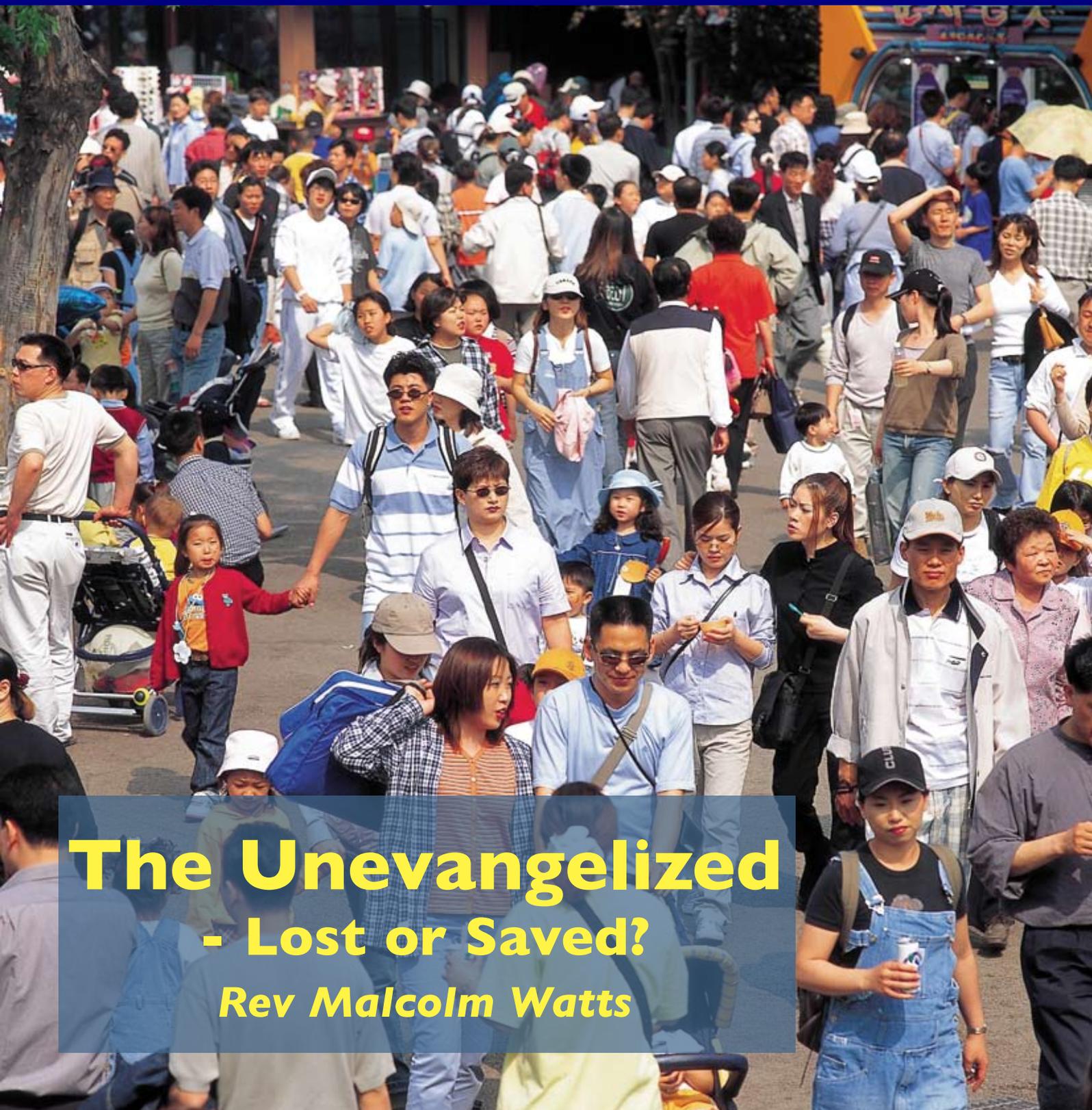


Free Church **Witness**



MAY 2013 ISSUE



The Unevangelized - Lost or Saved? Rev Malcolm Watts



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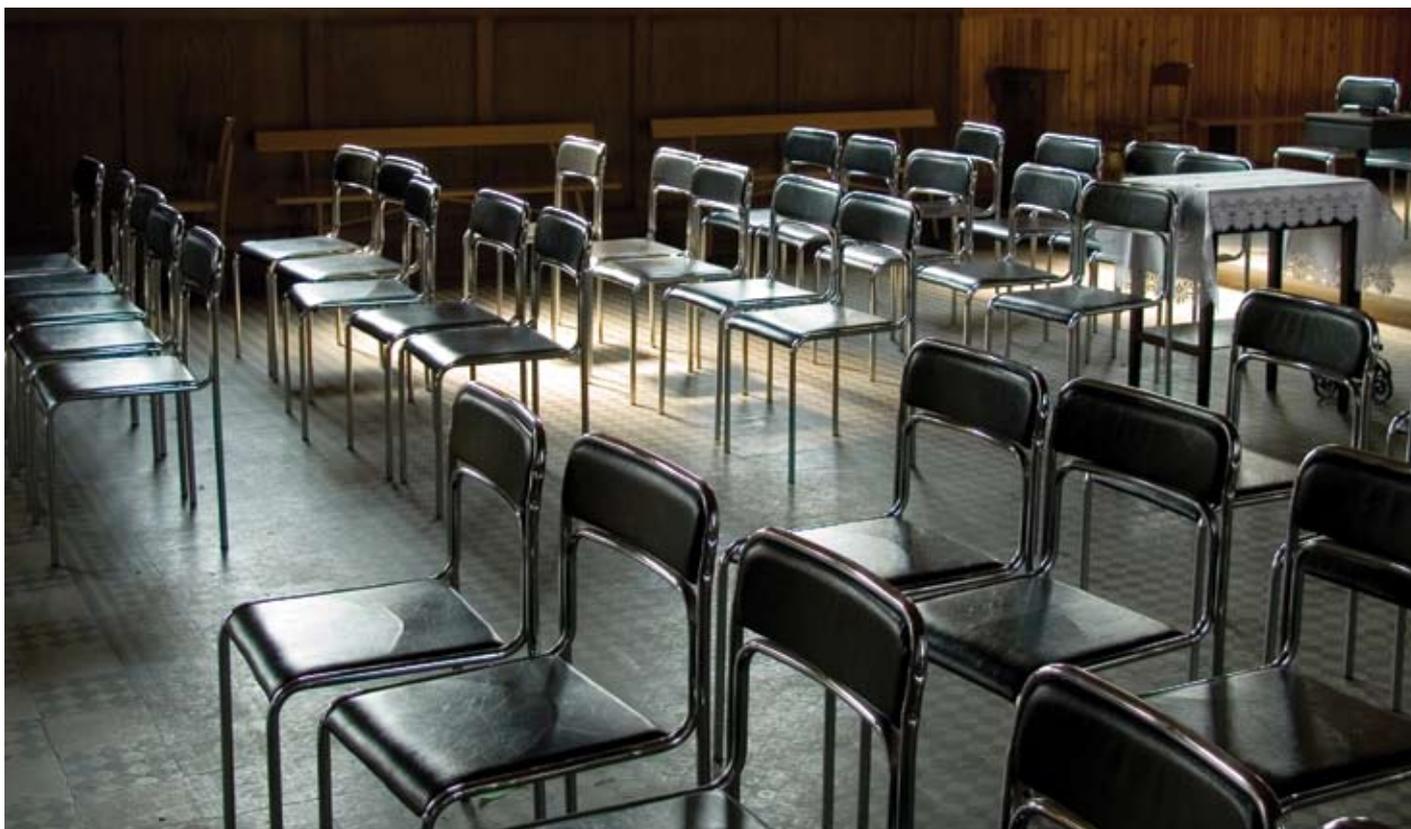
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The Marks of the Early New Testament Church

The day of Pentecost was a special, unique event. The Spirit came down as the Comforter whom Christ had promised that He would send to abide with the church till He returned. The disciples were transformed by the presence of the Spirit and Peter preached with power. The result was that 3000 souls gladly received the word and were baptized. What I would like to consider in this article is the distinguishing marks of this early New Testament church.

1. Doctrine

We are told 'they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine' (Acts 2:42). In fact what happened was that a new school was opened with 3000 pupils. Christianity is not simply an experience. It is not music and dancing and man-pleasing entertainment. Rather it involves diligently studying the teachings of Scripture. One has to think and use the mind. The truths of the Bible, the attributes of God, the law and the promises, are the spiritual food which our souls require. They were steadfast and earnest in their acquiring of and adhering to the doctrine which the apostles proclaimed and the fact that this is the first mark Luke gives of the early church emphasizes that the Apostles were pre-eminently doctrinal preachers. The idea that doctrine does not matter is a modern heresy. Are you a student of God's Word? Do you hunger for the truth?

2. Fellowship

Scripture says: 'they continued steadfastly in ... fellowship' (v42) The early believers loved to come together to share

in the worship of God and the fellowship of His people. The devil likes to keep us apart because he knows the importance of fellowship for stimulating Christian growth. A coal taken out of the fire will soon cool down but when in the fire, along with others, keeps burning. 'And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching' (Heb.10:24-25).

3. Breaking of Bread

The early church not only continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, but also 'in breaking of bread' (v42). In the Greek the definite article is used with the 'breaking of bread'. This plus the context makes plain that it is not an ordinary meal which is referred to but the sacrament of the Lord's supper. Christ broke the bread and gave it to His disciples. He asked His people in this way to remember His death till He return. The sacraments are important means of grace. They present Christ in a visible and tangible way to our senses and we are enabled to feed upon Him. The Lord's table is to be highly valued as a means of grace for the strengthening of God's people.

4. Prayer

Prayer is another very important distinctive of the early church: 'And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in



Prayer is of vital importance to the being as well as the well-being of the church. Souls are saved by calling on the name of the Lord. Christ stressed the importance of private prayer when He said: 'But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly' (Mt.6:6).

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5. Fear

It is surprising to modern minds to read, 'And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles' (v43). The church was joyful and successful and alive and yet there was fear. Actually the fear of the Lord is a vital part of true godliness. Solomon says, 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom' (Prov.9:10). True wisdom is only to be found where there is fear of God. This fear is a loving reverence and respect for God. It is giving God His place. Too much modern religion is irreverent and treats God as if He were not much bigger than ourselves. There is little awe and wonder as people draw nigh to God. But when revival comes there is a great sense of God and a trembling before this holy Lord God. The religion of the early church was full of reverence.

6. Had all things in common

Caring for each other and sharing was another mark of the early church. 'And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need' (v44-45).

They not only delighted in each other's company but they were also constantly looking out for one another and bearing one another's burdens. Those who had property sold it and gave the money to the Apostles for the help of the needy. They loved the brethren not just in words but in deed. Not all private property was sold because they still had homes as can be seen in Verse 46. Ananias and Sapphira did not die because they did not give the full price they received to the Apostles but because they pretended that the amount they gave was all that they had got for the land. In hypocrisy and deceitfulness they lied to the church, hoping to look good in the eyes of men and seeking glory from men. They also lied to the Holy Spirit who was present in the church and God hates lies (Acts 5:1-11).

7. Public Worship

These disciples are described as 'continuing daily with one accord in the temple' (v46). Public worship was very important to them. They could not get enough of it. They hungered and thirsted for God. Only one thing seemed to matter. In times of revival many things are neglected for the one thing needful. The Psalmist envied the sparrows and swallows which made their nests in the house of God. It is tempting for modern Christians to stay at home and listen to sermons on the internet, but public worship has special blessings attached to it. 'For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them' (Mt.18:20).

8. Gathering in homes

Not only did the New Testament believers like to gather in the temple but they also met for fellowship in one another's homes: 'breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart' (v46). The 'breaking of bread' here is defined as the eating of 'their meat'. This was not the Lord's supper but sharing in hospitality. They loved one another's company and enjoyed talking together of the things of God. When the church is in a lively, healthy condition the best entertainment Christians can get is talking together

of the Lord Jesus Christ and His work in their lives.

9. Gladness

The early believers 'gladly received his word' (v41) and they 'did eat their meat with gladness' (v46). Joy was a characteristic of the church and should be of us too. The 'fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace...' (Gal.5:22). The world has its pleasures but they are small and transitory in comparison to the pleasures God gives even in this life, the joy of the Spirit. Worldly pleasures always have a sting in their tail. God's people are the happiest people in the world and this joy should be shown by us. Peter writes of it as found in 'Jesus Christ: 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' (1Pet.1:7-8). Not only will we have joy in heaven but it is ours already. Yes, and we are able even to rejoice 'in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us' (Rom.5:3-5). 'Rejoice in the Lord alway' (Phil.4:4) and let your joy be seen

10. Singleness of heart

Divisions come from the devil and they were soon to be found in the early church too, eg Corinth. But to begin with there was 'singleness of heart' (v46). Heresy, pride and party spirit cause division. The church is like a body and the individual Christians are members or parts of that body. The body has one head which is Christ. We all need each other and are intimately united. Love covers a multitude of sins. We must strive for this unity while at the same time recognizing that this must not be at the expense of truth and righteousness. Those who disturb the unity by heresy or immorality must bear the responsibility. Let us all strive for unity without compromise. Christ prayed for it and obviously means us to strive for it with all humility and self-denial: 'That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me' (Jn.17:21-23).

11. Praising God

The early Christians were constantly 'praising God' (v47). The great purpose of the original creation and now the new creation is to glorify God. 'But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light' (1Pet.2:9). Oh to praise Him more! It will be our occupation throughout the endless ages of eternity. Churches full of genuine praise will be full of God.

12. Bright witnesses

It is said of the early church that they had 'favour with all the people' (v47). Our aim must not be to be popular with the world but at the same time we must strive to cause no unnecessary offence. We should be loving, kind, helpful, considerate and the best of neighbours. Just as an unconverted husband can be won for Christ by the lifestyle of his wife

(1Pet.3:1) so unbelieving friends and workmates can be drawn to consider Christ and His claims. On the other hand we can be guilty of being a stumbling block to sinners and of putting people off the gospel by being inconsiderate, bad tempered and boorish.

13. Evangelism

The early church was a growing church: 'And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved' (v47). They did not hide their light under a bushel or a bed. They did not retreat behind closed doors saying the Lord can find a way to convert His elect. 'Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God' (Rom.10:17). They made known the glad tidings and the Lord blessed the Word. No doubt many were saved through the public preaching, but people had to be invited by their friends to hear that preaching. Others may have heard the word through private conversation. The gospel must be heard or no-one will be saved. May this be an increasing mark of our churches today.



A Thought on the Sea-shore

In every object here I see,
Something, O Lord, that leads to thee;
Firm as the rocks thy promise stands,
Thy mercies countless as the sands,
Thy love a sea immensely wide,
Thy grace an ever-flowing tide.

In every object here I see
Something, my heart, that points to thee;
Hard as the rocks that bound the strand,
Unfruitful as the barren sand,
Deep and deceitful as the ocean,
And, like the tides, in constant motion.

John Newton

Obituary

John Campbell (Aberdeen)

Rev Timothy J McGlynn

John Campbell, born 17th April 1925, was raised in Tong, Isle of Lewis, along with his brothers Calum, Colin, Donald-John and his sister Cathy Maggie. He was a weaver and crofter for fifty years. In 1956 he professed faith in Jesus Christ, a profession he would maintain until his death. Just a few years after his profession he married Catherine and they remained inseparable for the next fifty-three years. Together they raised their family of Christine, Erica and Iain. Their home-life centred on the Bible read each day in family worship, and church attendance (at the local Free Church of Scotland).

In 1961 John became a deacon, and for the next twenty years served the Lord in this role, and for many years was also the treasurer in the church at Tong. As a Sabbath school teacher he sought to impart his knowledge of the Bible to the young people of the community. When in 1981 he was ordained as an elder he continued to serve the Lord in his local church. Amongst his many good friends he particularly enjoyed the fellowship of the Rev Alex Murdo Macleod (late of Kinloch), whose theological bent and spiritual mind gave them much scope for friendly debate and discussion, and Mr Willie Murray with whom he stood shoulder to shoulder throughout the dark days leading up to and following the division of 2000.

In 2005 he and Cathy moved to Aberdeen to be nearer to the children and their families. This meant the grandchildren; Paul, Craig and Mhairi. Catherine was able to get to know their grandparents even better. It also allowed his children, particularly Christine and Erica to care more fully for their ageing parents. As his physical strength declined he continued to look to the Scriptures and the promises contained within them. He greatly appreciated the ministry of Rev David Blunt in Aberdeen and settled in well to life on the mainland. Nevertheless, he loved to return to his native island when health and strength would allow. Although latterly he was unable to get out to worship on the Lord's Day, he loved to be part of the congregation's monthly home Bible studies when they were held at Portlethen in the home of his daughter Christine and her husband Brian.

His final days were spent in the Lethen Park care home, where he was well looked after. On 6th December 2012, he passed on to his eternal reward. As we are reminded in one of his favourite Psalms:

Then they to God in trouble cry,
who them from straits doth free.



The storm is chang'd into a calm
at his command and will;
So that the waves, which rag'd before,
now quiet are and still.

Then are they glad, because at rest
and quiet now they be:
So to the haven he them brings,
which they desir'd to see.
(Ps. 107:28-30).

His consistent and gracious stand for truth throughout his life will long remain in the hearts and minds of those who knew him best.

Lanka Mission Messenger
Reformed Protestant Mission Trust
March 2013

We greet you all from the centre of Sri Lanka and it is a great blessing to share our mission news with all who are interested and praying for us.

Family

God has been very gracious to us in our family life. We too face the ups and downs of life in the midst of a confused community. We are very thankful for the way He leads and comforts us. By the grace of God we now feel very much at home in Vavuniya. Thank you for your prayers for our family.

Ministry

We have felt God's presence with us during our worship services. We have nine worshipping with us at the morning service and around seventeen to twenty gather with us for the evening service. In the morning I have been preaching on 'The Falls of the Patriarchs' and during the evening services I have been studying 'The Fruit of the Spirit'. I continue to teach the Westminster Confession of Faith at the midweek prayer meeting. It is always good to study the doctrines of God.

As you know, in January we started doing some charitable work in the village of Selvanagar. We have now also begun teaching Bible classes for children with the hope of bringing the Gospel to them and their families.

Conference

We organised a conference for pastors in Vavuniya. Pastor R Bala from the Sovereign Grace Reformed Baptist church in New Zealand was the main speaker. (I have written about him in previous Lanka Mission Messengers). We had over sixty pastors and church leaders attending. It was a most blessed time with excellent teaching. Good Christian literature was distributed.

In Sri Lanka, if you plan to organise any church conference you have to talk to, and obtain permission from, the local pastors' federation. All of the pastors involved are charismatic. I met the president of the pastors' federation - he had actually come to correct my theology but ended up asking me to teach some of their church leaders! I am very thankful to God for this opening. I gave him a copy of the Westminster Confession of Faith and explained to him that these were the doctrines to which I hold, and if he had any questions regarding my beliefs to feel free to contact me. He had me preaching at his church on the 9th of March. I preached on the importance of the ministry and how to identify God's calling and the qualifications required of ministers. They appreciated the message and rejoiced in the Lord. Following that, they asked me to teach every Saturday. I feel this is not an easy task, but it is a very nice opening for us to witness for His doctrines. At this stage, I do not know how long they are willing to study.

The pastors' federation also supported our conference. Praise God!

Chettikulam

Another group of pastors meet in Chettikulam, 35 kilometres from my home. They have asked me to teach systematic theology to them. This April, God willing, Rev Robert McCurley (Greenville FCC) and his friend Mr Randy Taylor are coming to Sri Lanka to visit me. Our plan is to bring them to Chettikulam and to do two days of Bible teaching with the pastors who meet there. We hope this meeting will be helpful in identifying what our next step in this venture should be.

Communion

We had a lovely communion on the last Lord's day in February. It was refreshing and a real blessing for us. I had invited Mr Kerey Thanananth (who also studied in our Seminary in Scotland) for our communion season. He preached well and our people enjoyed the messages. God's grace is moving us closer to the Lord.

Please pray for the preaching of the Word, that the pastors' conference would continue to bear fruit, my teaching opportunities and the conversion of those who are not yet saved.

I have previously made mention of a pastor called Amos who is now convinced of Reformed theology and practice. His congregation has also accepted his teaching. His denomination however has now started to give him problems. Please pray for him and his young family.

Charitable work

Ceylon Christian Care (CCC) continue to support our ministry faithfully. We hope and pray that the Lord will bring more fruit from the village of Selvanagar where we have started a nursery school. We have also started teaching some school subjects such as English and Maths to older children. We currently support one teacher. If God opens other opportunities to financially support more teachers and subjects that would be very useful.

With funding from CCC we have published one book written by Pastor Bala entitled: Without Church Membership and printed 1,000 copies of it. We are giving these out to surrounding churches. Next, God willing, we are hoping to print a book by Al Martin which includes some of his sermons that have been translated into Tamil. Again, CCC is willing to support the associated printing costs. We are very thankful to CCC who have been very open and supportive for our mission in Vavuniya.

Finally, brethren, I would like to thank all those who support us both spiritually and physically. God opened some of His people's hearts and they in turn opened their wallets according to our needs. We are praying for these cheerful givers.

Thank you,

Parthee

My soul doth magnify the Lord and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour (Luke 1:46-47).

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Accounts of the 1859-60 Revival
Fisherwick Place Church, Belfast
Rev James Morgan (1799-1873)
Individual Accounts of Conversion

For some time previous to the occurrence of the general awakening of the past year, there had been a preparation for such an effusion of the Spirit as has been granted to us. The tidings from the United States had awakened much attention, and impressed many hearts, and excited ardent hopes and earnest prayers for ourselves. This influence was increased by the proceedings in our Church courts, especially at the annual meeting of the Assembly in 1858. I believe that the key-note of our revivals was struck at the special devotional meeting of the General Assembly of that period; for our ministers returned from it to their congregations deeply solemnised, and commenced holding similar meetings in their respective localities.

Increased attendance at prayer-meetings

The effect was apparent in an increased attendance on the congregational prayer-meetings. It had been found difficult for some time before to sustain them, and the interest was feeble. Few attended them, but at the end of 1858 there was a marked change. It was found necessary to remove from a small to a capacious place of meeting. Throughout the concluding months of that year, and the whole of the past year, the prayer-meetings have generally been large, lively and profitable. There might be an average attendance of from four to five hundred persons, and at times there was difficulty in accommodating all who came.

It was, however, in the beginning of June last that the first decided case of revival occurred, and it appeared in the following circumstances. Two young men, from a neighbourhood in which the work had previously appeared, addressed our Sabbath schools. Their words were simple and earnest in tone, but not what we are accustomed to consider able or powerful.

A Woman under conviction

A woman had come with her children to hear these addresses. She was much impressed. The following morning she called upon me in great distress of mind. She asked me with intense emotion to pray for her. I was proceeding to do so when she herself burst forth in a prayer such as I have seldom or ever heard equaled in earnestness and importunity.

When she concluded, I asked her to explain how she had come to be so exercised. She said they had been exhorted all the previous day at the Sabbath school to go and examine themselves whether they were the children of God or not, and that at the time she formed the resolution to do so. That night, she said, she earnestly besought the Lord to discover to her what her true condition was, and He had revealed to her that she was not converted to Him. This filled her with distress, and she had been in agony all the night. She came to me for my advice and prayers as soon as she thought it was proper to call

upon me.

I reminded her that her husband, who had been long sick, and whom I visited until he died, had once been in the same state as she then was, and had subsequently found peace. She remembered it

all, she said, but could never understand it. I gave her the best counsel I could. I dwelt especially on the truth, that 'the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin'. She became much quieter and more composed, and then we prayed together.

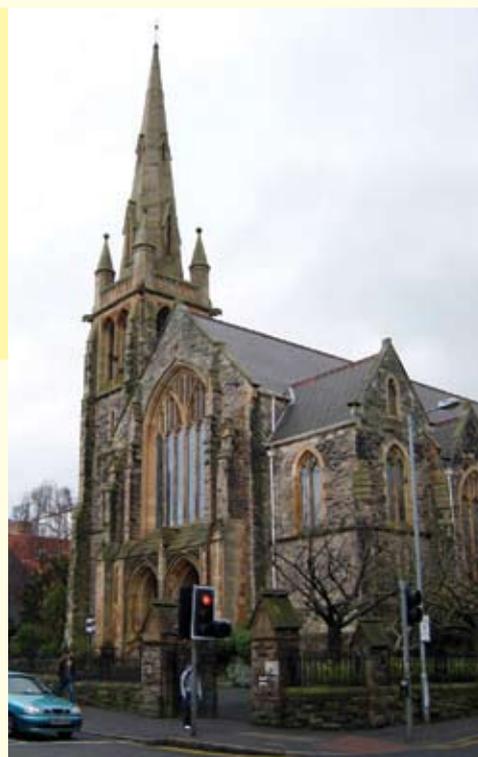
On leaving the room where we had met, she went into the kitchen to see our maid-servants, with whom she was acquainted. After speaking for half-an-hour or more with them, she returned to me, filled with joy and peace in believing. She said, 'Now I know what the new birth is - now I know what the agony of the new birth is - now I know how it is that any one who is born again may know it'. She expressed her conviction that she had never before known anything of true religion.

She was a poor woman, but most correct and industrious, and an attendant on public ordinances, though not a communicant. During the long sickness of her husband, her conduct was truly praiseworthy. I had been speaking with her about uniting with us in the Lord's Supper, and I would have received her, yet she maintained that till that hour she had no just views or experience of true religion.

I was thankful my first case was so distinct and undoubted. It encouraged me to expect more, and it produced a most favourable impression on my mind respecting the work of grace in the midst of us. I need only add, that this woman became a communicant shortly after, and has continued to adorn the doctrine of God her Saviour by a life becoming the gospel.

A hundred souls in agony

On the following Sabbath, my attention was again drawn forcibly to the subject. After the public services of the day, I learned that some members of the congregation were much impressed in a family not very distant from my own house, and I went to inquire after them. I found a young man and his sister, both affected very much as the woman whom I have described. They had passed through the most agonising convictions of sin,



and had found peace in believing. As I left them, after having conversed and prayed with them, I was requested to visit another similarly affected in the next house. Thence I was taken to a third, and subsequently to house after house, until my time and strength were completely exhausted. I believe there were there in that immediate neighbourhood not fewer than a hundred souls in the agony of the new birth.

I knew many of them, and recognised them to be scholars of our Sabbath schools, either now or of former years. A large proportion of all who were affected were of that class. I have often gone among them since, and made all the inquiries I could respecting them, and I am thankful to say, I believe there is the most satisfactory evidence of the genuineness of the work of grace, in the good conduct of its subjects.

Organised support

At this period I felt it to be necessary to organise some system for attending to such as were or might be impressed. My elders entered cordially into the matter, and laid themselves out to render all the assistance in their power. Some of them spent a large portion of their time in visiting the houses of the affected. I requested our Sabbath-school teachers to meet and adopt measures for looking after their scholars, and the districts in which they resided. They did so, and continued to pursue these labours with unabated zeal. Classes were formed for giving instruction on the week evenings, which are still continued. The work progressed. It appeared in all our associations, whether in the Sabbath assemblies of the church or the schools, and the history of it may be continued in connection with these.

Our Sabbath assemblies were very pleasant and profitable. There was no undue excitement in them. Only two young women were ever stricken there, so as to cry aloud in the congregation, and to be carried out in prostration of body as well as in agony of mind. But a healthful spirit of inquiry arose in many, and the Word was made effectual to them for salvation.

Schools

In the Sabbath schools, the work was more marked and general than in the congregation. The teachers were most assiduous and faithful. Many of the young were impressed. At the present time, the signs of spiritual good are as hopeful as at any previous period, perhaps even more so. I meet a large class of young persons every Sabbath evening. At present it contains about seventy. Formerly I found occasional inattention, or lightness of conduct, but latterly there has been a uniform spirit of the deepest seriousness and attention.

Three evenings in the week we have long had a school for

mill-girls, who could not attend at any other time. Formerly many of them were rude and unmanageable, but now they are devout, respectful, diligent, and in all respects present the most agreeable and encouraging appearance. There has been a gracious work in the souls of many of them.

The day schools have exhibited similar results. The scholars hold a weekly prayer-meeting, and some of themselves take part in the exercises. Lately, an application was made to us by some little boys for the use of a schoolroom in which they might hold a prayer-meeting during the interval of public worship on the Sabbath-day. Of course it was granted; and I can hear their voices in devotional exercises while I am awaiting the hour of our afternoon service. A fortnight ago it was announced that I was to preach my annual sermon to children, in the afternoon. During the interval the children held a special prayer meeting, to seek the Divine blessing on my sermon.

I must add that I have abundant evidence of a similar work prevailing in other places; for some of my congregation, who left us in the beginning of the summer careless and worldly, have returned in the autumn earnest and lively Christians, having been brought under the influence of the Divine Spirit in the places where they resided.

Several Hundred

I will not presume to say how many may have been savingly influenced in all these ways and exercises, but I believe they amount to several hundreds. There are two things which I am constrained to testify of them, that I never saw a case which suggested to me the idea of insincerity - and that I never saw an example of backsliding into open sin. I do know a few instances, but only a few, in which the glow of first love has abated, and in which, I fear, there never was a maturity of the Spirit's work; but I have not been disappointed in any case where I had reason to believe there was a sound conversion to God.

In what I have written, I have confined my remarks to my own congregation; but I cannot conclude without expressing my belief and gratitude that the extent of the work has been almost as wide as the province. In the town of Belfast there has been a very marked outpouring of the Spirit. There is an extraordinary change on many of its congregations. Some churches that were well nigh empty are now filled. Sabbath schools are greatly increased. We have the prospect of five new congregations in the town in connection with the General Assembly, chiefly the result of the present revival. Immorality has greatly declined. Peace and goodwill have prevailed. Party spirit has been swallowed up. Generosity in the cause of God has been increased.

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News



New Moderator Designate

Rev John MacLeod, Tarbat

The Moderator Designate for the 2013 General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) is Rev

Warren Ewing Gardner, minister of the Free Church (Continuing) congregation in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

Mr Gardner was born in 1946 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania into a Christian family with wide and practical interests: his father, a surgeon, also ran a farm, while his mother was both a skilled lab technician and a trained teacher. Although he came from a family of firm Christian convictions and practical involvement in mission work, Mr Gardner did not come to a personal faith until his third year of university studies, at which point his ambitions for a medical career were set aside and he began preparation for the ministry, first of all at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia and then at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary from which he graduated with a Master of Divinity degree.

Ordained in 1972, he served as assistant minister of First Presbyterian Church, Atlanta, and then Rehoboth Presbyterian Church, Decatur, Georgia, before being called to First Presbyterian Church, Winder, Georgia. Seeking closer adherence to Biblical standards, Mr Gardner entered the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in America in 1981 as a church planter and organised the New Life Presbyterian Church in Winder, Georgia where he served as minister for twenty-three years.

In 2003 Mr Gardner became convinced of the Scriptural basis of Free Church practice and sought admission into the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) to serve as a church planter in Atlanta, Georgia. He rejoices in belonging to a denomination where there is a strong emphasis on heart religion and where the original Westminster Confession of Faith and its Catechisms are taken as the personal faith of those who serve as its office-bearers.

Mr Gardner is married to Valerie, a trained violinist who performed as a member of the Atlanta Symphony

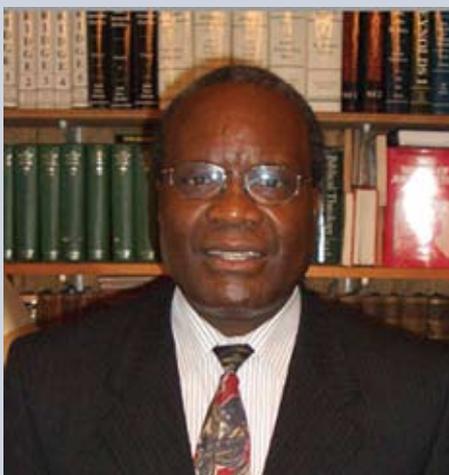
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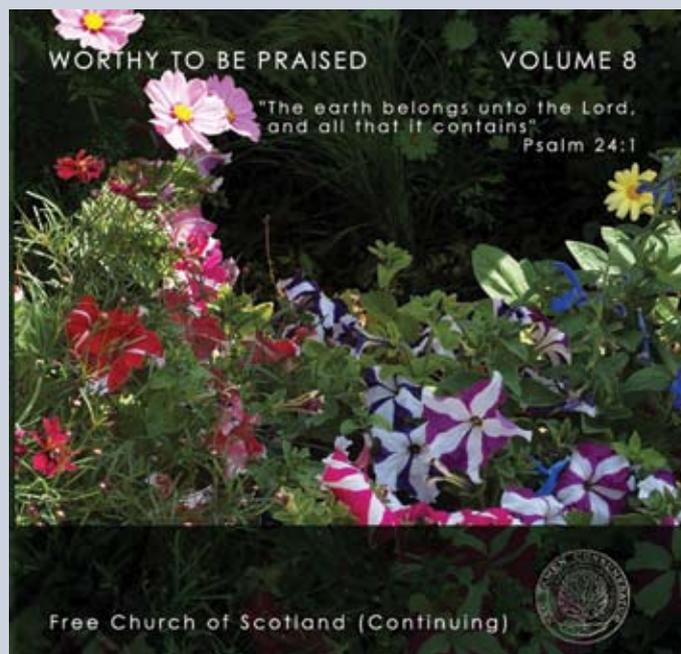
Orchestra until she resigned her position to care for their children. The Gardners have five children. Their son is a trauma orthopaedic surgeon, while three of their four daughters married ministers. Their eldest daughter is the wife of Rev Robert McCurley, minister of the Free Church (Continuing) congregation in Greenville, South Carolina. The Gardners have thirteen grandchildren.

Next Youth Weekend

The next Youth Weekend will take place DV from Friday 18th - Monday 21st October 2013. As usual it will be held at the Windmill Christian Centre, Arbroath and is open to all young folk who are 16 and over. The topic will be 'Christ's Precious Blood' and the speaker, Rev Achille Blaize who comes from the West Indies and ministered for many years in Grace Baptist Church, London. Further details can be obtained from Nathan Roberts, 26 Philip Avenue, Linlithgow, EH49 7BH. Tel 01506 668162, email: arbroath@bible-sermons.org.uk. Online booking is now open at <http://oct.bible-sermons.com>.



Pastor Achille Blaize



The Cover of Volume 8 of 'Worthy to be Praised'

New Psalmody CD

This year's Psalmody CD includes a number of singings with a congregational sound. God willing Volume 9 of *Worthy to be Praised* will be released at the General Assembly this month. On Disc 1 there are familiar tunes including Ayrshire, Dunfermline and Ericstane. The less well-known ones like St Matthias, Melcombe and St Matthew will encourage us all to learn new tunes with which to praise the Lord. Disc 1 also contains two Gaelic Singings. Disc 2 is the teaching disc, with 96 tracks, in which each tune is taught separately in Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass. We are very grateful to everyone who has so willingly given of their time and skills to make these CDs possible. They can be obtained from Mrs Isobel Scott (email: isobel.scott@bible-sermons.org; tel: 01506 652168) at £8 + p&p or online at www.sing-the-psalms.webs.com.

Assisted Suicide

Christian Institute

The police have resisted suggestions they have effectively legalised assisting a suicide – a crime that still carries a heavy punishment. Record numbers of Britons travelled to a Swiss assisted suicide facility last year but no one has been charged. And now new guidance from the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) allegedly highlights

the complications of investigating assisted suicides abroad.

Last year 33 Britons went to Swiss suicide clinic Dignitas to be helped to die – the highest ever annual figure. Of the cases passed to prosecutors by the police, no one was charged. The Care Not Killing Alliance warned: 'It is extremely worrying that police officers are saying they cannot investigate and are advising their members not to investigate deaths abroad'.

Mark Pritchard, a Conservative MP who is vice-chairman of the Parliamentary Pro-Life Group, said: 'I fear assisted suicide is being legalised by the back door. If the will of Parliament is being ignored, there should be an urgent review by the Justice Secretary'. Kevin Fitzpatrick, of the campaign group Not Dead Yet, commented: 'The idea is gaining hold that assisting someone to commit suicide is not prosecutable in



Mark Pritchard MP

practice’.

Aiding or encouraging a suicide remains illegal in England and Wales under the 1961 Suicide Act and punishable by up to 14 years’ imprisonment. The Association of Chief Police Officers’ guidance on investigating assisted suicide has not been revealed in full, but the Mail on Sunday newspaper was shown the section which deals with deaths abroad. The guidance says, ‘there may be a lack of co-operation or even a legal impediment as to why the relevant foreign authorities cannot provide evidence as to how and why someone has died’. In a statement ACPO said: ‘The police service is responsible for investigating cases of encouraging or assisting suicide, whether the actual suicide takes place in the UK or abroad, and whenever we receive information or intelligence about such a case, these investigations are pursued’.

The Crown Prosecution Service said: ‘Any inference that the CPS has implemented a blanket policy of not prosecuting for this offence is wrong’.

Life is precious. It is given by God and only God has a right to take it away. Suicide is self-murder and assisted suicide is assisting someone in committing murder.

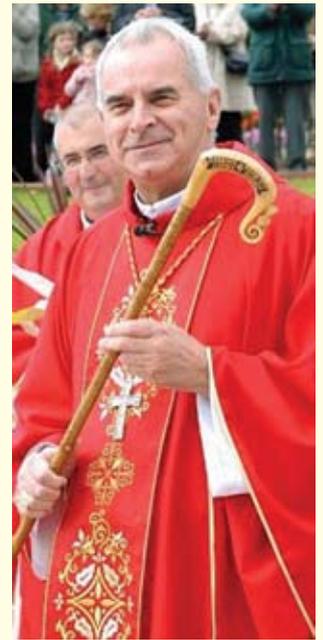
Popes Retiring & Appointed

Pope Benedict XVI announced his resignation on the 11th of February and on 13th March Pope Francis from Argentina was appointed. Does it make any difference? Popes come and go but one thing never changes – the Roman Catholic Church. Despite talk of his concern for the poor, his taking public transport, not living in a bishop’s palace, doing his own cooking, having an interest in Liberation Theology, he is basically a conservative pope. He is a Jesuit and it is amazing all the positive things which are said about the Jesuits and their founder Ignatius Loyola. Nothing is said of the Jesuits’ involvement with the Spanish Inquisition and its horrific torture of Jews, Muslims, Reformed Christians and whoever was in the slightest suspected of deviating from the accepted Roman Catholic teaching and practice. Nothing is said of their political involvement and intrigue from which we get the term Jesuitical. The Jesuits were behind the Gunpowder Plot to blow up Parliament. The description that Paul gives of the ‘man of sin’ in 2 Thessalonians 2 fits the papacy perfectly and so the Westminster Confession calls the Pope of Rome ‘that antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the church against Christ, and all that is called God’. The Pope is a particular servant of the devil ‘whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy

with the brightness of his coming’ (2Thes.2:8).

Cardinal Keith O’Brien’s Resignation

The Scottish Roman Catholic Church was left stunned by the shock resignation of Cardinal Keith O’Brien in the wake of allegations of sexually inappropriate behaviour towards young priests and seminarians. The Cardinal had taken a leading role in Scotland For Marriage and spoken strongly against redefining marriage to include homosexual relationships. What hypocrisy! On the one hand to be condemning homosexual practice and at the same time, it is alleged, deeply involved in homosexual activity. Roman Catholicism exalts marriage above the status given to it in Scripture by making it a sacrament and on the other hand regards it as second best



by forbidding their priests and nuns to marry. The Scripture states: ‘Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge’ (Heb. 13:4). Paul foretells the rise of the Roman Catholic Church to Timothy and warns later generations to beware of being led astray: ‘Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth’ (1Tim.4:1-3). By ‘forbidding to marry’ the Roman Catholic Church has put priests and nuns in an unnatural position where they are particularly vulnerable to sexual temptation and the likelihood is that we have only so far seen the tip of the iceberg. Sadly because the man in the street does not know the difference between the various denominations all ministers and churches suffer as a result of Cardinal O’Brien’s wickedness. He has done great harm to Scotland For Marriage, but also to all Christians who are regarded by many as mere hypocrites. The liberal media have had a field day.

On a more positive note could the troubles of the RC Church signal the beginning of its downfall and the ushering in of the millennium?

Portree Manse Appeal

Rev Richard Ross

Due to the expected equitable settlement of disputed property in Portree, the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) congregation require to purchase a new Manse. The Deacons Court are appealing for funds to any friends of Portree in the wider Church. All donations to the new Manse Fund should be sent to the Treasurer:

*Mr David MacDonald, Corriebheinn, Achachork,
Portree, Isle of Skye, IV51 9HT.*

Western Isles Bible Conference

Rev Graeme Craig

Saved from our Enemies' provides the theme for this year's annual Western Isles Bible Conference, which takes place DV from Friday 7th to Sabbath 9th June 2012 at Stornoway FCC. In all there will be five addresses given by Rev Trevor Kirkland, minister of Templepatrick Reformed Church, Northern Ireland. Under consideration will be the various enemies which confront both believers and unbelievers in this world and from which we need deliverance - these include the world, the flesh, Satan, the curse of the law and death. A warm welcome awaits all. Anyone requiring further details or accommodation should contact Donald MacDonald, Tel: 01851 704039.

Eritrea – Christians arrested

Barnabas

The Eritrean authorities have arrested 125 Christians since the beginning of the year in a crackdown on those worshipping in unregistered independent churches. In the latest raid, 45 men and women from the same church in the south-western town of Barentu were detained. They were seized from their homes and workplaces and marched through the town while being beaten by police officers. Before the latest crackdown, the authorities had staged a public meeting at which they accused Christians from independent churches of being a threat to Eritrea's security and unity. At least 1,500 Eritrean Christians are imprisoned in extremely harsh conditions for their faith.

Cameroon

Barnabas

Two converts from Islam to Christianity have been shot dead by Islamists in northern Cameroon; one of them had previously been threatened by militant group Boko Haram. A group of four converts were travelling together around Lake Chad on Tuesday 19 February when their vehicle was stopped by four armed men who demanded to know which member of the party was Abdoulaye Douad. He, the leader of the converts from the Kotoko people group, had last year received a threat from Boko Haram, which has been targeting Christians in Nigeria for over three years. The armed men got the four Christians out of the vehicle and opened fire on them. They aimed at a man named Abakachi, thinking he was Abdoulaye, and killed him on the spot. As the others tried to flee, Abdoulaye and another convert, K, were shot. The wounded pair were taken to hospital, where Abdoulaye later died of his injuries. K, who was seriously injured, stayed in for treatment. Abdoulaye leaves behind a wife and 13 children; Abakachi, a wife and four children. In January 2012, a handwritten note from Boko Haram was put under the door of a church leader's house in northern Cameroon, warning all Christian converts to return to Islam or 'face Allah's wrath'. In the following days, the homes of two church leaders were searched by two turbaned men. Cameroon is around 54% Christian and 26% Muslim. Islam is strong in the north, and radical Islamism is gaining strength. Boko Haram is a militant Islamist group that is fighting to establish an Islamic state in Northern Nigeria, which borders Cameroon.

Let us never forget our brothers and sisters around the world who are suffering unto death for their faith. In the days of the Reformers

and Covenanters people in this country died for their faith. Today martyrdom for Christ is common across the world. Pray for the persecuted.

Ayr New Church Building

For many years now the Ayr Free Church (Continuing) has been meeting in the Heathfield Community Centre which they share with various other groups. Recently however the Bethel Mission building became available. This building is quite near by - 7 Lindsay Street, Ayr, KA8 QOD. The congregation has been able to rent the building from the Local Authority at a reasonable rate. So on Friday 2nd March an opening service was held. Rev Trevor Kirkland of Templepatrick Reformed Church, Northern Ireland preached a relevant and warmly evangelistic message on the 'Treasure in earthen vessels' in 2 Corinthians 4. There was an encouraging attendance of both local people and friends from further afield. Their Lord's Day services are at 11:30 am & 5:30 pm and their midweek meeting is on Thursday evening at 7.30 pm. Remember this congregation in your prayers.



The New Ayr Free Church (Continuing)

Glasgow Christian School

A meeting was called in Shettleston Free Church (Continuing) on Saturday 23rd February for those interested in supporting a Christian School in the Glasgow area. The attendance was very encouraging with some 60 or 70 folk there. After devotions conducted by Rev David Fraser, Alan Wilson an elder in Shettleston and teacher at Hamilton Christian College spoke on 'What is a Christian School?' Two young mothers then addressed the meeting outlining the plans they were making. Mirjam Murphy, one of the core group members and a home schooling mother of four, gave a presentation detailing the vision for the school. Daisy Fraser, a core group member and a mother of two, gave a presentation regarding the way forward, including details about financing and the constitution and the time frame. A panel answered questions and finally a transitional board was elected. It is hoped that a cooperative school will start in August with a full primary school next year. When one considers how education has deteriorated over the years and the secularism of our schools today this is a welcome development. The young mothers are to be congratulated for the work they have done in preparing for this meeting and researching the way ahead.



The Unevangelized: Lost or Saved?

Rev Malcolm H Watts, Salisbury

The world's population nearly doubled between 1970 and 2010. In 1970 it was 3,689 million and in 2010 it was 6,908 million. At the present time the population of China is nearly 1,331 million, that of India is almost 1,215 million and Britain a mere 62 million.

Of the total population of the world, 32% is nominally Christian, 22% is professedly Muslim. Although Muslims often boast of great increases in their numbers, proportionately few actually convert to Islam. Growth is due to high birth rates and low apostasy rates. Christianity has become the most global of religions, with a witness in every country of the world. However, it is estimated that 41% of the world's peoples (that is, 2.84 billion) are unreached with the Christian Gospel, and of the 6,909 languages in the world, 2,252 require a translation of the Scriptures, in whole or in part, and 200 million people are still waiting for the written Word of God.

The world-mission of the church must therefore be kept continually in view. Every Christian, and every Christian church, ought to have a conviction about preaching the Gospel 'to every creature'. That this generally is not so, is a sad reflection on the spiritual condition of the church in these days. The lack of enthusiasm about missionary work should not be allowed to continue among us.

One of the main reasons for this apparent lack of enthusiasm is the confusion which exists about the state of the heathen. Are the unevangelised heathen on their way to that place so fearfully described in the Bible as 'Hell'? It is a terrible thing even to ask the question, but what concerns us here is the answer to it.

Many Ways to God

Some would react strongly even to the suggestion that those who have never heard might be eternally lost, believing that all religions are basically the same. 'The several universal religions', writes Prof Hocking, 'are already fused together, so to speak, at the top'. Such men argue that Christianity dares not claim a monopoly of the divine revelation: in all the religions may be discovered 'the footprints of God's redemption' (R Panikkar). 'The Holy Spirit', in the words of Dr Samuel Shoemaker, 'is found in some measure in every religion and we must make common cause with Him there'. Indeed, some like E O James, are prepared to go even further and state the matter in this way: 'To discover the reality of Christ in all the religions of the world is the essence of the ecumenical approach'. This is ecumenism in its final form: no longer 'Christian ecumenism', but 'ecumenical ecumenism'.

Once such a position is adopted, the traditional approach to

missionary work must undergo a radical change. There must be no more attempts to 'convert' non-Christians. This must cease at once. Professing Christians must adopt what Johannes Vos once called 'the round-table attitude', the basic idea behind it being that 'every religion can contribute something to the religious life of man'. This finally develops into something known as 'plural belonging': 'in this case the worshippers affect more than one religious system and visit temples of different faiths quite freely' (Bouquet).

The Christian view has always been that the religions of the world have embodied man's thoughts about God, while Christianity embodies God's revelation of Himself. That is the biblical view. Writing to Rome, the metropolis of the Gentile world, the apostle does not argue that divine revelation is to be found in all the religions of heathendom: rather he declares that to Israel was entrusted 'the oracles of God' (Rom.3:2).

Seekers After Truth

In an attempt to appear somewhat more orthodox, an appeal is sometimes made to Scripture in order to avoid the awful conclusion about the unreached millions. G H Lang expressed himself carefully, but went so far as to suggest that God may see ground 'to extend the benefit of redemption to some who had not known of it in this life ... such as in much darkness of mind had at least longed after that type of life to which the cross of Christ affords access by faith'.

It is an attractive theory, but where is the biblical warrant for it? There are indeed promises held out to those who 'seek' (eg Lam.3:25) but that the heathen inquire diligently after God in this way is by no means certain. Surveying the Gentile nations of his day, Paul wrote: 'There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.' (Rom.3:11) We do not deny that God has borne testimony to Himself in His works so that men ought to 'feel after him' (Acts 17:24-27), but we affirm that men choose not to do so, which renders their ignorance of God quite inexcusable.

After-Death Conversion

A view commonly held is that for such persons there may be some kind of 'after-death conversion': 'Love ... proclaims evermore to the "spirits in prison"... the glad tidings of reconciliation' (Plumptre). The Bible does not give even a hint of such a thing.

The verse so wrongly used in this connection is 1 Peter 3:19, which teaches only that Christ, by His Spirit, once spoke through the prophet Noah (2Pet.2:5; 1Pet.1:11 – note the Spirit of Christ was 'in' such prophets). Through Noah's

preaching that Spirit was 'striving' with the ungodly who lived before the Flood (Gen.6:3). Peter tells us that those persons are now shut up in the prison of Hell. This is the obvious meaning of the verse and it should not be used to teach anything else, least of all the unscriptural notion that there is an opportunity of hearing the Gospel beyond the grave. 'It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this (not another chance, but) the judgment' (Heb.9:27).

Judgment Mitigated by Ignorance

In evangelical circles it is sometimes said that the heathen will be judged according to the light which they have. This is true, but it is false to draw from it the conclusion that the heathen will therefore be saved. D F Salmond, in that definitive work *The Christian Doctrine of Immortality*, expressed the view in this way: 'We need nothing beyond Paul's broad statement that those who have law shall be judged by law, and that those who are without law shall be judged without law'.

The exact wording of the apostle is, however, often overlooked. The Scripture actually says: 'As many as have sinned without law (ie without the written revelation) shall also *perish* without law' (Rom 2:12). The Judge will do right, and the heathen will be fairly judged, but they are still to *'perish'*.

The Heathen have Never Heard

Those still wanting to believe that the heathen are spiritually safe maintain that, having never heard the truth, the ignorance of the heathen is not deliberate, and therefore excusable. The validity of this must be questioned at once. A revelation of truth has been given to them, a two-fold revelation, one inside of them, the truth of God being inscribed upon their hearts and there witnessing for righteousness and against sin; and one outside of them, divine truth being conveyed through the works of creation and providence. In the words of the great apostle: 'That which may be known of God is manifest in them (ie in their consciences); for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made' (ie by His works in nature) (Rom.1:19,20).

Even with this general knowledge of the one supreme God, they refused to yield Him that adoration due to Him as Creator ('they glorified him not as God'), neither would they render that gratitude due to Him as their Benefactor ('neither were thankful') (Rom.1:21). The Bible then traces the downward progress of the human soul. They began by forming their own ideas about the Deity, which were quite worthless speculations ('they became vain in their imaginations'). In their speculative folly they failed to retain that concept of God which had been revealed in nature and to conscience ('their foolish heart was darkened'). At last they were abandoned to the most debasing conceptions of the Supreme Being (they 'changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image' v23). For which things God judges them. They should know better. They are rejecting divine revelation. Paul says that they 'hold the truth in unrighteousness' (Rom.1:18 – the word used here means 'to hold down, to hold back, to suppress'. It is used again in 7:6 where it has the meaning of being 'held down as captives'). The heathen have deliberately obstructed the power of truth in themselves. The inspired apostle declares the verdict of God concerning them: 'they are *without excuse*' (Rom.1:20).

Paul believed in the world-wide message which God had sent out to all peoples: a message which all men have heard: 'Have they not heard?' he asks. 'Verily', he says, 'their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world' (ie the voice and sound of the works of nature proclaiming everywhere the being and perfections of God (Ps.19:4). 'God has manifested Himself to the Gentiles from the beginning', comments John Calvin, 'if not by the preaching of men, yet by the witness of His creatures'. Idolatry is perpetrated therefore in defiance of God, incurring guilt and condemnation. 'Sirs, why do ye these things?' (Acts 14:15). 'We ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device' (Acts 17:29). 'And many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds' (Acts 19:18).

Idolatry is Simply an Attempt to Reach the Unknown God

The idolatrous condition of the heathen is not, as some would argue, evidence of a search for the true and living God, nor is it piety and reverence imperfectly developed. This idea is entirely false. The first chapter of Romans has already made plain to us that the various forms of human religion do not represent to us the various stages of man's groping for God. The idolatrous systems of the world are actually states of man's departure from God, and expressions of his desire for other gods rather than the true, living God. The Bible proceeds further in its exposure of heathenism, teaching us that the heathen address their idolatrous devotions, not to the Maker of heaven and earth, but to devils. Observe carefully the words of Moses when referring to Israel's lapse into heathenish idolatry: 'They sacrificed unto *devils*, not to God', he said, 'to *gods* whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up' (Deut.32:17). The reader should carefully study the following Scriptures: Lev.17:7 cf Ex.34:15; 2Chron.11:15; Ps.106:36,37; 1Cor.10:20; Rev.9:20. Perhaps we may now understand the severity of God's judgment upon idolatry. Whole nations of idolaters were exterminated in Old Testament times to make way for the worshippers of the one living and true God. 'The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God' (Ps.9:17; cf Rev.21:8; 22:15).

'The abominations of the Gentile world ... are not the feeble and obscure utterances of childhood, sincere and honest, but uninstructed ... They are the utterances of alienated hearts, the slanders of malignant and poisoned tongues ... When the Christian man contemplates this spectacle...he hears the unbroken voice of blasphemy and slander ascending from every tongue against that name which angels pronounce with awe...We hear our God traduced and reviled ... We witness unceasing libels on His character...We gaze upon the abominations of a world, which have been introduced by the arch-enemy of God in order to insult and reproach Him' (Thornwell).

Unjust and Unfair to Punish Them for Unbelief

A final point made whenever discussion about these things takes place is that the heathen have a right to hear the Gospel, just as the rest of us have heard it, and that if they are denied that right, it is hardly fair. It seems, to such objectors, that God is partial in His dealings with men. There is however a serious

flaw in the reasoning here. Sinners by nature and practice may not justly demand things of God. Fallen men have not a single claim, or the least vestige of a claim, upon God. 'By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation' (Rom.5:18); and, since we are all born of Adam's race, and therefore already subject to condemnation, none of us have any rights before Almighty God. The charge of partiality could only be brought if men and women had some claim to the favour and mercy of God. And this no-one has. God is indebted to no man and, for that reason, He is not obliged to do anything. This is the inspired reasoning of the apostle, when he writes: 'Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?' (Rom.11:35). All His favours are bestowed in sheer mercy.

This is true of the Gospel itself. It is not deserved. There is not a soul on earth who can advance with a claim on God concerning it. It is entirely unmerited. 'The gospel of the *grace* of God' is the divine description of it (Acts 20:24). We greatly

err when we speak of any man being 'entitled' to the privilege of hearing the Good News. Men have done nothing at all to deserve the opportunity; and there can be no just ground for complaint if they never hear it. The Gospel, opened up, is 'the word of reconciliation' (2Cor.5:19): from which we must conclude that all have committed sin, broken the holy Law of God, and offended Him who is both Maker and Judge. This God, whose Law has been violated and whose government has been cast off, is under *no* obligation to do anything for any man. True, He sends out his Gospel into the world, and has a hand in directing its course, but it is not on the basis of fairness, but on the basis of sovereign grace to ill-deserving sinners. 'God, having raised up His Son Jesus, *sent* Him to bless you (ie in the Gospel), in turning away every one of you from his *iniquities*' (Acts 3:26 cf. 13:26).

However strongly predisposed some Christians may be to hope for the salvation of the unconverted heathen, we believe that such vague hopes rest on no scriptural foundation. It is



Christian friends, think on these things. Think long and hard. Then quietly kneel down and confessing any previous lack of concern, dedicate yourselves afresh to the greatest work on earth – the spread of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

a false charity to suggest some possible deliverance. In the face of all those who would argue otherwise, we contend that idolatrous ignorance is no security for eternal happiness. Every part of the Word of God – the only authority competent to speak on such matters – affirms that the unevangelized heathen are lost.

What is the Doctrine of God's Infallible Word?

A brief summary of the Bible's teaching on this vital point is as follows:

- 1) there is no true knowledge of the one and only God apart from His Son (Mt. 11:27; 1Jn.2:23; 5:20);
- 2) Christ being the sole mediator between God and man, there can be no approach to God except through Him and His atonement (Jn.14:6; 1Tim.2:5; Heb.10:4,12,13);
- 3) heathenism, being full of falsehood and destitute of God, leads only to disappointment and despair (Eph.4:17 – 'vanity' here means 'futility');
- 4) the peoples of the world, outside the church of Christ, serve Satan, being also enslaved by him (1Jn.5:19 lit. 'lieth in the evil one'; Acts 26:18 – the commission of 'the apostle to the Gentiles');
- 5) all adherents of pagan religious systems are subject to the wrath of God (Eph.2:2,3; Jn.3:36 – note the force of the word 'abide' here: the wrath of God is upon them even now);
- 6) a people without the saving revelation of the Gospel are without any hope (Eph.2:12; 1Thess.4:13);
- 7) souls must be gathered within the appointed reaping time, or else, like corn in the field, they will tragically fall to the ground and perish (Jn.4:35; cf. Rom.10:12-15);

8) to die in a state of unbelief and impenitence is to die under the guilt and condemnation of our sins (Jn.8:21,24);

9) the unbelieving dead are reserved in Hell awaiting the dreadful Day of Judgment and the eternal punishment which will follow (Rom.2:6, 8-9, 11; 2Pet.2:4,9);

10) if sinners do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, they cannot be saved, for salvation is only in Him (Acts 4:12; cf. 1Jn.4:14).

Motivation for Missions

It was the knowledge of these things which moved the great missionaries of the past. Adoniram Judson, the first missionary to Burma, wrote in a letter dated March 4th 1831, that he could not turn a deaf ear to the plaintive cry of 10,000,000 immortal beings, who were crying to him: 'Come and save us, for we are sinking into hell'. Moved at the cruel rites and debasing idolatries at Serampore, Henry Martyn felt himself to be 'in the neighbourhood of hell'. 'Millions perishing', he wrote in his journal, 'and in the neighbourhood of one who can preach the Gospel to them'. That outstanding missionary to the New Hebrides, John G Paton, wrote in his autobiography: 'The wail and claims of the heathen were constantly sounding in my ears. I saw them perishing'. Hudson Taylor also heard the cry of their need. He felt the crushing burden of responsibility – 'these souls, and what eternity must mean for every one of them!'

Christian friends, think on these things. Think long and hard. Then quietly kneel down and confessing any previous lack of concern, dedicate yourselves afresh to the greatest work on earth – the spread of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Congregational Remittances - March 2013

	CENTRAL BUILDING FUND YTD 2013				ORDINARY REMITTANCES			
	2013	2013	2013	2012	2013	2013	2012	2012
	Mar	To Mar	To Mar	To Mar				
Presbytery of Inverness								
Aberdeen	0	3,349	5,549	5,068				
Duthil-Dores	0	5,359	7,710	5,279				
Inverness	0	2,000	6,000	6,000				
Kilmorack & Strathglass	0	2,562	5,162	4,110				
Total Inverness	0	13,270	24,421	20,457				
Northern Presbytery								
Assynt & Scourie	185	673	673	631				
Brora	63	3,708	5,208	4,336				
Kiltearn	81	1,622	2,122	1,907				
Tarbat	0	1,913	2,913	4,940				
Total Northern	329	7,916	10,916	11,814				
Southern Presbytery								
Arran	289	1,153	2,243	2,486				
Ayr	0	1,903	2,853	2,730				
Dumfries	0	0	0	0				
Edinburgh	13	7,174	10,174	7,626				
Glasgow - Partick	45	5,905	9,705	10,302				
Glasgow - Shettleston	51	5,180	8,880	7,118				
Glasgow - Knightswood	50	4,912	8,762	7,254				
Rothsay	0	0	0	130				
Total Southern	448	26,226	42,616	37,647				
Outer Hebrides Presbytery								
Cross	0	2,283	5,834	3,773				
Harris - Leverburgh	83	2,902	5,277	4,846				
Harris - Scalpay	0	4,471	8,071	7,732				
Knock & Point	0	2,051	3,601	3,573				
North Uist	685	1,893	3,893	3,219				
Stornoway	1,272	6,368	19,516	16,617				
Total Outer Hebrides	2,040	19,969	46,193	39,760				
Presbytery of Skye & Lochcarron								
Bracadale	205	2,333	3,833	4,361				
Duirinish (Waternish)	0	500	1,500	1,500				
Kilmuir & Stenscholl	382	2,373	4,973	4,939				
Lochalsh	60	3,760	4,060	2,643				
Poolewe & Aultbea	644	2,483	4,003	3,301				
Ullapool	0	0	0	51				
Portree	0	4,286	5,686	7,341				
Snizort	0	4,475	6,875	6,488				
Strath	60	1,015	2,360	920				
Total Skye/Lochcarron	1,351	21,226	33,291	31,544				
Total Congregations								
	4,168	88,605	157,435	141,222				
Other Donations								
Legacy	273	2,400	5,025	14,659				
		0	0	0				
TOTAL	4,441	91,006	162,461	155,881				
Including Gift Aid	1,709	49,209	49,209	45,171				



Update from Zambia

Rev David Lachman

Greetings from Covenant College, Eastern Province, Zambia!

There truly is 'no place like home' and we are thankful to be back here after three months sojourn in Scotland. The Lord blessed the few (very busy) days we had in Glasgow in mid-January, days which were full to the brim with shopping and other preparations for returning to Zambia, visiting with friends, speaking and preaching engagements. Our flight left Glasgow early on 17 January and we arrived safely in Lusaka in the early hours of the following day after almost 24 hours of travel. After spending a few days in Lusaka to take care of the regular service for our truck, we returned to our home at Covenant College on 22 January.

College News

The first term of 2013 began on 5 February. We welcomed back 19 returning students and 3 new students, for a total of 22 in our student body. These numbers are down from previous years because Covenant College saw 11 students graduate last year and not as many new students arrive as we had expected. However, we trust that the Lord is providentially giving us a year without too many added responsibilities as we are still short on staff here, and it is providing an opportunity to finish reworking the diploma students' curriculum faster than we had hoped we could. The beginning of the year is always busy as we are accepting new students, catching up on maintenance and catching up on administrative work which could not be done long-distance. Also there is the added work of preparing all the reports and other paperwork for the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Covenant College Zambia Trust which is at the beginning of April.

Maintenance

March started with a 'bang' for us, literally. On the night of 2nd March there was a huge thunderstorm (quite common at this time of year) and lightning struck the College transformer, damaging 2 of the 3 lines. That same morning something else had already gone wrong - the pump for our borehole which provides us with clean water had stopped working! Suddenly we were without electricity and water. After a lot of work by the power company and the electrician, the lines were repaired by Monday afternoon. But the water pump still wasn't working, and with 7 families and 22 students dependent on the water from the borehole that was a serious problem! It turned out that the underground pipes were failing and had to be replaced. The Lord was very kind to us, as it would have been much harder to repair if we had found the problem much later. We were very thankful to have clean running water again starting on Tuesday afternoon. It was good to know of those

who were praying for us during these difficult few days - we managed to send a couple of prayer requests via text message. It is so easy to take things like clean water for granted but we praise the Lord for enabling these serious problems to be fixed. Our internet is not yet working after being damaged by the lightning strike, but we hope it will be repaired soon.

Visiting Lecturers

We are looking forward to the arrival of Covenant College's first visiting lecturer of 2013. The Rev Andrew Allan, minister in Aultbea, Scotland is scheduled to arrive on the 29th of March. He is serving as the Trustee from the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) and will be joining us for the Trust meeting at the beginning of April and staying for a couple of weeks longer in order to teach a class on Preaching Christ from the Old Testament to our Diploma level students. We are so grateful for the willingness of men like Mr Allan to join us in this rural area and bring teaching and training which will greatly benefit the lives and ministries of these rural pastors. Throughout 2013 we will have other men coming to help out with teaching. One of these, Lord willing, will be Rev Tim Broberg from Philadelphia who is David's brother-in-law (married to David's sister Sarah). Most of our visiting lecturers are funded when they come to teach for us, but Tim does not have funding. Tim is scheduled to teach a class here at the College in July, and we ask for your prayers for him as he prepares his class material and endeavours to raise the necessary money to cover his travel expenses.

Family News

We are overjoyed to announce that we are expecting our third child, due the first week of October. The Lord has blessed us richly and we are looking forward to the arrival of this new covenant child. In the Lord's providence the timing of this baby means that we cannot travel as planned to the UK for the end-of-year break. Our tickets were scheduled for 22 October, but this is too close to the baby's due date and the tickets we have cannot be changed. So we plan to stay in Zambia this year and deliver the baby in Lusaka, Lord willing. We are sad to miss visiting our dear friends in Scotland this year. We appreciate your prayers for continued good health for Katie and our unborn child, as well as for the Lord to provide us with a place to stay in Lusaka for the weeks surrounding the baby's birth.

The Lord in his mercy has kept us safe and healthy and we truly feel at home here, enjoying raising our children in the peaceful busy-ness of the rural environment here. Our big boy, Elijah, who is nearly 3 years old, has rather suddenly developed the ability to speak in entire sentences and keeps us very entertained. He is also discovering the alphabet, counting up to 20, the colours of the rainbow, and many other profound and amazing new tidbits of information. Ketzia, who is now 15 months old, endeavours to keep up with Elijah in every way. She has discovered an exuberant love of all food, including the dog food which we have to keep her away from now! She is also taking her role of following in Mummy's footsteps very seriously by constantly trying to walk around the house in Katie's high-heeled shoes. Our family expanded by 5 chickens this month, which we have obtained in a bid to conquer the yearly influx of fleas and ticks into our garden. Now the big job is to train the dogs not to view the chickens as 'fast food'.

David and Katie continue weekly language lessons and Katie also enjoys teaching a baking class to a group of local ladies who are anxious to learn new skills. Life is full, and we are very blessed. We thank the Lord for his mercies and for the opportunity to serve Him in varied ways!

Correspondence

We have put our email addresses and mailing address at the bottom of this newsletter in case you want to contact us. You will also find the information for the College website and Katie's blog. Covenant College also now has a Facebook page which we are keeping updated regularly with current prayer requests and news. Katie is also trying to keep her blog about our daily life up-to-date. We hope that these technological tools will help keep you informed about the goings-on at the College.

Thanksgiving

We thank the Lord for a very encouraging time in Scotland and for safe travels back home; for the blessing of expecting another covenant child; for good health, strength and protection each day; for allowing the water and electricity problems to be repaired quickly; for bringing 3 new students this year; for blessing the College with visiting lecturers; and for all his unnumbered provisions for us.

Prayer Requests

Please pray with us for continued grace and strength throughout the remainder of this term (which ends 10th May); for safety in travel for Rev Andrew Allan as he travels here on 29 March; for the Trust AGM from 4-6 April and the Trustees who will be travelling from near and far; for the Lord to provide another full-time lecturer and a Principal to join the staff here at Covenant College; for a good harvest this year so that people will not go hungry; for Katie's family as they have experienced severe trials recently with the sudden death of her grandfather on 28 February and other family struggles; for continued good health and safety for our entire family; for the Lord to provide a place for us to stay in Lusaka from September to November this year; and for Rev Tim Broberg as he endeavours to raise the necessary funds for his visit here in July. In all these details we trust that the Lord will forever be faithful to his promises!

*For the mountains shall depart,
and the hills be removed;
but my kindness shall not depart from thee,
neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed,
saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee
(Isaiah 54:10).*

In Christ's Love,

David, Katie, Elijah and Ketzia Lachman

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It Happened Years Ago

Rev Bill Scott

Years ago on a trip to Hungary, still under Communist sway, I had the great privilege of visiting a dear Christian lady, widow of a pastor. She was the daughter of the Victor family; her father was headmaster of the Christian school for Jewish girls founded by the Scots Mission. Her great grandfather, a converted German Jew and colporteur, had worked with Rev John (Rabbi) Duncan. When she knew that I lived in Dumfries she had so much to tell of Jane Haining, baptised in Dunscore Free Church in 1898 (near Dumfries), dux of Dumfries Academy, secretary to Coates of Paisley, missionary in Hungary, and housemother to the Jewish girls who boarded in the Christian school. She would not return to Scotland with the other missionaries at the outbreak of the war and alone she stayed to look after 'her' girls. Arrested by the Gestapo, she was transported with some of her beloved Jews to Auschwitz where she soon died. The Germans counted among her 'crimes' the fact that she visited British POWs in prison, that she listened to BBC radio, and most poignant of all that she was discovered weeping when she was sewing yellow stars on her girls' coats to signify publicly that they were Jews. My dear host told me that as a German speaker she would go to ask for Jane Haining until it was no longer safe for her to do so. How can I tell you of the wonder of later meeting one of Jane's 'girls' whom she had led to Christ all these years ago!

The parents of the girls had brought them to the school where they imagined they would be safe, but they too were rounded up and put into the Ghetto. Soon many were dying there due mainly to starvation. Their bodies were brought out at night so as to keep the truth from the people of Budapest. A plan was formed, Christian doctors would supply chloroform, and Jews in hiding would supply gold to bribe the undertakers and guards. Jane's dear Jewish girls, one by one were given the chloroform and brought out fast asleep in coffins. They were then smuggled out to Christian families and all of them were kept safe from further shameful persecution and survived the war.

My dear host and I then turned our conversation to Rabbi Duncan and to Adolph Saphir, who as a boy was converted along with his elderly father when the missionary from Scotland was preaching, probably in Latin. 'Do you know Saphir's book on Paul's letter to the Hebrews?' I had used it from the College Library. She disappeared and in a moment a two volume copy of this book in English was in my hands. Adolph Saphir had personally given this copy to her pastor uncle who gave it in turn to her pastor husband. It was with something akin to reverence that I held it in my hands with tears in my eyes unable to speak. This dear aged saint with her frail hands with almost transparent skin, parchment like, pulled my head to her shoulder, patted my back and whispered, 'I think the Lord wants you to have them'. They are on my study shelves as I write, one of my dearest possessions.

“And many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.”

Acts 19:18-20