of it; as, for instance, when the heart begins secretly to like the matter of the temptation, and is content to feed it and increase it by any ways that it may without downright sinning.

In particular, a man begins to have a good reputation for piety, wisdom, learning, or the like—he is spoken of much to that pur-

pose; his heart is tickled to hear of it, and his pride and ambition is affected with it. If this man now, with all his strength, work the things from which spring his reputation, esteem, and glory among men, with a secret eye to have it increased, he is entering into temptation. If he take not heed, it will quickly render him a slave to lust.

So was it with Jehu (2Ki 9, 10). He perceived that his reputation for zeal began to grow abroad, and he got honor by it. Jehonadab comes in his way, a good and holy man. “Now,” thinks Jehu, “I have an opportunity to grow in honor of my zeal.” So he calls Jehonadab to him, and to work he goes most seriously. The things he had done were good in themselves; but he was entered into temptation and served his lust in what he did.

So is it with many scholars. They find themselves esteemed and favored for their learning. This takes hold of the pride and ambition of their hearts. Hence they set themselves to study with all diligence day and night—a thing good in itself. But they do it that they might satisfy the thoughts and words of men in which they delight. And so in all they do, they make “provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof” (Rom 13:14).

It is true, God often brings light out of this darkness, and turns things to a better result. A man may have studied for several years with an eye upon his lusts—his ambition, pride, and vain-glory—rising early and going to bed late, to give them satisfaction. Then God comes in with His grace, turns the soul to Himself, robs those Egyptian lusts, and so consecrates that to the use of the Tabernacle which had been provided for idols.^a

Men may be thus entangled in better things than learning, even in the profession of piety, in their labor in the ministry, and the like. Some men’s profession is a snare to them. They are held in good reputation, and are much honored on account of their profession and strict walking...If thoughts of this secretly and gradually grow in their hearts, and influence them into more than ordinary diligence and activity in their way and profession, they are entangled. Instead of aiming at more glory, they have need to lie in the

^a Owen is alluding to the Israelites spoiling the Egyptians when they left Egypt, accepting riches that later were used in the building of the Tabernacle (Exo 12:35-36).

dust in a sense of their own vileness. So close is this temptation, that often it requires no food to feed upon except that he who is entangled with it avoids all means and ways of honor and reputation—so that it can but whisper in the heart that that avoidance is honorable.

The same may be the condition with men, as was said, in preaching the gospel, in the work of the ministry. Many things in that work may yield them esteem: their ability, their plainness, their frequency, their success—and all in this sense may be fuel unto temptations.

Let then a man know that, when he likes that which feeds his lust, and keeps it up by ways either good in themselves or not downright sinful, he is entered into temptation.

D. Condition of Life

Sometimes by a man's state or condition of life, or any means whatever, it comes to pass that his lust and any temptation meet with occasions and opportunities for its provocation and stirring up. When this happens, let that man know, whether he perceive it or not, that he is certainly entered into temptation. I told you before that to enter into temptation is not merely to be tempted, but so to be under the power of it as to be entangled by it. Now, it is almost impossible for a man to have opportunities, occasions, or advantages suited to his lust and corruption, but he will be entangled. If ambassadors come from the king of Babylon, Hezekiah's pride will cast him into temptation. If Hazael be king of Syria, his cruelty and ambition will make him to rage savagely against Israel. If the priests come with their pieces of silver, Judas' covetousness will instantly be at work to sell his Master. And many instances of the like kind may be given in the days wherein we live.

Some men think to play on the hole of the asp and not be stung, to touch pitch and not be defiled, to take fire in their clothes and not be burnt—but they will be mistaken. If your business, course of life, societies, or whatever else it be of the like kind, do cast you on such things, ways, or persons as suit your lust or corruption, know that you are entered into temptation. How you will come out, God only knows...Fire and things combustible may more easily be induced to lie together without affecting each other, than

peculiar lusts to be with suitable objects or occasions for their exercise.

E. Less Attention to Duties

A man may be weakened or be made negligent or formal in duty. He may be able to omit duties or to content himself with a careless, lifeless performance of them—without delight, joy, or satisfaction to his soul, which had another frame formerly. When this is the case, let him know that, though he may not be acquainted with the particular distemper^a of which it consists, yet in something or other he is entered into temptation. This he ultimately will find evident, to his trouble and peril.

How many have we seen and known in our days who, from a warm profession, have fallen to be negligent, careless, indifferent in praying, reading, hearing,^b and the like...From some few returners from folly we have every day these doleful complaints made: “Oh! I neglected private prayer. I did not meditate on the Word, nor attend to hearing, but rather despised these things: and yet said I was rich and lacked nothing (Rev 3:17). Little did I consider that this unclean lust was ripening in my heart; that this atheism, these abominations, were growing there.”

This is a certain rule: If a person who has had another frame has his heart grow cold, negligent, or formal in duties of the worship of God—and that either as to the matter or manner of them—one temptation or other has laid hold upon him. World, pride, uncleanness, self-seeking, malice and envy, or one thing or other has possessed his spirit. Gray hairs are here and there upon him, though he does not perceive it (Hos 7:9).

13. The Letters of Samuel Rutherford

(1600-1661)

Samuel Rutherford was an effective preacher, writer, and theologian. But it is his letters for which he is best known. In these his pastor's heart shows itself, able to relate to his parishioners to encourage and support them even from behind prison walls. The first edition appeared in 1664 soon after his death with less than

^a **distemper** – disorder or disturbance.

^b **hearing** – listening to the preaching of the Word in public worship.

half the letters known today. More than 40 expanded editions have kept The Letters in print continuously to this day. Andrew Bonar (1810-1892, Horatius's brother) collected the final ten and published all 365 extant letters in 1863.^a

To Lady Kenmure^b *from Anwoth, 26 June 1630*

God's inexplicable dealings with His people well-ordered

I perceive your case in this world savoureth of worship and communion with the Son of God in His sufferings. You cannot, you must not have a more pleasant or more easy condition here than He had, who 'through afflictions was made perfect' (Heb 2:10). We may indeed think: cannot God bring us to heaven with ease and prosperity? Who doubteth but He can? But His infinite wisdom thinketh and decreeth the contrary; and though we cannot see a reason for it, yet He hath a most just reason. We never with our eyes saw our own soul, yet we have a soul; we see many rivers, but we know not their first spring and original fountain, yet they have a beginning. Madam, when you are come to the other side of the water, and have set down your foot on the shore of glorious eternity, and look back again to the waters and to your wearisome journey, and shall see in that clear glass of endless glory nearer to the bottom of God's wisdom, you shall then be forced to say, 'If God had done otherwise with me than He hath done, I had never come to the enjoying of this crown of glory.' It is your part now to believe, and suffer, and hope, and wait on: for I protest in the presence of that all-discerning eye who knoweth what I write and what I think that I would not want^c the sweet experience of the consolations of God for all the bitterness of affliction; nay, whether God come to His children with a rod or a crown, if He come Himself with it, it is well. Welcome, welcome Jesus, what way so ever thou come, if we can get a sight of thee. And sure I am, it is better to be sick, providing Christ come to the bed-side, and draw aside the curtains, and

^a CHAPEL LIBRARY's 48-page edition excerpts 30 of the most helpful letters.

^b **Lady Kenmure** – Jane Campbell, Viscountess of Kenmure: daughter of the 7th Earl of Argyll. In 1628 she married John Gordon of Lochinvar. His untimely death occurred in 1634. She married again in 1640, but a second widowhood shortly commenced. She lived into the 1670s with what appears to have been an exemplary Christian life.

^c **want** – lack.

say 'Courage, I am thy salvation,' than to enjoy health, being lusty and strong, and never to be visited of God.

Lack of ordinances

Worthy and dear lady, in the strength of Christ, fight and overcome. You are now alone, but you may have, for the seeking, three always in your company: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I trust they are near you. You are now deprived of the comfort of a lively ministry; so were Israel in their captivity; yet hear God's promise to them: 'Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord God, although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come' (Eze 11:16). Behold a sanctuary! for a sanctuary, God Himself, in the place and room of the temple of Jerusalem: I trust in God, that carrying this temple about with you, you shall see Jehovah's beauty in His house.

To John Kennedy^a *from Anwoth, 2 February 1632*

Deliverance from shipwreck and death

I salute you with grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ. I heard with grief of your great danger of perishing by the sea, but of your merciful deliverance with joy. Sure I am, brother, Satan will leave no stone unrolled, as the proverb is, to roll you off your Rock, or at least to shake and unsettle you: for at the same time, the mouths of wicked men were opened in hard speeches against you by land, and the prince of the power of the air was angry with you by sea. See then how much you are obliged to that malicious murderer, who would beat you with two rods at one time. But, blessed be God, his [Satan's] arm is short: if the sea and winds would have obeyed him, you had never come to land. Thank your God, who saith, 'I have the keys of hell and of death' (Rev 1:18). 'I kill and make alive' (Deu 32:39). 'The Lord bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up' (1Sa 2:6). If Satan were jailer, and had the keys of death and of the grave, they should be stored with more prisoners. You were knocking at these black gates, and found the doors shut; and we do all welcome you back again.

^a **John Kennedy** – Bailie of Ayr; an eminent Christian, prominent in public affairs during the 1640s.

Prepare for death

I trust you know it is not for nothing that you are sent to us again. The Lord knew you had forgotten something that was necessary for your journey; that your armour was not as yet thick enough against the stroke of death. Now, in the strength of Jesus, dispatch your business; that debt is not forgiven, but deferred; death hath not bidden you farewell, but hath only left you for a short season. End your journey ere the night come upon you; have all in readiness against the time that you must fall through that black and impetuous Jordan; and Jesus, Jesus, who knoweth both those depths and the rocks and all the coasts, be your Pilot. The last tide will not wait for you one moment; if you forget anything, when your sea is full, and your foot in that ship, there is no returning again to fetch it. What you do amiss in your life today, you may amend tomorrow; for as many suns as God maketh to arise upon you, you have as many new lives; but you can die but once; and if you mar that business, you cannot come back to mend that piece of work again; no man sinneth twice in dying ill; as we die but once, so we die but ill or well once. You see how the number of your months is written in God's book; and as one of the Lord's hirelings, you must work till the shadow of the evening come upon you, and you shall run out your glass even to the last grain of sand. Fulfill your course with joy; for we take nothing to the grave with us, but a good or evil conscience. And although the sky clears after this storm, yet clouds will engender another.

Use of trials

You contracted with Christ, I hope, when first you began to follow Him, that you would bear His cross (Joh 15:21; Luk 9:23). Fulfill your part of the contract with patience, and break not to Jesus Christ. Be honest, brother, in your bargaining with Him; for who knoweth better how to bring up children than our God? For (to lay aside His knowledge, which there is no searching out) He hath been practiced in bringing up His heirs these five thousand years,^a and His children are all well brought up, and many of them are

^a **five thousand years** – In 1654, James Ussher published *The Annals of the World*, a comprehensive history of the world from creation to AD 70. His scholarship included the genealogies of the Bible and estimated the age of the earth to be about 6,000 years, since corroborated by many creation scientists.

honest men now at home, up in their own house in heaven, and are entered heirs to their Father's inheritance.

Now, the form of his bringing up was by chastisements, scourging, correcting, nurturing. See if He maketh exception of any of His children (Rev 3:19; Heb 12:7-8). No! His eldest Son and His heir, Jesus, is not excepted (Heb 2:10). Suffer we must; ere we were born, God decreed it; and it is easier to complain of His decree than to change it. It is true, terrors of conscience cast us down; and yet without terrors of conscience we cannot be raised up again. Fears and doubtings shake us; and yet without fear and doubtings we should soon sleep, and lose our hold of Christ. Tribulation and temptations will almost loose us at the root; and yet without tribulations and temptations we can now no more grow than herbs or corn without rain. Sin and Satan and the world will say, and cry in our ear that we have a hard reckoning to make in judgment; and yet none of these three, except they lie, dare say in our face that our sin can change the tenor of the New Covenant.

Forward then, dear brother, and lose not your grips. Hold fast the truth.

To Robert Cunningham^a *from Irvine, being on my journey
to "Christ's Palace" in Aberdeen, 4 August 1636*

Consolation to a brother in tribulation

Grace, mercy and peace be to you. Upon acquaintance in Christ, I thought good to take the opportunity of writing to you. Seeing it hath seemed good to the Lord of the harvest to take the hooks out of our hands for a time, and to lay upon us a more honourable service, even to suffer for His name, it were good to comfort one another in writing. I have had a desire to see you in the face; yet now being the prisoner of Christ, it is taken away. I am greatly comforted to hear of your soldier's stately spirit for your princely and royal Captain Jesus our Lord, and for the grace of God in the rest of our dear brethren with you.

His own deprivation of ministry

You have heard of my trouble, I suppose. It hath pleased our sweet Lord Jesus to let loose the malice of these interdicted lords in

^a **Robert Cunningham** – Eminent minister of the gospel at Holywood, N. Ireland. In 1636 he and others were driven out of Ireland by Prelatists. He died in March 1637, scarcely eight months after Rutherford wrote to him.

His house to deprive me of my ministry at Anwoth, and to confine me, eight score miles from thence, to Aberdeen; and also (which was not done to any before) to inhibit me to speak at all in Jesus' name within this kingdom, under the pain of rebellion. The cause that ripened their hatred was my book against the Arminians, whereof they accused me on those three days I appeared before them. But let our crowned King in Zion reign! By His grace the loss is theirs, the advantage is Christ's and truths.

Christ worth suffering for

Albeit this honest cross gained some ground on me, and my heaviness and my inward challenges of conscience for a time were sharp, yet now, for the encouragement of you all, I dare say it, and write it under my hand, 'Welcome, welcome, sweet, sweet cross of Christ.' I verily think the chains of my Lord Jesus are all overlaid with pure gold, and that His cross is perfumed, and that it smelleth of Christ, and that the victory shall be by the blood of the Lamb, and by the Word of His truth, and that Christ, lying on His back in his weak servants and oppressed truth, shall ride over His enemies' bellies, and shall 'strike through kings in the day of His wrath' (Psa 110:5). It is time we laugh when He laugheth; and seeing He is now pleased to sit with wrongs for a time, it becometh us to be silent until the Lord hath let the enemies enjoy their hungry, lean, and feckless^a paradise. Blessed are they who are content to take strokes with weeping Christ. Faith will trust the Lord, and is not hasty nor headstrong. Neither is faith so timorous as to flatter a temptation or to bud^b and bribe the cross. It is little up or little down^c that the Lamb and his followers can get no law-surety, nor truce with cross-es; it must be so till we be up in our Father's house.

My dear brother, let us help one another with our prayers. Our King shall mow down His enemies and shall come from Bozrah with His garments all dyed in blood. And for our consolation shall He appear, and call His wife Hephzibah^d and His land Beulah^e (Isa 62:4); for He will rejoice over us and marry us, and Scotland shall say, 'What have I to do any more with idols?' Only let us be faithful

^a **feckless** – worthless.

^b **bud** – win over by means of a gift.

^c **little up or little down** – of little significance.

^d **Hephzibah** – "my delight is in her."

^e **Beulah** – "married."

to Him that can ride through hell and death upon a windlestrae,^a and His horse never stumble. And let us make Him a bridge over a water, so that His high and holy name may be glorified in me. Strokes with the sweet Mediator's hand are very sweet. He was always sweet to my soul; but since I suffered for Him, His breath hath a sweeter smell than before. O that every hair of my head, and every member and every bone in my body, were a man to witness a fair confession for Him! I would think all too little for Him. When I look over beyond the line, and beyond death, to the laughing side of the world, I triumph and ride upon the high places of Jacob; howbeit otherwise I am a faint, dead-hearted, cowardly man, oft borne down, and hungry in waiting for the marriage supper of the Lamb. Nevertheless I think it the Lord's wise love that feeds us with hunger, and makes us fat with wants and desertions.

14. Duties of Husbands and Wives

Richard Steele (1629-1692)^b

Many Puritans addressed practical family life. Doctrine and devotion must manifest themselves in the reality of daily living, or else we are deceived. In this sermon series, Steele addresses duties belonging to both husbands and wives, and specific duties for each.^c

The Duties Belonging to Both Alike

1. Living with Each Other

He must “leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife” (Gen 2:24), and she must “forget her own people also, and her father's house” (Psa 45:10). He must “dwell with his wife” (1Pe 3:7),

^a **windlestrae** – withered stalk of grass; metaphorically a mere trifle.

^b **Richard Steele** (1629-1692) – English Puritan Nonconformist theologian and pastor; born to a farming family in Cheshire; educated at Northwich grammar school, received M.A. from St. John's College, Cambridge. He was ejected from the Church of England for Nonconformity in 1662.

^c CHAPEL LIBRARY's 28-page edition includes the whole work. Other helpful family titles available include *Family Duty* by John Bunyan, *Duties of Parents* by J. C. Ryle (1816-1900), *Parents Groans over Their Ungodly Children* by Edward Lawrence (1623-1695), *Preserving the Honor of Marriage: Biblical Guidance from the Puritans* by Joel R. Beeke and James A. La Belle; and *Free Grace Broadcasters* Biblical Parenthood 204, Fatherhood 228, Motherhood 229, and The Godly Home 179.

and she must not “depart from her husband,” even if he is an unbeliever (1Co 7:10)...

2. Loving Each Other

This is both the husband’s (Col 3:19) and the wife’s duty (Ti 2:4). Love is the great reason and comfort of marriage. This love is not merely romance, but genuine and constant affection and care for each other “fervently with a pure heart” (1Pe 1:22). Marital love cannot be based on beauty or wealth, for these are passing, and not even on piety, for that may decay. It must be based upon God’s command which never changes. The marriage vow obliges “for better or for worse,” and married persons ought to consider their own spouses the best in the world for them. Marital love must be durable, lasting even after death has severed the bond (Pro 31:12). This true-hearted love brings true content and comfort in its train. It guards against adultery and jealousy. It prevents or lessens family trouble. Without it, the marriage is like a bone out of joint. There is pain until it is restored.

3. Staying Faithful to Each Other

Every man should have (sexually) his own wife, and every wife her own husband (1Co 7:2), and only their own. Imitate the first Adam who had but one wife and the second Adam who has but one church. The marriage covenant binds you to your own spouse as the dearest, sweetest, and best in the world. The slightest infidelity, even in the heart, may lead to full-blown adultery. Without repentance, adultery destroys both earthly happiness and reasonable expectation of heaven. It almost dissolves marriage, and in the OT was a capital crime (Deu 22:22). Be careful to avoid temptations to this sin. The man who is not satisfied with one woman will never be satisfied with many, because this sin has no boundaries. Faithfulness also involves keeping each other’s secrets. These must not be disclosed unless there is a greater obligation. Telling your spouse’s secrets is bad when accidental, worse when the result of temper, and the worst when it is motivated by hate.

4. Helping Each Other

The wife should be a “helper comparable to her husband” (Gen. 2:18), implying they should both help each other. They should carry these things together:

a. Their work

If she works at home and he works outside, both their work shall be easier. For motivation, let him give attention to all of Proverbs, and her to the last chapter especially.

b. Their crosses

Though newlyweds expect only pleasure in marriage, trouble is bound to come (1Co 7:28). You may face loss of worldly goods, harm to your children, afflictions from both friends and enemies. Spouses must be friends to each other through thick and thin.

c. Their commitment to Christ

Live “as being heirs together of the grace of life” (1Pe 3:7). The highest end of marriage is to promote each other’s eternal happiness. Cooperation here is very important. His knowledge must aid her ignorance and her zeal his discouragement. When the husband is home, he must instruct and pray with his family and sanctify the Sabbath, but in his absence, she must look to these things.

5. Being Patient with Each Other

This duty we owe to all, but especially to our spouse (Eph 4:31-32). There are many temptations in marriage to become impatient! Hot tempers ignite civil wars indoors, and no good ever comes of them. Both need a meek and quiet spirit. Learn to hold your peace to keep the peace. Withdraw until the storm is over. You are not two angels married, but two sinful children of Adam. Wink at lesser faults, and be careful in confronting greater ones. Acknowledge your faults to one another and confess them all to God. Yield to one another rather than to the devil (Eph. 4:27).

6. Saving Each Other

1 Corinthians 7:16 insinuates that our great duty is to promote the salvation of our spouse. What good is it to enjoy marriage now and then go to hell together? If you let your spouse be damned, where is your love? Both should inquire into each other’s spiritual state, and use the means appointed to improve it. Chrysostom said, “Let them both go to church and then discuss the sermon together.” If both are Christians already, then they should do what they can to help each other to become thorough saints. Speak often of God and spiritual things. Be fellow-pilgrims to the Celestial City.

15. God's Grace in Justifying the Sinner

Robert Traill (1642-1716)^a

Traill preached thirteen sermons on the throne of grace from Hebrews 4:16, sixteen sermons on the prayer of our Saviour in John 17:24, twenty-one sermons on perseverance from Hebrews 10:23, eleven sermons on salvation and sanctification from 1 Peter 1:1-4, and six sermons on Galatians 2:21. The sermon here is one of the six, which includes six sections explaining and proclaiming how God's grace shines so gloriously in the justification of a sinner.^b

A. Arguments

"I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."—Galatians 2:21

My text contains two arguments, drawn from a common natural head of arguing against error by the absurdities that necessarily flow from it. They are two of the greatest that can be: "frustrating the grace of God" and "making the death of Christ to be in vain." Greater sins are not to be committed by men: the greatest sin, the unpardonable sin, is expressed in words very like to this,

Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? (Heb 10:29).

How near to one another are frustrating the grace of God, and doing despite to the Spirit of grace; and making Christ's death to be in vain, and counting the blood of the covenant an unholy thing!

B. Definitions of Grace

There are two words to be explained before we go any further: *First*, what is the grace of God? *Secondly*, what is it to frustrate the grace of God?

First, what is the grace of God? The grace of God has two common noted acceptations in the Scripture.

^a **Robert Traill** (1642-1716) – Late English Puritan; Presbyterian minister and author. Born in Fife, Scotland and educated at University of Edinburgh, he pastored in England and stood against the rise of Arminianism.

^b CHAPEL LIBRARY's 24-page booklet contains the entire sermon.

First, it is taken and used in the Scripture for the doctrine of the grace of God, and so it is frequently used: the gospel itself is called the grace of God: “The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men” (Ti 2:11). That is the gospel; for it is the teaching grace of God that is there spoken of, as called by the apostle; [it is] the gospel of God’s grace. And this grace of God may be received in vain. Many may have this grace of God and go to hell. Pray that you receive not the grace of God in vain!

Secondly, “the grace of God”: in the word *grace* is understood the blessing itself. This grace is never frustrated. The grace that called Paul, the grace that wrought mightily within him, was not given him in vain:

His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me (1Co 15:10).

The gospel of the grace of God is frequently frustrated,^a but the grace itself is never so.

Secondly, what is it to frustrate this grace of God? The word that I remember in the original is used as “Full well ye reject the commandment of God” (Mar 7:9). It is the same word with that in my text: to frustrate the grace of God is to defeat it of its end, to miss the end of it. In Luke 7:30, it is said that the Pharisees and lawyers frustrated the grace of God against themselves; or, as we read it there, they “rejected the counsel of God against themselves.” The true grace of God itself can never be frustrated; it always reaches its end, for it is almighty. But the doctrine of the grace of God is many times rejected. The apostle here in the text speaks of it as a sin that that [those who] speak of “righteousness by the works of the law” are guilty of.

There is one thing that I would observe in general from the scope of the apostle: that in the great matter of justification the apostle argues from his own experience. The true way to get sound light in the main point of the justification of a sinner before God, is to study it in your own personal concern. If it be bandied about by

^a **grace...frustrated** – Men without Christ may choose to ignore the general proclamation of the gospel message, but when God moves upon them by His Holy Spirit to give them His saving grace, it is irresistible and always results in regeneration and conversion (Gal 1:15-16; Eph 1:6; 2:6-10; 2Ti 1:9).

men as a notion only—as a point of truth, discoursing wantonly^a about it—it is all one in God’s sight whether men be sound or unsound about it: they are unsound in heart about it [no matter] how sound soever they are in head. The great way to know the right mind of God about the justification of a poor sinner, is for all to try it with respect to themselves. [It is as if] the apostle would say, I know how I am justified, and all the world shall never persuade me to join the righteousness of the Law with the righteousness of Christ.

C. Justification Displaying Grace

There are four points of doctrine that I would raise, and observe from the first part of these words:

First, that the grace of God shines gloriously in the justifying of a sinner through the righteousness of Christ.

Secondly, it is a horrible sin to “frustrate the grace of God.”

Thirdly, all that seek righteousness by the Law do frustrate the grace of God in the gospel.

Fourthly, that no sound believer can be guilty of this sin.

I would speak to the first of these at this time: “That the grace of God shines gloriously in the justifying of a sinner by the righteousness of Christ alone.” When the apostle speaks of it, how frequently is this term *grace* added? “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:24). “That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life” (Ti 3:7).

There are four things to be explained here that will make our way plain to the proof of this point. What is justification? Who is it that doth justify? Who are justified? And upon what account?

First, what is justification? We read much of it in our Bible, and the doctrine of it is reckoned one of the fundamental points of the true Christian religion—and so indeed it is. This grand doctrine—the fountain of our peace, comfort, and salvation—was...the first light of the Reformation that God was pleased to [give] in our forefathers’ days...

^a **wantonly** – carelessly; without serious study.

Justification is not barely the pardon of sin; it is indeed always inseparable from it, the pardon of sin is a fruit of it, or a part of it. Justification is God's acquitting a man, and freeing him from all attainder;^a it is God's taking off the attainder that the broken Law of God lays upon every sinner. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth" (Rom 8:33). Justification and condemnation are opposites: every one is under condemnation that is not justified; and every justified man is freed from condemnation.

Justification is not sanctification; it is an old Popish error, sown in the heads of a great many Protestants, to think that justification and sanctification are the same. Justification and sanctification are as far different as these two: There is a man condemned for high treason against the king by the judge; and the same man is sick of a [mortal] disease. If he dies not by the hands of the hangman today, he may die of his disease tomorrow. It is the work of the physician to cure the disease, but it is an act of mercy from the king that must save him from [his penalty]. Justification is the acquitting and repealing the law-sentence of condemnation; sanctification is the healing of the disease of sin, which will be our bane^b except Christ be our physician.

Justification and sanctification are always inseparable, but they are wonderfully distinct. Justification is an act of God's free grace; sanctification is a work of God's Spirit. Sanctification is a work wrought within us; justification is something done about us—and therefore justification is every where spoken of in the Word in terms of a court act.

^a **attainder** – penalty.

^b **bane** – ruin.

16. The True Christian's Love to the Unseen Christ

Thomas Vincent (1634-1678)^a

Some might think that the Christian's love for Christ could be adequately explored in a few pages. Not according to Puritan depth of insight. Every Christian needs to guard against superficiality in his love, and actively cultivate true, unbounded love for Christ. Vincent starts with "What is it to love Christ?" in an exposition of his text, 1 Peter 1:8. Sections follow on duty, self-examination, motives, and applications.^b

Why True Christians Love Christ

The seventh thing is to show *why* true Christians do love Christ, Whom they have never seen.

Reason 1: Their Need

True Christians love Christ because of the need that they have of Him. Men love their necessary food, without which their bodies would starve with hunger. Men love their necessary raiment and habitations, without which in winter seasons their bodies would starve with cold. Men love their necessary friends, upon whom (under God) they have their dependence, and from whom they have all their subsistence. But nothing in the world, or friend in the world, is so needful to the body as the Lord Jesus Christ is unto the soul. As the excellencies of the soul are far beyond the excellencies of the body, so the necessities of the soul are far beyond the necessities of the body—which necessities can be answered by none but Jesus Christ. And, therefore, true Christians do love Him.

At first conversion, when they were convinced of sin, awakened out of their carnal^c security, oh, what need had they, and did they see they had, of Christ! They perceived themselves to be lost, and that it was Christ only that could save them. They felt the wounds of conscience, and it was Christ only that could heal them. They feared the wrath of a sin-revenging God, and it was Christ only that

^a **Thomas Vincent** (1634-1678) – English Puritan preacher; beloved and respected author of *The Shorter Catechism Explained from Scripture*, *The True Christian's Love for the Unseen Christ*, and others.

^b CHAPEL LIBRARY's 122-page paperback edition includes the complete work.

^c **carnal** – fleshly; worldly.

could deliver them. The remission, reconciliation, and salvation that they had by Christ did lay the first foundation of a most endeared love unto Christ. And still they perceive a continual need of Christ to procure daily pardon for them and to convey daily supplies of grace unto them. When they are dark, they have need of Christ to enlighten them; when they are dead, to quicken them; when they are straitened,^a to enlarge them; when they are weak, to strengthen them; when they are sad, to comfort them; when they are tempted, to succor them; when they are fallen, to raise them; when they are in doubts, to resolve them; when they are under fears, to encourage them; when they stagger, to establish them; when they wander, to restore them. Christ, and none but Christ, can do all this, and more than this, for them. And therefore, because of the need and usefulness of Christ, true Christians love Him.

Reason 2: The Loveliness of Christ

True Christians love an unseen Christ because of the loveliness of Christ, which loveliness, though it be not and cannot here be seen by the eye of the body, yet it is evident unto the eye of faith...

In the person of Christ, the human nature and the divine nature are in conjunction: He is most lovely in regard of both...But the beauty of Christ's soul does excel. No creature whatever has such shining excellencies as are in the soul of Christ. All the excellencies that are or ever were in any creature, are like a feather [when] laid in the balance with the exceeding weight of His glorious excellencies and perfections. Christ excelled the most excellent men that ever lived as to spir-itual endowments when He was here upon the earth. He excelled Moses in meekness, Solomon in wisdom, Job in patience. And, how much does He excel now that He is in heaven? He excels not only the spirits of just men made perfect, but also the most glorious and holy angels, which never sinned. If any creatures have wisdom, it is but a beam: Christ is the sun. If they have goodness, it is but a drop: in Christ is the ocean. If they have holiness, it is but a spark or dark shadow: Christ is the brightness of His Father's glory. If they have the Spirit, they have Him but in some measure: the Spirit is given to Christ without measure (Joh 3:34).

^a **straitened** – restricted.

Christ is most lovely in His manhood, so nearly united unto His Godhead—and how lovely is He in His Godhead! As God, He is equal in all glorious excellencies with the Father. Christ's Godhead implies excellency of being; He calls Himself "I AM" (Joh 8:58).^a [It implies] excellency of glory, therefore called "the Lord of glory" (1Co 2:8) and "the King of glory" (Psa 24:7)...

Many descriptions are given in the New Testament of this lovely Person. I shall mention only one:

Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell (Col 1:15-19).

If we read, believe, and consider this great description of Christ, we must needs see and say that Christ is most excellent and amiable, and that no beloved is like to the Beloved of true Christians. Therefore it is that true Christians love Christ because of His loveliness.

Reason 3: The Love Christ Bears to Them

True Christians love Christ because of His love that He bears to them. He loves them with a first love and with a free love. He loves them with a tender and compassionate love, with an active or doing love, with a passive or suffering love. His love is infinite, without bounds or limits; it is superlative, without comparison; transcendent, beyond comprehension; everlasting, without change, and which will have no end or conclusion. He loved them when they were polluted in their sins and washed them with His own blood. He loved them when they were naked in their souls, and clothed them with the robes of His righteousness. He loves them in their

^a "I AM THAT I AM" is the sacred name of God and His eternal self-sufficient being in the Old Testament (see Exodus 3:14). In Hebrew it consists of four letters: YHWH, which is termed *tetragrammaton* from the Greek word meaning "four letters." "Yah-weh" is one pronunciation widely accepted by Hebrew scholars. The Hebrews considered this name too sacred to be uttered by man. They filled in the consonants with vowels to make *Jehovah*. In some English Bible translations, the word is spelled with all capital letters (LORD) to indicate the use of the tetragrammaton in the original.

sickness and sorrows, and is their Comforter. He loves them in their wants^a and straits, and is their Benefactor. He loves them in life, and is the life of their souls. He loves them at death, and is the stay of their hearts; and He loves them after death, and will be their portion forever...

Use One: For Information

[The true Christian's love for Christ informs us] that there are but few true Christians in the world, because there are so few that love this unseen Christ. There are many Christians in name, but few Christians in deed and in truth. The time has been when openly to profess the name of a Christian argued true love unto Jesus Christ; I mean in the primitive times, when Christians were persecuted by the heathens—as in the ten first dreadful persecutions under the heathen emperors when the world was watered with Christian blood. Then, especially, at some times and in some—yea, most—places, whoever openly acknowledged themselves to be Christians exposed themselves unto imprisonments, racks, tortures, burnings, and the most cruel deaths. It was the truth and strength of love unto Jesus Christ that carried them through such great sufferings as many in those days underwent for the sake of Jesus Christ.

But now there are multitudes of bare *nominal* Christians; they call themselves Christians, being baptized in Christ's name; but they are altogether without love to Christ, Whose name they bear. Surely there are but few—not only in the Christian world, but even in England (where Christianity is to be found in as great purity as in any place)—that love Jesus Christ in sincerity.

No grossly *ignorant* persons do truly love Christ: such as do not know Christ, they cannot love Him—*ignoti nulla cupido*, “there is no desire after, nor love unto an unknown thing.” An unknown evil cannot be hated, and an unknown good cannot be loved.

No grossly *erroneous* persons do truly love Christ. Such as do not receive Christ's truths, they cannot love Christ's person. “If a man love me, he will keep my words” (Joh 14:23). The words of Christ include not only the words of His precepts, but also the words of His doctrine. Such as err grossly, I mean in the funda-

^a wants – needs.

mental truths of Christianity, they are no friends to Christ, but His enemies—so far are they from true love unto Him...

No *covetous* persons do truly love Christ; the apostle says, “If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (1Jo 2:15). And I may say that if any man love the world (that is, with his chief love), the love of the Son is not in him. Love cannot be chiefly set upon things below here on earth and upon Christ, Who is above in heaven.

No *licentious* persons do truly love Christ: no drunkards, adulterers, or any that indulge themselves in unlawful delights. The love of Christ teaches us to deny such lusts and to mortify them.

No *mere civil* persons that are unconverted, [and] no hypocrites that have a form of godliness but are without the power of it, do truly love Christ. The former may be loving and courteous unto men, but they have no love to Christ. The latter may profess love to Christ, and seem to love Him, but they do not really love Him. In a word, none who are under the reigning power of any sin do truly love Christ. The reign of sin is in the heart, and this is inconsistent with the love of Christ in the heart.

Now let us separate all these aforementioned persons from the rest: grossly ignorant persons, grossly erroneous persons, grossly wicked persons, the profane, the persecutors of God’s people, the scoffers at religion, all unrighteous persons, all covetous persons, drunkards, adulterers...all licentious persons, mere civil persons, hypocrites, and all that are under the reigning power of sin—and how few will there be left that do truly love Christ! And by consequence, there will appear but very few that are true Christians.

Use Two: For Examination

Here you may know whether you are true Christians: by the trial of your love unto Jesus Christ. Examine yourselves therefore, whether you love Jesus Christ, Whom you have never seen. The most in the world only love truly those persons and things that they have seen; but can you say that you sincerely and chiefly love Jesus Christ, Whom you have not seen? The love of the most arises from the notice that the eye gives to the objects beloved; but does your love arise from the notice that the ear has given by the Word of the amiableness that there is in Christ?

How may we know whether we have true love to Jesus Christ? You may know the truth of your love to Jesus Christ...by your desires after Christ's presence. Wherever there is a great love to any person, there is a desire after the presence of that person. Do you sincerely and earnestly desire Christ's presence? There is Christ's gracious presence here: "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (Joh 14:18). You desire that such friends and relations would come unto you, but do you desire chiefly that Christ would come unto you? Do you desire that Christ would come unto you in a way of gracious communication? Are your desires after communication of spiritual light from Christ to teach and guide you, of spiritual life from Christ to quicken and encourage you, of spiritual strength from Christ to support you under burdens and enable you unto duties? Do you earnestly desire communications of all kinds, and further degrees of grace, out of that fullness of grace that is in Christ? Do you hunger and thirst after Christ's righteousness, not only that it may be imputed to you for your justification, but also that it may be more and more imparted unto you for your further sanctification—that you might be brought and hereby wrought into a more perfect conformity and likeness unto Jesus Christ? This is an evidence of true love.

17. The Doctrine of Repentance

Thomas Watson (1620-1686)

Many believe Watson's classic to be the finest exposition found in print of this vital biblical doctrine. In his explanatory style filled with vivid illustrations, he reveals the biblical call for repentance, and counterfeit repentance as mere worldly sorrow over suffering the consequences of sin. He then describes the nature of true repentance, its necessity, motives, and effects. He closes with strong exhortations to repent from every sin, how to remove impediments, and the means for true repentance.^a

The Nature of True Repentance, Part 1

I shall next show what gospel repentance is. Repentance is a grace of God's Spirit whereby a sinner is inwardly humbled and

^a CHAPEL LIBRARY's 98-page paperback includes the complete work.

visibly reformed. For a further amplification, know that repentance is a spiritual medicine made up of six special ingredients: 1) Sight of sin, 2) Sorrow for sin, 3) Confession of sin, 4) Shame for sin, 5) Hatred for sin, and 6) Turning from sin. If any one is left out, it loses its virtue.

Ingredient 1: Sight of Sin

The first part of Christ's physic^a is eye-salve (Act 26:18). It is the great thing noted in the prodigal's repentance: "he came to himself" (Luk 15:17). He saw himself a sinner and nothing but a sinner. Before a man can come to Christ, he must first come to himself. Solomon, in his description of repentance, considers this as the first ingredient: "if they shall bethink themselves" (1Ki 8:47). A man must first recognize and consider what his sin is, and know the plague of his heart, before he can be duly humbled for it. The first creature^b God made was light. So the first thing in a penitent is illumination: "Now are ye light in the Lord" (Eph 5:8). The eye is made both for seeing and weeping, and sin must first be seen before it can be wept for.

Hence, I infer that where there is no sight of sin, there can be no repentance. Many who can spy faults in others see none in themselves. They cry that they have good hearts. Is it not strange that two should live together, and eat and drink together, yet not know each other? Such is the case of a sinner. His body and soul live together, work together, yet he is unacquainted with himself. He knows not his own heart, nor what a hell he carries about him. Under a veil, a deformed face is hid. Persons are veiled over with ignorance and self-love; therefore, they see not what deformed souls they have. The devil does with them as the falconer with the hawk: he blinds them and carries them hooded to hell, "the sword shall be upon...his right eye" (Zec 11:17). Men have insight enough into worldly matters, but the eye of their mind is smitten. They do not see any evil in sin; the sword is upon their right eye.

Ingredient 2: Sorrow for Sin

"I will be sorry for my sin" (Psa 38:18). Ambrose calls sorrow the embittering of the soul. The Hebrew word "to be sorrowful" signifies "to have the soul, as it were, crucified." This must be in

^a **physic** – medicine.

^b **creature** – something created [archaic].

true repentance: “They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn” (Zec 12:10), as if they did feel the nails of the cross sticking in their sides! A woman may as well expect to have a child without pangs as one can have repentance without sorrow. He that can believe without doubting, suspect his faith; and he that can repent without sorrowing, suspect his repentance.

Martyrs shed blood for Christ, and penitents shed tears for sin: she “stood at [Jesus’] feet behind him weeping” (Luk 7:38)...The sorrow of her heart ran out at her eye...

This sorrow for sin is not superficial; it is a holy agony. It is called in Scripture a breaking of the heart (“The sacrifices of God are a broken and a contrite heart,” Psa 51:17), and a rending of the heart (Joel 2:13). The expressions of smiting on the thigh (Jer 31:19), beating on the breast (Luk 18:13), putting on of sackcloth (Isa 22:12), plucking off the hair (Ezr 9:3)—all these are but outward signs of inward sorrow. This sorrow is:

1) To make Christ precious. O how desirable is a Saviour to a troubled soul! Now Christ is Christ indeed, and mercy is mercy indeed. Until the heart is full of compunction,^a it is not fit for Christ.^b How welcome is a surgeon to a man who is bleeding from his wounds!

2) To drive out sin. Sin breeds sorrow, and sorrow kills sin. Holy sorrow is the rhubarb^c to purge out the ill humours^d of the soul. It is said that the tears of vine-branches are good to cure the leprosy. Certainly, the tears that drop from the penitent are good to cure the leprosy of sin.^e The salt water of tears kills the worm of conscience.

^a **compunction** – strong uneasiness caused by a sense of guilt; remorse.

^b This is figurative. The idea of “fit” does not mean “in good enough condition.” Rather, when the Holy Spirit brings a person to understand his sinfulness, and he sorrows over his rebellions against God, he is then *ready* to look to Christ for cleansing.

^c **rhubarb** – large leafed plant, sometimes eaten to cleanse the bowels.

^d **humours** – dispositions; moods.

^e This is figurative. Penitential tears do not literally cleanse a sinner spiritually; tears of true repentance indicate the Holy Spirit’s convicting work in a sinner’s heart, leading him to faith in Christ, and thus receiving the benefits of the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ.

3) To make way for solid comfort: “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy” (Psa 126:5). The penitent has a wet seed-time but a delicious harvest. Repentance breaks the abscess of sin, and then the soul is at ease. Hannah, after weeping, went away and was no more sad (1Sa 1:18). God’s troubling of the soul for sin is like the angel’s troubling of the pool (Joh 5:4), which made way for healing.

But not all sorrow evidences true repentance. There is as much difference between true and false sorrow as between water in the spring, which is sweet, and water in the sea, which is briny. The apostle speaks of sorrowing “after a godly manner” (2Co 7:9). But what is this godly sorrowing? There are qualifications for it:

1. Contrite godly sorrow is inward

It is inward in two ways.

1) It is a sorrow of the heart. The sorrow of hypocrites lies in their faces: “they disfigure their faces” (Mat 6:16). They make a sour face, but their sorrow goes no further, like the dew that wets the leaf but does not soak to the root. Ahab’s repentance was in outward show. His garments were rent but not his spirit (1Ki 21:27). Godly sorrow goes deep, like a vein that bleeds inwardly. The heart bleeds for sin: “they were pricked in their heart” (Act 2:37). As the heart bears a chief part in sinning, so it must in sorrowing.

2) It is a sorrow for heart-sins, the first outbreaks and risings of sin. Paul grieved for the law in his members (Rom 7:23). The true mourner weeps for the stirrings of pride and concupiscence.^a He grieves for the “root of bitterness,” even though it never blossoms into act. A wicked man may be troubled for scandalous sins; a real convert laments heart-sins!

2. Godly sorrow is ingenuous

It is sorrow for the offence rather than for the punishment. God’s Law has been infringed, His love abused. This melts the soul in tears. A man may be sorry, yet not repent—as a thief is sorry when he is taken, not because he stole, but because he has to pay the penalty. Hypocrites grieve only for the bitter consequence of sin...Likewise, their eyes never pour out tears except when God’s judgments are approaching. Pharaoh was more troubled for the frogs and river of blood than for his sin. Godly sorrow, however, is

^a **concupiscence** – illegitimate desire; lust.

chiefly for the trespass against God, so that even if there were no conscience to smite, no devil to accuse, no hell to punish, yet the soul would still be grieved because of the prejudice done to God. “My sin is ever before me” (Psa 51:3); David does not say, The sword threatened is ever before me, but “my sin.” O that I should offend so good a God, that I should grieve my Comforter! This breaks my heart!

Godly sorrow shows itself to be ingenuous.^a When a Christian knows that he is out of the gunshot of hell and shall never be damned, yet still he grieves for sinning against that free grace which has pardoned him.

3. *Godly sorrow is of faith*

It is intermixed with faith: “the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe” (Mar 9:24). Here was sorrow for sin checkered with faith, as we have seen a bright rainbow appear in a watery cloud.

Spiritual sorrow will sink the heart if the pulley of faith does not raise it. As our sin is ever before us, so God’s promise must be ever before us. As we much feel our sting, so we must look up to Christ, our “brazen serpent” (Num 21:8-9). Some have faces so swollen with worldly grief that they can hardly look out of their eyes. That weeping is not good which blinds the eye of faith. If there are not some dawnings of faith in the soul, it is not the sorrow of humiliation but of despair.

4. *Godly sorrow is a great sorrow*

Question 1: Do all have the same degree of sorrow?

Answer: No, sorrow does *recipere magis & minus* (produce greater or lesser [sorrows]). In the new birth all have pangs, but some have sharper pangs than others.

1) Some are naturally of a more rugged disposition, of higher spirits, and are not easily brought to stoop. These must have greater humiliation, as a knotty piece of timber must have greater wedges driven into it.

2) Some have been more heinous offenders, and their sorrow must be suitable to their sin. Some patients have their sores let out

^a **ingenuous** – free from deception.

with a needle, others with a lance. Flagitious^a sinners must be more bruised with the hammer of the Law.

3) Some are designed and cut out for higher service, to be eminently instrumental for God, and these must have a mightier work of humiliation pass upon them. Those whom God intends to be pillars in His church must be more hewn. Paul, the prince of the apostles, who was to be God's ensign-bearer to carry His name before the Gentiles and kings, was to have his heart more deeply lanced by repentance.

Question 2: But how great must sorrow for sin be in all?

Answer: It must be as great as for any worldly loss. "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn as for an only son" (Zec 12:10). Sorrow for sin must surpass worldly sorrow. We must grieve more for offending God than for the loss of dear relations. "In that day did the Lord GOD of hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth" (Isa 22:12): this was for sin. But in the case of the burial of the dead, we find God prohibiting tears and baldness (Jer 22:10; 16:6) to intimate that sorrow for sin must exceed sorrow at the grave; and with good reason, for in the burial of the dead it is only a friend who departs, but in sin God departs!

Sorrow for sin should be so great as to swallow up all other sorrow, as when the pain of the stone^b and gout meet: the pain of the stone swallows up the pain of the gout.

We are to find as much bitterness in weeping for sin as ever we found sweetness in committing it. Surely David found more bitterness in repentance than ever he found comfort in Bathsheba (Psa 51).

Our sorrow for sin must be such as makes us willing to let go of those sins which brought in the greatest income of profit or delight. The physic shows itself strong enough when it has purged out our diseases. The Christian has arrived at a sufficient measure of sorrow when the love of sin is purged out...

5. Godly sorrow is abiding

It is not a few tears shed in a passion that will serve the turn. Some will fall a-weeping at a sermon, but it is like an April shower,

^a **flagitious** – extremely wicked.

^b **stone** – kidney or gall stone.

soon over, or like a vein opened and presently stopped again. True sorrow must be habitual.

O Christian, the disease of your soul is chronic and frequently returns upon you; therefore you must be continually physicking yourself by repentance. This is that sorrow which is “after a godly manner” (2Co 7:9)...

There is a two-fold sorrow: *firstly*, a rational sorrow, which is an act of the soul whereby it has a displacency^a against sin and chooses any torture rather than to admit sin. *Secondly*, there is a sensitive sorrow, which is expressed by many tears. The first of these is to be found in every child of God, but the second, which is a sorrow running out at the eye, all have not. Yet it is very commendable to see a weeping penitent. Christ counts as great beauties those who are tender-eyed; and well may sin make us weep. We usually weep for the loss of some great good; by sin we have lost the favour of God. If Micah did so weep for the loss of a false god, saying, “Ye have taken away my gods, and what have I more?” (Jdg 18:24), then well may we weep for our sins that have taken away the true God from us.

18. Honey Out of the Rock

Thomas Willcox (1621-1687)

Honey Out of the Rock is mentioned in 1740 by Thomas Crosby in his History of the English Baptists, where he wrote of Willcox: “He writ a small piece, which was printed just before the Great Fire of London (1666), entitled: A Drop of Honey from the Rock Christ—a piece that was very well esteemed, and has done much good and been oft reprinted.” It continues to encourage God’s people wherever Christ is served.^b

Does your sin make you look more at Christ, and less at yourself?

You complain much of yourself. That is right, or else complaining is but hypocrisy. To be looking at duties, graces, enlargements, when you should be looking at Christ, that is pitiful. Looking at them will make you proud; looking at Christ’s grace will

^a **displacency** – displeasure; dissatisfaction.

^b CHAPEL LIBRARY’s 24-page reprint includes the complete work.

only make you humble. "By grace you are saved" (Eph 2:5). In all your temptations be not discouraged (Jam 1:2). Those surges may be not to break you, but to heave you off yourself upon the Rock Christ.

You may be brought low, even to the brink of hell, ready to tumble in; you cannot be brought lower than the belly of hell. Many saints have been there, even dowsed in hell; yet even then you may cry, even there you may look toward the holy temple (Jon 2:4). Into that temple none might enter but purified ones, and with an offering too (Act 21:26). But now Christ is our temple, sacrifice, altar, high priest, to whom none must come but sinners, and that without any offering, but His own blood once offered (Heb 7:27).

Remember all the patterns of grace that are in heaven. You think, oh, what a monument of grace you would be! There are many thousands as rich monuments as you can be. The greatest sinner did never pass the grace of Christ. Do not despair. Hope still. When the clouds are blackest, even then look towards Christ, the standing pillar of the Father's love and grace, set up in heaven for all sinners to gaze upon continually. Whatever Satan or conscience say, do not conclude against yourself, Christ shall have the last word. He is Judge of quick and dead, and must pronounce the final sentence. His blood speaks reconciliation (Col 1:20); cleansing (1Jo 1:7); purchase (Act 20:28); redemption (1Pe 1:19); purging (Heb 9:13-14); remission (Heb 9:22); liberty (Heb 10:19); justification (Rom 5:9); nighness to God (Eph 2:13). Not a drop of this blood shall be lost. Stand and hear what God will say, for He will speak peace to His people, that they return no more to folly (Psa 85:8). He speaks grace, mercy and peace (2Ti 1:2). That is the language of the Father and of Christ. Wait for Christ's appearing, as the morning star (Rev 22:16). He shall come as certainly as the morning, as refreshing as the rain (Hos 6:3).

The sun may as well be hindered from rising as Christ the Sun of Righteousness (Mal 4:2). Look not a moment off Christ. Look not upon sin, but look upon Christ first. When you mourn for sin, if you see Christ then, away with it (Zec 12:10). In every duty look at Christ; before duty to pardon; in duty to assist; after duty to accept. Without this it is but carnal, careless duty. Do not legalize the gospel, as if part remained for you to do and suffer, and Christ were but half a Mediator and you must bear part of your own sin, and

make part satisfaction. Let sin break your heart, but not your hope in the gospel.

Look more at justification than sanctification. In the highest commands consider Christ, not as an exacter to require, but a debtor, committed to work according to His promise. If you have looked at word, duties, and qualifications, more than at the merits of Christ, it will cost you dear. No wonder you go about complaining; graces may be evidences, the merits of Christ alone (without them) must be the foundation of your hope to stand on. Christ only can be the hope of glory (Col 1:27).

Appendix 3

TRIBUTES TO ERROLL HULSE

Erroll Hulse gave his life to serving the Lord with his whole heart. He maintained a focused balance that supported both disciplined service to the Lord and consistent glory to God. Every Christian can and should learn from his Christ-honoring life. These articles illustrate Erroll's life in prayer, fellowship, discipleship, literature, evangelism, and world missions.^a



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|---|--------------------|
| 1. A Christ-honoring Life | Kees van Kralingen |
| 2. A Biographical Overview | Sharon James |
| 3. Psalm Seventy-two | Bill James |
| 4. The Need for Reformation and Revival | Kees van Kralingen |
| 5. Prayer for Revival | Jonathan Bayes |
| 6. The Priority of Evangelism | Sharon James |
| 7. A Tribute to Lyn Hulse | Sharon James |
| 8. A Beautifully Proportioned Life | Tom Nettles |

1. A Christ-honoring Life

Kees van Kralingen Editor, *Reformation Today*

Erroll Hulse's ministry, which altogether spanned a period of more than 50 years, was remarkable in several ways.

First of all, the Lord called him to be a pastor and a preacher of God's Word. He became a pastor of local churches, but also exer-

^a The first six articles originally appeared in a special commemorative edition of *Reformation Today* (285, September-October 2018; see RT in Appendix 4). "A Tribute to Lyn Hulse" first appeared in *Reformation Today* 256 (November-December 2013). "A Beautifully Proportioned Life" first appeared in *Founders Magazine*, July 2017. All articles used by permission.

cised a much wider ministry right to the end of his life. This wider ministry encompassed work in

- publication of Christian literature (Banner of Truth, Evangelical Press / EP Books),
- publication of *Reformation Today*,
- setting up regular conferences such as the Carey Ministers Conference^a and the African Pastors' Conferences (see Appendix 4),
- writing books,
- setting up prayer meetings for revival,
- missions,
- evangelism,
- and supporting reformation of local churches.

This wide and extensive ministry over these many years took place against the background of major changes in church and society worldwide. Examples are the resurgence of interest in Reformed theology, the evangelistic campaigns of Billy Graham in the 1950s, the rise of Postmodernism, the loss of Christian values in Western society with many ethical issues as a result, and the spread of the Christian faith in Africa, Latin America, and parts of Asia.

All of this suggests that we should be able to learn from the ministry of Erroll Hulse. Of course, our focus should be how to approach the challenges we face today. For this purpose, we can learn how others have approached challenges in their time. Moreover, we are absolutely convinced that some things do not change at all—even when it seems to us that our circumstances are radically different now than they were only a few decades ago. People are still sinners and in need of the gospel. The Word of God “endureth for ever” (1Pe 1:25)...

We praise our gracious Lord for His servant. Erroll never drew attention to himself, but rather focused on encouraging others... Erroll often expressed his ultimate desire to see the name of Christ glorified in us personally, in our churches, and in the world. This fuelled his visionary outlook, showing not just optimism, but an unwavering belief in the promises of God. He would often end tele-

^a Began by Erroll and others in 1970, the Carey Conference continues each January in England to encourage pastors in their work of the ministry. All preaching is from a Reformed Baptist perspective. A separate Carey Family Conference is held each summer.

phone calls quoting God's promises like this one from Habakkuk: "The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (Hab 2:14). The Lord will bring "salvation unto the ends of the earth" (Act 13:47).

We have to use these promises to plead with the Lord for their fulfilment. Erroll always was a man of prayer, but it still fills me with deep respect to have witnessed how he spent his final years in prayer, when he could do nothing else.

Let us pray that the Lord will fill us with His Word and Spirit to continue the ministry of the everlasting gospel in the years ahead. This is the best way to remember the remarkable ministry of Pastor Erroll Hulse.

2. A Biographical Overview

Sharon James Daughter; The Christian Institute

The Priority of the Gospel

Erroll was brought up in a very privileged and nominally Christian family in South Africa. An only child of loving parents, his father was a gifted architect who ended up leading major projects, and his mother was a highly successful business woman who owned a flourishing photography business.

As a youngster Erroll was an accomplished athlete competing at a high level. He studied architecture at Pretoria University (using the Afrikaans language). His great friend David Cowan, a fellow architect, witnessed to him and invited him to an evangelistic service at Pretoria Baptist Church in 1953. Erroll was powerfully converted. At about the same time, his fiancée, Lynette, was clearly converted when the Lord convicted her during a mighty thunderstorm. They covenanted together to live for the Lord, to meet with His people morning and evening each Lord's Day, and never, if they could possibly help it, to miss the midweek prayer meeting. They married in 1954, and right through their lives they endeavoured to keep this solemn covenant.

Ever since his conversion, Erroll's passion to witness to others and his confidence in the gospel never waned.

In 1962, Erroll was called to his first pastorate at Cuckfield Baptist Church. During the 1940s and 1950s, the membership had declined to just one member. In 1956 a letter was sent to the pastor of The Tabernacle, a Strict Baptist church^a in Brighton, asking whether the church would be prepared to attempt a work of revival in Cuckfield. Erroll believed, with his fellow worker in the church restoration project, Stanley Hogwood, that the work should be built through conversions. They believed in prayer and they believed in action.

Evangelistic activity included door to door work, open air preaching, and constantly working on contemporary and relevant evangelistic literature to deliver around the village. Most powerful was the regular exposition of Scripture and the preaching of the gospel week by week. The preaching was anointed through the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the many who were saved during these years.

On a personal level, Erroll witnessed very naturally to neighbours and others he met. He has always sought to witness when on planes. He took the opportunity of meeting Nelson Mandela at Johannesburg airport, engaging with him graciously in a conversation lasting about fifteen minutes—and reminding him of the need for salvation through grace. Erroll has continued to be eager to share the good news with those who have cared for him in later years. His enthusiasm has always been infectious.

Erroll became committed to the doctrines of grace, and he was equally passionate about the free offer of the gospel. He strongly resisted the dangers of “hyper-Calvinism.” One of the hymns we often used to sing at Cuckfield was: “Come Ye Sinners.”^b

The Concert of Prayer for Revival

In the early days at Cuckfield, in addition to the weekly Wednesday prayer meeting, a highlight of church life was the “cottage prayer meeting” on Saturday nights. We met in homes to pray for conversions on the Lord’s Day. The Lord heard and answered many of those prayers and we saw remarkable conversions. There was a spirit of great expectancy, urgency, and trust in those meet-

^a **Strict Baptist** – conservative group of churches similar to the Particular Baptists; embrace the doctrine of particular redemption.

^b “Come Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy” by Joseph Hart (1759).

ings. We also had Saturday morning prayer meetings to pray for revival.

In 1990, Erroll joined with Glyn Williams of Tinshill Church, Leeds, and they tried to stir up support for a “concert of prayer for revival.” At that time there was little interest. More recently, a good number of churches have responded to this call and meet to pray regularly for God’s blessing in our nation and internationally. The leadership of this concert of prayer has passed on to Jonathan Bayes and others.

Passion for God-centered and God-honouring Church Life

Erroll and Lyn were both converted in the context of an Arminian Baptist church in Pretoria. They were grateful for the absolute devotion to the Lord and emphasis on a consecrated life of that church.

But when they came to London in 1954, they were thrilled to come under the teaching of Ernest Kevan at London Bible College, and under the preaching of Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones at Westminster Chapel. And they read voraciously. Erroll testifies: “I was reading the recently published commentary by Robert Haldane on Romans in five volumes: that cured me completely of Arminianism. By the end of Romans chapter three I was a firm five-point Calvinist.”^a

A formative friendship was with Iain Murray. Iain had founded the Banner of Truth Trust with the aim of reprinting great Reformed literature. Erroll was appointed as the Business Manager. Many other significant and lasting friendships were forged during those years, including with Humphrey Mildred and Roger Hodgkinson.

The sea change in embracing the doctrines of grace was like a Copernican revolution^b for Erroll and Lyn. Both fought against it. They had been taught erroneously that Calvinists hated the gospel and evangelism! But they were compelled by Scripture to change their views.

^a **five-point Calvinist** – one committed to the historic faith of the Reformation, including the five doctrines Total Depravity, Unconditional Election, Limited Atonement, Irresistible Grace, and Perseverance of the Saints.

^b **Copernican revolution** – extreme change in frame of reference; paradigm shift. Reference is to the scientific shift from having the earth stationary at the center of the universe, to having the sun at the center of the solar system.

They had been involved in evangelistic tours around Europe with the Nurses' Christian Fellowship. This organisation operated at that time as a "faith mission." When they explained their change of views to the Fellowship, they were effectively expelled. Many former friends shunned them. This was a very painful time. But they had to be true to Scripture as they understood it.

Erroll and Lyn had both worked as counsellors in some of the great London crusades of Billy Graham. Both had been involved in open air evangelism back in South Africa and in Europe. But they came to be disillusioned with the invitation system. Back in South Africa, they had found that when they delivered the invitation to "come to the front" to make a decision, the same people kept coming back again and again. In the case of the Billy Graham crusades, without doubting the fact that some were genuinely converted, they found from the follow-up work which they did personally, that the drop out rate was high. As Erroll looked carefully into the follow-up work of others, he found they had the same experience.

Erroll and Lyn began to question the need to invite people to "come forward." They believed that it could plant false expectation of assurance. His first book, *Billy Graham: The Pastor's Dilemma*, was a compelling critique of the invitation system. It incorporated a strong apologetic for the biblical and Reformation doctrine of the "bondage of the will" with regard to salvation.^a

This was an extremely controversial topic and his book attracted attention from the national secular press as well as the religious press.

A Believers Church Made Up of Baptised Believers

Erroll was blessed to minister at Cuckfield Chapel for twenty-three years. He was absolutely committed to the local church.

Erroll and Lyn dearly loved the church family. They loved the Lord's Day as the day when the church family met together. They loved the prayer meeting as the time the church family met to speak with their Father in heaven. They never regarded the local church as a "preaching center" where the minister "does the minis-

^a **bondage of the will** – doctrine that man's will is free to choose within the boundaries of his sinful nature and selfish interests. See *Bondage of the Will* by Martin Luther; excerpt of the most important chapter is available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

try” and members merely listen. Erroll’s convictions about believer’s baptism meshed with his convictions about the local church being made of believers who have a credible profession of faith, who covenant together to love and serve God and their fellow members. He wrote several books on this theme, including *The Testimony of Baptism*. His booklet *Baptism and Church Membership* has been widely used to introduce new believers to these truths in many churches. He also edited a series of books gathering together papers given at the annual Carey Ministers Conference. Along with others, he founded this conference in 1970 as a meeting place for Reformed Baptist church leaders.

When Erroll took over the editorship of the magazine *The Christian’s Pathway*, he quickly moved to transform this into *Reformation Today*—a much more contemporary magazine promoting Reformed Baptist truths in a fresh and relevant way.

He then networked with Reformed Baptists internationally, and travelled widely to encourage the planting of Reformed Baptist churches in places as far afield as Fiji, New Zealand, Australia, Cameroon, southern Africa, and Argentina. He also supported the planting of churches locally. Cuckfield sent out elders to plant a church in Crawley.

Biblical Worship

Erroll was not an exclusive psalm-singer. But he was passionate about the mandate to sing psalms in worship, and he spent a great deal of time in collaboration with David Preston to that end. They published *Book of Praises: Psalms for Today*.

Many of David Preston’s renderings of the psalms were then incorporated into the *PRAISE* hymnbook. This offers a fresh rendition of all the psalms, making each one accessible in a new way to congregations today. Erroll was a great admirer of this hymnbook.

Erroll was always passionate about the value and benefit of the Lord’s Day. He saw a day of rest as the Creator’s good gift to all people; and in particular he saw it as a means of grace to believers: the “market day of the soul.” He believed that the day should begin and end with worship and sitting under the Word of God.

He believed that God speaks in a living way through His Word, and through His Word preached. He did not think that the preacher had done his work if he merely delivered a “bible lesson” or

teaching slot. He believed that biblical preaching is when truth comes alive and is delivered with authority and passion and Holy Spirit power. The old term for this is “unction”.

The rest of the Lord’s Day he believed should be given over to ministering to others—especially through hospitality. In the Cuckfield days, the Hogwoods were sterling examples of generous open hospitality, especially on Sundays. Erroll and Lyn, all through their lives, were hugely hospitable as well.

Passion for Biblical Worldview

God’s sovereignty extends to all of life. Erroll believed in Kuyper’s^a vision of Reformed Christianity: that Christ is King over every square inch of life. Biblical Christianity has something to say to art, architecture, music, and all of life. He was a great admirer of Francis Schaeffer, and helped organise the key Schaeffer trip to the UK to promote the two-film series *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* and *How Should We Then Live?* These were formative in turning evangelicals away from the rather pietistic and withdrawn attitude that had characterised the period up to the 1970s.

In the 1960s an extremely permissive lobby was starting to introduce explicit sex education into schools. Erroll took the lead in Sussex in campaigning against this. He worked with our local doctor, not himself a Christian, but a man of goodwill who saw clearly what pernicious^b effects such sex education would have.

Erroll was a great supporter of the Christian Institute^c since its formation, and engaged regularly in a friendly and consistent way with his local MP.^d

He was committed to the truth of biblical creation.^e He loved travel, wildlife, and all aspects of God’s good creation, including sport and music.

^a **Abraham Kuyper** (1837-1920) – Dutch politician, journalist, statesman, and theologian. He was prime minister of the Netherlands between 1901 and 1905, and was known for practically applying Christian theology in the affairs of state.

^b **pernicious** – highly destructive.

^c **Christian Institute** – British Christian organization promoting conservative and biblical values in society, www.ChristianInstitute.org.

^d **MP** – Member of Parliament.

^e See *Evolution or Creationism?* available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

Missionary Passion

Like many of the Puritans, Erroll was utterly confident that God is going to glorify His name by the extension of the Kingdom of Christ in all nations. He pleaded the promises of God in prayer.

The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea (Hab 2:14)

For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts (Mal 1:11).

I remember the very first edition of *Operation World*^a and Erroll's excitement when it arrived. He was committed to using it every day. He has remained faithful. During these later years he has literally worn out several copies of this prayer manual for the nations. Right through his life he would quiz his children and grandchildren on the nations of the world, and in later years, his carers and nurses didn't escape! He quizzed them too with enormous good humour.

He loved those psalms that point to the Kingship of Christ, especially Psalms 2, 72, and 110. Favourite hymns, often sung during his pastorate at Cuckfield, included *Hail to the Lord's Anointed* and *Jesus Shall Reign* (both from Psalm 72).^b

He believed that God's honour and Christ's Kingship demand that many from all nations will eventually turn to Christ. And he never wavered in his conviction that many Jews will ultimately be converted: his second book was *The Restoration of Israel*. Erroll loved and enjoyed all of his friend Iain Murray's books as they appeared, but one of his favourites was *The Puritan Hope*.^c

He travelled widely. On average he crossed the Atlantic twice every year during the key thirty-five or so years of his ministry. He

^a *Operation World* – Originally written by Patrick Johnstone in 1964; updates have been made in 1986, 1993, 2001, and 2010 (seventh edition, Inter-Varsity Press). It includes profile information on cultures and religions in each country of the world and is widely regarded as the definitive volume of world prayer information. The cumulative number of copies printed in all languages exceeds 2 million. See www.OperationWorld.org.

^b James Montgomery (1821); Isaac Watts (1719).

^c Available from Banner of Truth, www.banneroftruth.org.

believed that biblical churches should be planted in every nation. He was active in convening the first meeting of the International Fellowship of Reformed Baptists in Toronto.

Erroll was always willing to “rough it”; he travelled in harsh conditions in places like Nigeria and Cameroon. Straight after Lyn was taken home to glory, he travelled over to South Africa to take his part in some African Pastors’ Conferences. This was where his heart was.

African Pastors’ Conferences

I believe time will show that the most strategic part of Erroll’s ministries was the inauguration of the APCs. During Lyn’s long years of illness, he not only cared for her, but would often work through the night on the APCs.

The vision was to use godly and gifted African pastors and preachers to deliver high quality training to other African pastors from all different ethnic groupings, in their own language, in culturally sensitive ways, and at an absolutely affordable price. Conferences now take place regularly in over forty locations in southern Africa. Huge quantities of excellent Reformed and appropriate literature have been sold at minimal price or given away.

Erroll remained passionate about this work right up until the end of his life, and was always eager for detailed reports of each conference.

The Gift of Encouragement

Many from all over the world have contacted the family to say that for them, Erroll was “the great encourager.” His constant instinct to encourage sprang from the way that he continuously prayed for others. Having prayed for them, he was then prompted to write, email, visit, or phone—sometimes at unearthly hours. Erroll needed little sleep, and always innocently assumed that others would be awake at the same time as he was.

He truly wanted others to know the joy of knowing God and the thrill of serving wholeheartedly. His encouragement was not sentimental. It could take the form of challenging questions, giving out good books to read, offering to cover costs of helpful conferences, spurring others to stretch themselves in using undiscovered gifts and abilities, and, especially, offering opportunities to serve.

Such challenges were invariably offered with enthusiasm and humour.

A Positive Spirit

Erroll was relentlessly optimistic and hugely energetic. Right through the difficult years, as Lyn suffered increasingly with Alzheimer's disease, his love for her enabled him in a remarkable way to slow his pace in order to care for her, which he did with ongoing good humour.

As soon as Lyn was taken to glory in September 2013, Erroll's immediate instinct was to throw himself back into active ministry. He went straight over to South Africa to take his place preaching for the African Pastors' Conferences. It was there, in November 2014, that he suffered a massive stroke that left him paralysed down one side for the rest of his life.

For such an active man to be totally dependent on others for care was hard to witness. But friends and family were inspired by his contentment, his acceptance of God's sovereignty, and his ongoing positive spirit. And friends and family were enormously grateful for the excellent and loving care he received, especially in the final year and four months, from the staff at Wetherby Manor.

His church family at Emmanuel Church Leeds (formerly Leeds Reformed Baptist Church) were faithful in visiting and encouraging him—as were many other Christian friends, including those from Tinshill Free Church Leeds and many from further afield. He was always eager for news of the APCs, and loved sections of *Operation World* to be shared for prayer.

Love for the Triune God

Erroll was truly blessed with sixty years of marriage to Lyn, a gentle, compassionate, and godly wife and mother. They were loving parents to us four children. They were deeply caring of our various other family members. They were good friends to many.

But above all else, Erroll loved the Triune God. He was incredibly active. But his faith was not just about activity; he was absolutely committed to sound doctrine. And his faith was not just academic: it was a heart passion. He wrote *The Believer's Experience* and *Crisis Experiences* to refute the claim that Reformed Christians do not emphasize religious experience. Both these books

developed a positive biblical and practical treatment of genuine religious experience.

He loved the work of John Owen on *Union and Communion with the Triune God*, and wrote a popular length summary of that, which is freely available online through Chapel Library.^a I remember a highlight of the early Cuckfield days was Dad's weekly expositions of the *Song of Solomon*, with the theme of a personal and profound love for the Lord Jesus, and a sense that that love is truly reciprocated.

He is now with the Lord Whom he loved so dearly.

NOTE: Chapel Library USA provides free online resources, including several booklets by Erroll Hulse; see Appendix 5. For further resources see the Reformation Today website, *www.Reformation-Today.org*.

3. Psalm Seventy-two

Bill James Son-in-law; Principal, London Seminary

Erroll's Funeral and Thanksgiving Service took place at the newly-built Cuckfield Baptist Church Chapel on Monday, 21 August 2017. The service was led by Will Cockram, pastor of the church, and Bill James, Erroll's son-in-law. Bill preached on Psalm 72, one of Erroll's favorite Scriptures. Bill's sermon included personal tribute to Erroll's influence and ministry.

His Purpose

We are gathered here today to give thanks for Erroll. Many of us enjoyed his friendship and personal encouragement. We have profited from his ministry. So we give thanks for Erroll and all that the Lord accomplished through him. He will be greatly missed; we grieve his loss.

And yet, Erroll would not want to be the center of our attention today. He would be the first to say that if anything was accomplished through his life and testimony, it was by the grace of God alone, and to God alone belongs all the glory.

^a Available under the title "Fellowship with the Trinity"; see Appendix 5.

Erroll prayed in the early days that if the Lord should bless his ministry, it should be in a chapel in an obscure country lane, so that only the Lord would have all the glory. That prayer was answered in Cuckfield Baptist Church where we are today.

The whole purpose of his life and his ministry was to point us to Christ. Erroll's favourite psalms were 2, 110, and 72, precisely because they celebrate so clearly the Kingship of Christ. Erroll's ambition and desire was that the Kingdom of Christ be extended to the ends of the earth. So now we take up that theme as we turn to Psalm 72. We want to see something of the glory of the King. And we need to be reminded that—while we His servants may falter and fail, and our lives in this world may end—yet Christ's kingdom will endure forever, and His glory will continue for all eternity.

The Glory of Christ

When we look at the glory of Christ in this psalm, the first focus of attention is His righteousness. He is just, He does what is right, He rules according to God's Law. He banishes evil and oppression. And His rule "brings peace to the people...by righteousness" and the blessing of the Lord (vv. 3, 7). When I say prosperity, I don't want there to be any confusion. The Hebrew word is *shalom*, which has the sense of peace, and wholeness, contentment, tranquillity. *Shalom* encapsulates what it means to live under God's smile, and *shalom* and righteousness are inseparable. In the words of Erroll's children's catechism,^a we were created holy and happy. The Law of God brings joy.

"He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper" (v. 12). The righteousness of the King goes hand in hand with His love, mercy, and compassion. The theme of the testimonies this afternoon has been the kindness of God. It is wonderful that in our hour of deepest need, and even as we grieve the loss of a loved one and a great friend, the Lord Jesus Christ is here with us. He is the Saviour Who wept at the tomb of Lazarus. As the psalmist puts it: "Precious shall their blood be in his sight" (v. 14b). The King gives the invitation:

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am

^a *A Catechism for Boys and Girls*, a simplified version of *Spurgeon's Catechism*; both available from CHAPEL LIBRARY. See Appendix 5.

meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light (Mat 11:28-30).

But supremely, the Lord shows His kindness and mercy towards us who by nature are lost sinners. His justice and mercy meet at the cross. This is where righteousness and love are united, and it was in such grace that Erroll rejoiced.

Even in his early diaries in teenage years, Erroll confessed his own conceit and pride. He was thrilled to discover the Lord's mercy, and ultimately to understand and appreciate the doctrines of grace. In his dying days, I tried reading some appropriate Scriptures to Erroll, but the one to which he responded most warmly was:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast (Eph 2:8-9).

As I read, Erroll became animated: "Yes, Amen!" he said. In Christ he found an abundantly gracious Saviour.

That was why he was so passionate about the doctrines of grace. It was not just because it is good biblical theology, but also because he knew it to be true in his own experience. And he knew for himself that if any element of his own salvation rested on his own efforts, his own initiative, his own good works, then he was utterly lost.

Erroll, having received salvation by pure grace, had an infectious enthusiasm to share this good news with others. He loved people, and he wanted them to enjoy the blessings of salvation. He was passionate about the free offer of the gospel. He had no time for a cold-hearted clinical system of hyper-Calvinism. He was zealous to make Christ known, persevering in door-to-door evangelism even into his later years at Leeds.

Amongst believers, he had a passion for others to experience and enjoy the free grace of God. He once explained to me that his main responsibility as the first Business Manager of the Banner of Truth was to drop boxes of books, so that they would become damaged, and he could give them cheaply or freely to those who might read them.

He had a very soft heart for needy people; he did not hesitate to be generous if he had money in his pocket that he thought might

do others good. Such compassion reflects the merciful heart of our Saviour, Who does not break the bruised reed or quench the smoking flax (Isa 42:3).

The Kingdom of Christ

This psalm describes the Kingdom of Christ extending to all peoples and all nations.

He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth...Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him (vv. 8, 11).

If the Lord Jesus Christ is worthy of ALL honour and glory and praise, then we cannot rest while there are those who do not yet serve and worship Him.

I want us to notice how outrageous are these prophetic notions. Israel was after all just a little nation. Solomon was the greatest of the Israelite kings in terms of the extent of his territory, but even in his day Israel would never rank with the great empires of the world. Israel was never exceptionally populous; nor particularly formidable militarily. It was always small, always vulnerable, always under threat from the surrounding pagan nations.

And yet the psalmist speaks of the empire of the King extending to the ends of the earth. Well, that's just ridiculous, isn't it? That's never going to happen, is it? Any right-thinking Israelite living in the reign of Solomon would surely agree. Surely this is just poetic hyperbole.

And yet, when you see this psalm through the lens of Christ, we understand that it in large measure already has been fulfilled. In the world today, those who call themselves Christians number not in their millions or tens of millions, but in their billions, their thousands of millions. The church of Jesus Christ has grown beyond our imagination in China, Asia, Africa, South America, and other parts of the world. The seed of Abraham, namely Christ and those who have faith in Him, inhabit almost every nation in the globe.

It is such ambitious prophecies that have motivated the missionary effort through the centuries. And what characterised Erroll was that he believed the promises of God:

Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations,

even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you (Zec 8:23).

For the earth shall be full with the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea (Isa 11:9).

There are so many voices to discourage us today. There are those who point to the rise of the new atheism, or the dominance of secular humanism, or the power and influence of Islam, or the moral chaos that characterises Western society. We are told that Christianity is on the way out, that we are doomed to fail.

But Erroll would never listen to those siren voices. He held tenaciously to the promises of God. He wore out countless copies of *Operation World* as he worked through that prayer manual each day, interceding for the nations.

"Oh," but you say, "personal witnessing today is so hard and so unpromising!" Yes, but look at verse 16a: "There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains." Only an idiot plants grain at the top of a mountain. There is no depth of soil to sustain it; and even if it grows, the wind will knock it flat. But it is a reminder that the Word of God will bear fruit even in the most unpromising settings and situations: "the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon." Who would imagine that God's promise of a mighty nation would be fulfilled through Abraham and Sarah? They were barren, and too old in any case. And yet the promise to Abraham is fulfilled that all nations are blessed through him (v. 17b). Who would imagine that God would raise up a King out of a little insignificant shepherd boy, a lad with a sling in the face of gigantic opposition? Who would imagine that victory would be won by a Man stripped naked, dying in agony upon a cross?

It is through the foolish things. It is through those things that are not. It is through the preaching of the cross that the kingdom advances.

Who would have imagined that a gospel work could flourish in a run-down Strict Baptist chapel in an anonymous back lane of a quiet Sussex village called Cuckfield?

But whom will you believe: the scepticism of the world or the promises of God? "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom 8:31). The fact is that the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ will

never falter or fail. At the cross, Christ has not only purchased a people from every tribe and nation, He has also defeated death. He is risen triumphant from the tomb. May He endure, or may He be feared (v. 5) through all generations.

Erroll is now in the immediate presence of the King; he joins the great throng of the faithful who have gone before. And now the baton falls to us—to preach Christ, to speak of Christ, to promote the cause of Christ, until all nations own His Name.

Erroll's earthly race may be finished, but the kingdom of Christ endures forever. "His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun" (v. 17a). Notice that this is the last of the prayers of King David (v. 20). And what would be David's final prayer? What would be the enduring prayer of our brother Erroll? We are told in verses 18-19:

*Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel,
who only doeth wondrous things.
And blessed be his glorious name for ever:
and let the whole earth be filled with his glory;
Amen, and Amen.*

4. The Need for Reformation and Revival

Kees van Kralingen

Introduction

Erroll Hulse has been used by the Lord in many different ways. One particular area of his ministry was the building up of biblically healthy local churches. The reason for this was his firm conviction that the spread of the gospel in evangelism and mission is the task of Christians brought together for this purpose in local churches. Proclaiming the gospel is a task for the church throughout the ages until the Lord returns. To accomplish this task requires churches composed of members who have come to real faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and who show this in consistent Christian living. This in turn demands that churches

Grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love (Eph 4:15-16).

This love is the love of Christ manifest in the church and its members, and shown to a lost world.

To fulfil this calling demands a process of continuous reformation and the revival of true, biblical spirituality. This is why Erroll was always so strongly interested in the themes of reformation and revival. He found his inspiration first in Scripture itself and, secondly, in the history of the church—especially in the periods of rich blessing during the time of the Reformation and the times of revival. His active interest in history and biography sprang from the desire to see these blessings again in the churches. In addition, he pursued a ministry of encouraging reformation and prayer for revival. This ministry included also the biblical foundation of local churches and its practical implications.

The aim of this article is to illustrate the continuous relevance of these themes.

Healthy Church: Healthy Members

A healthy church requires healthy members. The biblical view of the church is not that the church is a building or an organization. Rather, it is a living body consisting of people who have been born again and show this by a credible profession of faith in Christ. Trying to reform a church first requires such members. Without real believers, any attempt at reform is in vain. It is therefore vitally important that we have firm biblical convictions about what real faith entails. What are biblical faith and repentance, which are the hallmarks of true conversion and the new birth brought about by the Holy Spirit? How will these manifest themselves in following Christ in a life of discipleship? To address these questions remains of paramount importance for the church. Erroll had realised this as he addressed these questions both in the early and later phases of his ministry.

These issues brought him to the doctrines of grace. He realised that we have to guard ourselves on two sides. First, we have to denounce approaches over-emphasising man's responsibility and activity at the expense of divine sovereignty and the work of the Holy Spirit. Such approaches result in man-centred religion and shallow conversions, often devoid of the necessary marks of real spiritual life. At the same time, we have to reject the opposite error of neglecting the free offer of the gospel and the biblically mandated task

of preaching this gospel to a lost world of sinners in need of salvation.

Erroll addressed these themes both in his early books, such as *The Believer's Experience* and *The Great Invitation*, and in his later publications, such as *Who Saves: God or me?* and *The Doctrine and Practice of Holiness*. These themes were also an important reason for Erroll to pursue the study of the Puritans and the republication of the *Second London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689*.^a

We can learn from this that these matters remain vitally important for the church also in the 21st century. Even though our time, our culture, and the situation of the church is different from the period of 1950-1970 (leading to the rediscovery of the Reformed faith and the doctrines of grace), these themes are still essential. These matters address the real spiritual condition of people, their relationship to Christ and to one another. We still need biblically and spiritually healthy church members!

Importance of the Local Church

The New Testament makes it clear that God not only saves a collection of individual people, but also binds them together in the form of the church. Believers are “in Christ,” to use Paul’s often repeated phrase, and this also connects them to one another. Or as Paul says: “Christ in you” (Col 1:27), with *you* being plural. This applies to the worldwide church of all true believers throughout the ages. But as already mentioned, this equally applies and manifests itself in the form of local churches that enjoy all the privileges of the worldwide church.

The local church must remain active in pursuing its glorious calling. The images used in the New Testament to describe the nature and calling of the church imply that continued growth and development are necessary. For this purpose, the church has to use the means ordained in Scripture to build up and lead the churches. This has been another area of active ministry by Erroll and many others from the 1970s onwards. Three areas stand out in particular.

1. Church government

Biblical leadership is required for the church to fulfil its calling. The leadership of the early church as described in the New

^a Available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

Testament did show development as the churches multiplied and grew. The instructions are found especially in the pastoral letters of Paul, with other important texts in 1 Peter and in the letter to the Hebrews. The leadership is carried out by elders supported by deacons.^a Elders have the task of shepherding the flock, the most important element of which is the teaching and preaching of the Word of God. In this way, the church is built up in the faith, instructed in living the Christian life, and encouraged in witnessing to the gospel of Christ. The New Testament indicates that the responsibility for the task of leadership is given to a plurality of elders, some of whom are specifically called to the ministry of preaching and teaching the Word of God.

In many churches before the 1970s, there was often only just the pastor together with a number of deacons. Through the work of Erroll and others, many churches came to the view that a plurality of elders is required. There are important additional tasks to those of the pastor. These tasks are all part of the necessary oversight of the church and they include pastoral care, the administration of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the exercise of discipline. Recognising this need and taking the necessary measure of appointing elders to these tasks has been a real blessing.

Having said this, it remains important to think through the ways to apply the biblical principles of leadership in the churches in the 21st century.

2. Pastoral ministry

The ministry of the pastor—as the elder responsible for preaching and helping people to apply the teaching of Scripture in their daily lives—is a major task, the importance of which cannot be overestimated. Erroll was convinced of this based on Scripture and supported by many years of experience, and this part of his ministry culminated in the publication in 2014 of his last book *One in a Thousand: The Calling and Work of a Pastor*. The book begins with the New Testament teaching, using the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ as the foundational example, followed by a description of the apostle Paul as a pastor. He then proceeds to illustrate how these principles have been applied by several men in the history of

^a See *Biblical Eldership* by Alexander Strauch, and *Biblical Elders and Deacons* by Nehemiah Coxe (d. 1688); both available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

the church, drawing out further lessons from their lives and ministries. These men include Luther, Perkins, Baxter, Edwards, Lloyd-Jones, and Martin Holdt,^a thus spanning a period of five centuries right up to our time, and covering the Reformation, the Puritans, and the time of the 18th-century revivals.

This material is still essential for the church in the 21st century. The prevailing cultural winds of our times still blow in post-modern^b directions. This implies that authoritative preaching of God's Word is still under pressure and is sadly all too often exchanged for other means. A widespread and disastrous mistake is the distinction made between church worship and preaching. The church meets for worship and this is seen as crucially important to lift the congregation to a higher spiritual plane. The preaching of God's Word is then an add-on particularly targeted at those who are interested in digging a bit deeper. What is sorely missed in this view is that listening to God's Word being read and expounded (exposition and application) is an essential act of worship. It is vitally important that we listen to the Head of the church (Jesus Christ) and what He has to say through His Word! Preaching is "logic on fire" as Martyn Lloyd-Jones used to say, or to use an expression from John Piper, it is "expository exultation." Both phrases emphasise the essential place of preaching in the life and ministry of the church.

Such preaching should be complemented by pastoral care. Knowing the needs and cares of the congregation is necessary for applying the teaching of the gospel. Pastoral care begins in the pulpit.

Many excellent resources that address these matters are now available. Erroll's book *One in a Thousand* is a great addition to these resources and as Pastor Irving Steggles said: "This is inspirational writing to encourage men labouring faithfully, whether in

^a Martin Luther (1483-1546), William Perkins (1558-1602), Richard Baxter (1615-1691), Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones (1899-1981). Martin Holdt (1941-2011) – South African evangelical and Reformed leader who planted churches in Tzaneen, Phalaborwa, Newcastle, and Constantia Park Baptist Church, Pretoria, serving there for 30 years.

^b See *Postmodernism* by Erroll Hulse, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY; excerpt in Appendix 5.

townships of Africa or great cities of Europe or America.” This leads into the need to train and encourage men for ministry.

3. *Training and encouraging new leaders*

This is a biblically based mandate to the churches. The obvious and well-known examples are Paul teaching and training people like Timothy and Titus. Paul then instructed these men to do the same: to appoint elders and to train young men for ministry (1Ti 3; 2Ti 2:2; Ti 1:5-9). Erroll always strongly supported such initiatives. I remember many conversations in which he mentioned his search for gifted men called to the ministry, and to take on responsibilities in churches and in the work of missions.

Once brothers had been entrusted with a particular task, Erroll was always actively seeking to support and encourage them. He made a real effort to keep in touch and to pray for men all around the world and for their ministry. He remembered not only these men, but also their families. He knew very well that anyone in the ministry should also minister first of all to his family—and in turn also needs to receive the support of his family.

As a personal testimony, I remember with deep gratitude Erroll’s support for me and my family. I was deeply moved that even in the final stages of his life in a care home, he remembered the names of our children. I also have vivid memories of his active support at a time when I was called to address serious difficulties in a Dutch church by advising this church on a new constitution. One evening I was presenting the confessional basis of the local church, with Erroll sitting in the back listening to what I tried to teach the church. It turned out that Erroll’s Afrikaans was good enough to understand and to check what I was teaching the church in Dutch! His support in this case was especially helpful and encouraging.

Training new people has to include encouraging them for the great commission given by our Lord. This brings me to the final point in this survey.

The Ministry of the Church to the World

Erroll’s missionary focus was truly global, as exemplified by his travels and his prayerful reading through several editions of *Operation World*. Although he never made a secret of his Reformed Bap-

tist convictions, he exhibited a truly catholic^a spirit, praying for and supporting all biblically based gospel initiatives. His special interest did obviously focus on the Reformed Baptist cause around the world. For this purpose, he actively supported unity and cooperation.

Conclusion

In order to establish and build up biblically healthy churches, we need men—called by God and filled by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God—to minister to local churches and to the wider cause of Christ in the world. We therefore must pray to our Lord, the great Head of the church, to continue to bless the churches and to raise up a new generation of leaders to follow in the steps of men like Erroll Hulse.

5. Prayer for Revival

Jonathan Bayes Director, Carey Outreach Ministries

“Jonathan, let’s pray.” Those were Erroll Hulse’s opening words as I walked into his room on one occasion when I visited him (in the care home in Leeds where he was living following his stroke). Immediately, before I could say anything at all, he launched into prayer, and we proceeded to pray in turn for the best part of an hour and a half. Only then did I get a chance to say, “Hello, Erroll, how are you today?” That one incident exemplifies for me better than anything else what a priority—and what a joy—prayer was in Erroll’s life.

Gospel-focused Prayer

Whenever I visited him, unless it was one of those days when he was exceptionally tired and weak, we would invariably spend time in prayer together. The themes of his praying were always gospel-focused. His regular use of *Operation World* was obvious as he prayed, and he prayed with passionate longing that the Spirit of God would be poured out in mighty power, that the kingdom of Christ would come in this world, that the nations would be given to Christ as His heritage. But he was equally earnest as he prayed for local churches and their gospel efforts, for the young church plants

^a catholic – universal.

in the local area—and especially so as he prayed for unconverted individuals, especially those members of his own family yet to come to know the Lord.

Erroll's fervent desire to see genuine revival and to foster extraordinary prayer to that end was well known to his fellow members of the Yorkshire Reformed Ministers' Fraternal. That is why he was the person whom they decided to ask to spearhead a movement of prayer for revival involving the churches of the county.

A Fresh Start of Prayer for Revival

The meeting of the fraternal in December 2010 was one of those occasions when the discussion (helpfully) wandered from the subject of the paper that had been presented. One brother after another unburdened himself as we aired the sense of frustration at the slow progress of gospel endeavour in our churches today, the lack of fruit from our labours, the sense of uphill struggle that seemed to be getting nowhere, and the fear that our love and devotion for Christ were not as all-embracing as they ought to be. One brother in particular issued a passionate plea that we should not just air our grievances and moan to one another, but that something should be done. We knew that we needed a fresh touch from God, and the unanimous decision was taken to invite Erroll to spearhead prayer for revival. How he should do it, we did not prescribe. That was for him to decide and initiate.

Erroll was not actually present on that occasion, so it fell to me, as chairman at the time, to go and see him, explain what had happened at the meeting, and pass on the fraternal's request for his help. The upshot was the decision to issue a call to prayer to the churches of the county, and to arrange a gathering for united prayer in Leeds, on one Saturday morning in March 2011.

A venue was secured, the churches with a link to the fraternal were notified, and a programme was prepared. We had no idea what the response was going to be. Erroll had tried to arrange prayer gatherings for revival some years previously, but there had turned out to be minimal interest back then. As the Saturday in March drew near, he commented to me, in a semi-jocular way, that if we got six people it would be more than last time. Imagine Erroll's delight, then, when about 120 people turned up from all over the four regions into which Yorkshire is currently subdivided. This

seemed to confirm that the time was right, that the Lord was moving His people to pray, and that bred a sense of expectancy.

It was clear that there was such an appetite for prayer that that event could not be just a one-off. We had to go on, and so further meetings were arranged, at first a bit haphazardly, but gradually the dates became more fixed, and one meeting or a round of meetings started taking place at the beginning of each quarter of the year, usually on the first Saturday of January, April, July, and October (though with the provision to move backwards or forwards a week whenever necessary to avoid clashes with other events in the county).

The reference to the round of meetings flags up something that Erroll recognised: in a county the size of Yorkshire (England's largest), it is unreasonable to expect people to travel to one central location for every prayer meeting. Yorkshire is over 120 miles from north to south, and about 100 miles from east to west. Erroll therefore proposed arranging a network of more local gatherings, and sometimes as many as nine meetings have taken place across Yorkshire simultaneously, with numbers attending reaching 265 in total on one occasion. We have come to use the term "Concert of Prayer," borrowed from the mid-eighteenth-century prayer initiative by Jonathan Edwards in America, and then revived by the Baptist churches of the English Midlands forty years later.

Spreading to Other Regions

As the years have passed, friends in other parts of England, and some in Wales and Scotland, have heard about what is happening in Yorkshire and have asked to be kept informed. Many of them have also arranged united gatherings in their own areas to pray for revival. Erroll saw to it that the Concert of Prayer was publicised beyond these shores. His hope was that it would truly become an international prayer movement, and he was excellent at reminding us constantly that our praying must never become merely parochial, but that we must keep the ends of the earth in our sights and pray with a global vision for revival.

As I write, it is the first Saturday of July this year. Earlier today I was at the meeting local to me of the round of meetings that has taken place as the third quarter of the year begins. On this occasion there have been six venues. For the first time on this occasion, we

also arranged a Friday evening meeting at another location, as an alternative gathering for those who find Saturday morning less convenient.

In the first few years of this prayer movement, it was my personal joy to work alongside Erroll. Following his stroke, and recognising that he could no longer take an active part in the organisation of the Concert, he encouraged me to continue and to recruit someone else to help me. Two brothers in succession have fulfilled that role. And so the united gatherings for special prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit continue. They are one part of Erroll's legacy. The specific people taking the lead may change from time to time, but the important thing is that God's people continue to pray for revival.

A Continuing Need

We recognise that without an extraordinary work of God, the cause of Christ in our nation will not prosper. We are living in dark and desperate days, when atheism and its evil agenda seems to be riding high and gaining momentum. As churches, we often feel that we are on the back foot, fighting a losing battle. However, as Erroll would have reminded us, the promises of God stand fast and the future is His. He calls us to participate with Him in the work of the gospel. We do that, in part, by prayer; though as Erroll was always keen to remind us, not by prayer as an alternative to evangelism, but through evangelism that is backed up by fervent, earnest, persistent, believing prayer.

6. The Priority of Evangelism

Sharon James

Erroll's Own Conversion

Erroll was brought up in a nominally Christian home. He was christened and later confirmed. But there was no sense of spiritual reality at home or at school, although he later looked back with gratitude at the teachers who made him memorise Scripture. At the time, however, "I regarded religion as merely useful to further selfish interests. My idea of God was of a high being who helped one to be good."

He was, in his own words, “a wretched, conceited youth.” Again, looking back, he was grateful for the faithful prayers of a godly and kind aunt, whom he occasionally visited in what was then Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe).

His family were of British background, but at the age of seventeen, in 1949, Erroll was sent to the Afrikaans-speaking Pretoria University to study architecture. There he was struck by the boldness of the Christian witness of fellow students, especially that of David Cowen, a top-performing student. Erroll accepted David’s invitation to hear a Welsh evangelist preach at the Central Baptist Church. He was deeply moved by the sermon, eagerly responding to the “invitation” at the close of the service. This new enthusiasm for Christ was short-lived. There had been no real repentance. Erroll threw himself into sport, studies, and also his courtship of Lyn.

Spiritual concern quickly dissipated. Lyn had even less biblical background than Erroll. However, caught in a fierce tropical storm one night, she was confronted with eternity and the reality of God. She read the *Gospel of John* through in one sitting and repented. She tearfully pleaded with Erroll that they should “attend to their souls’ salvation.” “Right,” he promised her, “from tomorrow we will attend the Baptist church morning and evening every Lord’s Day.” At some point during 1953, Erroll was truly born again by the Spirit of God—this time with repentance accompanying belief.^a

Divine Sovereignty in Salvation

Erroll and Lyn were baptised and disciplined in the Central Baptist Church, Pretoria. They looked back with gratitude at the emphasis on holiness, consecration, and the urgency of sharing the gospel with others. They were committed to Sunday School work, street preaching, and giving out tracts. They worked hard to save up to travel to Europe, where they joined up with a “faith mission,” the Nurses’ Christian Fellowship (at the time very different from the present NCF), which sent teams of gospel workers into the needy countries of post-war Europe.

In London, staying at what was then the Foreign Missions Club in Highbury, they were horrified to find that some of the young

^a See *Marks of True Repentance and Saving Faith* by Jonathan Dickenson (1688-1747) and Free Grace Broadcaster 203, *Repentance*; both available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

people there, including Iain Murray and David Fountain, were “infected” with the dangerous teachings of John Calvin. Erroll and Lyn were convinced that if the doctrine of human free will is denied, then evangelistic effort must cease. They threw themselves into helping with the Billy Graham campaign at Wembley in 1955.

I still have Erroll’s handwritten notes on the people who went forward at Wembley whom he had counselled, and whom he followed up. He noted their names, age, the Scriptures he read with them, and then gave comments. Miss S L,^a “likely to be pseudo. No real conviction.” Mr. A H, “likely to be pseudo. No real conviction.” Mr. D S, “bewildered.” Mr. I C, “bewildered.” Mr. D T, “very sad and doubtful.” Without questioning that some who attended the Crusades were genuinely converted, Erroll and Lyn discovered that the dropout rate was high. As Erroll looked carefully into the follow-up work of others, he found they had the same experience.

Erroll and Lyn recalled that when they preached on the streets back in South Africa and gave an appeal, the same people tended to come forward every time. They began to question the need to invite people to “come forward.” They had found from experience it could plant false expectation of assurance, which could in turn result in disillusionment and “soul wreckage.”

Week by week they listened to Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones preach at Westminster Chapel, attended excellent evening classes taught by Dr. Ernest Kevan at London Bible College, and talked with Iain Murray, David Fountain, and others. Against all their previous prejudices, they unwillingly came to acknowledge that God is sovereign in salvation, that the sinful human heart has to be made new by the Holy Spirit, and that genuine repentance and faith are the gracious gift of God. Today these beliefs are mainstream among Bible-believing evangelicals. Not then! Those evangelicals who had resisted modern liberal theology were predominantly Arminian, often from the “holiness” or Pentecostal tradition. “Calvinism” was assumed to lead to dead orthodoxy^b and an unconcern to reach the lost.

^a I have removed the names for reason of privacy.—*Sharon James*

^b **dead orthodoxy** – an overemphasis on doctrine isolated from the urgent demand for faith, love, and good works in response.

Billy Graham: The Pastor's Dilemma

In 1966, Erroll, aged thirty-five, wrote his first book, *Billy Graham: The Pastor's Dilemma*. It was gracious about Billy Graham himself but offered a compelling critique of the invitation system.^a This was an extremely controversial topic and his book attracted attention from the national secular press as well as the religious press.

The book included a strong apologetic for the biblical and Reformation doctrine of the “bondage of the will” with regard to salvation, alongside a plea for active and energetic evangelism. The passionate evangelistic preaching of such men as William Farel and C. H. Spurgeon was described in order to demonstrate that confidence in the doctrines of grace underpins bold proclamation of the good news.

By this time, Erroll was coming to the conviction that evangelism is best conducted in the context of a local church:

A pastor of a flourishing church organised three coach parties every week throughout the Haringay Crusade. He followed up ninety decisions. Of these he knows only two who stand today. [In contrast, in] over fifteen years, this pastor has witnessed many conversions under his [local church] ministry, only about 5 per cent of which have fallen away.

The Central Role of the Local Church in Evangelism

Insisting on the importance of the local church in evangelism wasn't simply based on experience of what was most effective. It was rooted in the conviction that the local church is the visible expression of the glorious body of Christ: “Even though she may be dressed in the garments of mediocrity, God is in the midst of her. That is her glory.”

But the glory of the local church is compromised if there is a failure to engage in constant and genuine evangelism. Why?

Evangelism is a necessity as far as the glory of a local church is concerned, because without it the wonder of salvation is nullified. If believers are endued with a sense of the surpassing greatness of God's power towards them in a) opening their eyes, b) turning

^a **invitation system** – method of evangelism that invites sinners to “make a decision for Christ,” or “invite Christ into your life,” or sign a card or walk an aisle. Such methods are never mentioned in Scripture. See *Decisional Regeneration*; available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, and c) forgiving their sins by the sacrifice of Christ's blood—then they will express appreciation of such amazing grace by concern for others. Absence of such concern in prayer and effort reveals absence of appreciation of the magnitude of salvation in the heart. A church lukewarm in evangelism is a lukewarm church, and a church lukewarm is a church less than glorious.

The church described in the New Testament is one that was constantly expanding. When the believers were scattered because of persecution, they went everywhere preaching the Word (Act 8:4). When a time of peace followed, the church throughout all Judea and Galilee was built up and continued to increase (Act 9:31). Unlike the situation today, we observe no special organisations for evangelism. Nor is there so much as one exhortation to the Christians to evangelise. We do see tremendous efforts by the unbelieving Jews to stop the witness of the Christians, who filled Jerusalem with their doctrine. The truth is that if the church is filled with the *life* of Christ, then the love and compassion of Christ in evangelism will flow out. Nothing will be able to quench that life. The aim then should be for a virile, healthy, and spiritual church—without which the evangelism will be artificial in character.

Having spent some years pouring his efforts into a parachurch^a evangelistic mission, Erroll could speak from some experience when he wrote:

The local church is the agent of evangelism, not fly-by-night organisations. One brother pastor known to us was sentenced to prison in a communist country (where he lives) through the activity of an organisation that copied his evangelistic literature without his permission, and spread it in an unwise and impersonal manner—which aroused the civil authorities to apply the law. Evangelism is to be done with the background of holy Christian living as exemplified in the “body of Christ,” the local church. Evangelism is not machinery. It is not merely dropping books and tracts from the sky. If evangelism were simply a matter of making knowledge known apart from the personal outworking of that knowledge, the work could well be passed over to technocrats and high powered organisations consisting of business organisers ...Evangelism ought to be the expression of the life of Christ flow-

^a **parachurch mission** – (Greek “para”: beside) mission that functions independently of any particular church.

ing out of his body, and not artificial in the sense that it is merely organised activity by private organisations.

The Centrality of Preaching and the Free Offer of the Gospel

Preaching is central to evangelism. Erroll's booklet *The Free Offer* (1973) outlined the biblical truth of human responsibility and the need to urge unbelievers to respond to the offer of the gospel. Texts of invitation, command, reasoning, and entreaty were listed and some of the great Puritan preachers quoted. This theme was also taken up in the book *The Great Invitation* (1986/2006). This began with a warm exposition of the Great Invitation of Isaiah 55:1,

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

It then went on to examine modern methods of evangelism that result in superficial professions of faith. Erroll couldn't close on a negative note; he then described the powerful ministries of four great preachers, whose ministries were blessed with many conversions, but who did not use the invitation "system" of calling for decisions. Erroll himself loved preaching Christ as Saviour of sinners.

But Erroll also took all possible opportunities to speak to people personally. His diary entries when he was working in an office in London record his prayers for fellow workers. He engaged in conversation with them when he could and invited them to hear the gospel—and it seems that some were converted. Over the years, folk in different parts of the world have told me that he was instrumental in their conversion.

The Centrality of the Local Church Living out the Reality of the Gospel

Gospel preaching has to be lived out by members of the body of Christ. People will then genuinely want to know what is the reason for their changed lives. Hence the importance of love and good works:

In Israel there are two lakes, the one called Galilee and the other the Dead Sea. The Sea of Galilee is fresh. It takes in and gives out fresh water. The Dead Sea is deadly to life. It only takes in but does not give out. So any church that is solely taken up with the edification of its own members, without concern for outreach, is inadequate and likely to be spiritually stagnant. The command to

preach the gospel to every creature, and to teach all nations, is binding upon the churches until the end of the age. Every believer, if he has a true experience of salvation, has deep desires for the conversion of his relatives, his neighbours, and workmates. He longs too for the conversion of the whole world, Jews and Gentiles, to Christ.

The local church should take practical steps to ensure that the gospel is being made known throughout the locality at all times. It is here that good works are important. It does not help if people get the impression that the gospel consists of words only, or even of special evangelistic meetings arranged for their benefit. If the lives of believers do not ring true, if they are guilty of shoddy work in the workplace, if they are not zealous for good works, if they are not compassionate towards the needy—then evangelistic activity is likely to be fruitless. Without love, the words of evangelism will be like a sounding brass. The hiring of special evangelists or the organisation of special evangelistic campaigns will little avail when the churches are in a chronic unspiritual state.

In a society in which people insulate themselves from others, great stress ought to be laid on hospitality. It is possible to be very lonely in a great city for the simple reason that each family is living in a water-tight compartment...Hospitality is essential for the office of eldership.

The Lord uses different members of the body of Christ in different aspects of witness—Erroll's warm, extrovert, and confident manner was well complemented by the equally warm but much quieter personality of Lyn. Her gentle, caring character meant that both believers and unbelievers were drawn to confide in her. She had a fiercely pastoral instinct, which meant she'd drop anything, and drive any distance, to go and see needy people. She had a strong sense of duty, for example, in regular visitation of elderly people and showing practical kindness to them, whether Christians or not. Erroll and Lyn took time to cultivate warm and genuine relationships with their neighbours in each of the various places they lived. Hospitality was an integral part of their life. And Erroll's fellow elder at Cuckfield, Stanley Hogwood, together with his wife Marion, became almost legendary for their ministry of hospitality, including to overseas students.

Hospitality is practical. So is godly parenting:^a

The gospel must be preached and applied to our own immediate family circle first. The Christian mother teaching the gospel to her children is a power that has worked to the salvation of multitudes. Some of the best missionaries have emerged from Christian homes, men such as John G. Paton and William Burns.

Biblical Evangelism includes Discipleship

Having spent time in itinerant evangelism, Erroll was skeptical of evangelistic efforts that fail to lead into ongoing discipleship:

Evangelism is the preaching of the gospel to every creature. There is no limit. We are to go into all the world. No kind of person is excepted: old or young, male or female, rich or poor, weak or strong. There is a priority. The gospel is to be preached to the Jew first (Rom 1:16). But when we define evangelism, we include comprehensiveness as well as contact. To have a five-minute chat about the gospel with every creature in the world is not to evangelise the world. That is contact alone. That is an introduction, and such is valuable indeed—but evangelism is much more than that. Evangelism is comprehensive. Our Lord states this comprehensiveness as follows:

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” (Mat 28:19-20).

The teaching is to be such that those disciples or learners which are made, are prepared for baptism into the Trinity. Such baptism presupposes a thorough and detailed understanding of each of the three persons of the Trinity. Think of the colossal ignorance, the woeful darkness, the terrible deception about Creation, the Bible, God, Christ, and the church prevalent today. The task of dispelling this ignorance and deception by way of proclamation and teaching is enormous. Until the end of the world we are to tackle this task with intelligence, courage, energy, and dependence upon the Lord, Who is with us to the end of the age.

Evangelism, then, is the preaching of the gospel in detail and in a thorough manner to every creature. If people will have nothing to do with it, we do not give up but persevere—in the knowledge that

^a See Free Grace Broadcasters 204, *Biblical Parenthood*, and 188, *Family Worship*; both available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

this is what our Lord has commanded and, therefore, in whole-hearted obedience we will continue.

We must not think that if we shout out a few texts on a street corner we have fulfilled our evangelistic responsibilities. Favourable sites for open air preaching in this modern world of heavy traffic noise are rare and should be utilized wherever there is reasonable prospect of a listening audience. But if such is secured and used regularly, it forms only one means of evangelism. Likewise when literature is distributed, we must remember that our dropping a few printed tracts or leaflets through letter boxes, while better than nothing, falls far short of the great commission to evangelize.

Erroll grounded gospel presentations in the truth of creation: all human beings have been created by God and in the image of God. They have been endowed by their Maker with a conscience. At the Day of Judgment, we have to answer to our Maker for how we have lived. On that basis, we all stand condemned. Hence the glory of the provision of a Substitute to take our place and positively provide us with His righteousness.

A shallow gospel presentation begins with "You need Jesus." But why? It is the reality of having to answer to our Creator for what we have done with the Moral Law placed on our hearts, that leads to the realisation that we need a Saviour.

A Dynamic Theology Is the Foundation of Evangelism

Erroll insisted that sound theology lies behind effective evangelism:

Our Lord, in sending His disciples out to evangelise the world, declared that all power belonged to Him. He alone has the power to regenerate and quicken sinners. He alone has the dynamic to create new life. A theology that does not come to grips with the sovereign power of God is less than dynamic. "All power is given unto me...Go ye therefore." Our knowledge of God (theology), and the fact that Christ is now making application of the redemption He has secured for His people, forms the foundation of evangelism, the basis upon which we proceed to the work. The knowledge that our Lord has power to quicken whom He wills, invests our persevering efforts with hope and expectancy. The doctrine of election, far from shutting out sinners, is the reason for their being gathered in. As we evangelize, we soon discover that "there is none that seeketh after God" (Rom 3:11). But we are encouraged by the sovereignty of God and such statements as, "All things are deliv-

ered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him" (Mat 11:27).

Modern evangelism is based on the notion that the preacher must preach to obtain man's response in order that God might then regenerate. Human response can be obtained by the exertion of pressure. By means of a call for decisions a visible result can be obtained. [But] our interest is in regeneration. When souls are quickened, they soon make their presence felt as they did under Peter's preaching: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Act 2:37). Those who follow in the apostolic tradition preach for regeneration. They are not interested in a harvest of wood, hay, and stubble, but look for gold, silver, and precious stones (1Co 3:11-15).

Preaching that is vindicated by the living, dynamic, almighty regeneration of God in which souls are brought to life is magnificent. In contrast to this, evangelism in which teaching and doctrine are minimized—and man-centred religion predominates, with the emphasis on entertainment—is weak and disappointing, because those who profess to have made decisions soon fall away.

Conclusion

Throughout his life, Erroll was passionate about urging others to follow Christ. He loved Christ and enjoyed people. He was a powerful preacher, but also engaged in one-to-one conversations whenever possible. He witnessed very naturally to those he met (for instance, speaking with Nelson Mandela of the need for salvation through grace when he had opportunity at Johannesburg airport). For some years he led a team from Cuckfield in open air work at Haywards Heath Market. He led by example in weekly door-to-door visitation, and wrote and published a number of evangelistic leaflets especially targeted at the local area.

As a young Christian he was so passionate to share Christ that at times he would have come over as abrasive. His 1962 New Year greeting letter to family and friends had, alongside the customary photo of toddlers Sharon and Michelle, a fervent plea headed "Unbelievers: The Time Is Short," telling his readers:

You are not ready to meet God, not ready to die, not ready for judgement. Without repentance, without faith, without forgiveness, it is high time to awake.

As time went on and he deepened in his convictions about the truth of common grace, his enthusiasm for sport, architecture,

wildlife, travel, and history meant that he more easily found common ground with non-Christians. Some of the remarkable conversions in the Cuckfield years were as a result (humanly speaking) of his enthusiastic personal work. For example, one convert had been a regular running partner with Erroll.

There are many written resources on the doctrine of evangelism. Erroll didn't just write about it. He lived out the priority of evangelism in his own life. And he lived out the conviction that biblical evangelism is rooted in the local church. The "glorious body of Christ" (the church) is to *live* as well as *proclaim* the gospel. Unbelievers are to see and experience the community of faith as a "worked out example" of the transforming power of Christ.

7. A Tribute to Lyn Hulse

Sharon James

Reformation Today was born in 1970 when the editorship of *The Christians' Pathway* (a monthly magazine for Calvinist Baptists) passed to Erroll Hulse, then pastor of Cuckfield Baptist Chapel. Erroll looked after the editing and promotion. But the magazine would never have taken off and survived without the behind-the-scenes secretarial work, proof-reading, and copy-editing performed seemingly tirelessly by Lynette. She acted as secretary of *Reformation Today* from 1970 right through until the commencement of her long illness in 2005.



Lynette was gentle and unassuming, which made others feel quickly at ease. She seemed always to be available to listen to, care for, and give hospitality to vulnerable people. She travelled to many countries alongside Erroll, and in a variety of contexts found herself called on to advise and counsel believers in need. Many from all over the world have testified to the godly wisdom and comfort she was able to offer.

Lynette was born in 1932 in Johannesburg, South Africa. Her mother was a gifted businesswoman and her father was chief rates officer in the South African railways. At school she was close friends with Prime Minister Smuts' granddaughter. Her father as a senior government official was required to attend Parliament in Cape Town for lengthy periods. During such times Lyn and her sister were entertained by the Prime Minister and his granddaughter at Groote Schuur, the Prime Minister's residence just below the beautiful Table Mountain.

The death of her father, when Lynette was just 13, meant that she was unable to pursue higher education, and she became a land surveyor when she left school. At the age of twenty she met Erroll, an architectural student at Pretoria University. Their lives turned around when both were converted. Lyn had very little Bible knowledge, but was awakened by overhearing a conversation on a bus. Shortly afterwards, during a terrifying thunderstorm she

turned to her Bible, read straight through the Gospel of John, and repented of her neglect of God. Erroll often teased Lyn by telling her that she was much more intelligent than Martin Luther. When Luther was caught in a terrifying thunderstorm, he prayed to St Ann and promised to become a monk. Lyn did better than that! At about the same time, Erroll's best friend, a fellow student named David Cowan, invited Erroll to hear the gospel—and Erroll too was converted.

Soon after marriage they left South Africa to work in London and study at London Bible College. Erroll worked as manager for the newly founded Banner of Truth publishing house. Lyn cared for their first two children, Sharon (myself) and Michelle. In 1962 Erroll became pastor of Cuckfield Baptist Chapel, which had dwindled to one remaining member. In 1964 the church experienced what might be called a mini-revival or visitation of the Holy Spirit, with significant numbers of powerful conversions. Such was the increase that by 1967 Erroll opted to leave the publishing scene and concentrate full-time on the pastorate.

Alongside elder Stanley Hogwood, his wife Marian, and others, Erroll and Lyn served in Cuckfield for a total of 22 years. Neil and Joanne were born. While caring for the four children, she also ran a nursery school in their home each day for ten preschool children. Creative and energetic, at the end of term she made black caps, gowns, and academic scrolls for the nursery leavers. Lyn also offered constant hospitality, and gave time and energy to pastoral visiting. When Erroll initiated a local gathering of ministers, the Whitefield Fraternal, Lyn would routinely provide lunches in the home for up to seventy men.

During these years, Lynette brought up their own family, but she was also a spiritual mother to many. With Erroll, Lyn travelled to many countries, where she was often called on to advise and counsel Christians in a variety of different circumstances. She was gentle and sensitive, which meant that needy and vulnerable people felt safe confiding in her. Many have testified to the love and wisdom with which she counselled them. She was exceptionally caring, insisting that she and Erroll make pastoral visits even when it involved long journeys.

Subsequently, Erroll and Lyn served first in Liverpool and then in Leeds. The love and care of the fellowship at Leeds Reformed Baptist Church was exemplary. Her testimony through all the years was: “Jesus Thy blood and righteousness, My beauty are, my glorious dress.”

8. A Beautifully Proportioned Life

Tom Nettles

**Senior Professor of Historical Theology,
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary**

Introduction

This week I was brought to a new sense of the greatness even of the disembodied state of those who die in the Lord. Paul said to be “absent from the body” is to be “present with the Lord” (2Co 5:8). Though he did not want to be unclothed, but longed for an immediate transfer to a state of glory in the body like Jesus’ glorious body, out of this tent into the heavenly dwelling; nevertheless, he longed to depart and be with Christ, for that was very much better (2Co 4:14; 5:1-8; Phi 1:23; 3:20-21). Often we find the glory of Christ enshrouded in a vagueness that accentuates the desirability of whatever pleasures, stunted as they are, may be found in the present life. Whatever is truly pleasant in these attractions are given by God as faint reflections of happiness that exists in fulness in His presence. But, perhaps unconsciously, we reflect, “a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.”

One aspect of the glory of leaving to be with the Lord is that we experience the fellowship of “the spirits of just men made perfect” (Heb 12:23). Clearly the entrance into the presence of “Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant” (12:24) presents an infinitely glorious prospect, unparalleled by any other blessing. The reality is, however, that an element of sensing the power of Christ’s redemptive glory includes an experience of the “assembly...of the firstborn, which are written [i.e., enrolled] in heaven” (12:23)—these fully rational, intelligent, emotionally expressive, fully self-conscious, exuberantly joyful spirits of the redeemed and justified elect of God. Through the centuries, from the time of the murder of Abel, among these spirits are the martyrs who ask how long the Lamb will wait

until He brings judgment and avenges their blood (Rev 6:10). The exhilaration of entering into company with such sanctified and zealous spirits must surely make all other circles of fellowship and conversation [seem] pale, partial, uninformed—and at best only mildly anticipatory of that knowledge and purity of experience which characterizes this company. We all should say, I have a desire “to depart and be with Christ” (Phi 1:23).

Glory

So it came to be with Erroll Hulse, a major force in the rejuvenation of life among Reformed Baptists in England [and the world]. He entered into the presence of the Lord and joined the spirits of just men made perfect on August 3, 2017. Although his knowledge is extended in volume and the purity of his perceptions is unblurred with earthly sludge, the subject matter of his tongue has changed little if any. Among those spirits are many he had come to know, love, and emulate during his earthly days—the dead through books and the living through encouraging fellowship. He will find the company of William Carey an absolute thrill, for he patterned his hopes for the revival of Reformed Christianity around Carey’s a) doctrinally grounded fervor for practical ministry and b) marked optimism for the eventual world-wide success of the gospel. Those spirits will include also Andrew Fuller, John Sutcliff, John Ryland Jr., and the seraphic Samuel Pearce. Joining will be William Kiffin, Hanserd Knollys, Benjamin Keach, and John Bunyan. Will the wit and eloquence of Spurgeon engage with even greater clarity, and will his view of the glory of Christ be even greater?

Oh, what a condition, what a prospect for the spirit already trained to seek Christ for all good and find in Him every blessing. Perhaps already Lyn, Erroll’s wife, and Stanley Hogwood, his faithful elder, William Payne—the Liverpoolian Canadian Baptist pastor of immense talent, good humor, and steady labor—and Ernest Reisinger, whom Erroll called Rex Reisinger because of his preeminence in the Reformed movement, have anticipated Erroll in this fellowship and even now are involving this newcomer into the well-established chain of conversation, worship, and mutual expansion of gratitude for the grace of God shed abroad in the lives of each other. I suppose it is not inappropriate to say, guided by revelatory glimpses, “I can only imagine.”

Strengths

Erroll Hulse was a keen promoter of hospitality. He taught his church that hospitality was a biblical doctrine and a Christian grace. They learned the lesson well and have had abundant opportunity through the years to display this encouraging Christian stewardship. Not only was he hospitable, he was a marvelous and encouraging guest. Along with Lyn, the Hulse couple could make a host and hostess feel like they were richly gifted in the art of hospitality. Every night's sleep was the best one he had ever had, every meal was "an existential experience." Evaporated milk in his coffee (one of the few special requests he would make of a hostess) delighted him no end and made every cup the quintessence of brewing expertise. And how ingenious Americans were to have grasped the custom of putting ice in a glass before one poured Coca-Cola into it—Amazing! The two of them were impossible to displease.

Erroll was indefatigable^a in his labors for the gospel, passionate in his love of truth, persistent in his love of friends, and unceasing in his penchant for encouraging others in their labors and in the faith. I asked him one time after he had bolstered my spirits in a peculiarly fitting way, "Who encourages you?" He said, "The Puritans. They never change, they speak virtually with one voice. They are always ready with godly counsel." Of course, I should have known he would answer that way and that he was only speaking what he had practiced for years. Early in his ministry in England, Erroll had served along with Iain Murray with the Banner of Truth Trust and aided Dr. Martin Lloyd Jones in reviving interest in the Puritans. His own substantial list of writings includes *Introduction to the Puritans*.

Evangelism

Evangelism was at the core of his commitment to Christ and the gospel. When my family and I lived in England for a year in 1984-85, we stayed virtually the entire time in Erroll's home in Haywards Heath. He had moved to Liverpool and we lived there until it sold in the summer of 1985. During the first week of that eventful year, Erroll introduced me to market preaching. An open market on Sunday sponsored by Jewish and Seventh-Day Adventist merchants allowed the Cuckfield Chapel to set up a preaching point

^a **indefatigable** – incapable of being wearied; tireless.

just at the entrance of the market. As people would stroll in, they would hear a presentation of the gospel from a preacher lifted by a small podium. The message was short but pungent; the passing comments were frequent, colorful, often humorous, but always indicative that those who walked near heard.

In his first number of *Reformation Today* (Spring 1970), Erroll followed an article on “Baptist Heirs of the Reformation” with a section entitled “Theology and Evangelism,” which ended with the sentence: “In other words, we need a dynamic theology that results in dynamic evangelism.” He also included an interview with Bill Summers entitled “House to House Visiting.” He closed the interview with the heart conviction of Summers,

Yes, I would exhort my brethren in the ministry to set an example to their flocks by showing a true zeal to reach lost souls...It is our business as Christians to spread the good news. After all, if we are too busy to tell our fellow men about eternal life, what have we come to?

In that first issue, Erroll included a full content outline of a sermon he had preached at Cuckfield on March 1, 1970, entitled “Joshua’s Call for Decisions.” He emphasized recurrent themes of his ministry:

- the clearly established doctrinal background of the necessity of salvation,
- the urgency of the need for salvation in “light of eternal hell or heaven,”
- the consequent urgency of the appeal to know and serve the Lord,
- the reality of human shallowness both in response and in reporting supposedly massive responses, and
- the necessity of pressing the matter in a wise, fitting, and constant way.

God’s Sovereignty and Human Responsibility

Erroll knew well the long historic struggle, the doctrinal entanglement, of a full-orbed biblical grasp of this gut-wrenching issue. He preached,

While there is simplicity about the gospel, it is also called a mystery. Some truths defy our understanding. That a man should be

born with a sinful nature and a will in bondage to sin, and yet be held responsible, is a deep mystery.

So he pointed to the text that showed Joshua knew the “fickle, unreliable nature of the human heart” and knew that the “heart governs the will.” He continued,

We are hesitant to take Joshua’s realistic approach to evangelism and say, “Ye cannot serve the Lord,” but have instead rejoiced in thousands of decisions and have been disappointed in thousands turning back. Nevertheless, with full recognition of the impossibility of this transaction on the basis of human power, we say, What about you? Like those Israelites of old you have only two alternatives before you: idols or the Lord! Look to the Lord Jesus Christ, for He is able to save to the uttermost all who come to God by Him. Relying upon Him and trusting Him wholly, resolve this day that in dependence upon the Holy Spirit you will serve God with all your heart!

A book published by Carey Press in 1975 included a chapter by Erroll on “The Local Church and Evangelism.” Of course, again Erroll summarized his commitment to a theology of evangelism in a book entitled *The Great Invitation*, an appropriate sequel to his earlier brave book *Billy Graham: The Pastor’s Dilemma*.

By October of 1969, at the beginning of my second year in the M. Div. program at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, I had become convinced that the doctrines of grace were true. At that time, it was a deeply personal persuasion, almost solipsistic^a in my perception of how this new framework of thought related to both my contemporaries and to historical Baptist theology. As I grew in both understanding and persuasion of the practical and historic integrity of these truths for Baptist life, I wondered if any other Baptists believed these things. In God’s providence, I came across a magazine, *Reformation Today*, that was fully immersed (indeed it was truly Baptist) in the doctrines of grace, historically confessional, and committed to ministry with local Baptist churches as the focal point for carrying out the commissions of the gospel. I was overwhelmed and overjoyed. I wrote the editor, Erroll Hulse, and he wrote back. Eventually he sent me a bound volume of the

^a **solipsistic** – absorption with oneself without consideration for the needs and desires of others.

1970-72 fascicles^a of *Reformation Today*. It included articles on such a comprehensive scale—exegetical, historical, doctrinal, confessional, contemporary concerns, practical ministry, and a series on “Reformation In [country]”—that it became a major influence in my seeing the Reformed Faith, especially from a Baptist perspective, as fundamental to a broadly-conceived, biblically consistent worldview. Around that time, Erroll also wrote a book entitled *An Introduction to the Baptists*.

Even now, as I go back through that initial volume of *Reformation Today*, I find myself fascinated with the expansive perspective that Erroll, as editor, was able to project. Items of concern went all the way from a serious engagement with concerns over sex-education in the state school system to a discussion of the life and ministry of William Kiffin.^b They were handled clearly, accurately, and with an eye to edification. It even included an article by a young Geoff Thomas about “The Scriptures and the Southern Baptists.” It gave a narrative in very accurate scenes of the history of the Southern Baptist Convention controversy over Scripture and the only-too-relevant punch-counterpunch between W. A. Criswell’s (1909-2002) *Why I Preach the Bible Is Literally True* and the multi-authored *Is the Bible a Human Book?* Erroll’s generosity in compiling this volume and the insight given on such a large number of issues made a definite and positive impact on my convictions about Christian ministry.

Erroll was prescient in his treatment of Calvin as a theologian, and a magisterial Reformer in his relation to the Anabaptists. This causes a contest of absolutist proportions in Southern Baptist discussions on the issue. Long before those unnecessary conflicts arose, Erroll was giving a properly focused analysis of the phenomenon. In one introductory remark, he noted,

Much can be learned from the past and from the life of Calvin. Jim van Zyl draws out lessons as to the role of a pastor. A wide gulf existed between Calvin and the Anabaptists. Nevertheless, we ought not to miss some of the lessons that can come from the attempts of the Anabaptists to create gathered churches.

^a **fascicles** – parts of a whole published in separate sections.

^b **William Kiffin** (1616-1701) – English Baptist minister; successful merchant in the woolen trade. He communicated with many Puritans and held sound baptistic doctrine.

In an article on “The Reformation and Baptists,” Erroll stated with candor,

Those who study the Radical Reformation for the first time should be warned against disillusionment in regard to some of the Reformers. Their part in the persecution of the Anabaptists is not a pleasant subject.

In his discussion of Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin in their relation to the Anabaptists, Erroll pointed to their differences on the sacral society of Christendom, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant, and its cohering ligaments of infant baptism as the cause of the great persecution of Anabaptists. After giving a summary, unvarnished in its impact, of some of the grotesque treatment of the Anabaptists, Erroll wrote, “Let us remember that the state-church system, rather than the Reformers, was responsible for these gruesome events.” Then in seeking to maintain a robust grasp of Reformation doctrinal advances and Anabaptist ecclesiological principles, he wrote,

Let us guard against lowering our estimate of the Reformers or of the Reformation because of sacralism^a which harmed the Baptists then, and which has tended to make them suspicious of Reformed teaching as a whole ever since, thus depriving them of great theological riches. Basic human factors, as we have seen, influenced Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin. They acted within the context of their times. As we are called to act within ours, we do well to seek a grasp of truth as profound as theirs, combining that with the main facet for which the Baptists contended, namely, that the church of Christ upon earth is to consist only of those who meet the requirement of the New Covenant: a new heart and a new spirit.

Africa

Erroll’s missionary vision prompted him to give a portion of his time each year to reformation among the pastors and churches in Africa. He expended bundles of energy and experienced a great variety of living conditions in pursuing this vision. This led eventually to the founding of the African Pastors’ Conferences. These are now put on solid ground with the promise of great impact.

^a **sacralism** – belief that all the members of a society should adhere to one common religious faith and practice. In this view the church is ideally comprised of all the members of society; therefore, “heretics” are threats to both the church and state and should be punished by the state.

It was in the service of this cause that Erroll suffered the stroke that, in the long term, was fatal. This time of incapacity was filled with patience, kindness, humor, wit, and even plans for future ministry. I must admit I was startled when Andrew Symonds, a dear Cuckfield friend and deacon, and I asked what he intended to do with his vast library. “Why, I shall put it in crates and send it to Africa; a minister can never be without his books and I will need them when I arrive.” He had been completely perspicuous^a and unfailingly coherent to that point in the conversation. Had he become detached from reality for just a moment? Or was this the response of a mind so given to ministry that he would never fail to strategize for at least one more thing for Christ and the gospel, even in the face of such invincible odds?

Conclusion

One of Erroll’s daughters, Michelle, as a young girl in answering a question concerning what her father did, responded, “He is a ballet dancer.” Perhaps she was right. He mastered the art of graceful, meaningful, disciplined movement between biblical text and hungry congregation. He mustered a force of eager disciples for the truth of the gospel through lovely enticement with the coherence between the music of the heart, the power of a message, the warmth of genuine experience, and the deftness of minds under the control of truth. He never lost concentration on the choreography of his life mixing virtue with his faith, and with both knowledge, and with the three self-control, and to that quartet, steadfastness, and pressed throughout godliness, which brings along with it brotherly kindness—all bolstered by and arising from the most beautiful, full, and unifying of all graces, love. Yes, a real, disciplined, Spirit-controlled, elegantly attired in humility, artistically developed Christian “ballet dancer.” Now he is among the spirits of just men made perfect, awaiting the time of being clothed with an immortal, incorruptible body, fit for perfect praise in the realm of the infinite spiritual glory of the triune God.

^a **perspicuous** – clear in statement or expression.

Appendix 4

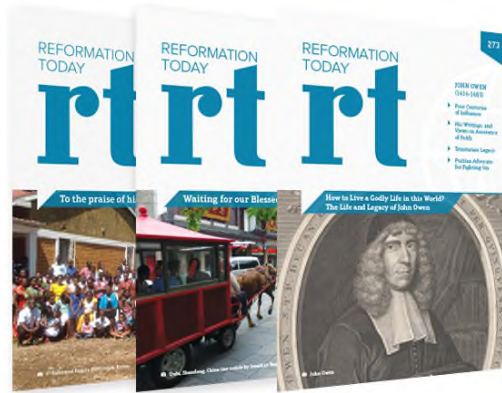
CONTINUING MINISTRIES

Erroll Hulse's work around the world brought about a vision for building up the churches through mutual encouragement and teaching. Both Reformation Today and the African Pastors' Conferences continue to serve Christ in these important functions.

1. Reformation Today

Erroll Hulse

The following is an extract from the editorial Erroll wrote for the very first issue of Reformation Today in 1970.



Why Reformation Today?

Every area of life—the church, the home, civil government—stands in need of continuous reformation. This will be so to the end of the age because of the destructive and retarding forces of sin. The Scriptures form our absolute, unchanging standard. To that we must conform. Since the local church is where God manifests His saving grace, it follows that it is the duty of every local church to conform to Scripture in regard to worship, evangelism, teaching, discipline, and literature. From such churches we can expect the principles of reformation to spread into society as a whole with salt-like effect (Mat 5:13). Unhappily, some churches have become tra-

ditional to the extent that self-criticism is no longer possible. This magazine, emanating from a local church, seeks to extend fellowship to all churches interested in reformation in all its aspects, and at the same time provide a mouthpiece for the Carey Conference.

What areas will the magazine serve?

As expressed elsewhere in these pages, it is clear that there is a Reformed awakening in many countries. A new situation is developing as a result, in which it is vital that there be an organ that is able, without fear of reprisal, to tackle the subject of reformation—particularly as it affects those with Baptist convictions—hence the need for associate editors in other countries.

Is there an editorial policy?

The contents of any magazine declare its policy. While we contend for truth, we are earnestly concerned about evangelical unity. Baptists are years behind in their work on Covenant Theology; it is not to be inferred that we are not concerned about unity with our paedobaptist brethren, with whom we have some of our most encouraging correspondence. For a long time, we have enjoyed their literature, and we hope that many of them will enjoy ours. Our prayer is for the prosperity of evangelical local churches everywhere, but particularly those who have had to secede from major denominations because of Modernism and Ecumenism.

Reformation Today continues in its mission unchanged.

For more information and subscriptions,
visit www.Reformation-Today.org.

2. African Pastors' Conferences

Conrad Mbewe

Pastor, Kabwata Baptist Church, Lusaka, Zambia

Beginnings

In 1991, Erroll Hulse decided to come and visit Zambia to verify what he was hearing about the fledgling Reformed Baptist movement here and to encourage us. He came in the company of Trevor Roberts, who at that time was pastor of Germiston Baptist Church in South Africa. He dubbed that historic visit, "In the footsteps of David Livingstone." Erroll was in his element as he spoke to us about the uniqueness of the *Second London Baptist Confes-*

sion of Faith of 1689. He said it had Reformation roots, Puritan roots, and Baptistic roots. The few of us who were gathered at that meeting went away sensing that we belonged to a great pedigree of those who never bowed their knees to Baal across church history.

What I remember most from Erroll Hulse on that trip was the time we were together in the same car for the 4 to 5-hour drive from Lusaka to Kitwe and back. He took out the church membership list of Leeds Reformed Baptist Church and quietly prayed for each member as we travelled. I remember thinking to myself, “Here is a true shepherd. He carries his members with him and prays for them at every opportunity. I should be doing the same!”



“In the footsteps of David Livingstone” – Zambia, 1991

I have never forgotten being on an international phone call with Erroll Hulse in 2005 in which, with his usual enthusiastic voice, he urged me to join the directors of what was clearly evolving into a network of conferences in southern Africa. “I have been talking with Irving (Steggles) and he will continue to organise things on the ground. But we need to have a ‘proper’ African director. You are the man! Having you from Zambia will make a lot of sense because that is where we have the pool of high-calibre Reformed expository preachers we can draw from.” Who was I to say “no” to Erroll? That was how I went from being a preacher at the African Pastors’ Conferences to being one of the directors.

The need

Erroll was calling from England. Although he had left Africa to settle in the United Kingdom about half a century earlier, it was evident that his heart was still on the African continent. He did everything he could not only to befriend pastors like me, but also to ensure that the Reformed faith sank roots even deeper on this continent. It was this latter goal that made him realise the need for conferences among the less well-to-do pastors, where they would be exposed to expository preaching by fellow African pastors and given access to solid Reformed literature at an affordable price. He knew that such conferences would result in incalculable benefit to the pastors and the churches of Africa.



Everyone agrees that the Christian faith is growing by leaps and bounds on the African continent. The traditional way of training men for the work of pastoring churches is not coping with this phenomenal growth. This has resulted in many individuals in pulpits who are doctrinally bankrupt and who have no idea how to preach in a way that makes the Bible come alive to their hearers. The fruit of this is the disaster that is being witnessed everywhere

on the continent. Most churches are syncretistic;^a others are turning into one-man cults. When one realises that Africa is poised to become the next major missionary-sending continent due to the growth of Christianity that is currently taking place here, one worries as to the kind of Christianity that will be exported to the rest of the world. It will certainly not be the same as that which was inherited from the pioneer missionaries, like David Livingstone, who brought the Christian faith to Africa.

Books and preaching

It is in an effort to help with this situation that the African Pastors' Conferences were conceived. Erroll loved books. He had been one of the pioneers of the Banner of Truth Trust. He had also served on a number of boards for Christian book publishing houses. He wrote a number of books himself. Through his enthusiastic commendation of books to younger pastors, a number of them had come to the Reformed faith and sustained a fruitful ministry for the rest of their lives. The challenge with getting such books into the hands of African pastors was not only caused by distance from most



good publishing houses (which are based in the USA and the UK), but also the high prices of the books. Those prices are well beyond

^a **syncretistic** – fusing different systems of belief, resulting in distortion of the truth.

the reach of most African pastors. One important role of the African Pastors' Conferences was to get these books into the hands of African pastors for as low a price as possible. In most cases, the price pastors pay for the books barely covers the cost of transporting them. In fact, a few of the books are given out freely to those who attend.^a

Another need for African pastors is that of role models. Too much of so-called preaching in Africa is topical preaching at best or mere story telling at worst. If we are going to see healthy mature churches across the landscape of Africa, there is need for the regular diet of most pulpits to be expository sermons. Yet, expository preaching is better caught than taught. So, from the beginning, the directors of the African Pastors' Conferences were determined to ensure that they were not only providing a centre for the distribution of good Christian literature, but also a place where good expository preaching would be modelled. They ensured that each conference would have at least one African preacher with above-average expository preaching skills so that fellow African pastors can see that they too can preach the Bible in this way. These preachers were initially largely from Zambia. Now, other preachers have joined these ranks from countries such as Kenya and Malawi.

So, the African Pastors' Conferences from the beginning have been characterised by good solid Christian books and good solid expository preaching. Both of these are very rare on the African continent.

Scope

Initially, these conferences were limited to South Africa and only occurred in January. Over the years, they have spread across the continent and are being held throughout the year. This necessitated more hands and consequently a full-time coordinator has had to be hired. There are now about 60 conferences covering South Africa, Botswana, Swaziland, Lesotho, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, and Cameroon. The conferences only last a day or two and those who register to attend need only affirm a) that they believe that the Bible is God's Word

^a CHAPEL LIBRARY has the privilege to regularly supply boxfuls of free Christian literature for the APCs, by many proven writers including Luther, the Puritans, Whitefield, Spurgeon, Ryle, Bonar, and Pink.

and b) that it is their final authority in all matters of faith and conduct. Last year alone (2017), there were over 12,000 individuals who attended these conferences. Since the beginning of the conferences, over 130,000 books have been distributed. Imagine the impact of this!

As stated earlier, these conferences were initially confined to South Africa and the main organisers were Dennis Hustedt, Erroll Hulse, Raymond Zulu, Irving Steggles, and myself. Dennis Hustedt moved to the USA and in due season concentrated his efforts on a few conferences among the largely Asian community in KwaZulu Natal. Raymond Zulu moved out to England but remained, until recently, a regular preacher, especially for the conferences that were being held in South Africa.



Leadership

Erroll remained the chief ambassador of the African Pastors' Conferences for many years. He looped in some pastors and churches in the USA as supporters for the conferences. Bob Dickie, Thomas Winn, John Divito, and Cary Kimbrell are some of the men who threw their weight behind these conferences in due season. At the time of writing this article, Thomas Winn and John Divito have even become APC directors.

How do the directors manage to get 60 conferences supported across the continent of Africa? The main approach is to encourage churches to adopt a conference. The cost of hosting a conference is

anything between \$750 and \$9,000. Therefore, churches and individuals are encouraged to partner with the African Pastors' Conferences by sponsoring a conference that they can afford. Where a church sponsors a conference, the pastor is encouraged to preach there or at least visit the conference from time to time. That way the church that is sponsoring can have first-hand information as to what is going on at the conference and they can feel something of the initial impact that the conference is having on those who are attending it. The directors also ensure that a report is written to the partners about the conference that they are sponsoring. When the financial burden is divided among the sponsors in this way, it becomes easier to manage.

Anyone can also follow what is currently happening by simply going to the African Pastors' Conferences website or the Facebook page:

www.AfricanPastorsConferences.org

www.facebook.com/africanpastorsconferences/

There are very short reports and plenty of good photos and videos of the conferences.

Erroll has since gone on to his eternal reward, but the conferences continue to grow in their influence right across the continent.

Appendix 5

AN ERROLL HULSE SAMPLER

Having travelled extensively, Erroll Hulse's writings over the years addressed specific needs he saw in the churches around the world. Chapel Library republishes eight of his titles, which are helpful to pastors, church leaders, and laymen. Notice in these excerpts the wide scope of his writings, both in protecting against doctrinal errors of today and in advancing personal piety and missions.^a

1. Adoniram Judson and the Missionary Call
2. A Catechism for Boys and Girls
3. Fellowship with the Trinity
4. Let's Pray for Global Revival
5. The Only Savior
6. Postmodernism
7. Vital Place of the Prayer Meeting
8. The Story of the Puritans

1. Adoniram Judson and the Missionary Call

Erroll Hulse

Adoniram Judson was the first Baptist missionary sent from the American colonies, and became one of the great missionaries of all time. His story's title is descriptive of the author's intent: a better understanding of worldwide missions interwoven into Judson's exemplary life. This excerpt is taken from the biographical section of the book. That section is followed by sections on Judson's character, his doctrine, and what we can learn from him about missions.^b

^a Each of these is available worldwide online at www.ChapelLibrary.org and in print upon request.

^b CHAPEL LIBRARY's 40-page booklet includes the complete work.

To Burma

Adoniram and Ann then sailed from Mauritius to Madras. Avoiding detection, they boarded a Portuguese ship that sailed direct to Rangoon. The steel wall of the East India Company^a finally was penetrated.

The government of Burma was as anarchic as it was tyrannical. It consisted of unmitigated despotism. The king was supreme in his power over the people; torture and mass executions kept the population in utter subjection. No deviation from Buddhism was allowed. One or two Catholic priests ministered to the tiny number of foreigners who ventured into this exotic kingdom, but a solitary Burmese subject who had dared to profess conversion to Catholicism some years before had been beaten almost to death. His life was saved by the mediation of a foreigner with an appeal that the man was insane, whereupon he was allowed to go into exile.

The leaders of Burma were intolerably arrogant. Officialdom was appallingly corrupt. When the country came into conflict with the British, the leaders had no idea of the military strength and experience of the opposition. They vainly imagined that the British would be easily demolished. When defeated by the British in war, several Burmese commanders were executed by beheading within hours of their arrival in the capital.^b

William Carey was well able to give the young American missionaries an accurate assessment of Burma: his son Felix had been there for four years. On account of his marriage to a Burmese woman of European extraction, Felix was the only one to succeed in staying in Burma. At great expense, Felix and a missionary called Chater began their mission in 1807. They succeeded in establishing a large well-equipped home within a compound of two acres. The property, just half a mile from the city of Rangoon, was enclosed by walls and planted with fruit trees. Felix had the advantage of medical skills. He pioneered vaccination in Burma. Like his father, he was able to gain remuneration by secular means. Felix did well to

^a **steel wall** – This commercial enterprise was careful to ensure that nothing interrupted its profitable trade, such as missionary activity which would arouse resistance from the government and the people.

^b Francis Wayland, *A Memoir of the Life and Labors of the Rev. Adoniram Judson* (Boston, Massachusetts: Phillips, Sampson, and Company, 1853, in 2 vol.); vol. 1, 103.

persevere in Rangoon. Of three missionaries who joined him, one had died of fever and two were forced to retreat through failing health...

On their arrival in Burma, it was to the mission compound in Rangoon, established by Felix Carey, that Adoniram and Ann were able to come. They were saved the work of finding property. Felix had decided to move his mission to the capital Ava. This ended in the greatest conceivable human disaster when his boat overturned and he lost everything—his wife, three children and all his possessions, among which was his translation work. He himself narrowly escaped death but the others, including most the servants, could not swim and were drowned.

When the Judsons settled in Rangoon, their very first priority was to gain fluency in the language. Adoniram resolved from the beginning to work toward the translation of the whole Bible into Burmese. Parallel with that was the development of a textbook for Burmese grammar, which in due course became a first-class compact tool of 76 pages. In later years he concentrated on the compilation of a Burmese-English dictionary. Burmese script was a complex circular writing without punctuation; no word, sentence, or paragraph divisions—a seemingly identical endless flow. To the end of his life Judson labored in linguistic study with eminent success.

Once language was attained, the next step was to evangelize. A principal method used was to build a *zahat*. This was a hut with about a 30 foot frontage raised on posts about four feet above ground level, a verandah across the front and two rooms at the back. Using the verandah, the missionary could invite passers-by to rest and discussion. Buddhist zahats were common.

The Judsons arrived in Rangoon in 1813 and it was not until 1819 that the first convert, Mounge Nau, was baptized. Going back to Felix Carey's arrival in 1807, this was the first Burmese convert in 12 years. Later in 1819, two more were baptized. The first Christian-Burmese prayer meeting began with a nucleus forming and interest being aroused. However it was inevitable that the evangelizing activities of the Judsons would come to the knowledge of the local ruler. Local rulers were all directly responsible to the king, who was greatly feared. Consequently, people were too afraid to

associate with the missionaries. The New Testament does not hide the cost of discipleship. The way of salvation is repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. In Burma, it was a case of repent, believe, and face an appalling death. Even mature disciples tremble at the thought of torture and death. It is much to ask of brand new converts from a completely alien society to start with such terms. Judson could see that unless an attempt was made to win the goodwill of the king, progress would be severely restricted.

It was a brave decision of Adoniram to take a boat up the river Irrawaddy. This river-craft measured 40 by 6 feet. There was a company of 16, including fellow missionary Colman. There was also an Englishman who was in charge of defense. His weapon consisted of a blunderbuss, necessary to drive off robbers. There were ten rowers and three others in charge of different aspects of the trip. In spite of severe difficulty, an audience with the king was obtained. The correct protocol was observed scrupulously. But the mission failed. It proved futile and dangerous. The King disdained these foreign religionists and despised their teaching.

When Adoniram returned, he was encouraged to find that the three converts were not daunted by the failure of his mission to Ava. They affirmed their faith in Christ irrespective of the consequences, but Adoniram was distressed by Ann's ill health. At this time, she was constrained to return to America for medical treatment. Shortly after her leaving (and she would be away for about two years), missionary doctor Jonathan Price and his wife arrived. Mrs. Price, a young woman, lived only five months in Burma. She was buried beside Roger Judson, who had died at the age of eight months. Dr. Price's skills soon became well known, and the news of his abilities, especially eye cataract operations, reached the king in Ava. Ironically one of the king's titles was "Golden Eyes." He sent a command that Dr. Price should come to him. And so Judson set off for a second journey up the Irrawaddy, this time accompanied by Dr. Price.

The king had no interest in Judson. In Price he could see some value. This visit led to friendship with the king's sister and her husband, Prince M. During one of the interviews of the king with Judson and Price, two Englishmen also being present, the king questioned Judson closely. This was like walking on the edge of a precipice. Judson recorded the incident in his diary as follows:

The Emperor enquired about the Burmese who had embraced my religion. "Are they real Burmese? Do they dress like other Burmese?"

I had occasion to remark that I preached every Sunday. "What! In Burma?" "Yes."

"Let us hear how you preach." I hesitated. An official standing by repeated the order. I began with a form of worship which first ascribes glory to God, and then declares the commands of the law of the gospel; after which I stopped.

"Go on!" said another official. The whole court was profoundly silent. I proceeded with a few sentences declarative of the perfections of God, when His Majesty's curiosity was satisfied and he interrupted me.

Through this second visit, the door to the capital city of Ava was opened. In his pleasure at gaining Dr. Price's services in the capital, the king granted permission to purchase property in the city where he could carry on his work. The little church at Rangoon had grown to 18 baptized members. More missionaries had arrived to strengthen the work. The way was open to establish the mission in the royal city of Ava.^a

Judson's devotion shines in his courageous visits to the king. His purpose, clearly, was to remove the cloud of fear that hung over the people and which isolated them from the message of eternal salvation...

2. A Catechism for Boys and Girls

Erroll Hulse

A catechism is a useful method for teaching the essential doctrines of the Christian faith by questions and answers. These have proven effective for many centuries. The Westminster Assembly produced not only its well-known Confession of Faith, but also the Larger Catechism (for pastors' use in teaching their congregations) and Shorter Catechism (for parents' use in teaching their children).

Soon thereafter, Baptists connected with Benjamin Keach (1640-1704) tailored the Westminster Shorter Catechism to the London Baptist Confession of 1677/89 (which is almost identical to the Westminster except in its chapters on church government and

^a Courtney Anderson, *To the Golden Shore*, Judson Press, Valley Forge, USA, 1989, 61.

baptism). Later, Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892) updated Keach's catechism for his own congregation.

More recently, Erroll Hulse knew that a more simplified Baptist catechism was needed so that parents could train their young children at home. The 134 short questions and answers encompass key doctrines of the faith, including sections on God-Man-Sin, Salvation, The Ten Commandments, Prayer, The Word, The Church and Ordinances, and Last Things.^a

1. God, Man, and Sin

Q.1. Who made you?

A. God made me.

Q.2. What else did God make?

A. God made all things.

Q.3. Why did God make you and all things?

A. For His own glory.

Q.4. How can you glorify God?

A. By loving Him and doing what He commands.

Q.5. Why ought you to glorify God?

A. Because He made me and takes care of me.

Q.6. Are there more gods than one?

A. There is only one God.

Q.7. In how many Persons does this one God exist?

A. In three Persons.

Q.8. Who are they?

A. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Q.9. Who is God?

A. God is a Spirit, and has not a body like men.

Q.10. Where is God?

A. God is everywhere.

Q.11. Can you see God?

A. No. I cannot see God, but He always sees me.

Q.12. Does God know all things?

A. Yes. Nothing can be hidden from God.

Q.13. Can God do all things?

A. Yes. God can do all His holy will.

^a CHAPEL LIBRARY's 16-page booklet includes the complete 134 questions and answers with Bible references

- Q.14. Where do you learn how to love and obey God?
A. In the Bible alone.
- Q.15. Who wrote the Bible?
A. Holy men who were taught by the Holy Spirit.
- Q.16. Who were our first parents?
A. Adam and Eve.
- Q.17. Of what were our first parents made?
A. God made the body of Adam out of the ground, and formed Eve from the body of Adam.
- Q.18. What did God give Adam and Eve besides bodies?
A. He gave them souls that could never die.
- Q.19. Have you a soul as well as a body?
A. Yes. I have a soul that can never die.
- Q.20. How do you know that you have a soul?
A. Because the Bible tells me so.
- Q.21. In what condition did God make Adam and Eve?
A. He made them holy and happy.
- Q.22. Did Adam and Eve stay holy and happy?
A. No. They sinned against God.
- Q.23. What is sin?
A. Sin is any transgression of the Law of God.
- Q.24. What is meant by transgression?
A. Doing what God forbids.
- Q.25. What was the sin of our first parents?
A. Eating the forbidden fruit.
- Q.26. Why did they eat the forbidden fruit?
A. Because they did not believe what God had said.
- Q.27. Who tempted them to this sin?
A. The devil tempted Eve, and she gave the fruit to Adam.
- Q.28. What happened to our first parents when they had sinned?
A. Instead of being holy and happy, they became sinful and miserable.
- Q.29. What effect had the sin of Adam on all mankind?
A. All mankind is born in a state of sin and misery.
- Q.30. What do we inherit from Adam as a result of this original sin?
A. A sinful nature.
- Q.31. What does every sin deserve?
A. The anger and judgment of God.

Q.32. Can anyone go to heaven with this sinful nature?

A. No. Our hearts must be changed before we can be fit for heaven.

Q.33. What is a change of heart called?

A. Regeneration.

Q.34. Who can change a sinner's heart?

A. The Holy Spirit alone.

Q.35. What is righteousness?

A. It is God's goodness.

Q.36. Can anyone be saved by his own righteousness?

A. No. No one is good enough for God.

3. Fellowship with the Trinity

Erroll Hulse

John Owen wrote Of Communion with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in 1657. For many readers, it has become their favorite devotional work of the Puritans and perhaps of all time. It was certainly so for Erroll Hulse. In writing Fellowship with the Trinity, he sought to capture Owen's main ideas in order to make the work more accessible to everyone.^a

Fellowship with the Father

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus firmly and clearly teaches us that we should relate to the Father as sons and daughters. This infers that we are members together in a spiritual family by adoption. In the ancient world, adoption was common. If a nobleman lacked a son and heir, he would adopt a son. Octavius, who was to become Caesar Augustus, was adopted.

Simply stated, "Adoption is an act of God whereby He makes us members of His family."^b The *Shorter Catechism*^c asks: "What is adoption?" and answers, "Adoption is an act of God's free grace,

^a CHAPEL LIBRARY's 20-page booklet includes Hulse's complete work.

^b Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Inter-Varsity Press; Zondervan, 1994), 736.

^c *Shorter Catechism* – questions and answers prepared by the Westminster Assembly in 1646 for fathers to use in instructing their children in the doctrines of the *Westminster Confession of Faith*. The *Larger Catechism* was prepared for use by ministers for teaching in the pulpit.

whereby we are received into the number and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God" (Question 34). The Greek word translated "adoption" consists of a combination of two words, *huios* (son) and *thesia* (placing), *huiothesia*—the placing of a son. Adoption is relational. Believers relate to the Father as sons and daughters. J. I. Packer says, "The entire Christian life has to be understood in terms of adoption. If you want to judge how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of the thought of being a child and having God as his Father."^a

The apostle Paul equates leading and assurance with adoption. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom 8:14-17). And in Galatians we read, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (*cf.* Gal 3:23-26). John Murray says, "Adoption, as the term clearly implies, is an act of transfer from an alien family into the family of God Himself. This is surely the apex of grace and privilege."^b Sinclair Ferguson helpfully points out that, "There is no higher self-image that the Christian can have, and no doctrine which will more readily help him enjoy the life of faith."^c

Scripture confirms these high views of adoption. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God:^d therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1Jo 3:1-2). The Authorized Version brings out the emphasis of the word *idou* in the Greek text, which means "Behold!" or "Look!"

^a J. I. Packer, *Knowing God* (Downers Grove, Ill.; InterVarsity Press, 1993), 181ff.

^b John Murray (1898-1975), *Redemption Accomplished and Applied* (Edinburgh, Scotland; Banner of Truth Trust, 1979), 134.

^c Sinclair Ferguson, *Pulpit & People: Essays in Honour of William Still* (Rutherford House, 1986).

^d Some manuscripts add the words, "and that is what we are!" which appear in modern translations.

Impossible though it seems, a humble believer is royalty. God has made him a priest and a king (Rev 1:6). People would never call a humble believer “your royal highness,” but in fact God’s children are viewed as royal in heaven. Adoption is the believer’s right if it is backed up with the supernatural evidence of the new birth: “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (Joh 1:12-13). Stephen Charnock (1628-1680) noted that adoption gives us the privilege of sons, regeneration the nature of sons.^a

At the heart of adoption is the love of the Father. “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God” (1Jo 3:1). Octavius Winslow (1808-1878) suggests, “If one perfection of God shines brighter in redemption than any other, it is this. Love is the focus of all the rest, the golden thread that binds them all together in holy and beautiful cohesion. Love was the moving, controlling attribute of God’s great expedient of saving sinners. Justice may have demanded it, holiness may have required it, wisdom may have planned it, and power may have executed it, but love originated the whole, and was the moving cause in the heart of God.”^b

Psalm 103 is a beautiful expression of the believer’s relationship to God as a child—captured well in the rendering in the hymnbook PRAISE!

*Praise the LORD! For, like a father,
Well he knows how we are made:
Frail as grass or meadow flowers,
Quick to grow and quick to fade;
But his grace from time eternal
Rests on those who fear his name,
And to all who keep his covenant
He is evermore the same.*

^a John Blanchard, *The Complete Gathered Gold* (Faverdale North, Darlington; Evangelical Press, 2006).

^b Octavius Winslow, *Our God* (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Reformation Heritage Books, 2007), 1.

Isaiah 56:3-5 plainly describes adoption. A foreigner who binds himself to the LORD finds assurance that the LORD will not exclude him for being an alien or foreigner. Likewise, the eunuchs were not to derogate^a themselves, for this is what the LORD says: “For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.”

Living in fellowship with our heavenly Father will manifest itself in the way we maintain unity and love with our brothers and sisters in God’s family, the church. The Apostle John majors on the application of adoption in his first letter. “Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation^b for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us” (1Jo 4:7-12).

4. Let’s Pray for Global Revival

Erroll Hulse

Erroll Hulse gives a clarion call to action for churches around the world eagerly seeking the Lord to do again His great works in the hearts of men. The author makes a keen distinction between true revival and “revivalism,” showing the latter to be but the contrived work of men. He demonstrates that true revival is not only possible in our day, but should be sought after and anticipated by the people of God everywhere. Sections include a description of Jonathan Edwards’ call to a “Concert of Prayer” for revival, a short history of

^a **derogate** – belittle; criticize.

^b **propitiation** – appeasement; a sacrifice that turns away wrath.

revivals, hindrances to revivals, dangers to be avoided, and how to seek God for revival. This excerpt is from the history section.^a

The Fourth Great Awakening, from 1900 to 1910

This awakening had its rise in small prayer meetings. Spiritual visitations began in the churches of Japan in 1900. In 1902, Boer prisoners of war, 10,000 miles apart, in Bermuda and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) experienced extraordinary visitations of the Spirit. In 1904 revival came to Wales. This was to prove the farthest reaching part of the spiritual awakening of the first decade of this century, for it affected the whole evangelical cause in countries like India, Korea, and China. Revival was renewed in Japan and South Africa and sent an impulse of awakening through the African continent and many parts of Latin America.

When coming to the first decade of this century, some tend to think exclusively in terms of the 1904 Welsh revival, and to harbour popular misconceptions about it. Many seem to think that the 1904 revival in Wales was ephemeral—something largely shallow that did not last, a religious excitement in which those who professed conversion soon fell away. The period of extraordinary spiritual power lasted about a year, but the results were enduring. Even critics of the revival concede that eighty percent of the 100,000 converts remained in the churches after five years, which is vastly different from the ratio of one in fifty or one in a hundred who “stick” after modern crusade evangelism. Edwin Orr points out that converts of the revival continued to be the choicest segment of church life. Even in the 1930s, when Orr studied the spiritual life of Wales closely, he found this to be so.^b I remember meeting an aged convert (Powell Parry) of the 1904 revival in the early 1960s, and could sense deeply the power of the revival that was burning in his heart even then. An elderly believer in Sussex used to tell of the indelible impression made on her mind during the revival when she witnessed Welsh miners coming out of the coal pits and falling to the ground to plead for God’s mercy upon their souls.

Two disasters overtook Wales. The First World War tragically removed a high proportion of men in their prime. Then in the

^a CHAPEL LIBRARY’s 24-page booklet includes the complete work.

^b J. Edwin Orr, *The Flaming Tongue*, 189ff.

1920s and early 1930s, unemployment caused large numbers to leave Wales.

A further misconception is that the Welsh revival was an isolated phenomenon with no connection to other nations. As intimated above, the facts show that the 1904 Welsh revival spread to other parts of the English-speaking world. Church membership in the USA increased by two million in seven denominations from 1905 to 1910.^a How many Christians today know that Norway was swept by a revival in 1905 as powerful as that which had come to Wales? In the same year Denmark, Sweden, and Finland experienced awakening.^b In 1905-1906, parts of the Christian church in India were visited, and in some areas the Christian population increased by seventy percent.^c

The *general pattern* observed was increasing fervour in prayer, intense conviction of sin, and often confession of sin—followed by great joy. Time and time again in reading the accounts, there is testimony given of the suddenness of the Spirit's coming, and that with such power as to defy description. "Suddenly without warning, the usual stoic-mindedness of our Indian assembly was broken as by an earthquake. Everybody present was shaken." "The Spirit came in like a flood and we had three glorious weeks, which to experience is worth a lifetime."^d

Whole books could be written on the revivals that took place during the first decade of this [twentieth] century in China, Korea, Indonesia, and Japan. There were several waves of revival in Korea, bringing extraordinary numerical growth that has continued to this present time. Some calculate that 18 percent of the population of 42 million is evangelical, with Korea having the largest Bible seminaries in the world.^e

By comparison, the situation in the UK today is pathetic! In contrast with Korea, the story of the evangelical cause in Japan is very depressing, but it should be recalled that a powerful work of the Spirit did take place in Japan during the first decade of the cen-

^a Ibid, 190.

^b Ibid.

^c Ibid, 131-152.

^d Ibid, 140ff.

^e Patrick Johnstone, *Operation World* (Worldwide Evangelization Crusade, 1986 edition), 269ff.

ture. One of these started in January 1907 in Tokachi prison in the north island of Hokkaido. The Holy Spirit swept through until almost every prisoner, as well as officers and guards, had made public profession of faith in Christ.^a

The spirit of revival can take root in a Christian's heart and be used in a powerful way many years later. In 1934 revival came to the Baltic States. This can be traced to the influence of William Fetler, who trained at Spurgeon's College and who was profoundly influenced by his experience of the 1904 revival in Wales. He thereafter never ceased to intercede that his native Latvia would experience spiritual awakening. The story is told by Omri Jenkins in his book *Five Minutes to Midnight*.^b

There are tokens of the Lord's omnipotent power and infinite mercy in our modern world. The revival in Nagaland, a province of India, during 1976-1978 when the moral and spiritual climate was dramatically changed, is an example. Now over 60 percent of the population of just under a million profess faith—Nagaland being the only Baptist country in the world.^c

I concede to those who are cynical about the reality of revival that it becomes more difficult to assess revival as we advance from the last century into the 21st century.

The transition from thinking in terms of revival to working on the basis of "campaign evangelism" is one that took place during the latter half of the 19th century and then gathered momentum. I describe the history of the "altar call" in chapter 6 of my book *The Great Invitation*.^d The way in which we are talking about revival one minute, and then about campaign evangelism the next as though it were the same thing, is very evident throughout in Edwin Orr's book *The Flaming Tongue*, which documents the way in which revivals spread around the world in the period of 1900 to 1910. Inadequate distinction is made between the advertised results of evangelistic campaigns and visitations of the Holy Spirit. Of course the Holy Spirit can work powerfully in an evangelistic cam-

^a Ibid, Edwin Orr, 176.

^b Omri Jenkins, *Five Minutes to Midnight* (Evangelical Press, 1989), 120 pp.

^c Ibid, Patrick Johnstone, 225.

^d Erroll Hulse, *The Great Invitation* (Evangelical Press, 1986). See also *Decisional Regeneration*, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

paign, but the difference between enquirers and true converts can be very great.

5. The Only Savior

Erroll Hulse

The western world has lost its Judeo-Christian roots in a mad headlong rush into secular pluralism. Understanding the unique place of Christ in the world is vital to modern Christianity. This title shows Christ as the only way to heaven. Sections include exposition of Acts 4:11-12, other religions' denial of Christ's work, and why Christ is the only possible Savior.^a

Contemporary Denials of Christ as the Only Savior

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

—Acts 4:11-12

There are many denials of Christ as the only Savior. Universalism and Annihilationism on the one hand, and Pluralism and Inclusivism on the other, are on the march today.

Universalism is the belief expressed by the modernist C.H. Dodd: "As every human being is under God's judgment, so every human being is ultimately destined, in God's mercy, to eternal life." If that is true then there is no point in preaching salvation as an urgent necessity, for all will be saved anyway.

Annihilationism (and there are eight varieties!) is the idea that after the Great Judgment the wicked will be annihilated. That means there is after all no eternal punishment. In this way the necessity of Christ as Savior for the wicked is removed. The wicked according to Annihilationism will miss eternal life but will only suffer the displeasure of the actual Judgment Day.

Pluralism is the idea that God saves souls through religions other than Christianity. *Inclusivism* is the notion that in some mysterious way souls are saved through various religions by the work of Christ as Savior. *Exclusivism*, in contrast to Inclusivism, holds to the orthodox Christian view that only by a faith union with Christ can souls be saved and there is no other way. Since Plural-

^a CHAPEL LIBRARY's 28-page booklet includes the complete work.

ism is the principal denial of Christ as the only Savior, and since it is increasingly predominant today, I will major on that.

Pluralism

W. Gary Phillips in an article “Evangelicals and Pluralism,”^a grapples with the issue of those who have not heard the gospel. Can they be redeemed? He quotes J. D. Hunter as follows:

For over nineteen hundred years missionary activity has hinged on this belief alone: that those who did not believe in the salvific capabilities of Jesus Christ had no hope of receiving eternal life. It follows that the unevangelized—those who lived without the knowledge of the claims of Christianity—would be damned to an eternity in hell. This exclusivism and finality of the Christian soteriology^b is the single most offensive aspect of Christian theology, the single most important source of contention between Christians and non-Christians. Yet without this particularity, there is no orthodoxy (historically understood).

Phillips goes on to remind us that “in the past an overwhelming consensus has affirmed this position. However a recent survey of evangelical college and seminary students showed that 32 percent and 31 percent (respectively) no longer hold these teachings.”

This tendency will probably escalate. Contradiction of the uniqueness of salvation in Christ is increasing due to the rise of Pluralism. Strong revisionist tendencies are at work, and these are bound to increase with devastating effects on missionary zeal. Historically, evangelicalism has with great consistency and marked continuity maintained that, without Christ, the unevangelized are eternally lost.

Influential voices are calling for an abandonment of the classic evangelical view in favour of a more generous view of non-Christian religions and what Clark Pinnock calls “an optimistic view of salvation.” Pinnock, in his book *A Wideness of God's Mercy* (Zondervan, 1992), calls for the placing of religious Pluralism on the agenda—just as social concern was placed on the evangelical agenda during the 1970s. In this work he describes the reasons that call for a consideration of Pluralism. Ethical Liberalism is por-

^a W. Gary Phillips, “Evangelicals and Pluralism,” *Evangelical Quarterly*, July 1992.

^b **soteriology** – doctrine of salvation: how God saves men from the just penalty for their sins.

trayed as reasonable. How can eternal hell be “fair” for those who have never heard the gospel? How can that ever be equated with justice? Peter Cotterell, former missionary to Ethiopia and Principal of the London Bible College, in his book *Mission and Meaninglessness: the good news in a world of suffering and disorder*, argues for a solution that will not outrage common sense and our common ideas of justice (page 83). Note the influence of Ethical Liberalism!

Pluralism is exceedingly ambitious and astoundingly unrealistic and naive. Pluralism can only work in the atmosphere of obscurity. Definition kills Pluralism stone dead. As soon as we define the person and nature of God, sin, wrath, the necessity of propitiation, a union with Christ and the resurrection of the body, then we see the emptiness of those religions that by their contrary teachings deny Christ as the only Savior...

Principle Flaws of Pluralism

I have called this section an exposure of Pluralism and will conclude it by drawing attention to its principal flaws.

Flaw number one. Pluralism rides over the reality of sin against our holy God. Pluralism at the same time romanticizes the state of humanity. The people of this world (and I include nominal Christians) are eternally lost because they are born in sin, practice sin, love sin, and die in their sins. They are not the sweet innocent beings that pluralists make them out to be! Missionaries who go to primitive people find them animistic, craven, darkened, superstitious, and sometimes barbaric in cruel practices such as infanticide and cannibalism. As for the most highly civilized and enlightened people, we have witnessed this century a catalogue of total depravity—ranging from the Holocaust born out of Germany; the Gulag monster, which was the child of the Soviets; genocide in Cambodia and Africa; destruction in Lebanon; and most ghastly civil wars in the former Yugoslavia, Mozambique, Somalia, and other countries.

Flaw number two. Pluralism confuses common grace with redemption. Yes, there are marvelous institutions of education, med-

^a **propitiation** – Propitiation has reference to the wrath or displeasure of God.

To propitiate is to satisfy the divine justice and thus to appease His wrath. In the biblical usage of the term, the justice of God is satisfied by the propitiatory sacrifice (Rom 3:25; 1Jo 4:10). (Morton H. Smith, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 1, 382)

icine, civil government, law, and compassion—but all by God’s mercy (Rom 2:4). These provisions are not saving but designed to constrain repentance. God’s wrath is poured out when mankind persists in rebellion, as in the case of the Flood. Clark Pinnock, typical of Pluralism, attempts to rewrite history and change wrath into redemption. An example is found in his book, *A Wideness in God’s Mercy*, page 21, where he seeks to turn the doctrine of common grace into redemptive grace.

Flaw number three. Pluralism is rationalistic. It takes the form of arguing according to the dictates of human reason. Pluralism in its style builds up a position of judgment according to human fairness. It is argued that it is completely unreasonable to condemn to eternal punishment those who have never heard the gospel. Natural human reasoning talks back at God and tells Him what is fair and what is not fair. Pluralism speaks of the outrage of common sense. But the mind of fallen man is hostile to God. It is misguided to tell God what He can and cannot do because, “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isa 55:9). When Martin Luther was wrestling with his own anger at God, he rebelled at thoughts about the sovereignty of God. Later he referred to “that which appears iniquitous, cruel, and intolerable in God, by which very many have been offended in all ages.”^a If rebellious rationalists have their way they will put God Almighty in the dock^b and judge Him to be the sinner!

Flaw number four. Pluralism is vague. It claims that God is saving sinners through the main religions. But how is He saving through the main religions? We are not told. Christianity is practical. It says, “Without holiness no man will see the Lord” (Heb 12:14). Jesus says to every man, and to every religious man like Nicodemus who is not joined to Him, “*Ye must be born again!*” (Joh 3:5-8). New birth is by union with Christ, a union that brings reconciliation with the Father, a union that results in a holy life, and a union that will eventuate in a glorious resurrection from the dead. Pluralism is obscure. It by-passes these realities. Pluralism is

^a Bainton, *Here I Stand* (Mentor), 44.

^b **dock** – place where the accused sits in a courtroom during prosecution for a crime.

refuted by clear, practical, biblical, expository preaching that defines precisely who God is, what His wrath is, and what salvation is.

6. Postmodernism

Attack on the Heart of Biblical Christianity

Erroll Hulse

This booklet is an important tool for the Christian church to use to retake high ground in the conflict with modern secular culture. It introduces non-Christians to the uniqueness of the Christian worldview and, for believers, gives effective voice to vital truths. In consecutive sections on deconstructionism, moral relativism, pluralism, and existentialism, the author first defines terms and then shows the superiority of the gospel.^a

Pluralism

Pluralism is seen in the growing diversity of race, heritage, religion, and value systems. In one city road of a hundred meters, there can be one Shinto, one Hindu, one Buddhist, one Muslim, one secular European, and one Caribbean evangelical Christian household. There is, however, a philosophy of pluralism which insists that all opinions have the same value, and that value is no value at all except to the persons who hold them. The prevalent view is that absolute values in religion have led to strife, war, and persecution wherever they are found. Think of the burning of the Protestant martyrs or of the Protestant/Catholic divide in Northern Ireland. Think of fundamentalist Islam and September 11, 2001. For many, religion spells trouble. To have any kind of credibility, you must proclaim your tolerance—it is simply out of place to criticize others' religions. The general opinion is that they might all have some truth and comfort to offer. The arch-heresy is to maintain that your religion is the only right religion and that all the others are wrong.

There are some cities in Europe today which are more Asian than European. The city of Bradford, England, is one of these. Among the Asian majority, the Muslims predominate. They are vigorous in the propagation of their Islamic faith. They remind us

^a CHAPEL LIBRARY's 28-page booklet includes the complete work.

that they have the authoritative word in the Q'uran, which they say is more up-to-date because their prophet, Mohammed, post-dates Jesus Christ. PM has not yet taken hold of the Muslim community; they live within their own world.¹⁵

In this environment, Christians need to articulate the fact that Christianity is complete and comprehensive. The Bible provides a worldview. PM is a philosophy that believes that every person is entitled to a belief system, but nobody is entitled to assert that his/her faith is superior to the others. This is daunting, because the Bible declares that Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life—that He is the only way to the Father. I suggest that the Bible text of the 21st century will be Acts 4:12:

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

The Holy Spirit will witness to the truth He loves as we proclaim the uniqueness of Jesus in spite of the obstacles we face in pluralism. In contrast to Islam, Christianity does not need coercive power and threats of death in order to see its message spread.

The incarnation is unique. From eternity past, Jesus, the second person of the Trinity, has taken manhood to Himself. He is unique. He alone has lived a righteous life. Not only did He not sin, He actually fulfilled positively all that God's law requires.

About 60 billion people have been born into the world; each person is unique or different in personality. But Jesus is unique and different from all others in the following ways:

1. Jesus was predicted in detail by prophets centuries before His birth.
2. Jesus was born of a virgin.
3. Jesus lived a sinless life.
4. Jesus made unique "I AM" claims of Deity.
5. Jesus supported these claims with miracles.
6. Jesus made a sacrifice of Himself that ended all sacrifices.
7. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit.
8. Jesus has kept His promise to build His church.
9. Jesus is the Creator of the world.
10. Jesus is the Judge of all mankind.

The Q'uran acknowledges the virgin birth, sinlessness, miracles, and the future return of Christ, but it denies His atoning

death on the Cross. In salvation, Jesus is unique in providing an imputed righteousness, which justifies the sinner. That is achieved by His past work. His work in the present also is unique inasmuch as He ever lives to intercede for all those who come to the Father through Him. His salvation is completed in the future when He bestows glorified bodies upon true believers in Christ. It is obvious that no other man can do this, because all others are themselves subject to death and the grave.

7. The Vital Place of the Prayer Meeting

Erroll Hulse

Erroll Hulse knew and practiced vital prayer. He preached on it, wrote on it, demonstrated it, and encouraged it wherever he went. Each time he visited Chapel Library, in the morning staff prayer meeting believing hearts were knit together in the cause of the gospel.^a

Consistent, Evangelical, Corporate Prayer

It is said that the weekly prayer meeting is the spiritual barometer for any local church. You can tell with a fair degree of accuracy what the church is like by the demeanor or substance of the weekly prayer meeting. Is there genuine evangelistic concern? If so it will be expressed in the prayers. Is there a heartfelt longing for the conversion of unconverted family members? If so that is sure to surface. Is there a world vision, and a fervent desire for revival and the glory of our Redeemer among the nations of the world? Such a burden cannot be suppressed. Is there a heart agony about famine and war and the need for the gospel of peace among the suffering multitudes of mankind? The church prayer meeting will answer that question. Intercession in the prayer meeting will soon reveal a loving church that cares for those who are oppressed and weighed down with trials and burdens. Those bearing trials too painful or personal to be described in public will nevertheless find comfort in the prayer meeting, for there the Holy Spirit is especially at work.

^a CHAPEL LIBRARY'S 8-panel edifying tract includes the complete work.

A Daily Church Prayer Meeting

One of the results of the revival in Korea is the multiplication of daily early morning prayer meetings. I questioned a Korean pastor recently and he assured me that daily early morning prayer meetings (5 AM in summer and 6 AM in winter) are part of the life-style of evangelical Christians of all denominations. Are these Koreans more angels than men?! Yet Bob Sheehan told me that as a boy he was impressed by the devotion of his father, a working man who laboured from 7 AM to 7 PM daily, yet attended without fail a prayer meeting at 6 AM on his way to work!

In 1866 Spurgeon instituted daily prayer meetings at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, 7 every morning and again 7:30 each evening.^a The main Tabernacle prayer meeting took place on Monday evenings attended by over 3,000. To provide for participation there was an obvious need of supplementary times of prayer for smaller groups within the church.

The book *Only a Prayer Meeting*^b by C. H. Spurgeon consists mostly of brief addresses given at the Monday evening prayer meeting, but does not describe the mechanics of how the church prayer meeting functioned with so many present. Visitors to Romania have observed that in their large church prayer meetings it is the custom to designate a section of the assembled company as solely responsible for the prayers. In this way those in one part of a gallery, or one section of the seating on the lower deck, are responsible to pray out with enough volume to reach the corners of the auditorium. Prayers are fervent and in rapid succession.

The Theology of Prayer

Prayer is an offering up of our desires to God for the things agreeable to His will, in the name of Christ, by the help of His Spirit, with confession of our sins and thankful acknowledgment of His mercies.^c

^a Holden Pike, *The Life and Work of Charles Haddon Spurgeon* (Banner of Truth, 1992); vol. 3, 183). The original six volumes are bound in two in this new set. The reference is from in the original.

The Metropolitan Tabernacle is the church in London built for Spurgeon to preach to 6,000 people each Lord's Day.

^b C. H. Spurgeon, *Only a Prayer Meeting* (Pasadena, Texas; Pilgrim Publishers), 367 pages.

^c This definition is composed from the *Larger and Shorter Catechisms* and cited in B. M. Palmer's book *Theology of Prayer*.

How can we be in accord with the will of the Holy Spirit unless He creates those desires in us? When the Holy Spirit works powerfully, then there is not enough time for everyone who wishes to participate. When He is absent, then spiritual deadness prevails. How can we express the burdens and concerns of the Holy Spirit except by prayer? The Spirit helps us in our weakness.

We do not know what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered (Rom 8:26).

Spiritual repentance is the creation of the Spirit.

They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son (Zec 12:10).

There was no repentance in King David concerning his adultery and murder until he was convicted by the Holy Spirit. Psalm 51 was the outcome. Desire for the glory of Christ and a burden to pray for His Kingdom to prosper is also the creation of the Holy Spirit. At the same time, such concern is our responsibility. It is sinful to be fatalistic and say to ourselves, "Well, we will be more attentive and lively in prayer when the Spirit comes to us!" No; that will not do! We are exhorted to stir ourselves up to prayer, but at the same time we must rely on the Spirit.

But, we reason, will our prayers achieve anything of moment? Hasn't the Lord made up His mind what He is going to do? This brings us back to the tension of divine sovereignty and human responsibility. We must uphold both truths in Scripture to the full. We are answerable to the Lord by way of dependence upon Him through His Word and by prayer. That is our way of life, and the extent to which we follow it will reflect in our entire way of life and be the measure of our peace, joy, and happiness.

Prayer as dependence upon the Father and as the means of guidance is seen in the prayer life of our Lord. He is divine, yet His divinity did not lessen His need to pray. He was in prayer at the time of His baptism (Luk 3:21). He rose very early while it was still dark to go to a solitary place to pray (Mar 1:35). He spent a whole night in prayer before choosing His apostles (Luk 6:12). He was in prayer when He was transfigured (Luk 9:29). Prayer was the means of His agonizing his way to victory in Gethsemane (Luk 22:44).

The phrase “prepared unto every good work” (2Ti 2:21), literally “having been prepared to every good work,”^a suggests that all that we do requires preparation in prayer. All that we do requires spiritual motivation and wisdom. Our works, therefore, need to be prepared in prayer. Obviously we must be governed by common sense. We can’t close our eyes for prayer every time we come to traffic lights. Prayerfulness is an attitude and there are all kinds of prayer (Eph 6:18; Phi 4:6).

8. The Story of the Puritans

Erroll Hulse

The Story of the Puritans^b is a 32-page reprint of Part One of *Introduction to the Puritans*. This shorter booklet can introduce people everywhere to the teaching of the Reformation as it came to maturity through the Puritan movement. It is a concise summary of one of the most important eras in church history, when brave, godly men believed and applied the pure truth of Scripture to their lives. They lived righteously and died boldly for Christ. The lives and writings of the Puritans have left us a legacy of the transforming power of Christ’s truth that echoes down through the ages.

^a *hetoimasmenon* is a perfect passive.

^b Available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.