

faith in focus

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who were the Puritans?

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Editorial

Who were the Puritans?

They were English Reformed Protestants of the 16th and 17th centuries who considered the reformation of the Church of England under Elizabeth to be incomplete, and who sought to purify and regulate the forms of worship.

As you can imagine, this was perilous process, especially in the face of zealous opposition from within the established church and from the state. Even before the 16th century, those who sought to reform the church could or would be exiled, imprisoned or martyred. Three men that come to mind during this period are Thomas Cranmer, Nicholas Ridley and Hugh Latimer, who were burned at the stake during the reign of Queen Mary, infamously remembered as “Bloody Mary”.

We know from church history that many Puritans fled to the Netherlands, where today there is still an English speaking congregation. Others set sail across the Atlantic to New England between the years 1630-1641, and formed the Massachusetts Bay Colony as well as other settlements.

The history of the Puritans is far too extensive to comment on here, but a notable thing about the Puritans is their legacy, which we still benefit from today. Whether or not you are familiar with them, it is important to know that they have contributed much to Presbyterian and Reformed churches down through the centuries – through their preaching, teaching and writing. They were undoubtedly very gifted scholars who sought to apply what they learned from the Bible to their lives and worship.

Who were the Puritans? In every respect, they were like you and I, and wanted to worship the LORD according to His Word in all its simplicity and beauty.

Our contributors write about their setting and the ongoing need for modern-day “Puritans”.

Mr John Haverland reviews the historical setting of the Puritans, their preaching and focuses on Richard Baxter.

Mr Peter Moelker calls for modern-day Puritans.

Mrs Jenny Waldron considers what having a servant’s heart involves.

Mr William Boekestein gives guidance on six ways to grow in the Gospels.

Mr Reuben Posthuma reviews Kevin DeYoung’s book, *What Does the Bible Really Teach about Homosexuality?*; Mr David VanDrunen reviews *Openness Unhindered: Further Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert on Sexual Identity and Union with Christ*, by Rosaria Champagne Butterfield.

Mrs Rosaria Champagne Butterfield looks at “Three lenses through which people view sexuality”, an excerpt from her book *Openness Unhindered*.

Mr David Waldron reports on: the Auckland Presbytery Men’s Study Day – in May 2016 – and the 2016 PCEA Synod.

The Steenhofs give us an update from Mbale, Uganda about their work with the Christian schools.

For our Reformation Day article, Mrs Patricia van Laar writes about the English Reformer and martyr, Thomas Cranmer.

The opinions expressed in this magazine are not to be considered the official position of the Reformed Churches of NZ unless they expound the Biblical system of doctrine contained in the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, the Canons of Dort, or the Westminster Confession of Faith, or reflect the successive Acts of Synod of the Reformed Churches of NZ. On the other hand, care is taken to ensure that articles and opinions do not directly contradict the official position of the Reformed Churches as contained in the above sources without attention being called to that fact.

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Who were the Puritans (1)

The historical setting of the Puritans

John Haverland

When we read or hear the term “Puritan” it often has negative connotations. Many think of this movement as a fanatical and legalistic brand of Christianity; they think of the Puritans as religious and social extremists with a tendency to perfectionism. The term was first used in the 1560’s to describe English Protestants who regarded the reforms of Queen Elizabeth as incomplete and called for further “purification” of the church.

Since the 1950’s historians and theologians have been wiping away much of the mud that has been flung at these men and, as a result, we have a more accurate picture of who they were and what they did. J.I. Packer describes them as “sober, conscientious and cultured citizens: persons of principle, devoted, determined, and disciplined, excelling in the domestic virtues, and with no obvious shortcomings save a tendency to run to words when saying anything important, whether to God or to man.”¹

The history of the Puritans has its background in the Protestant Reformation in England. **Henry VIII**, who reigned from 1509-1547, used religious reform for his personal and political advantage to break with the Catholic Church so he could legally divorce and remarry with the objective of producing a male heir. He did produce a son, **Edward VI**, who was unwell and reigned briefly from 1547-1553. Edward was sympathetic to the Protestant faith and many reforms were made in the church under the leadership of the reformer Archbishop Thomas Cranmer. After Edward’s death **Mary Tudor**, who was ardently Roman Catholic, reversed many of these reforms in her short and “bloody” reign between 1553 and 1558. In these five years 270 Protestants were

martyred including Thomas Cranmer.

Queen Elizabeth came to the throne in 1558. Many Protestants who had fled to Europe to escape the persecutions returned in the hope that Elizabeth would continue the reforms begun by Edward. These hopes were not realised. Elizabeth introduced a “settlement” for the English Church that took a middle path between Roman Catholicism on the one hand and Protestantism on the other. She was determined to retain full control of the church and the state and rejected what she regarded as the “extremism” of the Puritans. She sought to impose conformity to her Anglican model by the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity of 1559 and the Convocation of 1563.²

These measures left the church only half-reformed and many Roman Catholic doctrines and practices remained. “Most of the clergy who remained were men of little ability and no clear convictions at all. Many of them were known to be immoral The religion of justification was little known, and superstition was as widespread and deep-rooted as it has been for the previous century. England might profess a Reformed Protestant religion and come obediently to church on Sundays (it was illegal not to), but England was not yet converted It is not easy to see what Elizabeth could have done to improve this situation, even if she had wanted to; but in fact she did not want to. For political reasons she wished clergy to be undistinguished men without initiative and to limit themselves to maintaining the status quo. Those, however, who sought the conversion of England and the glory of God in the English Church could not conscientiously sit still as she did.”³

The first generation Puritans who sought to reform the church through political means were no match for the

The Puritans were spiritual giants in theology and practice, in preaching and pastoral work. J I Packer described them as “learned, strong-minded, well-read, scholarly men”.

political power and savvy of Elizabeth. The next generation sought to reform the church from within by means of preaching, teaching and mentoring future pastors. This is “the real story of Puritanism, the story of its spiritual growth and power” as a grass-roots movement of spiritual influence.⁴ One example of this reform is seen in Richard Greenham who, in 1570, resigned his fellowship in the University of Cambridge to become the minister of a rural church seven miles out of the city. He set a pattern for the reformed pastor of preaching, teaching and pastoral care over the members of his flock. He continued to exercise a considerable influence in the university, and he encouraged and trained many young men as pastors as they lived in his home and studied with him as apprentices.⁵ During the next 50 years Cambridge produced many pastors in Greenham’s mould, including Laurence Chaderton, the “pope of Cambridge Puritanism”, and William Perkins, “the prince of the Puritan theologians”.

For a time Queen Elizabeth had been distracted with the international threat of Catholicism, but after defeating

the Spanish Armada in 1588 she concentrated on enforcing conformity in the English church. The Act against the Puritans issued in 1593 accused them of sedition and disloyalty and hundreds of pastors were ejected from their churches.⁶ Some withdrew completely from the Anglican Church and established the English Independent or Congregationalist Churches. Others sought refuge in Europe, especially in the Netherlands as the Dutch allowed the English refugees to come in freely.

James I came to the English throne in 1603 as a Calvinist king, and the Puritans, hoping for further reforms, presented their requests to him in a petition signed by a thousand ministers. Initially the king threatened to “harrie them out of the land” and during the next five years nearly ninety ministers were suspended from office. Later, however, he became more tolerant and a growing number of moderate pastors were able to serve within the English Church.

Charles I became king in 1625. He married a devout Catholic, Henrietta Maria, and appointed William Laud as the bishop of London, who began a severe persecution of the Puritans. To escape this many chose to emigrate to the Netherlands and to New England. In 1630 John Winthrop led the first great Puritan exodus to Massachusetts. During the next decade some of England’s most respected preachers joined the 13,000 emigrants who sailed to New England.

The brutal persecutions by Charles of the Puritans and the attempts of Laud to enforce the Anglican liturgy on the Scottish Presbyterians prompted a war between Charles and the Scots, which the crown lost. Laud’s persecutions also provoked a newly militant political Puritanism. England descended into a civil war (1642-1649) between the Cavalier

Army of King Charles I and the New Model Army of Puritan soldiers under the brilliant leadership of Oliver Cromwell. The Puritan Army defeated Charles who was tried and then executed in 1649 and the government of the country was taken over by a new Commonwealth.

The Puritans agreed with each other about personal religion and the need to seek the glory of God in his church, but they did not agree on a form of political or church government. In the face of this disagreement Cromwell dissolved the Parliament in 1653 and ruled as Lord Protector until his death in 1658.

The monarchy was restored in 1660 with **Charles II** as king. He sought to bring about religious conformity through a series of Acts, including the Act of Uniformity of 1662 which prescribed the use of a newly revised *Prayer Book*. In one day about 2000 Presbyterian and Congregational Puritans who refused to use the *Prayer Book* were driven from their pulpits and parishes, with their families and reduced to poverty. These were many of “the Church’s best men ... almost all of them were the scholarly products of Oxford and Cambridge Universities, many of them men of culture and much moderation and all men of irreproachable piety.”⁷ Many Puritan pastors were persecuted and imprisoned including John Bunyan and Richard Baxter. In this period however, in the providence of God, some of the most-loved Puritan books were written and printed, including *Pilgrim’s Progress*, works that are being reprinted today and continue to be of great blessing to the Christians all over the world. This persecution came to an end in 1689 with the Toleration Act under King William and his wife Mary.

One of the most enduring legacies of the Puritans was the work done

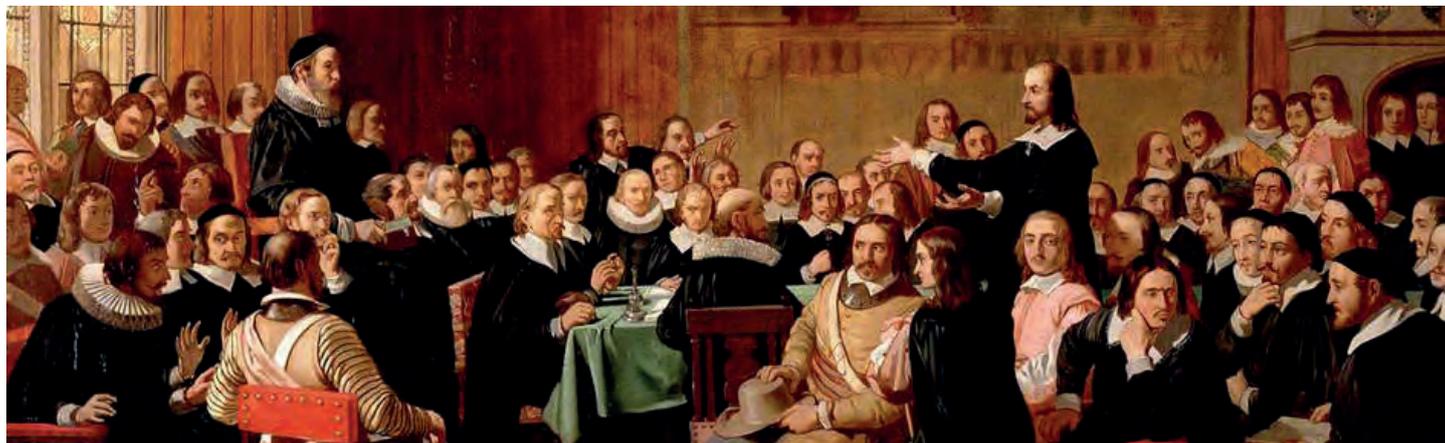
by the **Westminster Assembly** which met during the English Civil War. This assembly of 121 clergymen and 30 laymen was called together by the Parliament in 1643. The vast majority of those who attended the sessions were Puritans who favoured a Presbyterian system of church government. In addition to the *Westminster Confession*, the main document produced by the assembly, they also prepared a *Larger Catechism* to be used for pulpit exposition and a *Shorter Catechism* for teaching children. Their views on church order and worship were expressed in a *Directory of Worship*.

The Puritans were spiritual giants in theology and practice, in preaching and pastoral work. J I Packer described them as “learned, strong-minded, well-read, scholarly men”.⁸ They regarded it as their duty and privilege to communicate what they knew about God to ordinary people through sermons and in print. “Behind the studied simplicity of Puritan practical books lies the care and competence of brilliant and deeply learned theologians.”⁹ Today we have much to learn from their books and example and would do well to imitate their diligence, devotion and perseverance.

Notes

- 1 J I Packer, *A Quest For Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life* (Illinois, Crossway, 1990) p. 22
- 2 Peter Lewis, *The Genius of Puritanism* (Great Britain: Carey Publications Ltd, 1977), p. 14
- 3 J I Packer, *A Quest For Godliness*, p. 51-53
- 4 Peter Lewis, *The Genius of Puritanism*, p. 14f
- 5 J I Packer, *A Quest For Godliness*, p. 54f
- 6 J Beeke and R Pederson, *Meet the Puritans*, (Grand Rapids, Reformation Heritage Books, 2006), p. 4
- 7 Peter Lewis, *The Genius of Puritanism*, p.18
- 8 J I Packer, *A Quest For Godliness*, p. 63
- 9 *ibid.* p. 64

Mr John Haverland is the minister in the Reformed Church of Pukekohe.



Assertion of Liberty of Conscience by the Independents of the Westminster Assembly of Divines. Oil on canvas, by John Rogers Herber, 1847.
en.wikipedia.org, public domain



Richard Sibbes



Robert Traill

Puritan Preaching

The Puritan era was a time of powerful and effective preaching. Puritan preachers were keen to apply the Word of God to the daily lives of their people.

... the Puritans brought into their preaching both the learning of the study and the practicability of the market place. Their sermons savoured of close meditation in the closet and no less close observation in the street. Their preaching was lively because it dealt with life as it was ... And thus it was that by the even quality of its matter, by the forceful sincerity and spiritual power of its utterance, by the soundness of its doctrine and the thoroughness of its practical application the Puritan pulpit produced the golden age of evangelical preaching in England.¹

Their ability in preaching arose out of their convictions that this was the primary work of the minister, the climax of the worship service, and the main means God used, through his Spirit, to bring people to salvation and faith. Robert Traill reflected the Puritan view on this matter when he preached a sermon entitled *By what means may ministers best win souls?* He wrote, "The principal work of a minister is preaching; the principal benefit people have by them is to hear the Lord's word from them ... Art thou a minister? Thou must be a preacher. An un-preaching minister is a sort of contradiction."² In keeping with this view of preaching they had a high view of the office of preacher and teacher. Richard Sibbes expressed this high regard, writing; "It is the gift of gifts, this ordinance of preaching. God esteems it so, Christ esteems it so, and so we should esteem it."³

The Puritan era saw a consistent and high standard of preaching. These preachers devoted themselves to a study of the Scriptures and of human life with a diligence that has not been seen since then. In our own day and age any one of them would have gained note as an outstanding preacher. **JH**

1 Lewis, *The Genius of Puritanism*, p. 20.

2 Quoted in Lewis, *The Genius of Puritanism*, p. 37,39.

3 Quoted in Lewis, *The Genius of Puritanism*, p. 36.

Richard Baxter

One of the most familiar names among the Puritans is that of Richard Baxter who, in the assessment of J. I. Packer, was "the most outstanding pastor, evangelist and writer on practical and devotional themes that Puritanism produced."¹

Baxter ministered at Kidderminster from 1641 to 1660, with a five year break during the Civil War. Most of the 2,000 adults in the town were converted under his ministry. Before he arrived "they had hardly ever had any lively serious preaching among them" and "there was about one Family in a Street that worshipped God and called on his name". But his ministry of regular preaching and systematic catechising was greatly blessed by the Lord so that by the time he left "there were some streets where there was not past one Family in the side of the Street that did not do so".²

His work, *The Reformed Pastor*, is regarded as one of the classic exhortations to ministers to apply themselves to the work of preaching and catechising. In it Baxter describes how he went about the work of teaching his people. This, to him, was the minister's main task: To be exercised both in the public preaching of the word and in private instruction. **JH**

1 Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, with an introduction by J.I. Packer (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1974), p9.

2 J I Packer, *A Quest For Godliness*, p44f



Richard Baxter

Why we need modern-day Puritans

Peter J. A. Moelker

In his well-known novel, *The Scarlet Letter*, Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864), who was born in Salem, Massachusetts, attempts to paint a picture for his reader of the Puritan ancestors of those being described in his novel. One of the ways he attempts to do so is by describing the portraits of the fore-fathers of Governor Bellingham which are hanging on the walls inside his house. They are described as wearing “stately ruffs and robes of peace. All were characterised by the sternness and severity which old portraits so invariably put on, as if they were the ghosts, rather than the pictures, of departed worthies, and were gazing with harsh and intolerant criticism at the pursuits and enjoyments of living men.”¹ This is the “puritan” as Hawthorne wanted us to conceive of him – harsh, intolerant, critical, opposed to joy. “Puritanism,” said one critic,

“To be a Puritan is to have a love for the Word of God and to have a passionate desire to see that Word applied to all of life. It is to have the conviction of the Psalmist – “Forever, O Lord, Your Word is settled in heaven”

“is the haunting fear that someone, somewhere, may be happy.”² If such is the Puritan, no doubt we would be glad to be rid of them. But, what if the Puritan is someone else altogether? What if the Puritan was someone who simply saw every branch of life “as so many spheres in which God must be served and honoured”; and who saw life whole, “for they saw its Creator as Lord of each department of it, and their purpose was that ‘holiness to the Lord’ might be written over it in its entirety.”³ What if, in a day when hearts perhaps have grown cold, the Puritan is simply one who was accurately characterised by an anonymous sixteenth-century tract this way: “the hotter sort of Protestants are called Puritans.”⁴ Perhaps a hotter sort of Protestant is just what is needed today.

The Bible and Puritans

It may be good to remind ourselves that the Bible describes purity in glowing terms. “He who loves purity of heart and whose speech is gracious, the king is his friend” (Prov. 22:11). When Paul exhorts Timothy to be a faithful minister of the gospel, he commands him to be a Puritan. “Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe” (1 Tim. 4:12). Titus was called upon not to be a loosey-goosey, hippy-whippy, culturally-conforming, self-absorbed young man who was unconcerned with Bible truth, but rather “in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified.” Likewise, the people of God are those who have been perfected and sanctified,⁵ who are being purified as the possession of Christ,⁶ who long for the pure milk of God’s Word,⁷ who have their minds dwelling on whatever

is pure,⁸ and who are convinced that nothing impure will ever enter heaven.⁹ And so, we are not surprised to hear Jesus pronouncing “blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”¹⁰ Why then do we often hear the term “Puritan” used with a negative connotation when the Bible so obviously directs us to seek purity of heart, mind, and life?

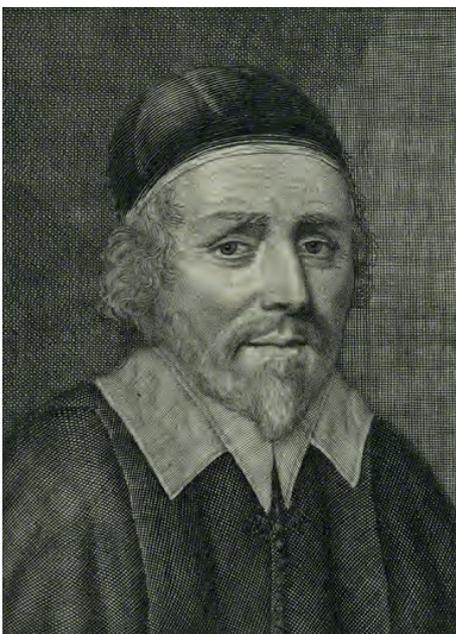
It is important to remember that those who were first called “Puritans” in the 16th century basically began as a group of pastors who, as Erroll Hulse tells us, “emphasised the great central truths of Christianity: faithfulness to Scripture, expository preaching, pastoral care, personal holiness and practical godliness applied to every area of life . . . those who cared about the gospel (‘gospellers’) and who sought to propagate the gospel were called ‘Puritans’.”¹¹ Given this definition, all those who treasure the reformed confessions are pleased to affirm, along with the Puritan authors of the Westminster Confession of Faith, that “the whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man’s salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men” (WCF Ch.I-6). We see this commitment to Scripture in the life of the “pre-Puritan” William Tyndale (1495-1536).

To be a Puritan is to have a love for the Word of God and to have a passionate desire to see that Word applied to all of life. It is to have the conviction of the Psalmist – “Forever, O Lord, Your Word is settled in heaven O how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day.”¹² It was this conviction that drove



Jeremiah Burroughs. Oil painting on canvas by Gustavus Ellinthorpe Sintzenich (1821–1892). commons.wikimedia.org, public domain

Tyndale to defy the laws of his day prohibiting Bible translation and to translate the Bible into the English language. It was Tyndale who had a puritanical zeal to see the people of God immersed in the Word of God – so much so that in reply to the appalling ignorance and arrogance of a religious leader of the day who was opposed to making the Bible available to the common man, Tyndale replied, “if God spare my life, ere many years, I will cause that a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scripture than thou dost.”¹³ Is this your passion? May God give us modern day Puritans whose greatest desire is to see the all-sufficient Word of God known by the plough boys and plough girls in Dunedin, Christchurch, Nelson, Wellington, Hamilton, and Auckland.



William Bridge

The Church and Puritans

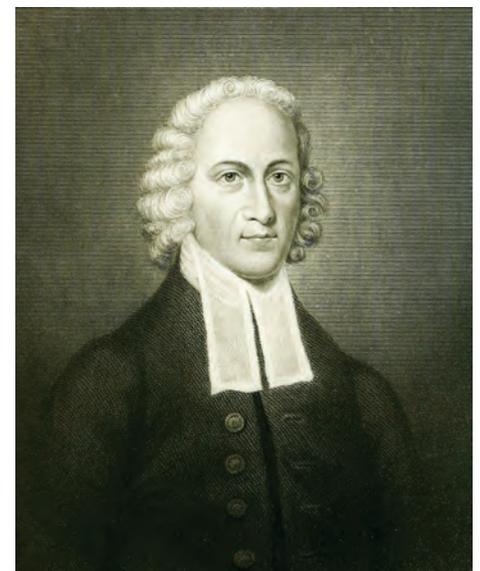
Why do we need modern day Puritans? Jeremiah Burroughs (1599-1646) serves as a good example of the blessing that Puritans bring to the church. Burroughs was educated at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, but eventually fled persecution and came to Holland in 1636 to join William Bridge, who was the pastor of a church in Rotterdam. Burroughs was well-known as a man of peace and one who desired that the unity of the church would be expressed in a common love for and devotion to the gospel. This can be seen from the titles of his most popular works which have been republished – *The Excellency of a Gracious Spirit, The Saints’ Happiness, Gospel Worship, Gospel Fear, Gospel Remission, Gospel Conversation, Gospel Reconciliation Or Christ’s Trumpet of Peace to the World*, and the rather lengthy but revealing title – *Irenicum, to Lovers of Truth and Peace. Heart-divisions opened, in the causes and evils of them; With cautions that we may be hurt by them, and endeavours to heal them*. Burroughs apparently had a motto posted on his study door which read – “difference of belief and unity of believers are not inconsistent.”

Burroughs was a member of the Westminster Assembly¹⁴ and was no doubt pleased when the Assembly adopted article 26.2 of the Confession of Faith – “Saints by profession are bound to maintain an holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God ... which communion, as God offereth opportunity, is to be extended unto all those who, in every place, call upon the name of the Lord Jesus.” This is the Puritan spirit. Not only did Burroughs pursue peace among the people of God, but he was also recognised by others as a man of peace. Richard Baxter famously said of the church situation in England in the 17th century, “if all the Episcopalians had been like Archbishop Ussher; all the Presbyterians like Mr. Stephen Marshall; and all the Independents like Mr. Jeremiah Burroughs; the breaches of the church would soon have been healed.”¹⁵ Could we insert your name into any one of those statements and would it be equally true? What if all members of the Reformed Churches of New Zealand were like you? Would the divisions within your church soon be healed? Are you known as a man or woman of peace? Do you, like the Confession states, extend your fellowship and communion and love to all those in every place who call upon

the name of the Lord? Those who love the Word of God love the unity of the people of God and desire to express that unity whenever and wherever they can.¹⁶ We need such Puritans today.

The Holy Spirit and Puritans

Why do we need modern day Puritans? Because in a world that is happy to talk about a person’s “spirituality”, that seems desirous of seeing evidence for the supernatural and can’t seem to get enough of movies that deal with supernatural forces of good and evil in the universe; and with a professing church that often speaks of the power, presence, gifts, and work of the Spirit, it is of great importance to know *who* the Holy Spirit is and



Theologian Jonathan Edwards. Engraving of Edwards by R Babson & J Andrews, before 1855. commons.wikimedia.org, public domain

what the Holy Spirit does. A brief look at some of the titles of Puritan authors of the past¹⁷ is enough to convince us that they were very much concerned with meditating upon and upholding the nature and work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of God’s people. We see this most clearly in the life and ministry of the American theologian and 18th century Puritan (or “post-Puritan” if you prefer), Jonathan Edwards. In commenting on 1 John 4, Edwards listed five *distinguishing evidences of a work of the Spirit of God*. He was writing at a time, not unlike our own, when there was much talk of the work of the Spirit, but not much careful discerning from Scripture what the true work of the Spirit looks like. If we would recover the heart-searching, joy-filled, Bible-soaked atmosphere resulting from the Puritan understanding of walking with

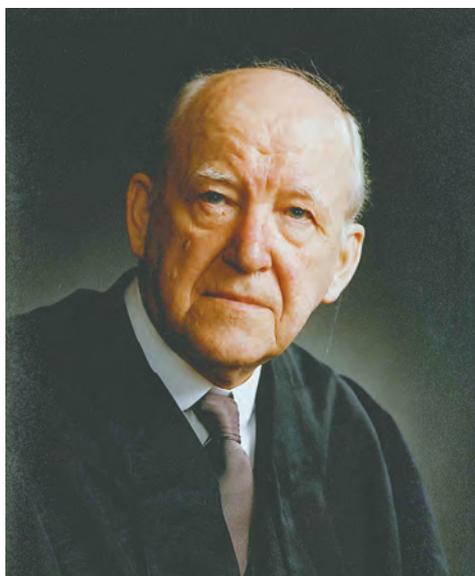
God, we would do well to ask ourselves if these marks are present in our own lives, in our worship, in our Presbytery meetings, in our ministerial labours, and in our daily walk with the Lord.

Edwards's first evidence of a work of the Spirit of God is that Jesus is being exalted and we are being confirmed more and more in our conviction that He is the Son of God and Saviour of men (1 John 4:2-3).¹⁸ The Puritans loved to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ and the words of John 3:30 was their constant prayer – "He must increase, but I must decrease." The Puritan believes that true, God-glorifying spirituality is the kind that makes much of the beauty and glory and centrality of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord.

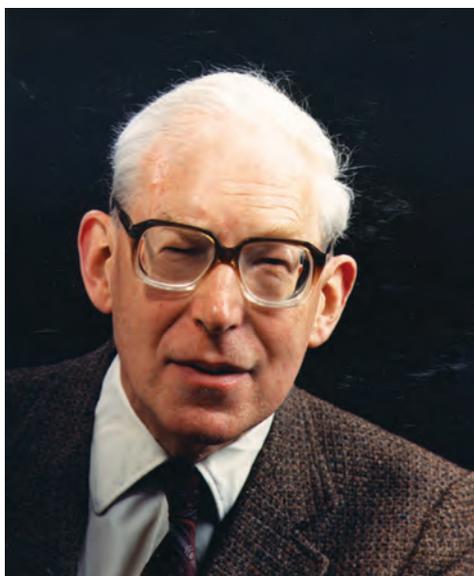
The second evidence of a work of

Edwards's third evidence of a work of the Spirit of God is that the Bible is exalted and held in high regard (1 John 4:6). One of the wonderful truths that we uphold in our Confession of Faith is that the Confession points away from itself as the final authority in matters of faith and life, and points directly to the ultimate authority of the Word of God. But notice how the Confession frames this conviction: "The supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but *the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture*" (italics mine).¹⁹ The Puritan believes that the Holy Spirit of God speaks in the

removes our darkness, and brings us to the light, undeceives us, and by convincing us of the truth, doth us a kindness." The Puritan is the Christian who loves the truth of God and does not shrink back from the truth. The Puritan is not afraid of hard questions, difficult issues, or new insights from God's Word. The Puritan is always being reformed by the Word. The Puritan knows that the light and truth of God's Word dispels the darkness of sin, reveals our pharisaical hypocrisy, unearths our apathetic and lifeless worship, condemns our lethargic concern for the loss, while also lighting our path with a renewed zeal for purity and holiness, authentic Christian obedience, joy-filled and Christ-centered worship, and a grace-overwhelmed heart which is compelled to invite others to come and



Dr Martin Lloyd Jones



J I Packer



Joel Beeke

the Spirit of God according to Edwards is that man's "esteem of the pleasures, profits, and honours of the world" are lessened and their hearts are captured by the pursuit of the kingdom of God and his righteousness. In other words, when the Holy Spirit is at work, men are convicted of sin and the need for repentance, they are aware of God's judgment upon sin, and their conscience is burdened by its need for the cleansing from sin which only the blood of Christ provides (1 John 4:4-5). The Puritan is not offended by the subject of sin, but rather understands the need for the preaching of the Law of God so that men might be shown their sin and their need for the cross. Likewise, the Puritan rejoices in the Law of God as a guide for the believer to direct him in the way of obedience and righteousness.

Scripture and therefore when the Holy Spirit is powerfully at work in the life of the church, in the life of our family, in our own individual lives, we will know it by the amount of time and devotion we give to the Word of the Spirit as He speaks to us in Scripture.

The fourth evidence of a work of the Spirit of God according to Edwards is that sound doctrine is taught and promoted. The Spirit of understanding and truth opposes spirits of falsehood (1 John 4:6). As Edwards puts it, because the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, "if by observing the manner of the operation of a spirit that is at work among a people, we see that it operates as a spirit of truth, leading persons to truth, convincing them of those things that are true, we may safely determine that it is a right and true spirit Whatever spirit

see who we have found – the Saviour!

Edwards fifth and final evidence of a work of the Spirit of God is that where the Spirit is at work there you will find both love to God and love to man (1 John 4:6-21). This love is no ordinary love, but it is a love focused on and patterned after the love of Christ Himself. As such, this love can be distinguished from counterfeit self-love because "the Christian virtue of *humility* shines in it; that which above all others renounces, abases, and annihilates what we term *self*." And so, those who are concerned with praying for, participating in, and identifying a true work of the Spirit of God will know it is Christian by the presence of selfless, humble, Christ-centered love. Do we need modern puritans today? As we are awash in a culture of pride and the exaltation of self, we

“What we need today is . . . more modern Puritans who will exalt the same Saviour, pursue the same righteousness, stand upon the same Scripture, rejoice in the same Truth, and love the same God”

must also sadly confess that the professing church is not immune from such a temptation. Where are those who are demonstrating true selfless love to God and others in the humility of Christ?

Are we known in our communities as those who exalt Christ, whose hearts are captured by the Kingdom of God, who hold high the authority of the Bible, who love the truth and pursue it no matter where it leads, and who love God and others with the love of Christ Himself? This is the Puritan. These are the men and women who we need in our churches today. It was such Christians whom Edwards saw to be a result of the work of the Spirit of God, and whom Burroughs exemplified in his love for God and for the brethren, and for whom Tyndale eventually gave His life that the Word of God would be known, read, and applied today.

Puritans today?

In 2006, Joel Beeke and Randall Pederson published the book *Meet the Puritans – With a Guide to Modern Reprints*. This is a great resource which lists the many who identified themselves or were identified by others as Puritans in the past. But perhaps the most important aspect of this book is found in a short Appendix provided by J.I. Packer as he sums up his conclusions from almost a lifetime of

study of the Puritans. “It is now more than half a century since I began to discern in the developed Puritanism of history a definitive embodiment of New Testament Christianity . . . a body of beliefs and a style of life that combined on the grand scale the Trinitarian objectivism of the Fathers, the knowledge of self and sin set forth by Augustine, the knowledge of Christ, of the cross, and of justification by faith that the magisterial Reformers had and shared, and the universal Christian passion of the glory of God in the worshiping life of the Church . . . a body of beliefs and style of life that was intensely practical, experiential, conscientious, determined, vigorous, hopeful, hardworking, and visionary in its struggle to achieve and maintain sanctity in all circumstances, walks of life . . . and to establish that sanctity everywhere . . . by every means available It is by the Puritan standards that our stature should be measured, and our short-comings detected, for these are the standards of the Bible.”²⁰

What we need today is perhaps not so much more modern reprints of the Puritans of an earlier century, but simply more modern Puritans who will exalt the same Saviour, pursue the same righteousness, stand upon the same Scripture, rejoice in the same Truth, love the same God and love the brethren in the humility of Christ, all the time praying for the same God-wrought reformation and revival in our own day. Indeed, a recovery of appreciation for the Puritans of the past and a modern day recovery of the Puritan concern is, says Packer, much needed for our own day when we “cannot discern how small and dry and lightweight and superficial and childish”²¹ we are compared to the spiritual giants of the past. May God be pleased to raise up the hotter sort of Protestants today!

Notes

- 1 http://www.literatureproject.com/scarlet-letter/scarlet_7.htm
- 2 *Worldly Saints – The Puritans As They Really Were*, Leland Ryken, Zondervan, 1986, pg. 1.
- 3 *A Quest for Godliness – The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life*, J.I. Packer, Crossway Books, 1990, pg. 29.
- 4 *Ibid.*, pg. 330.
- 5 Hebrews 10:14
- 6 Titus 2:14
- 7 1 Peter 2:2
- 8 Philippians 4:8
- 9 Revelation 21:27
- 10 Matthew 5:8
- 11 *Who Are the Puritans? ...and What Do They Teach?*, Erroll Hulse, Evangelical Press, 2000, pg. 31.
- 12 Psalm 119:89,97

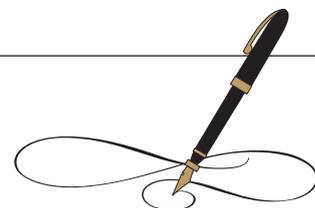
- 13 Hulse, pg. 33.
- 14 A helpful introduction to many Puritans who participated in the Westminster Assembly is found in *Puritan Profiles: 54 Puritans Personalities drawn together by The Westminster Assembly*, William S. Barker, Mentor, 1996.
- 15 *Ibid.*, pg. 86.
- 16 A current opportunity for such communion and fellowship which has proved a great blessing to members of the RCNZ who have participated is available in New Zealand through the *Stand for the Gospel* conferences being hosted annually in places like Howick and Christchurch.
- 17 *A Guide to the Puritans*, Robert P. Martin, Banner of Truth Trust, 1997, pgs. 233-238.
- 18 For this and the following summary points of Edwards, see his “Marks of a Work of the True Spirit” in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards, Vol.2*, Banner of Truth Trust, 1997, pgs. 260-277.
- 19 Westminster Confession of Faith chapter 1.10.
- 20 *Meet the Puritans – With a Guide to Modern Reprints*, Joel Beeke and Randall Pederson, Reformation Heritage Books, 2006, pgs. 837-839.
- 21 *Ibid.*, pg. 839.

Mr Peter J. A. Moelker is the Pastor of Sovereign Grace OPC in Redlands, California (recently of the Reformed Church of Avondale)

“Peter Lewis rightly says that Puritanism grew out of three needs:

- (1) the need for biblical preaching and the teaching of sound Reformed doctrine;
- (2) the need for biblical, personal piety that stresses the work of the Holy Spirit in the faith and life of the believer; and
- (3) the need to restore biblical simplicity in liturgy, vestments, and church government, so that a well-ordered church life would promote the worship of the Triune God as prescribed in His Word”.

Beeke and Pederson summarising points made by Peter Lewis in The Genius of Puritanism



Not my own — but saved to serve

What do we regularly recite from the Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 1? "That I am not my own, but belong, body and soul, in life and in death, to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ... Because I belong to him, Christ, by his Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him."¹

What does it mean to be "wholeheartedly willing and ready ... to live for him?"

In Romans 1:1, the Apostle Paul calls himself a "bondservant (or slave) of the Lord Jesus Christ". He was called to be someone who was bound to his Saviour, to do His will, to obey His every command, and to be totally at the disposal of his master. He was not a man-pleaser but a servant of Christ.²

Serving a master may require a person to sacrifice time, energy, money, pride and possessions; and we are all slaves to a master. In Gal 5:1, Paul says, "For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. We know that our old self was crucified with [Jesus] in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died to sin has been set free from its slavery and bondage and now serves a new master, one who is loving, kind and gentle and give us all the strength and help we need to serve Him."

If we have accepted Jesus as our Lord and Saviour (and doesn't Lord and Saviour just roll off the tongue, but think about it, LORD and SAVIOUR), we now serve a new master, Jesus. That means Christ has Lordship over every nano-second of our existence and every tiny aspect of our lives. But in reality this lordship is not easy for us sinful humans to submit to, even though we are by grace,

one of God's chosen people. We often struggle between a desire to serve Jesus and not wanting to do his will.

Nancy Leigh DeMoss writes:

"Even as a little girl, I had recognised God's ownership of my life. I had long acknowledged that I was not my own; in essence, I had signed a blank contract, giving my life wholly to God to be used for His purposes. Yet now that He was filling in some of the details, I was trying to protect and preserve part of it for myself. Finally, stepping out in faith and surrender, I said, "Yes, Lord. I am Your servant. You know my weaknesses, my fears, and my personal desires. But I will gladly embrace whatever You reveal to be Your will in this matter."

I'd be less than truthful if I said the journey since then has been easy; but His presence and grace have been with me each step of the way, and I have never regretted following Him on this path."³

Serving Jesus in the Church

All areas of our lives are to be lived under the ownership of the Lord, and as his servants/slaves we are called to encourage others in their faith and to do good works.⁴ We are going to contemplate ways we can serve the King of kings in His Church. Our fellow servants are blessed when we labour alongside them, in humility and service, working together for our God.

Serving Jesus with a humble heart

We should not serve in the church to show off how holy we are, or to prove we are holier than others; we serve, because we belong, body and soul, to our risen Saviour. It is not by works that we are saved but through faith; however, faith without works is dead.⁵ As we consider service to the Lord, it is clear we

"Pray for a servant heart, to serve others in a way that gives glory and honour to God. Actively look for ways to serve; from the small things ... to seeking out struggling people within our congregations or finding an avenue of service in the community."

need to have a humble heart. As soon as we think, "Oh look at me, people, I'm doing all this work for the Lord!" or "Why aren't other people helping out here, I'm slaving away and no-one else is?!" we need to remember who we are serving; our Lord Jesus Christ, not man. Pride creeps in so softly and quietly and can have us thinking in ungodly ways. We may find we are serving not Jesus Christ, but ourselves or some other human. God hates the proud but gives grace to the humble.⁶

Sometimes it may feel like we are not being appreciated. A woman, "Liz", was always being called on to organise food for events at church. She struggled with feeling used and unappreciated but she asked the Lord to help her to serve with a willing and humble heart, even if no-one recognised her hard work.

We are called to show the love and servant heart of Christ as a sacrifice to

Jesus, doing good to others and sharing what we have.⁷

Serving Jesus as Office Bearer's wives:

If you are an officer bearer's wife you are in a unique position. Your husband has been called to an office of serving in the church, whether it be as a pastor, elder or deacon. This is because the session, and the congregation, have recognised him as having the gifts necessary to that office. Your husband is called to serve the church, not to lord it over the church⁸ but to humbly serve to his best ability and with God's strength. As his wife, you are privileged to encourage him wholeheartedly in this challenging and, often, difficult role. It is so easy to become frustrated and angry when he has to go out yet another night or when your husband comes home way after you have gone to bed. Help him to be a godly officer-bearer, executing his duties in a way that gives glory to God. You can encourage him in his spiritual walk with the Lord by being godly yourself. Answering him kindly and gently, helping him in whatever capacity he needs (this may mean making a meal for a needy family that the deacons are helping, inviting visitors on Sunday for lunch, meeting with

another woman to talk about an issue that has arisen or getting dinner on the table early so he has time to digest the food before a meeting). When the elders and/or deacons are going through tough times, be encouraging. Pray while he is out serving the church, for wisdom, strength and unity within elders and deacons.

Sadly wives have, at times, become resentful of the "church" and how the church gets more of their husbands than they do, or bitter against others in the church who are causing difficulty for their husbands. Guard your hearts and minds against such things. Instead pray for strength to be a helpmeet who will be an encouragement, comfort and helper to your husband and for love for Christ's church.

Serving Jesus with hospitality

We are called to show hospitality especially to those of the household of faith⁹. This includes visiting speakers, preachers and ministers, as well as those within our local church. Be proactive about offering lunch on a Sunday to visitors to church, that means being prepared in your mind to actively look for people to invite, to be prepared food-wise (have an extra loaf of bread out) and to pray for opportuni-

ties to serve in this way. It doesn't have to be a fancy meal, cheese sandwiches are fine, because they are coming to get to know you and have fellowship with you, not to have a 4-course meal. Visitors to our church may be looking for a new spiritual home and hospitality has been shown to be a major factor in helping people to decide to join a church.¹⁰ Don't think that just because they already have family within the church that somehow that is enough. They need to get to know others in the congregation too.

If you have regular visitors in your congregation, showing hospitality to them may be crucial in their deciding to stay. We need to show to them the love of Jesus, our Saviour, to draw them into committed fellowship with us.

Serving Jesus and the struggling

Some of our members have been faithful attendees of our churches for decades and are now no longer able to attend our services. They would love a visit and a kind word, a reading from the Bible, singing of psalms and hymns and a prayer. Others are ill or struggling mentally. Visit, bake for them or just listen to them, and point them to our wonderful Saviour, Jesus.



Serving Jesus practically in the Church

Pray for a servant heart, to serve others in a way that gives glory and honour to God. Actively look for ways to serve; from the small things like picking up a tea-towel, for after-church coffee to seeking out struggling people within our congregations or offering to serve on a committee or finding an avenue of service in the community. We need to keep our eyes open to avenues of service. You may discover a mum is struggling with raising her children, or a woman who is struggling in her marriage. Offer to pray for them, first and foremost, but also offer practical and spiritual help that will point them to Christ. Not everyone can be in the church kitchen washing the dishes at one time, but so often it is the same people, week in and week out, that quietly get on and serve. If you know of a need, consider meeting that need yourself. Some months ago, I was going through a particularly difficult time, and a friend rang and said she was

coming around to clean my toilet and bathroom. "Would Tuesday or Wednesday suit?" she asked. What a wonderful blessing and she phrased the offer in such a way that my proud heart could not say "No, no! I'm Fine!" When it comes to preparing a meal for someone in need maybe we think someone else will do it (the deacon's wives maybe?). If you are asked to make a meal, gladly do it. Yes, it may be outside your comfort zone, but you are a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, so serve, sacrificially, for Him. It could be as simple as a cooked chicken, coleslaw and french bread from the supermarket or a large pot of soup or ordering fish and chips or pizza. If a meal is requested, it is because it is needed. We do not always know, nor need to know, the reason. However, we should just serve willingly and readily as unto the Lord. If a need is on-going, let the deacons or your church care-team know.

Serving Jesus

Serve the Lord, humbly and with grace.

He has called you to be His servant, and to show His love and compassion to those whom He has chosen to be His. Serve His church wholeheartedly, willingly and readily, living for Jesus.

We need to keep reminding ourselves that we are bondservants of the Most High God. How does He command us to live? How can we honour Christ's name today, through our obedient service to our Lord and King?

Notes

- 1 Heidelberg Catechism Question and Answer 1
- 2 Gal 1:10
- 3 *The Quiet Place – Daily Devotional Readings* – Nancy Leigh DeMoss: June 21
- 4 1 Thess 5:11
- 5 James 2:14-26
- 6 James 4:6
- 7 Romans 12:1, 1 Peter 2:5, 1 Peter 4:7-10, Heb 13:15-16
- 8 1 Peter 5:3
- 9 Romans 12:13
- 10 <http://thomrainer.com/2015/05/seven-things-church-members-should-say-to-guests-in-a-worship-service/>

6 Ways to Grow in the Gospels

William Boekestein

A number of years ago I was about to preach for the first time in a certain church. As I arranged my papers and books I noticed a sign near the top of the pulpit. It was a quotation from John 12:21: "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." I have since learned that these words are fixed to the pulpits of many churches as a reminder to the minister that one non-negotiable purpose of preaching is to show to the congregation the glories of Christ. I remember getting a little nervous as I thought about that sign, wondering if Christ was clearly set forth in my sermon.

It is possible to lose sight of Jesus in one's theology, like a person admiring the beautiful colors of a painting but failing to notice the image the colors depict. But to theologize without Christ

is to forfeit the foundation of our faith. We become like Peter, who knew his theology but took his eyes off Jesus and began to sink (Matt. 14:30). We must fix our eyes on Jesus (Heb. 12:2). One of the best ways to do so is to spend time in the Gospels.

Here are six suggestions for profiting from the Gospels.

Read large portions

The Gospels are not proverbs. Gospel writers have not compiled pithy and self-contained nuggets of truth; they have told a story. Their story is best understood – and felt – when read in large chunks. If you've ever listened to a full audio story while on a long drive, you understand the power of continuity. Longer readings of the Gospels preserve the story's movement. Shorter readings break up the flow.

Witness God at work

Gospels have the specific purpose of describing God's redemptive acts. The first question we should bring to the Gospels is not, "What must I do?" but "What is God doing?" Gospels are theological biographies that tell the greatest news ever: As Calvin put it, the Son of God has come in the flesh to "deliver a ruined world, and to restore men from death to life."

By seeing God working in the Gospels we can develop a sturdy theological view of life. Because the Gospel authors write from a transcendent viewpoint, they can help us understand God's supernatural purposes behind natural events. Knowing, for example, that Jesus allowed a sick friend to die so that his friends might believe (John 11:15) can assure us that God is doing more than meets the eye. In order to be shaped by the

Gospels we must not read them simply as moral lessons.

Keep Jesus at the center

Biblical history is essentially the history of Jesus who fulfilled God's promise to send a mediator to repair the breach between God and man (Gen. 3:15). This theme is blatant in the Gospels; other characters come in and out of the story, but it never ceases to be about Jesus in His role as mediator. Christ came to fulfill the badly-deteriorated Old Testament offices of prophet, priest, and king (Jer. 8:1-3). As prophet He teaches us God's will; as king He rules over history and judges the thoughts words, and deeds of men; and as priest He lays down His life to save His people. With gripping clarity, the Gospels tell "no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said would come – that the Christ would suffer, that He would be the first to rise from the dead and would proclaim light to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles" (Acts 26:22-23).

Sense Jesus

Like all good stories, the Gospels draw us into the world of the narrative, enabling us to powerfully sense the God who is with us. The Gospels exude the kind of details that help us imagine that we are breathing the same dust the disciples breathed as they followed Jesus. We

feel, for example, Jesus' other-worldly love as He "saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them" (Mark 6:34). Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John each present the gospel message not as a dry legal brief but as a fast-paced historical account of the ministry of the Savior of the world.

Notice what God Loves and hates

In the Gospels God interacts with men – sometimes blessing, sometimes cursing – always teaching which type of life He honors, and which He rejects. We learn about this life in the Epistles through doctrine; in the Gospels through illustration. The characters in the Gospels can be like mirrors. Sometimes we see an image that resembles us (for better or for worse). Sometimes we see an image that doesn't resemble us (again, for better or for worse). We see a remorseful Judas fail to repent (Matt. 27:3). We observe Pilate violate his conscience out of self-love (Mark 15:14, 15). We watch Peter confess Christ and then falter (Mark 15:1-15). The characters in the Gospels literally lived before the face of God in Christ. As we watch them we should ask, "Where am I in this story?"

Submit to the Great Teacher

In the earlier days God spoke to his people by the prophets. But He has spoken His final word through "His

son, whom he has appointed heir of all things" (Heb. 1:1). When Jesus was transfigured on the mountain God's voice boomed from heaven: "This is my beloved Son, hear him!" (Mark 9:7). Jesus speaks through the entire Bible. But there in the works and words of Christ, the will of God takes on flesh and blood and communicates to us in a uniquely powerful way. If we did not have the Gospels we might miss God's tender invitations, His firm warnings, His solemn commands.

You and I need to see Jesus. We can see Him in all of Scripture (Luke 24:44-45). But we cannot miss Him in the Gospels.

William Boekestein is the pastor of Immanuel Fellowship in Kalamazoo, Michigan. This article is adapted from his new Bible Studies on Mark.

Pastor Boekestein's latest book is Shepherd Warrior a biography of Reformer Ulrich Zwingli for young adults.

www.ligonier.org

"Doctrinally, Puritanism was a kind of vigorous Calvinism; experientially, it was warm and contagious; evangelistically, it was aggressive, yet tender; ecclesiastically, it was theocentric and worshipful; politically, it aimed to be scriptural, balanced, and bound by conscience before God in the relations of king, Parliament and subjects.

Beeke and Pederson

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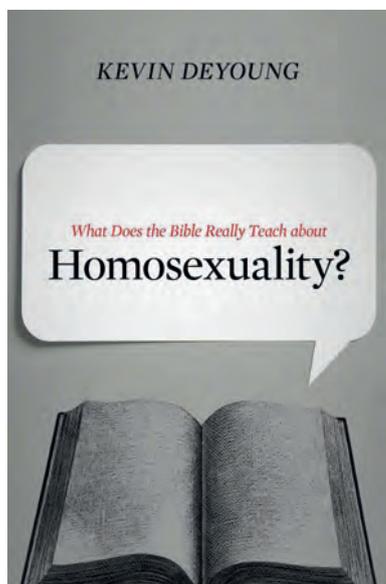
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What Does the Bible Really Teach about Homosexuality

by Kevin DeYoung, Crossway, 2015

Reviewed by Reuben Posthuma



What does the Bible really teach about homosexuality? That's the question that Kevin DeYoung seeks to answer in his book of the same name.

"Once we answer [the question of whether homosexual practice is a sin, a blessing, or something else], we can move on to a thousand points of application and search for the most courageous and winsome ways to address the sin and suffering we all experience." (p16)

He begins the book by reminding us of the gospel truth: Christ saves sinners. Of course, this begs the question of whether homosexual activity is a sin, so he begins by dealing with this from Scripture.

The Bible's arguments

DeYoung spends the first section of the book tracing passages in Scripture which speak about homosexuality. He begins in the creation of mankind. At creation, God gave the man and the woman to each other, along with the command they could only fulfill together: to be fruitful and multiply. DeYoung argues that this is prescriptive (this is the way God intends relationships and sexuality for all times and places to operate), rather

than descriptive, and backs that up with more Scripture.

DeYoung then moves on to the narrative of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis, to determine whether this has any bearing on how we should view same-sex activity today. While he concedes that this is one of the weaker arguments from Scripture against homosexuality, he traces further passages to show that homosexuality was indeed a large part of what those cities were condemned for.

The next treatment is on a few passages in Leviticus. In the face of "oh, well the Levitical law passed away with Christ", DeYoung raises the great point that if the purpose of Lev 18:22 and 20:13 being in our modern Bibles is anything different than "God doesn't approve of homosexual behavior", then it needs to be proven from Scripture (p. 43).

Next he covers Romans 1, and finishes off with 1 Corinthians 6 and 1 Timothy 1. The Corinthians and Timothy passages both use a disputed Greek word, which DeYoung spends time tracing back to Leviticus.

At the end of this survey, it seems convincing that the weight of evidence shows that "homosexual activity is not a blessing to be celebrated and solemnized but a sin to be repented of, forsaken, and forgiven" (p. 67)

Objections

Of course, there are still objections from many corners. DeYoung covers 7 of these, including that "the Bible barely mentions homosexuality", which is somewhat related to the objection that "the church cares too much about homosexuality compared to divorce and gluttony".

One of the more common objections I've heard – both from inside and outside the church – is that when the Bible condemns homosexual behaviour, it is only railing against all the excesses and perversions that have gone along with it in history, like rape, abuse, and prostitution. The time in history when the Bible was written, according to objections, knew nothing of loving, committed, monogamous same sex relationships. If that is the case, then as long as same-sex expres-

sion exists inside a loving, mature, and stable relationship, it might still be able to be blessed by the church. DeYoung refutes this both with passages from the Bible, and with examples from ancient literature that show that committed homosexual relationships were present in ancient cultures as well. The apostles were not in some cultural vacuum, and what they write is entirely relevant for us today.

The best chapter of the book, though, covers the objection that "it's not fair." For Christians who, in God's providence, struggle with same sex attraction, the possibility of a long road of celibate discipleship is daunting. DeYoung speaks compassionately to this. He reiterates the call to God-honouring sexual expression, but also reminds us that sex is only a small part of God's gifts to humanity. As we pursue discipleship, God gives us grace in our battles against the flesh, and we have the hope of glory even in our trials.

I was impressed with how pastorally DeYoung writes, while unabashedly affirming the truth of the Bible. He takes care to separate homosexual desire and attraction from homosexual practice which is something the church has struggled with. He calls on the church to minister graciously to those battling with unwanted same-sex desires. He calls us to examine whether we've made an idol out of the nuclear family, and calls us to be family for the lonely (Psalm 68:6).

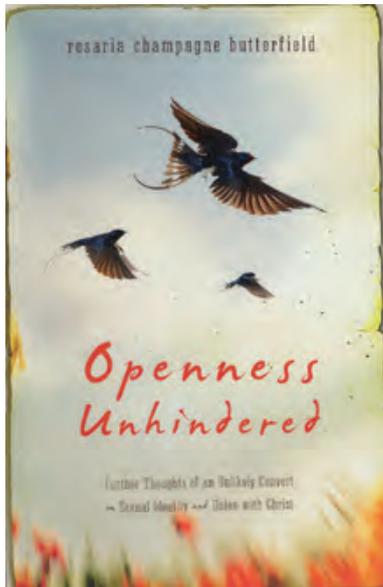
I would recommend this book to all Christians. We need to be clear on what the Bible calls us to contend for on homosexuality, and we also need to be called to compassion, care, and self examination. De Young does both of these excellently!

Mr Reuben Posthuma is a member of the Reformed Church of Christchurch (Cornwall Street)

Openness Unhindered: Further Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert on Sexual Identity and Union with Christ

Rosaria Champagne Butterfield

Reviewed by: David VanDrunen



As its subtitle indicates, this volume is a companion of sorts to the author's striking 2012 memoir, *Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert*, in which she chronicled her conversion to Reformed Christianity from her former life as a lesbian. While the earlier book was primarily biography interspersed with theological reflection, this new work is more theological reflection interspersed with biography. It is a valuable resource, whose message and

tone the church would do well to absorb.

After introducing some important themes and recounting aspects of her life's story in the preface and opening chapter, Butterfield moves in chapter 2 to a key idea, both in her book and in larger societal debates about sexuality: identity. She argues that believers should not find their identity in their own experience or actions, but in who God is and what he has done. We are united to Christ, she highlights, and thus justified and sanctified.

This discussion of identity bears fruit especially in chapters 4 and 5, in which she argues against the very concept of "sexual orientation" and opposes use of the term "gay Christian" to describe believers who feel same-sex attractions but strive to resist them. These are controversial assertions, with which many thoughtful Christians disagree, but I believe that she makes a compelling case on both issues. Christians should, at least, contemplate her argument that such concepts and terms do no favors to anyone: they tend to deceive Christians who are struggling with same-sex attractions into defining their identity in sexual terms, rather than in Christ, and to deceive Christians without same-sex attractions into downplaying the serious character of their heterosexual sins. In chapter 6, Butterfield offers additional insights into the use of these contested concepts and terms by describing her collegial interaction with a friend who

describes herself as a "gay Christian."

In the midst of this discussion of identity, chapter 3 offers important reflections on repentance as the antidote to shame and temptation. While Butterfield's description of the relationship between grace and repentance (and of the nature of Christ's temptations) is not quite as clear as it could be, her main point is crucial: Christians must never let confidence in God's grace be a substitute for repentance, and must commit themselves to confessing sin and not just admitting it.

The final chapter, on community, goes far beyond the matters of sexuality that are the book's main concern. But in many respects it brings the volume to a fitting close, for Butterfield points to mutual encouragement and hospitality as chief means by which God equips his people to resist temptation – sexual or otherwise – and to grow in grace.

One of the best things about this volume is its underlying tone and attitude. It wholeheartedly promotes holiness and godly sexuality, but without the rancor, vitriol, and self-righteousness that too often poison conservative Christians' contributions to societal debates on sex and marriage. Butterfield's self-critical and generous spirit is far from the least of this book's virtues.

New Horizons, August 2016

Three lenses through which people view sexuality

Rosaria Champagne Butterfield

There seem to be three lenses through which to examine today's sexual landscape. The first views gender and sexuality as cultural artifices, not ontological, God-ordained categories. Folks with this lens reject the idea that the Bible is an inerrant (without error) and inspired-by-God text, even though some claim a deep love for many parts of the Bible,

and a self-identified high view of Scripture. It is not unusual to have a high but also flawed view of something. People can have a high view of something that they don't understand. I may have a view of Shakespeare's sonnets, but if I cannot scan for iambic pentameter, I will only be able to appreciate them in a surface or "vulgar" way. Faithful readers of any text may have differing levels of literacy in discerning the meaning of those texts.

The same is true for Scripture. A high view does not guard against low literacy. To unbelievers and to those who hold to a revisionist hermeneutic (a reading practice that questions and reconceives the Bible's plain meaning and the shared testimony of the church), this is the case. But the Bible unfolds its own hermeneutic, as God himself determines how we should approach him. Of course you can read the Bible through a lens other than



Rosaria Champagne Butterfield

that which God asks, but you will never know the God of Scripture through his written Word if you do.

God's created order includes norms, boundaries, definitions, and limits for sexuality and gender, some of which may be difficult to embrace, especially if your personal experience puts you at odds with people you love and care about. Bible-believing Christians are gender and sexuality essentialists, believing that there is an essence to maleness and femaleness, and that God's created order mandates sexual union exclusively between one man and one woman in the covenant of biblical marriage. To the rest of the world, such essentialist understandings of sexuality, gender, and selfhood are reactionary, backward, and dangerous. To the rest of the world, the Bible-believing Christian's rejection of the wisdom of the world in favor of the fear of God and allegiance to the thousands-

of-years-old Bible is foolish and hate-mongering. I completely understand how these folks feel and interpret this. And my shift from postmodern intellectual, unbelieving professor, and lesbian activist to repentant Bible-believing Christian has tagged me a dangerous idiot. I love the folks in the former group. This group holds my former family of choice, and the learning community they cherish and inhabit is the one I helped build. Unbelievers tend to be pragmatists about morality. If consenting adults are hurting no one and cherishing what they have together, they are deemed to have a good relationship. I believed this for many years and I understand where they are coming from.

The second lens through which to read sexuality is with an inerrant, inspired, and dependable Bible. But even when we use the right lens, we also use the eyes of flesh, so we won't get good

results. In this group we find Christians who uphold what we call the inerrancy (without error and therefore completely true and trustworthy) and inspiration (God-breathed, supernatural, holy) of Scripture, but have never struggled with homoerotic desires themselves, looked deeply enough into Scripture, or listened well enough to their friends who do struggle. These folks unbiblically believe that the struggle is the sin. They do not know how to approach their lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) neighbors because deep down they truly believe that if gay people would just come to Jesus, they would all be straight.

Recently someone in my extended church community asked if the lesbian daughter of a mutual friend of ours was going to commit her life to Jesus and "go straight." I reminded the churchy lady (I live in the South, so indulge me here) that the young woman she mentioned

had made a profession of faith, and I had no more knowledge of whether she would develop heterosexual attractions than I did if she was going to buy a puppy at the state fair this year.

Homoerotic desire, these folks believe, is rooted in willful sin, bad choice-making, full-blown lust, and/or lack of knowledge of or real faith in Jesus. Without intending it, they endorse a prosperity gospel about sexuality, one that falsely believes that Christ died on a cross and rose again to make you happy and prosperous on earth. We all make choices along the path of our life journeys, but if sin is only about bad choice-making, we don't need a savior. Sin is bigger and deeper and longer than bad choice-making. All sin is a vestige of the fall and a transgression against God, but that doesn't mean that patterns of temptation are themselves proof that we are actively sinning. While it is true that in conversion we are new creatures in Christ, it is also true that on this side of the resurrection we will struggle with all manner of sin, including, if God permits, homoerotic desire. That is the kicker, and I hear this all of the time: "God would never make someone with a homosexual baseline." Really? Original sin means that we are born in fallenness – both moral (which requires the sanctifying power of God through saving faith) and natural (which requires medical or supernatural healing, but not necessarily

saving or sanctifying faith). Sexuality can straddle this line, as sometimes sexual dysfunction results from natural fallenness (such as intersexuality, being born with reproductive or sexual anatomy of both sexes). So yes, we are all "born this way." And even after we are born again, we will all struggle with sin until we die and enter Glory or Jesus returns.

Whether the pain you face now is the consequence of your sin or the sin of others, in God's providence and in saving faith, Romans 8:28 still reigns: "God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." It is not the absence of sin that makes you a believer. It is the presence of Christ in the midst of your struggle that commends the believer and sets you apart in the world. Real conversion gives you Christ's company as you walk through the valley of the shadow of death. Indeed, the fall made everything – including my deepest desires – fall. And this happened under God's providential eye, not behind his back.

The third lens is used by those who believe they have Christ's saving grace, but do not believe that God calls them to repent of all sin, in part because they use the wrong biblical lens. They believe that there are holes in the biblical story, holes that can only be filled by the "moral logic" of personal experience or the culture in which we live.

These people believe in Jesus, but extract him from the Word of God by suggesting that we have new and improved ways of understanding the human condition.

While the Bible is not a science book and will not tell me how to fix my computer or build a telescope, it is spot-on when it comes to the moral condition of humanity. When folks in this group claim Christ's confidence, but uphold a hermeneutic that unwittingly but wholeheartedly erases Jesus' brutal sacrifice for sin, they often do so on the grounds of new evidence about morality that changes what the Bible means. Every generation seems to arrive at new evidence to explain away a biblical truth. Part of loving your sister or brother involves holding the mirror of Scripture up to the reflection of personal testimony. If personal testimony does not reflect the Bible's account of a life of faith and repentance, then for the sake of your friend and for the sake of Christ's witness, bring the Word of life to bear upon the claim of conversion.

The author, a well-known author and speaker, is the wife of an RPCNA pastor and a homeschooler. She quotes the NASB. This article is an excerpt from Openness Unhindered (Crown & Covenant Publications, 2015), pages 5–9. Photos: Neil Boyd Photography.

New Horizons, March 2016

Report on Auckland Presbytery Men's Study Day

The speaker at the Auckland Presbytery Men's Study Day last May was Dr. Jerram Barrs of Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. His current position at the Seminary is Professor of Christian Studies and Contemporary Culture. Dr Barrs has been a mentor to the Rev. Ryan Sparks and was in Auckland to take part in Ryan's ordination service in the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Bucklands Beach.

The title for the men's study day was 'Evangelism – The Christian's calling to follow Jesus into the world'. Professor Barrs presented three talks, each based

on gospel passages:

1. Jesus shows the way into the world (John 4:1-43)
2. An unusual dinner invitation (Luke 19:1-10)
3. Parables for a mixed gathering (Luke 15:1-32)

Dr. Barrs emphasized the primary work of Christ in atoning for sin and in living an exemplary life, but he noted also that Jesus provides the pattern for us to follow for engaging in evangelism. He noted the criticism which Jesus received as the One who had come to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10) and then drew out some practical lessons for those who have been sent out by Christ (e.g. John 17.18).

The practical teaching which flowed out from his careful interpretation of Scripture included the following points:

- The importance of living intentional

lives, in which we serve the Lord by purposefully initiating relationships with non-believers in order to convey the gospel. We are called to follow Jesus in cultivating close friendships with people – no matter what their sin

- Being ready and willing to set aside social custom and man-made rules (especially those made to keep church members apart from sinners) in order to interact with non-believers
- Being aware of your own prejudices and testing these against Scripture
- Being vulnerable by having a willingness to show your weakness and personal needs
- Receiving the good gifts of unbelievers with thanks (e.g. their hospitality)
- Always discussing and interacting with unbelievers respectfully
- Being gentle and gracious when speaking of moral failures (seeing yourself as the chief of all sinners)

- Remembering that we have been commissioned for service as gospel witnesses by Christ Himself
- Extending hospitality in your home to the unbelievers you have befriended and go gladly to their homes
- Never condoning sin, but always ex-

tending grace

- Teaching your children to be merciful and kind to other people. Warning them about the dangers of an unbelieving world, but not completely separating them from unsaved sinners

I found Dr Barrs' presentations to be Biblically sound, very engaging and thoroughly thought-provoking. His wealth of experience, as someone who has lived what he teaches, was evident throughout.

David Waldron

Report on the 2016 PCEA Synod

The Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia (PCEA) is a sister church denomination to the Reformed Churches of New Zealand, comprising 14 congregations in the mainland states of Eastern Australia and Tasmania. The churches are grouped into three presbyteries: Northern (Brisbane, Northern Rivers and Hastings), Central (Hunter Barrington, St Georges, Mt Druitt and Sydney South) and Southern (Knox, All Nations, Narre Warren, Carrum Downs, Geelong and Ulverstone). There were 468 communicant members in 2015 with a typical attendance at worship services, including regular visitors, of 625 for the denomination as a whole.

sion of the character of the Free Church of Scotland with whom a close relationship is still maintained. The PCEA subscribes to the Westminster Confession of Faith as adopted by the Church of Scotland in 1647. Theologically the PCEA is Reformed. In corporate worship the 150 canonical psalms are sung without musical accompaniment. Hymns are not included in corporate worship services.

The Synod of the PCEA meets annually. The 2016 Synod met in Sydney at the Mt Druitt church facilities in Sydney from 3rd to 5th May with 19 delegates from the PCEA attending together with 5 sister-church delegates (CRCA, URCNA, RPCA, PRCA, RCNZ).

The three PCEA presbyteries submitted reports to Synod, noting the importance of church revitalization and extension, as well as on-going training of office-bearers. The PCEA have a number of standing committees including

Lord that the Federal Marriage Act has not been changed, and continues to pray there will be no change that legalises homosexual marriage.

The 'Missions Committee' reported on works in which the PCEA has a connection including outreach to aboriginal people (Australian Indigenous Ministries – AIM), various ministries in India (Mukti Missions, Dumisami Theological Institute and the Taleem (discipleship) Centre in Dehradun), involvement in school and seminaries in South America (Peru and Colombia) and Christian Witness to Israel.

The Interchurch Relationship Committee reported on churches with whom the PCEA have fraternal relations. These denominations are: The Church of Scotland, RCNZ, OPC, RPCA, Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland, Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, The Presbyterian Free Church of India,



PCEA

The Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia

The PCEA was formed in Sydney on 10th October 1846 by the Rev. William McIntyre and three ministerial colleagues who separated from the Church of Scotland following the 'Disruption' of 1843. The Disruption was the result of the interference of civil authorities in the spiritual affairs of the church. The State had required that ministers who were not acceptable to the church and had not been chosen by local congregations be settled into certain parishes. After a protracted struggle, some 470 ministers left the established body and formed the Free Church of Scotland. The PCEA is, in many respects, an Australian expres-

sion of the character of the Free Church of Scotland with whom a close relationship is still maintained. The PCEA subscribes to the Westminster Confession of Faith as adopted by the Church of Scotland in 1647. Theologically the PCEA is Reformed. In corporate worship the 150 canonical psalms are sung without musical accompaniment. Hymns are not included in corporate worship services.

The 'Church and Nation Committee' reported on the Australian Federal Marriage Act and on the NIV 2011 Bible, proposing that this version not be recommended for use in the PCEA churches. This recommendation was adopted by Synod. The Synod gave thanks to the

The Southern Presbyterian Church of Australia, URCNA, CRCA, Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Australia and The Reformed Presbyterian Church of Australia.

I was warmly received by the PCEA delegates. I am thankful to have been able to attend the 2016 Synod, to experience the fellowship there. I also enjoyed the plentiful food provided, primarily by the Tongan members of the Mt. Druitt congregation.

David Waldron

And we hope by Thy good pleasure ...

John and Alice Steenhof

To refresh new readers, we are helping 6 village communities to firmly establish and develop their Christian schools in Uganda. Our next step will be to determine to what extent the boards in their communities have the vision, discipline and love necessary to support and plan for their schools. This can only be estab-

lished over time, especially as some of these boards are just in the process of being formed. Meanwhile we are giving the teachers the tools and training to do their work with the assumption that they receive board support from their community. We hope and pray that these communities may, over these six months, demonstrate that they can and are willing to take on the responsibility

of long term Christian education.

Now we are part of a “committee to help OPCU schools” which includes our esteemed colleague, Connie Jackson. She is the wife of Dr Charles Jackson, who teaches student pastors at the Knox Theological College. She is willing to give her time, effort and resources in order to help out. She goes out to the schools and visits with a temporary helper named



Our first community project, which is now totally run by Robena, sitting at front. She travels about 12 kilometres on the Boda(motorbike taxi) to teach the ladies bead making out of paper. This takes place in Hope Nursery School.

Addie, a seventeen-year-old student who is visiting Uganda from US to broaden her horizons for the Lord. Bless her heart! Addie leaves on July 25th. Do you know of anyone who might want to visit here for six months and take her place? Believe us, it is a challenge, but it is so good for young people.

Regular visits are made to all schools – we spend from 2 to 4 hours at each school. Both teams visit three schools (there are a total of six schools) each week. (The Steenhofs take a Ugandan, Richard Mazanga, as their translator). We speak and act as models to teachers as we see needs – (how to engage students, the importance of student book work as opposed to mere rote learning, showing love to children and the importance of play – so we bring balls and skipping ropes etc. with us). We also encourage teachers to ensure that all students have the basic tools needed for learning, namely exercise books and pencils and wax crayons (especially for nursery classes), and emphasize the importance of adhering to their schedules, the crucial role of Bible stories etc. We stress that all free materials (which come out of the team's personal pockets) are an initial

gift, which will be a kick-start but will not continue over time. We teach them that the board has an important role to plan for needs and the village community should seek to raise their own funds as far as is possible.

The degree to which they hear us is another matter. *"The Muzungu is here to provide money and will continue to substantially provide"* is such a difficult and stubborn-gluey thing to overcome. For so long the loving white missionaries have been largely a source of income. We are loved, but also expected to provide money "out of love" for the covenantal group. We try to convince them that Muzungu money is not always the answer. Sometimes it is the worst answer. And we believe they are beginning to listen. (Yes there is still a huge need for fund-raising for a "you-do-your-part-and-we-will-match-with-donor-funds ministry").

We are thankful to God for changes we have viewed in the schools, teachers and students. They are verbally and in practice full of gratitude. Many have manifested major changes. This is His work. We are conscious every day that we can only work out of His strength and

daily revealed wisdom as we are called to participate in His work. In many cases it is very slow by our Western standards. We are constantly guessing at what should be a benchmark of improvement, but go on just doing our best.

We intend to keep instructing our teachers. But now our focus for the next three months will be on boards and their function, a most crucial connection between Christ's Lordship and the students. This is the "next step" of the schools. (In some ways it should have been their first step, logically, but these things form in time). Schools so far have normally formed through ad hoc plans by individuals often led by head teachers.

But boards are now taking the lead. The lack of self-discipline and love, which has come to our attention in the boards, was very disappointing. Where these boards existed, they often were weak and did not call meetings. The emerging laxness in coming to a first meeting was also disappointing. We are blatantly straightforward about this resistance to meet as demonstrating, in part, a lack of genuine love for the teachers and the children at the school. So we stress the need for Christ's love in these



Alice Steenhof receiving respectful greetings.

communities, and their communal plea to Christ to make us all care enough to do something for our neighbour whom we are so prone to hate. The learning curve for the Ugandans makes me appreciate the board members in Silverstream and Perth for giving so liberally of their time for the schools.

Now is the time for Ugandans to demonstrate by way of response that they will develop the Christ-like characteristics necessary for any future work to take root firmly. They must develop a more strongly self-planned and self-managed programme to produce via their villages solid Christian education with a larger component of community funds for the schools. They must gradually learn to formulate their own plans with their own manpower and resources, through Christ's work in them. By God's grace and undergirding this can happen. We pray that it will. Please pray for these boards and our work with "yonder sacred throng"

An encouraging response

We were encouraged with better attendance, more being on time and most of all at their bold reception of the "Duties of a Board" list. We explained this thoroughly with a translator. Since we last talked to them, one of the board members donated land for the members to use to grow crops to sell for the school! He was inspired by our last "you-raise-funds-in-your-communities-by-reflecting-on projects" PowerPoint. (we have a portable LED projector) He responded to our "ladies make beads" project with his own creative "villagers-grow-crops". They are working towards



(bottom) Our Teacher's Convention. Teachers came from all the village schools by Bodaboda (motorcycle taxi).

somehow obtaining an irrigation pump to get water from the nearby river, in order to have a fair chance of getting a good crop, to sell for the school. Our initial check with locals seems to confirm so far that this crop project is a viable project to raise funds. Praise the Lord!

We have stressed that the board members, out of their love for Christ, must work hard for the teachers, and ensure the community pays their fees. This is not a selfish love, but a love for Christ. While it is a pain in the neck to leave their lands and households and walk to the school for a board meeting, sometimes from a good distance, nevertheless this loving deed for the teachers and their children is their response to Christ's love for them. He gave Himself

freely, though He wanted to flee His duty to go the cross, since it was so altogether hard to bear. In the same way we must bear our cross of service for others, out of thankfulness to Him.

We rejoice at this improved response to our plea to meet as boards. But it is too early to jump up and down in excitement. The question now remaining for us is this: When we are not pushing and cajoling, will they still meet regularly as boards and plan for the third term? We will not be there. Our visits will not take place. There will be no more gas-in-the-carburettor gifts from us. Will they plan? Will they raise money and obtain fees? We hope and pray that it may be so. Will you too pray for this?

And we hope by His good pleasure ...

The Reformed Churches Bible College in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea is looking for a Principal.

The RCBC was established in 2007 and has been blessed with many graduates, who are able to serve the PNG churches in many capacities including elders and most recently as ordained pastors.

The successful candidate must have a teaching and administration background as well as a strong desire to serve the Lord on the Mission field. They must be able to write, present and evaluate the current curriculum and make changes for future enhancements. The candidate must be adaptable and culturally sensitive and must also have the ability and desire to learn another language and culture. This rewarding position will be strongly supported by the team on the field and by the supporting federations' mission boards.

If you are interested, please contact Carol Griffioen at 9 Regis Drive, North York, Ontario, Canada, M2M 3J4 or at carolgriffioen@yahoo.ca

A British martyr: Thomas Cranmer, 1489-1556



Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, by Gerlach Flicke, 1545, National Portrait Gallery. en.wikipedia.org (public domain)

Patricia van Laar

Three squares in Christchurch are named after prominent martyrs of the Reformation in England. These are Cranmer Square, Latimer Square and Ridley Square. I doubt whether many Christchurch people today are aware that Ridley was the original name of what is now called “Cathedral Square”, forgetting that until the 1880s the Cathedral did not exist. Thomas Cranmer, Nicholas Ridley and Hugh Latimer were foremost among the leaders of the Reformation in England during the 1500s.

The pre-eminent one, Thomas Cranmer, was an advisor to Henry VIII and to the young King Edward VI, Henry’s only son, for whom Henry had chosen a Protestant education. Cranmer thought his own childhood experience under a severe and cruel schoolmaster caused his uncertainty and pliability in the hands of superiors and opponents. His cautious nature was to cause him some difficulties.

In 1503 he entered Cambridge University, becoming divinity professor in Jesus College until 1529. After the death of his first wife, he was ordained into the Roman Catholic priesthood. Summons into personal service by King Henry VIII led to an official appointment as an ambassador to Germany in 1532. Already interested in Luther’s teaching, during this time his views became more and more reformed through Reformation contacts. But on his return home it was political events that changed his aims for reform from the academic to the practical. He was caught up in the desire of Henry VIII to divorce his first wife, the Spanish Catherine of Aragon, in order to marry Anne Boleyn. Cranmer, at the instigation of the king, took this matter in hand, approaching the ques-

tion from the scriptural point of instruction, forbidding marriage to the wife of a deceased brother. In this view, the marriage was invalid, because Catherine was the widow of Henry's older brother

In 1533 Cranmer was consecrated as Archbishop of Canterbury. He resolved the matter for the King with the above-mentioned scriptural argument, pronouncing Catherine's marriage void, and Anne's valid. This paved the way for future events, for Catherine was the mother of Mary, a Roman Catholic, while Anne gave birth to Elizabeth, who was brought up in the Protestant faith.

Cranmer viewed his task as Archbishop to be the oversight and guidance of clergy in his care, responsibility for placing the English Bible into every parish church in the country, (enabled by the invention of the printing press), and making some Protestant changes. Henry VIII both liked and trusted Cranmer – with good reason. Cranmer was not greedy, devious or self-seeking, as many of the political and ecclesiastical leaders were. In spite of the King's rejection of the Reformation, Henry's 'curious attachment' to Cranmer (as it has been called) foiled at least three plots to destroy the Archbishop.

Doctrinally Henry VIII remained Roman Catholic, with no wish to change the shape of the Church of England, while Cranmer conformed more and more to the Reformation. The transformation of doctrine fell into the hands of the likes of Cranmer, Ridley and Latimer. So the claim that is often made that Henry VIII 'began the Reformation in England' is false. He remained firmly on Roman ground, and his only interest in reform was in curtailing any interfering power of the Pope's in the realm of Henry's kingdom. Meantime, circumstances were heading towards an unforeseeable climax.

Disaster followed Henry's death. All three children of Henry were to follow him as monarch. Edward, Protestant son of his third wife Jane Seymour, though the youngest of the three, was immediate monarch because of his gender. During his short reign as Edward VI, Cranmer continued his work of transforming the worship of the church. He produced 42 Articles, later reduced to 39, and today these are still the officially accepted dogmas of the Anglican Church. The articles carried the doctrine of transubstantiation further than Luther's teaching, to a fully Reformed view. Article 28 reads '*transubstantiation (or change of*



the substance of Bread and Wine in the Supper of the Lord) cannot be proved by holy Writ, but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthrows the nature of a Sacrament, and has given occasion to many superstitions.' It should also be noted that in the Holy Communion Service the words the 'Lord's Table' are used consistently, not the word 'Altar', as is commonly but wrongly used today. This further emphasises the teaching of Article 28. The Sacrament is a memorial meal, not a sacrifice. This truth Cranmer died for.

In two successive Prayer Books of Edward VI, the progress of reformed thinking can be traced. With these as a base, Cranmer compiled the Book of Common Prayer, (the liturgy of the reformed Church of England), which proved to be a literary masterpiece, based on the Bible. It is a supreme example of magnificent English literature, with Biblical litanies that served the church well for the next four centuries.

The death of Edward VI in his mid-twenties and Cranmer's support of Protestant Lady Jane Grey as queen (nominated by Edward VI as his successor), sealed both her fate and that of Cranmer's. Elizabeth, the daughter of Anne Boleyn, although a Protestant, was not next in the line of succession. Anne Boleyn had misbehaved and been executed at Henry's orders. Later her daughter became Queen Elizabeth I, one of England's most renowned rulers. [Incidentally, another mistake made today, is that the monarch is officially the 'Head' of the Church of England. Elizabeth I absolutely refused this title, saying that Christ is the Head of the Church. She did consent to being ascribed as Defender of the Faith and Supreme Governor of the Church of England, and these are two ascriptions given in the official Book of Common Prayer to the English monarch from that day to this. Of course, these were inserted during Elizabeth's reign, after Cranmer's death. So the monarch

should be emphatically proclaimed as NOT 'head of the Church'.]

But in between Edward VI and Elizabeth I, came Catherine of Aragon's daughter Mary, Henry's first child, an avid Roman Catholic, who came to the throne as Queen Mary I. She had already given away the monarchy to her half-brother, so she would not allow Lady Jane Grey to also stand in her place. Her succession after securing the execution of Lady Jane Grey, (whose nine-day reign was the shortest in English history,) meant the temporary halting of the Reformation in England. Mary was more than ever determined that Cranmer too,

should die for his long-standing offence in promoting Protestantism. Cranmer's abandonment of belief in transubstantiation was to be a major point of dispute in the events that followed.

Queen Mary I is nicknamed 'Bloody Mary', for her rule saw over 300 Protestants, both low-born and high-born, put to death for their faith. Ridley, Latimer and Cranmer were all tried for heresy. Cranmer was forced to witness the simultaneous deaths of Ridley and Latimer, burnt at the stake in October 1555. The timid Cranmer was then persuaded to sign a recantation of his beliefs, in the faint but vain hope of receiving mercy.

His recantation was published in the expectation that his defection would wreck the Protestant faith in England.

On March 21, 1556, he was taken from prison to be burnt. But the Queen's representatives over-reached themselves. They required Cranmer there and then while standing at the stake, to confirm his recantation in public. To the shock of his enemies, Cranmer boldly withdrew his recantation, reasserting that the Pope had no right to power in the realm of England, and that transubstantiation was untrue. Then he steadfastly held his 'traitorous' right hand in the flames, so that this hand, which had offended by signing his previous recantation, should be consumed first by the flames.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica has assessed the effect of this action:

His brave and dignified end made an enormous impression." And that "At one blow, Cranmer undid all that government propaganda had achieved, and restored heart to the surviving reformers.

Truly, God turned what was meant for evil, into good. For

*Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.
Psalm 116:15*



Engineering (Electronics) Trainee

This is a tremendous opportunity for a person with an already keen interest in technology and wanting to make a career in this exciting industry. To help ensure this happens, the successful candidate will be required to successfully complete the New Zealand Diploma in Engineering (Electronics) (Level 6), studying part-time at Wintec (Course no. SC1101).

To fill this position, we are now seeking applications from school leavers to NZ Registered Electricians, who would not be required to complete the Diploma.

We see ourselves as a 'technology based' company providing innovative and cost-effective solutions for our clients in Hamilton and Waikato Region.

The successful candidate would work in the full range of installation and maintenance services the company provides. These include security alarms, access control, CCTV, C-Bus and Crestron automation systems, structured cabling, AV systems, MATV, intercoms and automatic gates.

To be successful in this role you will need to demonstrate that you:

- ✚ Are physically fit and in good health
- ✚ Possess a positive personality and a willing 'can-do' attitude
- ✚ Possess good interpersonal and communication skills
- ✚ Are able to deliver good customer service
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- ✚ Are a fast learner and possess the commitment needed to meet deadlines
- ✚ Are able to work as an effective member of our friendly team

Applicants will need to possess a current NZ Driver's License.

Remuneration package is based on your experience, qualifications and skill set. The position is available for immediate start.

The company is privately owned and holds strongly to Christian values including honesty, integrity and respect. You would need to be comfortable working in this environment and show a commitment to these values.

To apply, please send your written application stating why you believe you are the right person for this position together with your current CV (with a list of character and employer referees), copy of your Record of Learning (NCEA results or other higher learning achievements) to Colin Young at colin@arc.net.nz

"The Puritans ... as a body were giants. They were great souls serving a great God. In them clear headed passion and warm-hearted compassion combined. Visionary and practical, idealistic and realistic too, goal-orientated and methodical, they were great believers, great hopers, great doers, and great sufferers. But their sufferings, both sides of the ocean ... seasoned and ripened them till they gained a stature that was nothing short of heroic.

J I Packer