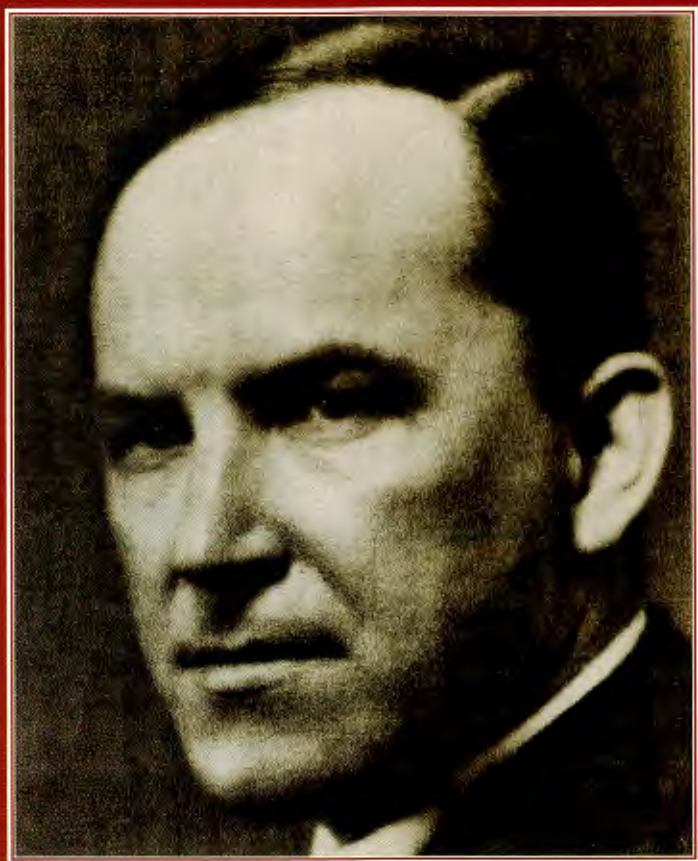


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# REFORMATION TODAY



MAY - JUNE 2006

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## Editorial

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### *Bible Conferences*

There is a vast need in the developing world, Asia, Latin America and Africa for sound theological training. In these areas Bible-believing Christians continue to multiply and there are innumerable indigenous pastors who are willing to travel long distances and undergo hardship to be able to improve and refine understanding of the Bible. They hunger to develop their skills in expository preaching and to grow in their grasp of Biblical, Systematic and Historical Theology. Areas of acute need are an understanding of the attributes of God, a grip of God's way of salvation in lieu of an over-simplified decisionism, the doctrine of progressive sanctification, and helps and inspiration for godly, disciplined living in the home and at work.

The report in the last issue describing the African-style Conference in Durban and the report in this issue of the first Carey Conference in Harare represent events which are a first of their kind. It is our prayer and our determination to see African-style Conferences multiply all over Africa. Already the FIEL Conference, which is African to the core, is well established in Nampula. The seventh Conference took place in August. 170 attend each year in Nampula. Work in Burma (Myanmar) is also described in

News. Reporting is restricted because the political situation in Burma is precarious. Pastors are subject to persecution. The needs in the sub-continent of India are almost identical to those of Africa. It is becoming more difficult for Christian workers to obtain visas for India and this must surely be a matter of prayer.

### *The Life and Legacies of Doctor Martyn Lloyd-Jones*

Doctor David Martyn Lloyd-Jones died on St David's Day (1<sup>st</sup> March) 1981. He was born at the end of the reign of Queen Victoria and lived through 29 years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth II. His life spanned the two great World Wars. He ministered through the years of the great economic depression of the 1930s. He worked in the heart of London when that city was bombed appallingly by the Nazis. He was used to build up the congregation of Westminster Chapel through the austerity years of the post-1945 period.

Since 1981 a whole new generation has arisen who do not know Lloyd-Jones. For them a short biography might whet the appetite to read the excellent official two volume biography by Iain Murray. The legacies described in this issue of *Reformation Today* are wholly positive. They are legacies we need to prize and strengthen.

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*The cover photograph of Doctor Martyn Lloyd-Jones was taken in New York in 1937. The photo opposite was taken in London by Desmond Groves.*

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Negative aspects of ML-J's ministry will be evaluated by the next generation. A Zambian has given his insights into ML-J's ecclesiology. (see *Westminster Chapel – What Happened?* by Conrad Mbewe, RT 193). The Doctor was right to be cautious about replacing the old pastor/deacons form of church government with pastor/elders/deacons model. Wrong elders can be disastrous just as a wrong partner in marriage can prove calamitous. But ML-J need not have been cynical about eldership. That model is clearly laid down in Scripture.

The five legacies I have described embrace the great centralities of the Christian Faith. How thankful we are that the greatest preacher in the UK in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was a leader of such calibre. Bethan his wife said that we would not understand her husband unless we understood him to be a man of prayer and an evangelist. Concerning the evangelistic impact of his ministry this is what she wrote: 'In those early years at Aberavon, I rejoiced to see men and women converted – drunkards, evil-livers – all manner of types and backgrounds and all different ages! I rejoiced to see them and I envied them and sometimes wished, when I saw their radiant faces and changed lives, that I had been a drunkard or worse, so that I could be converted! I never imagined that I needed to be converted, having always been a 'Christian', or that I could get any more than I had already! In those first two years, God graciously used Martyn's morning sermons to open my eyes and to show me myself and my needs. I came to know my sins forgiven and the peace of God in my own heart.' (*Memories of Sandfields 1927-38*, Banner of Truth, 1983 p. 10).

### *Mao Zedong and China*

The first missionary of the modern era to China was Robert Morrison (1782-1834) from Newcastle on Tyne. The way into China was barred. He could get no further than the 'trading factories' of Canton. A death sentence was threatened to anyone tampering with the Chinese language. Morrison ignored that. He translated the whole Bible into Chinese which he completed by 1818.

The enthralling book *A Thousand Miles of Miracle in China* by Archibald Glover describes the Boxer Rebellion of 1900. It describes the day by day experiences of a missionary couple and their two small children accompanied by one lady missionary fleeing from those determined to kill them. It was the avowed purpose of the Chinese at that time to eradicate all foreigners not by expulsion merely but by death. The marvel is that they escaped the jaws of death time and time again. During 1900 there were 136 Protestant missionaries and 53 children (altogether 189) martyred in China; not to speak of countless nationals.

106 years later China probably has the largest number of Bible-believing Christians in the world. Providing that theological materials can be supplied there is vast potential for spiritual growth. The modern Chinese Church has been born out of suffering and persecution. After the final conquest of mainland China in 1949, the Communist Party remoulded the nation along Marxist lines. The Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) was the culmination of Mao Zedong's policy. This caused immense suffering. Albert Mohler's review of *Mao: The Unknown Story* by Jung Chang and Jon Halliday highlights the parameters of that suffering.



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## **The Life and Legacies of Martyn Lloyd-Jones**

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*Twenty-five years on*

Dr D Martyn Lloyd-Jones was multi-gifted. He was a born leader and a brilliant chairman of meetings, whether of church meetings or of conferences. But he was pre-eminently a preacher. It was his care for and his love for souls that made him an effective preacher. When he was leader of the large congregation at Westminster Chapel, London, it was not possible for him to engage in systematic pastoral visitation of the flock. However, it was his custom after every service to spend time in his vestry counselling those who needed his help. A deacon was always in charge to supervise this part of the Doctor's ministry. Dr ML-J was a pastor by telephone to many other pastors. Much of his time was spent in advising and shepherding fellow-pastors, especially younger men.

It was preaching ministry that formed the basis of all Dr ML-J's work. It was his preaching that built up the church known as Sandfields, Port Talbot, in Wales where he was pastor from 1927 to 1938. The same is true of Westminster Chapel, which congregation was built up gradually after the 1939-1945 world war. The war had severely depleted the congregation. Many had moved out of the city. It was his preaching ministry that spearheaded his extensive work among students as he frequently preached at Inter-Varsity Fellowship (IVP) and the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES) conferences. I heard him present historical and biographical subjects on several occasions. I was present when he spoke for over two hours at the Evangelical Library in 1962. The subject was the tercentenary of the Great Ejection of 1662. He spoke with passion and I must say I never ever saw him read a paper. His method was to use an outline. Even when presenting a historical or biographical paper, his method was to preach. His delivery was always personable and dynamic. He regularly preached at mid-week meetings and rallies throughout the United Kingdom but especially in Wales where he preached in Welsh as well

as English. It was his preaching that constituted the contents of all his books. As with the English Puritans whom he admired, loved and commended, he preached his sermons first and later edited them for the publishers.

I will outline his life and then concentrate on his legacies and how they apply today.

### **The life of Doctor Martyn Lloyd-Jones**

Born in Cardiff, South Wales, Martyn Lloyd-Jones spent the greater part of his childhood in rural Cardiganshire before moving with his family to London in 1914. Concluding his education at St. Marylebone Grammar School, he entered St Bartholomew's Hospital at 16, to follow a career in medicine. He passed all his examinations with brilliance. In 1921 he was chosen as Chief Clinical Assistant to the famous Sir Thomas Horder who was a cardiologist and the King's physician. The importance of precise thinking and analysis in diagnosis made a deep impression on the young ML-J. An acute intellect combined with astute observation of human nature and excellent memory were natural gifts which contributed much to his work as pastor and preacher. He could not put a date to his conversion but he came gradually to realise that he was dead in sin and found his only hope in Christ during the years 1923-24. By 1925 (and it is easy to follow his age as the 20th century progressed since he was born in December 1899) he was experiencing an intense struggle over his calling to be a pastor.

Turning his back on a successful and lucrative career in medicine, he committed his life to the ministry in South Wales in the district of Aberavon, in a church popularly known as Sandfields. Around this church was a population of about 5,000 working class people some of whom lived in overcrowded conditions. The church was part of the 'Forward Movement' of the Calvinistic Methodist Church and was a refuge when sorrow or bereavement or trouble of any kind came to the people there. ML-J's salary was £225 a year plus manse and rates. This was in striking contrast with a medical consultant who at that time

could earn anything between £2000 and £5000 per annum. Part of his contract was to have 13 Sundays a year free. This was a feature throughout his ministerial life, giving freedom to preach in many other places and also take time to refuel and rest from the relentless demands on the life of a pastor. Initially ML-J was regarded as a lay-pastor because he had not been to seminary or been subject to any theological training.

In 1927 Martyn married Bethan, who was also a medical doctor. She was two years under Martyn's ministry before she really understood what the gospel was.<sup>1</sup> In 1927 their first daughter Elizabeth was born and Ann was born ten years later.

A remarkable visitation of the Holy Spirit took place in the church at Aberavon. The church membership increased in 1930 by 88, of whom 70 were converts 'from the world'. The following year, 1931, saw another 135 added, 128 of whom were 'from the world'. All his life ML-J was a profound believer in the phenomenon we call revival. He always pointed out that the kingdom of Christ does not advance by business methods and worldly schemes. He never ceased to warn against shallow evangelism of the decisionist kind which lacks conviction of sin and heart repentance.

Upon his settlement in the Sandfields church he had to learn from scratch all that is involved in leading an assembly of believers. Very soon his calling as a preacher was recognised. In the first year of his ministry he agreed to preach in 52 other churches usually on a Tuesday or Thursday evening. The impact of his itinerant ministry was felt throughout Wales. His preaching was powerfully evangelical and in resolute opposition to prevalent modernistic theology.

In 1932 and 1937 'the Doctor' (everyone seemed to refer to him by that name), ministered in North America. His powers as a preacher were soon appreciated. Leaders in Canada urged him to return with a view to being called to be minister of a large church there. He declined.

The record of these early years reveals many instances of his pastoral care of individual needy people, and sometimes the dying. He was a

personal pastor not only in visiting but also in correspondence. Many Christians who lacked pastoral leadership wrote to him for counselling. On one occasion when his correspondence had to be forwarded to him, there were 90 letters that had accumulated in one week.<sup>2</sup> Not only was ML-J a born preacher, he was a born leader. Soon there gathered round him a dozen pastors. Together they covenanted in specific practical ways to promote the evangelical cause in Wales.

In May 1938 the Doctor announced his resignation from the pastorate in Sandfields and in the same month accepted Dr Campbell Morgan's offer to share the pulpit at Westminster Chapel in Buckingham Gate in London which is only a short distance from the House of Commons and Buckingham Palace. During the war years the Lloyd-Jones family lived in Haslemere, Surrey. In 1943 Dr Morgan retired, leaving the Doctor as sole pastor of the church.

1939 to 1945 saw the congregation scattered and reduced to about a quarter of the size it had been under the ministry of Campbell Morgan. There are circular galleries at Westminster Chapel which when totally full, together with the ground floor area, can accommodate about 1,800.

The congregation was initially ignorant of the Reformed faith and unaccustomed to series of doctrinal expository sermons. Some were opposed outright to ML-J and preferred Campbell Morgan's easy-to-follow simple preaching outlines. The Doctor's style was more challenging, exhorting his hearers to think through doctrine and understand it. This situation was encapsulated in the remark of an indignant male attendee who went one Sunday morning expecting to hear Morgan and was disappointed. "I went to hear Morgan", he complained afterward, "and heard that Calvinist instead!"<sup>3</sup> Some of the deacons were tinged with nominalism. Some were content while the ministry was shared, but were uneasy when Campbell Morgan retired and they then had to face the prospect of ML-J at every service. The very direct evangelistic preaching of the Doctor was not congenial to some of the older members who were nominal in their faith and who liked the social activities such as ball-room dancing in the Institute Hall.



Under these circumstances the Doctor exercised exceptional wisdom. On Friday evenings he organised a time of discussion when those present were free to propose questions for discussion. It should be noted that a pastor will soon know where people stand when there is opportunity for open discussion.

Some of Lloyd-Jones' friends were doubtful whether the simplicity of church life in Calvinistic Methodism could succeed in London. One of the observers at that time was a Dr Douglas Johnson. He said, 'When I saw that he was without choir, musical entertainment and any external aids set to preach the Chapel full, I wondered if he could – with his away preaching in the week – sustain the load.' At one time the weekly open discussion concerned what could be done to fill the Chapel as it had been filled under Campbell Morgan. Many suggested that there should be additions to the service. A minority expressed the view that the primary reason they attended was for the preaching and did not desire any changes or extra items. Of course spiritual worship is vital but it was a matter of proportion with regard to preaching.

The primacy of preaching is illustrated by the form of service followed. A chapter in Iain Murray's biography has the title 'Sunday mornings in the 1950s'.<sup>4</sup> It captures magnificently the form and atmosphere of those times for those who never had the privilege of being there. There were no accessories. There was a substantial reading of Scripture, a 10 to 15 minute prayer, and then a sermon of about 40 minutes. On the Lord's Day evenings it was the same, except that the main thrust of the sermon was evangelistic and would last anything from 40 to 60 minutes. There were always four hymns in the usual nonconformist manner. I cannot recall an addition of any kind whatsoever. During Campbell Morgan's day there used to be a choir, but that disappeared.

These years of the Doctor's ministry at Westminster Chapel from 1939 to 1968 were momentous years. In the heart of London he exercised a powerful preaching ministry the influence of which spread round the world. In addition to tourists who made Sunday at Westminster part of their itinerary, university students preparing for all kinds of vocations from many countries regularly attended Westminster Chapel. Also many students from the London Bible College attended Westminster.

For them the Doctor was a model preacher. My wife and I arrived in London in 1954 with the express purpose of studying extramurally at London Bible College. I had just graduated as an architect and worked in an architectural practice in London. We lived at the Foreign Missions Club. There we met Iain Murray and David Fountain who insisted that we attend the Doctor's ministry.<sup>5</sup> We were inspired and imbibed his teaching at Westminster from 1954 to 1958. Our London Bible College studies prevented us from attending the famous Westminster Chapel 'Romans lectures' on Friday nights. The Sunday series that made the greatest impact on us was Ephesians, which material is now in print in eight volumes published by the Banner of Truth.

In addition to his itinerant preaching all over Britain during the week and during the summer break, the Doctor was also in demand in the student movement. For example, his book with the title *Authority* was first preached as a series of sermons at a conference for students.

Throughout his ministry from his early 30s to 80 the Doctor preached to large congregations. Besides his own congregations at Westminster, 1,200 to 1,400 on Sundays, there were the large crowds at the mid-week rallies or special occasions. For instance as early as 1932 he preached to 6,000 in Toronto and in 1935 to 7,000 at Llangeitho. The Lord not only gave him the gift of preaching, but gave him the congregations which would benefit from this preaching. He was, without doubt, the foremost preacher in the United Kingdom during the 20th century.

In 1941 a quarterly meeting began for ministers which was by private invitation. This developed into the 'Westminster Fellowship' which was confined to full-time pastors. Sometimes subjects were addressed by a visitor or member of the fraternal but mostly it consisted of open discussion led by the Doctor as chairman. In 1967 I began to attend. There must have been about 200 who were eligible to attend. The average attendance was about 120. Some travelled all the way from Wales. In the 1960s the Fellowship took place on the first Monday of the month. Attendees would return from the Fellowship greatly encouraged. To a number of members of the Fellowship the Doctor was a friend and counsellor, a shepherd guiding and advising them in their difficulties and encouraging them through their family and personal trials.

In 1968 ML-J fell seriously ill and resigned as pastor from Westminster Chapel. This brought to a conclusion 30 years' ministry there. He wrote to his friend Philip Hughes that he felt he needed to place into written form the material that he had preached, particularly on the book of Romans. Letters from friends confirmed this desire. A missionary in Mombasa wrote to say that he had read the monthly sermon printed in the Westminster Record (the magazine of Westminster Chapel) since 1948. Another missionary in Morocco wrote to assure the Doctor that his written ministry had been a very great blessing over a period of ten years. For six months during 1968 the Doctor did not preach at all. His recovery from surgery was successful and in 1969 he was able to resume his very considerable and widespread itinerant ministry in different parts of the country.

A significant event in the Doctor's life took place in 1977 when he gave the inaugural address for the founding of the London Theological Seminary. This was a seminary that had been established through his encouragement.

In 1979 the former cancer from which he had suffered returned. He was constrained to limit his public engagements, yet still kept a few preaching engagements during 1980 in Scotland, Wales and England. The Doctor believed passionately in the Puritan view that it is a Christian duty to prepare well for death. In his final illness he maintained an outstanding testimony and was an inspiration to his own family and the wider Church. He entered glory on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March 1981, St David's Day.

## **The Legacies of Doctor Martyn Lloyd-Jones**

Five main features call for attention.

### 1. *The primacy of preaching*

I began by drawing attention to the fact that it was preaching that formed the basis of all ML-J's work.

Today impatience with or antipathy toward preaching is increasing. Preaching is regarded as culturally insensitive to postmodern Christians. It is affirmed that preaching makes the churches an impenetrable subculture for the unchurched. Preaching, it is even maintained, should be used only occasionally for special purposes.<sup>6</sup> This concept prevails in some charismatic churches and is becoming more and more pervasive in non-charismatic churches. Part of the problem is that what is perceived as preaching is not the kind of preaching exemplified in ML-J. He nearly always succeeded in combining all the main elements of true preaching: expository, didactic, doctrinal, evangelistic, relevant, practical and spiritually experimental. Often what goes for preaching is a mixture of anecdotes and exhortations with an altar call at the end.

Recently I visited a charismatic pastor. He proudly showed me a video of his idea of preaching at its best. This was a lady (to show we are liberated!) marching briskly from one end of the platform to the other with tremendous zeal and terrific passion, a Bible in one hand and a microphone in the other, shouting gospel clichés and extracting ovations of delight and appreciation from the congregation. However true and glorious the clichés such as ‘Jesus Saves’, this is not didactic. It does nothing for the mind (Rom 12:1-3).

The way that ML-J set about preaching is seen in his books particularly the series on Romans and Ephesians. In his book *Preaching and Preachers* he gives reasons why there is no substitute. Many follow ML-J’s example of consecutive, expository, structured preaching. That was the method used by most of the English Puritans. It is noteworthy that almost every book written by ML-J is now published in Portuguese in Brazil. Yet in that land consecutive expository preaching is exceptional. This shows that young preachers need living preachers as models. Preaching is not easily learned from books.

Many examples could be cited of believers who move away to seemingly greener, tastier pastures (entertainment) only to experience leanness of soul. Without expository preaching they become frustrated.

They are not fed. They then feel constrained to return to the spiritual nutrition provided by expository preaching. ML-J warned against entertainment dislodging the primacy of preaching. Numerous musical items, missionary reports and testimonies, however helpful, can sideline preaching. ML-J referred at one time to the new kind of official in some churches - the 'song leader', who is supposed to produce the atmosphere. 'He often takes so much time in producing the atmosphere that there is not time for preaching in the atmosphere!' Preaching as the vehicle in which God's power is revealed ebbs away when distractions have left minimum time to attend to it.

Many influences are antagonistic to the prime place of preaching today. For instance David Norrington's book *To Preach or Not to Preach?* (Paternoster, 1996) pursues a relentless attack on the central tenets and presuppositions supporting preaching in the contemporary church, deriding the sermon as synonymous with an overly institutional and anti-democratic posture.<sup>7</sup> In the days of the apostles the Jews demanded miraculous signs (1 Cor 1:22). Today many of charismatic persuasion think that the power of God is vested in signs, wonders and miracles. Even though it is very unusual for anything sensational to occur except in their imagination, this idea persists. Others believe in the primacy of prophecy. Preaching compared with that is dull. Prophetic ministry relegates preaching to the category of the cerebral.<sup>8</sup> But those who persevere in their calling to preach are rewarded in the testimony of changed lives

## 2. *Separation*

Liberal (modernist) theology is still a mortal enemy of biblical Christianity. The Doctor warned against submission of our minds to the devil. Never, he insisted, place yourself under the teaching of unregenerate tutors. There are many students who pursue academic gain in liberal seminaries. They then fall into doubt and then into outright unbelief. Thankfully there are upgrades. A notable upgrade from liberal theology is Southern Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, under the leadership of Albert Mohler. That is exceptional. Wales was



turned into a spiritual wilderness through liberal theology. Today there are reformed ministers throughout Wales on a scale that did not exist at the time of the 1904 revival. This change is largely due to the Doctor's persevering efforts in his native country of Wales. This is encouraging, but Wales like England and Scotland is spiritually barren.

When Billy Graham ran his crusades ML-J was a lonely non-participant. Subsequently it has been seen how completely ecumenical the Billy Graham organisation became. Bible believers should never compromise the doctrine of justification by faith alone (Galatians chapter one). He would be encouraged too by the continued progress of the Banner of Truth and the emergence of Evangelical Press which now has 367 titles in print. These churches and publishers and several other thriving evangelical and reformed agencies are faithful to the basic principles ML-J laid down in his books *What is an Evangelical?* and *The Basis of Christian Unity*.

The doctor would be encouraged by the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches, (January 1980 – 425 churches affiliated, and in January 2006 – 483) which churches hold to the following principles:

#### FIEC Statement on Ecumenism

All gospel-loving Christians face many kinds of tension, but there is one particular way in which we are increasingly pressurised at the present time. Since the formation of the Churches Together movement in 1991, with its avowed aim to pursue ecumenism at the local level, we are constantly being urged to join other churches in united services, prayer meetings, marches and evangelistic activities.

If all the other local churches and their leaders involved in a united activity are wholly committed to the one true gospel there is no problem. Indeed the FIEC desires to encourage that kind of true and biblical ecumenism. Often, however, some of the churches and leaders with whom we are urged to unite neither believe nor preach those essential gospel truths which are embodied in our FIEC Doctrinal Basis or a similar Statement of Faith. Some do not accept the inerrancy of

Scripture, the eternal punishment of the unsaved, or that Christ died bearing the punishment due to sinners. Some deny the deity of Christ, his virgin birth, miracles and literal resurrection. Others teach that religious ceremonies such as baptism, the mass and the adoration of Mary have some saving efficacy.

The FIEC has always felt it to be confusing and unbiblical to unite in public acts of worship and outreach with those who question and deny the faith. Our Doctrinal Basis, *What We Believe*, clearly states, 'True fellowship between churches exists only where they are faithful to the gospel.'

If an evangelical church or leader unites with those of a liberal persuasion who deny essential gospel truths, or with those of a Roman Catholic persuasion who add to the gospel, then great confusion is created. The impression is given either that the evangelical, liberal and Roman Catholic are all agreed when in fact they are worlds apart doctrinally, or that their different messages are equally valid when in fact there is only one gospel. Not only is this confusing but it is also a contradiction of the gospel on which our FIEC churches unite.

The gospel of salvation by grace is so precious to us that we desire to stand together with all who believe and preach it. For the same reason, we are compelled to remain separate from those who deny it. By taking this position we are seeking to follow the commands of Scripture (Gal 1:8, Rom 16:17).

*(Agreed unanimously in Assembly April 1996).* See [www.fiec.org.uk](http://www.fiec.org.uk)

### 3. *Historical theology*

The Doctor always stressed the place and importance of Church history. In 1950 together with J I Packer the Doctor initiated the annual Puritan Conference. This conference in which ML-J was chairman was devoted not only to a study of the English Puritans but to Church history generally. When a serious division over the question of separation from

unbelievers in the Christian ministry occurred in 1970 the conference was disbanded and re-organised under the title Westminster Conference. This two-day conference has continued to have an average attendance of about 220. Every year six papers are published. The Westminster Conference papers (about 300 well-researched papers) form a memorial to the founders Drs Martyn Lloyd-Jones and J I Packer. These papers form a rich resource of material of permanent, accessible value. Indices are available both in electronic and hardback form.<sup>9</sup> Very few ministers I know stress the importance of Church history and few have the gift to inspire an appreciation of the importance of Church history.

The Banner of Truth books reflect this emphasis. The following principal volumes remind us of the wonderful grace of God in England over five centuries. *The Reformation in England* by J H Merle d'Aubigné (two volumes), *The Works of John Owen* (sixteen volumes), *The Life of George Whitefield* by Arnold Dallimore (two volumes), *The Life of C H Spurgeon* (two volumes), *The Life of Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones* (two volumes). These volumes join hands across the centuries to tell the story of God's faithfulness and free grace.

Two further volumes published by the Banner of Truth show ML-J's interest in Church history. The first is *The Puritans* which contains addresses given at the Puritan and Westminster Conferences and the second is *Knowing the Times* being addresses given on various occasions. About one third of the papers devoted to historical subjects relate to the Reformation, a third to the Puritans and a third to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. He often expressed encouragement derived from the remarkable 18<sup>th</sup>-century awakening. He was inspired by leaders of that time such as Daniel Rowland, Howell Harris, George Whitefield and Jonathan Edwards.

In practical terms ML-J contributed in a vital way to the establishment, growth and ministry of the Evangelical Library, 78A Chiltern Street, London, W1U 5HB.

#### 4. *Experimental Calvinism*

ML-J warned against what he called cerebral Calvinism. The Reformed faith is intellectually satisfying but he stressed that the truth is for the heart, the mind and hands. Here again is the influence of the English Puritans. They did not merely explain the meaning of a biblical text but went on to apply it in terms of devotional life and practical daily living. Early in his ministry the Doctor was helped by the writings of B B Warfield. From the beginning to the end of his ministry he was rigorous in intellectual discipline. Yet while he recognised the vital importance of the mind he always stressed the importance of the experimental dimensions of the faith.<sup>10</sup>

He said, ‘When I get discouraged and over-tired and weary I also invariably go to the eighteenth century. I have never found George Whitefield to fail me. Go to the eighteenth century! In other words read the stories of the great tides and movements of the Spirit experienced in that century.’<sup>11</sup>

An example of what ML-J meant by spiritual experience is found in his sermons on Romans 5:5: ‘God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given to us.’ ‘What does “heart” mean here? It undoubtedly means the very centre of our being and personality. It certainly does not mean the mind only, it includes the emotions and feelings, and the sensibilities. Then on the matter of “pouring out”, the whole idea is one of superabundance and of a great profusion.’ The Doctor then goes on to illustrate this matter by quoting a letter from Henry Venn to the Countess of Huntingdon. Venn had just lost his wife by death and was left with five young children. ‘Did I not know the Lord to be mine, were I not certain his heart feels even more love for me than I am able to conceive, were not this evident to me, not by deduction and argument, but by consciousness, by his own light shining into my soul as the sun’s doth upon my bodily eyes, into what a deplorable situation should I have now been cast?’ The Doctor then draws attention to the directness of the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart and not merely by ‘intellectual deduction or argument’.<sup>12</sup>

## 5. *Revival*

Related to experimental religion is revival. In commemoration of the 1859 revival ML-J preached a series of sermons on revival in 1959 but in the Christian world at large little interest was shown in that subject. He often stressed the need of 'the baptism of the Spirit' by which he meant empowerment and assurance. We do not always agree with the terminology he used but there can be no doubt that spiritual empowerment is what is needed and what is so often lacking today. He believed passionately in the reality of revival, that is fresh and larger enduements of the Holy Spirit's grace and power. Few evangelicals have that passion and expectation today. The more time that passes the more revival seems to be viewed as something belonging to history, something unlikely to be given again.

Volume 4 of the Doctor's series of sermons on Ephesians 4:1-16 has the title *Christian Unity*. Even though it is only marginally connected to the theme of unity ML-J breaks into the series with a complete sermon on revival. In this exposition he asserts, 'There is no subject which is of greater importance, or of greater urgency, for the consideration of the Christian Church today than this subject of Revival. If I have any understanding of the times, if I have any understanding of the biblical teaching concerning the nature of the Church, and the work of the Holy Spirit, I do not hesitate to assert that the only hope for the Church at the present time lies in Revival. I see no hope in any kind of movement or organisation or any special effort planned by men. The one supreme need of the Church is Revival.'

He then goes on to define revival as a repetition in some degree or in some measure of that which happened on the Day of Pentecost.

The spiritual awakenings of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in countries such as Korea, China, Indonesia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Romania, Nepal and Sarawak show these convictions to be correct.

Although he never attempted to organise a concert of prayer for revival the Doctor was close to the theology of Jonathan Edwards on that subject. Edwards believed (see his book *The History of Redemption*)



that this world will eventually be evangelised from one end to the other through outpourings of the Holy Spirit. The Doctor was not as optimistic as that but his view of the importance of revival in Church history is beyond question.

We must do everything possible to promote the gospel at home and abroad and at the same time pray with passion for revival. That in essence was the view of ML-J.

Foundational to the Doctor's life was the practice of taking time every day for daily Bible reading and prayer. Family prayer marked the close of every day. More than ever we need to give serious attention to our standards of devotional life and to the fruit of the Spirit. His two volumes, *The Sermon on the Mount*, endorse that emphasis and undergird the five legacies described above.

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<sup>1</sup> D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *The First Forty Years, 1899-1939*, Iain Murray, 393 pp, Banner of Truth, 1982, p. 166

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*, p. 244-246

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*, p 100

<sup>4</sup> D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones – *The Fight of Faith*, Iain Murray 1939-1981, p. 251.

<sup>5</sup> Iain Murray invited me to become the manager of the Banner of Truth Trust in 1957 which publishing venture was born in that year. David Fountain became pastor of Spring Road Evangelical Church where he ministered to his retirement in about 1996. He was the first to invite me to preach. When I arrived he placed a Geneva gown over my shoulders. This was in imitation of the Doctor who wore a Geneva gown in the pulpit on Sundays! That was the only time I ever wore clerical garb.

<sup>6</sup> Ian Stackhouse, *The Gospel-Driven Church – Retrieving Classical Ministries for Contemporary Revivalism*, Paternoster, 2004. p. 93

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid* p. 81

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>9</sup> THE FINDER, Banner of Truth magazine 1955 —, Reformation Today 1970 —, Westminster/Puritan Conference 1955 —, diskette or CD, The Christian Bookshop, Alfred Place, ABERYSTWYTH, SY23 2BS, UK. E mail emk@aber.ac.uk Hardback £13.95 in UK including postage. Tentmaker Publications, 121 Hartshill Road, Hartshill, STOKE ON TRENT, ST4 7LU, UK

<sup>10</sup> D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones – *The Fight of Faith*, 1939-1981, Iain Murray, p.219ff

<sup>11</sup> D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1971, p. 118

<sup>12</sup> *Romans*, Vol 4, Assurance (5:1-21)

### Sudan

The Sudan is the largest country in Africa in terms of landmass. It has a population of about 40 million. Khartoum is the capital with 4.2 million. There are 244 ethnic groups in Sudan. The main languages used are Arabic, Nubian and English. The overall literacy rate is roughly 61 percent.

From the media the impression is that Sudan is a land of hopelessly irreconcilable conflicts, enormous complexity, and barbaric attempts by an unjust regime to destroy by genocide unwanted peoples including Muslim non-Arabs in Darfur. It is important not to give up in despair. Rather we must be patient in prayer and try and understand the history of Sudan and the present scenario.

The northern region is ancient Nubia settled by Egyptians. There was widespread conversion to Coptic Christianity in the sixth century. The Arabs brought Islamisation in the fifteenth century. The south is predominantly tribal. The majority of Southern Sudanese Christians are first or second generation converts from tribal religions. There is always the problem of syncretism, the joining of animistic practices with Christianity. There is special need to apply biblical teaching in marriage,

the home and work. It takes time to develop a biblical worldview. Also, as has been seen many times in European history (eg. conflicts in Ulster, and in Yugoslavia), it takes a long time for the gospel of reconciliation to heal people who have been involved in and injured by inter-tribal conflicts and wars.

In our modern era a great impact was made on the tribes of the south by Christian missionaries. The conversion of millions of Nuer, Dinka, Anuak, Shilluk, Murle and other tribes represents a major contemporary spiritual awakening akin to that in Guatemala and El Salvador. Muslim leaders responded to that by pouring in huge resources to reverse the trend to Christianity in the south of Sudan.

In 1983 the introduction of Islamic legislation by Arab Muslim northerners controlling the Sudanese government (supported by Saudi Arabia and Iran) intensified civil war with the African tribes in the south. This resulted in much suffering and the domination of Islamic political power. In 1989 an extremist Islamic scholar Hassan al-Torabi, and an army general Omar al-Bashir orchestrated a military *coup d'état*. An Islamic republic was proclaimed. Al-Torabi declared that the complete Islamisation of Sudan would be achieved by the end of 1997. In this

he was supported by Islamic countries. Thousands of trained Islamic missionaries from Egypt, Pakistan, Nigeria, Iran and other nations arrived in Sudan. An ambitious program was launched to islamise the south using the means of medical aid, schools and food. This Islamisation included the imposition of the Arabic language on the tribal people of the south. The Sudanese tribes resisted this imperial imposition. Southern tribal and military leaders were inspired to lead a liberation movement.

In the upheaval that followed hundreds of thousands of tribal African Sudanese converts from animism to Christianity were driven by the civil war to the north. In their poverty a small proportion under pressure converted to Islam but many organised themselves into evangelical/reformed congregations, particularly in Khartoum. In the meantime the northern Islamic leadership became divided. Torabi lost his power and was put under house arrest. The Islamisation effort faltered. Financial resources dried up and most Islamic missionaries left. Last year as the outcome of much effort a peace agreement ended the civil war. A power sharing arrangement between the northern Arabs and southern African tribes came into being.

The Islamist imposition in the south opened many hearts to the gospel. Evangelists emerged who made an immense impact. At this time the

reformed community has advanced from the southeast to all of the south, the Nuba Mountains and the north. It now numbers close to four million.

Most southern Sudanese remain illiterate and that includes some elders and deacons. The number of trained pastors to meet the needs is totally inadequate. It will take years to redress this need with theological education. There are agencies seeking to meet this challenge.

Contrary to predominant pessimism about making an impact in a society dominated by Islam it must be noted that growing numbers of young Arabs in the north of Sudan are disenchanted with their religious traditions. This is similar to the situation in Iran. Some have become ardent disciples of Christ and already some are ordained pastors, evangelists or elders.

## **Qatar**

With an area of 11,400 square km which is almost all desert, Qatar is an Arabian peninsular with a population of about 600,000, mostly expatriate. Qatar was under British protection until independence in 1971. Qatar has huge gas reserves and oil wealth.

The first Christian church since the arrival of Islam in the 7th century is to be built on land donated by the reform-minded Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani.

The US\$7 million Church of the Epiphany will not have a spire or freestanding cross since Clive Handford, the Nicosia-based Anglican Bishop in Cyprus and the Gulf, says: 'We are there as guests in a Muslim country and we wish to be sensitive to our hosts . . . but once you're inside the gates it will be quite obvious that you are in a Christian centre.'

Qatar's Anglican community is estimated to number between 7,000 and 10,000 people. Ian Young, who has been the chief Anglican priest in Doha since 1991 stated that 'Our church is like a microcosm of the Anglican community. I've got 28 nationalities from every continent.'

Dr. Young from Perth, in Scotland, will run the new church.

Catholics, who comprise the majority of Qatar's 70,000 Christian expatriates, Egyptian Coptic Christians, and Indian Christians will also have land donated to them by the Emir of Qatar.

## **Burma**

*Report by Pastor Simon Robinson*

News from Burma (Myanmar) is quite rare but after visiting the country this January I am able to report that the Church is thriving there! Although evangelism is not allowed many have come to faith and

the local churches have found some very inventive ways of spreading the gospel. One pastor in Yangon planted a church with a handful of people a few years ago and through personal witness he has been able to lead many people to the Lord. The fellowship now has more than 50 members with many having come from a Buddhist background. They run a small workshop which makes garments. This provides employment and has been a very effective way of reaching people.

My fellow travellers were Ken Brownell (East London Tabernacle), Clive Anderson (the Butts Evangelical Church, Alton), Chris Hughes (Eastleigh Evangelical Church) and Jim Winter (Horsham Evangelical Church). The program was similar to the one we followed last year. The whole team had the privilege of addressing a conference aiming to equip pastors in expository preaching, which was held at the YMCA in Yangon. This was the first time the conference had been held so attendance was relatively modest, although it grew on the second day. The organizers were very encouraged, and God willing plan to hold another next year. We were also able to teach at the All Nations Training Scheme, the Evangelical Bible Seminary, the New Life College, Grace Seminary and the Myanmar Institute of Theology. On the Lord's Day we were privileged to preach in different churches.



*Pastors in prayer on a roof-top in Burma*

In Mandalay the team took a Bible conference for Church leaders that had been organised by the pastor of the Baptist Church. There were about 200 people attending and everyone had great enthusiasm to listen to the Word of God being expounded.

Although the people of Burma are going through a very difficult time we rejoice that the Lord is building his church there. Please pray for the pastors who are caring for large churches with scant resources and for the believers who are living in very difficult conditions.

## **Sweden**

### *Report from Don Ritter*

We have been here now over 40 years, upheld by the grace of our faithful God! Sorry that I have not been very good about communicating with the

outside world during the past ten years, but we are still alive and well. At the end of 1998 we published the last issue of our magazine: *Det Står Skrivet (It is written)*. That was after 25 years of publication. Two years later we closed down the rest of our literature ministry. At the same time the manager and part-owner of a large Christian book shop in downtown Gothenburg asked me to come and work for him part-time, giving me full responsibility for the English division of the work. In this way I could continue our long literature ministry in Sweden. There I have been since – a little over six years, working with old customers and new.

For the last four to five years we have been attending the large Baptist Church (about 450 members) in downtown Gothenburg. The pastor is a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary, Texas, and an excellent communicating preacher. We have a



very large group of university students in attendance. There are many fine, godly Christians in the church especially among the older members and we do enjoy good fellowship. I have had a number of opportunities to teach in the church's 'Bible School'. I also lead the Bible Studies in a small house group in our neighbourhood, as well as teaching a short course in Systematic Theology with a small group of young men (ages about 25-30). So there are some excellent opportunities for service in the church.

A couple of years ago there was a group of young Presbyterians from Sweden that attended the Carey Pastors' Conference. I have had much contact with them and have sought to be an encouragement. My wife and I visit them at various intervals and enjoy the Christian fellowship. On any given Sunday there are about 25-30 in attendance, mostly young people and young families. They have now, since November 2005, established a small Presbyterian Church in Tranås, Sweden, about 3 hours from Gothenburg on the way to Stockholm. They are firmly committed to the Westminster Confession. We are thankful for this encouraging addition to the Swedish church scene. They hope to do some publishing in the near future, beginning with Packer's *Knowing God* and two books by R C Sproul. They also plan to have a website and have asked me for permission to use some of the many materials that I published in our magazine, a number

of which are taken from *Reformation Today*.

Hopefully there has been some lasting fruit from the thousands of excellent books in English that we sold, as well as the books we published in Swedish, and our magazine during 25 years. A new venture of creating a Reformed website could just be the tool the Lord might be pleased to use to reach out further in Sweden. I am still a faithful reader of *Reformation Today*.

Titteridammshöjden 8, SE 424 68  
Angered, SWEDEN Telephone: +46-31-330 60 07, e-mail: don@detss.se

## USA

*The Midwest Center for Theological Studies, Owensboro, Kentucky.*

Progress is being made to provide theological studies in the context of the local church. Resident professor is Dr Sam Waldron. Fred Malone, Tom Nettles, Tom Ascol and Don Whitney are visiting tutors. What makes this work significant is that it is a marriage of the academic with practical godliness and its ethos is the local church. This initiative from Heritage Baptist Church, Owensboro, is an example to other churches in other nations. An attractive brochure is available.

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## Blest be the Tie that Binds?

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### *Efforts to Unite Baptists in Scotland prior to 1870*

*Brian Talbot*

How should Baptist churches express in a practical way their unity with each other? Complete isolation from other causes is not scriptural nor is union at the expense of truth acceptable. It is a subject that will constantly provide a challenge to Baptists who, in order to be true to their principles, believe in the autonomy of the local congregation, together with interdependence amongst churches of similar principles. Scottish Baptists prior to 1870 made several attempts to address this subject with varying degrees of success. There was an early attempt amongst the Scotch Baptists to emphasise that unity is uniformity, but that unsuccessful model is unlikely to be copied today. Brief comments will be made on the three main attempts to form a union of churches in the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

#### **1. Maintaining the Old Paths: The 1827 Baptist Union**

The body within Scottish Baptist circles that had been the largest part

of its constituency at the start of the nineteenth century, the Scotch Baptists, had shown signs of its future demise by the 1820s when its more liberally minded congregations sought to work more closely with other Baptist traditions in Scotland, to the evident disapproval of others in their ranks. The momentum towards union, though, had gathered pace in the late 1820s principally due to the desire on the part of the majority of all the networks of Scottish Baptists to work together in home evangelisation. This process culminated in the formation of the Baptist Home Missionary Society for Scotland, a body that encompassed the mission agencies of its constituent members. Union in this body resulted in a greater income and the consequent benefits of employing a greater number of evangelists to lead its activities. Morale was high as an increasing number of church members saw the practical fruits of greater co-operation.

The logical next step was a desire for a union of autonomous Baptist churches in Scotland. In the Spring of 1827 there was a series of meetings that culminated in the decision in June 1827 to form the first Baptist Union of Scotland. The groundswell of support for this venture was clear

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<sup>1</sup> A copy of the fuller version of the original Carey Conference paper, including footnotes, can be obtained from the author at [brtalbot@breathemail.net](mailto:brtalbot@breathemail.net)

from the fact that twenty-eight out of sixty-two Baptist churches, 45% of the total number, opted to join the union. The significance of this percentage was that it was only in 1869, in the fourth and enduring Baptist Union, that the allegiance of a higher proportion of Baptist causes was gained for this initiative in Scotland. There were also churches joining this body from each of the three Baptist streams, although in terms of their proportions the Scotch Baptists were under-represented compared to the Haldaneite and 'English' Baptists, reflecting the reservations held by many in that part of the constituency about aspirations for a union of churches in which uniformity in all ecclesiastical matters was not required. The chances of success appeared to be strengthened by a strong leadership team and by a good geographical representation of urban and rural congregations throughout Scotland from Aberdeen in the north-east to Hawick in the south of the country. In addition, the strength of sharing the same Calvinistic theological heritage could be assumed, although there were some ecclesiological differences between these groups, but these were small in comparison to the things held in common. These factors ought to have guaranteed the success of this Baptist Union, but by 1830 it had ceased to function.

What was the catalyst for the failure of this innovative venture amongst Scottish Baptist churches, because,

by contrast, the Home Missionary Society had gone from strength to strength since its inception, also in 1827? There were two stumbling blocks that had to be addressed. The lesser of the two issues here was the Scotch Baptist fear of doctrinal and ecclesiological compromise. The small number of congregations from this Baptist stream that had joined the union had been under pressure from other Scotch Baptist causes to ensure that they had not 'compromised' their principles. The major issue was a controversy concerning James Watson, minister of Montrose Scotch Baptist Church. Watson had preached for one Sunday in Clyde Street Hall Scotch Baptist Church in Edinburgh. Given that Scotch Baptist elders regularly preached in each other's congregations this in itself was uncontroversial; however, on some unknown occasion(s) the Montrose minister was suspected of having uttered Arminian sentiments in his own pulpit. Archibald Smith, an elder of the Clyde Street Church, and his own congregation would have readily agreed to separate themselves from James Watson, as Scotch Baptists regularly dissociated themselves from individuals or churches deemed to be less than orthodox, but it was another matter altogether to persuade the churches from other Baptist traditions represented in the Baptist Union to do the same thing - after all, neither the Montrose church nor its minister had applied to join the Union! It is probable that only Scotch Baptists

would ever have entertained such a notion. In the twenty-first century it is difficult to comprehend how a difficulty of this sort could result in the dissolution of a most promising initiative. Documents regarding the later stages of the Union have not survived, but it is clear that the inability of Scotch Baptists to comprehend the compromises necessary for this new body to function had caused its demise.

## **2. Uniformity precedes Unity: The Baptist Union of Scotland 1843-56**

A small Scottish Baptist Association (SBA) existed between 1835 and 1842, but it attracted little support from the churches. In 1842 a new and young Baptist minister with a charismatic personality, Francis Johnston, joined this body. His dynamic impact was such that he was invited to become the secretary of this organisation and to have the honour of writing the annual circular letter for the following year. This practice was long established amongst the English Baptist Associations, and gave an opportunity for one of the ministers to put before his colleagues and other church leaders an address on a particular subject deemed pertinent to their current situation. The vision outlined at the July 1843 assembly was centred on evangelism and the means whereby Scottish Baptists could more effectively reach the

unchurched people of the country, especially in the growing urban communities of the central belt of Scotland. He called for the employment of more full and part-time evangelists; more imaginative use of evangelistic literature; a greater focus on church-planting and the renewal of struggling causes, based on careful and strategic planning for the implementation of his vision. In the first seven years to 1850 affiliated churches had risen in number from sixteen to thirty-eight, though these were only 39% of the ninety-eight Baptist churches in Scotland; the geographical spread was transformed with churches from the Shetland Isles to the Borders and from Aberdeen across to the Isle of Skye. A theological tolerance of both Arminian and Calvinist opinions within their midst pointed to a very different kind of future spiritual life within Baptist circles in Scotland. This period of steady and sustained growth both in the quality of relationships between Scottish Baptists and the numbers of members and churches associated with the Baptist Union came to an abrupt halt in 1850, as a result of the adoption of a new vision for the future that had come from the Union secretary Francis Johnston.

The seeds of the inevitable failure of this national agency were planted as early as December 1845 when the proposed merger of the Union with the better supported Baptist Home

Missionary Society (BHMS) was rejected. The offer of uniting these two organisations had come from the Calvinistic leaders of the BHMS and had the support of the majority of the churches, yet Johnston, increasingly opposed to Calvinistic theological views and unwilling to yield some of his executive powers, vetoed the proposal and somehow persuaded both the Union executive and the annual assembly that the time was not propitious for such a step. There was a strong and passionate response to Johnston from the BHMS leaders in an open letter published in *The Free Church Magazine*, a sign that the good will that had been granted to Johnston by all sections of the Baptist community in Scotland in 1842 had now been forfeited. The initial inclusive vision of Johnston had dissipated, but it was not until April 1849 that his new perspective on the way ahead was revealed. It was a complete reversal of his former views; now unity required uniformity and that was entering uncharted waters for many of the independent-minded Scottish Baptists.

When the 1827 Baptist Union leaders set out the principles on which their Union was based there were reasonable grounds for expecting almost universal agreement within the Baptist community in Scotland. By contrast, when Johnston persuaded the 1849 Baptist Union assembly to agree that from 1 January 1850 the Baptist Union would stand

for militant Arminian views as this viewpoint presents 'the only consistent view of the character of the triune God', he knew it would cost him a sizeable proportion of union members, but this was apparently a price worth paying.

'We have counted the cost. Our principles we cannot renounce for friendship's sake... We calculate on the defection of those friends, with whom we differ in sentiment... The spread of truth, so important, is worthy of labour, of self-denial and sacrifice... We ask no favour.'

Within less than three years the Union had collapsed, though it continued in name only for a further three years until Johnston left Scotland in January 1856. What factors precipitated this dramatic collapse? First of all the total breakdown of relations with Home Mission leaders, a group of men who were the most prominent and influential of the older ministers in the denomination. This ensured that Johnston's task of leading the Union was now guaranteed to be extremely difficult. Secondly, differences in methodology between the Union secretary and older colleagues were magnified by Johnston's confrontational style. A third factor was Johnston's controversial book, *The Work of God and the Work of Man in Conversion*, which was overloaded with passionate phraseology, but was extremely thin on edifying

theological content. Some years later in March 1861 at a BHMS committee meeting Johnston apologised for writing some unorthodox theological views in that book concerning the work of the Holy Spirit and declared that he now was fully convinced of mainstream opinions on that subject. An older, wiser Francis Johnston realised by the 1860s that trying to impose theological uniformity on the Baptist denomination in Scotland had been disastrous and taken together with his aggressive leadership style had destroyed the very initiatives he had been seeking to develop. In future a very different approach to union needed to be adopted.

### **3. Unity includes Diversity: The Genesis of the 1869 Baptist Union**

The final and successful attempt to unite Scottish Baptists began in 1856 with the formation of a society of interested individuals called the Scottish Baptist Association. Its activities culminated in the constitution of the third Baptist Union in 1869 which quickly gained and retained the support of the overwhelming majority of Baptist causes in Scotland. There were a number of reasons for this development. First of all there was a more realistic attitude to theological differences. Calvinists and Arminians had to work together and acknowledge each others' ministries. The excesses of the later years of

Francis Johnston had produced a new realism on the part of ministers and churches. They were now more willing to work with each other accommodating their different emphases. A focus on promoting an evangelical faith was the direction adopted.

A second factor was the inclusion of the ministers and churches from the large urban areas in the central belt of Scotland. The leaders of this SBA were determined to learn from the mistakes of the previous Union in failing to engage with Glasgow and Edinburgh ministers and their churches. Each year, but especially in the 1860s, the gatherings of the SBA grew in numbers. The organisers of these events deliberately alternated assemblies between Glasgow and Edinburgh and utilised the premises of more than one Baptist church in each city for these events, together with a dinner in a suitable temperance hotel to encourage fellowship outside the context of formal meetings. When this strategy was placed alongside the equally wise invitations to different ministers from churches outside these cities to lead particular parts of the programme, it is not difficult to see how these confidence-building measures were extremely fruitful in strengthening the support base of this venture.

One external factor that transformed the life of many denominations was the 1859 religious revival. The 1859



annual meetings heard that one of the grounds for Baptists working more closely together in Scotland in the late 1850s was in order to experience 'a larger outpouring of the Spirit of God...the report gratefully acknowledged that many of the churches connected with the Baptist denomination had participated in these tokens of God's mercy and grace.' The revival reports in the Baptist newspaper *The Freeman*, provided by Glasgow Baptist minister John Williams, emphasised the pan-denominational nature of the prayer meetings and other services. A comment made of the churches in Eyemouth, Berwickshire, including the local Baptist church, was representative of what was happening in many communities in Scotland at that time. 'The most cordial union exists among the ministers of the town, as well as among all Christians. Denominationalism is out of sight, and all are cooperating most heartily on behalf of Christ alone.' The spirit of the revival continued into the 1860s. The 1861 SBA annual report declared that the SBA was '...designed to promote the cause of revivals'. Cooperation with other Christian churches showed the benefits of this ecumenical activity and ensured that by the early 1860s Scottish Baptists saw the advantages of working much closer with each other.

An equally important external factor was the influence of the London

Baptist Association (LBA) and the settlement of ministers in Scotland who had been trained at the Pastors' College in London by Charles Spurgeon. This Baptist minister, together with clerical colleagues William Brock and William Landels, formed the LBA in 1865. The church-planting successes and track record in getting Metropolitan Baptists to work together was second to none. Spurgeon's former students began settling in Scottish Baptist churches from 1859 and by 1870 twenty-five men were in pastorates and promoting a case for a union of Baptist churches. The presence of individuals who could testify to the success of the LBA was the final confirmation needed before a union of churches was launched in 1869 with fifty-one churches in membership, a figure rising to eighty-three out of ninety-two a decade later in 1879.

These English Baptist ministers had not convinced their Scottish colleagues of the need for a union of churches, or that joint efforts were required although these points were almost universally accepted in this ecclesiastical constituency. What they had done was to demonstrate that this proposed course of action had worked in London and, therefore, was most likely to succeed also in Scotland. At the heart of this successful union, launched in 1869, was the recognition that in order to prosper unity must include diversity within its ranks.

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## Mao's Reign of Terror

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*Review article by Albert Mohler*

### **Mao: The Unknown Story by Jung Chang and Jon Halliday**

Our moral imagination is haunted by monsters, and the greatest aspect of this horror is the fact that so many monsters are real. Is the world ready to face the reality of Mao Zedong?

For the last seven decades or so, Mao has been a focus of admiration among many on the Left. Many Americans have known Mao primarily through the work of sympathetic biographers who became champions of the Chinese Communist regime. For many others Mao has remained a man of mystery, whose true character and legacy have been hidden from western eyes. All that is about to change. The publication of *Mao: The Unknown Story* by Jung Chang and her husband Jon Halliday will force a radical reformulation of western understandings of Mao-and the book is virtually certain to exercise a vast influence within China as well.

Ms Chang, author of the much-acclaimed novel *Wild Swans*, has, with her husband, historian Jon Halliday – produced a devastating analysis of Mao and his legacy. They do not present a pretty picture.

‘I decided to write about Mao because I was fascinated by this man,

who dominated my life in China, and who devastated the lives of my fellow countrymen,’ Ms Chang recounts. ‘He was as evil as Hitler or Stalin, and did as much damage to mankind as they did. Yet the world knows astonishingly little about him.’

Why is this so? Writing in the October 2005 issue of *Commentary*, Arthur Waldron, Professor of International Relations at the University of Pennsylvania, draws a distinction between the popular rejection of Adolf Hitler and the celebration of Mao.

‘The 20<sup>th</sup> century was remarkable not only for the number and scale of the atrocities it witnessed but also for the slowness with which these frightful events were recognized for what they were, let alone condemned,’ Waldron observes. This was certainly true of the Holocaust, but Adolf Hitler is almost unanimously acknowledged as one of the greatest criminals in history. His name is met with revulsion, and those who would celebrate Hitler’s legacy are rightly considered the enemies of humankind.

Not so with Mao. As Waldron notes, ‘Today, no one in his right mind would put a portrait of Hitler in his house. Yet, in many places in the West, Mao kitsch-posters, badges,

busts, and so forth – is still considered not only acceptable but even fashionable.’

Mao’s positive reputation in the West was made possible largely through the nefarious efforts of historians and writers who sacrificed the truth in order to further Mao’s interests. The prime example of this propaganda literature is *Red Star Over China* by journalist Edgar Snow. We now know that Snow was duped by Mao and that Maoist authorities edited the book in order to meet their own purposes. Beyond this, many of the events detailed in the book are now known never to have happened. As historian Keith Windschuttle recounts, Snow transformed the reputation of Mao and the Chinese Communists. ‘He portrayed Mao and his supporters as heroic figures, dedicated to liberating their country from both the foreign invaders and the hopelessly corrupt Nationalists.’ According to Windschuttle, ‘Snow’s book played a major role in converting public opinion in both America and Europe towards a more favorable view of Mao. Its biggest impact, however, was in China itself, where it had a profound influence on radical youth.’

Edgar Snow would eventually be discredited as a journalist, and his book would be revealed to be little more than baseless propaganda. Nevertheless, the book remains in print and its impact continues.

Other leftist writers and figures joined Snow in praising Mao and his regime. John K Fairbank, a Harvard professor, returned from a visit to China and remarked: ‘The Maoist revolution is on the whole the best thing that has happened to the Chinese people in centuries.’ Feminist philosopher Simone de Beauvoir excused Mao’s murderous regime by arguing that ‘the power [he] exercises is no more dictatorial than, say, Roosevelt’s was’. Jean-Paul Sartre, de Beauvoir’s consort, celebrated Mao’s ‘revolutionary violence’, declaring it to be ‘profoundly moral’.

Waldron points to the fact that there has been no repudiation or re-evaluation of Mao’s leadership within China. ‘China has never repudiated Mao as Khrushchev did Stalin at the Party Congress of 1956,’ he notes. Mao’s face continues to shine over Tiananmen Square, and his cult of personality continues, even as his embalmed body remains the nation’s central object of veneration.

The official party line about Mao presents him as a liberator who emerged as the popular leader of a revolt against oppression, both foreign and domestic. The ‘Mao Myth’ centers in claims of heroism during the ‘Long March’ of 1934-1935, when Mao and his Communists supposedly fled from their base in the south of China to a refuge in the north.

Edgar Snow constructed the myth of the Long March in order to present Mao as a heroic figure who deserved popular support and foreign respect. As it turns out, the account was a total fabrication. Even the famous crossing of the suspension bridge over the Dadu River turns out to have been pure fiction.

This much is clear – Mao wasn't counting on the opening of the Soviet State archives. Jung Chang and Jon Halliday have performed a massive feat of research, drawing from personal research, hundreds of interviews, and years spent researching historical documents—especially those released with the fall of the Soviet Union.

Now, as Ms. Chang makes clear, Mao is revealed as 'the biggest mass murderer in the history of the world'.

That is quite a statement, of course. Yet, even by the murderer standards of the twentieth century, Mao emerges as the greatest murderer of them all. Chang and Halliday carefully document their claim that at least seventy million people died as a direct result of Mao's policies. They died as victims of his cult of personality, and their lives were sacrificed to nothing more than Mao's desire for bloodlust and personal power.

Reviewing the evidence, Arthur Waldron agrees: 'Mao was the greatest mass murderer of the 20<sup>th</sup>

century. Much of the killing was direct, as in the torture and purges at Yan'an. After the Communist seizure of power in 1949, the practice became countrywide. Mao set his numerical targets openly, and stressed the "revolutionary" importance of killing.'

Li Rui, a former secretary to Mao, sent a paper to a conference held at Harvard University two years ago. She declared that 'Mao was a person who did not fear death and he did not care how many were killed. Tens of millions of people suffered during every political movement and millions starved to death.'

Like so many other mass murderers Mao developed a taste for killing. After watching peasants kill their landlords during an uprising in the late 1920s, Mao wrote a poem: 'Watch us kill the bad landlords today. Aren't you afraid? It's knife slicing upon knife.' Mao suggested that the landlords be killed more slowly in order to magnify their agony.

Being close to Mao didn't help. When Chou Enlai, Mao's closest associate, was diagnosed with bladder cancer, Mao insisted that Chou should never be told of the condition nor treated for it. Thus, Chou Enlai died slowly and painfully.

Mao's cult of personality took programmatic shape in his erratic campaigns. The 'Hundred Flowers campaign' was followed by the tragic

‘Great Leap Forward’, which was in turn followed by the ‘Cultural Revolution’. Eventually, all of these movements ended with murderous purges that removed any competitors to Mao’s personality cult.

Michael Yahuda, Professor Emeritus at the London School of Economics, provides one of the most concise descriptions of Mao and his legacy. ‘Mao had none of the skills usually associated with a successful revolutionary leader. He was no orator and he lacked either idealism or a clear ideology. He was not even a particularly good organizer. But he was driven by a personal lust for power. He came to dominate his colleagues through a mixture of blackmail and terror. And he seems to have enjoyed every minute of it. Indeed what he learned from his witnessing of a peasant uprising in his home province of Hunan in 1927 was that he derived a sadistic pleasure from seeing people put to death in horrible ways and generally being terrified. During the Cultural Revolution he watched films of the violence and of colleagues being tortured.’

The cult of Mao has continued, especially in the West, because the Left has never repudiated the man, his Party, and his tyrannical and murderous regime.

Within China Mao is still presented as a great man. One Communist Party statement oddly judged Mao to be ‘70% good’ and ‘a great Marxist’.

Chang and Halliday have performed a tremendous public service in researching and writing this important book. As Arthur Waldron rightly observes, ‘This is the book that will wreck Mao’s reputation beyond salvage.’ This can’t happen too soon.

Chang and Halliday begin their book with a simple declaration: ‘Mao Tse-Tung, who for decades held absolute power over the lives of one quarter of the world’s population, was responsible for well over 70 million deaths in peacetime, more than any other twentieth-century leader.’ We should be thankful that the truth is now known.

*Mao: The Unknown Story* is certain to be banned in China. Nevertheless, in today’s information economy, this book will be difficult to hide. If the truth ever gets out, China is likely to experience a genuine cultural revolution.

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*R Albert Mohler, Jr. is president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. For more articles and resources by Dr. Mohler, and for information on the Albert Mohler Program, a daily national radio program broadcast on the Salem Radio Network, go to [www.albertmohler.com](http://www.albertmohler.com).*

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## First Carey Conference in Africa

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### Harare – Zimbabwe

*17-19 February, 2006*

*By Dennis Hustedt*



Many countries in Africa are in turmoil. Zimbabwe, a one time paradise, is desperate. Starvation is a present reality. There could hardly be a more unpropitious place for an annual Carey Conference to be launched.

The story began in October 2005 when I had the pleasure of conferring with Joseph Soko, pastor of Harare Reformed Baptist Church. This was at a pastors' fraternal in Pretoria. I had not seen Joseph since 2001. At the Lusaka conference that year Pastor Conrad Mbewe enthusiastically welcomed Joseph to the large gathering as the first pastor from Zimbabwe to ever attend the Lusaka conference. Now, more than four years later Joseph and I had opportunity to discuss whether the time was ripe for a conference to be launched in Harare.

We established that a good time to hold a conference would be 17-19 February, 2006. What a blessing it was. Sixty pastors and about twenty pastors' wives gathered for the first Carey Conference held at the YWCA in Harare. The time was packed with teaching and

fellowship. Jeff Gage and I were the speakers. Lynnette Hustedt and Deborah Gage spoke to the pastors' wives. Erroll and Lyn Hulse were also scheduled to be with us but were unable to participate due to an accident sustained by Lyn at Johannesburg airport on 10th January that required complex surgery. Erroll spearheaded raising funds for the conference while Joseph Soko and his team in Harare made all the necessary preparations.

The YWCA facility was very appropriate for our needs. While the building itself had seen better days it was an excellent venue. The YWCA staff did everything in their power to make our time with them enjoyable. We were impressed by the basic, yet delicious food. When we inquired about this we learned that the YWCA was able to purchase directly from farmers. We were truly blessed given that so much of Zimbabwe is in the midst of a severe shortage of basic foodstuffs. Mealie meal (corn meal) is the most basic of necessities for the masses yet this is in critically short supply in many parts of the country.



Throughout the country, but particularly in the Bulawayo region, people are now literally starving to death. Survival, for many, is the goal of daily life.

I preached from Hebrews emphasising that Christ alone (not ancestors) is the Mediator and High Priest of his people. Jeff spoke on disciple-making and expository, Christ-centred preaching. The ladies' sessions focused on God's sovereignty and the submissive role of women (which four female pastors in attendance found quite 'interesting!'). We sensed the work of the Spirit as both Jeff and I enjoyed good freedom and power in preaching. The pastors were eager to learn and grow. We were pleased to see the overall understanding of the Word of God yet we also recognized how starved these men were for solid gospel preaching and an example of how to deliver the Word of God to the hearers. The examples most pastors receive are from the charismatic televangelists. We greatly enjoyed our time of fellowship with these dear brothers around the dinner table and throughout our time together.

Most of the pastors came from in and around Harare. Some, however came long distances and this showed their commitment as travel is difficult.

The conference was free for all the attendees. This was necessary because most of the pastors are desperately poor. Great numbers of pastors are in Zimbabwe who urgently need the advantages of an occasion like this.

There is a great hunger for God's Word and a desire to serve the Lord better.

One major purpose for the conference is to place the best Reformed literature into the hands of the pastors. Ten good-sized boxes of books arrived from England for the conference. Most of these were purchased at discounted rates from Evangelical Press, Banner of Truth and DayOne. Metropolitan Tabernacle in London where Joseph Soka studied also sent books. We divided the literature into three categories: commentaries, devotionals, and simplified Puritan classics. Pastors then took turns to choose books in such a way that everything was evenly shared out.

We were impressed by the warmth and hospitality of our Zimbabwean brothers and sisters. The Shona culture is impressive. Living in Durban where one is subject to so much crime and jostling it was refreshing to walk the streets of Harare and not be concerned for one's personal safety. Certain areas of the city that we visited are high crime areas, but downtown Harare was still clean and carefully policed. In the midst of intense poverty we were amazed to see people openly carrying bags of money in the streets without concern! The Zimbabwean dollar is now worthless in terms of international business. On the black market the US dollar fetches over one million Zimbabwean dollars. A new 50,000 dollar note has been introduced, but even with this new note exchanging 10,000 South African rand requires a large duffle bag.

Brother Joseph Soko gave us a tour of the larger metropolitan area of Harare. The airport is on the south side of town. From the airport we were taken to the area that only a few weeks prior had been the large informal market. It was now demolished and bulldozed by order of the State President. After recent good rain all that is noticeable are tall grasses covering what once was the business centre for thousands of traders.

Pastor Joseph and Plaxedes Soko are the parents of eight children. Two of the older children are now out of the home and working at a local restaurant. Nonetheless, six children and one grandchild live with Joseph and Plaxedes in their humble one-bedroom home. A very tiny room that holds some of Joseph's books is also the bedroom for two children. Four others sleep in a small backyard shack. Joseph had built a well-constructed small room in his back yard as sleeping quarters for some of his older children but authorities arrived last year and systematically knocked it down and removed it from his premises. They cited the lack of a proper permit for the demolition. The room has been replaced by a small vegetable garden.

Out of a typical charismatic background Pastor Joseph learned of the doctrines of grace from a pastor/missionary. Noting his giftedness the pastor/missionary opened a way for Joseph to attend the London Reformed Baptist Seminary during 1998-1999. He was away from

his family for two years but they proved to be of immense value in establishing Pastor Soko in the Reformed faith.

After a drive into the city Joseph took us eastward toward the more affluent section of Harare. We drove past the State President's sprawling residence. This main thoroughfare is closed from dusk to dawn due to the paranoia of Robert Mugabe that assassins might strike at night. Driving further eastward we came to an area called Borrowdale where luxurious homes are abundant. We walked through a beautiful outdoor mall. Unlike many of the other sections of town, the grocery store here was well-stocked with fruits, vegetables, meats and basic foodstuffs. While we were inside the store the lights went out and back-up generators came on. This is a daily occurrence we discovered. One of the white patrons of the store informed us that rolling blackouts are essential to keep the city from total darkness. Everyone who can afford a generator has one. The wealthy, she stated, no longer receive rubbish collection from the city, but are burning their rubbish in their plush back gardens. She also wondered how the poor blacks of Zimbabwe are keeping alive. A few hundred grams of mince meat would be 20% of an average worker's monthly wage.

There are small pockets of resistance in Zimbabwe, particularly in the southwest, in and around Bulawayo. Most resistance has come from women who boldly march against the increases in mealie meal and other basic

commodities. Such opposition is dealt with severely. The military and police, beholden to Robert Mugabe, are on high alert as rampant inflation makes most items on the store shelves out of reach to the masses. Traveling into an area of extreme poverty in Harare, we came to a sprawling market within Mbare Township. Mbare Township is made up of block after block of apartment complexes. Inside small apartments live sometimes two or three families. The rundown complexes are without water or electricity. Many families are too poor to hang curtains in the shattered windows. The market is a large, open area with a vast array of items for purchase, much of it illegally-imported goods being sold on the black market. In one area women are using massive pestles to pound tobacco leaves into snuff. Nearby is every imaginable herb or dried animal part for use as traditional medicine or in witchcraft rituals.

Next year's conference is already being planned for 125 pastors (male evangelicals only). Having the women taught by our wives was a great blessing. But we also discovered, as is the case throughout southern Africa, that there are elements of strident feminism, women who want to rule over the men. Zimbabwe, like Zambia and unlike South Africa, has a refreshingly strong number of men in the typical evangelical congregation. Most churches have men as overseers. However, many women within what would be considered evangelical churches are declaring themselves as

pastors, prophets, even apostles! Gently, but boldly, we had to meet this issue head-on during the question and answer sessions. By the end of the conference many men and women thanked us for stating clearly the necessity of male headship within the home and church.

Erroll Hulse and I have both stated our intentions to do what we can to raise the needed funds for such conferences as the one just held in Harare. A driving passion of mine is to see more of such conferences organised up in southern Africa. The combination of preaching, for its dual benefit of feeding the soul and providing an example to pastors of expository preaching, along with reformed literature is invaluable for building up the Church of Christ in this part of the world. We have already held our first such conference in Durban this past January. We are planning other conferences for 2007 in other parts of southern Africa. Lord willing, I plan to be in the States this summer and my prayer is that I might encourage God's people to support these conferences. The conference in Durban cost just \$6000 which included food and accommodation for 80 pastors for the two-day conference. Next year we hope to make it a three-day conference at a cost of approximately \$10,000. The cost of the Harare conference is also approximately \$10,000. We are looking for a heavenly provision so that we might have the finances available to inaugurate four or five conferences in 2007.

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## Reviews

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### EVANGELISTIC & DISCIPLESHIP RESOURCES

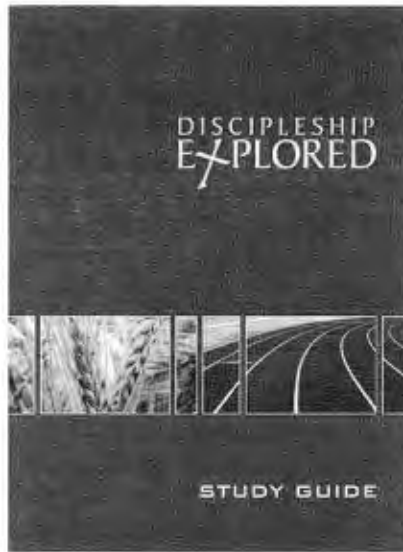
*Bill James*

#### **Christianity Explored DVD**

[www.christianityexplored.com](http://www.christianityexplored.com)

In the western world we are struggling against spiritual apathy and indifference, and looking for creative ways to present the gospel message. While we may not be happy with the content of the *Alpha* course, the format of a meal, a talk, and discussion groups is very attractive. Perhaps the most popular course of this form amongst conservative evangelical churches in the UK is *Christianity Explored*. This has been available on video for some time, but has now been re-released on DVD which is more flexible and convenient. Presented by Rico Tice at various locations around the UK, the course provides an excellent introduction to the Christian faith. There is a very clear emphasis on sin, the person of Christ, and the nature of his saving work on the cross. What is most striking is the course's focus on Scripture; it is clearly based on Mark's Gospel. Bible passages are read out during the presentation, and the course takes you through the whole Gospel highlighting the key elements of the teaching and saving work of Christ. The study guide encourages participants to read and study the Gospel of Mark for themselves.

The presentational quality of the DVD is excellent, and can be used in any setting: a large supper party, the home or workplace. There are 10 main sessions, with four additional sessions on the church, the Holy Spirit, the Bible and prayer. The DVD comes with a brief guide on leading the course; study guides for participants are also required.



#### **Discipleship Explored**

Leader's Guide ISBN 1904889638, Study Guide ISBN 1904889646

The Good Book Company

A new discipleship course has now been published to complement *Christianity Explored*. *Discipleship Explored* provides talk outlines and discussion

guides taking us through the book of Philippians. There is no video available as yet, so you have to give your own talks. This may be rather clumsy in a small group or one-to-one setting. However, the talk outlines in the Leader's Guide are in sufficient detail for an inexperienced speaker to use them as a good basis for his presentation. This could prove to be a good training experience for the speaker as well as helpful to the new believers who are listening. A talk also helps to keep the studies on track.

The guide includes an outline for daily devotions through the course, with suggested passages each day, and some study questions. Not only does this provide a good structure for a young believer, but it also gives continuity with the course by looking at complementary Bible passages and topics through the week. For example, after a session on Philippians 4:2-9 the daily devotions that week are on prayer, including Matthew 6, Paul's prayer in Colossians 1, and his prayer request in Colossians 4.

There are 8 sessions in all; the normal format for each is a talk and two sessions of group discussion. This is a very good study guide on Philippians, and a helpful course for new believers.

### **Introducing God DVD**

[www.introducinggod.org](http://www.introducinggod.org)

In addition to *Christianity Explored* there is now a new evangelistic video/DVD course available called *Introducing God*. This has been developed in Sydney, Australia by a group called 'Christians in Media'. It is already being used by

churches in the UK and elsewhere. Whereas *Christianity Explored* goes directly to the person of Jesus Christ, *Introducing God* starts a little 'further back' with an introductory talk based on Acts 17 acknowledging that we live in a pluralistic society with many views about what God is like. Then we are taken through the Bible storyline with talks on the creation account in Genesis 1, the fall in Genesis 3, the promise of God's King in Psalm 2, and the appearance of Jesus as the King in Luke 8. There are then talks on the meaning of the cross, and the resurrection. There is a call to discipleship, which is developed in the final 3 talks (recommended for a possible weekend away). The cost of commitment is clearly presented, along with salvation by grace, and a call to live in the light of heaven and hell. The structure of the course is based on the popular '2 ways to live' format, and the use of the familiar graphics is helpful.

There are always some niggles with any course. I didn't like one early illustration comparing God to a lonely grandmother; Genesis 1 is described as poetry; there are occasional brief clips of the Jesus video. But to focus on these negatives would be hyper-critical; overall the content is excellent. The presentation is of high quality (as one might expect from a group called 'Christians in Media'). Most of the time we are watching Dominic Steele speaking to a large room of people sitting around dinner tables. He is a very gifted communicator. Brief video clips are used to illustrate Dominic's points; these are usually but not always helpful. I found the presentation distinctly Australian (and one or two allusions are a little mysterious

to non-Australians), but probably most audiences would not find this too difficult.

The Presenter's Pack includes the DVDs for the sessions, discussion guides for course participants, a DVD to train course leaders, and attractive A4 full-colour posters and A6 invitation cards.

### **The World We All Want: a course on how the Bible really works**

Tim Chester & Steve Timmis

Authentic Media, 2005, 84pp, pb

ISBN 1850786364

This is an evangelistic Bible study course which begins with a vision of 'the world we all want' - the picture of heaven in Revelation 21-22. This is a good starting point with non-Christians who are well aware that all is not well with the world or their own lives. We are shown that Jesus gave us a glimpse of heaven in his own life and ministry - by healing sickness, subduing storms and demons, and even overcoming death. We are then taken back through the story of the Bible to give the background to all of this. We are introduced to the doctrines of creation and sin; God's promises to Abraham and how they worked out through Israel's history; the cross and resurrection as the provision of our salvation. Finally there is a study on what it means to be a Christian and part of God's people.

So in just seven sessions we have a brief overview of the Bible storyline. This course can be used on its own, or in conjunction with *Christianity Explored*;

the Gospel quotations are from Mark to help the connection with that course.

### **Christian Beliefs: 20 basics every Christian should know**

Wayne Grudem

IVP, 2005, 157pp, pb

ISBN 1844740889

Those looking for a brief introduction to Christian doctrine for new Christians should consider this very good little book. Wayne Grudem's substantial *Systematic Theology* has been warmly reviewed in *Reformation Today*; a condensed version, *Bible Doctrine*, is also available, but now the theology has been summarised in pocketbook form. This is not just a boiled down version of the larger *Theology*; Grudem has worked with his son Elliot (a graduate of Reformed Theological Seminary, Orlando) to produce a book which will be especially helpful to new believers. The 20 basic doctrines are presented as simple questions, eg: What is the Bible? What is the Trinity? What is sin? What is the atonement? and so on. Those familiar with Grudem's larger work will already know that he is capable of presenting theology in a warm and accessible manner. That is very evident here, along with a determination that young believers should see how the doctrines flow from the biblical text. So for example, on the doctrine of election, after quoting a number of texts which demonstrate this truth Grudem continues: 'It is important to note that these New Testament authors often present the doctrine of election as a comfort to all who believe in Jesus.' Romans 8:28 is then quoted and unpacked, along with the



surrounding verses in Romans 8 to show the comfort and assurance this doctrine brings. We are then reminded of how our salvation is all of God, and we are to live for his glory. The notion that election stunts evangelism is briefly refuted by showing that Paul understood election to be an incentive to his work. Fatalism is also dismissed, and the tension of free will and election is briefly but clearly explained. The question is raised whether God wants all to be saved, and this is developed in a helpful way. There is a brief section on common grace. Finally the chapter concludes with study questions for review and application.

Grudem is not cessationist with regard to spiritual gifts, but this is only referred to briefly. The contentious matter of eschatology is dealt with fairly. Appendices include the Apostles', Nicene and Chalcedonian Creeds, and the Chicago statement on biblical inerrancy. A number of evangelical Systematic Theologies are suggested for further reading.

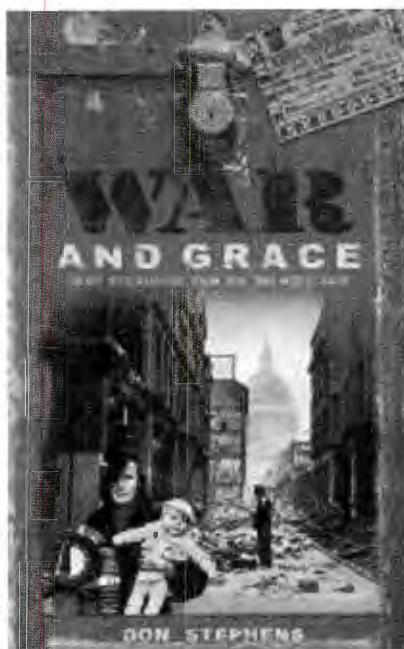
### **War and Grace: Short Biographies from the World Wars**

Don Stephens

Evangelical Press, 2005, 288pp.

ISBN 0852345941

This is an excellent collection of 13 well constructed biographies of those who were subjects of sovereign grace in the turmoil of the first and second world wars. These include the Japanese pilot Michiharu Shinya who led the attack on Pearl Harbour. He was later converted and became an effective evangelist in Japan and the USA. His biography taken from



this book by Don Stephens was printed in RT 201. That account is typical of the quality of these short biographies. The Jewish girl who found Christ while hiding from the Nazis is included and is an outstanding example of how Christians risked their lives to protect Jews. Included is the story of the US Army chaplain who served as spiritual adviser and chaplain to the top Nazi war criminals. The story of Zamperini the Olympic athlete is an example of the patience of God in redemption. These are powerful testimonies, which make a most engaging and encouraging book. It is no wonder that the first print run sold out in three months. This is an encouraging book for Christians and ideal to give away to non-Christian friends, especially those who remember the war or who had relatives who were caught up in the war. The publishers have done an excellent work in the style and layout of the book.

This book has been nominated for the UK Christian Book of the Year Award.

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