

CURRENT

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The Free Presbyterian Church of North America is a conservative, Protestant, and Reformed denomination with churches in Canada and the United States. We maintain a biblical position of separation from false ecumenism while seeking to stand with all who stand for Christ and the historic Protestant faith. While we are unashamedly Reformed in our theology, our Calvinism is never a hindrance to our preaching the free offer of the gospel since we always seek to keep our Calvinism Christ-centered and evangelistic. Our great desire is to preach "the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Ephesians 3:8) in our churches and throughout the world.

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NO FAKE NEWS

Fake news is the latest in sensational journalism, deliberately designed to mislead. The media may say they fact-check their news stories, but often put so much “spin” on them they are capable of turning black to white, or white to black. To gain instant advertising dollars, tech savvy manipulators have the ability through the internet to create sound bites of scandal-stirring news that may go viral. In doing so, they become authors of confusion and pedlars of lies.

The devil has been peddling his lies since the garden of Eden, and our first parents were poisoned by his spin, which led them to sin. And so, because the world has become cursed with lies, the battle for truth has had to be fought valiantly through each successive generation. In this internet age, however, the battle for truth has become so fierce that it is imperative to seek out reliable sources of information, lest we follow a lie.

On the other hand, we never need be ashamed of the “good news” of the gospel of Christ, for the Lord Himself is absolute truth. In the opening verse of his gospel, the apostle John declared the Lord Jesus to be “the Word.” That means He is God’s revelation to men. Just as truth is one of God’s divine perfections, so the Lord Jesus Christ is truth personified and incapable of propagating fake news. John also noted that the Lord frequently prefaced His most profound statements with, “Verily, verily.” It is obvious from this manner of repeatedly guarding His statements that the Lord was aware He was ministering

in a world of falsehood. The Lord made it known that His message was God’s good news to enlighten men, not fake news to deceive men.

We do not source our gospel doctrines from newspapers, nor from wiki websites, but we go to the written Word of God that reveals the living Word – the Lord Jesus.

John repeated the fact that the Lord Jesus came to bring the light of God’s truth to the spiritually blind when he wrote, “In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not” (John 1:4-5). From his opening statements, John established that Jesus is the Light of the world, and in the course of writing his gospel, he reinforced this as definitive doctrine. He noted the Lord’s pronouncement, “I am the Light of the world.” In doing so, John unashamedly contended that Christ was the embodiment of truth.

In our generation, we need to build on this doctrine of Christ that we might be a light in this darkened world. We do not source our gospel doctrines from newspapers, nor from wiki websites, but we go to the written Word of God that reveals the living Word – the Lord Jesus.

The truth of the gospel is more needed today than ever. While fake news propagates its lies, we are committed to proclaiming the good news that Jesus is “The way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). The Lord said it, we believe it, and the world needs to hear it.

Remember the Lord’s command, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). While the devil operates as the king of darkness to lodge his lies within darkened minds, our Lord Jesus operates as the “King of glory” to shine the light of truth to enlighten minds. We are His disciples, and this is the work He has given us to do.

I am thankful for each one who wrote informative articles for *Current* on this 500th anniversary year of Martin Luther’s posting his 95 theses on the church door in Wittenberg. His work was for the truth, and God blessed it to the people of Germany and to the masses across Europe in his day. We praise God that these same truths are continuing to reach the hearts of multitudes around the world. Let us not lose sight of what the truth of Christ, “the Light of the world,” can accomplish in this darkened world. Let us each do our part to hold forth the truths of the gospel. Then shall we see that Jesus truly is God’s “Good News” to turn souls from darkness to light.

“Buy the truth, and sell it not.”

Proverbs 23:23

Rev. Jason Boyle is a born missionary, and one of our own seminary grads now ministering the gospel in Mexico City, the fifth largest city in the world by population. While his church is but a dot on the city's map, it has made its mark in reaching the people of that needy city. With their own building, and membership of people committed to the proclamation of the gospel, as well as two sister congregations to the east in Veracruz, the Lord has been pleased to signally bless the vision and diligent labors of His servant. No small part of Jason's steadfastness has been without the loving and cheerful support of his wife Danielle, who was born in British Columbia, Canada, and was a member of Cloverdale FPC. As editor, and as minister of Cloverdale church, I take joy in this connection with the ministry in Mexico City. May all of our readers become more personally connected through our interview with Rev. Boyle.

God's people know that missionaries must be a special kind of people. They need a special calling from the Lord and special training for the many extra challenges of ministering to people of another language and culture. What has helped you the most to enter into your work and stay the course in Mexico City?

I try to always emphasize to people that missionaries are not super-Christians, but are simply Christians living and ministering in another culture. I think that's important for people to know, especially so we can encourage others to consider the call of God in their own lives. At the same time there are particular challenges and difficulties living and working in a culture that are not what you grew up with.

What has helped the most in the beginning years of ministry in Mexico is having a clear and undeniable call to minister here, as well as a love for the people that God has brought into our lives. We have been embraced whole-heartedly by our congregation, and that love has been a great help to us.

The remarkable thing I have observed from your first announcement and then your preparations to minister in Mexico City has been your clear sense of direction. How did that direction come about?

When I was in third and fourth grade Sunday School class, our teacher went to Mexico for a mission trip during part of a summer. When she came back, she showed us pictures and souvenirs that she had bought, but she also told us of all the children our age that needed to hear about Jesus. Even at that young age of eight, the Lord touched my heart and gave me a burden, not just for missions in general, but specifically for Mexico. From that point on, that's what I told people I wanted to do when I grew up.

When I was a junior in high school, I was preparing for college and thinking about where to go and what to study, and although I still had the same burden and desire to go as a missionary to Mexico, I also wanted to confirm that call and be sure that it wasn't just something I wanted as a child. So, I sought the Lord for a



few months as I read His Word, and He gave me two verses: Matthew 4:16 and Acts 26:18 to confirm His will for my life. Matthew 4:16 has been very special to me since that time: "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up."

After my college freshman year, I was able to go on a mission team and visit Mexico for the first time, even though at the time I didn't speak any Spanish! Then in 2002, I spent ten weeks in Mexico City as part of my internship, working with the Goldfuss family, and the Lord gave me a specific burden for the city, with its millions and millions of people in need of Christ.

When did you commence your ministry in Mexico City and how were those first few months as you set out to gather in people to hear the gospel?

We arrived in Mexico in July, 2010 and took language classes for the first year or so. We officially planted the church on January 1, 2012. During our time of language study, we began to make some contacts, and when we started we had 13 people, including ourselves. The Lord brought in this beginning group in various ways, and then allowed the church to grow, during that first year, almost entirely from family members and friends of that beginning group. We have a slightly broader reach now as a church, but that type of organic growth continues and is part of what I consider vital to the life of a new church.



What was it like to transition from preaching in English to Spanish?

Challenging! Very, very challenging. I had completely written out my sermon the few times I had preached in Spanish before coming down to Mexico full-time, and so I continued to do that when I began preaching here, sending my notes to a friend in Paco Orozco's church in Hermosillo every Friday to correct my mistakes. I did that for a couple of years, until there were much fewer mistakes. I remember the first time that I was able to get away from my notes for a couple of sentences while I was preaching, and speak from the heart, which was an encouragement! Then little by little I became more and more comfortable, and now I'm more at ease preaching in Spanish than in English!

With some experience now of the needs of the people to whom you minister each week, are they any different from a congregation in the USA or Canada?

I suppose that's a little hard to say, seeing that I haven't pastored anywhere but Mexico. On the one hand, I imagine that the needs of people are the same everywhere. On the other hand, understanding cultural differences is important to be able to explain and apply the Word in an effective way.

What is the underlying influence of Roman Catholicism upon the people in Mexico?

It's a combination of oppression, corruption and complacency. The political and spiritual oppression of the Roman Catholic church dates from the time of the Conquista, and although it's not as obvious now, the grip of the church over the people continues. The corruption of the church has influenced the rest of society, and the results are obvious in the government, or any other type of authority. And then there is complacency because, even with all the current mistrust of the Roman Catholic church, people are still holding onto at least part of their faith — specifically that everyone is a son of God, basically a good person, and therefore, eventually,

everyone's going to get to heaven.

You have been diligent and careful to minister to others, then others seemed to look to you for further fellowship and ministry. How has that come about, and what present opportunities do you have beyond your own congregation?

The Lord has brought like-minded men and congregations to fellowship with us, without us really doing anything. Marcus and Lalo were looking for fellowship and supervision from those who held the same doctrine and distinctives as them, and Ramón was looking for a Presbyterian denomination, and contacted the mission board. We made contact with another man in a city not too far from Marcus and Lalo at a leadership conference in Hermosillo, at Paco Orozco's church, as well as other contacts there in the north of the country. We are very thankful for the opportunity to fellowship with those of like precious

would be a light in the darkness. Pray that men would be raised up in leadership positions, that young people would be saved and dedicate their lives fully to the Lord, that they would wait for and find godly spouses, and that the Lord would bring in young children and save them early in life. Pray that God would strengthen the marriages in the church, and use every believer as a testimony in his own house and work and neighborhood.

Apart from raising money, how can people get involved to support your ministry and to advance the cause of Christ in Mexico at large?

The prayers of God's people are the most important thing for us. We send out an update regularly, and are thankful for so many people that uphold us in prayer and remember the specific requests that we have. Apart from that, if anyone knows Spanish and wants to use it for the Lord,



faith and many doors have been opened to preach and give conferences in different churches. Sometimes people are interested in what we believe and who we are as a denomination, and whether or not they ever join with us, it is a blessing to share with them what the Lord has done and is doing in our churches.

How should readers pray in specific terms for your ministry?

Pray that the Lord would save souls in Mexico City, believing that He has "much people in this city" (as was the case in Corinth in Acts 18), and that our church

or has a burden for the mission field, we would love the chance to show them what life is like down here and provide ministry opportunities.

When we think of the geographical size and population of Mexico, the need for men on the field must be overwhelming to you. Where do you think the future lies for growth in evangelism and pastoral ministry to the Mexican people?

In the young people, without a doubt. The generation of people in our church that are in their forties, fifties, and sixties are the ones that are taking on responsibilities

and being trained, but the future lies in our young people. They have the advantage now of growing up in the church (unlike their parents) and being trained from a young age in the gospel, and they have less bad habits and misunderstanding of Scripture to get rid of. We have been blessed with about 20 young people (ranging from age 15 to about 30), and we are thankful that many are saved and want to serve the Lord. But we ask for special prayer for the young men that at a young age they would be burdened for full-time ministry, or to serve as leaders in the church.

It's a long way from Vancouver. How has your wife Danielle found life in Mexico City? Do you both find that you are at home where you now live and minister for the Lord?

It was definitely not an easy transition, but Danielle loves life here and is an invaluable part of the ministry. We are very much at home here. We love the people and the food, but are not as fond of the traffic and pollution! We enjoy going back to the States or Canada to visit, but it's not home anymore. When we talk about going home, it's when we're on our way back to Mexico.

One last question: Are Mexicans good at soccer? When did you last play the game?

Mexicans are absolutely obsessed with soccer, and in general are quite good at the game. I played soccer from the time I was little, so I can hold my own when I play. I'm not able to play as much as I would like to, but when we get together as a church, there's always time for a little soccer. I played at our youth camp in April and was pretty sore afterwards! Danielle doesn't play, but cheers me on.





THERE IS HOPE

“Stay with me, I cannot bear to be left alone. O Lord help me, what have I done to suffer so much? What will become of me hereafter? No, don’t leave me, stay with me. Send even a child to stay with me, for I am on the edge of hell here alone.” These were the cries of Thomas Paine to his housekeeper, as he lay upon his death bed. Thomas Paine was a founding Father of the United States, political activist, writer, and professing atheist. Why was there such a sense of loneliness and abandonment? Why such fear and dread? The answer is simple: Thomas Paine had denied the existence of God and hell, and when he came to die he was suddenly gripped by the reality of both, and was not ready to face either. He would die without hope.

Contrast Thomas Paine’s final words with those of the great hymn writer Augustus Toplady, who wrote the beloved hymn, “Rock of Ages.” As Toplady’s life ebbed away, he suddenly awoke from sleep and said, “Oh, what delights! Who can fathom the joy of the third heaven? The sky is clear, there is no cloud; come Lord Jesus, come quickly!” Mr. Toplady was a man who had hope and was looking forward to being with his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Passing from time into eternity held no fears for him. There was a time in his life, however, when he recognized that

he was a sinner, and needed to be prepared for eternity, and did so by receiving Christ as Savior and Lord of his life. The words of his hymn might well be his own testimony:

*Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood, From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure, Cleanse me from its guilt and power.*

Let me ask you, dear reader, if you have made Christ your Rock of Ages? Has the blood that flowed from His hands, feet and riven side washed your sins away to give you hope for eternity, or are you still in your sin “having no hope and without God in the world?” Let me exhort you to attend to this urgent matter of the hopeless state of your soul, because if you have not Christ as your Savior, then you have no hope of heaven. To know Christ as Savior is to have “Christ in you the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27).

The question is, do you have Christ in your heart, and have you made Him your hope of glory? Perhaps you have never looked to Christ by faith, never had your sins washed away in His precious blood. That means that you are still in your sin and certainly without hope. But you don’t have

to spend your days without hope, nor be like Thomas Paine facing eternity without hope. The good news is that the Lord Jesus Christ, who is “the God of Hope,” came into the world to purchase salvation for a sinner like you, through His atoning death on Mount Calvary and give you hope for eternity.

Through what the Lord Jesus accomplished on the cross, a door of hope was opened for all who would enter in by receiving Him as Savior. That door leads to heaven and home. We know this because it is written that all the glorified saints in heaven are there because they “have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” (Revelation 7:14). That door will bring joy, happiness, and peace to all who enter in. David said, “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered” (Psalm 32:1). Sin, on the other hand, brings sorrow and woe to all who do not believe on Christ and would rather “enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season” (Hebrews 11:25). The Lord Jesus said, “I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved” (John 10:9). You see, it is only through Christ the Door, that anyone can know sins forgiven and be given hope for eternity.

Dear reader, do you know Christ as your

own and personal Savior? Are you ready to meet God? Perhaps, like many, when asked this question you say, "Well, I hope so." But that is not good enough. You cannot face eternity depending on a "hope so." You must be sure that you are saved! You must be sure that your sins have been forgiven and that Christ is your Savior. You must be sure that He is the keeper of your soul and that heaven is your home. You can be sure because Paul said, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13). Notice, "shall be saved" not, "might be saved" or "perhaps will be saved." Shall be saved is sure, and something upon which you can build for eternity.

So why not call upon the name of the Lord? He will answer your prayer and save you this very hour! Having Christ as Savior, you will no longer be facing eternity depending upon nothing more than "I hope so." Instead, knowing Christ as the Redeemer of your soul, and with the hope of glory in your soul, you will be able to say:

**My hope is built on nothing less
than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
but wholly lean on Jesus' name.
On Christ, the solid Rock I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand,
All other ground is sinking sand.**

Dear friend, there is hope. Christ will be your hope if you repent of your sin and receive Him as your Savior. Why go out into eternity like Thomas Paine, a hopeless lost sinner? Instead, having Christ as your Lord and Savior you will be able to say, "I have the hope of eternal life."

Rev. Reggie Cranston, minister of Port Hope
FPC

Former Abortionist Turned Pro-Life OB/GYN Tells Congressional Committee: 'I Am a Mass Murderer'

WASHINGTON — A former abortionist turned pro-life OB/GYN told a Congressional panel on Thursday that she lives with the realization that she is a "mass murderer" because of all the lives she ended.

"We know from a scientific standpoint that the baby in the womb is a human being and not just a blob of tissue," Dr. Kathi Aultman stated before the House Judiciary Committee as support for the Heartbeat Protection Act of 2017. "Birth changes nothing but the baby's environment. What justification do we have to deny them personhood and human rights until after their birth?"

She explained that there were three cases that opened her eyes about the evils of abortion. The first was a situation where a woman on whom Aultman had performed three abortions returned a fourth time.

"I was told by the clinic staff that it was her right to choose to use abortion as her method of birth control and that I had no right to pass judgment on her or to refuse to do the procedure," she recalled. "I told them it was fine for them to say, but that I was the one who had to do the killing."

The second incident involved a woman who was asked by an accompanying friend if she wanted to see the baby, and straightforwardly proclaimed, "No! I just want to kill it."

The third matter involved a mother of four who felt that she could not afford another child and wept throughout her time at the abortion facility. "What struck me was the apathy of the first patient and the hostility of the second towards the fetus, contrasted with the sorrow and misery of the woman who knew what it was to have a child," Aultman recalled. "I had finally made the emotional connection between fetus and baby, and realized that the baby was the

innocent victim in all of this."

"The fact that it was unwanted was no longer enough justification for me to kill it, and I could no longer do abortions," she explained. Aultman, now retired from her OB/GYN practice, outlined that she has come to realize that the abortion industry is replete with "extreme propaganda."

"We have sanitized our language to make abortion more palatable and talk about the 'fetus' instead of the baby, and 'terminating the pregnancy' rather than 'killing the baby,'" she lamented. "We have moved farther away from the idea that life is precious and closer to the utilitarian attitudes that destroyed so many lives during the last century."

"More and more we are embracing a culture of death that only values the strong and healthy," Aultman said.

And as much as she enjoys seeing the children that she delivered years ago all grown up, it also reminds her of the people who are not here because she killed them.

"I love to meet adults that I delivered, but it's always bittersweet because I am reminded of all the people I will never meet because I aborted them. It also reminds me that I am a mass murderer," Aultman bluntly told Congress. "Because we can't see who they will become, we feel justified in sacrificing babies in the womb for the people we can see."

According to her bio, Aultman worked as the medical director of Planned Parenthood of Jacksonville from 1981 to 1983, and was also the co-founder of the Rape Treatment Center.

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By Heather Clark on November 5, 2017

LUTHER'S LEGACY



When *Playmobil* produced a Martin Luther figurine to commemorate the Reformation, the German manufacturer could not keep this new toy on the shelves. Dressed in sixteenth century academic robes, replete with cap, scroll and quill, and holding a copy of his New Testament in German, the figurine had a first run of 34,000 and sold out in less than 72 hours, making this little plastic version of the man who launched the Protestant Reformation the fastest-selling *Playmobil* toy ever.

Astid Mühlmann, director of the governmental office preparing for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, told *Newsweek* that education might be behind the toy's popularity: "There's quite an interest in looking back to our history. Parents want to make sure their children grow up knowing who he is because he had such an impact on how society evolved in Europe."

The impact that Luther had on society can be gauged from a one-line description of him in the pages of *Time* magazine where it casts him as, "The last medieval man and the first modern one" – making the point

that, though he was raised in the distant medieval world, he has profoundly shaped our own. It is undeniable that without Martin Luther our world would look very different: theology, history, ethics, and politics are just some of the areas where his influence has been nothing short of profound.

[1] NATIONALLY

Martin Luther retains his position as a revered figure in Germany, even in a spiritual climate where best estimates tell us that one third of all churches in the country will soon no longer be needed as they are simply too empty and too expensive to maintain. He is credited not just with standing up to the power of the pope and exposing corruption within the Church, but with making huge contributions in society.

Politics and Culture

Politically and culturally Luther coalesced the German people. He was aided in his work by German princes who were keen to loosen the papacy's grip on their lands. Luther helped to unite the two hundred to three hundred

little Germanic states in language and culture, thus contributing to the breaking up of the Holy Roman Empire and the rise of nationalism.

Human Rights and Education

Luther's bold stance in insisting that all people are equally noble before God and that no man's conscience should be crushed by the powers of government opened the door for everything from free enterprise to free speech to the intellectual freedom that millions have enjoyed ever since. This made democratic government possible and allows Luther to stand symbolically as the greatest single agent in increasing the value of the individual.

One of his first acts as a reformer was to propose that monasteries be turned into schools, while one of his last was to establish a school in Eisleben. Not only Luther, but also Melancthon, Zwingli, Bucer, Bullinger and Calvin actively promoted reformed education in their writings and works. Accordingly, it is no exaggeration to state that the Reformation greatly altered public education by the end of the sixteenth century.

Marriage and Family

Luther's marriage on 13 June 1525 to "escapee" nun Katharina von Bora, followed the Reformation practice that elevated the family over and against celibacy and eventually led to the transformation of church and culture. One scholar writes, "Little did the sixteenth-century world realise the tremendous significance — both religious and social — of this simple and reverent ceremony in the backwoods of rural Germany . . . Luther's marriage remains to this day the central evangelical symbol of the Reformation's liberation and transformation of the Christian daily life." Together they had three boys and three girls and led a happily married life in the Augustinian monastery in Wittenberg where Katharina was the treasurer, manager, and administrator of what became, due to Luther's popularity, an informal boarding house. By means of this union, Luther lifted parenthood to the highest of callings and brought Biblical teaching directly into his home with his *Small Catechism*. In calling parents the "bishops" of their homes, he emphasized how they were accountable to God for their children's spiritual welfare and contributed unintentionally to the rising status of women.

Economy and Industry

The Reformation provided a place for capitalism to flourish. John Calvin's thought touched upon nearly every contemporary problem, one of these being usury (money lending at interest) a practice essential for the later development of capitalism. The Reformation also paved the way for a "Protestant Work Ethic." Martin Luther's teaching of the "priesthood of all believers" demolished the partition wall between the secular and the sacred realms which dominated the thought of the church at the time.

Prior to the Reformation, it was believed that the only way in which to serve and glorify God was to take holy orders and enter a monastery or convent. By breaking down this barrier, hard labor was elevated. Being a ploughboy or a maid was no longer viewed as an inferior life to that of a monk or a nun; rather, any

type of work could be pleasing to God (1 Corinthians 10:31).

[2] ECCLESIASTICALLY

When Luther launched his most highly publicized challenge — the 95 theses, or arguments against indulgences — his intention was to engineer a discussion with the Church, not to create a division within it. However, this action turned out to be the match that lit the powder keg. It sparked a set of debates in which the abuses of the Catholic Church were exposed, generating a series of documents that propagated Luther's message across Germany by means of the printing press. This culminated in 1521 when Luther received a bull of excommunication from the church and an edict of banishment from the state. These events brought Luther to the realization that the Roman Catholic Church was irreformable and separation from it was inevitable.

The Appearance of the Protestant Church

By 1525, Luther had married a former nun, conducted the first Lutheran worship service, and ordained the first Lutheran minister. The word "Protestant" was first used at the Diet of Speyer in 1529 to describe those who, like Luther, questioned the authority of Rome; at a formal gathering in Regensburg in 1541 any lingering thoughts that there may be a reconciliation between Luther and the Catholic Church were abandoned.

While the Catholic Church made determined attempts to stamp out Protestantism, forcing the Schmalkaldic Wars and generating other conflicts, the Peace of Augsburg (1555) brought the violence to an end and ensured that German princes could choose the religion of their realms according to their conscience ("whose region, his religion"). By this time, Luther's ideas had spread across Europe and inspired others. Henry VIII had established the Church of England and John Calvin had started the Reformed Church in Geneva, Switzerland. By 1536, Norway had become Lutheran and Sweden made Lutheranism its state religion in 1544, each development guaranteeing the further spread of Protestantism.

The Word and Worship of God

In 1521, Luther set himself the task of translating the New Testament out of Latin into German. He went back to the sources and translated from the original Greek text, completing this work within a mere four months. This New Testament was released in September 1522 (with a complete German Bible ready for publication by 1534) and has been described by Phillip Schaff as, "the most important and useful work of his whole life" because, "he brought the teaching and example of Christ and the Apostles to the mind and heart of the Germans in life-like reproduction." Luther's Bible laid the foundation for a standardized written language that came to be accepted throughout Germany. Luther made further changes to the way we worship. Dr. Carlos Eire says that Luther made Christianity a faith about the living by doing away with purgatory: "Before Luther, Christians used to spend a lot of their time, a lot of effort and sometimes a lot of their money, on masses for the dead, to get their relatives released from purgatory. And that changed completely."

One enemy complained that Luther's music did more damage than his teaching. "After theology," Luther stated, "I accord music as the highest place and greatest honour." Thanks to Luther, church singing that used to belong only to monks and priests passed to the people and composers were encouraged. Additionally, with the emphasis on the priesthood of all believers, priests were no longer required for anyone to do business with God. Pastors became more like shepherds, preachers, and educators. Every Christian had the right and responsibility to go directly to God through Christ, and they were permitted to take the cup in communion — all of which showcased the radical changes in worship introduced by the Reformation.

[3] THEOLOGICALLY.

As a result of being forced to defend his positions, Luther hammered out a theology that was at non-negotiable odds with Catholicism. He rejected the papacy, all but two of the sacraments, any redemptive power for the virgin Mary, praying to saints, purgatory, and celibacy for clergy.

His doctrine of salvation by grace alone through Christ alone by faith alone (not merited by works) became the pillar of Protestant teaching.

The Supreme Authority in the Church

In contradistinction to the Catholic Church which holds that the teachings of the pope and church hold the same weight as Scripture, Luther made the Bible "sola scriptura" or Scripture alone – the supreme authority for what Christians are to believe and practice.

The Key Doctrine in Soteriology

Luther considered the doctrine of justification by faith alone, expressed in the words, "The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11), as key to his salvation. It "opened the very gate of paradise" to him, and consequently dominated his theology: "The one doctrine which I have supremely at heart, is that of faith in Christ, from whom, through whom, and unto whom all my theological thinking flows back and forth day and night." Little wonder he also said that he felt it was his duty to "beat it into people's heads continually." R.C. Sproul accurately observes: "Luther blazed the rediscovery of justification by faith alone, and he restored the church's focus to Christ alone."

The Principal Duty of the Preacher

When Lucas Cranach, the Wittenberg painter, committed to canvas a final memorial to his friend, he depicted Luther preaching. Cranach painted Luther's wife Katie and Luther's daughter Magdalena (who died when she was thirteen) into the picture. In between Luther and his congregation is Christ – an acknowledgement that not only did Luther preach Christ, but when his congregation heard him preach, they did not see Luther but Christ and Him crucified.

Luther was convinced that the Scriptures were full of Christ: "The Bible is the cradle wherein Christ is laid" and that the chief business of the preacher is to discover and present Christ to the people.

Three days before he died, from his deathbed in Eisleben, Luther preached his last sermon which consisted of two texts, Psalm 68:19 and John 3:16, which he connected with this comment: "Our God is indeed a God of salvation, and that salvation comes through the work of His Son." He ended his sermon by saying, "Much more could be said about this Gospel but I am too weak."

Much more can be said. And we must keep on saying it. Luther did not reform the church at every point. Some things were left undone, but even this underlines a principle of the Reformation – *ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda* (the church reformed, always reforming). When old errors resurface, most often in a new disguise, the church must reaffirm its commitment to the unchanging truth of Scripture. By this maxim alone, the Reformation that commenced in the sixteenth century, is not over yet.



Dr. Ian Brown is minister of Martyrs' Memorial FPC, Belfast, Northern Ireland.



This Year of Luther's 500th Anniversary

This has been a busy year with many special services and projects to mark the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's protest against the sale of Roman Catholic indulgences. As a reformer, Luther was larger than life and contributed an astounding amount of light to the cause of Christ and Protestantism. He was a preacher of God's Word: he called people back to the saving doctrines of the gospel, including the doctrine of justification by faith alone. He was a writer: he left a legacy of some seventy volumes of his writings, which have been of excellent value to students in the church of Christ. He was a musician: he composed music and wrote lyrics to enable the people to sing the gospel. He was a translator: he translated the Bible into the German language to give the common people the Word of God for the first time. He was an educator: he promoted marriage and was an exemplary model of family life. In the marvellous providence of God, Luther lived to age 62 and died of natural causes in the full assurance of his salvation.

Thanks to the many writers for our magazine. Throughout 2017, a large number of articles has been published on Martin Luther's life and work. These are now accessible on our website at www.fpcurrent.com

In addition, various series of Reformation topics have been preached in our churches throughout the year and are now available by audio and video at www.sermonaudio.com. May the Lord be glorified in this reformation focus. Let us never cease to pray for revival and for another reformation in our lands and in our churches.

– Editor

A LUTHER LESSON

Luther's Third Major Debate



THE PLACE

Worms, Germany

THE DATE

April 18, 1521

LUTHER'S OPPONENT

Dr. John Eck, Archbishop of Trier (not to be confused with the Dr. Eck of Ingolstadt, who debated Luther at Leipzig).

THE MAIN ISSUE

The pope sent a letter to German officials issuing a bull of excommunication against Martin Luther and demanded that the young Prince Charles of Germany act to protect the Church as well as the state. The German princes insisted that a man should not be banished without a hearing.

DR. ECK'S CONTENTION

That Martin Luther acknowledged the books that were laid out on a table which exposed the papacy and expounded the gospel of justification by faith alone.

Luther was asked to either defend them or disavow some of them.

LUTHER'S REPLY

"Since your Imperial majesty requires a plain answer I will give one without horns or hoof! It is this: that I must be convinced either by the testimony of Scripture or by clear arguments. I cannot trust the Pope or Councils by themselves since it is clear as daylight that they have not only erred but contradicted themselves. I am bound by the Scriptures which I have quoted; my conscience is thirled [bound] to the Word of God. I may not and will not recant, because to act against conscience is neither honest nor safe." "This he said both in German and Latin. Then after a pause he added in German: 'I can do nothing else; here I stand; so help me God! Amen.'¹

THE RESULT

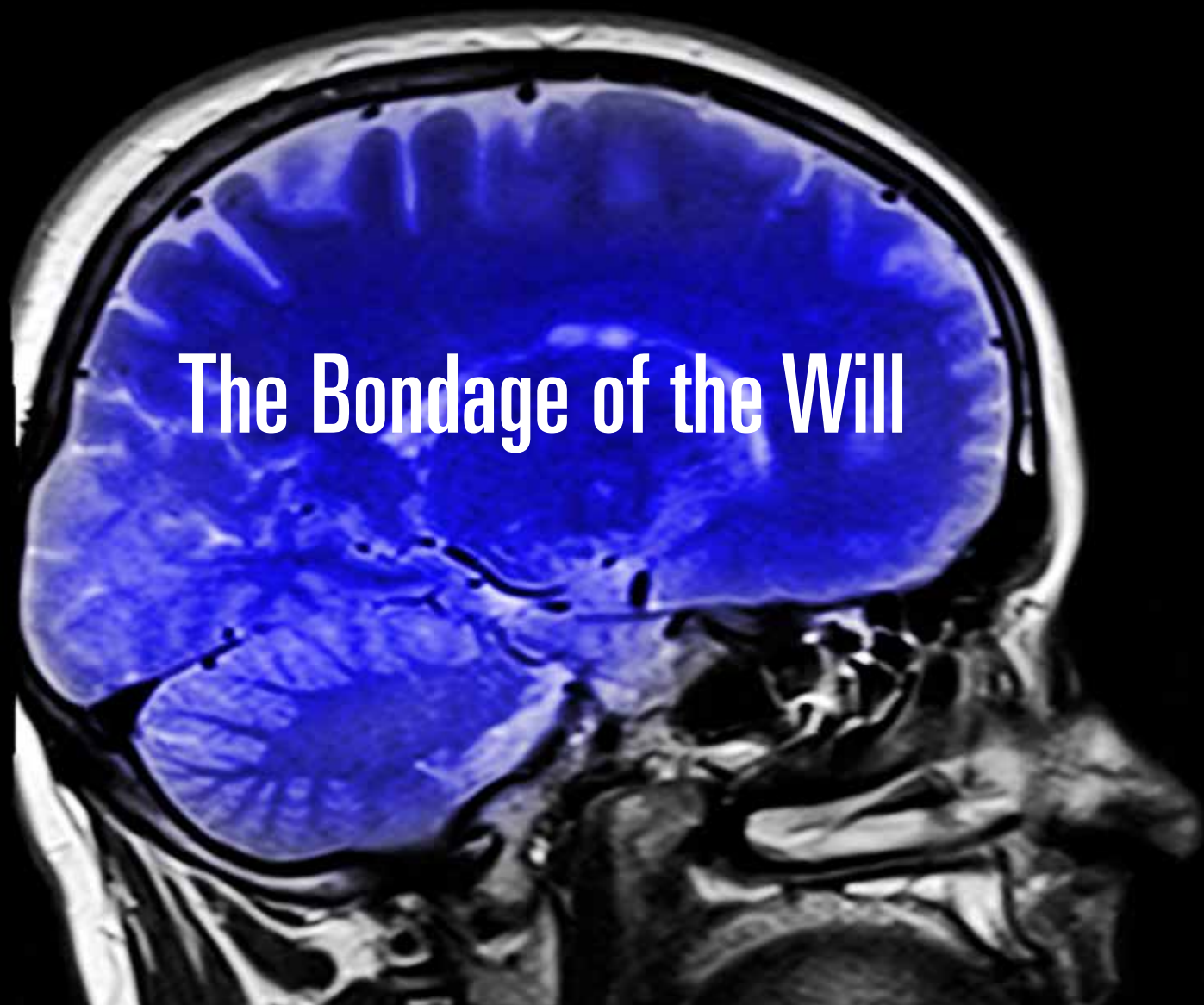
"He was ushered out of the great hall, that was packed with dignitaries and with sympathetic Germans. As he was escorted to his lodgings he pleaded for calm from the German people who looked to him as their champion. The Emperor Charles,

King of Germany, caved to papal pressure while bartering for further powers in his rule over Spain, signed the document banning Martin Luther from his empire. The ban of the empire, thus fraudulently obtained, granted Luther twenty days' safe-conduct after his departure from Worms; after this — twenty days after April 26, — everyone was forbidden, under severe penalties, 'to give the aforesaid Luther house or home, food drink, or shelter by words or deeds.' It only remained to secure Luther's person and burn him as a heretic. Luther had suddenly disappeared, however, and no one knew where he was, and the wildest conjectures were started. Aleander came nearest to the truth when he said that he believed 'the old fox', meaning the Elector of Saxony, had hidden him somewhere."²

Luther had been taken into hiding within the walls of the Wartburg Castle. There he translated the Bible into German, so that the common people could read the Word of God in their own tongue.

¹ Thomas Lindsay, *Martin Luther: The Man Who Started the Reformation* (Christian Focus, 1996), 107.

² *Ibid.*, 110.



The Bondage of the Will

In 1516, Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam, Holland made a tremendous contribution to the Christian religion by publishing the Greek text of the New Testament. This caused many to say, “Erasmus laid the egg which Luther hatched.” Although Erasmus was “the Prince of the humanists” in Europe, he was still a very unenlightened theologian who was under the bondage of medieval scholasticism. He knew enough Scripture, however, to realize that there needed to be a reformation in Roman Catholicism, but he did not desire anything so thorough as the Lutheran Reformation.

Early in Luther’s Reformation, Erasmus wrote, “Martin Luther is a mighty trumpet of Gospel truth.” He also agreed “that many of the reforms for which Luther called were urgently needed”, but by 1524 he was adamantly opposed to Luther; therefore, he wrote his book *The Freedom of The Will* in opposition to

Luther’s teaching on God’s sovereign grace, election, and justification by faith alone. The following year, Luther responded with a 400-page treatise *The Bondage of The Will* that demolished Erasmus’ weak arguments. Erasmus scolded Luther by asking, “Would a stable mind depart from the opinion handed down by so many men famous for holiness . . .?” Of course, Erasmus was referring to the “church fathers” whom he had quoted confidently in his contention with Luther over man’s “free will”!

It is interesting to note that Erasmus carefully avoided quoting St. Augustine, the greatest of the church fathers. In one sense, this is surprising because Erasmus, like Luther, had been an Augustinian monk from 1487-1492. But in another sense, it is not surprising because Augustine wrote so stringently against free will. Quoting him would have been counter-productive.

Erasmus was more of a humanist than a true believer in God’s Truth. His writings reveal

that he doubted the veracity of God’s Word and the reality of eternal blessedness. Luther passionately pleaded with Erasmus, saying, “May Christ grant, what I desire and hope, that your heart may not be . . . as your words certainly imply that you consider the Word of God, and a future life, to be mere fables.” Erasmus thought that the Scriptures were unclear regarding the distinctions among the three Divine Persons in the Godhead.

He also considered the reality of the two natures joined together in Christ’s person to be of meager importance when compared to keeping the commandments of the moral law. These doctrines are fundamental, historic, orthodox, Christian theology that had been hammered out in the early ecumenical church councils. Yet Erasmus still called himself a faithful member of the church while questioning these foundational elements of Biblical revelation. Luther viewed these matters

as fatal departures from pure, Biblical theology. He declared, “The Holy Spirit is ‘no skeptic’ and it is not doubts or mere opinions that He has written on our hearts, but assertions more sure and certain than life itself and all experience.”

Erasmus often resorted to the standard Roman Catholic argument that the Scriptures are not clear, so they must be interpreted only by the Roman Catholic hierarchy. He said that Scripture is obscure and ambiguous. In Section 35, Luther pointed out that the teaching of Scripture is clear, obvious, and most certain. Luther quoted many passages from both the Old and New Testaments proving this point. Here are a few excerpts from Luther’s translation:

- Psalm 19:8—“The commandment of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes.” From this text, Luther rightly pointed out that the Scriptures “cannot be obscure or ambiguous.”
- “The door (entrance) of thy Words give light; it gives understanding to the simple” (Psalm 119:130).
- “We certainly have more surely the Word of prophecy, unto which, ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place” (2 Peter 1:19). The Word is a clear lamp; only man makes it obscure.
- “Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path” (Psalm 119:105).

Erasmus denied that the Bible teaches God’s sovereign predestination from all eternity. Evidently this leading humanist needed to do his homework with more careful Bible study, for many Bible passages can be cited which reveal God’s sovereign predestination.

Luther took up Erasmus’ question: “If the Scripture be quite clear, why have men of renowned talent, through so many ages, been blind upon this point?” Erasmus had implied that from the Apostolic Fathers onward, free will was the standard doctrine

and not God’s sovereign grace. Once again, if Erasmus had only carefully read the writings of Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Cyprian, Athanasius, Basil the Great, Cyril of Jerusalem, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Jerome, and a host of others, he would have found that they boldly set forth the doctrine of God’s gracious, eternal predestination rather than futilely exalting man’s free will.

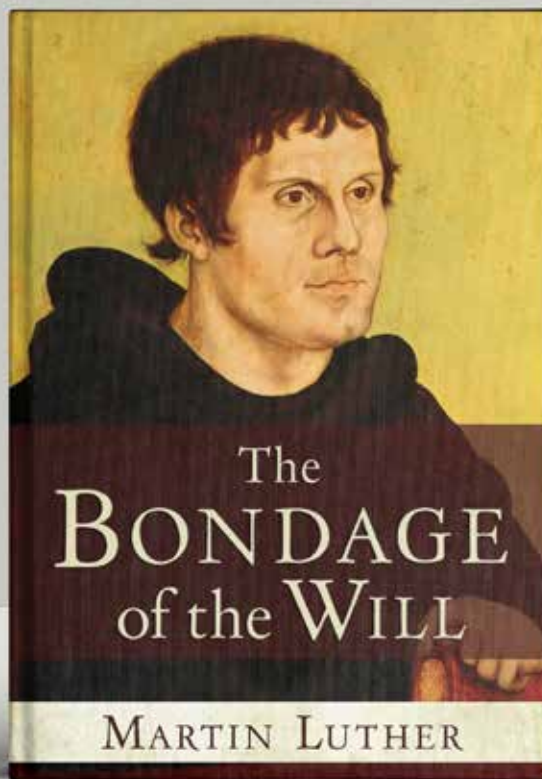
Somewhat like John Calvin, Erasmus wanted the religious world to be silent and leave him alone so that he could spend his life in undisturbed study. He did not want the tumults that gospel light and truth had brought into darkened, slumbering Europe. Luther said, “I am sorry that I find it necessary to teach you. But how much better it is to lose the whole world than to lose God, the Creator of the whole world, Who can create innumerable worlds again, and better than infinite worlds. For what are temporal things when compared with eternal?”

The history of the church teaches us that it is better to have tumults of controversy than to settle for a false peace that leads into darkness. Luther showed that he was

a true servant of the Lord and a preacher of the saving gospel of grace when he wrote his response to Erasmus. He was greatly concerned to reach the soul of his hopeless opponent. He wanted Erasmus to know the answer that he himself had found for life here, and life hereafter. When a soul that has been held for decades in the bondage of spiritual darkness with unresolved guilt is graciously released, he or she will desire to help others who bear the same unbearable burden. Luther was pleading for the salvation of this chief of the philosophical humanists. Oh, if only Erasmus had known Christ and possessed His saving grace, the contention with Luther would have ended!

On this 500th anniversary of the Reformation, a classic defense of the Reformed faith is just as needful as it was five centuries ago. To an overwhelming degree the professing church is sleeping in spiritual death and bowing at the idol of “free will” as Europe was in Luther’s day. Thankfully many publishers still publish Martin Luther’s classic book which is well worth reading.

(*The Bondage of the Will* can be found on Amazon in paperback for under \$5, \$1 for Kindle and in hardback for \$10.)





Liberian Church Holds Official Opening for New Radio Station

The Free Presbyterian Mission Church of Liberia (FPMCOL) held an official opening for their new radio station in mid-July during the visit of a ten-person mission team from the Ballymena Free Presbyterian Church in Northern Ireland (FPC).

The team leader Mr. Alastair Hamilton, who is also a deacon in the Ballymena congregation and board member of the Free Presbyterian radio ministry *Let the Bible Speak* (LTBS), was the guest of honor for the ceremony where he congratulated the missionaries on behalf of LTBS for the success in undertaking such a large project.

“LTBS started with one station, and this is our 34th station,” Mr. Hamilton said about Free Presbyterian Radio 92.5 FM. “It’s a real privilege to stand here today within a few meters of the radio tower that carries the message of the gospel across 1.5 million people around Monrovia in this wonderful land of Liberia.”

The ceremony was carried live on the new station, and attended by several congregants from the Paynesville FPMCOL, and other invited guests from the technical community who aided the project.

“I want to thank a number of people who made this project possible,” said

Mr. DiCanio, one of two FPMCOL missionaries and the general manager of the station. He acknowledged several guests, including technicians from other local stations. “Tepenty Young, I know I asked you for over three years to give me technical advice on what we would need, and about the cost to do this project. I appreciate your help.” Mr. DiCanio made these remarks to the presidential appointee and engineering head of the nationwide government station ELBC where LTBS broadcasts four days a week.

Two men from the Ballymena team were also mentioned because they constructed a large broadcast desk that enabled the station to do live talk shows with guests. “We really appreciate William Crabbe and Thomas Brown for constructing this desk and putting down carpet in the studio,” said Mr. DiCanio. “I joked with them that they were doing such a good job that it was starting to look like a real radio station. They replied that it is a real radio station!”

Mr. Hamilton declared the station officially opened at the July 23, 2017 ceremony as he cut the ribbon and later affixed a plaque to the wall which included the first broadcast date of April 20, 2017 and a Scripture verse from Psalm 119:130, “The entrance of thy

words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.”

In his address, Mr. Hamilton said, “It’s a real pleasure for me to be here today to take part in this service and to witness the opening of the first wholly-owned radio station within the Free Presbyterian Church. *Let the Bible Speak* is pleased to broadcast on Free Presbyterian Radio 92.5 FM.”

Mr. Hamilton noted that LTBS programming made up 6.5 hours of the 18 hours of daily content on the new station, which signs on at 5:00 a.m. and off at 11:00 p.m.

Mr. DiCanio added that they have several LTBS programs that they produce, “including two, one-hour programs of the preaching of Dr. Alan Cairns, the founder of LTBS, and Rev. John Greer,



Liberian Church

whose daughter Joanne labors here as a missionary.” Dr. Cairns’ program airs twice daily at 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., and Rev. Greer’s once daily at 6:00 p.m., which is prime time for the afternoon commute.

Free Presbyterian Radio also airs twice-daily with two 30-minute LTBS programs produced by the Greenville and Vancouver churches. “Ulster has provided us with over one thousand, 15-minute programs that air on Radio North throughout Ulster and Western Scotland. These air on our station Monday through Saturday at 5:45 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. with five different FPC ministers. There is also a 6:45 a.m. program on Sundays featuring Rev. Greer.

Mr. DiCanio recently added a daily LTBS program at 11:00 a.m. called, “Let the Bible Speak: Ministers and Students of the Free Presbyterian Church.” The program rotates through each FPC minister and student worldwide.

Mr. DiCanio has also produced a program called *Straight Talk* with the Rev. Stephen Hamilton which airs seven days per week at 4:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and Sunday at 10 a.m. He also introduces other FPC preaching with a voice-over that simply says: “It’s now time for the preaching of...” These air on Sunday with Rev. Geoff Bannister, Dr. John Douglas, Rev. John Wagner, Dr. Mark Allison, and the late Dr. Ian Paisley, whose program is entitled, “Classic Sermons of Dr. Ian Paisley.”

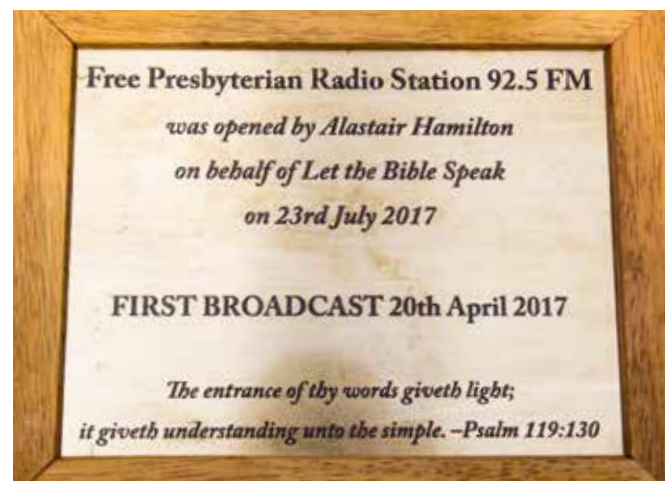


Other outside programs include 15-minute programs produced by Bob Jones University (BJU), including *Word of Truth* with university founder Dr. Bob Jones, Sr., *Miracles, Fortress of Faith*, and *Hymn Histories*.

Mr. DiCanio added: “The only music we play are those selections included by LTBS preachers and BJU productions. Being primarily talk-radio, we also air some educational programs which look at current events from a biblical perspective, and moral issues like so-called same-sex marriage, and abortion from a biblical worldview.”

Mr. Hamilton congratulated Mr. DiCanio for the establishment of a fully-owned

Free Presbyterian radio station with such potential, and said he would return to Ulster with a much greater knowledge and awareness of the set-up and operation of a radio station. He said, “You can be assured that I will report back to the *Let the Bible Speak* board when I return to Northern Ireland. What a pleasure it has been to be here and what a joy it has been to witness what you have achieved here in the Lord’s name in the formation of Free Presbyterian Radio. I do pray that God’s blessing will be on the radio work. The Lord has blessed in the provision of the frequency, but we need the Lord to continue to bless the messages that will go forth across the airwaves here in Monrovia, that the gospel will be spread abroad, and that the Lord’s word will be heard across this land.”





New Elders Ordained in Covenant FPC, Columbia, SC

July 27th marked a very special night for Covenant Free Presbyterian Church when it witnessed the ordination and installation of its first elders, Bryan Barwick, Duaine Hamilton and Paul Peters. Our church had been under the oversight of an interim session composed of several elders from Faith FPC which had been a great help to our church over the years. It was encouraging to see a sizeable group from Faith FPC in attendance at the service.

In what would be his last official act as a member of the N. American Presbytery before returning to N. Ireland, Rev. Colin Mercer presided over the meeting. After Rev. Stephen Hamilton opened in prayer and Dr. Mark Allison brought greetings from the Presbytery, Rev. David Mook, clerk of our Presbytery, put the prescribed questions to the elders-elect who then subscribed to the sub-standards of the FPCNA. It was a stirring moment when all of the elders in attendance laid hands on these three men to set them apart for their work, as our moderator, Rev. Myron Mooney, led in the ordination prayer. Mr. Mooney then brought a very challenging charge to the newly ordained elders from 1 Timothy 6:11-12 where Paul exhorted Timothy to flee covetousness, follow after

righteousness, and fight the good fight of faith. He carefully reminded them of the solemnity of the vow they had just taken before God. After the sermon, our three elders spoke briefly to the congregation, thanking them for putting them into office and asking for their prayers. Tim Farr, who had served as the clerk of the interim session, closed in prayer.

Light refreshments were then served as the Lord's people enjoyed a good time of fellowship for the remainder of the evening. Please remember to pray for these men as they take up their responsibilities in the congregation.

Passing of Mr. Duaine Hamilton

In a strange turn of providence, the Lord

took Duaine Hamilton home to glory just one month after he was installed as an elder. He was deliberately knocked to the floor by a couple of shoplifters who were stealing a large screen television from the Sears store where he worked as an appliance salesman. The fall caused severe head trauma from which he died several days later. For his funeral, Rev. Wagner preached on Psalm 116:15 — "Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints." The Lord blessed the message to the hearts of many and the funeral became a time of rejoicing over Duaine's entrance into glory rather than a time of mourning over his entrance into the grave. Please remember to pray for his wife Margaret and their daughter, Amy, who still lives at home.

FREE PRESBYTERIAN INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

Philadelphia, USA

July 30 -August 3, 2018

To secure accommodation or for further information contact
Dr. Stephen Pollock. Phone: 484-506-3444 Email: sjwpollock@gmail.com



THE REMARKABLE DEATH OF MARTIN LUTHER

by Cosette Landon

This year we have been learning about Martin Luther, the German reformer. Five hundred years ago he protested against the errors of the Roman Catholic church, which had rejected the truths of the Bible. Luther was a very strong man to stand up for the Lord against so many enemies of the gospel. He made it clear, however, that his strength came from Lord who gives the power of His Holy Spirit to those who obey Him.

Almost twenty years before his death, Martin Luther wrote a hymn, "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" which has been called the "Battle Hymn of the Reformation." Luther wrote many hymns during his lifetime, but this one became most famous and has been used by composers, including Johann Sebastian Bach. Luther's hymn was based on Psalm 46, originally written in German, but translated into English in 1853. That is the version that we have in our hymnbook today. It is very good to read this hymn, because it helps you to understand the heart and ministry of Mr. Luther. Five hundred years later, the words of this hymn still help us to remember that God is all-powerful, and His truth will always be defended no matter what enemies attack it.

For so many years God gave Martin Luther power to be a faithful preacher to call the people away from error to follow the truth. God also gave Martin Luther special

strength when he came to die at the age of 62. The gospel that made him strong in his life also made him strong in his death. The details of Martin Luther's last hours before his death are recorded in the pages of history. The great reformer died of what we call "natural causes." His body had been weakened by some of the diseases he had suffered in his life. That means Martin Luther did not die by the sword, nor was he burned at the stake, or hanged, or stoned to death, or poisoned, or left to die in prison like many martyrs. Being able to live as long as he did is astonishing because he was hated by many powerful men in his day who could have killed him. The only way to explain how he avoided becoming a martyr is that God protected His servant.

"The body they may kill."

Martin Luther had many enemies in his life. These were leaders who had money, connections, and power in Europe. When Martin Luther began to spread the truth of the Bible, he threatened their empire which had been powerful for hundreds of years. They tried to stop him by making his teachings look foolish. When that didn't work, they wanted to kill him. But Martin Luther and his message kept on opening people's eyes to the truth of the gospel and the false teachings of the Roman Catholic church.

"God's truth abideth still."

With God's protection, Martin Luther

could not be stopped by the threats and schemes of evil men. Nor did he stop believing in the Lord when it came time for him to die. With his dying breath, he testified of his steadfast faith in the blood of Christ alone for his salvation. This is what he prayed:

"O my heavenly Father, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God of all consolation [comfort], I thank Thee that Thou hast revealed to me Thy well-beloved Son, Jesus Christ, in whom I have believed, whom I have preached, whom I have confessed, whom the pope and all the ungodly insult, blaspheme, and persecute, but whom I love and adore as my Savior. O Jesus Christ, my Savior, I commit my soul to Thee! O my heavenly Father, I must quit [leave] this body, but I believe with perfect assurance that I shall dwell eternally with Thee, and that none shall pluck me out of Thy hands."

From 1533 to his death in 1546, Martin Luther continued his preaching duties despite various disappointments and ailments. He continued to teach at Wittenberg University until the end of his life, and his last lecture ended with the words: *"I am weak, I cannot go on."*

"Reverend father," asked his friend Jonas, "in your dying hour, do you rest on Jesus Christ, and steadfastly rely upon the doctrine which you have preached?"

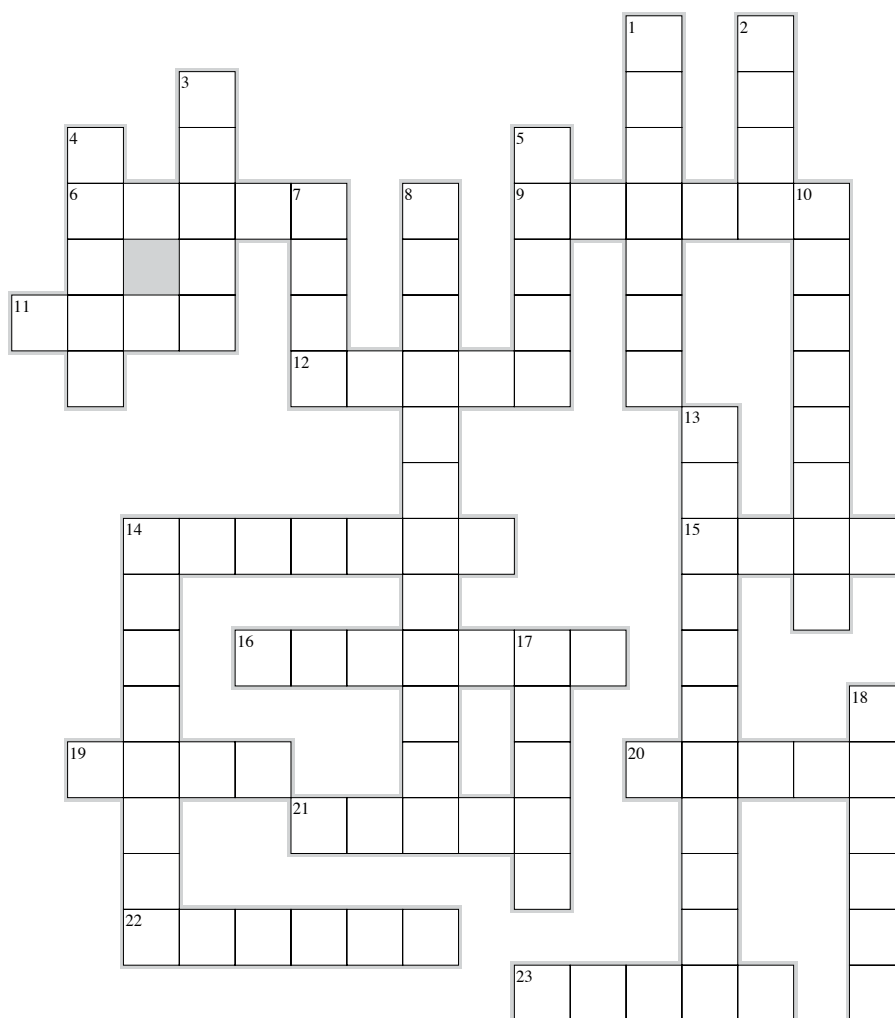
"Yes" was Martin Luther's last word and immediately he went into the presence of his Savior. Martin Luther will always be remembered and appreciated as a man who started the Protestant Reformation which has made a huge impact on our religious freedom and knowledge of the truth of God. For this reason alone, we should be thankful for his life and ministry.

Kids' Crossword Puzzle

Across

6. "The ____ day he shall rise again."
(Matthew 20:19)
9. "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are ____."
(1 Thessalonians 4:13)
11. "In whose hand is the ____ of every living thing." (Job 12:10)
12. "Fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in ____."
(Joshua 24:14)
14. "____ the edge of the sword."
(Hebrews 11:34)
15. "But ____, and stand upon thy feet." (Acts 26:16)
16. "O grave, where is thy ____?"
(1 Corinthians 15:55)
19. "And set my feet upon a ____."
(Psalm 40:2)
20. "He bringeth down to the ____, and bringeth up."
(1 Samuel 2:6)
21. "Can these ____ live?"
(Ezekiel 37:3)
22. "Ye shall dwell in the land in ____."
(Leviticus 25:18)
23. "Yet in my ____ shall I see God."
(Job 19:26)

3. "The ____ of your faith, being much more precious than of gold." (1 Peter 1:7)
4. "The Lord ____ with me, and strengthened me."
(2 Timothy 4:17)
5. "Thy ____ hath made thee whole."
(Luke 17:19)
7. "For ____ thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."
(Genesis 3:19)
8. "For thou shalt be recompensed at the ____ of the just." (Luke 14:14)
10. "Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in ____."
(Luke 23:43)
13. "And become the ____ of them that slept." (1 Corinthians 15:20)
14. "The people that do know their God shall ... do ____."
(Daniel 11:32)
17. "Thou shalt ____ up the foundations of many generations." (Isaiah 58:12)
18. "No ____ that is formed against thee shall prosper."
(Isaiah 54:17)



Down

1. "Preserve me from the ____ man."
(Psalm 140:4)
2. "In the way of righteousness is ____."
(Proverbs 12:28)

PLEASE NOTE: Please send your completed puzzle to *Current Kids' Corner*, Attn: Mrs. Rachel Carper, 3 Elmira St., Greenville, SC 29615, or by email to rcarper@bju.edu by Jan. 15, 2018. Include your name, address, age, and the name of the church you attend. Five winners will be drawn from all correct submissions received. The contest is open to young people ages 5–12, and winners will receive a \$10 cash prize.

A full-page background image showing a sunset over a body of water. The sun is a bright, glowing orb in the upper right, casting a warm orange and yellow light across the sky. The water below is dark with white-capped waves rolling in from the right towards the left. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

O FOR GRACE TO TRUST HIM MORE!

As a young child, I enjoyed sitting on the porch and listening to my grandfather sing the old hymns. He led the singing at a small country church, and sometimes he would ask me to play the piano. I learned many hymns at an early age, but did not fully understand the significant part they would play in my life as I grew older.

Songs of praise, songs of promise and songs of petition are priceless when written by godly men and women whose sole desire is to glorify God. Many of the old hymns that speak to the heart were written by those who experienced a great trial or a turning point in their lives. One such hymn, “’Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus,” was written by Louisa M. R. Stead who experienced a personal tragedy when her husband drowned while attempting to save a young boy in the sea. The heartfelt words that she penned have been echoed from the hearts of multitudes down through the years as they faced trials over which they had no control.

In 2004, I experienced a major trial in my life as I faced surgery for a large tumor that

ended up being ovarian cancer. There were many unknowns at the time, but I found sweet consolation in the Psalms. Psalm 94:19 often reminded me of the comforts the Lord gives. One special comfort given to me was the old hymn, “’Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus.” The simple yet profound truths written by Louisa Stead were an encouragement to my soul as I sang them. Jesus was precious to me for I had proved Him over and over, but in this trial I needed greater grace. My daily petition was, “O for grace to trust Him more.”

“’Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just to take Him at His word;
Just to rest upon His promise;
Just to know, “Thus saith the Lord.”

O how sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just to trust His cleansing blood;
Just in simple faith to plunge me
’Neath the healing, cleansing flood!

Yes, ’tis sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just from sin and self to cease;
Just from Jesus simply taking
Life and rest, and joy and peace.

I’m so glad I learned to trust Thee,
Precious Jesus, Savior, Friend;
And I know that Thou art with me,
Wilt be with me to the end.

Refrain

Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him!
How I’ve proved Him o’er and o’er!
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!
O for grace to trust Him more.

Truly, the Lord gives songs in the night. This precious hymn continues to give solace to my soul in the midst of life’s challenges, and my daily prayer is still “O for grace to trust Him more.”

Charlene Allison is the wife of Dr. Mark Allison, president of Geneva Reformed Seminary. They live in Greenville, SC.
