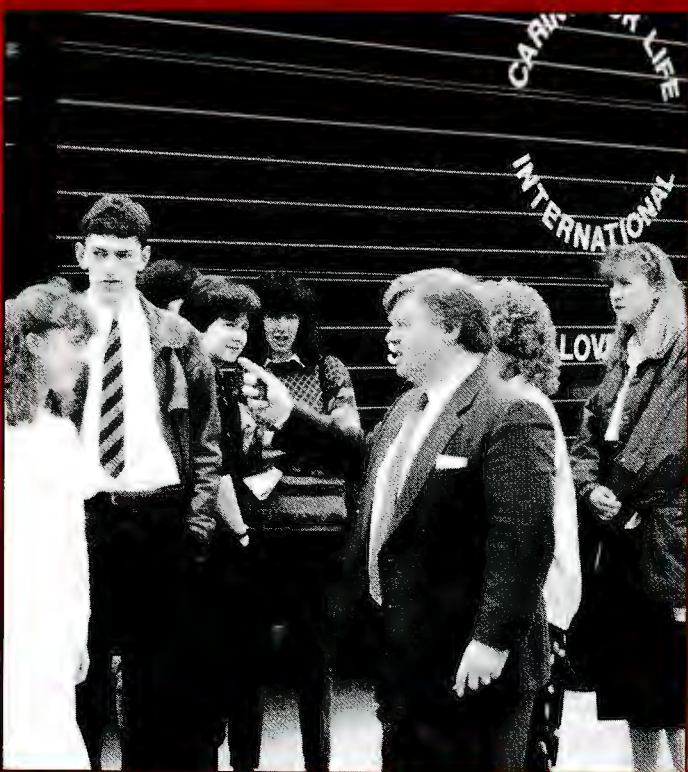


REFORMATION TODAY



JULY-AUGUST 1990

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Front cover picture: Peter Parkinson giving instructions for the loading of the heavy goods vehicle for Romania. See the interview article.

Editorial

High On Orthodoxy, Low On Love!

The Ephesian church was the first church, the mother church (Acts 19), of the churches in Asia Minor. In the letters to the seven churches Jesus commends the Ephesians for their orthodoxy. Rightly they rejected false apostles and hated the practices of the Nicolaitans. The Ephesian church is praised, too, for hard work and perseverance. Yet says our Lord, 'I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love!'

How serious was this lack of love? How important is this attribute? Love is the fulfilment of the law! That is the whole law — love for God and love for man. These two dimensions of love form the essence of the first and second tables of the law. Love is the substance of the new commandment (John 13:34). It is by love for each other that the Christian gospel is commended to the world. Those on the outside will be brought to faith when they see how the believers love one another (John 17:20-23). Organised evangelism is essential, but without love it is rendered powerless.

The vital factor of love is central to Paul's letter to the Corinthians. The Corinthians were bitterly divided into factions: Apollos, Paul, Cephas! He declared that all their mighty gifts and all their testimony were nullified without love. He explains exactly how love behaves (1 Cor 13:4-7). Love is patient, kind, not boastful, not proud, not self-seeking, not easily angered, keeps no record of wrongs. It trusts, hopes and perseveres. Love is the greatest. Heaven will be a world of love. The apostle Peter also maintained the primacy of love. It is the ultimate virtue. 'Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins' (1 Pet 4:8).

Jesus suggests that the Ephesians had fallen from a great height (Rev 2:5). So serious was this fall that Jesus threatens to remove their lampstand. Love and unity in the church are the means to convince the world that Jesus is the Messiah (John 17:21). The witness of the Ephesian church, high on orthodoxy, low on love, was threatened with extinction.

These thoughts are penned as I travel in America and hear of an injurious schism in The Reformed Baptist Church of West Chester, PA. Those who have known the work intimately and supported the church from its inception avow that the reason for this grievous situation is a short supply of 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. When the watching world observes pastors treated in a mean and ugly way, the result cannot but have a devastating effect upon their view of the body of Christ. Those who labour in the gospel are to be held in the highest regard in love because of their work (1 Thess 5:12). How an assembly treats its shepherds is very telling for good or ill. Calvin's commentary on 1 Timothy 5:19 should be mandatory reading in all our churches.

As Reformed Baptists we have urged the primacy of preaching, reformation in church life and discipline (see 'Local Church Practice' — Carey Publications), the regulative principle in worship (see *RT 70*) and the importance of

apologetics (see RT 102). We have much to offer the wider universal body of Christ of which we form a tiny part. But unless we major on love as much as we do on orthodoxy, we will not be taken seriously. Indeed if schisms spread they will be our ruin. The lampstand will be gone!

Love is the heartbeat of evangelism. With soaring divorce rates and broken homes, hurting souls are most sensitive to the presence of love. As bees can zero in on pollen, so broken spirits know where there is love. They can sense it, or the lack of it, in the worship, in the preaching, in the singing, but above all they discern it in inter-personal and inter-church relationships. Needless to say, loving hospitality is an enormous factor. Action is a thousand times more cogent than words.

Professor Douglas MacMillan of The Free Church College, Edinburgh, tells of a delightful incident from his former days as pastor of a church. A young man began to attend and was converted. The second time he came Douglas asked him what had brought him back, inwardly hoping he might say, 'The wonderful sermon, sir!' 'Well,' said the young man, 'what drew me back was the way in which the steward shook my hand!' Even in that small gesture he sensed genuine concern and love. Everything needs to be welcoming and affectionate in our churches, but not overwhelming! In a Southern Baptist church as first timers we all received a large blue and white rosette with 'VISITOR' written in the middle, rather like those rosettes they put on prize-winning bulls at agricultural shows! Some respond to an assuring welcome, but a special exit door marked 'SILENT' should be provided in our churches for those who crave quiet and contemplation! Love will provide for a wide diversity of needs.

Many tensions will arise to test our unity, but how about being as high on love as we are on orthodoxy. Let us take seriously the saying, LOVE NEVER FAILS.

Fifth International Baptist Conference

Sponsored by: Toronto Baptist Seminary and Bible College

130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto, Ontario M5A 3T4, Canada

From October 15-18 this year, the Fifth International Conference is anticipated at Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Canada. The subject is *The Pursuit of Holiness*, or sanctification which is always practical. We hope that the conference will be as successful as the former occasions.

A fine programme has been arranged with speakers from ten different countries including Georgi Vins (USSR), Peter Parkinson (UK), Martin Holdt (S Africa), John Campbell (Australia) and Stuart Latimer and Tom Nettles (USA).

'In these Laodicean days no theme could be more relevant than that of "Pursuing Holiness". Easy believism and Charismatic confusion have muddied the waters. We need to know what demands God puts on those whom he has graciously redeemed . . .' – the Organisers.

For details write to the above address.

The Organisation of our Sanctification

Sanctification is a beautiful thing. It makes God and the angels fall in love with us.¹ Sanctification is an extensive thing: it embraces a man in the whole of his being. Sanctification is a supernatural thing: it is divinely infused. It is a progressive thing: it advances and grows. It is a comprehensive thing: it involves our Christian experience from beginning to end. Who organises this amazing thing called sanctification?

The Father is the organiser; Christ the procurer; the Holy Spirit the executor. The Father originates it; Christ supplies it (every particle of holiness we will ever have comes from him); the Holy Spirit empowers it.

The names given to sanctification are:
Definitive Sanctification which is the beginning of it;
Progressive Sanctification which is the middle of it; and,
Glorification which is the end of it.

Definitive sanctification is the once and for all setting apart of the believer in Christ. Definitive means final and decisive. Positionally we have been joined to Christ. We are 'in him'. In that sense we are perfectly sanctified. Over 160 times we have the term 'in Christ' in the NT and over 60 times we have the term 'saints' which means those who have been definitively sanctified, set apart in Christ. 'You were sanctified' (1 Cor 6:11). Note the past tense.

Progressive sanctification is well defined by John Sheffield: 'True holiness is that inward, thorough, and real change, wrought in the whole man of a formerly vile sinner by the Spirit of God, whereby his heart is purged from the love, and his life from the dominion and practice of his former sins, and whereby he is in heart and life carried out after every good.'²

The organisation of progressive sanctification

Just what goes into this operation of transformation, a metamorphosis (Rom 8:29; 12:2; 2 Cor 3:18)? What does the Father use to achieve his purpose to conform us to his Son?

1. A personal relationship with the Trinity
2. Church membership
3. Mortification of sin
4. Conformity to Christ
5. Trials, afflictions and chastisement
6. The development of a disciplined lifestyle
7. Unusual providences and crisis experiences

1. A personal relationship with the Trinity

We are baptised into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. In Scripture the name of God is put for all that he is. The baptismal formula asserts in the clearest and most powerful way the union of the believer with each person of the Trinity; not partial, but full union is expressed. By union with Christ we come into union with the Father and the Spirit. The Christian's relationship to the Father is adoption. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus expounds what it is to live for the Father in everything. All providence is interpreted as coming from the Father. We respond to him personally and daily examine our lives as we relate to him as Father. In all our decision making we examine our motives before the Father. We seek to eradicate everything that is displeasing and at the same time labour to do everything that is pleasing. The effect of living in this way cannot be exaggerated.

The exhortation to be holy even as our Father in heaven is holy (1 Pet 1:15) is always with us, especially since we know that he will judge every one of us impartially. But how can we be holy as he is holy when his holiness is utterly unique? His holiness is transcendent in purity and brightness, in a way which we cannot even approach to, still less imitate. The purity of his nature is epitomised in the moral law of Sinai. The effects of this law which is 'holy, just and good' are expressed by Paul in Romans 7. The moral law shows how we sin and fall short of the glory of God. Yet the law in itself does not give us power. That power comes from our union with Christ. In Christ we see the perfect holiness of God. In Christ we have the only man who has loved God perfectly. He is the only man of whom we can say he is as holy as the Father.

We relate to the Son by way of union. In him we have not only a full and final redemption but also a pattern to follow. We seek to walk as he walked (1 Jn 2:6). He is unrivalled for love and compassion, gentleness, meekness and humility. But he was not only perfect in these positive graces but also in the negative graces. Nobody hated sin more than he and nobody has rebuked false prophets and false shepherds as he. Read Matthew 23 again if you doubt that. Nobody has ever behaved so selflessly under torments and injustice as he. No one has ever borne unjust and complete rejection and spurning as he did. Here is holiness exemplified. He requires that we be like him. He insists that we forgive each other since we ourselves have been forgiven so much. Hence Matthew 18:35. Our living union with Jesus has an immense daily effect on our progressive sanctification.

Likewise when we consider our relationship to the Holy Spirit we are acutely aware of the possibility of grieving him (Eph 4:30). The Holy Spirit monitors all our thought patterns. We relate to him as advocate. He represents us. It is only by his enabling that we can pray (Rom 8:26,27). He convinces us of our sins. He proposes correctives. He motivates and he directs. He interprets the Scriptures to us. He empowers us for service and worship. He is entirely intolerant of evil thoughts. In contrast to that his zeal for good works is immeasurable and he fills our minds and hearts with his presence. He directs us to good works so we can

be fully involved in enterprises which please him. Again the implications of this relationship are enormous in terms of progressive sanctification.

2. Church membership

Throughout the history of redemption God has dealt with his people in a corporate way: Noah and his family, Abraham and his family, Israel as a nation, and now with his Church. To the three persons of the Trinity the Church universal is essentially One (Eph 4:1-6). Every local church is a microcosm of the whole. All the churches should be to one another what believers are to one another. That is the ideal. The situation is enormously complex because of so many serious differences. Yet every believer is duty bound to adjust as best he can to membership in a local church for 'each member belongs to all the others'. Every member derives his spiritual life from the same head and every member has been baptised by the Spirit into the same body and has 'been made to drink of that same Spirit'.

The closely interwoven life and interdependence of the members upon each other is vividly expressed in the text, 'From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work' (Eph 4:16). Think of the influence of other Christians upon us in the sphere of sanctification. We are taught together through the preaching. We benefit together from the ordinances. We learn from one another in fellowship. We serve together. We run the race together. We rejoice together and we suffer together. We gain inspiration from leaders and outstanding members not only in real life but through literature. We are warned and corrected by cases of discipline. If we analyse the channels by which we are sustained and built up through fellow members, we would see that there is hardly anything of spiritual value that does not come through the body of the Church.

We can well understand why giving up meeting together is regarded as a disaster in Scripture. In effect that is the road that leads away from the life of God's people. It is the road of apostasy (Heb 10:25).

3. Mortification of sin

Mortification of sin in the Christian is not optional. It is essential. 'If you live according to the sinful nature you will die' (Rom 8:13). Putting sin to death involves all the power of the will. Cutting the throat of sin is not done for us. I have to mortify the misdeeds of my body. True this is accomplished through the empowering of the Holy Spirit, but mortification is my work.

The two principal texts which command that everything impure be put to death, are Romans 8:13 and Colossians 3:5. The latter reads, 'Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature; sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.' The 'therefore' refers to the radical break with the world of sin, which has come about through union with Christ. In

Christ's death we have died to that world of iniquity. Even though that is the case, that world is still our environment and there is remaining corruption in us. This corruption is in the mind but works through the body. In Galatians it is denominated flesh (*sarx*). That is a stark word which needs no elaboration. Paul says that the flesh wars against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh (Gal 5:17). There is only one way of dealing with the problem and that is to get out a hammer and nails and crucify the flesh. Mortification is sometimes compared with the slaughterhouse. (The verbs used are expressive: *thanatoō* in Rom 8:13 means to kill, and *nekroō* used in Col 3:5 means to make impotent.) We must kill lusts because every sin is capable of very quick growth with a disastrous outcome. Lust can quickly become actual adultery, anger can soon erupt to become literal murder. Covetousness can soon turn into a criminal offence of fraud or theft. Rebellion toward God can turn into apostasy.

There can be no compromise with indwelling sin. It is like a deadly snake. A friend in Africa told me of an encounter he had with a fullgrown mamba, one of Africa's most aggressive and deadly reptiles. Taking a large stick he knew that it was essential to kill the snake with the first blow. He prayed for the accuracy necessary. The Lord heard his prayer and that first blow circumvented the deadly retaliatory strike by the mamba. Would that we treated all sin in our hearts like deadly snakes are treated.

Mortification of sin is like clearing away the rubbish on a building site to make room for the new structure. It is impossible for the old rubbish to form part of the new building. This leads to the next major issue involved in progressive sanctification.

4. Conformity to Christ

God has predestinated that we be conformed to the image of Christ. The Holy Spirit gradually and progressively affects this transformation to the likeness of Christ (2 Cor 3:18). The practical means employed is by the renewing of our minds (*metamorphousthe* is an imperative — you be transformed! Rom 12:2). In all of these places the word which is used is the equivalent of metamorphosis in English. It denotes a change which is inward, permeating and thorough. The only other place where the term is used is in Matthew 7:2 to describe the transfiguration of Christ.

Renewal is another word used to describe the idea of advance and progress. For instance we have 2 Corinthians 4:16, 'Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day'; and Colossians 3:10, 'And have put on the new self which is being renewed in the knowledge of the image of its Creator'.

In what ways are we made like Christ? The answer surely is that we are conformed to him in the attributes of love, meekness, humility, patience, gentleness, a love of righteousness and a loathing of evil and so on. As Jonathan Edwards asserts in his treatise on Religious Affections, there is a beautiful symmetry in all the attributes of Christ-likeness. There is salt and light in the

Christian as well as love, sweetness and compassion. This essential aspect of sanctification receives surprisingly scant treatment in books on the subject. Even J. C. Ryle in his book *Holiness* has little which is specific on Christ-likeness.

In practical terms progress in Christ-likeness can only take place as we study our actions in detail and compare them with the life and example of Christ and with the requirements of Scripture. That involves analysis and hence as suggested in Romans 12:2 the use of our minds.

5. Trials and chastisement

The promise is that if we suffer with Christ we will also reign with him. Because we are joined to Christ everything we suffer in soul or body is shared with him. All our trials, temptations, anxieties, pains and disappointments affect him and are shared with him. Everything that is adverse drives us closer in dependence upon God. For this reason it is often observed that a persecuted Church or a suffering Church is at the same time blessed in having a close walk with God.

The cardinal book in the Bible on this theme is Job. Job suffered extremely and in his trials made great progress in his spiritual experience. His friends were sure that Job was being punished for some sin or sins he had committed. They attempted to compel some confession of specific sin from him. However we are informed at the beginning of the book that Job was a blameless and upright Godfearer. He was not being punished. His trials were not permitted in order to correct him in the sense that he needed a radical change in his lifestyle. Sometimes Christians are chastised in a severe manner, hence the word scourging (see the description of Prov 3 and Heb 12), because they need a radical correction or reformation in their lifestyle.

Job shows us that we need to distinguish clearly between trial and chastisement. Chastisement is corrective. King David was acutely conscious of the fact that his later trials were chastisement (Ps 51).

In some ways all sufferings tend to humble the Christian and make him more gentle and sympathetic to others and hence more like Christ. The ingredient of correction may be small or great in our sufferings, but we can be sure that this factor in our lives plays a foremost role in progressive sanctification. As Paul says, 'We know that suffering produces perseverance.' James says that we should have a positive and not a negative attitude to trials because 'you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything' (Ja 1:2,3). Grief has come, suggests Peter, 'so that your faith — of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire — may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed' (1 Pet 1:6,7).

6. The development of a disciplined lifestyle

The Christian life is likened to the professional soldier who is always in training and always on the alert. In the spiritual life there is never a time when we can be

off our guard. The Christian life is also likened to the disciplined lifestyle of an athlete (2 Tim 2:3-5; 1 Cor 9:24-27). Paul exhorts Timothy to train (*gumnazo*) himself to be godly. As there are set exercises in the gymnasium so there are disciplines and habits in the spiritual life which if neglected will result in a weak and flabby Christian. Time is to be redeemed and put to wise spiritual use (Eph 5:16; Col 4:5). The word used literally means to buy. That requires cost and effort. Wisdom is to be exercised in putting this bought back time to best use.

The establishment of a disciplined lifestyle will ensure that there will be daily private prayer and regular times of corporate prayer. We are to strive together (*sunathleo* denotes a striving together in an athletic contest) for the faith of the gospel (Phil 1:27). We are to strive (*sunagōnisasthai* – agonise together) with other Christians in prayer (Rom 15:30). The mind is to be disciplined constantly (Rom 12:2) to include all thoughts. We take captive every thought (2 Cor 10:5). The paramount importance of self examination and meditation can be appreciated when we think of what is involved in taking captive *every thought*.

In the context of the spiritual race and competing as an athlete the body too is to be disciplined and be made obedient. 'I beat my body and make it my slave' (1 Cor 9:27). By diligent use of these means, the channels by which our spiritual lives are nurtured are to be kept clean and flowing with the waters of eternal life. Paul so ordered his life that he could commend his lifestyle to others. To Timothy he could say, 'You have fully known my way of life', and could point to details such as patience, endurance and perseverance (2 Tim 3:10).

7. Unusual providences and crisis experiences

We have seen that there is no event so significant as conversion. In the effectual call of the Father the believer is regenerated, definitively sanctified, justified and adopted. We can well understand why no further major event is commanded in the New Testament or even suggested. All the means of grace, as I have endeavoured to show, are available for the ongoing work of progressive sanctification. While that is so it is noteworthy that crises are often used to advance a Christian's experience. There is the crisis of discovery. For many, coming to an understanding of the doctrines of grace and the sovereignty of God is not a mere intellectual stride but an overwhelming spiritual experience which has far reaching effects. Some have made a great leap forward in the Christian life through an experience in which they have had to cast themselves by faith on God. Some, like the apostle Peter, have needed restoration. That was used in a powerful way.

The Wesleyan Methodists believed it possible to attain a state of 'perfect love'. It was muddled thinking. Yet in spite of the intellectual confusion many Christians showed tremendous love and zeal which could put many lukewarm Christians in our time to shame. I mention this not to commend in any way weak teaching but only to press home a point. That is we need to lay hold of the power of the truth. It is not enough to be clear about it. We need to be enthusiastic about it.

Jesus the Revolutionary

A review of the book **THE PARABLES OF JESUS** by David Wenham
256 pages, £6.95. Hodder and Stoughton

The coming of Jesus brought a mighty revolution in the spiritual realm and in the sphere of human relationships. The Jews were looking for a liberation or revolution akin to what happened in Romania when the Ceaucescu regime was swept away. But Jesus has brought about a revolution which has continued and which has greater potential in the world today than ever before, a revolution to break down Satan's dominion and establish a new unity in salvation. This salvific revolution is good news for Jew and Arab, black and white, male and female, rich and poor. All are one in Christ (Gal 3:28).

Dr David Wenham, who is teaching New Testament at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, shows how the parables of Jesus clearly illustrate this revolution. He groups all the parables under the theme of 'Jesus the Revolutionary', identifying 47 parables arranged in eight categories. Each category has a telling title:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. The revolution is here | 5. Bad news for the establishment |
| 2. On the way to a new world | 6. Revolutionary neighbour relations |
| 3. The great day of the Lord's coming | 7. Living with the God of revolution |
| 4. Good news for the needy | 8. Call to decision |

Continued on page 10

The importance of human responsibility in progressive sanctification

We have thought in terms of organisation of the use of means employed by our Father to achieve our sanctification. The place of our responsibility stressed in Scripture requires careful attention. It is appropriate to say we are partners with God in this vital work: 'Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you both to will and to act according to his good purpose' (Phil 2:13). Innumerable imperatives stress accountability: 'Mortify!' — 'Be transformed!' — 'Pray continually!' We will be judged for what we do, in thought, word and deed. Christians will be judged in respect of everything done in the body (1 Cor 3:10-15 and 5:9-11). The fear of the Lord sometimes dominates as a motive but at other times love for God with strong desires to reciprocate his love in faithful and sacrificial service dominates.

Have you analysed the influences and motives used in your own experience? Would you agree that adoption, union with Christ and the indwelling of the Spirit as a relationship must have the prime position? After that individual personal experience varies greatly. It would be interesting to have responses by way of correspondence to this practical and central theme of our salvation.

Notes

¹ Thomas Watson, *Body of Divinity*, p. 242, Banner 1980 edition.

² John Sheffield, *Cripplegate Morning Exercises*, vol. 5, p. 427.

Continued from page 9

Wenham demonstrates that the parables have a wide range of meaning, covering riddles, fables, proverbs, stories and so on (p. 225). Jesus was the master communicator who knew how to use metaphors, similes, pictorial sayings and stories of all sorts. He was especially adept at putting two ideas side by side (as the Greek word *parabole* suggests) in such a way that the one idea illuminates the other.

All the parables are expounded so that the power of Jesus' teaching comes through to excite and enrich the reader. In his exposition of the sheep and the goats (Matt 25:31-46) Dr Wenham concludes six pages with this paragraph:

We have criticised those who use the parable improperly in emphasising the Christian's social responsibility. The parable does nevertheless stress that responsibility in a vivid way, making clear how much the Lord cares for those who suffer. The parable is a severe warning to those who see the revolution of God as something purely spiritual and to do with 'my personal relationship with God', and who fail to see that the kingdom is a practical down-to-earth revolution and that no amount of spiritual gifts, or fervour in calling Jesus Lord, will be persuasive on judgement day. Jesus calls his followers to be a revolutionary, caring community, not comfortable conservationists protecting the status quo (p. 93).

The author's treatment of the budding fig tree is masterly (pp. 68ff.). The coming 'in clouds with great power and glory' means the gathering of the elect in anticipation of the Great Judgement Day when the revolution will be completed.

In the parable of the Prodigal Son, the setting and cultural background is woven in well. Those who read Kenneth Bailey's book *Poet and Peasant* (Eerdmans, 1983), have to resist being so carried away with details about life in the New Testament times that the main point of the parable in hand gets buried. The question of the elder brother, so often missed by expositors, is presented fully.

With regard to the Rich Man and Lazarus, Wenham suggests that the portrayal of hell is not the purpose of the parable and queries the methodology of expositors who use the parable in detail. I disagree with him by observing that there is nothing in Jesus' description which does not harmonise exactly with the overall biblical teaching on heaven and hell. I would endorse entirely the way in which Brownlow North expounds and applies this passage of Scripture. While Dr Wenham is deferential to modern liberal scholars he seems to be firm himself on the authenticity of the gospel and firm, too, on the reality of hell (pp. 81ff). (Incidentally, Dr Lloyd-Jones used to call the liberal scholars 'our donkeys', 'beasts of burden', who laboured in areas, sometimes usefully, where we have too little time to work.)

A useful bibliography and indices complete an excellent book, one which will provoke preachers to consider a series of about 25 or 30 exciting gospel expositions on the parables, all held together by the theme 'Jesus the Revolutionary'!

1689-1989 – Recalling the Benefits of the Confession

This report by pastor Robert Oliver of Bradford-on-Avon is based on reports submitted to him and does not comprehend all the meetings that we arranged during 1989 to commemorate the tercentenary. The RBMS (Reformed Baptist Mission Services) devoted time to the history and significance of the Confession, as did Reformed Baptist family conferences in the USA (Harvey Cedars and the Northwest Family Conference at Camp Gilead). A number of churches organised meetings to consider the history and relevance of the Confession. East Moline, Illinois (Pastor Gordon Taylor) is just one example. In the UK the Leeds Reformed Baptist Church devoted eight special meetings during the year to the history and content of the Confession. The 1689 was the focus of attention in Zambia and South Africa (see report on Africa South). The 300th anniversary helped to promote interest but the power does not lie in the calendar but in the truth. The 1689 Confession is proving to be a tremendous instrument in promoting reformation among Baptists and an instrument of unity for RB churches round the world.

The second half of the twentieth century has been marked by a significant recovery of Reformed theology the effect of which is to be found in many parts of the English-speaking world. In the United Kingdom the origins of this movement can be traced to the historic ministry of Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones at Westminster Chapel together with the input of such institutions as the Evangelical Library, the Puritan Conference and the Banner of Truth Trust. Baptists have gained much from these developments. For them a significant event was the republication of the *1689 Confession of Faith* in 1959. This venture was undertaken by a small group of men including the late Leslie G. Mills of Haslemere and John Doggett, then editor of the *Free Grace Record*, who wrote the introduction to the new edition. In 1959 it was by no means clear how successful this venture would be as the Confession did not reflect the stated position of any of the English Baptist groupings at that date. However sales exceeded all expectations and more than justified the pub-

lishers' hopes. They claimed that 'it has a message for this generation and believe its publication to be long overdue'. Since that date a modern version has become available and translations have been made into other languages so that it is now used more widely throughout the world than at any other time in its history.

It was appropriate therefore that the tercentenary of the adoption of the Confession by the 1689 General Assembly of Particular Baptists should be widely celebrated. The Confession was of course drawn up in 1677 but its association with the 1689 Assembly resulted in its usual title. Appropriately the central thanksgiving meetings held in London on September 9th were arranged to mark the actual anniversary of the Assembly. These meetings were promoted by the Particular Baptist Fund which was established in 1717 to help churches and ministers who uphold the teachings of the Confession. The thanks of all who attended are due to Dr. Jack Hoad the chairman of the

Fund who worked so hard to ensure that the day was a success. He did so in spite of unfulfilled promises by an American tour operator that a large contingent would cross the Atlantic. In fact each meeting drew about 220 people to Westminster Central Hall. It was significant that those who did make the journey into central London on a Saturday afternoon were enthusiasts for the theology of the Confession and were those resolved to bequeath to future generations the spiritual legacies that have come to us at great cost. That enthusiasm was demonstrated in the fellowship enjoyed before and after the meetings at Westminster. The speakers on the Confession were Drs. Barrie White on the historical background, Robert Oliver on the theological background, Tom Nettles on the impact in North America, and Raymond Brown who made an application to the present day.

Throughout the year special meetings were devoted to the Confession. These began in January with the Carey Ministers' Conference in Ripon where, in addition to a historical treatment of the subject, papers included such matters of interest to Baptists as the Law of God presented by Robert Sheehan and the relationship of children to the church by David Kingdon.

Regional meetings included those arranged by the Northern Particular Baptist Fellowship at Calvary Baptist Church, Liverpool and also at the Leeds Reformed Baptist Church. At both of these Robert Sheehan spoke on the historical background to the *1689 Confession* while Geoffrey Thomas vigorously addressed the theme of doctrinal relevance for today. Both meetings were attended by about 50 people.

In Northern Ireland Erroll Hulse addressed three mid-week meetings at

Ballymoney in North Antrim. The small chapel was packed with between 60 and 65 on each occasion. Some travelled 60 miles to attend. Over £250 worth of books were sold and over 50 copies of the Confession.

In the English West Midlands Pastor Alun McNabb organised a 1689 Rally on October 12th. This was addressed by Erroll Hulse. Over 200 were present and large numbers of the Confession were sold. The organisers were encouraged by the attendance of a number who knew little of the Confession but were keen to learn.

In addition to these meetings Robert Oliver had opportunity to consider various historical, theological and practical aspects of the subject at the annual meeting of the Strict Baptist Historical Society, the Bryntirion Training Course and also at the Evangelical Movement of Wales Ministers' Conference at Bala in June. Very encouraging meetings were also held at Carey Baptist Church, Reading and at Philip Street Chapel, Bristol.

It was appropriate that the commemoration year should end with a paper given at the Westminster Conference in London in December. This conference is of course the successor to the old Puritan Conference. At this meeting Erroll Hulse sought to answer the question, 'Why Another Confession?' The paper gave the speaker the opportunity to argue the case for a distinctive Baptist confession in the context of the seventeenth century debates and subsequent discussion developed the question of its relevance today.

The meetings of 1989 showed that there is a considerable group of Baptists who are concerned to confess their Reformed and Puritan heritage. They are prepared to do this in terms of the specific details of the *1689 Confession*.

That interest needs to be maintained and developed. One hundred years ago many of the Nonconformist leaders were ready to acknowledge a general debt of gratitude to the Reformers and Puritans but few were prepared to stand confessionally where their forebears stood. The year 1889 was in the aftermath of the Downgrade Controversy which had demonstrated the doctrinal weakness of so many Baptists at that time. The challenge to Reformed Baptists today is to ensure that the *1689 Confession* never becomes a museum piece but that the great system of theology which it teaches remains a power-

ful reality in the life of the churches. When it was republished in 1959 it was readily received and studied. Many pastors used it as a form of instruction in their churches or encouraged church members to study it themselves. That task has become so much easier with the help of the recently published fine modern exposition of the Confession by Samuel Waldron. 1989 demonstrated that there are Baptists who care about the Confession. May the years to come show that as a people we have doctrinal understanding and an ability to apply these teachings to the needs of our society.

Book Review

The Christian in Complete Armour. A modernised abridgement of the Puritan classic by William Gurnall, Banner of Truth Trust. £2.95 per volume (3 volumes).

C. H. Spurgeon said, 'Gurnall's work is peerless and priceless; every line is full of wisdom; every sentence is suggestive. The whole book has been preached over scores of times, and is, in our judgement, the best thought-breeder in all our library.'

It is daunting for stressful, pressurised mortals of this last decade of the second millennium to be confronted with a 600 page double column volume! The Banner of Truth have, by cooperation with David Wilkerson and his team, produced an abridgement in three beautiful paperback volumes. We are not surprised to hear that this is one of the most successful enterprises ever undertaken by the Banner. Nothing of Gurnall's original has been omitted that we would be sorry to miss.

The contents pages map out the materials lucidly so the reader can

quickly locate what he needs for keeping his armour in full and shining repair.

Of the virtues, love is the most beautiful and the greatest, for it will outlive hope and faith. As far as necessity is concerned, faith is an 'above all' virtue. Without it we cannot please God (Heb 11:6).

The following quote concerning the 'shield of faith' gives the reader an idea as to how Gurnall's style has been kept intact:

In old times the shield was prized by a soldier above all other pieces of armour. He counted it a greater shame to lose his shield than to lose the battle; and therefore he would not part with it even when he was under the very foot of the enemy, but esteemed it an honour to die with his shield in his hand. It was the charge which one mother laid upon her son going to war: 'Either bring your shield home with you or be brought home upon your shield.' She would rather have seen her son dead with his shield than alive without it (vol. 3, p. 31).

These three volumes will shine like diamonds on your shelves and delight your soul with warmth when you read them.

A Visit to Romania

An interview with Peter Parkinson, pastor of Leeds Reformed Baptist Church and chairman of Caring For Life.

Readers have expressed appreciation for the article in which you described the development of CARING FOR LIFE (RT 111, September-October 1989). Very recently the work was expanded to include CARING FOR LIFE INTERNATIONAL. We understand that it was the tremendous plight of orphaned children in Romania that inspired this development. Can you describe the inception of this new undertaking?

Having been deeply moved by media presentations of the desperate need of Romanian children, I asked the CFL Executive to consider undertaking the establishment of Christian Children's Homes in Romania. Their answer was a unanimous 'Yes'. Following extensive research of Christian work already being undertaken there, which involved contacting many individuals, the Trust appointed Alfred Eagers, Director of Venture Eastern Europe, as Director of CFL International (Romania). With his help, a fact-finding mission was undertaken in May.

How was your group made up and what was the nature of relief materials taken?

Three lorries made the journey to Romania and a car was hired while there. The group comprised 13 workers and we were anxious not simply to research a need, but to do something to relieve it. Hence supplies of food, clothing, bedding, medical equipment and Bibles were included.

How did you locate the areas of need?

Alfred, who knows Romania well, directed us to Christian pastors and through them to churches, families and orphanages, all in great need of help.

What is the state of the existing orphanages in Romania? In what way do you plan to establish an orphanage there?

There are thousands of orphaned and abandoned children in Romanian orphanages, all housing at least 200 children; many are larger. There are serious shortages of food, toys, clothing and medical supplies leading to epidemics of AIDS, TB and hepatitis B. Large numbers of babies do not survive. Those who do are moved six or more times up to the age of 16 at most, when all help ceases. The children receive minimal, if any, individual attention, very little or no affection, and there is no special help for those with psychological problems or physical disabilities.

CFL hopes to establish a series of smaller 'family-type' homes run by Christian Romanian staff, with support from the UK. We also aim, from these homes, to meet some of the spiritual, medical and material needs of the surrounding communities and the local church.

What features at present lacking will you aim to rectify?

Special help is desperately needed for emotionally disturbed children, children with severe learning difficulties and the physically disabled. With training and with help from Christian professionals in the West, we will seek to provide a compassionate, loving Christian 'home' for children who have been totally deprived of affection, the basic needs of life and of the gospel.

Very extensive funding must be required to maintain CARING FOR LIFE in the UK. How do you envisage raising the further funding for the work in Romania?

Many are willing to give funds to orphans in Romania, who are not at present giving to homeless young people in our own country. New sources of funding have begun to open up for this work. As always, we look to the Lord to supply our needs and are deeply grateful for his provision. The vast majority of CFL support to date has come from the sort of churches represented by the leadership of RT and it is encouraging that many such

churches in the UK, USA and Canada are showing considerable enthusiasm and sacrificial commitments for this new area of our work.

Obviously only a small section of the Romanian Church can be reached but how do you perceive the principal needs of the evangelical churches in Romania?

The greatest need as expressed by the Romanian Christians themselves, is simply that of 'friendship' with their brethren in the West. Undoubtedly, there is a great need for food, clothing, medical supplies, plus Bibles and Christian literature, and financial support for pastors who have been hard pressed for time and resources and lack expository materials. In all these areas there is the need for our sensitive, prayerful friendship and support.

What is a realistic assessment of numbers of Christians killed during the revolution?

According to a reliable source, this is very difficult to estimate. Without doubt many were killed, though pastors in the Timisoira area warned their people to stay away from the most troubled areas as much as possible.

How many children were killed in Timisoira in the revolution and what was the mentality behind such massacre?

I do not know the total number, but one appalling incident involved the massacre of 30-40 children on the steps of the Orthodox Basilica on the main square. Fleeing from the Securitate bullets, the children ran to the Basilica to seek cover, but the priests closed the doors in order to protect themselves and the children were shot. We were told that the motivation for such killings was simply to terrorise and disperse the people.

How did you come to enjoy TV coverage? Did you have an opportunity in the interview to present the gospel?

I was asked to visit a local Independent TV Station, to see if we would be able to help them secure better equipment from the West. I was interviewed by an evangelical pastor and was able to present the gospel in the context of the work which we are seeking to undertake in Romania.

It has commonly been observed that the percentage of evangelicals is higher in Romania now than in 1976 and has increased steadily during the years between. How can this be explained? To what extent has there been, or is there still, a Holy Spirit revival?

The believers we met in Romania had suffered most appallingly, but displayed a deep joy in Christ and a spiritual hunger which was moving and humbling. Persecution has united believers and their steadfast witness for Christ has been a tremendous testimony to non-believers. There are certainly many large churches. One 'small village' church we visited had 150 members. This could perhaps be described as a revival. Certainly it was a joy to be with such believers.

What are the dangers for the churches now that a measure of freedom has been introduced?

Perhaps there are three main dangers.

1. The danger of Western materialism dampening the spiritual vitality of the Romanian believers.
2. The danger of well-intentioned Western visitors 'exploiting' their Eastern brothers and using up their meagre resources of food or accommodation.
3. The danger of 'wooing' Romanian pastors away from their congregations to spend long periods in the West while neglecting the welfare of their own flocks.

It is greatly feared in Romania that the new regime is mostly old Securitate in a new guise. What is the view of the evangelical leaders you met?

Some leaders certainly expressed much concern that the 'old-style' Communism has certainly not disappeared and some newly passed laws are already placing great restrictions on evangelical churches.



At the Reformed Baptist Association annual conference held at Emmanuel Church Johannesburg, Simon Dayi, Lawrence Yoyo, Elvis Natshe and Jackson Hale all from the Ciskei

Vast Potential in Africa South

During seven weeks of ministry in Africa South it was my privilege to minister in a number of churches, annual church camps, ministers' gatherings and at the Afrikaans Baptist Seminary. The tour included ministry in the Transkei, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi. It was not feasible to include Botswana, Namibia and Swaziland but we pray that that may be possible in the not too distant future. A description of the whole tour would take up too much space so I will concentrate on an outstanding issue which is the tremendous potential of the RBA (Reformed Baptist Association).

Note the use of the term AFRICA SOUTH. This has not been formally adopted as a title but is used to denote the fact that the movement is embracing several nations in Southern Africa. It is as clear as a summer African sky that a movement is developing which transcends political, national and ethnic considerations. Christian unity

when it has a substantial doctrinal basis leaps over barriers that defy the world torn with strife. In him we are all one (Gal 3:28). The diversities of character that Satan exploits in the world, Christ uses in his Church to enrich the unity for which he so fervently prayed (Jn 17).

Major denominations the world over have declined into modernism or are now sliding rapidly into a doctrinal vacuum. The effects of this downgrade are pitiful to see. Many who should know better pride themselves in being broad and ecumenical. They dislike clarity and for that reason are opposed to Confessions of faith. Doctrinal obscurity is regarded as a virtue. In contrast to this we now find individuals and churches prepared to espouse and contend for the sum total of truth as expressed in the 1689 Confession. Believers from all over South Africa attended the RBA gathering as well as representatives from Malawi and Zambia. Recently I



A group of Reformed Baptist pastors in Zambia. Seated is Alfred Nyirenda of Kitwe Evangelical Chapel and above him directly Conrad Mbewe with Choolwe Mwetwa on his right. Standing at the back is Trevor Roberts, pastor of the Germiston Baptist Church

was visited by Keith Underhill of Kenya. We spoke of linking up contacts from Capetown to Nairobi including Tanzania and Mozambique. More is needed than a common love of the historic gospel of sovereign grace. We must strive to share gifts and resources and be ready to receive and give. Mozambique excepted, there is freedom to travel in the countries of Africa South and freedom for the gospel.

The time is opportune to promote the Reformed Faith and in this way strengthen the ministers in their preaching and pastoring and encourage them in building up the churches on solid Biblical foundations. In many countries, such as Zambia, English is widely spoken and read by most pastors. However currency and exchange restrictions cause difficulties which need to be overcome.

An indigenous movement giving rise to a multiplication of Baptist churches in Malawi is exceedingly refreshing. Pastor Mathias Munyewe of Liwonde (see photo on p. 19), has seen through the translation of *Who is in Control?* into the Chichewe language. This title is the abridgement of *The Sovereignty of God* by A. W. Pink, published by Grace Publications, Abingdon, UK. Pastor Munyewe believes that the content is of vital significance in his country. Grace Publications have agreed to publish the Chichewe title and we trust that it will prove a blessing to many.

The 1689 Confession in Zulu is now used among churches of that language group in South Africa. As in Zambia, English is also popular and Pastor Sikhone Hashe of the Transkei has prepared a fine evangelistic booklet in English especially relevant to local

needs. We hope that this will be published and distributed.

Overall the most striking and lasting impression of seven weeks in Africa South is the potential that lies in the building up of the Reformed Baptist Association especially as the needs are so varied and many churches now suffering from isolation stand to reap rich benefits from involvement. 'How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity! — there the LORD bestows his blessing, even life forevermore' (Ps 133).

The following features are worthy of observation:

Feature 1. Some churches are developing an increasingly valuable close working unity. The Newcastle Baptist Church (English speaking) and the Baptist church nearby at Mdadene (Zulu speaking) have attained a meaningful practical unity. This could be emulated with benefit in many more places.

Feature 2. Literature continues to play a foremost role in the advance of the Reformed movement worldwide. This was especially evident to me in my travels. In Zimbabwe I found young men who had been enlightened by Reformed books as well as farmers' wives who were prolific readers and avid in their appreciation of the truth. Why wives? Well, their husbands are exceedingly hard pressed to maintain their farms which are industries employing large numbers of workers. Everywhere I went I found a keenness not only for the classics but for contemporary Reformed books which face current issues.

Feature 3. There is a glory in indigenous movements which have sprung



Sikhoni Hashe of the Transkei emphasising a point to Elvis Natshe at the RBA meetings in Johannesburg



Vernon Light of Newcastle and Alpheus Sbiya of Mdadene



23-year-old Zulu evangelist Raymond and the editor

up without modelling themselves on anything foreign. Such is the case in Zambia. They have their own unique style and character in worship which is brim full of enjoyment and zeal not copied from others. The Holy Spirit forges churches his way through the truth. Diversity of character is very important because the glory of salvation shines brightly as we contrast with each other. From every race and tribe and language the Lamb is praised.

Feature 4. Valuable personal friendships develop through cross culturisation. It was a joy for me to travel with a 23-year-old Zulu evangelist and to learn from his experiences which are so different to mine and to come to know how the Holy Spirit honours aggressive evangelism and in that way effectually calls sinners out of darkness into light.

Feature 5. To observe the appetite for the Word of God preached in some rural areas, far away from privilege and advantage, was like a cordial from heaven! How desperate is our need in the UK where the general population is cynical and hardened against the gospel. It is urgent that we in the UK take seriously the need to pray that we are not given over to judgement. In the news section there is a reference to the Ivory Coast and Bill Clark's ministry there. He endorses as do many others *as a general feature* this observation about hunger for the truth in Africa. 'No man can come to me except the Father who has sent me draw him'. An appetite for the truth is engendered by the Holy Spirit.



Mathias Munyewe, pastor in the Evangelical Baptist Church of Malawi whose church is in Liwonde



Gathering in rural Malawi with church building in the background



John Bell, pastor of the Bindura Evangelical Fellowship, Zimbabwe

Bearing One Another's Burdens

Part 2

'Bear One Another's Burdens': Galatians 6:1-5

Correction in 'A Spirit of Gentleness'

An exposition by Don Garlington

In our introductory study of Paul's exhortation to the Galatians to 'bear one another's burdens', we had occasion to see that his words were called forth by a definite historical circumstance, namely, the 'zeal for the law' exhibited by the circumcision party, which resulted in the display of hatred toward anyone unwilling to become precisely as they were. Such a zeal once characterised Paul himself (Gal 1:13,14; Phil 3:6). We come now to examine the exact terms in which the apostle frames his pastoral counsel to his Christian friends. In a nutshell, we can say although correction of the offending brother/sister is of obvious significance, the *manner* in which this correction is to be undertaken is at the forefront of Paul's mind as he pens the words of Galatians 6:1.

It is of primary importance to understand that Paul takes into account the weakness of fallen (though Christian) human nature. 'Brethren,' he says, 'if a man is *overtaken* in any trespass . . .' (v. 1). The verb here translated 'overtaken' (*prolambano*) indicates an inadvertent transgression. One is not intending to sin, but because of a lack of watchfulness and diligence he/she is caught 'unawares', in most cases by a besetting sin. As R. Y. K. Fung explains, the verb may suggest that 'the sinner has been forcibly laid hold of by sin before he was able to reflect'.¹ The NEB translates: 'if a man should do something wrong . . . *on a sudden impulse*', while the NIV renders: 'if a man is *trapped* in any sin'. In any event, Fung can comment that the term carries the sense of being surprised by sin rather than being detected in it.² John Brown, then, is quite right that the reference is not to the 'doer of sin' (1 Jn 3:6,8), i.e. the habitual sinner, but to the one who (unexpectedly) falls into sin. 'From the force of temptation, the want of prayerful vigilance and humble dependence, every Christian, even the most eminent, may fall into error and commit sin.'³ Paul does not specify any particular sin, but in view of vv. 1c,4 it would appear that the person in question was guilty of presumption, which in turn opened the way for his transgression.⁴

Paul, then, confronts a situation which is clearly the fault of the brother/sister, but one which he understands and for which he has compassion. As J. M. G. Barclay remarks, Paul is more concerned about how to deal with the problem than with the transgression itself: 'The event should not be made an occasion for self-righteous condemnation of the sinner, which would only provoke or crush him. Rather it is an opportunity for spiritual people to display the fruit of the Spirit.'⁵ Accordingly, his counsel is to proceed with 'a spirit of gentleness'. 'Gentleness' was especially important for Paul because it is one of the fruits of the Spirit (5:23). The 'gentleness of the Spirit', as it were, becomes the 'spirit of gentleness' in the one who is filled with the Spirit.⁶ In fact, most of the virtues

commended in 5:22,23 articulate attitudes which are the product of love, the first item on the list. Correspondingly, the 'works of the flesh' (5:19-21) are in large measure defined as dispositions which manifest the spirit of 'biting and devouring one another' (5:15) – the very antithesis of love.

It has been pointed out many times that 'gentleness' (meekness) is not weakness. Indeed, the term seems to connote a strength which is under control.⁷ This would account for the way in which 'self-control' is placed side by side with 'gentleness' in 5:23. The gentle person is no pushover, but he is one who has learned to control his emotions, even in the face of disappointing, if not scandalous, behaviour. Perhaps an illustration from the world of music would be appropriate. Every violinist knows that an old instrument is normally more desirable than a new one, simply because a new violin is relatively harsh and brash sounding: it needs to be played for several generations before it begins to mellow and develop into its full potential. Similarly, young people in particular enter the Christian life with high ideals of the way things ought to be. However, experience has not yet taught them that there is a reality which counterbalances the ideal. In other words, they have not yet mellowed. They are very much like the new violin; they need to be played on by the providence of God in order to be qualified to deal with others who sin. In some cases, the mellowing process even necessitates sin before compassion can become a part of the fibre of one's character. The tragedy, of course, is when Christians never really attain to the degree of gentleness required by the apostle to help others, particularly when accompanied by the heresy-hunting mentality exemplified by the rigorists in Galatia.

This is why although Paul addresses the community as 'brethren' (v.la), he directly exhorts 'you who are spiritual'; it is they among the 'brethren' who are equipped to engage in this vital work. It is important to understand that the term 'spiritual' is defined very much by the present context, i.e. the spiritual person is the one who bears the fruit of the Spirit. Note again how each of the individual fruits are the concrete manifestation of love, most notably 'patience, kindness, gentleness' and 'self-control'. These stand in sharpest contrast to the 'works of the flesh', such as 'enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy' (RSV). It is only against such 'spiritual' people that there is no law (5:23); only they, who are led by the Spirit, are no longer under the law (5:18).

Paul thus turns to the 'spiritual' alone as being qualified to come to the aid of those who sin. It may be that the 'spiritual' are a segment of believers which stands out from other believers, who have been more heavily influenced by the Judaizers. Or, it is possible that although he calls the entire church 'brethren' because of its profession,⁸ only the 'spiritual' are the true brothers of Christ, who himself was 'meek and lowly in heart'; the others are 'false brethren' who 'slipped in to spy out the liberty which we have in Christ' (2:4). As we recall from the previous study, belonging to the Christian community is not enough, because the wrath of God is threatened against all who seek to avenge them-

selves, thus exhibiting a love which is hypocritical (Rom 12:9a,19-21). In either case, the 'spiritual' are consistent with the principles of the new creation, i.e. faith working through love (5:6; cf. 6:15) and serving one another through love (5:13), while the remainder are not. Otherwise put, the 'spiritual' have learned to 'beware the leaven of the Pharisees'; they are aware that to the degree that the spirit of the Pharisees dominates in the church, to the same degree Christians will fail to mend the injured body of Christ. The 'spiritual', then, are concerned that those for whom Christ died be not swallowed up by excessive grief (2 Cor 2:7).⁹

Of the essence of spirituality is the awareness that one himself may fall. 'Look to yourself,'¹⁰ says Paul, 'lest you too be tempted.' The spirit of gentleness is a spirit of realism in that one never forgets his origins. One of the ironies of history is that the Pharisees originated from groups who, during the Greek persecution of the Jews in the second century BC, self-consciously viewed themselves as the poor and oppressed people of God. With the passage of time, however, the persecuted became the persecutors, with the Pharisees identifying themselves exclusively as the Lord's true people and condemning everyone else. In effect, the Pharisees had forgotten their origins. In contrast to the 'Christian' Pharisees who made up the Circumcision Party, the 'spiritual' man is the one who remembers, in the words of the gospel song, that he is 'only a sinner saved by grace'. Hence, his dealings with other sinners are always tempered by the realism that, as a man of like passions, he too can be tempted.

Finally, Paul's prime mandate is to receive its due emphasis: 'Restore such a one.' John Brown notes that the verb 'restore' signifies 'to put a dislocated member of the body into its proper place.'¹¹ 'When a professed Christian falls into error or sin, he becomes, as it were, a dislocated member of the mystical body of Christ, incapable of properly performing its own functions, and occasioning pain and inconvenience to the other members of the body.'¹² Paul's concern is for the individual (cf. again 2 Cor 2:1-4); but it is equally for the Church in its corporate dimension. He calls upon the spiritual to perform pastoral surgery not simply for the sake of the one but also for the sake of the many.

The restorative process, as again Brown comments, involves use of the appropriate means of convincing the brother/sister of sin and of leading him/her back to the path of truth and righteousness. Among the means at our disposal are: faithful, but friendly, statement of the truth; a demonstration of the inconsistency of the sin in question with the law of Christ; an admonition about the evil consequences of the sin; a reminder of the grace of God, so that the offender will not be swallowed up by sorrow.¹³ Of course, the exact words chosen by us will vary according to the individual circumstances. But whatever is said, it is surely vital that we attempt to understand why people have arrived in the state in which they find themselves. Christians sin for reasons; and our treatment of others who have sinned must be intelligent as well as compassionate.

The bottom line, then, is restoration. Without actually indicating so, it is not unlikely that Paul was aware of the teaching of our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17. But whether or not he had this particular instruction in mind, the same principle applies to his exhortation to the spiritual in Galatia. That is to say, neither Jesus nor Paul envisages a mechanical process whereby the church may rid itself of undesirables: the goal is restoration, not excision. 'When a member of the human body is dislocated, amputation is not immediately resorted to.'¹⁴ The same is true of the body of Christ.

We began this segment of our study with the assertion that the manner in which restoration is attempted is all important. Here we see why. If our goal is the *recovery* of Christian brothers and sisters and the resumption of their walk in godliness, then nothing can be more paramount than the 'spiritual' pursuit of that ambition. Our aim is not censure for the sake of self-aggrandisement, in the words of v. 4, boasting on account of our supposed superiority to our neighbour. It is, rather, for the sake of winning our brother (Matt 18:15). If Calvin may have the final word:

Just as ambition is a particularly poisonous evil, so also great harm is done by unreasonable and excessive severity, which goes under the noble name of zeal but frequently springs from pride and from dislike and contempt of the brethren. For very many harass their brethren violently and cruelly, as if their faults were something to taunt them with. The reason is that they would rather scold than correct. Those who sin should be reproved, and it is often necessary to be severe and sharp. Therefore it is right to press them with rebukes even to the point of discourtesy; but the vinegar must be tempered with oil. Therefore he teaches us to show mildness in correcting the faults of brethren and says that no rebukes are godly and Christian which do not savour of meekness.¹⁵

¹ *The Epistle to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), p. 284, quoting S. Biede, *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), III, p. 750.

² *ibid.*

³ *An Exposition of the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians* (New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1853), p. 317.

⁴ The combination of 5:15, 18-25 might suggest as well that he is one who, out of vainglory and envy, considered himself to be superior to others. Because of the force of the context, we should not lessen the meaning of 'transgression' (*paraptoma*) to 'wrong'. Indeed, it is possible that the transgression in question is of a particularly grievous nature.

⁵ *Obedying the Truth: A Study of Paul's Ethics in Galatians* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988), p. 157.

⁶ 'The Galatians' manner of life in the community, including their treatment by offenders, must be an outworking of their obedience to the Spirit'. Barclay, *Obedying the Truth*, p. 157.

⁷ In detail see W. Barclay, *Flesh and Spirit: An*

Examination of Galatians 5:19-23 (London: SCM, 1962), pp. 111f.

⁸ Cf. how Acts 15:5 refers to 'some from the party of the Pharisees' as 'believers'.

⁹ 'Follow a positive, not a negative course with respect to the transgressor. Do not hurt him but help him. Treat him as you yourselves would wish to be treated if you were in his place'. W. Hendriksen, *New Testament Commentary: Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968), p. 232.

¹⁰ The verb *skopeo* means to 'examine critically'.

¹¹ R. C. H. Lenski adds that 'it is always an action that requires expert skill'. *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians, to the Ephesians and to the Philippians* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1961), p. 298.

¹² *Galatians*, p. 317.

¹³ *Galatians*, pp. 317-8.

¹⁴ Brown, *Galatians*, p. 317.

¹⁵ *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians*, trans. T. H. L. Parker (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1965), p. 108.

Reconstruction, Restorationism or Puritanism

After years as the Cinderella of eschatology, optimistic postmillennialism has come into its own and has even sent the high priests of dispensationalism rushing to the presses to hold their clay-footed colossus on its pedestal.¹

The Reconstructionists believe that the whole wide world will be conquered for Christ by the use of assertion of the biblical institutes of God's law.

The Restorationists believe that the whole wide world will be conquered for Christ by the restoration of apostles and the recovery of signs, wonders and miracles.

The Puritans believe that the whole wide world will be conquered for Christ according to God's programme declared in Romans 11, by concerts of prevailing prayer for revivals, spiritual awakenings on a national and international scale, by preaching and regeneration, by blood, toil, sweat and tears.

1. Reconstructionism

Rousas J. Rushdoony, Greg Bahnsen and Gary North are principal prophets in this movement which is hugely attractive to evangelicals, so much so that Rushdoony claims that 20 million charismatics have espoused it. Two reasons explain this magnetism. First is the optimism generated. After almost a century of the concrete bunker mentality of a last ditch stand before Satan's reign on an earth drenched in tribulation, it is positively electrifying to hear that Christ will win and reign, not Satan.

Second is the refreshment of a world view which sees biblical teaching applied to every sphere of human activity: civil government, culture, the arts, education, ethics, ecology, economics and even micro-biology and horticulture. This is in stark contrast to the idea that Christianity is only about my own precious soul, full stop!

Reconstructionism has spread in some places more than others. In South Africa I found a well known physician who had read every single one of a large ten volume set expounding reconstruction (i.e., 'The Biblical Blueprints Series' which contains a great deal of excellent material), but this month in the Midwest of America I found Christians who, when asked, thought that reconstruction might mean high tech architecture, meccano sets, or lego toys.

The movement has recently completed the First Chalcedon Christian Reconstructionist Conference in London, England. 120 arrived at the super Russell Hotel to hear not only Rushdoony himself, but also the illustrious American author Otto Scott, the Swiss educator Jean-Marc Berthoud, Samuel Blumenfeld and David Estrada, as well as others.

The literature of reconstruction is enormous. The leaders have harnessed their computer technology and outwritten and outprinted all other comers in the Reformed field. Gary North, son-in-law to Rushdoony, after a split in the movement, heads up his own branch in Tyler, Texas. Among his books are *Unholy Spirits* (424 pages), *The Dominion Covenant* (511 pages), *Moses and Pharaoh* (425 pages), *Dominion and Common Grace* (292 pages) and *Unconditional Surrender — God's Program for Victory* (262 pages). All of these works are printed in large size pages, not pocket style paperbacks!

Everything in the massive library of reconstruction has to be sifted, the wheat from the chaff. Who among us is adequately equipped to know which political philosophy most accords with biblical principles? And who among us can assess which economic system is best suited for a world rapidly running out of fossil fuels?

There are two fatal flaws in reconstructionism.

Firstly, the revolution of Jesus and his conquest of the world works from the inside out, and not from the outside in. 'I will build my church,' said Jesus. The church, preaching, regeneration, faith, repentance, sanctification — all these must remain in the centre. From that basis we apply the Scriptures to everything under the sun. Reconstructionism puts its world view in the centre, like the cuckoo bird which lays her eggs in another nest. When hatched, they push out the true natives of the nest.

Secondly, on the subject of the law reconstructionism has got both legs bogged down in a vat of quickly-drying concrete. How wise our Reformed and Puritan forebears were to distinguish in crystal clear fashion the different categories of law — civil, ceremonial and moral (see the 1689 Confession, chapter 19).

Greg Bahnsen has been side-tracked by his exegesis of Matthew 5:17 where he maintains that Jesus meant that he came *to confirm* the law, not *to fulfil* the law. By attempting to apply Old Testament theocratic law to contemporary civil law, the reconstructionists have become bizarre. Gary North has received the nickname 'Scarey Gary' following an article written in June 1980 about what he called the 'Four G's' in investing: gold, groceries, guns and God. He has advocated stoning as the best (and cheapest!) form of execution. The list of criminals awaiting execution is long: homosexuals, Baptists, swindlers and gatherers of sticks on the Lord's Day! Can you imagine the Southern Baptist denomination (I have just attended their annual convention which was attended by 38,000 delegates) calmly marching off to the execution pitch!? I have just met a young Baptist who is a wrestler. He has a chest like a snooker table. What Samson did to the Philistines is what he would do to the executioners!

2. Restorationism

We have devoted articles to this subject before, so we need only be brief. Herbert Carson, while speaking to the Whitefield Fraternal in Haywards Heath,

drew attention to the grievous harm done by this movement. David Watson, a leader in the charismatic movement, had recently died from cancer, even though John Wimber had prophesied (falsely, it turned out) that David Watson had been healed. According to the theonomists (another name for the reconstructionists) in their application of the Old Testament law, Wimber should be stoned to death as a false prophet!

The restorationists are looking for an easy path to the millennium, with thousands falling on their backs because they have seen a miracle! Said Jesus: 'A wicked and adulterous generation seeks a sign' and 'although one be raised from the dead they will not believe.' Wimber's load of miracles is as bad as Lourdes. Sit in the front row, as one of my friends did recently, and use your brain and eyes to see the proportion of this fraud. And afterward chronicle the list of disappointed expectations.

False prophets vexed Luther and evoked from him this observation:

If seduction and darkness were again to begin through the wrath and decree of God (as will happen after our days, it is to be feared), and the devil were to begin to perform signs through some false prophet and perhaps cure a sick person, you would no doubt see the mob press to espouse the cause in such a way that no preaching or warning would be of any avail. . . . For in those who have no love for the truth, the devil will be powerful and strong. . . . If, then, these teachings (of false prophets) contradict the chief doctrine and article of Christ, we should accord them neither attention nor acceptance though it were to snow miracles daily.²

There is no miraculous short-cut to world evangelisation. After the stupendous multiplication of the loaves and fish the people were still lusting after the outward materials and hating the message of sovereign grace — 'no man can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him' (John 6:44).

3. Puritanism

Old fashioned revivals in which the preaching of repentance and faith, heaven and hell, church membership, holiness and personal sacrifice (Rom 12:1,2) is the only way the Church has advanced in the past. That is the only way she will progress in the future. When the churches were dry and dead the old way was to unite in concert of prayer for revival. Let us do likewise. God is alive. This earth will be filled with his glory as the waters cover the sea (Hab 2:14). The sooner we take the promises seriously, the sooner we will see their fulfilment, as Albert Barnes once wrote:

That day which shall convince the great body of professing Christians of the reality and desirableness of revivals will constitute a new era in the history of religion and will precede manifestations of power like that of Pentecost.

¹ The dispensational writers H. Wayne House and Thomas Ice have produced a 460 page treatise titled, *Dominion Theology — Blessing or Curse?* Multnomah Press, Oregon, USA.

² Ewald M. Plass, *What Luther Says*, St Louis Concordia, 1959, page 637, sighted in *The Agony of Deceit*, Michael Horton, page 29, Moody Press, 1990.

News

Czechoslovakia, summary of a report by Roger Weil

Of a population of fifteen and a half million, 63% are Czechs, 29% Slovaks and 8% Hungarians, Jews, Gypsies, etc. Catholics form about 70% of the population and are strongest among the Slovaks, where Protestants only number about 6%.

The Catholic Church always resisted Communism. Many suffered imprisonment or removal from church positions and some priests were secretly murdered. The Catholic Church supported 'Charter 77' and its victims whereas, by and large, the Protestant churches went along with State opposition to the movement. As a result, the Catholic Church, especially in Slovakia, has emerged with a good reputation. It organised its underground activities effectively especially among young people.

The popular determination to crush Communism has given rise to a great variety of political parties. Western materialism now has free access with business advancement and money-mindedness gripping the hearts of many. Popular thinking sees 'Democracy' as freedom to do and say whatever you like without interference and will lead as we all know to unrestrained individualism and immorality. Already there are 'strip clubs' in Prague.

Open borders have also meant an influx of cults including even HARE KRISHNA street processions. All manner of missions and organisations are establishing headquarters and proselytising on Czechoslovak territory. Some churches have lost valuable young people to a house group movement recently arrived from the West.

The surprising suddenness of the November Revolution caught every-

body including the evangelical churches unprepared. Under the old regime most Protestant church leaders had become accustomed to diplomacy, secrecy and prayer as the means to survive, acting with quiet caution under a hostile and inquisitive Communist government. Devotional preaching has dominated with a lack of systematic teaching. New times call for a new mentality — robust, enthusiastic, missionary-minded and (in the best sense) visionary. God's people badly need a new leadership which will inspire, motivate and equip them for these days of boundless opportunity! Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send labourers into his harvest. GOD is well able to do it.

Papua New Guinea

From a report by Cliff and Martie Hellar, Box 370, Ukarumpa via Lae, PNG.

Two young families, Lance and Robin Hellar and two children and Glenn and Beth Calderwood and three children, are now settling in tribal areas in the work of reaching unreached people with the gospel. It is hard work and we ask for prayer for their health as they adjust to their new environment and encouragement by way of good contacts and an opening of the hearts of the hearers and an interest in hearing the Word.

In November we made a trip to Hekwanga (where they now are) to get Lance and Robin familiar with the situation. Lance returned in January to make a formal agreement with the people as to their settling there. We left here on April 1st to move them in, bag and baggage. Both our vehicles were loaded and it was a three-day trip by road. We praise the Lord who graciously undertook and we arrived with everything intact. We stayed in Hekwanga to help get them settled. Lance fixed the broken water pipes and brought water into the house (a blessing!) and Cliff did

a lot of jobs inside. Lance and Robin have a radio and we are able to talk to them every day which is a great help. There has been some opposition already and this area has no believers that we know of at this time. Moving into Satan's territory is always difficult so we covet your prayers for them. We are confident that the Lord will show himself strong on their behalf.

When we returned, Glenn and Beth and children had already begun packing up for their move into the Kanite area (where Don and June McMurray and boys spent three years). This area is largely unevangelised as well and the mission which for years has had the greatest influence there preaches salvation by works. (At the time of writing, the move was imminent when Cliff and Glenn would be spending several days moving the family and equipment over badly deteriorated roads.)

The monthly teachers' meetings at Keyagana, where a church has been established, continue to be a real blessing and the men are growing in knowledge and in holiness too, which is a real blessing. The elders, deacons and teachers meet each Saturday, but also once a month for an extended time of three or four days for detailed Bible study. The men have no concordances or commentaries and no formal education. Yet they teach with understanding and apply the Word with power to consciences. They have been taught of God! Next month we have our bi-annual conference again and all the plans are under way for that. It is for a week and people come a long way to attend. It is completely in the hands of the people which takes a great responsibility off us.

Cliff is working on a series of literacy books that will bridge the gap for new readers between learning how to read and being able to read the Scriptures

easily and understandably. The books are short portions from the Gospels in large print. We trust they will prove a help to our new readers. Often it is very difficult for them as they read so slowly as to lose track.

It is a few months since we have been able to continue work on the revision of the New Testament.

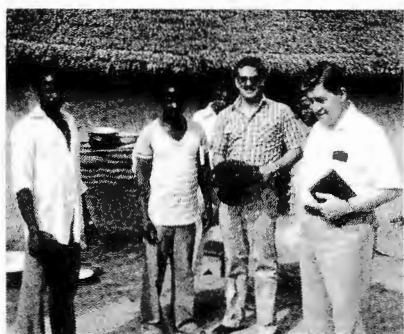
A young couple, Dave and Dianne Hornor and their son, have expressed a desire to join us in the work early next year. They are presently preparing with courses in Canada and USA. Much paper work is necessary for entry permits. We have prayed for many years for the Lord to send some young people and our hearts are full of praise and thanksgiving to him for all these. Sometimes we feel our age but are thankful for strength day by day.

The Hellars also relate their sorrow over the hospitalisation due to terminal cancer of the son of their co-worker Bernie Crozier who has now returned to Australia to be with him. When we think how much time family responsibilities rightly claim in our own lives, especially in times of trial and illness, we appreciate more deeply the commitment of those who serve the Lord faithfully in the remote parts of the world.

Report of a Visit to Ivory Coast

by Bill Clark, May 29th 1990

A few days ago I returned from another trip to Ivory Coast. The purpose was for Ken Wimer and me to visit the churches of some of the preachers who have been doing our Preachers' Training Course in order to encourage them and their people. Some of the men have had to face strong opposition both from their own churches and from the missionaries. We wanted to let their people know that their preachers were not preaching some new far-out doctrine;



A bush village in Ivory Coast. The local preacher is in the centre and the village headman on the left. Ken Wimer is holding a chicken given to us as a gift

they were simply preaching what the Bible clearly teaches about God's sovereignty in salvation.

On this trip we visited nine churches, some of them very isolated and difficult to get to. To get to one church in the forest we had to cross three 'bridges' which were simply tree trunks thrown across the rivers. The men from the church had been out the day before to repair the bridges so that we could cross. We managed to get across two with the car, but the third one was too dangerous, so we had to abandon the car several miles from the village and walk the rest of the way along a jungle road. It was dark when we came back, but fortunately there was a moon and we had a lamp to help us keep on the track.

The meetings were all a real encouragement to us. It was such a joy to see these men in their own churches and to know that they are clearly preaching God's grace to undeserving sinners. A couple of years ago most of them had never heard the gospel of grace. They heard the radio broadcasts and realised that the message was different from what they had heard from their missionaries and teachers and they applied to do our Preachers' Course. It was simply through studying the book of Romans and the conferences which we have had

for them that they have come to know the gospel. One man said to me, 'I have been to Bible college for four years, but I had to come here away out in the forest, to hear the gospel.' We rejoice at what God has done and is doing. To him be all the glory.

It is not easy for the pastors, for most of them have to work in their jungle 'fields' in order to support their families. None of them get any financial support from us. They are only interested in the spiritual teaching which we can provide. At the moment we have almost 300 men who have begun our Preachers' Training Course. It takes at least a year to do the first course on Romans. Over 40 men have finished the first course and they have all now begun the second course on Hebrews.

Scottish Reformed Conference

About 250 persons, representative of several denominations and from various parts of Scotland, gathered at Stirling University on Saturday, April 21st, for a Scottish Reformed Conference — the first of its kind, organised by a group of ministers sympathetic to the Reformed Faith.

The messages are available on individual cassettes from Abbeygreen Church Recording Services, 27 Turfholm, Lesnahagow ML11 0ED at £1.50 each. Rev. Martin Allen of Chryston Church, Glasgow spoke on the full authority of the apostolic gospel in an age of relativism from Jude v 3. Prof. A. I. McLeod of the Free Church of Scotland College, Edinburgh expounded Psalm 100:1-3 and Rev. Bill Hughes of Harper Memorial Baptist Church, Glasgow preached from Revelation 4.

The delegates felt a true sense of fellowship and unanimously requested another conference which is now scheduled for May 4th, 1991 at the same venue. Enquiries should be addressed to: Rev. William Black, 27 Neilshill Park, Mossblown, Ayr KA6 5AU.

Men That we Need

'But now we are all little men, there is scarce a man alive now upon this earth.'
(C. H. Spurgeon)

From earliest times God has blessed his people and sustained his Church by giving them leaders.

While the children of Israel were groaning in bondage in Egypt, Jehovah was preparing Moses to be a saviour. When the hordes of Midian filled the land of Israel, driving God's people into dens and caves in the mountains, Gideon was commissioned, and by three hundred men a great victory was wrought. When Europe was enslaved in the chains of Popery and superstition, Luther emerged as God's sent servant. When England had relapsed into darkness, the voice of Whitefield came like a trumpet blast to waken the dead.

All God's men have been equipped by him for their peculiar tasks, Peter for Pentecost, Paul for the Gentiles. The scene is always changing but the Lord has always had his men.

In our day rank confusion prevails on every hand. We are all acquainted to some degree with the weaknesses which depress the Church of God as a whole. The question is, are we aware of the need of outstanding leadership and, if so, are we praying that God will send us men for the times, men who are equipped, called and thrust forth? It is not for us to dictate to our heavenly Father the kind of men he must send, but we can envisage some of the gifts that we might find in such leaders. Let us intercede earnestly for:

1. Men who above everything else have burning hearts of love for God and for men, who fear God and nothing else but sin, who have an indefatigable zeal for God's glory, who are ready to die if need be for Christ.
2. Men who are thoroughgoing exegetes of Scripture, able to expound any text in a systematic and convincing manner doing full justice to the background and context as well as to the construction of the verse in the original.¹
3. Men who are thoroughly gifted in doctrinal comprehension, who love the tried and tested doctrines of the faith, who mingle with the mighty, who know and can discern the things that differ in the systems taught by Augustine and Calvin, Owen and Baxter, Edwards and Gill, Hodge and Warfield.
4. Men who love and study Church history in all its departments,² specialising of course in evangelical reformations and revivals, who love the martyrs, and who know what they believed and what they died for, who can competently apply an extensive knowledge of Church history to the present day, avoiding pitfalls fallen into before, and following solutions which have proved sound in the past.

5. Men who are humble enough to apply themselves to small spheres of labour but who at the same time have a world vision, following missionary movements everywhere, doing everything in their power in a practical way to help fulfil the Great Commission.³
6. Men who know how to meet the evils of the age, who have a plan from God for our day, who are competent and aggressive in evangelism, no armchair advisers but, like Grimshaw and Rowlands, sons of thunder rather than showmen and variety artists.
7. Men who are well grounded in Reformed apologetics,⁴ who know about but have a right perspective on modernism and theories of science, who do not follow infidels by an over-study of destructive criticism (a practice which is the ruination of so many in our colleges) but concentrate like the apostles on power in preaching the gospel.⁵
8. Men who will not compromise the truth for the sake of expediency yet who are able to distinguish between cardinal and secondary issues,⁶ who have the courage to discard that which is merely traditional, oppose that which is unscriptural, and yet respect the consciences of those who do not measure up to the spiritual dimensions here described.

May God send us such men.

¹ 2 Tim 2:15.

² Acts 7.

³ Matt 28:18-20; Mk 16:15.

⁴ The manner and method of setting forth and defending the faith.

⁵ Acts 6:4.

⁶ Matt 23:23,24; Rom 14:17.

This article first appeared in *The Banner of Truth* magazine October, 1962.

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

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Iain H. Murray

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'Though in the eyes of other Christians he was "full of faith and of the Holy Spirit", yet in his own eyes he was, "nothing but an old sinner saved by the grace of God.'

Holiness — and Justification

This page is copied from *Gathering Gold*, a treasury of quotations for Christians compiled by John Blanchard (page 148, volume 1). There are two volumes of 350 pages each published by EP in paperback. The quality of this page will commend these excellent books.

Any attempt to make justification dependent upon sanctification is to rob grace of its freeness and to add works to saving grace.

Donald Grey Barnhouse

Justification and sanctification are inseparable companions; distinguished they must be, but divided they can never be.

Thomas Brooks

Any man who thinks that he is a Christian, and that he has accepted Christ for justification, when he did not at the same time accept him for sanctification, is miserably deluded in that very experience.

A. A. Hodge

We must first be made good before we can do good; we must first be made just before our works can please God — for when we are justified by faith in Christ, then come good works.

Hugh Latimer

If Christ justifies you he will sanctify you! He will not save you and leave you in your sins.

Robert Murray M'Cheyne

According to Scripture it is quite impossible to be justified by faith and

not to experience the commencement of true sanctification, because the spiritual life communicated by the Spirit in the act of regeneration (which introduces the new power to believe) is morally akin to the character of God and contains within it the germ of all holiness.

Iain H. Murray

Justification and sanctification are distinguishable but not separable.

William S. Plumer

I fear it is sometimes forgotten that God has married together justification and sanctification.

J. C. Ryle

In the court of justification merits are nothing worth, insufficient; but in the court of sanctification . . . they are jewels and ornaments.

Richard Sibbes

Sanctification is so involved in justification that the justification can never be real unless it be followed by sanctification.

Benjamin B. Warfield

If God should justify a people and not sanctify them, he would justify a people whom he could not glorify.

Thomas Watson

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