

REFORMATION TODAY

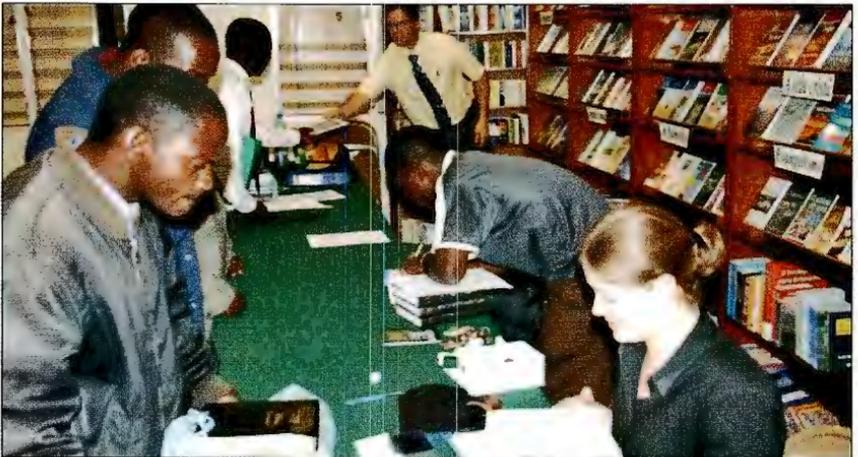


NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2008

226



The FIEL pastors' conference in Nampula, Northern Mozambique, has grown every year since it began in 2000. This year for the first time a large marquee was needed to accommodate the conferees. For more detail see below.

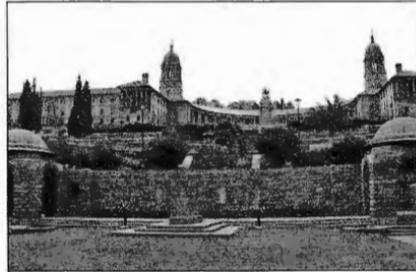


There was fervent prayer that the final shipment of books ordered for the FIEL conference would arrive from Brazil in time. Salome van Niekerk is in charge of the book business for FIEL. She is seen in the photo at the desk. Missionary Karl Peterson is helping in the background. The books began to arrive in the week before the conference began and the last box arrived the day before the conference began.

Front cover picture – Missionary doctor Charles Woodrow describes the struggle to be ready in time for the ninth FIEL conference in Nampula in north Mozambique: ‘After eight months of struggling with a dilatory manufacturer and an equally laggard exporter, the large marquee tent did arrive in the nick of time. Mike Stolk barely got it erected and fitted with lights before the conference was underway. As the photo reveals it was a striking landmark as it loomed against the night sky. Without the tent we could never have accommodated the 240 attendees at this year’s meetings.’

Editorial – African Pastors’ Conferences

The photos from Mozambique which adorn the front and inside covers of this issue illustrate the ninth FIEL Conference in Nampula, Mozambique. Missionary Karl Peterson who is also senior pastor of the Community Baptist Church in Barberton, South Africa, describes this conference on pages 23 to 25. He declares that every conference has been an improvement on the last. He accurately describes the aims of this annual event. If readers compare his report with that of Sierra Leone by Alan Levey they will see a major contrast. The Sierra Leone work is only beginning whereas the conference in Nampula has grown in effectiveness and in numbers from 80 in 2000 to 235 this year.



The Union Buildings, Pretoria

The conference work in Nampula, the aims of which are well described in the report, is a model for the African Pastors’ Conferences. The leaders of the APCs are Conrad Mbewe of Zambia, Irving Steggles and Erroll Hulse. You are encouraged to visit the African Pastors’ Conferences website which is maintained by David Peyton www.africanpastorsconference.com Unity and co-operation with Training Pastors International (PTI) is maintained. A main attraction of the APCs is a wide range of expository books especially commentaries, which are sold at substantial discounts. The APCs are designed to raise the standard of preaching and pastoring. Costs are kept to the minimum. The ethos of the APCs is African: African food and simple accommodation. All evangelical pastors are welcome.

November this year. The preachers are Pastor Ronald Kalifungwa of Lusaka Baptist Church, Zambia, and Pastor Irving Steggles of Birchleigh Baptist Church near Kempton Park, South Africa. In January APCs are planned for Capetown, East London, Port Elizabeth, Newcastle in Kwazulu, Welkom in the Free State, and Pretoria. The one near Pretoria will be the third at The Ora et Labora conference centre. The APC in Welkom will be the second at the Pines Conference Centre. The main preachers are Pastor Choolwe Mwetwa of Zambia and Pastor Raymond Zulu of High Wycombe in the UK. Pastor Gary Morrison of Cornerstones Baptist Church, Bolton, UK, will be in South Africa to act as co-ordinator. Pastor Bob Dickie of Berean Baptist Church, Flint, Michigan, has agreed to preach at the Port Elizabeth Conference.

Whether APCs can continue in Harare and Bulawayo depends on the political and economic situation in Zimbabwe.

Funding for the APCs comes from churches in the UK and USA and, we hope in the future, from South Africa. Financial support is needed for this

The first African Pastors’ Conference in Botswana is scheduled for 19 - 21



The Community Baptist Church, Barberton, led by Pastor Karl Peterson, supports a church plant in the shanty town of Verulam. Central in the picture directly under the notice board is Pastor Masuko who leads this church plant. He is one who benefits from the African Pastors' Conferences.

vital ministry. An APC Bank Account has been established. The funds are supplied by way of gifts from the churches in the UK and the USA. Cheques should be made out to African Pastors' Conferences and posted to the treasurer, Rachel Rothwell, 4 Hall Close, Bramhope, LS16 9JQ, UK. The African Pastors' Conferences fund is part of RTT (Charity Trust no 1017000). Donations can benefit from gift aid on request.

Historically white pastors in South Africa have been well-served in terms of training, books, and conferences. But the future of the gospel in this nation of 43 million (including five million illegal immigrants, three million of whom have fled Zimbabwe), depends on African pastors. These pastors lack the literature resources they need for their ministries. There is no shortage of believers and churches but there is a desperate shortage of trained pastors.

Apartheid was dismantled in South Africa in 1994. In terms of democracy

South Africa was liberated and became a fully democratic nation. However little has changed by way of the economy. The rich get richer and the poor get poorer. About 80 percent of the population live on a very different level to what we do in Europe or America.

The proportion of African peoples is reflected in the languages spoken: Zulu 24 %, Xhosa 18 %, Afrikaans 13 % (which is the language not only of Afrikaners but of a considerable constituency of coloured people in the Cape), Sepedi 9 %, English 8 % and Sesotho 8 %). There are several smaller language groups. Most choose English as their second language. The books supplied for the African Pastors' Conferences are in English.

Portuguese is the official language in Mozambique. The indigenous people speak Swahili, Makhuwa, Sena, Ndaun and Shangaan. Books imported from Brazil for the FIEL Conference in Nampula are in Portuguese.

Discouragement and its Antidote¹

The Second Servant Song Isaiah 49:1 -6

Introduction

An overview of the four Servant Songs in Isaiah is as follows:

- | | | | |
|----|----------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| 1. | Isaiah 42:1-4 | tailpiece or elaboration | 42:5-9 |
| 2. | Isaiah 49:1-6 | | 49:7-13 |
| 3. | Isaiah 50:4-9 | | 50:10-11 |
| 4. | Isaiah 52:13 — 53:12 | | 54:1—55:13 |

The first and fourth of these Servant Songs are biographical while the second and third are autobiographical. As he was growing up and as he prepared himself for his ministry what would Jesus make of these prophecies? They describe him and pre-record some of his speech. Like Psalm 110 this second autobiographical Servant Song contains direct speech between two persons of the Godhead. The Servant speaks and Yahweh responds.

The second Servant Song is unique in the Bible as it is the only place that records the discouragement of Jesus in his own words.

The reason for discouragement is the failure of his mission. The context of Isaiah 49:1-6 tells us that he failed 'to bring back Jacob to him, and gather Israel to himself' (49:5). He was sent to turn the Jews back to God. 'He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God' (John 1:11). The body of the nation rejected him. The parable of the wicked vinedressers tells the story. 'When the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, "This is the heir. Come, let's kill him and take his inheritance." So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him' (Matt 21:38,39).

The discouragement of Jesus is expressed in the words, 'I have laboured to no purpose: I have spent my strength in vain and for nothing' (49:4).

It is no small thing to be sent on a mission and to fail in that mission. Ambassadors are responsible to deliver their message but are not responsible for the outcome. In the parable the wicked vinedressers were responsible for their evil deeds. The messengers who were sent to them were innocent. Human responsibility is seen in the punishment inflicted, 'He will bring those wretches to a wretched end' (Matt 21:41). In AD 70 the wrath of God came upon those leaders. 'The wrath of God has come upon them at last' (1 Thess 2:16).²

The expression, 'I have laboured to no purpose,' has nothing to do with his supreme work which was to make propitiation for our sins on the cross. The words, 'I have spent my strength in vain and for nothing' have nothing to do with Jesus in Gethsemane. There we are allowed to see Jesus' spiritual agony as he grappled with the reality of his impending sufferings which were vicarious, that is, for us and in our place.

Yahweh's response is one of reassurance. What the Servant did not accomplish in his mission on earth will nevertheless be accomplished in the future (49:6,7).

In his ministry Jesus is an exemplar for ministers of the gospel. To have few conversions is often the cause of despondency for pastors. There are very few pastors who do not experience discouragement because of the lack of success in the Christian ministry. It was Jeremiah's grief that he made no impression on the nation to which he was called to minister. We remember too the experience of the prophet Elijah. After the drama on Mount Carmel and the execution of the prophets of Baal, Elijah realised that the mighty display of supernatural power of fire coming out of heaven had not changed the hearts of the people. His great burning desire was to turn their hearts back to Yahweh. He was seeking their repentance. Jezebel was the instrument to bring home to Elijah the reality of failure. She was still in charge. If there were a contest for power out of fear the majority would follow her. Elijah made it clear why he was discouraged. The people had not repented and he perceived himself as the only one left. That was an exaggeration. Seven thousand in Israel had not bowed the knee to Baal. Elijah eloquently expressed his discouragement. He keenly felt that he was a failure and lamented that he was no better than his fathers.

With regard to spiritual results Jesus can be compared to Jeremiah and Elijah but certainly not to Jonah. Jonah was downright rebellious. He ran away and bought a ticket to Tarshish not because he was depressed and needed a holiday in the sun but because he wanted absolutely nothing to do with being a missionary in Nineveh. On the map Tarshish is in the exact opposite direction to Nineveh.

‘I have laboured to no purpose.’ Some pastors suffer from depression which is related to the burdens they bear. There are different kinds of depression. Clinical depression caused by chemical imbalances is cured in most cases by medication prescribed by qualified psychiatrists. There are many other forms of depression which are caused by prolonged affliction, disappointment or exhaustion, or a combination of factors. There is no evidence that Jesus ever suffered from depression of any kind.

The Second Servant Song divides naturally as follows:

1. The Servant proclaims that he is called and equipped for his work 49:1-3

He has made my mouth like a sharpened sword

2. The Servant expresses his discouragement 49:4

I have laboured to no purpose; I have spent my strength in vain

3. Yahweh assures his Servant with an antidote to his discouragement which is twofold 49:5-6

second *I will also make you a light for the Gentiles that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth*

first *You will be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept*

1. **The Servant proclaims that he is called and equipped for his work (49:1-3)**

He has made my mouth like a sharpened sword (49:2)

That Jesus’ ministry is directed to all the world is expressed in the call to the islands and distant nations to listen. ‘Before I was born the LORD

called me.' The Servant was called from eternity to this work. 'He has made my mouth like a sharpened sword.' He is equipped to speak the very words of God. Revelation 1:16 describes the Son of Man as one 'out of whose mouth came a sharp double-edged sword'. 'For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart' (Heb 4:12). The comforting power of the Word is expressed in the Messiah's testimony, 'The Sovereign LORD has given me an instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary' (Isa 50:4).

Yahweh says, 'You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will display my splendour.' This is the only place in Scripture where the name Israel is ascribed to Jesus. The most convincing reason for this is that the word Israel means to prevail and was given to Jacob when he wrestled with the angel of the Lord and prevailed (Gen 32:28). Jesus has wrestled in prayer for his people and prevailed (John 17; Heb 4:14-16; 5:7-10).

2. The Servant expresses his discouragement

I have laboured to no purpose (49:4).

There is no doubt that Jesus was disappointed and discouraged by the rejection of himself by the Jews.

Remember how Jesus began his ministry in his home town of Nazareth. The general expectation was for a Messiah who would deliver the nation from the dominion of Rome. They expected him to tell of shattering blows that would remove the Roman legions. Then Israel would be rid once and for all of the Roman yoke. Jesus heightened their expectations by announcing that the Spirit of the Lord was upon him and that that scripture (Isaiah 61:1,2), which he had read to them, was fulfilled in their hearing. He stopped short of pronouncing the text, 'and the day of vengeance of our God'. Instead he reminded the synagogue congregation of Elijah's ministry to a Gentile woman at Zarephath and then of Elisha who healed the Syrian general Naaman of his leprosy. This by-passing of the chosen nation to the blessing of Gentiles filled the hearers with fury. They seized Jesus to take him to the brow of the hill and dispose of him with disgust. Using his divine power he slid away from them.

What a dreadful start to one's public ministry and that in one's home town! I have read of hundreds of pastors past and present but never of one who began his ministry in such a way as to be the subject of attempted assassination.

In the course of his three-year ministry the leaders of the Jewish nation increasingly hated and rejected him. Their determination to kill him intensified. Eventually they prevailed at the time of betrayal by Judas Iscariot. Of the seventy-strong Sanhedrin we know of only two who became disciples of Jesus. There may have been three or four more but of this we cannot be sure.

What of the ordinary people? Large numbers followed Jesus but when the call to holiness became clear they turned their backs on him. John tells us, 'From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him' (John 6:66). In the very last days before his crucifixion crowds followed Jesus in Jerusalem. The Sanhedrin feared that they would provide a protective shield to Jesus. However when it came to it the majority stirred up by ringleaders were fickle and turned against Jesus.

The question of rejection by the Jews of Jesus' generation as a whole is summed up in the words of Romans 10:21: 'All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people.'

Jesus' tears over Jerusalem and his lamentation tell the story. 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing. Look, your house is left to you desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord" ' (Matt 23:37-39).

In terms of numbers only 120 disciples gathered in the upper room for prayer before the Day of Pentecost.

The note of discouragement, 'I have laboured to no purpose' is followed immediately by expressions of faith. 'Yet what is due to me is in the LORD'S hand, and my reward is with my God' (49:4).

The Servant's words of faith are a model for discouraged pastors. Wisdom is to appreciate that God apportions gifts for his work. Not only so, he apportions the extent of the work to be done for him (Eph 2:10). Furthermore he apportions the extent of success or otherwise in the ministry. Some spend their lives sowing while others reap the harvest.

An example of this is pastor Tom Carson (1911-1992) the father of Don A Carson who is so well known for his writings and leadership in evangelical circles. Tom Carson persevered through barren, hostile times in a small church in French-speaking Quebec. During the 1960s with no savings, no home, and no church Tom refused invitations outside the orbit of about twenty small French-speaking churches in Quebec. He entered the civil service as a translator and remained as a tent-making pastor until his retirement. When missionaries arrived in Quebec from spiritually fruitful times in French-speaking West Africa they did not last longer than six months. When Don asked his dad why he kept going the answer came from a mind full of Scripture in both French and English, 'I have many people in this city' (Acts 18:10). This personal faith in God's election was vindicated. Evangelical work in French-speaking Canada began to change radically from 1972 onwards when Tom Carson was 61. From about 40 tiny churches in 1972 the number increased to about 500 in 1980, some of them substantial.³

Whether we are involved in sowing or reaping, or both, we will all rejoice in the victories that are celebrated in the New Jerusalem. All the glory will be ascribed not to the workers but to the Lamb. They lay their crowns before the throne and say:

'You are worthy, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honour and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they were created
and have their being' (Rev 4:11).

3 Yahweh assures his Servant with an antidote to his discouragement which is twofold 49:5-6

first *You will be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept*

second *I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth*

first *You will be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept⁴*

The words ‘those of Israel I have kept’ tell us that the Jews as an ethnic and religious entity are preserved through the centuries. The diaspora of AD 70 saw the Jews dispersed to many countries. Since 1948 when Israel was constituted a state the population has increased there to about 4.5 million. There are 5.6 million Jews living in the USA (population 300 million). 700,000 live in Ukraine (50 m) and 470,000 in Russia (144m) 300,00 in the United Kingdom (58m), 488,000 in Argentina (37m), 68,000 in South Africa (42m), 373,000 in Canada (33m), 357,000 in Brazil (190m). Jews are living in many other nations including some Muslim countries such as Morocco (14,000 out of 28m) and Iran (25,000 out of 74m).

You will be my servant ‘to restore the tribes of Jacob and to bring back those of Israel I have kept’. In answer to the question, Has God finished with the Jews? Paul answers that God has definitely not abandoned the Jews. First there is always a remnant. The apostle is himself an example of that. Right up to the present day there are Jews who have been converted and who have been a blessing to the churches. Second there is a fullness to come. ‘But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their fullness bring! I am talking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I make much of my ministry in the hope that I may somehow arouse my own people to envy and save some of them. For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?’ (Rom 11:12-15).

How will the tribes of Jacob be restored? Paul answers this when he declares: ‘The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob. And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins.’ Lying at the heart of this restoration is the new covenant which

was promised. 'I will make a new covenant *with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah*' (Jer 31:31 italics mine).

When will this 'life from the dead' take place? The answer is, 'When the full number of the Gentiles has come in' (Rom 11:25).

second *I will make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth*

While the Servant's work is related first to the redemption of his own people Israel, his purpose is to reach the entire world. This was made plain to Abraham. 'All peoples on earth will be blessed through you' (Gen 12:3). When the Servant is exalted to be king this invitation follows: 'Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession' (Ps 2:8). According to Psalm 22 his work will be richly rewarded. 'All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him, for dominion belongs to the LORD and he rules over the nations.' How will this take place? According to Isaiah 2:2 the Word of God will gain ascendancy over all opposition. 'It will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it.'

This part of the promise to the Servant is consistent with the description in the first Servant Song, 'In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his law the islands will put their hope' (Isa 42:4). It is also consistent with the fourth and best-known Servant Song, 'He will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand' (Isa 53:10).

The Antidote to Discouragement

In war the morale of soldiers is vital. In their very bones they must know that victory is certain. The battle is fierce. Casualties and martyrs are many. But the outcome is sure. The war will be won. The opposition is formidable. Enemies are implacable and hateful. Yet Yahweh's Servant will not falter or allow discouragement to deter him from his purpose.

The Holy Spirit will not relinquish the task assigned to him until all the work is complete (John 16:8).

This teaching confirms that it is necessary to plead the promises of Scripture in our intercessions. Furthermore we should derive encouragement from the psalms and hymns which express the purpose of Yahweh to bring glory to his Servant by achieving his salvation to the ends of the earth.

So be it, Lord! Thy throne shall never,
Like earth's proud empires, pass away.
Thy kingdom stands, and grows for ever,
Till all Thy creatures own Thy sway.⁵

Typical of the pioneer missionaries of his era David Livingstone, all alone, a light in dark Africa, wrote in his journal, 'We see the earth filling with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, aye all nations seeing his glory and bowing before him whose right it is to reign. Our work and its fruit are cumulative. We work toward another state of things. Future missionaries will be rewarded by conversions for every sermon. We are their pioneers and helpers. Let them not forget the watchmen of the night, we who worked when all was gloom and we had no evidence of success in the way of conversion.'⁶

It is biblically sound to encourage ourselves with the promises of God about the future harvest, salvation to the ends of the earth.

¹ This sermon was preached at Tinshill Free Church, Leeds, on the evening of September 14, 2008. I am indebted to Alec Motyer's commentary on Isaiah for this outline.

² It is sinful to persecute Jews because of their rejection of Jesus. The saga of AD 70 and the destruction of Jerusalem demonstrate the sovereignty of God. 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay' (Rom 12:19). Our responsibility is to pray for the Jews and to go to them first and to treat them with love and respect (Rom 1:16-17).

³ *Memoirs of an Ordinary Pastor. The Life and Reflections of Tom Carson.* D A Carson. Crossway, 160 page paperback, \$15.99. ISBN 978-1-4335-0199-9.

⁴ The Hebrew word for preserved is *natsor*. The ESV of Isaiah 49:6 translates as 'and to bring back the preserved of Israel', and the NASB, 'the preserved ones of Israel'. In the old Afrikaans Bible (which is a much better translation than the new one) the translation is, 'Die gespaardest in Israel'. 'spaar' has to do with setting aside money in savings in a saving bank, thus 'Spaarbank'.

⁵ Christian Hymns number 887, John Ellerton 1826-1893

⁶ David Livingstone, Rob Mackenzie, Christian Focus, 1993, page 135.

James Hudson Taylor (1832-1905)

part three

by Bob Davey

The beginnings of the China Inland Mission 1865-1875

The China Inland Mission, founded in England by James Hudson Taylor in June 1865, was indeed a giant leap of faith for all involved. Yet it proved to be of God and prospered from the beginning. The foundations had been laid by six years' experience on the mission field in China, careful reflection and above all a single-minded burden to reach all the Chinese in China for Christ, not just those around the treaty ports. Within a year of publication of the manifesto *China's Spiritual Need and Claims*, Hudson Taylor and family were on their way to China with the full number of twenty-four prayed for, either already sent on ahead, or with them!

How this happened is a saga in itself. It is enough for us to know that it could only have happened because Hudson Taylor had tirelessly worked in training recruits at his home in the east end of London, had consulted an ever widening circle of influential Christians and had taken up the opportunity to speak on behalf of China on every occasion to which he was invited and which included speaking at some of the most popular annual conventions. Significantly, the recruits were chosen for their spiritual maturity and willingness to trust in God for supply

and not because of their social background or academic attainments. This meant Hudson Taylor was tapping into the vast resource of Christians from the artisan class for missionaries rather than exclusively relying on the university educated or medically qualified personnel of the traditional Missionary Societies.

Even so, the success of the China Inland Mission was really due to the fact that the hand of God's blessing and protection was on the work. We need also to note that the spiritual principles on which this Mission was established and maintained were peculiarly adapted to survive the Communist onslaught in the mid-twentieth century after all foreign missionary agencies had been ejected and they have been the means, under God, of largely producing the flourishing indigenous Chinese Church that has emerged since. This fact alone warrants close attention to the history of the ministry and work of Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission.

The Principles of the China Inland Mission

1. From the first it was decidedly a 'faith' Mission. There were to be no appeals for money, no collections at meetings, nor any personal solicitation for money. 'All who go out as missionaries shall go in dependence upon God for temporal supplies with the clear understanding that the Officers of the Mission do not

guarantee any income whatsoever, and knowing that as no debt will be incurred they can only be ministered to as the funds sent in from time to time will allow.' The motto was 'go and do the work, trusting in His sure word'. The Mission was never to go into debt on principle as this would be contrary to apostolic command in Scripture and also the principle of faith.

2. The Mission was evangelical. 'Duly qualified candidates for missionary labour shall be accepted provided there be soundness in the faith on all fundamental truths.' Along with their application forms as candidates they had to submit 'a written statement of their convictions as to the divine inspiration and authority of the Scriptures, the Trinity, the fall of man and his consequent moral depravity and the need of regeneration, the atonement, justification by faith, sanctification, the resurrection of the body, the eternal life of the saved, and the eternal punishment of the lost'.

3. The Mission was non-denominational. 'Our work is evangelistic and unsectarian: we desire to win souls for Christ, and not to spread any particular views of Church government. Those of similar views are to be located near each other as far as can be arranged.' The fundamental purpose of the Mission was to evangelise by pioneer preaching into the unreached provinces, ever breaking new ground. The aim was also to plant self-supporting indigenous churches as soon as was practicable and from which native evangelists would emerge to accompany the CIM missionaries and

also pioneer in their own right from their own church base. God mightily blessed these efforts over the years.

4. Men and women, married or unmarried, from any background would be acceptable candidates, the requirement being the same for all, that they be spiritually equipped and called. 'The proposed field is so extensive and the *need of labourers of every class* is so great.' Of every qualified candidate 'each one has been qualified we believe for that sphere of service which the Lord intends him or her to occupy'. The plan adopted for choice of personnel was as follows. 'After correspondence with and about them, personal acquaintance is sought, and every care is taken to ascertain that God has fitted them for the work. In order to know them more thoroughly they are invited to reside for a longer or shorter time with us. When satisfied of the fitness of one and another for the work in China, the Lord is asked to open the way and provide the means for outfit and passage.' From a biblical point of view a weakness was that there was no insistence on a local sending church for accepted candidates.

5. Headquarters must be on the field under a Director. Hudson Taylor was unmoveable about this principle. The tail was not to wag the dog. It was not just a matter of logistics. For Hudson Taylor the heart of the matter was spiritual responsibility. Only those on the field, who had the ultimate responsibility of prayer and looking to God, could be in a position to direct affairs. Home directors were to be supporters not masters. As the work

expanded across China the responsibility was delegated to Field Directors.

6. As a result of early experience on the field it was soon required that all new missionary recruits go out as probationers for two years to learn the language and find their feet in the work. From the beginning it was required that all going inland agreed to dress in Chinese clothing and live like the people among whom they worked. This could not always be enforced as time went by, but the ideal remained. When churches had been organised, those who were appointed subsequently to succeed to the pastoral charge of a church were to continue the form of church government already established in that church.

7. As for recruitment of missionaries, Hudson Taylor says, 'In the study of the divine Word I learned that to obtain successful labourers was the need not of elaborate appeals for help, but the need *first* for earnest prayer to God to thrust forth labourers and *second* the deepening of the spiritual life of the Church so that men should be unable to stay at home. I saw the apostolic plan was not to raise ways and means but to go and do the work, trusting in his sure word who has said. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."'

There can be no doubt that Hudson Taylor had read the times aright. The 1857/60 revival on both sides of the Atlantic had increased the churches by over a million in the United States and Canada and the same in the United

Kingdom. The spiritual power of the revival also created a depth of spiritual hunger and thirst for the continuing presence of God which led to movements and conferences aimed at producing a deeper spiritual consecration and walk with God for the individual Christian. It was this tide of deep evangelical spirituality in the land that Hudson Taylor saw as an answer to his prayers. The tide of blessing continued for one generation and peaked in the late 1880s. Thereafter the spiritual tide of blessing began to recede quickly and remorselessly in the United Kingdom, succumbing to the relentless rising tide of rationalistic, liberal theology which gained more and more the dominance in the ministerial training institutions and pulpits of the land. By the time of this dominance the CIM had become international in its recruitment and continued to expand at a remarkable rate during and after the lifetime of its founder without ever compromising its principles in any way.

The challenge of human responsibility

One of the driving spiritual concerns compelling the birth of the Mission becomes clear right at the very beginning of the manifesto where Hudson Taylor quotes Proverbs 24:11,12 (A.V) which he repeats again and again throughout his appeal.

'If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth he not know it? And shall not he render to every man according to his works.'

Hudson Taylor took seriously this concept of 'blood-guiltiness'. Guilt comes on every believer who knows the salvation of God and does nothing or very little to assist in carrying out the command of the Great Commission. It is the command of Christ. It is a duty. For China he calls for at the very least 'effectual, fervent prayer and strenuous self-denying effort for the salvation of the benighted Chinese.' Apathy and indifference concerning the eternal well-being of the Chinese is denial of the law of love. Four hundred million Chinese, half of the world's unevangelised peoples, were 'perishing for lack of knowledge'! To challenge the conscience, Hudson Taylor tells the story of an incident in China. He was travelling along a canal in a houseboat. A Chinese, one of his party, fell in the water and did not come to the surface. Nearby were fishermen trawling for fish. He called for their help. They called back, 'It is not convenient!' After offering them money, they tried to barter. In exasperation Hudson offered them all he had on him. They came over in their own good time, dragged the river and found the body. Hudson tried artificial respiration without success as the man had been under water too long a time. To Hudson Taylor this speaks of the godless mind indifferent to the value of life; but it is also a picture of the apathy of Christians who are content in their own salvation and are reluctant and slow to raise a hand while others die in sin and go to eternal damnation.

Establishing the China Inland Mission in China

On 30 September 1866 a party of eighteen adults (which included nine

unmarried ladies) and the four Taylor children disembarked from the sailing ship *Lammermuir* at Shanghai after a journey of four months in which they survived two typhoons. This was at a time when there were only ninety-one Protestant missionaries in all China. The party, having adopted Chinese garb, moved as soon as possible to Hangzhou (Hangchow), 100 miles south-west of Shanghai and 100 miles west of Ningbo (Ningpo) as the crow flies. Hangzhou was the capital of the coastal province of Zhejiang (Chekiang) and was strategic for establishing a first base for the Mission. The first two years were critical. Hudson Taylor's friends held their breath. His many critics who regarded the venture as foolhardy, ill-considered, presumptuous and doomed to failure were ready to spread their criticisms at any opportunity. Hudson Taylor's leadership skills were indeed to be tested to the full but he had counted the cost and held firm and resolute. The Ningbo church left behind from his first visit to China had matured and now had fifty-nine Chinese members and had trained half a dozen excellent evangelists who now helped Hudson Taylor in the vanguard of the advance. These evangelists with others were a tower of strength. They were fearless. Without them there could have been no expansion.

In Hangzhou the missionary party were able to rent an old mansion with about thirty rooms which were capable of being developed into sixty rooms, just ideal for Mission Headquarters. The house next door was procured for a boys' boarding school under Mr Yu. A

medical clinic and a printing press for literature in different dialects were also established. A church was also soon formed and Wang Lae-djung was appointed pastor on 16 July 1867 with 18 members and 15 applicants for baptism. There were three other elders, Mr Tsiu as Church Evangelist, and two Exhorters. This was a fully indigenous Chinese church. A new and larger chapel site was purchased for them.

From this base in Hangzhou, by the end of 1867 six major Prefecture cities were settled by a CIM missionary each accompanied by a Chinese evangelist. There was also a witness settled in two county towns and three market towns. These were all amazing achievements in such a short time. The large cities, governed by Prefects, were Ningbo, Hangzhou, Shaoxing (Shaohsing), Taichou (now Linhai), Wenzhou (Wenchou) and Nanjing (Nanking) which was the second city of the Empire. Nanjing, the capital of the province of Jiangsu (Kiangsu), stood on the Yangzi (Yangtse) river up from Shanghai. The Yangzi was also navigable for over a thousand miles further inland, deep into the heart of China. Here was the way forward for the CIM advance.

In a letter to Grattan Guinness, Hudson writes, 'The difficulties of the work intrinsic and extrinsic are so great that, apart from the mighty power of God, we should indeed have a hopeless task before us.' In the first eighteen months the Mission had to face much ill health, a death, major riots, unprincipled dissension from a small clique of their own missionaries and a sniping press in

China and Britain. Yet the annual day of prayer at the end of 1867 was full of praise to God for all he had done and a joyful anticipation for the future. By the end of that year there were 30 CIM missionaries on the field with 5 more on the way. The largest Protestant Mission in China at the time was the London Missionary Society which after sixty years had 30 missionaries on the field. The absolute conviction at the CIM day of prayer was that, in spite of all difficulties, God was going to lead the CIM deeper into China.

Slow progress

The further the Mission pressed inland the fiercer the opposition became, backed by the majority of the literati, the Mandarin class, who were the scholar-gentry backbone of the Chinese culture. The literati saw Western ways and modernisation being more and more imposed upon China by the unscrupulous foreign powers. They regarded all this as being subversive of the ancient order, their own way of life, and deadly poison for China. They regarded the twin evils of the barbarians as being the opium trade forced on the Chinese by the gun-boat, and the missionary. In the view of the literati both brought disorder. Reactionary xenophobia struck back. Everything that went wrong in China could be blamed on the Christians. False rumours about them gained credence among the superstitious and the volatile, leading to riots and murder. A show of strength by the British navy became necessary to stabilise matters in 1868, though not at the request of Hudson Taylor.

The common people were by-and-large willing to listen to the gospel. After all, their gods had failed to protect them in the calamities of the Taiping rebellion of 1850-1864 during which over twenty million had died by war, famine and rapine. They were willing to listen, at least for a time. The China Inland Mission tried to rise to the occasion, though to begin with progress was painfully slow. There were obstructions at every turn, including fierce criticism of them back in Britain.

In July 1870 Mrs Taylor, ill with dysentery, gave birth to a baby boy, Noel. They both died within weeks. Hudson Taylor was also ill with dysentery, an illness which dogged him to his dying day. In August 1871 he returned to Britain for his health, to be with his children, and do deputation work. On 28 November 1871, he was married again, to Jennie Faulding who was one of the original *Lammermuir* party. Hudson set up the home CIM headquarters at 6 Pyrland Road in Newington Green, London. He also organised a council for the management of the home affairs of the CIM. The American evangelist Dwight L Moody was on his second visit to Britain at this time. Hudson Taylor shared the platform with him at the Mildmay Conference on 26-28th June 1872 in London. After the singing of the popular missionary hymn 'Waft, waft, ye winds His story' Hudson arose and addressed the conference, 'My dear friends, the wind will never waft it! If the blessed story of his love is to be taken to the dark places of the earth it must be taken by men and women like ourselves ... who wish to obey His great missionary command.' This gesture

won the friendship of Moody who was to be a good and influential friend for the CIM in years to come.

Hudson Taylor and his new wife Jennie were back in China by 28 November 1872. The massive task ahead can be seen by the fact that on the day of their departure to China there were only fifteen colleagues on station, nine missionary men, five wives and one woman. Ill health and death had taken its grim toll! Without the invaluable help of the Chinese evangelists and other helpers where would the CIM have been?

Hudson visited as many missionary stations as he could, until he hurt his spine in a fall and had to return to England in 1874. By that time the CIM had entered three inland provinces. Firstly, they had proceeded west along the mighty Yangzi river from Nanjing and settled in the city of Anqing (Anking) in the inland province of Anhui (Anwei). Secondly, they then travelled further along the Yangzi and occupied the city of Jiujiang (Kiukiang) in the province of Jiangxi (Kiangsi). Thirdly, they then took residence further west in the triple city complex of Hangchow (Hankou), Hanyang and Wuchang (now all united as the metropolis of Wuhan). These were situated in the province of Hubei (Hupeh) on the banks of the river Yangzi and the river Han and had a combined population of over a million. This city complex was also *the strategic place to reach into the farthest regions of China to the north, west and south.*

Hankou was a treaty port, though seven hundred miles inland. The Yangzi river

was a mile wide and thirty feet deep there and was navigable for ocean ships all the way. Hankou had already been resided in since 1861 by the remarkable and intrepid London Missionary Society pioneer missionary Griffith John. It was his intense pioneering spirit that had taken advantage of the new freedom to go inland. It was a unique ministry. He had been blessed to see a church established in the Hankou area with 353 baptised adult members by 1875. Here was a colleague after Hudson Taylor's heart. When the LMS had ordered Griffith John to return to the coast in accordance with their policy he refused and won the argument! Griffith John believed in the primacy of preaching in the missionary mandate and nearly every day he was out and about preaching in the open air or house to house. No wonder his labours were richly blessed.

Nevertheless, in spite of the real progress made by the CIM, pressing problems including that of manpower and finance were weighing heavily on Hudson Taylor. Also, British government policy had hardened against missionary activity away from Treaty Ports, a policy Hudson Taylor could not accept and for which he was criticised for ignoring. At the end of the year 1874, back in England, on his back in bed with excruciating pain, almost completely paralysed in his back and legs, a map of China pinned to the end uprights of his bed, Hudson Taylor issued a public appeal. In a written article, he made a request for 'prayer that God will raise up this (coming) year eighteen suitable men' to go into the nine still as yet unreached provinces

in China. A J Broomhall says, 'The CIM was at its lowest ebb since its inception. It was a brave and defiant act, made from a paraplegic's bed.' It was also an act of total conviction and faith in the faithfulness of God who had called and who would provide. The apostles did not wait for permission from the authorities before evangelising and obeying the great missionary command of Christ, nor must he!

Hudson Taylor's article was published early 1875 in *The Christian* and also in C H Spurgeon's *Sword and Trowel* and in other publications. It was also included in the new CIM official magazine called *China's Millions* which was first published in July 1875. The astonishing response to this article proved to be the turn of the tide for the CIM and as A J Broomhall justly comments, 'The point at which the tide of all missions to China turned.'

The advance of the gospel throughout China during the last quarter of the nineteenth century can only be described as remarkable and decisive. God willing we will trace this signal work of God in our next article.

Sources

A J Broomhall, *Hudson Taylor & China's Open Century, Books 4&5*. Hodder & Stoughton, 1984,1985.

K S Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China*, SPCK 1929.

R Wardlaw Thompson, *Griffith John, The Story of Fifty Years in China*, Religious Tract Society, 1907.

David W Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism, The Age of Spurgeon and Moody*, IVP 2005.

News

India

Huge armed Hindu mobs continue to rage against Christians in several states, assaulting and murdering them and torching their homes and churches. Since violence erupted on 23 August, at least 57 people have been killed, more than 18,000 injured and over 4,300 houses, 150 churches and 13 Christian schools and colleges destroyed. Two Christian women have been gang-raped and some 50,000 people are now homeless. On 29 September three relief camps in Orissa sheltering displaced Christians were rocked by bombs. The camps are heavily guarded and there were no casualties but terror has increased substantially. *This report from missionaries in India.*

Myanmar

Nargis Grace Missions for Myanmar describe their 13th mission trip to Burma. August 25, 2008.

On August 23 (Saturday) we, 11 Bible students and two Bible teachers, went to Tamet Chaung Village with bags of rice. There are 81 families (houses) at that village and only two house



Meeting an urgent need – bags of rice



Visitors singing at one of the meetings

buildings are left, but the rest were destroyed by the Nargis cyclone. There are only five families who are Christians. They have been struggling for food to survive. They have not yet received any aid from any group. When we arrived there the villagers were overjoyed; first we gathered them together in one area at a house compound and preached the gospel; then we distributed rice bags to them. They welcomed us to come back to them for a gospel campaign in the future also. *This report is supplied by Mt Zion Bible Church (Chapel Library) Pensacola.*

Sierra Leone

A report by Alan Levey

As we have celebrated the 200th anniversary of the Abolition of Slavery bill during this last year, my mind's eye went back to Freetown the capital of Sierra Leone. I thought of the giant cotton tree in the centre of the city where the returning slaves rejoiced in their freedom and also of the William Wilberforce Memorial Methodist Church nearby. Sierra Leone is a small and poverty-stricken land in West

Africa and rated as one of the poorest countries of the world. Most people remember Sierra Leone as a country where there was an eleven year long civil war of appalling brutality that left hundreds of amputees. British forces successfully carried out a daring raid to rescue some of their own troops who were on peace-keeping duties. For more background to Sierra Leone see my report in *Reformation Today* 218.

In between my two visits to the country (Mar./Aprl. 2007 & Feb./Mar. 2008) an election took place. Thankfully there was a peaceful changeover of power for which many prayed fervently. The new government has begun to tackle the enormous problems that the country faces especially corruption in government, at all levels.

The Mayor of Freetown is a Christian and he and others in positions of responsibility, politicians, teachers, industrial leaders need our prayers.

The international financial turmoil is affecting Sierra Leone. The work of building an infra-structure is painfully slow. The only structures that are being built quickly are mosques. These are appearing in virtually every town and village. Enormous mosques have been built in Freetown and other cities.

The majority of preachers are failing in their God-given task of leading the flock and warning and teaching them. They imitate 'Prosperity Preachers' whom they watch on television and whose books are readily available. Sierra Leonians in general are a quiet, reserved people and it is incongruous to hear preachers screaming out a message of instant health, wealth and deliverance. Disappointment and disillusionment prevail.

Grace and Truth Mission, along with Unevangelized Fields Mission Sierra Leone, (UFMSL) are working together in Freetown training students in Biblical Studies, with classes on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings. They hope to build premises in order to expand this ministry. A new church has been started in the capital with the exposition of Scripture as its main aim. Regularly in various centres throughout Sierra Leone the 'Travelling Bible School', run by these agencies, holds conferences to help train and encourage pastors. Pastor Training International (PTI) has been invited to work alongside these agencies.

PTI conferences have been held in four strategically placed towns. The first series of conferences majored on the Pastoral Letters, asking, What is a pastor? What is the standard of life that he is to display? What is he to preach? Most conferees were entirely without training.

The second series concentrated on the centrality of Christ in the ministry. Colossians was expounded. In group sessions central doctrines were discussed such as justification, sanctification, regeneration, the atonement. Sermon preparation was taught. At the conclusion of each conference every man who had attended was given a parcel of books: E F Kevan's 'What the Scriptures Teach', Derek Prime's 'Pastors and Teachers' and Roger Weil's 'Foundations of the Christian Faith'.

Those who attend are encouraged to write to an address in the UK to obtain further help and encouragement. One wrote with this comment: 'The teaching impacted my life so much so

that I was able to identify my mistakes from God's Word and to correct them.'

Recently Conrad Mbewe of Kabwata Baptist Church, Lusaka, Zambia ministered in Sierra Leone. He was excited to have his first helicopter flight. This ten minute flight saves several hours of tedious travel from the airport to the centre of Freetown. Conrad preached to pastors from different areas of the country with an average attendance of seventy each day at three-day conferences. His theme was 'Biblical Christianity and Spiritual Gifts'. Summing up at the end, one pastor stood up and said, 'Concerning such a controversial subject, we would have been disagreeing with the speaker, but what can we say? You have only taught us the Word of God!'

Plans are under way for a series of further conferences in Sierra Leone early in 2009. In anticipation we appeal for prayer. Missionaries Mike and Vi Webb of UFMSL make the arrangements. They fulfil a vital role in Sierra Leone.

Romania

Tom J Nettles

Recently I spoke at two conferences of Romanian Baptist pastors and seminary students. The conferences bear the name of Dimitru Cornilescu, a Romanian monk who was converted while translating the Bible into the Romanian language. The subject matter focused on Baptist confessional identity. The first was held in Oradea, September 29-October 1, and was attended by around 70 pastors. At this venue we had five sessions with each



Prof Tom Nettles and translator Pavel Miron

followed by a Question and Answer session. The subjects covered included a biblical rationale for the use of confessions, the Christological confessions of the Early Church, the Reformation confessions, and examples of Baptist confessions.

The purpose was to give a full confessional profile of Baptist doctrine. First, we intended to show how Baptists agree with the rest of orthodox Christians in affirming the theology of the Apostles' Creed, the creed of Nicea (325), the Constantinopolitan Creed, and the Symbol of Chalcedon. We affirm the theological direction taken in the Reformation on doctrines such as justification by faith, the rejection of the mass in favor of the completed work of Christ on the cross, the immediate operations of grace on the soul through hearing the Word of truth, the gospel, instead of grace communicated through the sacraments. The Baptist confessions showed how Baptists built on this historical progress of theology, claiming the whole development of true doctrinal understanding from the Early Church through the Reformation as their own. Then, as a culmination of

Reformation discussion on the nature of the Church, a distinct ecclesiology produced the movement known as Baptists. Baptist confessions affirmed regenerate church membership, believers' baptism, liberty of conscience and some accompanying implications as more consistent both with Scripture and the Reformation than those ecclesiologies that retained infant baptism and desires for union of Church and State.

This conference was repeated in Brasov where, in addition to pastors from the area, close to 35 students from the Baptist Theological Institute in Bucharest attended. This conference was held where Corin Mihaila, a recent PhD graduate in New Testament from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in the US, serves as pastor. In both conferences the fellowship and worship were lively and joyful and at the same time reverent and Bible-centered. The Q and A sessions showed the biblical earnestness and doctrinal alertness of the conferees. While a wide range of questions was fielded at each conference, those that dominated concerned the strong Calvinist persuasion of the English Particular Baptists and the early Baptists of America. How do these doctrines relate to Baptist witness today? Several young pastors already testify to the biblical authority for these doctrines and others show sincere openness in discussing their pastoral relevance. On Sundays I preached at four different Baptist congregations, two in Oradea and two in Bucharest, and found great blessing in the Bible reading, testifying, praying and singing in the times of corporate worship. One of the highlights was meeting the young man that translated

By His Grace and For His Glory into Romanian, Pavel Miron. Also, a legend of contemporary Romanian Baptist life is 'Dr. Nick' Gheorghita, an endocrinologist who translated many important Christian books from English to Romanian and served in several important offices in Romanian Baptist life. He attended the conference in Oradea, greatly encouraged and inspired the speaker, and expressed real appreciation for the conference. His son, Radu Gheorghita, a teacher of New Testament at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, organised the conferences and works closely with Emil Bartos, an astute theologian of Reformed persuasion. He and Radu are working on a visionary project for securing ongoing biblical and theological education for Romanian pastors.

I travelled with three seminary students on Saturday evening to Bucharest where, on Sunday, I preached in churches pastored by Daniel Maris and Dr. Vasile Talpos. Both also work as professors and administrators at the Theological Institute in Bucharest and are doing excellent work in their respective churches. Dr. Talpos received his advanced degree from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He entered in 1980 during some of the darkest days of communist domination in Romania. It was also one year after the Conservative Resurgence began in the Southern Baptist Convention. He was told in an Old Testament seminar that Abraham was never told by God to offer Isaac, that much of the Old Testament was not historically reliable, but was only a vehicle for the developing religious convictions of the

Israelites. After class Tarpos went to the office of the professor and spoke respectfully but plainly to him. He said, 'We Romanians have suffered for the Bible and our belief in its truthfulness. You have told me exactly what the Communists have said about the Bible, a view to which we have refused to consent much to our peril. You are wrong, and if I am made to accept this viewpoint I will simply leave and return to Romania.' Lewis Drummond intervened on his behalf and the professor put no pressure on Talpos to receive the views he insisted on in the seminar. Can there be any doubt that the struggle for the authority of Scripture in the Southern Baptist Convention was any less needed than the overthrow of Communism in Romania?

Mozambique

Karl Peterson describes the ninth FIEL Conference at Nampula

Every year I find myself saying, 'This was our best conference yet.' This year was no exception. July 22, 235 pastors, elders, evangelists, Bible school instructors and students and many wives arrived at the Summer Institute of Linguistics (Wycliffe Bible Translators) mission in Nampula, northern Mozambique for three days of spiritual feasting.

We hold this Conferência FIEL every year in fellowship with the Brazilian Reformed publisher Editora Fiel, directed by missionary Richard Denham. This was our ninth annual conference. Medical missionary Dr. Charles Woodrow and I coordinate the conference with the help of many

others, notably the new South African missionary, Salomé van Niekerk.

Our purpose is to expose Mozambican church leaders to the beauties of the doctrines of grace and their implications for church and pastoral ministry. The church in Mozambique is growing rapidly. Nevertheless, enormous gaps and needs exist. Pastors and church leaders, though at times highly gifted and committed, are not theologically grounded or trained in sound ministry practice. With this in mind the FIEL Conference seeks to encourage men and their wives in sound doctrine and biblical thinking about church life.

This year's conference centred around expositions in Ephesians. Not only did the pastors hear the majestic doctrines of this epistle, they also were exposed to brilliant models of expository preaching, still quite uncommon in Mozambique. Pastors Gilson Santos of São José dos Campos, Brazil and Ronald Kalifungwa of Zambia divided the book into ten sections and very ably and warmly preached this epistle. Pastor Santos also gave a biography of Augustine of Hippo, that great early African pastor whose theology of grace beautifully paralleled the teachings from Ephesians.

Church leaders from every conceivable denomination attend the FIEL Conference – many Pentecostals, Presbyterians, different Baptist groups, tiny African Initiated Churches, mainline liberal churches, Zionists and some Anglican padres. Quite a number are converted Muslims, Islam being strong in northern Mozambique. It is very common for one pastor to have the responsibility of shepherding five or

ten local congregations. One participant oversees more than 20 churches. One can only imagine the far-reaching impact this conference is having.

A highlight of the conference is the book reports. We ask men who have received books from us during the year to give a five minute review of how a book helped them in their life and ministry. These men really are reading and it is showing in their ministries! There is a large spread of books at the conference bookshop, which is the largest Protestant bookshop in the entire country. These men need books! Books are subsidised and sold for about a third of the cost price. Without such discounts few of these servants of the Lord would be able to equip themselves with necessary ministry tools as poverty is so acute throughout the country. One man who pastors five churches and is heavily involved in evangelism to Muslims in the northern coastal areas of the country told me that the *only* training he receives during the year is what he hears at the FIEL Conferences and the books he buys or receives from us. So often have we heard of men using the books or conference manuals as the texts for seminars for other pastors when they return to their home cities or towns.

Possibly the most effective part of the conference is the week-long seminar held immediately after the conference for the 50 – 60 participants who are able to remain. Beginning in 2005, Charles Woodrow has taught an intensive course in Systematic Theology. Our Brazilian guest speakers have taught seminars on the Christology of Genesis and Expository Preaching. These seminars allow us to

meet with leaders in smaller contexts and engage them directly and intensively in a way that is difficult in the context of a larger conference.

A backbone of the entire FIEL ministry in Mozambique and other Portuguese-speaking countries is the Adopt a Pastor Project. In this program a sponsor sends \$US30 to Editora FIEL in Brazil per month for three years. With this gift Editora FIEL is able to translate and publish books, and send one book per month to a selected pastor or church leader for three years and provide bus fare for him and his wife to attend the conference. Currently we have 67 men on the Adopt a Pastor Project. Some are sponsored by churches, families, Sunday School classes or home Bible studies. Any readers interested in investing in this project can find details at www.editorafiel.org.

Is reformation taking place in Mozambique? Though we long to see a self-conscious, Mozambique-initiated Reformed movement in the country we realise that we are still planting seeds. Yet men are reading books, preaching more biblically in their churches, and coming to appreciate the doctrines preached by the apostles.

We can hardly wait for next year's conference!

Moldova

I visited Moldova for 2 weeks in September with William Smylie of Slavic Gospel Association (SGA). The purpose of our visit was to teach in the Baptist Mission School in Balti (pronounced Beltz) as part of the SGA training programme for Christian

leaders and workers. This was also an opportunity to see at first hand some of the opportunities for the gospel in this country.

Moldova is economically very poor, the poorest country in Europe. A government employee (eg doctor, teacher) might expect to earn £75 per month; those who work in private companies where there is less job security might earn £100 a month. Yet in the midst of such material poverty, we found amongst the evangelical Baptists (the largest evangelical grouping in the country) a real spiritual seriousness and zeal for the gospel. They are committed to church planting in the villages (because of the lack of cars, each village needs its own 'house of prayer'). On Sunday 14 September we were present at the opening of a village church building in Ghiliceni (built for a few thousand pounds with financial help from SGA). In 1994 this whole rural area of the country was without gospel witness. The Baptists embarked on a programme of evangelistic outreach and now there are 30 churches. The pastor of Ghiliceni is a former student of the Mission School, and a number of the current students are seeking to establish a similar witness in villages.

The women studying at the Mission school are generally involved in children's work. A number of Summer camps are organised and are an effective means of outreach – especially to children from non-Christian homes. Others teach the Bible in Sunday Schools, or in orphanages. In recent years opportunities have opened up for involvement in state primary schools,

and some young women go into schools to take Bible classes.

The commitment and enterprise of these young people is extraordinary. To give one example: a young married woman testified that 5 months ago she had asked for prayer because she was trying to set up a youth club for 12-17 year olds to reach them with the gospel, but was discouraged that only 2-3 were coming along. Now she reported that she regularly has 16, and sometimes 35 in attendance. She asked for prayer for helpers, as it is hard work leading the club alone (!).

The vision of these Moldovan believers is not limited to their own country; the evangelical Baptists have over 50 missionaries in countries such as Russia, Turkey and Iran. There are encouragements in nearby nations. Ukraine has seen even more dramatic growth in gospel work since the 'openness' at the fall of the Soviet Union. The number of evangelical Baptist churches has grown from 1200 to 3000. For comparison, there are only about 1000 evangelical Baptist churches in the whole of Russia.

It has to be said that the growth in the churches was more dramatic in the years immediately following the 'openness'. For example, Bethany Baptist Church in Balti, a church of 1200, used to have 2 baptismal services a year at which 100 would be baptised on each occasion. Now the number baptised at each service is more like 25. And it is discouraging that for all the growth this is outstripped by the numbers emigrating to the USA. America has been very favourable to Moldova in offering visas, especially to



Fellowship lunch outside the new church building in Ghiliceni following the opening service.

Christians, because of the sufferings of Communist days. It is helpful for hard-pressed families back home to be receiving money from abroad, but discouraging that Moldovan believers gather in Russian-speaking enclaves in the USA, sometimes with two or three pastors in a church. Not all are happy with their new situation, but it is difficult to return to Moldova and admit that they have made a mistake. So now the number of evangelical Baptists in the country remains at only 22,000.

It was refreshing to spend time in this spiritually encouraging setting. However, evangelism is becoming more difficult. A pastor reflected ruefully that it was easy to talk to atheists about the gospel – the challenge was clear. In the days of Communism there was real

sacrifice involved in becoming a Christian as you would be denied promotion or advancement. In those days the church was always growing. Now there is less sacrifice involved in conversion, and many are willing to identify themselves as ‘Christians’ in a general way. So nominalism provides fresh challenges.

Do pray for the land of Moldova, the leaders of the churches, and all involved in enterprising ways of making the gospel known. For more information about SGA’s ministry in training leaders, providing practical support for widows and the needy, literature, etc, go to www.sga.org.uk

Bill James Emmanuel Evangelical Church, Leamington Spa.

A New Dawn for the Huguenots in France?

Frederick Hodgson

On the night of 24-25 August 1572, on the Feast of St. Bartholomew, the Protestant leaders, gathered in Paris for the marriage of Henry of Navarre to Margaret de Valois, were massacred on the orders of Catherine de Medici. By October over 3,000 Protestants had been murdered in Paris and probably over 10,000 in the provinces of France. Catherine was exuberant at the success of her plot and rejoicing over the destruction of the Protestant movement was widespread in the Catholic world of the time. When news of the massacre reached the Vatican there was jubilation! Cannons roared, bells rang and Pope Gregory XIII (1572-85) struck a special commemorative medal to honour the occasion! He also commissioned Italian artist Vasari to paint a mural of the massacre – which *still* hangs in the Vatican!

The rejoicing was short lived. Although the massacres spread over much of France, some fifty or so towns that were strongly Protestant withstood the storm. The opponents of the gospel failed to recognise that the faith of many was not just in their leaders but in their Lord. These brave-hearted people had no intention of simply ‘rolling over’ or allowing

themselves to be victims of the terror. Most of these towns were in the mountainous areas and in the south and west of the country. The royal forces led by the Duke of Anjou, Catherine’s third son, targeted two towns in particular. Sancerre, a small town situated in the Loire valley, famous today for its wines, was subjected to a cruel siege lasting 10 months in which famine killed more than 500 of its inhabitants.

Wylie recorded that the people were reduced to eating ‘dogs, cats, mice, snails, moles, grass, bread made from straw, ground into powder and mixed with pounded slate’ along with leather, parchment and other materials softened with water. The Protestant centre and fortress of La Rochelle was surrounded by land and sea and pounded by cannon and its walls undermined and partially demolished by explosive. All the while the Duke’s forces dwindled during the twenty-nine repulses that they suffered at the hand of the brave, uncompromising defenders who sang Psalms at the same time as flying their flags of defiance. La Rochelle withstood the assault of the duke for four months before the duke withdrew his forces from both these targets of his hatred. The reason for his withdrawal was a call from Poland to become its king. The Poles had

insisted that he would only be acceptable if he ceased persecuting their fellow Protestants in France.

Meanwhile criticism of Catherine's rule (although Charles IX was still officially the king) came from another quarter. A political party, deeply disturbed by the attempted violent crushing of the Reformation in France had been brought into being by the appeals for toleration from the recently deceased statesman l'Hôpital. This party, composed of Catholics who despised the immorality of the French court, had high profile leaders such as the three sons of the Constable Montmorency, along with Marshals Cosé and Biron. This party was also dismayed by the numbers of Italians and Spanish who surrounded the throne. They were dismayed by the influence of witchcraft that had crept into the Louvre. The *Politiques*, led by the Duke of Alençon, the king's youngest brother were jealous for the honour of France. These patriots looked to the Huguenots for support in cleaning up French society.

Catherine and Charles were left feeling politically weak and within a year of the massacres representatives of the Huguenots came before her to request that the privileges granted to them in 1570 should be restored. Although white with anger at their boldness together with despair at vanquishing them she was forced to make peace. She had lost so much as

a result of her intrigues. Her son, the Duke of Anjou was bound for Poland. Her country was in ruin and divided into warring parties. She was surrounded by those she was unable to trust and the Huguenots had regained much of their strength.

The health of Charles IX had deteriorated after the St. Bartholomew murders in which he participated, although perhaps unwillingly at first. He was filled with remorse and suffered from a strange disease in which he sweated blood. His feelings of guilt were aggravated by his superstitious alarm at the regular appearance of ravens flying around his residence. The royal perpetrators of the plot had congratulated themselves on the destruction of the Huguenots in Paris. Providence ruled otherwise and the nurse who attended him in his illness was a believer and she attempted to comfort him as his conscience accused him. He died in May 1574, a year and a half after he had with great excitement shot those attempting to escape from the murderous mob.

The Duke of Anjou was then recalled from Poland and he became Henry III of France. When he ascended the throne he imperiously demanded that all his subjects become Roman Catholic or leave the country. His government was weak, however and he had no means of enforcing this decree. Wylie recorded that Catholics and Protestants alike despised this

effeminate but vicious man because of his lifestyle. He was unpredictable, in that one moment he lived like a reclusive monk and the next he surrounded himself with a selected band of youths and engaged in debauched behaviour.

At this time another group, called the Catholic League, appeared. This popular group was led by the young Duke of Guise and supported by Catholic priests and was given strength by the Parisian mob that had constantly been the instruments of persecution used by the Triumvirate. They were angry on two accounts. Firstly they felt that Catherine had given too many favours to the Huguenots, who now had their own schools, congregations and synods. Secondly they were disgusted at the moral standards of the court of Catherine and the remnant of the Valois dynasty as exemplified by Henry III who succeeded Charles IX. They were strongly opposed to the fact that the next in line was Henry, the son of the great Protestant Queen of Navarre. The aim of the League was to eliminate both Henry III and Henry of Navarre and replace them by the Duke of Guise, the favourite of the mob. This aim shortly became apparent.

Meanwhile the politically weak Henry III had to find an ally. He had to choose between the League and the Huguenots. His initial choice was to join the League based in Paris and he

brought his army with him to the capital. However, the danger that he was in was quickly apparent and he fled to the Castle of Blois. Clearly he had learnt how to lure his enemies into a trap and just as his mother before him had done with the Huguenot leaders, he pretended to be friends with the Duke of Guise and the latter was cordially invited to join him at Blois. Ignoring the warning of his friends, he accepted the invitation thinking that the king dare not harm him in any way. On his way into the king's chamber he had to pass through another chamber filled with soldiers. They suddenly fell on him with their swords and he was mortally wounded but managed to stagger into the king's room before collapsing. Henry just kicked his body out of his way and then went to boast to his mother Catherine that he was now really king of France. She told him that he must first kill the Duke's uncle, the Cardinal of Lorraine whose murder he quickly accomplished. The remains of the two men were lowered into a pit of lime until they were unrecognisable as their bodies would have incited the mob to violent reaction and the guilty king wished to hide the evidence of these assassinations. Catherine died shortly afterwards aged seventy. She died without friends as all parties recognised her evil, deceptive schemes.

Henry III now turned to Henry of Navarre for support. Surprisingly this

man, trained in high godly principles was willing to give him his support despite his reputation as having been part of the St. Bartholomew's plot. The two Henrys then marched on Paris confident of victory over the League as the joint army was much superior in leadership, men and equipment to that of the League. Wylie commented on the incongruity of the union of the two Henrys, 'The flower of the Huguenots were in the grave; the King of Navarre was not the high-minded hero that Coligny had been. We find now a lower type of Huguenotism than before the St. Bartholomew Massacre.'

On their way to Paris, they heard that the pope had excommunicated both of them. Henry of Navarre dismissed the fear of Henry III who, superstitious as he was, was unable to eat for two days. However, as he continued his journey to Paris a monk named Jacques Clément, having obtained absolution in advance, pretended to deliver a message to the king. Gaining access into his tent he plunged a dagger into the king and the League was saved. This ended the Valois dynasty. As the Protestant Henry of Navarre, renowned for his bravery, was the heir to the throne it might have seemed that the persecution of the Huguenots was at an end.

Although Henry was the next in the line of succession, he was not universally acceptable. Some Catholics were supportive as long as

he became a Catholic. However, Pope Gregory, the Catholic League and the powerful Philip II of Spain were all opposed to his becoming king. The Huguenots had high hopes of him. When the moderate Catholics demanded that he renounce his Protestant beliefs, he boldly answered, 'In the day of battle would it add to your courage to think that you followed the banner of a perjured apostate!' The throne was very attractive to him however, and he tried to appear supportive of both Catholics and Protestants. In order to be acceptable to the Catholic party he offered to be instructed in the Catholic faith for a period of six months. This naturally alarmed his fellow Huguenots and their support of him cooled off.

The soldiers of the League still held Paris and his own army started to desert him, leaving him weakened and he withdrew with about 6000 troops to the area around Dieppe in the north. The Catholic League having an army of 30000 hemmed him in with his back to the sea. He was forced to give battle and amazingly God gave him the victory despite the odds. This battle restored his credibility and thousands flocked to his standard, with the result that his army grew to 20,000. He also gained the support of the Protestant states of Europe.

Henry now moved his army southwards and crossed the Loire to spend the winter months there. In the

spring of 1590, after his army was strengthened further by the addition of more Huguenot soldiers he felt strong enough to march towards Paris and fought against the League which had been strengthened by Spanish and German troops. Although Henry was heavily outnumbered he was again victorious at this second battle on the plains of Ivry. Before this battle Henry prayed earnestly for the success of his project if the Lord found it was a just cause. Wylie pointed out that these victories should have given him faith to trust in the God of the gospel and not compromise his faith in order to gain a crown. Henry, although universally acclaimed as a great king, did not appear to have great faith. The support of the Catholics still depended on whether or not he renounced his Protestantism and became a Catholic.

Although he had probably made his mind up what he should do, he consulted his two trusted advisors Sully and Mornay Duplessis. Sully pointed out that if he remained a Protestant he would have a hard time, having to fight lots of battles and endure hardships and have to decline the many pleasures of this life. If he simply converted to Catholicism he would 'escape all those pains and difficulties in this world'. Henry lightly joked about the world to come, replying, 'As for the other world I cannot answer for that.' Duplessis was a firm believer and charged

Henry to serve God with a good conscience and attempt the union of the kingdom by reformation of the Church. He went on to say that he could not advise the king to become a Catholic as he himself had no intention of attending mass. He warned the king that a religion that could be taken off and on like a coat was of no value.

Henry, with his mind made up, went to talk with the bishops about points of difference between Catholicism and the Protestant faith. On the following Sunday he went to the Church of St. Denis and upon knocking on the door he was admitted and asked what he had come for. He replied that he wished to be admitted into the Church of Rome. He was led to the altar and swore to live and die in the Catholic faith. He abased himself before the altar as his brow touched the floor as mass was celebrated. The congregation consisting of prelates and priests greeted this act with great jubilation. The church bells rang out and cannon were fired so as to announce to the world what had happened. His former Huguenot supporters were greatly saddened and disturbed by the events of that day. Their apprehension was increased as the bishops had insisted on Henry swearing that he would to the utmost of his power and in good faith drive out all heretics under his jurisdiction and from all lands under his sway.

Henry tried to pacify his Huguenot friends with the promise that after he was stronger in his position as king he would try to make life easier for them. They were still not allowed to practise their religion openly in many parts of France. Often they were compelled to have their children instructed as Catholics. Occasionally their dead were dug up from graveyards and simply thrown on the fields. Out of concern for their freedom the Huguenots formed a parliament to promote their safety and unity of action. Henry did not oppose this move and secretly he encouraged it. Although he was an apostate, he did not become a persecutor. However, there was no new legislation to protect the Huguenots and right the wrongs done to them or restore their privileges. This was despite four years of negotiations. After some acrimony in these discussions there was another massacre of a Huguenot congregation in 1595.

The Huguenots continued to complain to Henry and make the point that they were faithful servants of the king, never threatening him as others had. Their plea was for an edict that they might enjoy common privileges as the rest of his subjects and asked for liberty of conscience, rest from persecution, security for their lives and property. Henry IV was involved in a war with Spain and needed support from the Huguenots when the Spanish army put the

French under particular pressure. Henry could delay no longer and in April 1598 the Edict of Nantes was proclaimed. This long overdue concession to the Huguenots was only extracted from Henry when he had no alternative.

It gave full liberty of conscience to all. Public worship by the Reformed was allowed in all those places where it was exercised in 1577 and in the suburbs of cities. Divine worship was to be allowed in the castles of the nobility and up to thirty people were allowed to meet in the homes of the inferior gentry for domestic worship. Reformed persons were to be admitted to office in the state, their children admitted to schools, the sick to hospitals and alms given to their poor. They were to be allowed to print their books in certain cities. Courts having equal numbers of Protestants and Catholics were to be established to provide for the interests of Protestants. Four Protestant colleges were to be provided and a national Protestant synod could be held every four years. The state was to pay the salaries of Protestant ministers. The edict was to be guaranteed by 200 towns being placed into Protestant hands. This edict did much to allow the two parties to live side by side in peace for the remainder of Henry's reign.

One consequence of the peace was that France was allowed to develop economically. During the ten years

the huge national debt was paid off and Henry demonstrated his powers of leadership in areas other than soldiering. He proved to be a man of vision and courage and united the nation. Instead of waging costly wars to suppress opposing nobles, Henry simply paid them off. As king he adopted policies and undertook projects to improve the lives of all subjects, which made him one of the country's most popular rulers ever. With the advice of Sully, he encouraged agriculture, forestry, industry and commerce. Roads, bridges and canals were built and swamps were drained allowing yet further expansion of agriculture. New prestigious buildings were erected in Paris including the Pont Neuf across the Seine, along with the addition of the Grande Galerie to the Louvre. He invited artists and craftsmen to live and work in the lower floors of this building. As a political leader he was probably aptly called Henry the Great.

However, his marriage with Margaret was unhappy and they lived apart for a long time before their marriage was annulled in 1559. The following year he then married the Florentian born Marie de Medici, daughter of Francesco I de Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany and of Johanna, Archduchess of Austria. She was described as being very pretty in her younger years. Her eldest son, the future King Louis XIII, was born at Fontainebleau in 1561. Despite his greatness as a soldier and statesman

Henry IV was unfaithful to both wives.

His foreign policy was that of reducing the power of the House of Austria (Hapsburg), which had branches in Spain and Germany. Queen Elizabeth of England joined him in this policy. This alliance made him very unpopular with the pope. Henry's troops set off to fight as part of the combined army and arrived in Germany for the war in 1610. Meanwhile as it had been recognised that Henry would be absent from home for long periods on state business, Marie was crowned queen on the 13th May, so that she could act in his place while he was away. She persuaded him to stay behind and be present at her coronation. Immediately after the event he was overcome with intense, unexplained and uncharacteristic melancholy. For some reason he believed that he would shortly meet his death in a carriage and his fear was justified. A day or two after the coronation, he was murdered by the monk François Ravallac. Henry was in his carriage that was forced to slow down by a cart. Ravallac, who had been following the royal carriage, jumped up and leaning over the carriage plunged his dagger into the heart of the king who died shortly afterwards.

Ravallac made no attempt to escape and admitted to his crime. He explained his actions by simply stating that the king was favourable to heretics and was making war on the

pope. In his judgement he believed Henry was making war on God. His motivation is not too different from that which drives certain fanatics to extreme acts of violence today.

Marie de Medici, a lady not renowned for her political skills, was left as regent because her son Louis XIII was only a young boy when his father died. This set the scene for what was to become a sad history for the Huguenots and for France.

The life of Henry IV is important, not merely because of the undoubted contribution that Henry made to the development of France, but because of the warning to us of the fact that a person may be brought up in a Christian home and yet turn aside. He had the advantage of a particularly godly parent and being surrounded by examples of other men and women of faith, and lived under the sound of godly pastors in a church with strong, clear doctrinal statements. Henry was a pragmatic ruler who treated both truth and faithfulness to his wives and his friends lightly. If he lived in today's postmodern society he would be highly valued for his charismatic but pragmatic leadership. The tolerance that he was forced into providing by the Edict of Nantes was an undoubted blessing to France at the time and it led to increased economic growth at the time after many years of stagnation. Nonetheless he failed to give a strong moral spiritual lead to his house. This allowed others to take control of the kingdom after his death. Weakness

gave way to autocratic centralised government and a trail of events followed that eventually led to the loss of the enriching influence of the Huguenots to France and the subsequent violent overthrow of the House of Bourbon in 1789. If Charles IV had followed in the footsteps of Moses (Heb 11:24-27) rather than Esau (Heb 12:16) the history of France and Europe might have been very different.

The first part of his reign up to the Treaty of Nantes was a period of intense disappointment to his patient suffering Huguenot subjects. The dawn of Henry's reign had promised much, but he must have appeared to them as a double-minded man unstable in all his ways. They had to learn the hard way that it is vain to put their trust in princes, even though Henry was outstanding in leadership qualities compared to other French kings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Subsequent generations of Frenchmen down to the present day were affected by his actions, reminding us of the sober lesson that what we do or fail to do has an effect on those that follow us.

Bibliography

J A Wylie, *The History of Protestantism*, Cassell Petter Galpin & Co, Vol 2, page 628-624.

Henry IV of France,
<http://en.wikipedia.org>

Henry IV of France's Wives and Mistresses, <http://en.wikipedia.org>

The Calvinistic Resurgence in Amercia

A Review Article by the editor

Young, Restless, Reformed, A journalist's journey with the new Calvinists. Collin Hansen, Crossway, 160 pages paperback, 2008.

Even though China (population 1,300 million) topped the Olympic table for gold medals and put the USA (population 300 million) in second place, the USA is still in many respects the leading nation of the world. Especially is this the case with regard to Christianity. America sends out 70,000 missionaries which is far more than any other nation. When they are good they are very good and when they are bad they are very bad. America exports Arminianism on a larger scale than any other nation. Arminianism like Roman Catholicism is a merit-based religion, which is why Calvinists will always be uncomfortable with it. If there is a Calvinistic resurgence in the USA that is of great significance for the rest of the world. We need to sit up and take notice.

There was a time about 1959 when from London we looked northwards to the county of Yorkshire and wondered if there would ever be such a thing as a Reformed pastor in that, the largest, of England's thirty or so counties. We did not then know of one pastor who preached the doctrines of grace in Yorkshire. In 1960 a change began. Today pastors of the Yorkshire Reformed Ministers' Fellowship meet regularly. They represent churches from Sheffield in the south to Reeth, Ripon and Hambleton in the north and from Haworth in the west to York and Pickering in the east with about twenty between.

Very few reformed lights shone in the USA in the early 1960s. As for Calvinistic leaders in the USA in the 1950s they would hardly number enough to fill a rowing boat. It was exciting to correspond with half a dozen contacts. Professor John Murray of Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia was one of them and he was greatly esteemed in our eyes.

In contrast to those days we now read with intense interest this book describing the present day Reformed resurgence in the USA. In journalistic and anecdotal style Collin Hansen provides a litmus test on the state of the Reformed Faith in the USA. In his tour Collin interviewed leaders in six states. Out of fifty states that is only a small proportion. However since he visited some of the best-known leaders his survey represents a fairly accurate picture of Calvinistic resurgence. Small reformed denominations like the Orthodox Presbyterian Church are not mentioned. The growing association of Reformed Baptists (ARBCA) is omitted. Not mentioned are the smaller seminaries like the Puritan Reformed Seminary in Grand Rapids whose leader is Joel Beeke. Beeke is the author of *Meet the Puritans* and other books which have an effective testimony for godliness.

At the beginning of his book Collin Hansen makes it crystal clear that he grasps and holds personally to the five points of Calvinism known by the acrostic TULIP. That is what he means by the Reformed Faith.

To this reviewer the Reformed Faith means four things. First, there is a love for Martin Luther and what God wrought through him in the amazing re-establishment of the doctrine of

justification by faith and clarity about salvation which has its source in the sovereign grace of God and not in the merit of the free will of man. Second, the Reformed Faith is confessional. I subscribe to all the chapters of the Second London Baptist Confession of Faith, known as the 1689 Confession. That Confession is the legacy of the English Puritans. Third, there is the clarity of the Five Points (TULIP) formulated at the Synod of Dort. Fourth, there is passion. Another word for passion is love. The church at Ephesus was commended for orthodoxy but was running low on love (Rev 2:1-7). The doctrines of grace mean little if they reside merely in the head and do not live with love and passion in the heart. And if grace rules in the heart we will not be sectarian, cultish, censorious, judgemental or superior to others who are not ruled by grace. I grew up in South Africa where the predominant European Church denomination is the Dutch Reformed Church, a denomination with a wonderful history of revival and missionary enterprise. Since the 1960s liberal theology has gone unchecked in the DRC seminaries. Liberalism has spread through that great denomination with devastating effects. Today it is difficult to find individuals within that body who know what the Reformed Faith is and who love it in their hearts.

So how do things stand now in the USA? To discover more about the Calvinistic resurgence Collin Hansen's first call was to the ministry of John Piper at Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis. Hansen describes Piper (whose signature book *Desiring God* has sold 275,000 copies) as the chief spokesman for the Calvinist resurgence among young Evangelicals. In the year 2000 40,000 students gathered at a venue near Memphis to listen to John Piper on the theme 'Don't Waste Your Life'. Subsequently 250,000 copies of Piper's book with that title have sold. If Piper is

the most influential living leader in the resurgence then Jonathan Edwards is the most read theologian from the past. In 2003 to celebrate the 300th anniversary of Edwards' birth, 2,500, mostly pastors, met for a three-day conference in Minneapolis.

Next stop for Hansen was Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut. Here he met Josh Moody who is pastor of Trinity Baptist Church with 300 members. In 1999 there were fewer than thirty members. Josh Moody earned his PhD at Cambridge University in England with a thesis on Jonathan Edwards. While at Yale Hansen probed into the extent of the ministry of RUF (Reformed University Fellowship) which has increased from ministry on 35 campuses in 1998 to over one hundred today. Hansen also managed to interview J I Packer who has a fine grasp of the state of Puritanism over sixty years and who made this perceptive observation: 'The sixties saw a new movement of the Holy Spirit. The charismatic renewal emphasised experience and affections – topics important to the Puritans. But this new wave lacked the patience to plumb the depths of Puritan theology. Like a tsunami it swept away most of what we thought we had been building and growing for more than ten years.'

The next port of call in Collin's tour was Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky. The upgrade at Southern is now well known. We are accustomed to downgrades but Southern represents a phenomenal upgrade out of liberalism. This came about under the leadership of Albert Mohler Jr. who was only 33 when he was appointed to the presidency of Southern Seminary. Mohler began a purge at Southern. The liberals were outraged and predicted the demise of Southern which is the first and best known Southern Baptist Seminary out of six in the USA. This dire prophecy proved



Collin Hansen

false. Southern with 4,300 students is now the largest seminary in America.

Collin Hansen is to be congratulated for the way he has grasped the nature of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) which is the largest Protestant denomination in America and like Presbyterian denominations has a problem with unregenerate members. This of course is not due to baptising babies but on account of easy believism without repentance. It is easy to get young children to make a decision for Christ. The SBC hovers between Semi-Pelagianism (which encourages the heresy of decisional regeneration) and Arminianism. The historic roots of the SBC go back to the Philadelphia Confession of Faith which is a sister Confession to the 1689 Confession. The Founders' Movement represents a body within the SBC calling for a return to the roots. The Pelagian mentality is appalled by the sovereignty of God in salvation.

The worst caricatures and most hateful expressions against Calvinism emanate from some SBC leaders such as 'Calvinists are worse than Muslims!' (Could that be said of Bunyan or Spurgeon and many Baptist leaders who were five-pointers? Or the leaders described in Hansen's book?). Hansen understands the SBC ethos and the swiftness with which pastors are fired (the average tenure is about two years). But ultimately he does not provide any detailed progress of the resurgence within the SBC. However Pastor Tom Ascol, pastor of a Southern Baptist church in Cape Coral, Florida, informs us that, 'Over its twenty-five year history Founders developed a variety of ministries including a quarterly theological journal, six regional conferences, two dozen pastors' fraternals, a publishing house, a high-traffic website, an online theological training institute and an internship ministry.'

In late 2006, two thousand recent graduates from Southern Baptist seminaries were surveyed on their commitment to Calvinistic doctrines. Twenty-nine percent were discovered to be 'five-point Calvinists'. This research strongly suggests that the growth of Calvinism among Southern Baptists is being experienced primarily among the rising generation. This does not mean that one-third of all Southern Baptist pastors are Calvinists, only recent graduates. The alarmists however, would warn that eventually the Calvinists will take over the Convention if the seminaries continue to indoctrinate graduates with Calvinist leanings. We know that a number of Reformed Baptist churches have been formed as an outcome of splits. A considerable number of SBC pastors preach free grace in expository style without mentioning Calvinism. Some have succeeded in bringing their churches all the way back to their historic confessional foundations. An example of complete reformation is Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, D.C. where Mark Dever is pastor. Dever earned his PhD at Cambridge with a thesis on the English Puritans. Capitol Hill was a dying Southern Baptist church which has revived greatly under Dever.

Turning northwards Hansen visited leader C J Mahaney, founder in 1977 of Covenant Life Church in Gaithersburg, Maryland, a charismatic church of 3,800 members. TULIP is treasured as much as the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Mahaney was converted when he was a hippie in Arminian charismatic circles. On conversion he had an immediate appetite to read and soon came to the doctrines of grace. He is an extraordinarily dynamic and lively personality – very attractive, charismatic, and fervently reformed, a preacher who tells everyone to read more books by dead people – especially John Owen on sin.

C J Mahaney is president of Sovereign Grace Ministries, a family of seventy-five churches. This grouping prioritises evangelism and has close ties with Spanish-speaking churches in Bolivia. Two years ago Mahaney handed leadership of the main Covenant Life Church to Joshua Harris aged 33. Harris has worked hard among the younger generation and has been the key individual in the sponsoring of the 'New Attitude Conferences'. This gathering is for 15-24 year old singles. 6000 have attended in Louisville for the last two years.

In April 2006 a Gospel Conference was organised in Louisville, Kentucky, in which good friends Dever, Mahaney, Ligon Duncan and Albert Mohler invited three of their heroes, John Piper, John MacArthur and R C Sproul to be the preachers. 3,000 pastors attended. It was not easy to settle on the music style. There were differences among these leaders such as baptism and eschatology. TULIP was the cement that cemented unity.

In this Calvinistic resurgence it is Baptists and Charismatics who are now sharing the leadership and who are at the cutting edge for theology and for missions. Two to three decades ago some Presbyterians thought that it was out of place for any but Presbyterians to call themselves reformed.

Collin's tour took him to the north west corner of America to Mars Hill Church, Seattle, Washington State. This is the home of 38 year old Mark Driscoll. Driscoll's teaching is uncompromisingly complementarian on the man/woman issue, and unflinching on the issues of homosexuality, inerrancy of Scripture, the eternal punishment of the wicked and penal substitution. The church began in 1996 and is now attended by 6,000. This is impressive since only ten percent in Seattle are regular church-goers. Mars Hill is mother church to about a hundred

churches nick-named Acts 29 churches. Driscoll affirms his indebtedness to Wayne Grudem and of Grudem's *Systematic Theology* declares it is 'the finest on the market and the standard for Mars Hill Church and many of the churches we are affiliated within the Acts 29 Network.'

The above described centres of influence are described in this book which shows that many have become weary of churches that seek to entertain rather than preach the great truths of God's sovereign grace. The young especially have sought out places where they can be fed with spiritual meat. Examples of large churches have come under review. What about thousands of small places where the truth is adored and obeyed? What about 300 to 400 prisons in America where Chapel Library (Mt Zion Bible Church, Pensacola) has achieved an amazing network of hundreds of groupings in prisons where sovereign grace literature is loved?

We must hold on our radar screens the black churches. One of the leading black reformed ministers in America is Eric Redmond. He serves a church in Maryland, not far from where Mark Dever is in DC. Also on our screens is the home school factor. The home school movement is extensive in the US and has paved the way for many since much of the curriculum comes from a Reformed persuasion.

Collin Hansen has not forgotten small churches and rural areas. To round things off he visited his original home in South Dakota, a little place of his childhood called Dell Rapids. There he discovered a newly planted church with about fifty in attendance. Andy Wright is the pastor. He enjoys fellowship with a number of pastors in South Dakota who share his Calvinistic views. One of these is Pastor Ryan Franchuk, First Baptist Church, Emery, South Dakota (population 450). Ryan has published a booklet called, 'The

Handy Dandy Doctrines of Grace Bible Verse Reference Guide' which lists proof texts for TULIP.

Hansen's experience in South Dakota was positive. Other areas are hopeful. For instance there are seven reformed churches in Rhode Island, twenty-three in Connecticut and no fewer than 61 in Massachusetts! Of course there are some Reformed groups that flourished briefly and have declined numerically or become extinct. There will be areas in the vastness of the USA which are barren and in which it is difficult to find a sovereign grace church. Nevertheless Hansen's book highlights positive scenarios which should surely fuel our prayers and encourage us to use the now enormous arsenal of free grace literature to encourage reformation and revival.

Criticisms? No! This is an easy to read book with a fine balance of personal testimonies and reports of interviews. Suggestions? Yes! In the next edition Collin Hansen should seek again an interview with John MacArthur Jr., his first request having been declined. The ministries led by MacArthur represent a large proportion of the Calvinistic resurgence. Likewise interviews with RC Sproul who leads a large annual conference and Tim Keller of Manhattan, New York, will help give a balanced perspective. A review of the ministry of the Reformed Theological Seminaries will add value to the volume.

150 years ago a great revival began in New York City and spread not only across America but to other countries too. Is this resurgence a divine preparation for another great spiritual awakening?

D A Carson in his endorsement of this book provides a timely warning, 'This is not the time for Reformed triumphalism. It is time for quiet gratitude to God and earnest intercessory prayer, with tears, that what has begun will flourish beyond all human expectation.'

Reviews

A review article by Sharon James with the title 'Every square inch' can be found on the Reformation Today website. The title is taken from Abraham Kuyper 'Every square inch of life belongs to Christ'. The books reviewed are as follows:

The Courage to Be Protestant: Truth-lovers, marketers and emergents in the post-modern world. David F Wells. IVP, 2008.

Christ and Culture Revisited. Don Carson. Apollos, IVP, 2008.

A Higher Throne: Evangelicals and Public Theology. ed. Chris Green. Apollos, IVP, 2008.

Common Grace and the Work of the Christian Institute. Nick Needham. The Christian Institute, 2008.

A second review article by Sharon carries the title *Continuity or Discontinuity in Evangelical History?*

Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s. David W Bebbington. London, Unwin Hyman, 1989, rep. Routledge 1993.

The Emergence of Evangelicalism: Exploring Historical Continuities. eds. Michael A G Haykin and Kenneth J Stewart. Apollos, IVP, 2008.

These highly commended reviews come to eighteen pages in all.

THE BAPTISTS, *Key People in Forming a Baptist Identity*, Tom

Nettles, Volume three, The Modern Era, 462 pp hardback, Christian Focus, 2007.

For a ten page review see www.reformation-today This review by the editor concludes with the choice of twenty Baptist leaders and a suggestion of the kind of worship service they would organise.

This extended review includes mini-biographies of John Clifford, C H Spurgeon, John Franklyn Norris, E Y Mullins, A H Strong, J B Gambrell, and R Albert Mohler Jr.

The third volume completes Tom Nettles' magisterial history of the Baptists. He keeps in focus the issue of Baptist identity. In other words: How would we describe Baptists? What do Baptists believe? What are the distinctive features? And how do they do church?

From the beginning Baptist identity falls either into the Arminianism of the General Baptists or the Calvinism of the Particular Baptists. These two streams have continued since the Baptists emerged as an entity in England in the seventeenth century. The Arminian stream has been much more susceptible to decline into liberalism.

There is much for all Christians to learn from Tom Nettles' three volume description of Baptist history especially in what to avoid and in what to embrace for the future.

Editor ERROLL HULSE, 75 Woodhill Road, Leeds LS16 7BZ
Assistant Editor BILL JAMES, 9 Epsom Road, Leamington Spa CV32 7AR
Associate Editors DAVID KINGDON, UK, TOM NETTLES, USA,
 JOHN CAMPBELL, AUSTRALIA,
 MICHAEL HAYKIN, CANADA

Readers can subscribe on-line using a credit card – www.tentmaker.org.uk
 or phone Phil Roberts in the UK – 01782 746879

Rates	Subscriptions	Agents
1 year £13.00 – 2 years £22.00	UK & EUROPE	Frederick Hodgson 31 Shillbank View, MIRFIELD, West Yorks WF14 0QG. e-mail: FFSJAN@aol.com
1 year £13.00 – 2 years £22.00	IRISH REPUBLIC	Matthew Brennan Ballingarrane North, CLONMEL, Co Tipperary
1 year \$20.00 – 2 years \$35.00	AUSTRALIA	Ray Levick Unit 116, 149-153 Epping Rd, Marsfield 2122. e-mail: raylevick@yahoo.com.au
1 year \$25.00 – 2 years \$45.00	NEW ZEALAND	Mrs Priscilla Drake 43 Pilkington Road, Panmure, Auckland 1006. e-mail: rt@tamakirb.org
1 year \$25.00 – 2 years \$42.00	USA	Tom Lutz Edgewood Baptist Church, 3743 Nichol Avenue, Anderson, IN 46011. e-mail: tomlutz41919@aol.com
1 year \$15.00 – 2 years \$27.00	BRAZIL (USA \$)	Richard Denham CP1601, CEP 12230-990, São José dos Campos, SP. JRDENHAM@aol.com
1 year \$25.00 – 2 years \$41.00	CANADA	Max Latchford 402 - 1787 154th Street, Surrey, BC, V4A 4S1.
1 year R75.00 – 2 years R140.00	SOUTH AFRICA	Roland Eskinazi PO Box 182, Goodwood 7459. e-mail: eskinazi@mweb.co.za
1 year \$35.00 – 2 years \$60.00 (Singa \$)	SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIA	Shalom Christian Media 8 New Industrial Road, LHK3 Building # 03-01, Singapore 536200. contactscm@shalomrb.com

Single copies one-sixth the above in each case which includes postage.
 For airmail add £4.50 sterling equivalent p.a.
 Gifts are welcomed and those who wish to support the magazine should make out their cheques to "Reformation Today". "Reformation Today" is registered as a charity no. 1017000

Bound volumes available: 71-90, 91-110 and 111-130 each £22 or \$35, 131-148 £25 or \$40,
 149-172 £40 or \$60, 173-190, 191-208 £25 or \$40 post free

CONTENTS

1. Editorial – African Pastors’ Conferences
3. Discouragement and its Antidote Editor
12. James Hudson Taylor (1832-1905), part three Bob Davey
19. News
27. A New Dawn for the Huguenots in France? Frederick Hodgson
35. The Calvinistic Resurgence in America Editor
40. Reviews