



REFORMATION TODAY



JULY-AUGUST 2015

266

Websites www.reformation-today.org
<http://africanpastorsconference.com>

Email address of Kees van Kralingen kees.vankralingen@online.nl



Being enabled to sail, we experience the effect of the wind, but ‘we do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit’ (John 3:8).

Front cover picture: Young people at a recent youth conference in Sri Lanka (see News).

Editorial

THIS ISSUE OPENS WITH THE FINAL PART OF THE series of expositions on our Lord's Prayer in John 17 by Bob Davey. Our Lord prays for unity between all true believers. This is also something that we need to strive for as believers. The apostle Paul urges us 'to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called' (Eph 4:1) and this includes being 'eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace' (4:3).

In our perception this can cause tensions with regard to other believers who hold different or erroneous views. How are we to deal with this? Where and how do we draw the lines? Should we draw any lines at all? D A Carson named one of the chapters in his book on religious pluralism 'On Drawing Lines, When Drawing Lines Is Rude' (D A Carson, *The Gaggling of God* (Leicester: Apollos, 1996). In our postmodern culture drawing lines is seen as rude, but Carson rightly argues for 'Heralding the Gospel in a Pluralistic Culture'. Written in 1996, this is still highly relevant today.

We have to remain faithful to the gospel, to the truth as it is found in Jesus Christ. We need to remember that Jesus also prayed that we will be 'sanctified in the truth; Your Word is truth' (John 17:17). Love and truth should never be played against each other. In the short letter known as 2 John, love, truth and obedience are tied together.

That is why we should still address

issues in which the truth of the gospel is at stake. We should do this in a spirit of love (Eph 4:15); love first of all for our Lord, who is the Truth, and love for the Church which is his body, and then, of course, love for those with whom we are in discussion. This means that we discuss and, if necessary, scrutinise and judge ideas and views, but not people. It is in this spirit that we are treating a number of topics in this issue of *Reformation Today* where these considerations are highly relevant.

The Roman Catholic Church appears very different in different parts of the world and may also be in a state of change. The official doctrine of the RC Church, however, does not seem to change and it is therefore important to realise afresh the biblical doctrine of justification over against the confusion in the RC Church of justification and sanctification. We are grateful to Benedict Bird for his first article in *Reformation Today* dealing clearly with this topic.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit is another highly controversial subject causing much discussion, division and confusion. The danger of unbiblical views in this area is that the Church becomes focused (or obsessed) with the gifts and loses sight of the Giver. This often leads to a man-centred approach in the life and worship of the Church. The widespread appeal of the prosperity gospel could also be seen as a product of this trend. We have to maintain that trustful obedience and humble listening to God's Word as our ultimate authority is of vital importance for the health

of the Church.

Once again, we have to speak the truth in love and a catholic spirit is to be recommended. At the same time we need to be on our guard as is also mentioned in the biographical article on James Harvey who in many other ways was a remarkable example of godliness exemplified in his apologetic zeal and generous support to the cause of Christ in this world.

Against the background of all of this it is always encouraging to read of the blessing on the Church in various parts of the world and the opportunities to teach the biblical gospel to those who have a real hunger for the message of God's

Word (see News section with the report of the visit of Mostyn Roberts to Sri Lanka). Finally, to return to where I started, the theme of real spiritual unity, I recently had the privilege of visiting the International Baptist Church in Brussels where our brother Roland Eskinazi, formerly of Goodwood Baptist Church, is the pastor (since mid-2013). Although such an international church with people from about fifty different nationalities brings its own unique and real challenges, worshipping together with brothers and sisters from so many nationalities is a real foretaste of heaven. Please pray for this work and the progress of the gospel in the world.

Kees van Kralingen

The High-Priestly Prayer of Jesus

by Bob Davey

THIS IS THE FINAL ARTICLE OF THREE ON THE HIGH-PRIESTLY PRAYER OF JESUS AS RECORDED IN JOHN'S GOSPEL CHAPTER SEVENTEEN.

The whole prayer falls naturally into three parts. Jesus prays for himself (verses 1-5), for the apostles (verses 6-19), and for all future believers (verses 20-26).

John 17:20-26. Jesus prays for all future believers.

20 I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in me through their word.

I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in me. Jesus does not confine his prayer to the apostles alone. He now enlarges his prayer to include the whole company of future believers. Believers in Jesus will be brought into the kingdom of God from all nations until the end of the world (10:16; Matt 28:19, 20).

through their word. These will be brought into the kingdom of God through the preaching of the gospel, as taught and passed on by the apostles. 'Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God' (Rom 10:17). The message of salvation is unchanging. It will always be the same gospel, the gospel of Christ and the apostles.

Prayer for their unity

21 that they all may be one, as you, Father, are in me, and I in you; that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that you sent me.

that they all may be one. What Jesus has just requested for the apostles (v11) he now asks for future believers in Christ, as a body. He prays that they be kept in unity. The spiritual unity of the Holy Spirit as a result of the new birth needs to be nurtured (Eph 4:3, 4).

that they all may be (constantly) one. The new birth produces unity in heart in the gospel. This unity works through love (1 Thess 4:9). We can read about this unity in the early Church. The unity included 'continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine' (Acts 2:41-47; 4:32-35). The example of the early Church presents us with the ideal pattern for church life and witness.

as you, Father, are in me, and I in you. This unity of believers in the Church stems from their spiritual union with the Father and the Son, through the Holy Spirit. The very essence of the union within the Godhead is perfect love (1 John 4:8). Therefore this is the standard to keep (1 John 4:7-12). Anything less does not fully reflect the unity in the Godhead and falls short of the honour due to God and each other.

that they also may be one in us. Effective unity in the Church depends on the faithful nurturing of the fellowship and communion which believers have with God and with each other (1 John 1:3, 7).

that the world may believe that you sent me. Spiritual quality in the Church matters because effective witness for Christ depends upon it. When believers are united in the faith and act in love, this fact stands out and is noticed by the world. This witness will lead people to Christ because God will honour it with his blessing (Acts 2:46, 47; 4:32, 33; Matt 5:13-16).

22 And the glory which you gave me I have given them, that they may be one just as we are one: 23 I in them, and you in me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that you have sent me, and have loved them as you have loved me.

And the glory which you gave me I have given them. Salvation has heaven's glory about it. God is the God of glory (Acts 7:2). Christ is the Lord of glory (1 Cor 2:8). The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of glory (1 Peter 4:14). In their souls believers have participation in the divine glory. 'We all, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord' (2 Cor 3:18). This is why the new birth is such a holy work of God.

I have given them. This glory is the gift of God as the result of the saving relationship with Jesus.

I in them, and you in me, that they may be made perfect in one. Jesus prays for the ideal, perfect unity among believers. Then the glory will fully shine. This ideal will only be realised in heaven. Believers are destined to an everlasting glory (Rom 8:18; 2 Cor 4:16, 17; Col 1:27; 3:1-4). There in heaven the Church will have perfect unity in love and glory forever.

Meanwhile perfect unity in Christ should be striven for as much as possible on earth, that the glory of God may shine out through the body of believers. Believers must strive for this in love (1 John 4:11).

that the world may know that you have sent me. Repeated from verse 21. When the Church of believers has the glory of God shining through it by the Spirit and the Word, it will have a powerful influence in the world. This is especially to be seen in times of revival. The only explanation will be that its source is supernatural, from God (1 Cor 14:25). This is a good reason to pray for revivals.

and have loved them as you have loved me. When the world sees unity in the Spirit among believers they will know that God in Christ is among his people with divine love and mercy. For spiritual unity to have its full effects there has to be the genuine warmth of the love of Christ with it. There is no substitute for the shared experience of the love of Christ which passes knowledge (Eph 3:14-21). It opens the heart, especially for prayer together.

Prayer for their final glorification with him

24 Father, I desire that they also whom you gave me may be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which you have given me; for you loved me before the foundation of the world.

Father, I desire (I will) As a faithful Son to his Father, Jesus has one final request to make on behalf of his people in this high-priestly prayer. This final

request will be granted because he wills it. He has the right to it. He has earned it through his perfect work of redemption on their behalf.

they whom you gave me. The final request is on behalf of all the redeemed in all of time.

may be with me, that they may behold (gaze upon) my glory. The will of Jesus for the whole body of his people is to be glorified with him in heaven. To gaze for ever upon the glory of their Saviour will be heaven for the people of God. To see the glorified Jesus face to face (1 Cor 13:12) and to be like him (1 John 3:2) will be the fullest possible happiness for the saved. Jesus requests it for them.

my glory which you have given me. Here Jesus is referring to the glory *given* to him as Mediator, a glory rewarded to him on the basis of his work of redemption. In heaven his people will behold him face to face as the glorified *Jesus*, the God/Man (Heb 1:3).

for you loved me before the foundation of the world. The glorification of Jesus in heaven with his people will also be the full expression of the Father's eternal love for his Son.

The plea of Jesus for justice to be done

25 O righteous Father! The world has not known you, but I have known you; and these have known that you sent me.

O righteous Father! In the intimacy of the Son to his Father Jesus now appeals to the righteous character of his Father. He appeals for justice to be done. He has earned a full salvation for his people. Everything needed for the work of redemption he has done or will certainly do. It would be unjust of the Father, the fount of all justice, to withhold implementing it to the full.

As Mediator of the New Covenant, as High Priest of the people of God, Jesus is making this, his plea, in official legal form. It is the ultimate argument. It constitutes the most powerful of pleas. This is truly holy ground.

The world has not known you, but I have known you. The world has rejected God, but Jesus had the true knowledge of God and had done all his perfect will. So let justice be done. Let his high-priestly prayer on behalf of his people be granted in full. Let his work be completed.

and these have known that you sent me. The apostles had come to believe in the divine mission of Jesus, the Son of God from heaven. So let his work be

continued through them.

26 And I have declared to them your name, and will declare it, that the love with which you loved me may be in them, and I in them.

And I have declared to them your name, and will declare it. Jesus had been faithful in teaching the true knowledge of God and his will to the apostles. He will continue to teach and guide them in the future, as they continue his mission.

that the love with which you loved me may be in them, and I in them. The apostles would be fully equipped for the task, by the anointing of the divine love within them and with his own presence in them.

So the high-priestly prayer ends with the happy conclusion that the future is fully secured for the kingdom of God. The very character of God, as the righteous God, will secure the future for the apostles and the kingdom of God. Justice will be done (Rom 3:26).

All has been provided for. Jesus can now turn his face toward his sufferings and death.

The Doctrine of Justification by Faith Alone

by Benedict Bird

IN THE SECOND PART OF THIS SERIES ON KEY CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES MOSTYN ROBERTS DESCRIBED ‘GOD’S BIG plan’ in terms of ‘uniting all things in Christ’; and, so far as people are concerned, that includes saving those who have been chosen for eternal life in Christ by his grace and mercy alone.¹

The key question of the 16th-century Reformation concerned the means by which God saves those whom he has chosen. What is the nature of that act or process? This question remains today a major point of difference between Protestant and Roman Catholic teaching.²

In this article we will consider first the content of the Protestant doctrine of justification by faith alone; then one of the main Roman Catholic criticisms of the doctrine; then why that criticism is wrong; and lastly why it matters.

What is the doctrine of justification by faith alone?

This is the doctrine that a sinner can be justified before God only on account

of his faith in Jesus Christ.

Every man is conceived and born sinful, and acts sinfully from his earliest days (Ps 51:4-5). Consequently he is rightly adjudged sinful and guilty by and before God, and lives as a child of wrath until his regeneration (Eph 2:1-3). His regeneration is a sovereign work of God, to which man makes no contribution. He can make no contribution because he is spiritually dead (Eph 2:1-3). All those who are 'chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world' (Eph 1:4), being the elect, are at a time in their lives of God's choosing 'made alive' (Eph 2:5; Col 2:13): they are convicted of their sin and given faith in Jesus Christ as their only Saviour. From a human perspective their hostility to or lack of interest in the gospel is replaced by an awareness of their personal sinfulness and their need to trust in Christ to put them right with God. At that point 'those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified' (Rom 8:30).

'Justified' means 'declared righteous'. Justification involves a legal declaration by God. It is a *legal* declaration in the sense that it is a verdict declared by a law-giver who has authority to make it, having an effect on the legal status of the subject that is binding upon all. God is sovereign over every person and power in the universe. If he makes a declaration, no-one has authority or ability to contradict it.

The words translated 'justify' (*hatsdiq*³ in the Old Testament and *dikaiō*⁴ in the New Testament) invariably have a forensic, declarative connotation.⁵ 'As often as the Scriptures speak professedly about our justification, it always must be explained as a forensic term.'⁶ 'I will not acquit the wicked,' says the Lord (Ex 23:7. See also Gen 18:25). Justification is spoken of in contradistinction from condemnation (Rom 8:33-34; Matt 12:37). 'If there be a controversy between men ... the judges ... shall justify the righteous and condemn the wicked' (Deut 25:1). 'He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous are both alike an abomination to the LORD' (Prov 17:15. See also Isa 5:23). The judge's condemnation is forensic and declarative; it does not change the accused inwardly. Likewise justification.

Justification, then, is an '*instantaneous legal act of God*⁷': by way of judicial declaration, he reckons to our account (Rom 4:3-6) Christ's righteousness and propitiation (Rom 3:25). He does so as a free gift to us (Rom 5:17), and on the basis of that imputation declares us to be righteous and forgiven in his sight (Rom 4:7). Those two aspects – righteousness and forgiveness – can be thought of as having been achieved for us by Christ's 'active obedience' and his 'passive obedience'. Man was created to fulfil God's commands, by living a life of perfect obedience to him. He failed, and God's perfect justice required that he be punished. Christ reversed that curse for his people both by living a

perfect life for them (his ‘active obedience’⁸) and by suffering and dying for them (his ‘passive obedience’⁹). When we are justified we are not just brought to a position of ‘moral neutrality’, with the slate wiped clean by his sacrifice but with the law left unfulfilled; rather, we are credited with the righteousness of Christ: the perfect sacrifice, the perfect law-keeper, the perfect man.

Justification by faith means that God’s declaration of forgiveness and imputed righteousness is made when the elect sinner trusts in Christ for his salvation.¹⁰ It does not mean that the sinner contributes faith, in return for which God must make the declaration.¹¹ Faith is the occasion of and precondition for justification, but it is a precondition that is satisfied by God himself as he graciously bestows the gift of faith (Rom 12:3, Eph 2:8, Phil 1:29). John Owen says, ‘It is a duty which [God] prescribes unto us: it is an act of our own; and it is we that believe, not God.’¹² To put it another way, faith is the ‘instrument’ by which we receive justification. Owen says that when we ‘receive [physical] things that are so given unto us, we do it by our hand; [the hand] is the instrument of that reception ... Whereas ... the righteousness [by which] we are justified is the gift of God, which is [offered] to us in the promise of the gospel; the use and office of faith being to receive...or lay hold of...this righteousness.’¹³

Justification by faith alone means that there are no other preconditions for justification, besides faith. In particular man does not contribute good works or obedience to God’s laws so as to earn the declaration or oblige God to grant it. ‘One is justified by faith apart from works of the law’ (Acts 13:38-39; Rom 3:28; Gal 2:16).

As Calvin put it: ‘He ... is justified who is regarded not as a sinner, but as righteous, and as such stands acquitted at the judgment-seat of God, where all sinners are condemned ... this justification consists in the forgiveness of sins and the imputation of the righteousness of Christ.’¹⁴

These truths are summarised in the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith in these terms: ‘Those whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justifieth, not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous; not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ’s sake alone; not by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness; but by imputing Christ’s active obedience unto the whole law, and passive obedience in his death for their whole and sole righteousness by faith, which faith they have not of themselves; it is the gift of God.’¹⁵

Understanding the claim that this doctrine is a ‘legal fiction’

If we are to have a clearer understanding of what this doctrine means, it is helpful to consider what it does not mean. One way to do that is by considering one of the major charges against it, as expressed particularly by Roman

Catholic theologians: the charge that it is a 'legal fiction'.

First we must understand what is meant by a 'legal fiction'. A legal fiction is an assertion that is accepted as true for legal purposes even though it may be untrue or unproven.¹⁶ More negatively '[it] is a supposition of law that a thing is true, which is either certainly not true, or at least is as probably false as true.'¹⁷

Legal fictions are adopted for reasons of expediency. For example, a corporation is said to be a 'person', capable of doing acts and entering into contracts, though in reality it may be no more than an entry in a government register. The statute giving rise to the fiction can thereby ensure that the corporation is subject to any law that applies to a 'person', thus making it unnecessary to rewrite every such law so that it refers to 'a person or a corporation'.

Another example is the doctrine of 'survival'. If a married couple die in circumstances where it is impossible to tell which spouse died first, the older of the two is considered to have died first. If the older spouse left some property to a daughter, and the younger spouse left the same property to a son, the daughter would receive the property. The truth may be that the younger spouse died first. But unless evidence of this comes to light, the fiction is treated as fact. It is a rule that simplifies the administration of justice, though it is arbitrary and potentially unfair. It was invented because human judges are not omniscient.

A legal fiction is very different from a legal declaration. A legal fiction is an assumption for convenience. It is a device enabling a judge to decide a case despite, or in ignorance, of the actual facts. A declaration, on the other hand, either *states* what already is, or *creates* what was not.

A judge can declare that a man who was always the rightful owner of some property is indeed the rightful owner, contrary to the claim of a challenger. Or he can declare *constitutively* that someone has thenceforth a new status.¹⁸ A declaration of adoption or divorce has the effect of legally bringing into existence a new status for the adopted or divorced person. He does not say, 'Now you can pretend that these people are legally your parents'; the adopted person and his new parents *have* the new status.¹⁹

Coming back to the meaning of justification by faith alone, the question is whether this is a legal fiction or, alternatively, a legal declaration; and, if it is a declaration, whether it is a constitutive declaration that creates a new state of affairs.

Roman Catholics and others argue that the doctrine of justification through the imputation of Christ's righteousness is merely a legal fiction.

'According to Rome, [on the Protestant view] the Christian life is made to

have its beginning in a fiction.' They say that imputation involves 'treating the justified sinner as if he were righteous before [God] when actually he is not'.²⁰

As Anthony Hoekema puts it: 'One of the chief criticisms Roman Catholic theologians have advanced against the Protestant view of justification [is] that the purely forensic or declarative understanding of justification leaves people totally unchanged and therefore falls short of full salvation from sin. The Reformed [doctrine] is a mere "legal fiction", a "robe thrown over a corpse"'.²¹

Thus, it is said, the fiction 'conceals our continuing sinfulness' and is 'a giant hoax, a phoney transaction ... which leaves you inwardly unrenewed'.²² God is imputing a false status to the sinner.

The Roman Catholic opposition to the Protestant view is not expressed mildly: 'If anyone says that men are justified either by the sole imputation of the justice of Christ or by the sole remission of sins ... let him be anathema.'²³

Instead, they teach that justification involves the 'infusion' of righteousness into a sinner so as to give him a spiritual and moral nature,²⁴ thereby 'divinizing him ... not merely imput[ing righteousness to him] in a juridical fashion'.²⁵ This, they say, better accounts for the fact that a convert continues to sin after coming into the church; he becomes more holy throughout life, through the co-operation of God's grace and his own efforts, and with the help of the Church.

Why the doctrine is not a legal fiction

The doctrine would indeed be a legal fiction if salvation consisted of nothing but a declaration that a sinner is righteous. Such a fiction would be unthinkable, whether on earth or in heaven, because it would involve God uniting that which is unrighteous with his righteous Son (1 Cor 6:9,15-17).

But Paul did not simply declare that God 'justifies the ungodly' (Rom 4:5), a statement which would collide catastrophically with Exodus 23:7. He explained the basis upon which a just God can do so, with reference to David, in terms of faith, forgiveness and righteousness (Rom 4:5-7). God does so in such a way 'that his judgment may be according to truth'.²⁶

How then can this be achieved, given that a man is a sinner before his conversion (Rom 3:23; Eph 2:1) and continues to sin after his conversion (1 John 1:8)? Must God wait until we are glorified and out of 'this body of death' (Rom 7:24) before we can be united with Christ? Or at least until the Spirit has done his work in 'sanctifying us completely' (1 Thess 5:23)?

The answer lies partly in the fact that justification is not a stand-alone concept, to be assessed in isolation. 'The process of salvation has many aspects which exist side by side.'²⁷ One aspect is justification. By this aspect it is possible for

God to treat believers as righteous even before they are inherently righteous. Thus he can unite us with Christ at the same time as our regeneration, justification and adoption, and at the same time as the commencement of sanctification, but *before* the completion of our sanctification or our glorification. All of these aspects flow out of the Covenant of Redemption²⁸ by which, in the eternal plan, God determined that we should be 'in Christ' or 'united with Christ'.²⁹ Justification is not 'a purely external transaction; it cannot be isolated from our union with Christ.'³⁰

But still it might be asked whether treating us as righteous 'accords with truth' and is a reality, or whether it necessarily involves pretence.

The reason why justification accords with truth is that it is a judicial declaration that is constitutive of our righteousness. 'To justify, in the scriptural sense, is to effect an objective relation, the state of righteousness by a judicial sentence ... by imputing the righteousness of another.'³¹

Francis Turretin explains: 'Man can be made just in two ways: either in himself or in another; either from the law or from the gospel.'³² As no man is intrinsically righteous (Rom 3:10), either he must be turned into a perfect law-keeper (and forgiven past sins), or he must be given a status that is alien to him. One of these things must happen at the time of his conversion if he is to be united with Christ at and from that time.

The first possibility does not accord with Scripture or reality, since a man continues to sin after his conversion.

The second accords with both Scripture and reality. Those who are 'in Christ' have the 'free gift of righteousness' (Rom 5:17). It is not a gift that will only be bestowed in the future: the believer has it upon becoming a believer. Even now 'the righteous shall live by faith' (Rom 1:17). He can therefore 'stand ... having put on the breastplate of righteousness' (Eph 6:14). Paul knew that he would 'be found in [Christ], not having a righteousness of [his] own that comes from the law, but ... the righteousness from God that depends on faith' (Phil 3:9).

According to Herman Bavinck Roman Catholics picture 'the imputation of Christ's righteousness ... as a fiction that is opposed to reality. [It] exists only in the imagination, whereas infused righteousness, according to them, is the only real and true righteousness. That picture, however, is completely mistaken. Justification is as real as sanctification, and imputation is not less real than infusion. The only difference is this: in justification righteousness is granted to us in a juridical sense while in sanctification it becomes ours in an ethical sense. Both are very real and very necessary.'³³

The Roman Catholic says in effect, 'A man can only be righteous in reality if he is made intrinsically – 'physically'³⁴ – righteous; anything else is a fiction'.

But that is not so. There is not only one dimension to reality. '[It] is a thing no less real in its own order (to wit, judicial and forensic) than infusion in a moral or physical order; as the imputation of a payment made by a surety to the debtor is in the highest degree real (to wit, by which he is freed from the debt and delivered from the right which the creditor had over him). Hence it is evident that this judicial act of God does not lack truth because he does not pronounce us righteous in ourselves (which would be false), but in Christ (which is perfectly true).'³⁵

In other words, if a legal declaration is genuinely efficacious in producing a new status in the beneficiary, it is unreal to insist that the effect is fictional. Buchanan lists the immediate blessings that are bestowed upon a justified believer, including: 'the pardon of sin, the restoration of God's favour, the renewal of His image, the assurance of His love, the privilege of adoption, and the gift of eternal life', and declares, 'Every one of them is as real, as it is desirable. When we are brought face to face with such realities as these, it is vain to talk of "legal fictions"'.³⁶

Scripture plainly teaches that we are united with Christ in this life, and stand before God justified now. Paul can say that 'we have *now* been justified by [Christ's] blood'; 'we have *now* received reconciliation' (Rom 5:9, 11, my emphasis. See also Rom 5:1). He could not have spoken of these benefits as real and existing if they were merely fictional, or merely future promises³⁷. We have the benefits only because Christ's righteousness really has been credited to our account.

Why it matters that the doctrine is not a legal fiction

It matters, first, because it would impugn God's justice if the doctrine were a legal fiction. 'Fiction' implies pretence. God is the God of omniscience and truth. Buchanan is right to describe the 'legal fiction' charge as 'offensive' on this basis alone.³⁸

Turretin goes further: 'Since the judgment of God is according to truth, he cannot pronounce anyone just who is not really just. ... Human courts often justify the guilty, either through ignorance, injury [or] iniquity ... But in the divine court ... this cannot occur.'³⁹

If God were willing to allow this fiction, why should he not allow another? He might also pretend that post-conversion sin is unimportant. For the Roman Catholics, this was the logical consequence of the legal fiction that they thought they had identified⁴⁰. If justification were a legal fiction, and if it stood alone, they could be right. But it is not, and does not (Rom 6; Gal 5:13).

Secondly, it would impugn Christ's honour. Believers are 'in Christ'. If imputed righteousness is a fiction, yet believers are united with him, it follows that Christ is willing to be united with the unrighteous. Christ did not need to

die at all, had that been his aim⁴¹. But as Calvin says, 'The Lord [cannot admit a man] to union ... without changing his condition from that of a sinner into that of a righteous man.'⁴²

Thirdly, it would undermine salvation by faith alone. Those who argue for the inefficacy of the imputation of Christ's righteousness are leaving room for complete justification to be achieved by some other means.

The Council of Trent did not hide this: 'If anyone says that the sinner is justified by faith alone, meaning that nothing else is required to co-operate in order to obtain the grace of justification, and that it is not in any way necessary that he be prepared and disposed by the action of his own will, let him be anathema.'⁴³ Instead, they insisted that justification is first the product of co-operation between God's 'predisposing grace' and man's freewill;⁴⁴ and secondly, the product of good works.⁴⁵ Justification might thereafter be lost and recovered through penance.⁴⁶

John Owen rejected this notion of a two-stage justification⁴⁷, explaining that the Roman Catholics were confusing justification and sanctification.⁴⁸ He went on to list all the immediate benefits that a believer has from true justification through the blood of Christ. With characteristic humour, he concludes: 'If there be anything now left for their second justification to do, as such, let them take it as their own'⁴⁹ What underlies the 'fiction and artifice' of the Roman Catholic notion of justification 'is a dislike of the doctrine of the grace of God, and justification from thence, by faith in the blood of Christ ... whilst they dress up their own righteousness in its robes, and exalt it into the room and dignity thereof.'⁵⁰

Hoekema puts it plainly: 'Understanding justification as a declarative act of God safeguards the precious teaching that we are saved by grace alone and not by works.'⁵¹

Conclusion

The doctrine of justification by faith alone is an essential part of the Christian gospel. Far from being a legal fiction, it is a real, effective, status-transforming, forensic, constitutive declaration by the righteous Judge of all. God really and effectually changes a man's status before him from the time that he truly confesses that he is a sinner under judgment and comes to trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation. He was under God's wrath and he ceases to be. There is no pretence involved. The death penalty due for his sin has been paid, thereby allowing the Judge to declare him forgiven and no longer under judgment. The righteousness of Christ's perfect life has been legally credited to the new believer, thereby allowing the Judge to declare him righteous in his sight. The law has been upheld and its demands have been fulfilled. The believer is united with Christ and adopted by the Father, without in any way tainting God's perfection.

References:

¹ *Reformation Today*, issue 260 (July-August 2014) p10.

² I refer below to the Roman Catholic teaching on justification as developed at the Council of Trent, which met between 1545 and 1563, which teaching has not been renounced or substantially altered since then as far as I am aware. I am not suggesting that all Roman Catholics would, in practice, express or hold to these views.

³ 'To esteem, declare, pronounce and adjudge anyone absolved, acquitted, cleared, justified' – J Owen, *The Doctrine of Justification by Faith* (Banner of Truth, 1967) Works V, p128.

⁴ M J Erickson, in *Christian Theology*, second edition (Baker, 1983-1998) notes that the verbal ending of δικαιώω, -όω, does not carry the meaning 'to make something a particular way', unlike -άζω, as in ἁγιάζω. This is consistent with the forensic interpretation of the word.

⁵ A A Hoekema, *Saved by Grace* (Eerdmans, 1989) p154.

⁶ F Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, ed. J T Dennison, transl. G M Giger (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1994) p634.

⁷ W Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (IVP, 1994) p722.

⁸ This is a translation of the Latin term *obedientia activa*, referring to Christ's keeping of the whole law of God: see R A Muller's *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms* (Baker Academic, 1985) p205.

⁹ This is a translation of the Latin term *obedientia passiva*, referring to Christ's obedience during his 'passion' or suffering on the cross, *ibid*. It does not imply 'passivity' in the sense of inactivity.

¹⁰ Rom 5:1: ἐκ πίστεως, 'out from faith' or 'by faith'; Eph 2:8: διὰ πίστεως, 'through faith'; also Rom 3:28, Gal 2:16 and Phil 3:9.

¹¹ Owen, Works V, p.13. Kees van Kralingen noted in a recent issue of *Reformation Today* (RT 265) a similar comment by Sinclair Ferguson in *The Holy Spirit* (IVP, 1996) pp126-129: 'God does not believe for us, or in us; we believe. Yet it is only by God's grace that we believe. His gift is simultaneously our act'; and 'The active exercise of faith (it is we, not God, who believe) does not compromise the grace of the Spirit's work in the application of salvation. It is of the nature of faith that by it we actively receive Christ and justification in him without contributing to it. After all, faith is trust in another. It is the antithesis of all self-contribution and self-reliance...The genius of salvation by grace is that it engages man without diluting the graciousness of the salvation received.'

¹² Owen, Works V, p110.

¹³ Owen, Works V, p111.

¹⁴ J Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 1559, trans. H Beveridge in 1845, book III, chapter XI, paragraph 2.

¹⁵ Chapter XI, paragraph 1; for a comparison of the 1689 Baptist Confession and the very similar (on this point) Westminster Confession of 1646 and Savoy Declaration of 1658 see: www.proginosko.com/docs/wcf_sdfo_lbcf.html

¹⁶ *Oxford English Dictionary* on-line (OUP, 2013).

¹⁷ J Buchanan, *The Doctrine of Justification*, Appendix 8, quoting from Erskine's *Institutes* (Banner of Truth, 1967) p501.

¹⁸ Buchanan, p234, says that a human judge can only make mere declarations, not constitutive declarations, but this is not correct, as a matter of English law at least.

¹⁹ Murray rightly regards God's declaration as 'unique', not on the basis that only God can make constitutive declarations, but on the basis that only God could do what he did in Christ: J Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied* (Banner of Truth, 1961) p123.

²⁰ R Reymond, *A New Systematic Theology* (Nelson, 1998) p753.

²¹ Hoekema, p169.

²² J Stott, *The Cross of Christ* (IVP, 1986) pp187-188.

²³ Canon 11 concerning justification, Council of Trent, Session VI under Pope Paul III, 13th January 1547, see: www.ewtn.com/library/councils/trent6.htm#2.

²⁴ Hoekema, p163.

²⁵ Hoekema, p168, quoting from the Catholic dictionary by Rahner and Vorgrimler, *Dictionary of Theology* (Crossroads, 1981) pp260-261.

²⁶ Turretin, p636.

²⁷ Hoekema, p169.

²⁸ Luke 22:29: 'my father covenanted ('*διέθετό*) to me a kingdom'; John 17:2: 'you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him'; Titus 1:2: 'promised before the beginning of time'.

²⁹ The expressions occur more than a dozen times in Romans alone, including 6:11, 6:23, 8:1, 12:5, 15:17, 16:3, 16:7, 16:9, 16:10. See L Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Eerdmans, 1939-41) p511.

³⁰ Stott, p191.

³¹ Berkhof, p511.

³² Turretin, p636.

³³ H Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, volume IV p213.

³⁴ Turretin, p49.

³⁵ Turretin, p648.

³⁶ Buchanan, p337.

³⁷ Buchanan, p336.

³⁸ Buchanan, p334.

³⁹ Turretin, p647.

⁴⁰ J I Packer, *Here We Stand* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1986) p124.

⁴¹ cf Trent Canon 33 on Justification, which says: 'If anyone says that the Catholic doctrine of justification ... derogates in some respect from the glory of God or the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ ... let him be anathema.' *Per contra*: Romans 8:1.

⁴² Calvin, *Institutes*, book III, chapter XI, paragraph 21.

⁴³ Trent Canon 9 on Justification.

⁴⁴ Trent Decree on Justification, chapter V.

⁴⁵ Trent Decree on Justification, chapters X, XVI and Canons 24 and 26.

⁴⁶ Trent Decree on Justification, chapter XIV.

⁴⁷ Owen, Works V, p137.

⁴⁸ Owen, Works V, p138.

⁴⁹ Owen, Works V, p142.

⁵⁰ Owen, Works V, p143.

⁵¹ Hoekema, p169.

African Pastors' Conferences

IN JUNE WE HAVE HAD TWO SIMULTANEOUS AFRICAN PASTORS' CONFERENCES. THERE WERE FRUITFUL conferences in the low veldt of South Africa where Zambian Pastor Ndonji Kayumba and Blake Cassell spoke. The conference in Barberton was especially well attended compared with last year and the following conference in Swaziland was a blessing as normal.

At the same time we had four conferences in East Africa, with Ronald Kalifungwa, Pastor of Lusaka Baptist Church, and Irving Steggles speaking. It was a joy to be hosted by our Reformed Baptist brethren in Trinity Baptist church in Nairobi, with many young pastors present, some new to Reformed theology, but all singing powerfully from Grace Hymns! There is much promise for the future here. We then flew to Kampala to the first APC there, well attended and organised by Pastor Bill Issa of a small and possibly the only Reformed Baptist church in this great city; the venue was Kampala Baptist Church, a Baptist Union church. We had enthusiastic support from BU churches which are not reformed but would like a large conference next year to which the BU associations from throughout the country will be invited – please pray we will be able to offer this. After a long road journey north, past the source of the Nile, we had a good conference in Mbale organised by the Presbyterians. Then we drove across the border to Eldoret in Kenya for the final conference hosted by Grace Baptist Church. The theme of all the conferences was 'Becoming right with God and Being more like Christ' (ie justification and sanctification).

The Nairobi conference was sponsored by a church in Louisiana and the Eldoret conference partly sponsored by a lady in Mississippi. We are truly grateful for their generosity.

Irving Steggles

UK Director

Raymond Zulu (pastor of High Wycombe Evangelical Baptist Church since 2005) has accepted the post of UK Director of APC. Raymond has been a regular speaker in January at APCs for a number of years.

The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

Part 3: His work in the Church (including the gifts), in creation and the consummation

by Kees van Kralingen

The work of the Holy Spirit in the Church

We have already referred to Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 12:13 that we have been baptised with the Spirit into the body of Christ. The picture of the body is used often by Paul to describe the Church (Rom 12:4-5; 1 Cor 12:12-27; Eph 1:22-23; Col 1:18). The Holy Spirit unites believers with Christ and with one another to form the body of Christ, the Church. We will not be a collection of individually saved sinners, but will form a living community through the ministry of the Holy Spirit for the glory of God (1 Peter 2:9-12).

For this purpose the Lord Jesus Christ has given many gifts to his Church through the Holy Spirit. This brings us to the much debated issue of the gifts of the Spirit. In this article we can only cover the headlines.

The gifts of the Spirit

The Greek words used are *charisma* (= gift of grace) and *pneumatikon* (= spiritual gift). We find several lists of such gifts in the letters of Paul and Peter (Rom 12:6-8; 1 Cor 12:8-11, 28; Eph 4:11; 1 Peter 4:11). In addition, Paul speaks about being married, or remaining unmarried as a *charisma* (1 Cor 7:7), and elsewhere he refers to suffering for Christ as a gift of grace (Phil 1:29). Studying all these texts shows that a well-defined list of specific gifts does not exist. Not a single gift occurs in all lists and thirteen gifts are only mentioned once. Not all gifts have the same value (1 Cor 12:31). There is an emphasis, however, on the role of the ministry of the Word, teaching and building up the Church as we can see that gifts referring to these aspects occur often and are usually mentioned first.

This brings us to the purpose of the gifts. As Paul states emphatically many times in 1 Corinthians 12-14, the gifts are not for ourselves, for our enjoyment, but rather for the benefit, edification, instruction and building up of the Church (1 Cor 12:7; 14:3,5,6,12,19,31). And Peter confirms this (1 Peter 4:10). The gifts are for serving one another as Geoff Thomas says: 'The fruit of the manifestation of the Holy Spirit of God is not an emotional high; it is service in the fellowship of believers.'¹ It is a very useful exercise to study all the occurrences of the phrase 'one another' in the New Testament.²

¹ Geoffrey Thomas, *The Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2011), p169.

The diversity of gifts serves this purpose for the one Church of Christ as John Stott states: 'Thus the gift of the Spirit (God's gift of the Spirit to us) creates the Church's unity, while the gifts of the Spirit (the Holy Spirit's gifts to us) diversify the Church's ministry.'³

Some of these gifts are supernatural whereas others relate to natural abilities. They are all spiritual gifts because the Holy Spirit gives them and uses them. The Holy Spirit is sovereign in the distribution of these gifts (1 Cor 12:11; Heb 2:3-4). This leads to the immediate conclusion that none of us can claim to possess one or more of these gifts as our own property to be used at our discretion. Any gift of the Spirit is not a permanent ability residing in us, but his gracious operation in us. This also means that nobody has all the gifts.

These gifts are given to believers, but there is clear evidence in Scripture that especially supernatural gifts have been given to the apostles to underline their unique and specific function in the history of redemption as direct witnesses to Jesus Christ and his resurrection. This is clearly stated in 2 Corinthians 12:12 and Hebrews 2:3-4. This has led to the biblically correct observation that miracles do not occur randomly throughout history, but are largely confined to the great epochal events in the history of redemption such as the exodus of the people of Israel and their occupation of the promised land, the time of the great prophets such as Elijah and Elisha, and, the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus followed by the pouring out of the Holy Spirit and the first formation of the Church. It cannot be denied that the number of references to supernatural events such as healings and speaking in tongues disappear in the later writings of the New Testament. This should not be taken to the extreme of denying that God can still do miraculous and wonderful works today. The glory and sovereignty of God is still displayed in his great works in the history of the Church, wonderful and powerful conversions, spiritual revival of the Church, and real answers to prayer.

This brings us to the question whether we have to conclude that the gifts, or at least the miraculous gifts of the Spirit have ceased to occur. In the case of the gift of apostles and prophets we do indeed have to conclude this. Paul says that apostles and prophets have been given as the foundation for the Church with Jesus Christ as the cornerstone (Eph 2:20). In the nature of the case a foundation can only be laid once, and then people continue building on it. The direct witnesses and also the people who received this witness first-hand from these witnesses (eg Mark, Luke) are no longer with us. The witnesses and some of their immediate contemporaries have now put the content of their

² Geoffrey Thomas, p68.

³ John Stott, *Baptism and Fullness. The work of the Holy Spirit today* (Leicester: IVP, 1975), p86.

witness on paper and we have this as the canon of Scripture. People have argued that other gifts have also ceased on the basis of 1 Corinthians 13:8-13. They have used this text arguing against the excessive claims of the charismatic movement that all gifts are still at the disposal of believers with speaking in tongues as a sign of a special baptism with the Spirit. These people have argued that Paul suggests these gifts will disappear when the perfect comes, taking this to mean the formation and completion of the canon of Scripture. This interpretation of the text cannot be totally excluded but it does seem unlikely that the perfection Paul has in mind is the perfection of the formation of the canon and Christ's return⁴. A strong argument for this conclusion is found in verses 11 and 12. How could the strong contrast and change in verse 11 become reality at the completion of the canon? It is also very unlikely that the things described by Paul in verse 12 apply in this time after the completion of the canon but before the consummation.

There is further important biblical evidence regarding the cessation or otherwise of supernatural gifts. The first point has already been mentioned above: such miraculous gifts were especially given to the apostles in the early days of the Church. These gifts were used by God to testify to the great salvation which had now been declared by the Lord. Secondly, another important point is to consider the nature of some of the so-called 'gifts' on the basis of the biblical data. When we apply this approach to some of the most controversial gifts, the Bible gives us clear direction in this matter. Take the gift of tongues first. The New Testament word usually translated as 'tongues' refers to what we do with our tongues in the production of language. Careful exegesis of the relevant texts in Acts and 1 Corinthians shows that the phenomenon referred to is well-defined, existing language with specific content. The need for interpretation confirms this. It is definitely not the uncontrolled uttering of meaningless, undefined, more or less ecstatic sounds.⁵ This gift on the day of Pentecost signalled the reversal of the curse of Babel and the opening up of the spread of the gospel to people of other tongues, the heathen people of other nations all around the world. This gift could obviously still have had a similar function in the early days in a multi-lingual, multi-cultural city like Corinth, but the need disappeared with the growth of the Church. Such a type of gift may still be experienced in a missionary situation where people have obtained remarkable gifts of learning new languages allowing the preaching of the gospel and the translation of Scripture. The work of missionaries like William Carey is an obvious example.

⁴ See D.A. Carson, *Showing the Spirit. A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12-14* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987), pp66-76 for a detailed exegesis. Geoffrey Thomas takes a similar position; see pp179-180.

⁵ See D.A. Carson, pp77-106 for a detailed discussion.

The gift of prophecy referred to by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12-14 is not the authoritative prophecy given to the prophets as in the Old Testament who could say: 'Thus says the LORD.' The word prophecy as used here by Paul denotes the gift to strengthen, encourage and comfort others, according to 1 Corinthians 14:3.⁶ This also explains why such prophecy should be weighed carefully (1 Cor 14:29-33). The whole purpose of Paul in 1 Corinthians 14 is to emphasise the need for orderly teaching and edification of the Church through intelligible content whilst the Word of God has the prime authority (1 Cor 14:36-37).

We also need to mention briefly the gift of healing. The New Testament shows that God gave miraculous healing through the apostles at several instances as recorded in the New Testament. At the same time it is clear that some of Paul's co-workers were not healed in this way (1 Tim 5:23; 2 Tim 4:20). This illustrates the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit who gave such gifts to the apostles to testify to the great salvation which had now been announced (Heb 2:3-4). This does of course not exclude the possibility that God can still give remarkable answers to prayer also for healing.⁷ But the popular institutionalisation of healing ministries in the Church is not in agreement with the evidence from Scripture.

In considering the gifts of the Holy Spirit to the Church, it is essential to remember that Paul has put his famous chapter on love right in the middle of his treatment of this topic. His holy arithmetic in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 is 5-1=0. He mentions five seemingly impressive gifts, but when people exercise these gifts without love, they count for nothing! Love should always be the main characteristic of the Church: love for God and for one another (Matt 22:36-40).

The work of the Holy Spirit in creation and the consummation

Although the world does not know God and has no knowledge of the Holy Spirit (John 14:17; 1 Cor 2:12-14), the Holy Spirit is still present in this world (Ps 139:7) and will continue his work in this world of convicting the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgement (John 16:8-11). This is because God so loved the world (John 3:16). Not because it is so large, and certainly not because it deserves it, but rather because God's unmerited grace is directed to such a bad world.

This work of the Holy Spirit goes on steadily at most times, but sometimes God sends special times of revival to his Church often when people least expect it.⁸ True revival focuses his people again on God, on his Word, and

⁶ Geoffrey Thomas, *ibid*, p180.

⁷ See also my article on James 5:13-18 in *Reformation Today*, issue 237 (Sept/Oct 2010).

the preaching of the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit (1 Thess 1:5). The Church receives fresh power to testify to the truth as it is found in Jesus Christ. People are deeply humbled and convicted of sin and only find peace in Jesus Christ and his work on the cross. This is something radically different from the triumphant sensationalism often presented today as revival, and the health and wealth gospel.

The pouring out of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was unique as indicated above, but at the same time, it can be regarded as the first revival in the history of the Church. Many revivals have followed, and they help us to expect the future consummation. The language of the prophecy of Joel 2:28-32 points us also in this direction (see also Isa 32:15-17). The final goal of the work of the Holy Spirit is to bring all glory to Christ and we may share in this glory as his adopted children (John 17:24). This will happen when we receive the resurrection of our bodies of which Christ is the 'firstfruits' (1 Cor 15:20-23; see also Rom 8:11; Col 1:18). We shall have a spiritual body that is imperishable and an end to all weakness, dishonour and sin in order to serve and glorify our Lord Jesus Christ for ever. Now the creation waits for this in eager expectation and so do we, groaning inwardly as we eagerly wait for our adoption as sons. But we can be assured that the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness and intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words (Rom 8:18-27). The Spirit has been given to us as our guarantee as we have seen. We are looking forward to a new heaven and new earth, the home of righteousness (2 Peter 3:13). That is why 'the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let the one who hears say, "Come!"' (Rev 22:17).

* There is a vast literature on revival. See for example: Erroll Hulse, *Give Him No Rest* (Darlington: EP Books, 2006); Iain H Murray, *Pentecost Today? The Biblical Basis for Understanding Revival* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1998).

Books on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit

BELOW IS A LIST OF SOME BOOKS WHICH ARE RECOMMENDED FOR FURTHER READING AND STUDY. THE FOLLOWING three relatively recent books give a comprehensive treatment of the subject either at a basic (Geoffrey Thomas) or more advanced level (Sinclair Ferguson).

- Sinclair Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1996). This is an in-depth, comprehensive treatment of the subject thoroughly based on virtually all relevant biblical data. His approach is fully in line with the historical Reformed perspective but still offers a fresh and insightful discussion of what may at first sight be well-known material. Particular highlights for me are his discussion of the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer starting from the basic notion of union with Christ, and the work of the Holy Spirit in the world towards the consummation of all things. The book is at a more advanced level aimed at pastors, students and interested lay people.
- Geoffrey Thomas, *The Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2011). This book is the result of a series of lectures on the subject. The book gives a remarkably comprehensive (given its modest size) and easily readable exposition fully in line with the Reformed faith. It is aimed at a wide readership of all Christians.
- Joel R Beeke and Derek W H Thomas (eds.), *The Holy Spirit and Reformed Spirituality* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2013), 236pp. ISBN 978-1-60178-270-0. See book review elsewhere in this issue.

The following volumes address more specific aspects:

- John Stott, *Baptism and Fullness. The work of the Holy Spirit today* (Leicester: IVP, 1975).
- D A Carson, *Showing the Spirit. A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12-14* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987). This is a very detailed exegetical study of these chapters. The author interacts with a wide range of competing views whilst drawing his own well-argued and carefully worded conclusions.

- Richard Gaffin Jr *Perspectives on Pentecost. New Testament Teaching on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit* (P&R Publishing), ISBN 9780875522692. A careful examination of the New Testament teaching on the gifts of the Spirit. It makes a case for the cessation of tongues at the close of the apostolic era.

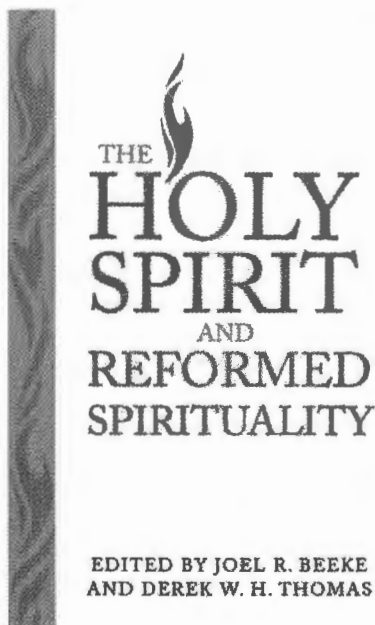
Finally some classics are worth mentioning:

- Octavius Winslow, *The Work of the Holy Spirit* (Edinburgh: Banner of truth, 1961), 223pp. ISBN 0-85151-152-X
- George Smeaton, *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1974), 418pp. ISBN 0-85151-187-2

Book Review

JOEL R BEEKE AND DEREK W H THOMAS (EDS.), **THE HOLY SPIRIT AND REFORMED SPIRITUALITY** (GRAND RAPIDS: Reformation Heritage Books, 2013), 236pp. ISBN 978-1-60178-270-0

Spirituality is a hot topic at the moment. People of all kind of backgrounds are interested in some sort of divine experience. Christians are seeking a fresh experience of God and this may be a higher priority for them than the study of the Word of God. Many non-Christians would not necessarily claim to be atheists and happily believe that 'there must be something out there', although they are agnostics when it comes to any more precise definition of what this something is. It is therefore very appropriate that we as Bible-believing, reformed Christians study Scripture to understand what true spirituality really is. Spirituality leads us to think about the Person and work of the Holy Spirit. We can be very grateful for a rich heritage of excellent literature on the Holy Spirit. The book reviewed here is tapping into this heritage in order to provide answers to such important questions as: What is a spiritual person? How does the Spirit open the mind of sinful people to trust in Christ? What does it mean to serve God in the power of the Holy Spirit?



This book is, at the same time, a tribute to Geoffrey Thomas, well-known preacher and pastor of Alfred Place Baptist Church in Aberystwyth, Wales, UK and was presented to him on the occasion of his 75th birthday in 2013. Geoff Thomas has been very interested in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit himself and he is the author of a book on this topic (see elsewhere in this issue). The book consists of a series of essays by eighteen of Geoff's friends in the ministry of the Word. The first two articles give us a glimpse of Geoff Thomas, the man and his ministry. His son-in-law Gary Brady has written a biographical appreciation. Paul Levy rightly draws attention to one important aspect of

Geoff's ministry: helping and stimulating young men called by God for the ministry.

The remaining articles are grouped into three further sections: Salvation and the Spirit of Christ (with contributions by Carl Trueman, Sam Waldron, Joel Beeke and Fred Malone); Growth and the Spirit of Holiness (with contributions by David Jones, Ian Hamilton, Sinclair B Ferguson, Michael A G Haykin, Derek W H Thomas, John J Murray, and Iain D Campbell); and Ministry and the Spirit of Counsel and Might (with articles by Stephen Turner, Conrad Mbewe, Austin Walker, Robert Oliver and Gary Benfold).

A book of this kind is inevitably highly diverse in terms of topics covered and style of writing. It can best be compared to a rich and varied buffet dinner with lots of mouth-watering dishes as starters, main course and dessert! It is remarkable to see how much material has been covered in such a relatively small volume. All articles are firmly rooted in Scripture and many of them also give a good sampling of the teaching of Calvin, several Puritans (Owen in particular), Martyn Lloyd-Jones and other important historical figures. Many aspects of the work of the Holy Spirit are covered with a special emphasis on the relationship of the Holy Spirit to Christ, sanctification, and the work of the Holy Spirit in the ministry of preaching.

This well-written book is essential reading for pastors and preachers of the Word and other church leaders and helps to give a much deeper understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit. At the same time all Christians will benefit from this very stimulating and instructive teaching to grow in true biblical spirituality and living the Christian life. I highly recommend this book alongside the other literature mentioned elsewhere in this issue.

Kees van Kralingen

James Harvey 1816-1883

by Gary Brady

A previous article noted our ignorance of 19th-century Reformed Baptists apart from Spurgeon and, thanks to Iain Murray, Archibald Brown. Having drawn attention (RT 258) to Samuel Morton Peto (1809-1889), we turn now to another Bloomsbury deacon, businessman James Harvey.

Biography

In 1900 a brief memoir *From Suffolk Lad to London Merchant* appeared, written by Harvey's son Alfred James (b.1855). It is the main source for knowledge about him. A loving memoir not a critical biography it includes the intriguing fact that while still relatively young *he resolved not to spend more than one third of his income on himself and his family, not to save more than another third and to give another third of his income to religious and charitable purposes.*

Suffolk lad

Harvey was born in Badingham, near Framlingham, Suffolk, then a village of 1800, now more like 500. Born 16 May 1816, he was the second son and youngest of seven. His farmer parents were good-living people, if nothing more, who called him 'Little Jems'. Educated first in the village 'Dame School', a private elementary school, he went on to Heveningham, then Framlingham.

If the family were a good influence, parish rector Clement Chevallier (1765-1830) was not, having no interest in the way of truth. A new and better man came later but Harvey was ready to leave for London by then. His one positive experience of something better came, at the age of around 10 or 12, when a woman Methodist preacher preached on the village green, probably a Primitive Methodist, a 19th-century movement seeking to regain the fervour of Wesley's day.

London merchant

On 2 November 1832 Harvey travelled to London by stagecoach to begin work in a warehouse at the bottom of the old Holborn Hill (where Holborn Viaduct now stands). His High Calvinist employer Henry Bardwell (d.1845) dealt in woollen and cotton (Manchester) goods wholesale and retail. James started as a junior assistant at £12 per annum, that soon rising to £20 then £32 then £40. He sent money home to pay off his outstanding school fees and help his parents.

By 1837 he was a junior partner and when Bardwell died in 1845, he became joint head of the company alongside contemporary Joseph Bartram (b.1815). By this time he had saved £2,500. Bardwell left him another £1,000.

Harvey's son comments that the secret of his father's success was twofold. First, he loved hard work. He had good health and never took long holidays. Secondly, he was not obsessed with money. He was able to relax too, enjoying 'books of gristle' and foreign travel. He loved work for its own sake but was also driven by a strong sense of duty.

There were also the high principles of conduct that he espoused even before conversion. 'Patient continuance in well doing' (Rom 2:7) was a motto text he often quoted. Early on, in a message called *'What traits of character are most desirable in a business man?'*, he spoke of a proper degree of self-respect (business is not all about profit and loss. Even tradesmen are capable of higher feeling); honesty (the golden law must be recognised and is important); persevering industry; clearness of purpose ('virtue and industry shall never go unrewarded' is one of God's laws). He was an upright churchgoer. However, as we shall see, he had more to learn and experience.

Under the ministry of James Wells

With no fixed convictions of his own Harvey joined Bardwell at what was known, from 1838, as Borough Road Tabernacle and, after its first enlargement in 1850, Surrey Tabernacle, Southwark. He sat under the ministry of the leading London Strict Baptist, James Wells (1803-1872).

Hampshire-born Wells grew up a godless man but, following an illness in his early twenties, he came under deep conviction and was converted through the witness of Hyper-Calvinists. He became a gifted preacher and had a large and loyal congregation, second only in size to that of his much younger neighbour, C H Spurgeon.

Wells (pseudonym Job) tangled with Spurgeon in the pages of the *Earthen Vessel* in 1854 and 1855. Spurgeon sometimes called him 'King James'. The press called him 'Wheelbarrow Wells' or the 'Borough Gunner'.

Hyper-Calvinists say gospel invitations are not to be given to all without exception. Only the elect should be addressed. They say the warrant a sinner has to come to Christ is found in his own experience of conviction and assurance and human inability means a man cannot be urged to come immediately to Christ. They also deny God's universal love.

Most dislike being termed hyper, though Wells did not mind. Unlike others, he distanced himself from Calvin and would always mention election and

reprobation, often attacking ‘duty faith’ as they call it. Ian Shaw says (*High Calvinists in action*, p248):

‘Wells contended that although it was the duty of man to believe the Bible, to repent of his sins, and appear before the bar of God to give an account of his sin, he “dare not say it is the duty of any man upon the surface of the globe to believe to the saving of his soul”. He declared, in 1859: “I will have no fellowship, no personal friendship, with any duty-faith minister; I have no personal antipathy towards him, but I will have no personal friendship with him, because it leads to truth’s compromise.”’

He had a strong experiential emphasis. ‘Religion without experience is no religion at all.’ A born controversialist, he weighed into controversies over Rahab’s lie, backsliding and against the Son’s eternal generation.

Harvey sat under Wells for fifteen years. He was convinced of election and reprobation and tried to convince others but did not think he himself was elect. He was ‘unhappy and a stranger to the peace of God that passeth understanding’. Harvey did not find Wells’ ministry helpful. Wells once wrote, ‘I would rather keep a child of God out for seven years than let one hypocrite in, and so deceive the souls of men.’ Perhaps that did not help.

On Harvey’s piety, Richard Glover, in the memoir, calls it ‘meditative, intellectual, well-informed’ and suggests he perhaps ‘owed more than he knew’ to Wells’ ‘exaggerated Calvinism’. ‘The gentler gospel which he reached by fighting’, says Glover, ‘he held with fuller conviction and deeper sense of its meaning ... the Fear of God was there, and that high Fear ennobled, restrained and strengthened him.’

Bloomsbury Chapel and his conversion

On 5 December 1848, ‘the first Baptist chapel to stand proudly on a London street, visibly an “ecclesiastical edifice”’ not hidden in a back alley, was built. Bloomsbury Chapel, situated strategically between fashionable Bloomsbury Square and the then slums of St Giles, is still there, though the impressive spires of its twin towers were removed in 1951 for safety reasons.

The chapel was built by Peto and the first pastor was William Brock (1807-1885) who, from a standing start, gathered a church of 52 members by July 1849. The church was so constituted that though ‘recognising no other baptism but the immersion of professed believers’ it would nevertheless ‘welcome to its fellowship all followers of Christ’.

Faith Bowers (*Sense and Sensitivity of Dissent*, Baptist Quarterly) wrote that ‘the term *Baptist* was deliberately avoided in the title. The Trust Deeds

spoke of “A Christian Church knowing only the Baptism of Believers”.⁷ Brock could write in 1863, ‘No term of communion has been insisted on but personal religion...Membership with Christ has been the only prerequisite for membership with our church.’

Born in Devon, of good Nonconformist stock, Brock, a watchmaker, trained for the Baptist ministry at Stepney College. He succeeded Strict Baptist Joseph Kinghorn (1766-1832) in St Mary’s, Norwich, controversially taking the church in an open communion direction. E C Dargan called him ‘an admirable pastor and a strong though not brilliant preacher’. Bowers says he was ‘unconventional, unaffected and warm-hearted, and... always concerned to relate religion to everyday life’. Active in public affairs, especially the slavery question, he originally moved to London because of ill health but remained at Bloomsbury until 1872.

Harvey had been unimpressed when he heard Brock in Norwich in the late 1830s but he decided to attend the new church for six months, to ‘give the minister and the doctrines which should be preached a fair trial’. ‘The first month had not passed away’, he came to write, ‘before I found what I had long been seeking in vain. I was able to rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ He began to keep a diary, one of its first entries being made at 7 am on Saturday 30 December 1848. He wrote:

‘This has been the most remarkable night of my existence, and the most precious. Not one wink of sleep have I had during the whole time, from 11 o’clock last night till 7 this morning. Last night, as has been my custom recently, I noted down the most important circumstances which occupied my mind during the day; and having had many very important and apparently difficult matters to arrange when I arose in the morning, which during the day were arranged in a way and manner much more satisfactory than my partner and I had been able to conceive of, I felt impelled to record my gratitude to God for so marked (as it appeared to my mind to be) a manifestation of His over-ruling all things to accomplish in the end His own purposes.

‘On retiring to rest I committed myself to God in prayer, with more freedom of speech than usual; and in pleading for the pardon of sins, and realising the bare possibility of their being forgiven and blotted out for Christ’s sake, I felt overwhelmed and could not say another word. In bed, I desired the Lord to have mercy upon me and accept of my imperfect gratitude for His abundant mercies and from that time till 4 am my mind was occupied on matters of business with which I had been concerned during the day, and as I appeared to be at an end of my musings, knowing that today is our stock-taking, and that I shall be engaged in the warehouse till 12 o’clock at night, I again tried

to go to sleep, and breathed a desire (which, if it be the Lord's will, may He grant) that He might enable me to be a benefit amongst those under our own roof both for their temporal and spiritual welfare. When in a moment I was arrested by an idea, and these words were fixed in my mind: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." As a father! – "as a father pitieth his children". Never did I realise the pity and mercy of God in such a sweet and endearing light. I could but repeat, "As a father pitieth." Seest thou a father embracing his son? Seest thou a father whose son is in trouble, whose son is in danger? Seest thou a father bestowing his riches and honour on his son in all the love of his heart? So, even "the Lord pitieth them that fear Him". A man may pity a faithful dog, a favourite horse; but "as a father pitieth his children." While lost in admiration in the thought, came one more precious still. "Because you are children, God hath sent His Spirit into your heart crying, Abba, Father." God my Father in this sense, and with these endearing words, can it be to me? When, lo! "If children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ." This was too much for my heart; my only language was, Oh, for faith to believe! - and I could not possibly restrain my tears. I could only cry, "Lord, help! Can it be my portion?" And I continued with this threefold text in my mind adoring its beauty though its blessedness seemed far too great for me; when again: "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the fruit of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee." I laid thus for some minutes, for my heart was full to overflowing, and enquired "What does this mean?" Then came as an answer: "'The love of God shed abroad in the heart.'" Then followed: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The words "everlasting life" seemed fixed in my ears. There came as a climax: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." I could hardly repeat the words. Then came back the thought, "As a father pitieth," but I could not repeat the words; "God, my Father, who hast loved me with such a love." I could not say them for several times trying. The thought returned: "The love of God shed abroad in the heart", and "God manifesting Himself to me as He doth not unto the world." I remembered that I had pleaded with Him for this, and it appeared as an answer to prayer. I then enquired, and do so now I am writing, What is all this that is done? Is it not to prepare one for some coming trial or difficulty? And my answer from my heart was, "Come sickness, poverty, peril or death, I can meet them all with the love of God shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost". I resolved to write it all down, if God enabled me, as soon as I arose ... If this which I am writing ever be read by any other being, I pray that he may experience the blessedness which I this morning, from the hours of four till seven o'clock,

have been made to feel.'

Employer

It is hard at this distance in time to imagine life for an employee in 19th-century London. Harvey was keen to improve their lot. As soon as he became head of the firm he invited his sister Rachel to come and help him both at home and in bringing changes to the workplace. She was responsible for things such as introducing tablecloths and, with Harvey, a library and newspapers and other amenities. He also encouraged monthly discussion classes.

From 1842 he was involved in the early closing movement. The pattern when he first became head was for business to end at 9 pm (winter 8.30 pm). He got that down in his area first to 8 pm (winter 7 pm) then, in 1855, unilaterally, to 7 pm all year round, closing on Saturdays at 5 pm. He made a number of speeches in favour of such moves.

He also worked with the evangelical organisation the YMCA, begun in London by George Williams (1821-1905) in 1844.

On 12 August 1851 Harvey's diary reveals that he made a long considered resolve to make it a point to speak to young employees words of Christian caution and advice as appropriate.

The dread of wealth

The *dread of wealth* is a chapter heading in the memoir. The phrase is no exaggeration. Harvey was always successful in business (unlike Peto, who suffered bankruptcy). Nevertheless, his son comments that 'in spite of his success, there was never in the City of London, a man who set his mind on money making less than he.' Proverbs 28:20 was a watchword, 'A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.' He hated all sharp practice in business.

Addressing the YMCA at Aldersgate Street on 28 February 1878, having spoken of getting on in business, he said, 'Be careful, however, for what purpose you wish to get on.' Live according to your means. He quoted Proverbs 16:18 'Pride goeth before destruction ...' and urged fair play.

It was not simply that he feared money but, more positively, he also had a strong sense of stewardship. On 26 May 1853, he made the remarkable resolution about his income alluded to earlier – not to spend more than a third on himself and family, not to save more than a third and to give a third to religious and charitable purposes. He also resolved, perhaps unrealistically, never to be worth more than £20,000. He renewed these vows from time to

time. The continual growth of his business made it impossible to remain worth no more than £20,000. It caused him some consternation but he sought to keep to the resolution as best he could and even carried it over into the terms of his will. His son remarks that this lifestyle made people think he was richer than he was. In truth, he was simply very generous.

Bowers picks up on something interesting about the 'self-made merchant of stern cast and great generosity' that is in the biography. 'He maintained that much of his giving should be anonymous, but some public to show Christian duty and as a stimulus for others' (*Sense and Sensitivity*).

Deacon, husband

In 1850 Harvey joined the Bloomsbury church and was soon made one of five deacons, alongside Peto and future brother-in-law, James Benham (1820-1885). He was very involved in evangelism in the nearby slums, an important part of the church's work.

In 1852 he wrote: 'I desire a wife, if it will help me to serve God better, to discharge my private and official duties more efficiently, and by these means to honour my Lord and Saviour; and not else. Do I believe that a Christian woman like-minded with myself would thus help me, and I help her? I do.'

Ever a practical man, by November 1853 he had married Jane Benham (1828-1855), daughter of John Lee Benham (1785-1864), a Wigmore Street businessman – *Ironmongers, bath makers, stove, grate and kitchen range manufacturers and hot water engineers*. Jane, like Harvey, was the youngest of seven. The Benhams were a prominent family in the church (Bowers, *The Benhams of Bloomsbury*, Baptist Quarterly).

The son describes his mother as a woman of judgement like the father. Though they were very practical about the arrangement, the son insists, 'Never did man and woman love one another in holier and more devoted love than they.'

Father, widower

Their time together at 22 Bloomsbury Square was tragically brief. On 17 August 1855, their only son was born and by 27 August Mrs Harvey was dead. Two years later Harvey wrote of his continuing faith despite the severe blow. His sister Rachel had been helping an invalid since the marriage. He died around the same time and so she came to look after Harvey again, becoming what Alfred touchingly calls his 'almost mother'.

Civic life

He was Chairman of the Board of Guardians for many years. In this connection

a dinner was given in his honour in August, 1859. In this capacity he was involved in the erection of a new West London workhouse, necessitated by the building of Holborn Viaduct (1865-69) sweeping business premises, including his own, from the area. He moved to Gresham Street in late 1865.

Even in the last 20 years of his life in Hampstead he was involved in civic life. His love of strict justice and individual liberty was reflected in his efforts to get the law on oaths changed. The new law allowed witnesses to simply affirm rather than go on oath, something atheists preferred.

Apologist

Harvey, it seems, always loved reading and was very interested in Christian evidences or Apologetics as it is now called. He regularly read *The Reasoner*, 'a journal of free thought and positive philosophy' sending in letters signed 'Inquirer'.

On 21 October 1855, he went to the *Scientific and Literary Institution* at 23 John Street, Fitzroy Square near Tottenham Court Road, a free thinker gathering place, to hear Robert Cooper (d 1868) 'a distinguished advocate of secularism'. Author of an 1852 booklet ridiculing death-bed repentances and editor of the secularist *London Investigator* Cooper spoke on *Miracles*. 'The time is approaching, gradually indeed but surely,' he claimed, 'when this delusion – this imposition upon the understanding of mankind – will be consigned, as it deserves, to public contempt.' Harvey entered into debate with him and felt able to trouble him with at least one argument.

On 30 March 1856, Harvey had opportunity to reply to Cooper at the same venue. He begins by identifying with his audience, a first rule of rhetoric, saying he too is a free thinker, one with a good working class background. He is not an enemy, as he seeks just what they seek – the truth and the good of the people. He went on to speak of the reasonableness of the evidence for the truth of Christianity and what it is mankind wants, arguing that miracles are possible and the apostles reliable, before coming to what is really wrong with this world and how it can be rectified.

Having been able to say something worthwhile, he nevertheless resolved to give more time to reading and study in this area.

On 11 January 1857, he spoke at John Street again, this time in reply to a lecture by freethinker, atheist and editor of *The Reasoner*, George Jacob Holyoake (1817-1906) against Christianity as a system of morality. Holyoake called Christianity indefinite, inadequate and inoperable; Harvey said it was definite, adequate and operative.

In September, 1862 Harvey was asked to umpire a six-night debate between a Rev W Barker and notorious freethinker and radical, later MP and President of the *National Secular Society*, Charles Bradlaugh (1833-1891) who until 1868 billed himself as 'Iconoclast'. The first two evenings both sides had a chairman but Harvey's impartiality 'gave so much satisfaction' according to a biographer of Bradlaugh, 'that the last four meetings were left entirely under his charge'. Attendance at a school room on City Road on some nights was so great that people were turned away and averaged 1200, around a thousand hearing all the debate. People came from far and near. A book of over 200 pages was later produced, Bradlaugh's biographer says, containing 'much that is interesting and much that is dull, a little that is witty, and more that is weak'. These debates were popular at the time.

Catholic and evangelical

Glover speaks of Harvey's 'faithfulness to conscience, the Love of Christ, the scrupulous Honour, the carefulness to know the exact truth of God on all points of our Creed and Duty'. At the end of his memoir, however, the son speaks of his father's catholicity. Harvey was an evangelical first. 'Baptist though I am,' he wrote, 'yet I have ever objected to work especially as a Baptist; I prefer to do so on the much broader basis of a disciple and servant of Christ.' Typical of him was how on holiday in Southwold he saw a need and immediately sent ten guineas to the vicar to help.

He was happy to read Anglican Thomas Griffith. When his *Fundamentals or bases of belief concerning man, God and the correlation of God and men* came out in 1871 Harvey wrote offering to finance a wide distribution of the book. Griffith sadly was a universalist, which suggests that Harvey's broadness sometimes led him astray. This perhaps lay behind Spurgeon's later remark:

'He was a man of mark: independent, yet ready to learn; lenient towards doubt, but himself a firm believer. His views of truth were his own, and would not be parallel in all points with those of anybody else; but we always felt at one with him, and even where we judged him to be mistaken we were glad to love him just as he was.'

Hampstead

Harvey spent his later years just outside London, in Hampstead. It was thought that better air would help his sickly newborn baby. This led eventually to a permanent move to Hampstead in 1861. They began on Haverstock Hill, moved up it once, then took up residence in newly built Mount Grove on the Greenhill Estate in 1870.

Baptist James Castleden (1778-1854) had laboured in Hampstead until his death but the only Nonconformist chapel at that time appears to have been a high one in both senses - high in its Calvinism, high in its location – atop Holly Bush Hill. Harvey resolved, partly as thanks to God for his son's restored health, to build a new chapel but the people of the area were poor and there was no place for it anyway.

It was another four years before they obtained land – a former fruit and vegetable garden. A committee was formed to plan a building but it was too expensive and the committee was dissolved. However, at long last, on 4 June 1860, Harvey signed a contract to build a chapel and other buildings at a cost of £4,800. It was not built at his sole cost, others gave; but he was a generous contributor. The Heath Street building opened in July 1861. *The Freeman* called it 'a neat, light and elegant structure presenting the same architectural ensemble as Bloomsbury Chapel' with a schoolroom below. Its frontage is more ornamental than Bloomsbury.

Harvey became a member and deacon and a generous provider. They called William Brock Junior (1836-1919), Dr Brock's son, as first pastor. Once again the intention was that the membership would be 'open to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in truth and sincerity' with true believers being baptised by immersion.

Services were held in Heath Street in 1864 to celebrate the clearing of the debt on it with an afternoon sermon by the Methodist W M Punshon (1824-1881). In the evening Dr Brock spoke and Harvey, presiding over the meeting, revealed that the entire cost of chapel and school-room (upwards of £6,300) had now been covered.

In 1871 Harvey's son, Alfred, then just 16, made known his desire to be a gospel minister. Harvey Senior wrote that he had long 'hoped for it and prayed for it and have expected it', yet he says it '... seems almost to take me by surprise ...'. He had pursued the policy of never hinting at the matter to him. Harvey Junior went on to be a vicar in Shirehampton, Bristol.

London Baptist

By that time there was also a Devon-born missionary at Heath Street, William Rickard, who started the work in nearby Childs Hill. Constituted as a church in 1877, they had put up a building in 1870. Harvey laid the foundation stone on 28 July 1870.

At the end of 1865 Spurgeon and Brock formed the London Baptist Association. Unsurprisingly, Harvey was first treasurer, and continued until

1881. In 1870 he offered to help defray the debts of many chapels. If they paid one third by the end of 1871 he would give 10% of the remainder. He ended up parting with £500.

Another cause Harvey helped was Shoreditch Tabernacle, where William Cuff (1841-1926) ministered, developed in the 1880s. The meeting on 1 December 1876, held in Harvey's Hampstead drawing room, where it became clear that the new building could be financed, was one of great joy to Cuff and his deacon.

Harvey felt a duty, as noted, to give an example but tried to conceal much of his giving. In 1867 his good friend Spurgeon wrote seeking a contribution to the recently begun Stockwell Orphanage. Harvey anonymously gave £600 for the second house, called The Merchant's House in his honour.

A letter of 16 July 1867, acknowledges the gift. 'You find it more easy to perform noble actions than I do to thank you for them.' A similar sum was given for the girls' orphanage 13 years later.

Spurgeon wrote in a brief obituary in the *Sword and Trowel* for April 1883:

'He was for many years one of the most liberal helpers of the work which the Lord has entrusted to us: and we hear that he has left a legacy of £500 to the Orphanage. We may not mention many of the things which were done of him in secret; but we may say that he was the donor of the house on the boys' side of the Orphanage, which is known as "The Merchant's House". This he gave without a request or even a hint from us.'

Another example of his kindness through Spurgeon came in the summer of 1876 when he sent £100 to pass on anonymously to ministers in need of a summer holiday. Spurgeon wrote back, passing on letters thanking him and acknowledging where the thanks should go.

In 1882 a gift for the Baptist work in East India Dock also produced a very thankful letter.

Harvey was also a great supporter of the *Baptist Missionary Society*. In 1881 he called on supporters to make 1882 a year of Jubilee, urging each one to see himself as 'the steward not the irresponsible owner of the manifold gifts of God'.

Nothing by halves

On 9 February 1883, after two days' illness, Harvey died rather suddenly at home. He was 66.

With a favourite turn of phrase, Alfred wrote, 'Never was there a man more

naturally modest and unpretentious than he. His unassuming geniality and consideration for others was the same in whatever company he was ...'

He was a man of buoyant spirits. *The Freeman* (16 February 1883) observed how he 'had a rare confidence in his own powers ...' taking up various pursuits, 'singing...preaching to the poor...' and apologetics, and mastering them. He was a 'keen sportsman' and 'a jocund traveller'; 'I cannot conceive of Mr Harvey doing anything by halves.' He was paradoxically 'devoid of personal ambition, and yet...ambitious.' He sought 'no satisfaction save success' and never rested on his laurels.

Glover writes of Harvey's promptitude in discernment and resource, his kindness and 'the influence of his Christian manhood'. 'He was above all things devout, and rich in the reserves of conviction and experience', exhibiting 'the kind of piety of a former generation; that namely built on the Fear of God.'

Spurgeon commended Brock's words, in what he called an admirable sermon:

'While in good health he was exemplary for punctuality at the service of God; and on very rare occasions was he absent from his place. "I am come," he said to me, the very Thursday evening before his fatal illness, when I expressed surprise at seeing him, "because I am able to go to business, and I do not think I ought to be absent from the church meeting."' "

Spurgeon added, 'Our personal loss is very heavy, and, hence, we can the more tenderly sympathise with the esteemed mourners who have lost father and brother. We shall not soon look upon his like again. Are there not other merchants who love our Lord, and will be baptised for the dead, filling up the vacancies caused by these many deaths, and taking thought that the cause of Christ shall know no lack?'

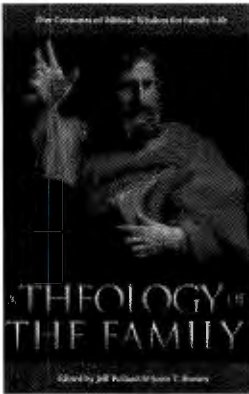
Lessons

This brief life of Harvey reminds us of the centrality of conversion. Doctrine in the head, accurate or inaccurate, cannot be enough. We are also reminded of the importance of generosity and the dread of wealth that marked him. There is also the importance of evangelism and seeking to win people on their own territory. Finally, there is the importance of a catholic spirit which is most commendable but that can, without care, lead us astray.

And a Very Special Book: A Theology of the Family

JEFF POLLARD, SCOTT T BROWN, *A THEOLOGY OF THE FAMILY. FIVE CENTURIES OF BIBLICAL WISDOM FOR FAMILY LIFE* (Wake Forest: The National Center for Family-Integrated Churches, 2014) 712pp. ISBN 978-1-624180-46-0

This is no ordinary book! The editors have compiled the best articles on the subject of Christian family life from 65 authors from the last 500 years or so together in one volume. The publisher (NCFIC; see www.ncfic.org) sees the publication of this material addressing a major need in the church for the 21st century. The mission of NCFIC is ‘to proclaim the sufficiency of Scripture for church and family life’. It believes that these two institutions – church and family – are critical to the proclamation of the gospel, the declaration of the glory of God, and the demonstration of the love of Christ from one generation to the next (as stated on the inside of the cover).



To give an idea of the comprehensive treatment of the topic I want to give a list of the main section headings: Family Worship, Godly Manhood, Virtuous Womanhood, Marriage, Bringing Up Children, Fatherhood, Motherhood, Childbearing, Abortion, Duties of Sons and Daughters, Modest Apparel, Thoughts for Young People. Each section contains articles by a variety of authors and they include many well-known as well as some lesser known men including: John Calvin, Martin Luther, Arthur W Pink, J W Alexander, John Howe, Benjamin Keach, Thomas Watson, William Gouge, C H Spurgeon, Jonathan Edwards, John Bunyan, D M Lloyd-Jones, R M M'Cheyne, Joel Beeke, R C Sproul and many others.

The editors are Jeff Pollard, elder at Mt Zion Bible Church, Pensacola, Florida and are involved in the literature ministry of this church known as Chapel Library (as mentioned in the past on the pages of *Reformation Today*), and Scott T Brown, elder at Hope Baptist Church, Wake Forest, North Carolina and President of the NCFIC.

It is obviously impossible to review this book on one page and this announcement is only intended to whet your appetite for this hugely important book. We hope to review (parts of) this book in more detail in future issues of *Reformation Today*. Our times see major shifts in thinking about the concept of family issuing in practices often sanctioned by legislation which fundamentally depart from the values and norms given us in Holy Scripture by the only living and true God, the creator of heaven and earth and everything in it, including the family. A book that calls us back to examine the Bible carefully on this vitally important subject is more than welcome!

News

Report on visit to Sri Lanka

IT HAS BEEN MY PRIVILEGE TO TRAVEL three times to preach and teach in Sri Lanka, the last two occasions with the Grace Fraternal group of churches. My hosts have been Pastor Benet Surendran ('Suresh') of Grace Evangelical Church, Colombo (a church of three congregations, English, Tamil and Sinhalese, each with its own pastor) and Pastor Huthin Manohar, a former London Theological Seminary student, who is Principal of Baldaeus Theological College, Trincomalee.



Pastor Benet Surendran and his wife Esther

After preaching at Grace on Sunday 26 April I travelled with a group from the church to Trincomalee for a three-day youth conference. About twenty-nine youngsters from five churches attended; I preached once and spoke four times on 'Thinking Biblically' from Romans 12:1-2. Three other speakers, including



Mostyn Roberts with some students from Baldaeus Bible College

Suresh, covered different topics including very practical ones like how to apply for jobs. After a day's rest back in Colombo I spoke at Grace Church's own three-day Family Conference at a centre near Colombo. I preached three times and gave a variety of papers including two on 'parenting' (a brave thing to do, as I discovered, in a different culture).

Back, then, to Trincomalee (I think I spent 33 hours on this road in all!) for a course entitled New Testament Introduction with twenty-five students at Baldaeus. Not all are Reformed but it is exciting to see those from different theological traditions coming to appreciate the richer teaching of the Calvinistic heritage. Some of the young men here will be pastors; all are committed to working in their churches in Sri Lanka. I flew home on 8 May.

All my preaching was translated into Tamil and in some cases into Sinhalese as well. It is precious to enjoy fellowship with these kind and generous believers but language is a real barrier with most. It is good to see the ravages of war receding and the economy appearing to pick up, including the all-important tourist industry. The election of a new President has given the Tamils at least a new optimism politically.

Spiritually there is much to give thanks for. Pray for the fruit of the ministry of the Word; for the overcoming of divisions and rivalries; and that our God 'may fulfil every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, so that the name of the Lord Jesus may be glorified' in Sri Lanka (2 Thess 1:11,12).

Mostyn Roberts

Carey Conference CDs

The way to obtain CD recordings was indicated in the previous issue of RT. There is a correction: CDs can be ordered by emailing Lois Collier at the following address: loiscollier@hotmail.co.uk

Euro-Evangelism Conference Vienna 22 - 24 September 2015

Details about this conference, for which registration is still open, can be obtained through the website: www.euroevangelism.org

Editor KEES VAN KRALINGEN
Founding Editor ERROLL HULSE
Associate Editors MOSTYN ROBERTS and DAVID KINGDON, UK,
TOM NETTLES and MICHAEL HAYKIN USA, IRVING STEGGLES,
South Africa, JOHN CAMPBELL, Australia.
Subscriptions General Enquiries: Frederick Hodgson, 170 Coach Road,
Sleights, Whitby, North Yorks., YO22 5EQ, UK
frederick.hodgson@gmail.com

Readers can **subscribe on-line** from any location using a credit card –
www.tentmaker.org.uk

(Contact Phil Roberts in the UK for further details – 01782 746879)

Donations can be made anytime via the following agents.

(UK taxpayers may use gift aid.

Reformation Today is a registered UK charity – number 1017000)

Please make any cheques out to 'Reformation Today'.

Subscriptions for UK/Europe:

Frederick Hodgson – details above
(£16 for 1-year subscription)

Subscriptions for Australia:

Ray Levick – Unit 25, 61-67 Moverly Rd.
Maroubra 2035 Australia
e-mail: rlevick77@netspace.net.au
(£25 for 1-year subscription)

Subscriptions for New Zealand:

Mrs Priscilla Drake – 43 Pilkington Road,
Panmure, Auckland 1006
e-mail: priscilladrake@gmail.com
(£30 for 1-year subscription)

Subscriptions for USA:

Tom Lutz – Edgewood Baptist Church,
3743 Nichol Avenue, Anderson,
IN 46011
e-mail: tomlutz41919@aol.com
or **Chapel Library**,
2603 W. Wright St. Pensacola, FL 32505
email: chapel@mountzion.org
(£30 for 1-year subscription)

Subscriptions for Canada:

Janice Van Eck – 52 Paulstown Crescent,
Guelph, Ontario, N1G 5H7
(\$30 for 1-year subscription)
e-mail: janicevaneck@rogers.com

Subscriptions for South Africa:

Matthews Nkuna – 13 Dick Muller Drive,
Norkem Park, Gauteng, South Africa 1618,
Tel +27 72 635 8282
e-mail: matthews.theinman@gmail.com
Cheques to Birchleigh Baptist Church
(specify – For RT subscription)
(R120 for 1-year subscription)

Subscriptions for Singapore & Malaysia:

Shalom Christian Media – 8 New
Industrial Road, LHK3 Building
03-01, Singapore 536200
e-mail: contactscm@shalomrb.com
(\$35 for 1-year subscription)

Subscriptions for Kenya:

Naphtally Ogallo – Grace Baptist
Church-Eldoret, PO Box 170-30100 Eldoret
mob: +254 723 918 943
e-mail: nandhogallo@gmail.com
(950 Ksh for 1-year, discount for 5+
copies to one address)

Single copies may be purchased. In this case the cost is one-sixth of the above cost. Postage is included, but please note that we have to charge extra for airmail. A 1-year subscription has surcharge of £5.00 if airmail delivery is required.

Donations to APC: These should be sent to Phil Roberts, 121Hartshill Road, Hartshill, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 7LU. Cheques should be made out to 'African Pastors' Conferences'. Could UK donors please let Phil Roberts know if they intend to use gift aid.

Further details about individual conferences are available from Phil Roberts (phil@tentmaker) or Frederick Hodgson (frederick.hodgson@gmail.com)

CONTENTS

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| 1. Editorial | Kees van Kralingen |
| 2. The High-Priestly Prayer of Jesus | Bob Davey |
| 6. The Doctrine of Justification by Faith Alone | Benedict Bird |
| 16. African Pastors' Conferences | Irving Steggles |
| 17. The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit, part 3 | Kees van Kralingen |
| 22. Books on the Holy Spirit | Kees van Kralingen |
| 24. Book Review | Kees van Kralingen |
| 26. James Harvey 1816-1883 | Gary Brady |
| 38. And a Very Special Book: A Theology of the Family | |
| 39. News | |