

REFORMATION TODAY



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Websites www.reformation-today.org

The editor's personal website is <http://www.errollhulse.com>

<http://africanpastorsconference.com>



Phil Roberts has served Reformation Today Trust for several years, annual meetings sometimes taking place in his home. Phil has been pastor of Hartshill Bible Church in Stoke-on-Trent for the past 12 years and was formerly a missionary for 18 years in the Republic of Ireland. He is known through the ministry of Tentmaker Publications, which he began while in Ireland. A number of superb titles have been made available (see Tentmaker website). Pastor Roberts has been actively involved helping churches in Burma. He is married to Joy and they have four sons. Phil has taken on the work of choosing and ordering books for the African Pastors' Conferences. He plans to visit Africa this spring.



Mostyn Roberts has joined Reformation Today as an associate editor. He has been the pastor of Welwyn Evangelical Church in Hertfordshire since 1998. He has taught Systematic Theology at LTS since 2002 and is a director of Evangelical Press. Mostyn is married to Hilary and they have two young sons, Nathaniel and Thomas. To relax, he enjoys reading and the Welsh countryside.



Simon Thomson who is the RT IT advisor is here seen in the editors' office. To the right can be seen a full set of RT bound volumes. (see page 22). The editor is taking the photo, hence the empty chair.

Front cover picture. *The Philippines. Pastor Bill James (Emmanuel Evangelical Church, Leamington Spa, U.K.) surrounded by pastors and students after a theological session in May 2012.*

We thank Carey Outreach Ministries for this photo.

Editorial – RT Website Ministry



Michael and Helena Charlton

Michael Charlton

THE ADVENT OF THE INTERNET AND WORLD Wide Web means information can be disseminated the world over. This has major implications for Christianity; Christians in China, Iran, the UK and the US can have access to the same library of reformed literature. We hope to be able to publish 80 pages of new articles on the Reformed faith online on a bi-monthly basis, while still publishing the 40-page hard copy of the *Reformation Today* magazine. Those who subscribe for hard copy (see back inside cover for details) are

in effect supporting this ministry into developing countries and the work involved in the website. Articles at the cutting edge, news and photos will be found in these pages of hard copy exclusively. Later some may be posted on the website

We hope to make the *Reformation Today* website as accessible to the highest number of people around the world as we can - whether by pc, tablet, smartphone, or any other platform that may come along in the future.

The perceived necessity for mobile phones in even the poorest sections

of some societies in the world means that smartphones are ubiquitous, and where there are smartphones, there are apps (short for ‘application’). An app is a piece of software that can run on computers, mobiles, tablets, etc. In Africa, where many of the West’s mobile phones go once we have moved on to the next model, smartphones will soon be widely available. We hope to produce an RT app, which will be free and downloadable to all smartphone platforms, that will hopefully be used the world over to link to the website. This means wherever there is a Wi-Fi or phone signal, the website will still be accessible. In countries where persecution is an everyday occurrence, the apps may be deleted from the mobile phone prior to any anticipated search and then re-downloaded after the danger is passed.

We also plan to have a presence on Twitter and Facebook, as some people find these a helpful way to search for websites and articles of interest and also as a way of keeping up-to-date with any new articles that come out on the website. As well as this, we plan to have an email sign-up for anyone wishing to keep up-to-date with new articles that way, as well as an RSS feed. (RSS stands for ‘Rich Site Summary’ or ‘Really Simple Syndication’. It is a group of web feed formats used to publish changes to frequently updated websites).

We will endeavour to redesign the website so that each article will be searchable by title, subject, writer or date, in order to make it as user-friendly as possible. We will also be looking into the possibility of translating at least some of the articles into various languages.

Through the years Christians have used technology to publish articles to inform, warn, encourage and discuss and this is the next step in that historical process. Please pray that this new technology will be effective in reaching Christians all over the globe, that they may be edified, blessed and that they may grow in the grace and the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ; that it may be used by the Lord to reach out and save the lost, and to him be all the glory!

Materials available on the RT website as from March 2013

The 1689 Confession and its role today (30 pages).

This article concerns our identity. Who are we?

We are Reformed? What does that mean? It means that we are Confessional. We have a written Confession of faith that has proved trustworthy and a source of stability for 320 years. This article describes the development of the Puritan Confessions of Faith. The 1689 is the Second London Baptist Confession of Faith. In some churches every

church officer is required to have a copy and has to subscribe to its contents.

The RT website provides a description of the origins of the 1689 and its relationship to the Westminster Confession and to Presbyterians. All the reasons motivating the original Confession are with us today. The 1689 is totally relevant in this the 21st Century. Assemblies can very quickly slide into shallow thinking and unbiblical teaching and practice. They need an anchor. It is no good saying, 'But we believe the Bible'. That sounds pious but so do Mormons and so do Prosperity gospel teachers. The point is, How do we interpret the Bible? What does it say? We must define what we believe.

The 1689 is a credal statement which represents the most important legacies of Church history. For instance chapter eight encapsulates the doctrine of the Person of Christ which was hammered out during the early centuries. The English Puritans of the seventeenth century represent the highest plateau of exposition. The Confession originated in Puritanism. The reasons which motivated its production are explained.

The best-selling most popular edition ever of the 1689 Confession of Faith is the Carey edition in contemporary language available from Evangelical Press. It has the title *A Faith to Confess*.



RT Website manager Paul Credgington.

The RT website provides historical articles tracing out Baptist history.

Dr Robert Oliver who served for 35 years as pastor of the Old Baptist Chapel, Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire, in recent years has taught Church History in the London Theological Seminary. He is the most able contemporary historian of Particular Baptist history. This is reflected in his masterpiece *History of the English Calvinistic Baptists 1771-1892*, Banner of Truth, 410 pages, 2006.

Dr Oliver has given his work on the Anabaptists to the RT Website. This is a 17-page wonderful condensed overview of the early history of the Anabaptists. Dr Oliver describes responses to that movement by the

early English Calvinistic Baptists. This material includes biographical material describing the lives of the leading Anabaptists including Hubmaier who was eventually burned at the stake. His wife was also a martyr and was killed by drowning.

Independency and Interdependency by David Kingdon

This 14 page article describes how the first Calvinistic Baptists organised themselves. It is essential that churches work together in unity. Reasons are explained.

Justification by faith alone

In this exposition Dr Gary Crampon (29 pages) expounds and defends Justification by faith alone and is right up to date in refuting recent attacks on this essential foundational truth of Christianity.

Justification by faith alone is the standing or falling article of a church. How is a soul saved? By doing good works? By being good? No, we are saved through a faith union with Christ by which his righteousness is put to our account. Christ's righteousness is the only basis of our justification before the Father. Good works prove the genuineness of our faith.

Also under this section on justification is a short article defining

righteousness written by Erroll Hulse.

Bible Seminaries

This is the account of Ferdie Mulder who was disciplined by a seminary in Pretoria for objecting to teachers who denied the physical resurrection of Christ. His book was written in Afrikaans and has the title *Opgestaan* (resurrection). Dr Gert M Augustine reviews Ferdie Mulder's book (12 pages) and in so doing unfolds not only the background and experience of this seminary student but the momentous issues involved. This is a vital contribution because it reveals how seminaries are destroyed, students' faith is undermined, and ultimately the decline and death of churches. How is it possible that those who reject the most basic truth of Christianity are paid salaries to pursue a ministry of destruction? The book of Jude is relevant.

Psalms for singing

80 Psalms are accurately transposed into contemporary English for singing, by Dr David Preston.

Miscellaneous articles

These are catalogued on the website.

Concert of Prayer

Jonathan Bayes

NOW IN ITS THIRD YEAR THE CONCERT OF PRAYER IN YORKSHIRE AND BEYOND MEETS FOR TWO hours 10.00 to noon on a Saturday once a quarter.

Venues are in the process of being arranged the next united gatherings in the Concert of Prayer on April 6th. Details will be announced once everything is finalised.

The experience of unity is a major bonus. Freedom in prayer continues to be a feature. Guidelines and leadership are necessary.

Initially the call was to intercede for spiritual awakening which will end the spiritual drought. Also without a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 3:19) the seven church plants associated with the Yorkshire Reformed Ministers' Fraternal will not grow.

The marked moral decline of the nation means that praying for our leaders is high on the agenda.

A new Website called Prayer for Parliament has just been launched. The wording used there is as follows:

'For a number of years Prayer for Parliament has joined with The Prayer Foundation (formerly Prayer for the Nations) to provide regular prayer bulletins to Christians throughout the United Kingdom. The 'Prayer Shield' offers vital information about the issues being debated in Parliament and that are of strategic importance to our government and nation. These matters require focussed prayer if we are to change the United Kingdom and seek God's will for this nation.'

‘Your prayer really can make a difference and we have seen this so clearly in recent times with the crucial votes on religious freedom and free speech. As our Chairman has said: ‘I have long been inspired by the words of 2 Chronicles 7:14 “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; THEN will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” ’

The real power to change this land rests not in 10 Downing Street or in the Palace of Westminster. It rests wherever you bow your head in prayer to the Almighty God who is sovereign over all.

There is explicit command in Scripture to pray for our rulers: ‘I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people – for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness’ (1 Tim 2:1-2).

To look with approval on what God hates results in reprobation. ‘Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done’(Rom 1:28), The blinding of the highest faculty of man is the worst kind of judgment.

We must not despair but persevere in prayer. There are many Scriptures to encourage us. Genesis chapter 18 is an example. ‘The men turned away and went toward Sodom, but Abraham remained standing before the LORD. Then Abraham approached him and said: “Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked? What if there are fifty righteous people in the city? Will you really sweep it away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous people in it? Far be it from you to do such a thing – to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?” The LORD said, “If I find fifty righteous people in the city of Sodom, I will spare the whole place for their sake.” ’

Christ the King

Editor

A KING IS A PERSON IN WHOM ALONE THE SUPREME AUTHORITY OVER A NATION IS VESTED.

This supreme power is illustrated by English kings. Up until the time of Oliver Cromwell supreme authority and the power to assert it was vested in the king. After the civil war the balance of power shifted from the king to parliament. Now the queen is a constitutional monarch and head of the Church of England. She is obliged to endorse all the legislation proposed by her government even when it is blatantly anti-Christian as is the case with the legislation to redefine marriage.

There are other names for kings. The Pharaohs of Egypt exercised supreme power. Some Emperors have wielded supreme power such as Napoleon Bonaparte of France. In the Babylonian era King Nebuchadnezzar was typical in the exercise of supreme authority. Later the Persian king Cyrus using his supreme authority ordered that the Jews be funded and assisted in rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem. During the centuries of the Roman Empire the Emperors (Caesars) exercised supreme power. One example is Nero who started well with some beneficial reforms but gradually he turned into a ruthless tyrant. When much of Rome was destroyed by fire Nero blamed the Christians. He had some of them arrested and burned alive as torches.

I will now view the kingship of Christ historically. First he is king of creation. Then he is portrayed by promise as the coming king. Then there is his birth and his experience in this world as the kingly heir of David's throne. That ends in his abject humiliation and crucifixion. But that was followed immediately by his resurrection and ascension in which he was enthroned as king. Finally I will consider his present reign as king at the Father's right hand.

The king of creation

The work of creation is attributed to the three persons of the Trinity.

There is an order and meaning to everything in creation. All the heavenly bodies have a name even though they are so many. The honour for such power, wisdom and beauty is ascribed to the Son. There is pleasure in this creation and this too is ascribed to the Son. The Father's delight is to accord this honour to him (Prov 8:22-30). The angels are created beings. They excel in power. The angels have meaning, order and rank. Christ is head of the angels. The kingship of Christ over all creation and over the angels is expressed by Paul: 'He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created through him and for him' (Col 1:15-16).

The kingship of Christ over the angels can be seen in their service of him. They announced his conception and birth, attended him after his temptation and again in his struggle in the garden of Gethsemane. They attended him in his resurrection and in announcing it. They explained the meaning of the ascension to the apostles and although not witnessed by the apostles we know from Scripture that the angels accompanied him in his ascension (Ps 47). In almost every instance angels appear in human form and communicate in human language (Gen 18). As a Field Marshall is the leader and head over armies so Christ is Field Marshall of the angels. As Dwight D Eisenhower was supreme commander over all other generals and over all the allied armies of D-day in 1944 so Jesus is supreme commander over all archangels and angels and over all angelic dominions and powers. When Christ returns as king the angels will come in massed array with him (2 Thess 1:7). We will see them when they act as Christ's officers in charge in the great judgement day. 'Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated and the books were opened' (Dan 7:10).

The glory of Christ as king is seen and appreciated in the combination of his dignity as being in very essence God and in the dignity of the offices and powers accorded to him as king over creation and in his charge of the angelic hosts.

The promise of the king

This is first stated in Genesis 49:10. He was to come through the tribe of Judah. The obedience of nations will be accorded to this king.

A covenant was made with David that the Messiah would come through him. The Davidic covenant is described in Psalms 89 and 132 which affirm the promise to David that his line would eventuate in the coming of *the* king whose throne will endure as long as the heavens endure (Ps 89:29). The absolute certainty of this promise is stressed. 'The LORD swore an oath to David, a sure oath that he will not revoke: "One of your own descendants I will place upon your throne"' (Ps 132:11; 2 Sam 7:12-17).

Yahweh's answer to all worldly rebellions and opposition to his kingdom is recorded in the second psalm, 'I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill.' To that psalm we will return later. Isaiah says that the government will be on the shoulders of this king whose name is 'The Prince of Peace'. Of the increase of his government there will be no end (Isa 9:6-7). This king will have a humble beginning but will be mightily endowed by the Holy Spirit (Isa 11:1-3); he will rule justly (Isa 11:3-5); he will work by extraordinary regenerative powers (Isa 11:6-9); he will permeate the world with saving knowledge (Isa 11:9); he will from time to time promote extraordinary reformatations (Isa 11:10-16). Unlike earthly kings Yahweh's king will be servant-like and humble. He will exercise patience until justice is established in the earth (Isa 42:1-4).

The arrival of the king

As promised Jesus was born a king in direct line from David (Luke 3:23-37). He is the king of the Jews. The angel Gabriel gave this message to Mary the mother of Jesus: 'You will give birth to a son and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants for ever; his kingdom will never end' (Luke 1:31-33).

The nature of his kingship

He entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey in exact fulfilment of Zechariah 9:9-10.

Rejoice greatly, Daughter of Zion!
Shout, Daughter Jerusalem!
See, your king comes to you,
righteous and victorious,
lowly and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
I will take away the chariots from Ephraim
and the warhorses from Jerusalem,
and the battle bow will be broken.
He will proclaim peace to the nations.
His rule will extend from sea to sea
and from the River to the ends of the earth.

This is the reason for joy because this king is just. He is endowed with salvation, is lowly and humble, riding on a donkey. His kingdom is peaceful and does not advance with warhorses or battle bows. It is universal in its extent.

The humiliation and suffering of the king

This king combines in his person the threefold function of prophet, priest and king. He teaches us the will of his Father, he intercedes for us as our great high priest and he rules over us and protects us because we are weak.

The central purpose of his mission in this world was to unite himself to his redeemed people and to make propitiation for their sins (Dan 9:24; Rom 3:25; 1 John 2:2; Matt 1:21). To achieve this he needed to lay aside his powers and submit to arrest and the humiliation of false charges. He had to be made a curse for us on the cross and be the subject of God's wrath. It essential for our salvation that he should die on the tree. Jesus' crucifixion was a scene of total defeat. His cause wore the appearance of pathetic and hopeless failure. His disciples all forsook him and fled. In a darkness which covered the earth he was abandoned by God. He complained that he was forsaken and deserted. Dereliction was his state. Stripped of his clothes, lacerated in his body,

nailed in his hands and feet, and finally pierced through his heart – you cannot be more derelict than that.

This king who created the world and the universe and who commanded legions of angels was mocked, flogged almost to death and put to death by crucifixion which was the most humiliating means of execution ever devised.

With earthly kings the emphasis and focus are on their glories and achievements, not on their humiliations and defeats. With our king his humiliation and suffering occupy the primary place. In these he defeated Satan (1 John 3:8), redeemed and liberated his people and at the same time became a leader and shepherd who is able to sympathise with the sufferings of his disciples. We can admire the organisational skills and leadership abilities of the aforementioned supreme military commander Dwight Eisenhower but he is unable to save anyone. He is dead whereas Christ is alive as he said to his apostle John, ‘I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! I hold the keys of death and Hades’ (Rev 1:18). In my battles I have a high priest who is able to save me completely because he always lives to intercede for me (Heb 7:25).

The kingship of Christ highlighted before Pontius Pilate

Is the kingship of Jesus stressed in the gospel narratives? Pontius Pilate asked Jesus, ‘Are you the king of the Jews?’ ‘Yes, it is as you say,’ Jesus replied. Pilate paraded Jesus before the mob and asked, ‘Shall I crucify your king?’ ‘We have no king but Caesar,’ the chief priests answered.

Paul reminds his readers that Jesus before Pontius Pilate made a good confession (1 Tim 6:13). Pilate had in mind the recent rebellion of Judas the Galilean who had wanted to be made a king. He had led a rebellion against Roman rule and caused the whole of Galilee to be in a state of turmoil (Acts 5:37). Jesus said that his kingdom is not of this world. If it were, his servants would fight. The only injury incurred was a severed ear which Jesus had replaced (Luke 22:51). For the rest of his life Malchus could testify that he had been the object of one of Jesus’ miracles.

King and judge of all the world is himself judged.

Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek. The chief priests of the Jews protested to Pilate, 'Do not write *The King of the Jews*, but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews.' Pilate answered, 'What I have written, I have written' (John 19:19-22).

The coronation of the king

What was the Father's response to this humiliation and death on the cross? In Philippians 2:9 we read, 'Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name.'

Christ ascended to occupy the throne by the right hand of God. This evokes the praise of the angels and all his people. For he is king of all the earth. Concerning the throne now occupied by Jesus, Spurgeon comments: 'What other throne is like this? Never was it stained with injustice or defiled by sin. Neither is he who sits upon it dismayed or in a dilemma. He sits in serenity for he knows his own power and sees that his purposes will not miscarry' (CHS *Treasury of David* Psalm 47:8).

The media describe civil wars such as the chaos at present in Syria. The nation of Mali is divided. Somaliland has been ungovernable for years. Yet for every nation in turmoil there are ten where law and order is maintained. Christians are to submit to civil governments (Rom 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-14). We are always to remember that Jesus reigns: 'By me kings reign and rulers make laws that are just; by me princes govern, and all nobles who rule on earth' (Prov 8:15-16).

When biblical ignorance prevails and evil legislation is proposed we must always recall Yahweh's answer to rebellion:

'I have installed my King on Zion, my holy mountain'

He has been given supreme power over all spheres of authority.

‘Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. You will break them with a rod of iron; you will dash them to pieces like pottery.’

The authority held by Jesus is of two kinds, *regnum potentiae* and *regnum gratiae*. By *regnum potentiae* is meant that the Christ has power over all governments. By *regnum gratiae* is meant that Christ rules his people by grace.

Jesus said that his kingdom was not of this world. He does not conquer by force, that is by the gun or sword. He conquers by regeneration. His people have his laws written on their hearts and on their minds. They love and obey him and will lay down their lives for him.

The power wielded by Christ is spiritual. It is a union with his redeemed people sustained by the Holy Spirit (1 John 3:24). It is internal. His people are willing, obedient and persevering. He is united to them. We are united to our king. This union is a living union. ‘Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God’ (Gal 2:20). The union is vital in a living sense. Moreover it is a federal (racial) union. As Adam is the head of the fallen race of Adam, so Christ is the head of his new race (Rom 5:12-21). ‘Through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous’ (Rom 5:19).

Our union with Christ is a human union. We are one with the man Christ Jesus, the only mediator between God and men (1 Tim 2:5). Our union is with a real man, the risen man, Christ Jesus. I must also insist that this union with our king is an experiential union. We are united to a ‘felt Christ’. We are sensitive to his presence with us personally and sensitive to his presence in the assembly during worship, praise and prayer. With regard to this union with our king I must also say that this union is a comprehensive union. To be united to Christ is to be united to him extensively in all he has done for us. As in an ideal marriage every interest and every concern is shared. Finally our union by faith with King Jesus is indissoluble. He promised that ‘no-one can snatch them out of my hand’ (John 10:28); ‘Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?’ (Rom 8:35). ‘And so we will be with the Lord for ever’ (1 Thess 4:17).

By *regnum potentiae* is meant that the Christ has power over all governments. Daily we read of the persecution of Christians. This happens not only in the Islamic world but in their heightened persecution in India by Hindus. If persecution is reported it is nearly always of Bible-believing Christians. In North Korea they are cruelly tortured in death camps. In Eritrea they are imprisoned in containers. In Iran they are locked up in prisons.

What are we to say of the unfinished task? The great commission recorded at the end of Matthew's Gospel commands that we make disciples of all nations. But many unreached people groups are shut off and beyond reach of the gospel. The only way to reach them is through prayer that our king will exercise his authority so that earthly governments which bar the way will have their resistance broken. 'You will break them with a rod of iron; you will dash them to pieces like pottery'.

Christ will employ his kingly power over the rulers and leaders of this earth to prise doors open that are at present shut. 'These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no-one can shut, and what he shuts no-one can open. I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no-one can shut (Rev 3:7-8).

Jesus said, 'I will build my Church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it' (Matt 16:18).

In spiritual terms the authority exercised by our king is seen in revivals. The first revival was Pentecost. 'In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people' (Acts 2:17). This is the last age and it is the age of revivals. Revivals are the most glorious of all the works of God. A mighty surge forward is initiated in a spiritual awakening. The ongoing effects continue for decades. In the case of the 16th century Reformation the effects continue to this day. A revival of that kind is precisely what we need today. Pray earnestly for it (Isa 62:6-7).

For previous articles see RT 243 *Christ our Melchizedek* and RT 246 *Christ as Prophet*.

The 1741 Revival in New England



George Whitefield.

IN 1735 AN AMAZING REVIVAL CAME TO NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS. JONATHAN EDWARDS WAS THE minister of the only church (Congregational) in the town. He described this revival in a book with the title *A Narrative of Surprising Conversions*. The spiritual awakening in Northampton was a foretaste of a major spiritual revival to come. In 1739 there were outpourings of the Holy Spirit. These increased in power and spread throughout the land reaching an apex in August and September 1741.

A New England minister wrote, 'Immediately preceded by a long season of coldness and indifference, the Great Awakening broke upon the slumbering churches like a thunderbolt rushing out of a clear sky.' There were signs of preparation. Preachers had been prepared. A spirit of prayer was found in some of the churches.

The catalyst in this revival was George Whitefield who reached Philadelphia in November 1739. He was 25 years old. He spent time with Gilbert Tennent, one of the leading preachers of that time. Tennent shared

with Whitefield descriptions of remarkable outpourings of the Holy Spirit that he had witnessed. In the months that followed revival spread. Pastors reported, 'God is present in our assemblies.'

Large crowds flocked to hear Whitefield. Nathan Cole, a farmer, described a journey by horseback with his wife. From his farm to Middletown the venue where Whitefield was to preach at 10.00AM was twelve miles. At 8.00AM Cole heard the news. Immediately he called to his wife to get ready. They shared the saddle with Nathan running alongside when it was his wife's turn to ride. As they drew nearer they saw a cloud rising. This proved to be the dust rising from galloping horses. A great stream of riders converged along the dusty road on the way to hear the preacher. In his journey Cole did not observe anyone remaining at work in his field. All had left with the same purpose. As he drew near to the place appointed he could see ferry boats bringing loads of people across the great river. It was reported that between 3,000 and 4,000 gathered. Nathan Cole testified, 'this young slim youth looked almost angelical, - clothed with authority from the great God and a sweet solemnity sat upon his brow - and my hearing him preach gave me a heart wound and by God's blessing my old foundations were broken up and I saw my righteousness would not save me.'

At this time Whitefield spent twenty days preaching daily in the Boston area. At his farewell service according to a newspaper report 23,000 gathered to hear him preach. The fruitfulness which followed Whitefield's ministry proved to be a time of great increase in the churches.

It was when he left Boston that he stayed with Jonathan Edwards at Northampton.

Edwards wrote, 'Whitefield preached four sermons in the meeting house (besides a private lecture at my house). The congregation was extraordinarily melted by each sermon, almost the whole assembly being in tears for a great part of the time.' 95 new members were welcomed into the church in the months that followed.

Mrs Sarah Edwards wrote to her brother James, 'Whitefield is truly a remarkable man, and during his visit, has I think verified all we have heard of him. He makes less of the doctrines than our American preachers generally do and aims more at affecting the heart. He is a born orator. You have already heard of his deep-toned yet clear and melodious voice. It is perfect music.'

‘It is wonderful to see what a spell he casts over an audience by proclaiming the simplest truths of the Bible. I have seen upwards of a thousand people hang on his words with breathless silence, broken only by an occasional half-suppressed sob.’

Edwards and Whitefield became loyal friends. It was in 1741 that the revival spread more powerfully all over New England. This was a spiritual awakening more general and extraordinary in its power than anything ever known there before. In some areas concern about eternity came gradually but in others dramatically. For instance on November 23rd at Middleborough 76 were struck to enquire what they could do to be saved.

About fifteen ministers devoted themselves to itinerant evangelism. Edwards also devoted time to an itinerant ministry in order to reap the harvest. It was at Enfield at this time that he preached his most famous sermon, ‘Sinners in the hands of an angry God’. So great were the outcries of anguish under that sermon that he was not able to complete it.

As intimated above, the months of August and September were the most remarkable in 1741. Meetings were characterised by intense spiritual experiences. This was the case especially in smaller gatherings in homes. Frequently there were outcries, faintings and convulsions. These concerned conviction of sin and distress. There were also vibrant expressions of joy unspeakable and full of glory. Sometimes some were so overcome that they were not able to return home but were obliged to stay all night at the house where they had met.

Those opposed to the revival criticised the meetings as extravagant. One preacher, Davenant by name, was eccentric. He encouraged excess. By his bad example he brought disrepute to the revival. Later Davenant repented.

It was at this time that Edwards was led to write his principal books on revival which have earned him the title ‘The Theologian of Revival’. Edwards’ book *The Religious Affections* is a classic in Christian literature. In this study he highlights the differences between true and false experiences. Edwards cogently advocates revivals as the greatest of God’s works. He defended the New England revival as a genuine and wonderful work of God.

Editor

A Puritan Theology

Joel R. Beeke

THERE ARE TIMES IN LIFE WHEN YOU FEEL THAT by God's grace you have completed a major project the Lord gave you to do. It gives you a sense of personal fruition and profound gratitude. For every good thing we have and every good thing we do is from the Lord. John Flavel said, "Providence carries our lives, liberties, and concerns in its hands every moment. Your bread is in its cupboard, your money in its purse, your safety in its enfolding arms."

God commands us to be faithful, but all our labors are nothing without God's blessing. Stephen Charnock said, "Diligence on our part, and the blessing on God's, Solomon joined together, 'The hand of the diligent makes rich' (Prov. 10:4), but, 'The blessing of the LORD maketh rich' (v. 22)." We work hard, but anything good that comes from it is of the Lord.

That's why I am feeling very grateful to God right now. This week at Reformation Heritage Books we sent a book off to the printer that represents many years of study by Dr. Mark Jones and myself. It's an 1100-page volume titled *A Puritan*

Theology. In its 60 chapters, we harvest the Reformed experiential teachings of the great English divines of the Puritan era, and bring to the reader the nutritious bread of their insights.

In an age when we have seen many systematic theologies published, it's surprising that no one has ever gathered together what the Puritans said about the major topics of theology. Many books have been written about the theologies of individual Puritans, or about a particular doctrine as taught by the Puritans. But *A Puritan Theology* is the first attempt to present a systematic theology derived from the writings of the Puritans. Since the Puritans aimed to communicate a balanced, biblical, and holistic view of life with God at the centre, I would like to think that they would be pleased. Though they are sometimes portrayed as narrow men stuck on their favorite hobby-horses, in fact the length and breadth and height and depth of their vision is breathtaking.

The book is encyclopedic in its scope. You will find chapters on the attributes of God, the Trinity, predestination, providence, angels, demons, sin, covenant, and law and gospel. There are chapters on

Christ's person, offices, states, blood, intercession, heart, and promises. You can read about the Holy Spirit, preparatory grace prior to conversion, regeneration, faith, justification, adoption, sanctification, the indwelling of the Spirit, assurance, and perseverance. There are treatments of church government, the Sabbath, worship, preaching, baptism, the Lord's Supper, praying for world missions, end times, judgment day, heaven, and hell.

In a field as rich and deep as Puritan studies, we do not presume to speak the final word on what the Puritans said on these subjects. Rather we hope that our contribution will expose more people to the whole counsel of God as taught by the Puritans. Furthermore, we would be delighted for this book, with its extensive footnotes and bibliography, to serve as a gateway for further studies on the Puritans. In this way *A Puritan Theology* functions as a theological companion to the biographical book, *Meet the Puritans*, which I published earlier with Randall Pederson.

Our aim in the book was not merely to inform the mind, but also to warm the heart. Thus the subtitle: *Doctrine for Life*. The Puritans intentionally preached and wrote with the goal of moving from biblical truth to human experience and practical action. Many chapters have rich implications for the Christian life.

Whether digging into the doctrine of Christ, the doctrine of sin, or the doctrine of the church, there is much food here for spiritual meditation. In fact, there's a whole chapter about the Puritan teaching on meditation. The book concludes with eight chapters specifically focused on practical applications such as living as a pilgrim, home life, daily prayer, keeping a good conscience, and zeal for the Lord.

Above all, we hope that by God's grace this publication will result in the glorification of the triune God by drawing sinners into communion with Him. Every aspect of theology leads the Christian into fellowship with the triune God. Thomas Goodwin wrote, "Sometimes his heart is drawn out to consider the Father's love in choosing, and then the love of Christ in redeeming, and so again the love of the Holy Ghost, that searches the deep things of God, and reveals them to us."

If we miss communion with God, then no matter how well our brains are stocked with theology we have missed everything. As John Owen said, "What am I the better if I can dispute that Christ is God, but have no sense of sweetness in my heart from hence that he is a God in covenant with my soul?" Please join us in praying that this book would be an instrument in God's hand to bring many souls into His "sweetness."

The Athanasian Creed

WHOSOEVER WILL BE SAVED, BEFORE ALL THINGS IT IS NECESSARY THAT HE HOLD THE Catholic Faith: Which Faith except everyone do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. And the Catholic Faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity. Neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substance. For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost is all One, the Glory Equal, the Majesty Co-Eternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost. The Father Uncreate, the Son Uncreate, and the Holy Ghost Uncreate. The Father Incomprehensible, the Son Incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost Incomprehensible. The Father Eternal, the Son Eternal, and the Holy Ghost Eternal and yet they are not Three Eternals but One Eternal. As also there are not Three Uncreated, nor Three Incomprehensibles, but One Uncreated, and One Incomprehensible. So likewise the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy Ghost Almighty. And yet they are not Three Almighties but One Almighty.

So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet they are not Three Gods, but One God. So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Ghost Lord. And yet not Three Lords but One Lord. For, like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every Person by Himself to be God and Lord, so are we forbidden by the Catholic Religion to say, there be Three Gods or Three Lords. The Father is made of none, neither created, nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone; not made, nor created, but begotten. The Holy Ghost is of the Father, and of the Son neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.

So there is One Father, not Three Fathers; one Son, not Three Sons; One Holy Ghost, not Three Holy Ghosts. And in this Trinity none is afore or after Other, None is greater or less than Another, but the whole Three Persons are Co-eternal together, and Co-equal. So that in all things, as is aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity, is to be worshipped. He therefore that will be saved, *must* thus think of the Trinity.

Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting Salvation, that he also believe rightly the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the right Faith is, that we believe and confess, that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man.

God, of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and Man, of the substance of His mother, born in the world. Perfect God and Perfect Man, of a reasonable Soul and human Flesh subsisting. Equal to the Father as touching His Godhead, and inferior to the Father as touching His Manhood. Who, although He be God and Man, yet He is not two, but One Christ. One, not by conversion of the Godhead into Flesh, but by taking of the Manhood into God. One altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by Unity of Person. For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one Man, so God and Man is one Christ. Who suffered for our salvation, descended into Hell, rose again the third day from the dead. He ascended into Heaven. He sitteth on the right hand of the Father, God Almighty, from whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies, and shall give account for their own works. And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting, and they that have done evil into everlasting fire. This is the Catholic Faith, which except a man believe faithfully and firmly, he cannot be saved.

Bound Volumes

HANDSOMELY BOUND IN RED CLOTH VOLUMES for RT 227-241 (Jan 2009-Dec 2011) are for sale, 720 pages. Price £35 (\$56). 90 per cent of this material including expository and historical articles news and reviews with photos in colour, are unlikely to ever appear in electronic form. Our policy is that we only publish materials by living authors. So what does this mean for historians? For instance what does it mean for an author working at present on how Strict Baptists have turned into Reformed Baptists? – or another author who is researching the worldwide development of Reformed Baptists? The news sections and the photos are invaluable. There is a fine photo of the leaders of ARBCA in RT 236 and of Dutch leaders in RT 235.

Unique to RT are reports about the birth and development of the Concert of Prayer for spiritual awakening these being found in this bound volume for RT 227-241.

The Evangelical Library in LONDON carries a complete set of RT bound volumes. The London Theological Seminary carries an almost complete set. If you turn to the photo on the front inside cover you will see to the top left hand side of the photo a complete set of RT bound volumes. These function well with the help of the FINDER which

is a bound volume of complete up to date indices available from *Tentmakers Publications* directed by pastor Phil Roberts. Again your attention is directed to the front inside cover.

Each bound volume has its own indices. Pastors like architects develop their own filing systems so they can readily research their subjects. In this 720 page volume are many articles of value for reference. For instance if you have not purchased *The Power to Save – A History of the Gospel in China* by Bob Davey 13 chapters are found here. *The value and use of the Psalms* by Dr David Preston is included. There are expositions of the third and fourth Servant Songs in Isaiah, an exposition of Isaiah 9:6-7, and many more materials with contemporary application. A biography of Simo Ralevic describing his ministry into seven nations is found in RT 242.

There are places where the reader will say this is the best yet. Such is the article on John Calvin as Missionary by Dr Jonathan Bayes (RT 231).

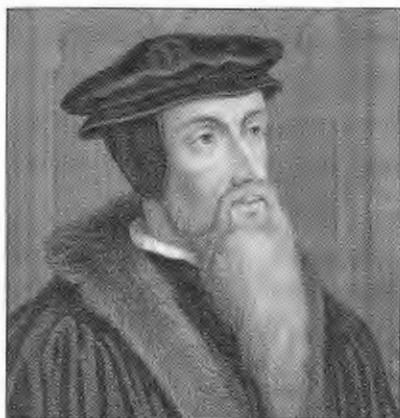
We appeal to readers to encourage Seminary librarians to invest in bound volumes of RT. In developing countries funding may be a problem. If so please communicate with us.

The Early Years of John Calvin

By Frederick Hodgson

FROM AN EARLY AGE HIS FATHER RECOGNISED that although his son John was delicate in body he was gifted with an excellent mind.

An interesting event in Calvin's life when he was only twelve sheds light on his times. His father, ambitious for his son, and finding himself stretched financially, managed to get his son appointed by the bishop to the chaplaincy of a small church in the neighbourhood of La Gésine. The



John Calvin

young clergyman had his head shorn by the bishop. This symbolic act set him apart as a member of the clergy, although it did not make him a fully-fledged priest. For two years he continued to live in Noyon holding his office but not discharging any duties. The plague of the 'black death' came to Noyon when Calvin was fourteen and it was then that he was sent to school in Paris, still keeping his allowance!

Calvin as a student in Paris

Calvin went to the school of La Marche in Paris, where he was taught by the erudite Mathurin Cordier and was exposed to the spirit of the Renaissance. His ability to express himself fluently in Latin was honed as he studied the works of Cicero. Calvin expressed his indebtedness to Mathurin by dedicating his commentary on 1 Thessalonians to his former Latin teacher. Calvin's university education opened with his attending the College of Montaigu, in order to train for the priesthood. The classical education he received there included teaching from John Major, one of the leading scholars of the day. John Major exposed Calvin to the neo-Pelagian ideas of the later schoolmen (the *via moderna*) who taught that grace was given to those who do their best according to their natural ability. However, he rejected the concept of full papal authority, believing that the pope should submit to the ecumenical councils. The College of Montaigu was known for its harsh regime. Loyola the Jesuit leader studied there and he and Calvin were well known for their resolute discipline.

Paris, with its university, probably second to none in Europe, was caught up with the renaissance of learning. It is impossible to imagine that the active mind of Calvin could ignore the leading French humanist Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples. This

internationally renowned scholar, like Calvin, was born in Picardy, and had travelled into Italy seeking to expand his knowledge in the early part of his life. The north of Italy had been the birthplace of the humanist Renaissance which included men like the spiritually-minded Francesco Petrarch (1304-74) who embraced Augustine's theology of human depravity and the grace of God. A major preacher and fierce critic of Pope Alexander VI and martyr was Girolamo Savonarola (1452-98). He also shared Augustine's view of grace. On returning to Paris to become professor at the college of Cardinal Lemoine, Lefèvre taught the celebrated Hebraist François Vatable and the future Reformer Guillaume Farel. Another disciple of Lefèvre was Pierre Robert Olivétan, Calvin's cousin. He was to translate the Bible into French in 1535. The Paris that Calvin studied in was alive with discussion about the doctrine of Augustine and in addition to this Lutheran theology was diffusing into Paris. Christians in Paris were being persecuted for being Lutheran. An example was Louis de Berquin who was imprisoned in 1523 and burnt at the stake in 1529. It is known that Calvin made friends with the Christian humanist Nicholas Cop, whose father was physician to Francis I. Cop was one of the foremost scholars of Paris and the friendship of Calvin and Cop was to have great significance for the future of Calvin.

Calvin as a Law student in Orléans and Bourges - his conversion

Calvin went to Paris with the purpose of studying to become a priest in the Catholic Church. This was not to be. In 1527 Calvin's father quarrelled with the authorities in Noyon Cathedral and determined that his son should become a lawyer rather than a priest. There wasn't a Law school in Paris, perhaps because the kings of France would have been uncomfortable with a possible challenge from their own back doorstep. Calvin was obliged to go to Orléans and Bourges to study Law.

It was in the autumn of 1528 that Calvin started his studies in Orléans under the tuition of Pierre Taison de l'Etoile, the most distinguished lawyer of the day. It was in studying Law that Calvin learnt the important skill of interrogating texts in order to ascertain the meaning of the text. This skill was so important to him later when he started to give expositions of the biblical text. (He made such progress in Law that he was sometimes asked to lecture when the normal lecturer was absent.) It was a year later that he went to Bourges to study under the professor of Law, Andrea Alciati (1492-1550), brought to France by Francis I. Perhaps the most significant teacher that influenced him was the German Evangelical Melchior Wolmar who taught him Greek using the Greek New Testament. It would be very strange if Wolmar had not also led him to the gospel in these studies. It is also possible that he learnt Hebrew in Bourges where he devoured the new humanist learning that had entered France. Calvin was one of the twenty-five to thirty in France who could read Hebrew. This ability was enormously helpful to him in his study of the Old Testament.

Approximate timeline of Calvin's early life

1509	born in Noyon, Picardy, north-eastern France
1521	became boy chaplain of La Gésine
1523	went to Paris and attended the school of La Marche College under Mathurin Cordier and following this he went to the College de Montaigu to study Theology gaining a BA in 1528
1528	studied Law at Orléans
1529	studied Law at Bourges, learning Greek and Hebrew
1529	death of his father
1532-33	probable time of conversion
1533	fled from Paris to find refuge in Angoulême after Cop lecture
1534	arrived in Poitiers in March and established a small Protestant congregation there
1534	went to Noyon in May for last time and broke with Rome, resigning the chaplaincy at La Gésine
1534	returned to Paris in June
1534	fled to Strasburg with Du Tillet
1536	first edition of <i>The Institutes</i>
1536	Farel called him to help in Geneva (July)

In 1531 his father died unexpectedly. He had been excommunicated from the Church of Rome over his refusal to hand over the Church books at Noyon. This meant that the last rites of the Church were not given to him and the teaching of the Church was that he was not eligible for purgatory and would therefore go directly to hell. It is not clear what effect this had on Calvin's mind but he felt free to abandon Law and he concentrated on the new Christian humanism. His thirst for this led him to the Collège de France. The lecturers here included Nicholas Cop and the Greek scholar William Budé. In 1532 Calvin wrote his first book that consisted of a commentary on a treatise on morality by the Roman Stoic philosopher, Seneca. This work gave Calvin an academic reputation, but it contained no hint of his having been converted. In fact the time of his conversion is disputed. Wylie, working from Beza's biography of Calvin, suggested that he was converted through the persistent witnessing of Olivétan whilst he was a student at The College de Montaigu. This theory would fit in with Calvin's welcoming his change to studying Law at his father's behest. However, Calvin was silent about the actual date of his conversion but he acknowledged that it was sudden and unexpected. The only reference he made to his own conversion experience is found in his introduction to his commentary on the Psalms in which he compared himself to David:

‘But as he was taken from the sheepfold, and elevated to the rank of supreme authority; so God having taken me from my originally obscure and humble condition, has reckoned me worthy of being invested with the honourable office of a preacher and minister of the gospel. When I was as yet a very little boy, my father had destined me for the study of theology. But afterwards when he considered that the legal profession commonly raised those who followed it to wealth this prospect induced him suddenly to change his purpose. Thus it came to pass, that I was withdrawn from the study of philosophy, and was put to the study of Law. To this pursuit I endeavoured faithfully to apply myself in obedience to the will of my father; but God, by the secret guidance of his providence, at length gave a different direction to my course. And first, since I was too obstinately devoted to the superstitions of Popery to be easily extricated from so profound an abyss of mire, God by a sudden conversion subdued and brought my mind to a teachable frame, which was more hardened in such matters than might have been expected from one at my early period of life. Having thus received some taste and knowledge of true godliness I was immediately inflamed with so intense a desire to make progress therein, that although I did not altogether leave off other studies, I yet pursued them with less ardour. I was quite surprised to find that before a year had elapsed, all who had any desire after purer doctrine were continually coming to me to learn, although I myself was as yet but a mere novice and tyro. Being of a disposition somewhat unpolished and bashful, which led me always to love the shade and retirement, I then began to seek some secluded corner where I might be withdrawn from the public view; but so far from being able to accomplish the object of my desire, all my retreats were like public schools. In short, whilst my one great object was to live in seclusion without being known, God so led me about through different turnings and changes, that he never permitted me to rest in any place, until, in spite of my natural disposition, he brought me forth to public notice.’

This extract from his writings is important in that it demonstrates so much about the natural timid, retiring disposition of Calvin along with the noteworthy evidences of the Christian graces of humility, love of God and confidence in his faithfulness. Calvin was not left in peace to live the life of an academic which he so often craved.

Calvin's flight from Paris to Angoulême

In 1533 his friend Nicholas Cop was appointed as rector of Paris University. In his inaugural lecture he called for reformation of the Church and referred to the writings of Luther and Erasmus. He quoted these with approval and this angered traditional Catholics and led to King Francis I adopting repressive measures. The reaction was so fierce that Cop fled to Basel in Switzerland. In the meantime Calvin had become recognised as a natural leader amongst the Reformed people of Paris and some even thought that Calvin had been behind Cop's speech. In fact Stickelberger reported that Calvin was actually congratulated by Margaret of Navarre, the sister of the king. She was a



believer and did what she could to support the Evangelicals in France. As the storm broke Calvin fled from Paris disguised as a gardener and went to Angoulême in the south-west of France. It was reported that Calvin's friends were so sure of his arrest that they lowered him from a window on bed sheets tied together so that he could escape. Calvin himself described in his exposition of the Acts of the Apostles how his flight from Paris was similar to Paul's escaping from his enemies in Damascus.

Calvin's flight from Paris at that time would be mirrored by thousands of Frenchmen in years to come as they found themselves fleeing from France itself to seek a safe haven from almost unrelenting persecution that pounded their country like waves upon the seashore. Was there a particular reason why he went to Angoulême in the south-west rather than seeking refuge by travelling to friendlier countries in the east?

It has been suggested that one reason might be that Queen Margaret of Navarre was actually born there. He might have thought that because of her influence

in this area there would be greater safety for him. He might also have thought that the authorities would have expected him to attempt a flight to the east as others had done. Centuries later survivors of the British (Cockleshell Heroes) commando raid at Bordeaux, who bravely used canoes to attack the German ships in this French port, actually sought refuge in the area around Angoulême rather than taking a more obvious route back to sea.

Whilst he was in Paris Calvin had made friends with Louis, a young member of the Du Tillet family from Angoulême. This politically influential family had a mansion with a large library of at least 4000 books and Calvin was given refuge there. It was ideal for him in that he was able to continue his studies in this relatively safe home that was so richly endowed with excellent books. Although his renowned systematic theological work, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, was first published about three years later, much of the deep thought and prayer leading to this took place in the Du Tillet library.

During Calvin's time in Angoulême Queen Margaret also sheltered the now aged Lefèvre at Nérac, close to Angoulême. Calvin visited the great man at Nérac, meeting him personally for the first and last time. Beza, Calvin's successor in Geneva and his biographer, recorded how Lefèvre, who had always hoped for a reformation of the whole Roman Catholic Church, including the pope, bishops and priests, was startled by Calvin's vision of a new Church structured on biblical foundations. Lefèvre, who had achieved so much, expressed bitter regret in his latter days that he had not more openly professed the truth.

Calvin and the Reformed church in Poitiers

Calvin stayed for about six months at Angoulême and then as he had judged the dissipation of the storm following the Cop speech, he travelled north very early in 1534 to the strategic town of Poitiers. (The area around Poitiers had been the site of two great historical battles, the Battle of Tours in which Charles Martel defeated the army of the Umayyad Caliphate in 732 and the Battle of Poitiers in which the English forces defeated the French in 1356.) Poitiers was an important centre for the Romans and there are significant remains of Roman architecture to be seen today.

Calvin was welcomed by the Prior of Trois Moutiers, a friend of the Du Tillet family and was allowed to stay there. He soon befriended the chief magistrate, Pierre de La Planche, and it was under his roof and in the garden (Basses Treilles) that he expounded the gospel to those who were willing to listen. One of the converts was Ponthus, the abbot of a local Benedictine convent. He openly professed his faith in Christ and later many of his family followed him, being willing to lay down their lives for the gospel. The nineteenth-century President of the Evangelical Society of Geneva (Count Alexander de St. George) was descended from Ponthus.

The group of lawyers, professors, counts and tradesmen was the nucleus of a Reformed Congregation. On account of safety they prudently decided to hold their meetings in a cave in a deep limestone ravine carrying the River Clain.

This cave became known as 'Calvin's Grotto' and was about an hour's walk from the town of Poitiers. Here the group met for prayer, study of the Bible and to hold what was probably the first Protestant communion service in France. This group of believers was evangelistically minded and Jean Vernon, Philip Veron and Albert Babinot volunteered as evangelists. The latter two of these travelled widely in the south and west of France and preached the gospel in Toulouse and Bordeaux. Jean Vernon devoted himself to reaching the university students of Poitiers itself for the gospel. (Today, a quarter of the population of Poitiers are students). He was later to travel into the Alpine regions of Savoy where he was eventually martyred in Chambéry. The other two zealous evangelists died peacefully.

In April 1534 the twenty-four year old Calvin set out from Poitiers to go to Paris with the young Du Tillet as his companion. (Two years later John Calvin was travelling along a circuitous route to Strasburg to avoid areas dominated by military action and had to travel through Geneva. He travelled under the name Charles d'Espeville in order to avoid recognition. His intention was to stay only one night in Geneva, but was recognised by the young Du Tillet who revealed his presence to William Farel. Without this providential presence of Du Tillet Farel would have been unaware of Calvin's presence in Geneva and the history of Geneva and the Reformation would have been very different.)

Paris at that time was unstable. King Francis I had a political interest in seeking a general compromise between Lutheranism and Roman Catholicism. Protestants were in conference in the royal Louvre and for a time it was not convenient for the persecuting Theological Seminary of the Sorbonne to pursue those of an evangelical persuasion. The king had returned from a visit to Marseille and his presence had silenced the fiery Beda, a priest who was violently opposed towards the Protestants. At his instigation only earlier in that same year the French parliament had passed a law that anyone found confessing his or her evangelicalism should be tried and condemned to death by burning upon the testimony of two witnesses.

It was probably at the beginning of June that Calvin entered Paris and he devoted himself to visiting and encouraging believers in their homes. He had done this previously when he lived in Paris and he did what he could to build up the believers during the few weeks that he was in Paris in 1534. Calvin realised that Paris was basically closed to evangelism. He left for Strasburg at the end of July. Had he remained he would almost certainly have been killed in the large-scale persecution that was to break out after the events of October 24th in that year. Some of those with whom he had fellowship in Paris were to perish in the flames later that year.

Interestingly, before leaving Paris he was challenged to a debate on the Trinity by the Spaniard, Michael Servetus. Calvin did not want to be identified with the heretical views of Servetus and accepted the challenge but Servetus did not turn up for some unknown reason. It was to be some years later in Geneva that Calvin would again meet Servetus. Paris contained other enemies of the gospel other than the Catholic party and Servetus. There were those who held

pantheistic views and Calvin sensed that these antichristian views would break out in larger measure in the future.

It is a wise man who understands the times in which he lives. Jean Calvin had been labouring as an evangelist in Paris, going from door to door and sharing the gospel of God's grace. Public teaching was impossible owing to the intensity of the opposition. Calvin was called to be a teacher of the gospel and found his time consumed with visits, interviews and other business. Sinking under the load he determined to leave Paris in order to find time for personal study and discussion with other theologians. Towards the end of July 1534 he left the city and set out on horseback towards Strasburg with his friend Du Tillet. (At that time the destination that he was heading towards was not part of France). Martin Bucer (1491-1551) the German Reformer was responsible for the reformation of the church in Strasburg and was based in this city from 1523 to 1549. Calvin would have witnessed the Reformed church in this city and must have been influenced by his stay in Strasburg.

Reflections on the early life of Calvin

In the providence of God Calvin, possessing a sharp mind and excellent memory, was exposed to some of the most capable teachers in France. In Paris he benefited from the tuition of Cordier and Major and became proficient in the classical languages of Latin and Greek. Paris was alive with Lutheran teaching and the influence of the great scholar Lefèvre d'Étaples. It was at this time in his life that he learnt the biblical languages that would enable him to write his commentaries and give his lectures later on in Geneva.

He received his legal training at the best Law schools in the country and his legal mind was of inestimable value in advising the constitution of Geneva.

His walking among the prominent men of Paris like Cop was also of value in that he was later to work with the leaders of the council in Geneva and write letters to European leaders.

Like the apostle Paul, Calvin spent a time 'in the wilderness' at Angoulême. This gave him ample opportunity to reflect upon the subject matter of *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Sometimes men are rushed into action and their words are not well thought out.

Calvin suffered acutely and thereby was able to counsel believers in the furnace of affliction. His early years of flight from persecution and witnessing the sufferings of others first hand in Paris prepared him for helping others and sending men into the dangerous world of France later in his life.

Essentially Calvin was a shy, timid man who, although a natural scholar, was not born as one who would face and endure the wild men of Geneva. Calvin's prominence in the Reformation was not just because he was born with amazing gifts. He had to be forged into the man he became. God preserved him and equipped him to influence history down to the twenty-first century.

Gay Marriage

Update on proposed legislation to introduce 'same-sex marriage' in England and Wales.

THE BILL TO INTRODUCE 'SAME-SEX MARRIAGE' passed the 'Second Reading' in the House of Commons on Tuesday 5th February by 400 to 175 votes. This is only the beginning of the Parliamentary process. It has to go through further stages in the Commons and then pass through the House of Lords. Given that anything can happen in politics (and especially, of course, if the Lord intervenes), it is vitally important not to accept that this redefinition of marriage is 'inevitable'. The Coalition for Marriage (c4m.org.uk) continues to represent those who oppose this legislation, and continues to promote the many arguments in favour of retaining the true meaning of man-woman marriage. Short easy-to-follow summaries of some of the key arguments are available on c4m website under the heading 'Marriage Minutes'. The on-line petition to retain the current legal definition of marriage is on-going. When the Bill reaches the

House of Lords, it would help enormously if this petition could have grown significantly. It is also important to keep the pressure up in terms of writing to Members of Parliament – especially thanking them if they voted against the Bill in the Second Reading. If your MP voted for the Bill, it is worth writing to express concern that the Bill as it stands has no adequate protection, for example, for school teachers who cannot conscientiously affirm and teach the new definition of marriage. Some MPs have admitted that they voted for the Bill under pressure, but will not vote for it again. So engagement on this issue has to be on-going. There has also been, in some circles, the honest admission that the arguments have not been properly addressed.

Given the extraordinary pressure on Members of Parliament to support the Bill in the Second Reading, it was encouraging and impressive that 175 MPs voted against same sex marriage, and that so many were brave enough to speak well and cogently in favour of man-woman marriage.

It is essential to continue to vigorously oppose this legislation, while there is still opportunity to do so. The agenda behind the gay lobby group Stonewall's advocacy of 'equal marriage' is that they sincerely regard it as 'abuse' to teach young people and children that homosexuality is wrong. The 'equal marriage' legislation would be a weapon by which such organisations could clamp down on the teaching of Christian morality not only in schools, but also in churches, and ultimately in homes. 'Equal marriage' legislation has been used in Massachusetts to challenge and attempt to silence Christian parents, ministers and churches.

('What same-sex "marriage" has done to Massachusetts', Brian Camenker, *MassResistance*, Updated June 2012.

http://www.massresistance.org/docs/marriage/effects_of_ssm_2012/index.html)

When speaking to people and trying to raise awareness of this issue, it is important to remember that in England and Wales, same-sex couples have civil and legal rights through Civil Partnerships. They also have the right to foster and adopt children. There are no

'inequalities' to be addressed. But if same-sex marriage is brought into law, it will redefine marriage for everyone, making marriage a genderless institution, stripping away its core meaning – the complementary union of a man and a woman.

It is also important to remind people that the Government has no popular mandate for this legislation. Three days before the last General Election Mr Cameron said on TV that he had no plans to redefine marriage. Same-sex marriage was not in any of the party manifestos. When the Government announced that it was bringing forward legislation and opened a 'consultation', the 'consultation' was only about how to implement the legislation – not on the principle of whether it was right.

The proposed legislation poses real threats to religious freedom and civil liberties. And if this 'first step' of redefining marriage is taken, there is of course the danger of further redefinitions. The Netherlands and Brazil, for example, both recognised three-way relationships, once they had legalised same-sex marriage.

Editor

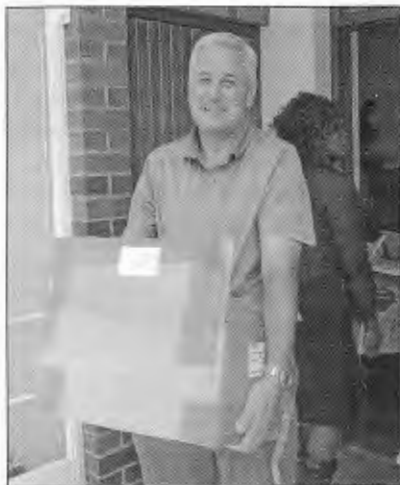
African Pastors' Conferences Report

January 2013.

THE PSALMIST WROTE, 'I WILL SING OF THE STEADFAST love of the Lord forever; with my mouth I will make known your faithfulness to all generations,' as he considered God's covenantal faithfulness and grace in establishing the eternal throne of David and so of our Lord Jesus. This privilege is ours as we bring the truth to pastors in southern Africa.

We left home on the 3rd January and completed our last conference on the 26th with eight conferences behind us. We took two vehicles due to the further kindness of someone who gave us the use of a Toyota diesel truck as well as the GWM we normally use. We carried an extra large load of books because we expected an increased attendance this year. This could only be done because of the bountiful contributions of Christians. The electric for the trailer failed, causing us to repack and leave it behind. Rain became a constant companion but at least it moderated the stifling Kwazulu Natal humidity and heat.

We started in Port Edward and then went on to Hillcrest in Durban, Pietermaritzburg, Mooi River, New Castle, Welkom, Krugersdorp and Kempton Park in Johannesburg. This year our speakers were seasoned pastors whose maturity and wisdom were evident. The men had a delicate but vital subject to handle and they were helped to answer at times controversial questions with compassion and gentleness without compromise. The subject was the Person and Work of the glorious Holy Spirit. Our speakers were Pastor Conrad Mbewe



Mike Marsland

from Kabwata Baptist in Lusaka, who spoke at three conferences, Pastor Ronald Kalifungwe from Lusaka Baptist, who addressed the last four conferences and Pastor Raymond Zulu who addressed all the conferences. 266 folk were addressed overall and most of them were pastors. Five books were donated to each person and we sold a record R 39000 worth of books at massive discounts. To say that our 'crews' were tired afterward is to put it lightly. But God strengthened us and good contacts were made. It was a thrill to see the delegates jabbing each other in the side as they heard the points being made. This was especially rewarding in Newcastle where the community is being troubled by so-called self-appointed 'Apostles'. Three conferences were held in new places with new organisers and the response each time was wonderful. One group complained that a year is too long to wait for another conference. The new conferences were held in Pietermaritzburg, Mooi River and



Felix Kalaba, a PhD student of Kitwe, Zambia, has written a history of the APCs

Krugersdorp. There were extended times for questions at some conferences because of all the questions to answer from delegates.

Once again we are delighted to report that a huge amount of assistance was given to us on our tour of duty. We did not need to hire accommodation because Christians opened their homes to our workers. Organisers in various places worked hard to get the word out to pastors, some using data lists they use to serve the local pastors with other projects and others just going out to find pastors. Two of the brethren in Mooi River personally visited 67 pastors in their area. This was heart-warming. We are reminded again of how many people it takes in this endeavour to set up these conferences, get the books to South Africa and then organise them into vehicles, lay them out at conferences, set up computer administration systems and so I could go on. We are so grateful to God for the many volunteers he has given us. The organisers were always so patient and thoughtful.

We were not free of what we think were the evil one's attacks. I suppose we must expect difficulties. The first major crisis came when Conrad Mbewe could not get to the first conference because his passport was stuck at an embassy in Cape Town and the Zambian authorities would not let him travel. We then reduced the Port Edward conference down to a single day and Raymond Zulu was helped by the Lord as he spoke through the day and answered questions on his own. Our attendance there was greatly reduced partly because one of the pastor's sons was murdered and others were attending the funeral meetings. The other reason given to us was that we commenced too early this year and so not everyone was back yet. In Durban we took two knocks. Tim Philips my assistant became very ill and we had to set up the Pietermaritzburg conference without our IT man. He soon recovered, glad to know that we had actually missed him! There is some competitiveness among us which adds to the fun of work and so I grudgingly got him to repair the blunders of the day of his absence. There was also a misunderstanding with a local pastors' fraternal and this led to more than a few missing the conference held in Hillcrest. We expected a lot more pastors to attend the first half of the conferences and so were somewhat disappointed. On the other hand if you think that each pastor attending represents a congregation and if he catches the vision of biblical truth, what massive ramifications could result. We are grateful for those that we did minister to. The folk on tour and at home working on the books have felt strains due to pressure of work and illness so please pray for us as we continue to labour to reach the church of our Saviour on this needy continent. We have reconsidered whether there are too many meetings in January and may reduce them in future.

One of our aims is to spot men who love the truth and are coming to understand the Reformed faith and apply the principles to the churches they work in. We met with pastors who have suffered because they expound the doctrines of grace as these appear in Scripture. We will try to assist these pastors wherever we can. We plan to even 'twin them' with established churches and put them in contact with godly pastors to encourage them and obtain various kinds of assistance.

One way of getting to know and work with the men is to encourage solid reliable organisers to set up workshops after the conferences. Some are doing this already. To this end we encouraged organisers to do this using a book called *The Holy Spirit* by Geoff Thomas. We bought 250 copies and we sold them at more than 80% discount. We have also prepared a study guide for the men to study and will be sending them off very soon. Please pray for this continued work. We then received a huge boost when Dr Brian De Vries of Mukanyo College here in Gauteng announced that the students who attended the conference and who read the book and answered the study guide would get half a credit towards their degree course.

Another encouragement was to meet men who are burdened for the Zulu people. One pastor in Newcastle is seeking to translate a book we sell called *Speaking to the dead*, a book dealing with the huge issue of ancestral worship, so that church members can read it, as many cannot read English in the rural areas. Another man, who is a convert from the Zionist movement, has already translated one of Mark Dever's books and is seeking a publisher. Last year he brought one of the local bishops of that organisation to the APCs. To witness this man's zeal and excitement at the discovery of truth is delightful. These men also translated for



Conrad Mbewe and Raymond Zulu

us during the conference and one missionary commented that he had never heard such accurate rendering of the lectures. Thank our Saviour for such provision!

Please pray for us as we prepare for the next set of trips. By the end of the year, if our Saviour blesses our plans and if we have the resources, we will have ministered in eleven countries. Please pray that the right subjects are chosen and the right men are free to minister in the particular places. We leave for Botswana on the 5th March and then head north to Livingstone and Lusaka. Please pray that men who are not reformed are reached for the glory of God. Thank you so much for the support in so many ways. With the books flowing like a river we are in need of funding to restock our supplies.

Donations can be gift aided and cheques need to be made out to African Pastors' Conferences and posted to the treasurer Mrs Rachel Rothwell, 4 Hall Close, Bramhope, LS16 9JQ UK

Michael Marsland

The Carey Conference – 2013

Reflections by the editor

THIS CAREY CONFERENCE WAS ONE OF THE BEST. The subjects were well balanced with regard to variety.

CDs are £4 each or MP3 CDs are £18 for 10 messages – this year's or a mixture of any ten messages from any time.

People can send orders to us: Carey Conference, 47 Long Street, Great Ellingham, Attleborough, Norfolk, NR17 1LN or e-mail them directly to Keith Mossop keith@kmossop.orangehome.co.uk

Cheques payable to 'Carey Conference'.

I found all the sessions spiritually nourishing and inspiring. Prof Andy McIntosh teaching on creation and the necessity of holding tightly to Genesis chapters 1-11 was highly relevant. He also gave a late-night presentation on the complexity of the machines that run the DNA, all of which demonstrated the stupendous wisdom of our Creator and the absurdity of believing that all fell into shape by chance without intelligent design.

In Jonathan Bayes' *A Call to Prayer*, we were challenged in our understanding of the promises describing the kingship of Christ.

In Psalm 89 we are given the guarantee of the line of David culminating in the Messiah. Jesus' command that we should teach all nations is in line with Psalm 2:8 'Ask me and I will give you the nations for your inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for your possession' which is also the context of Psalm 67 and stressed in other psalms such as 72, 22:27-31 and 86:9.

Yet when we look at the relentless spiritual decline of the UK and Western Europe these Scripture promises seem like pipe dreams. Jonathan Bayes rejected the idea that we can spiritualise the promises as though they are mere poetry. Rather he pointed us back to Psalm 89. The psalmist is appalled by the fact that realisation of the coming reign of the Messiah was threatened on every side. The prospect appeared hopeless. Did the psalmist give up in despair? No! He glorified God by believing prayer. We must follow his example. Gospel growth in Africa, the Americas and Asia is more advanced than it has ever been. That should encourage us to persevere.

Athanasius

In the first of three expositions Mike Reeves described the life and ministry of Athanasius (296-373) who was the champion of orthodoxy against Arianism. Born of wealthy parents Athanasius was Egyptian by birth but Greek in education. In Alexandria he was deeply moved by the martyrdom of Christians in the last of the persecutions. He was ordained a deacon by Alexander bishop of Alexandria. As secretary to Bishop Alexander he attended the Council of Nicea. Athanasius soon revealed skill in theology and a powerful intellect. Arius, like Jehovah's Witnesses today, taught that Christ the Logos was not the eternal Son of God but was a created subordinate being. This undermined the doctrine of the Trinity. When Bishop Alexander died in 328 Athanasius was enthroned as bishop. He was only 33. He became the focal point of Arian attack. Many false charges were made against him by the Arians. The Emperor Constantius was influenced against Athanasius by Eusebius of Nicodemia. Over his lifetime Athanasius was exiled five times, these periods of exile adding up to 17 years. At one point it seemed that the whole world was against him. Hence we have the saying *Athanasius contra mundum* – Athanasius against the world.

In 356 a large body of soldiers was sent to arrest Athanasius. They



Mike Reeves

surrounded a church where he was at a service. His friends surrounded him and enabled him to escape. On another occasion he fled by boat up the River Nile. Suddenly he had a hunch that he should turn round and travel downstream. He then came directly near to the boat which was in pursuit of him. They shouted, 'Have you seen Athanasius?' He shouted back 'He is not far – keep going!' This they did and continued upstream. And so he escaped yet again.

Athanasius became a prolific author. The volume and quality of his writings are impressive. These include commentaries, doctrinal treatises and letters. Especially valuable are his writings on the incarnation of the Son of God. The Athanasian Creed was formulated after Athanasius but his influence radiates from it.

We must be prepared for some deep theological thinking when we consider the implications of the eternal relationship of the Father to the Son.

Starting from the idea of God, Athanasius argues: The relation of Father is not accidental, arising in time, else God would be changeable. It belongs as necessarily to the essence and character of God as the attributes of eternity, wisdom, goodness and holiness; consequently he must have been Father from eternity, and this gives the eternal generation of the Son. The divine Fatherhood and Sonship are the prototype of all analogous relations on earth. As there is no Son without Father, no more is there Father without Son.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the only begotten of the Father, begotten and not made, and is of the essence of the Father. Jesus is *homoousios* (of the same substance) with the Father and not *homoiousios* (of similar substance). There was never a time when the Son was not. He came down from heaven and by incarnation was made man; as Wesley expressed it, 'Our God contracted to a span, incomprehensibly made man'.

The Father eternally loves the Son. Our relationship is built on the



Prof Andy McIntosh and his wife Juliet work as a team

relationship of the Father to the Son (1 Jn 1:1-4). Hence if I do not love, then I am not of God because the Father is love and loves the Son. He loves those who are united to the Son. The proof of adoption into the family of God is love for one another (1 Jn 4:16-21).

Mike Reeves presented a study of Richard Sibbes with particular reference to the spiritual experimental dimensions of Sibbes' life. He also spoke on Jonathan Edwards.

Professor Andy McIntosh addressed the subject *Creation – reconnecting the Gospel to a godless culture*. In Postmodernism there are no rules. Such thinking says there is no overarching meta-narrative. Not only is everything relative and no one view is perceived as being correct (that came out of modernism in the post war years), but now any concept of

there being such a thing as truth is relegated completely in public life. But the strange twist in all this is that the basis for such pronouncements is that evolution and secular humanism is the worldview (religion) which no one is allowed to doubt – the secular scientists are NOT postmodern. They are the new high priests. Consequently the believer in today's society must stand firm on the authority of Genesis 1-11 to show a coherent worldview firmly anchored in the authority of Genesis. Any attempt to compromise the clarity of the teaching that Man is made in the image of God from the dust (Gen. 2:7) allows a serious error which affects the NT (e.g. 1 Cor. 15 and Rom. 5) as well as the OT (Gen. 3) understanding of death. Only after the Fall did death come into our experience and God clearly tells Adam, he would return to the dust he was made from (and not to some pre-existing ape-like creature). Christ's physical death (as well as spiritual separation from His Father) on the Cross only makes sense when we understand that Adam's sin brought spiritual and physical death into the world. Our preaching must robustly bring converts to a full-orbed understanding of the Bible as being diametrically opposed to the basis of our society which is today based on evolutionary philosophy.

The ladies were pleased with the Women's track led by Kath Paterson. David Skull began his sermon *A Call*



Conferences secretaries Hugh and Lois Collier

to Holiness with a power point which promptly broke down but he was equal to that mini-crisis as his material was excellent. John Stevens, National Director of the FIEC, shared his understanding of the overall scene in the UK. Steven Curry in the closing sermon in expository and gripping fashion (see 2 Cor 11) buried the notion that we can boast about anything.

The Carey Conference provides an opportunity for the promotion of missions. Chairman Bill James organised the sessions, rotating chairmen. 110 conferees were informed and challenged by missionary reports interwoven with the sessions.

Luke Jenner, pastor of the RB church in Halifax, gave a report on the work of missionary Peter Slomski in Poland

and reminded us of conditions in that country.

Paulo and Jada, church planters in Italy between Venice and Milan, described their work and the spiritual conditions that prevail in their country.

Dinu Moga heads up FACLIA, the Reformed Baptist Publisher in Romania. Since 1992 FACLIA have published 200 books. Dinu who was himself converted in the 1976 revival which began in Oradea described the ongoing effects of that spiritual awakening. One outcome is 14 growing Romanian Baptist churches in Austria and as many again of Romanian Pentecostal churches.

Pastor Stephen Nowak of Stowmarket described his work in Tanzania. He is encouraged by the large quantity of reformed books in Swahili that have arrived in Tanzania. The door is wide open, a door so big that it could be described as one mile wide and two miles high.

Omitted here for security reasons is a report that was presented of church planting in hazardous places.

Prof McIntosh commended the work of Jyoti Chakravartty and his wife Sushmita in Calcutta in West Bengal who are involved in a number of projects flowing out from their firm belief in the historic Biblical faith. They are Baptist in conviction and are working with children in

their own home, humanitarian projects in West Bengal, book ministry (sending good reformed literature to pastors across India), and Creation ministry to alert pastors in India to the dangers of Western evolutionary philosophy which has undermined a rising generation of Indian students' confidence in the Scripture. More information is available through Andy McIntosh at andy.c.mcintosh@gmail.com

The Carey Conference encourages evangelism. Open Air Mission & Christian Answer was described by Professor Andy McIntosh as a witness that goes on throughout the year in the UK. The Open Air Mission have a number of evangelists working tirelessly in the shopping precincts of our cities and preaching the Gospel often using illustrations on a board. Team events are also run. Such work is also done by Christian Answer in the Spring and Summer months with teams of young people led by an experienced open-air speaker. This latter work is a sister ministry to United Beach Missions. More details of both works are available at <http://www.oamission.com/> and <http://www.ubm.org.uk/page68.html> and both groups would value your support in prayer, support of an OAM preacher near your own city, or coming on a team event.

About fifty per cent of the conferees enjoyed the stamina to attend the early Morning Prayer meetings.

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