



QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA

CURRENT

VOL. 7/No. 1 WINTER 2018

**Revitalizing
the Prayer Meeting**

**How Well Do You
Love Your Bible?**

The Creed

**The Falacy of
Macroevolution**

**Tensions in the
Korean Peninsula**

From The Editor

3 The Battle is the LORD'S

Features

4 The Mystery of Suffering

6 Revitalizing the Prayer Meeting

7 Taking Aim: The Focus of Sabbath School Teaching

8 The Creed

9 Welcome to the Maritimes!

11 The Testimony of Peter Banfe

12 The Falacy of Macroeolution

14 Church News

15 Tensions in the Korean Peninsula

16 A History of "Missions" to the Aztecs

17 Book Review: The New Calvinism Considered

Kids' Corner

18 How Well Do You Love Your Bible?

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.

For a complete listing of our congregations, contact information, and instructions on how to listen online to sermons from our ministers, please go to www.fpcna.org.

Subscriptions

Current is published quarterly by the Free Presbyterian Church of North America (www.fpcna.org). The annual subscription price is \$15.00 (US). To subscribe, please go to www.fpcna.org/subscriptions. You may also subscribe by writing to Rev. Derrick Bowman, 5865 Woodsway Drive, Pfafftown, NC 27040. Checks should be made payable to *Current*.

General Editor, Rev. Ian Goligher. Assistant Editor, Rev. Andy Foster. Copy Editor, Jill Saunders. Graphic Design, Moorehead Creative Designs. Printer, GotPrint.com.

The editor may be reached at cloverdalefpc@telus.net, phone: 604-897-2040, or Cloverdale FPC, 18790 58 Ave., Surrey, BC V3S 1M6.



YOU CAN READ *CURRENT* ONLINE

Visit www.fpcna.org. When at the church website go to *Current Magazine* & click the PDF icon for the latest issue.





THE BATTLE IS THE LORD'S

As the armies of Israel trembled at Goliath's roars in the valley of Elah, so we as God's people may tremble at what lies before us in the year ahead. The enemies of Christ have been loud in the past year; Satan's vicious agenda against Christ and His Church appears to be getting louder each year. Open immorality and scandals have rocked nations and churches. God-denying men are madly framing laws against Christian liberties, forcing God's people to acknowledge that we are in a spiritual battle for our very survival of Biblical Christianity. As Christian freedoms are restricted, persecution cannot be far off.

More and more people are subscribing to godless thinking, and we are witnessing what the leaven of humanism has done in our nations. In the USA and Canada, majority opinion states that there is no need for God, nor to maintain His name and laws in public life. It's obvious we are already living in a secular society. At a recent funeral service for a fallen police officer in Abbotsford, British Columbia, to which hundreds of police officers came from across the country and other parts of the world, there was a "celebration of life" held in his honor. Of course it was proper to honor a man who sacrificed to protect society, and it was proper to support his grieving wife and children, but sadly there was no reference to God, the Bible, or any religious tradition. It was a wholly secular event. Mourners came and went without the hope and comfort which the gospel of Christ alone affords to the sorrowing.

Godlessness in society is also impacting the Christian church. The divide between Biblical thinking and the world's defiance

of all things God-like is widening. Church attendance is dropping, tempting churches to allow the attitudes and standards of a rebellious world into the church. The stand for truth and righteousness is ever more difficult for the gospel-preaching church. The pressure is on to compromise on all fronts – even the message we preach and the way we worship.

What then shall we do? Shall we flee in fear and refuse to engage in the battle for Christ and His kingdom on earth? No. There is no excuse for disobeying the Lord, nor for shrinking from His enemies. We need the mind of David, who as a ruddy shepherd boy boldly faced Goliath with this confidence: "The battle is the Lord's." He took his five smooth stones and sling

to fear from the dead wood within the church than we do from the shouts of men without our ranks. The gathering clouds of persecution call our congregations to give themselves to earnest prayer. It is not just a case of propriety, but of survival. It is the only answer to the threats that loom against the ministry of the gospel in these times.

As we enter 2018, it is time for every Christian to add his or her voice to the congregation's cries unto God in the church prayer meetings. Silence against the evils of the world is unforgivable and so is silence in the church prayer room, especially when we know that the enemy is unstoppable by human efforts. We need to call down the power of God to see the

**We must press forward in the Lord's name
and strength. But let us do so with a greater
emphasis on prayer by which we demonstrate
our total dependence on the Lord.**

and went out against the giant to slay him. The Lord gave him the courage, the skill, and the victory to silence the roars of Israel's defiant foe.

In this New Year, we must determine that the battle is the Lord's. He can empower us to stand for His cause amid a hostile world. We must press forward in the Lord's name and strength. But let us do so with a greater emphasis on prayer by which we demonstrate our total dependence on Him. Pray against the hostile forces outside our gates, but also pray against the apathy within. As the rot in a tree will eventually cause it to fall, so we have more

giants of evil fall and the forces of hell put to flight. Impossible, you say! So thought the armies of Israel, who trembled in pitiful fear until David came on the scene. We have a greater than David to go out against the enemy for us, and when we go in Jesus' name against the world, the battle truly is the Lord's. How shall we give an account of ourselves in the year ahead if we do not turn to the Lord for His divine intervention in our churches and our nations? So, the question remains, how shall we pray for victory for Christ's Church? Only with the inner burning conviction that the battle is the Lord's.



The Mystery of Suffering

Throughout the course of history, Christians have suffered hardships in many different ways. Perhaps you've heard the suggestion that if you want to know why Christians suffer, read the book of Job. At first, Job receives a high commendation from God: "And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?" (Job 2:3). Then follows the mysterious permission that God grants Satan to test Job by taking away his possessions (1:12) and then his health (2:4-6).

Job has three friends who sit with him in silent empathy for a period of seven days and seven nights (2:13), but when Job calls for a curse upon the day of his birth (3:3), one of the friends, Eliphaz, rebukes him. "Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?" (4:7). This statement sets the theme for his friends' criticism of

God's faithful servant. Basically, they argue that no man can suffer the way Job suffers unless he has sinned and suffering is always God exercising judgment on sin.

A prolonged debate takes place between Job and his three friends, recorded in the next twenty-one chapters, which grows more fierce with each round of argument. Job refuses to concede that his suffering is due to the judgment of God: "God forbid that I should justify you: till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me" (27:5). Job and his friends spend themselves until they are devoid of words. Exasperated, Job concludes, "The words of Job are ended" (31:40). At this point, Elihu, the son of Barachel, who witnessed the entire debate, steps forth. Elihu is perhaps the most interesting and the most puzzling character in the book. He recognizes that Job has spoken unwisely seeking to justify himself rather than God (32:2). He also recognizes that Job's friends have no answer for his suffering, but have condemned

him (32:3). Elihu pledges that he will not answer Job the same way they answer him (32:14), and yet, when you read Elihu's speech, you wonder if he really differs from Job's three friends.

At last, the LORD Himself comes to Job in a whirlwind (38:1), but He does not come to give account for his sufferings, but to call on Job to give account to God (which is the way it always has been and will be). Following a lengthy interrogation from the LORD, Job sees how foolish he has been to question and challenge God. "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further" (40:4-5).

The Lord vindicates Job when he prays for his three friends, who did not speak right concerning God (42:7-9), and through that act of mercy which pleased God, Job's captivity is turned to liberty, in which he

receives from the LORD twice as much as he had before (42:12).

After you read the book of Job, you might still ask the question: Why do Christians suffer? There is no simple answer why Christians suffer, or why some suffer more than others (sometimes more than those in the world who have no interest in God). From the book of Job, however, there are a number of spiritual realities that need to be taken into account when it comes to understanding the Christian's trials and afflictions.

First, there is the reality of the gospel. God's testimony about Job is foundational to understanding the dealings of God with Job. How much of the gospel Job understood in comparison to Christians today can be a matter of some speculation. It's true that he didn't have the New Testament. It could well be true that he didn't have the Old Testament either. This much, however, can be seen for sure: Job understood the seriousness of the plague of sin, for he feared its consequences falling upon his household, "It was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually"(1:5).

In addition, Job understood the presence and power of sin in this world. He understood how deeply sin is entrenched in the heart of man. He was concerned, not just for the actions of his children, but for the condition of their hearts. He was aware that sin can be committed in the heart. He would have understood that the sacrifice he offered on the altar functioned as a substitute for his children. By implication he would have understood something of how the sins of his children were imputed to that sacrifice and how that sacrifice looked ahead to Christ, the Redeemer (19:25).

It is on the basis of Christ's atoning death that Job could receive such commendation from God. It's on that same basis that a believer today can also receive commendation from God. God

sees the believer as joined to His Son and commends him as He would His own Son.

The challenge to the Christian's faith comes in the midst of trials and adversities when he suffers the loss of health, or possessions or loved ones. Can that Christian still believe that he's in the realm of God's favor? Can he still believe he has God's commendation even when circumstances around him, including his friends and maybe even his spouse, all scream that he must be under God's condemnation?

The key must be in looking to Christ instead of looking to our circumstances. If a Christian gauges the love and favor of God simply by his circumstances, he'll have many reasons to doubt God's favor, but if he sees his circumstances through the lens of the gospel of Christ, then he'll affirm that, even in the midst of painful trials, all things are working together for his good and for God's glory (Romans 8:28).

The second reality behind the Christian's trials is his spiritual opposition. The first chapter of Job provides an important key to understanding that opposition, for it is in that first chapter that the reader goes behind the scenes and hears the discussion that takes place between the LORD and Satan. When the LORD commends Job as one who is perfect, who fears God and eschews evil, He is talking directly to Satan. And even though God commends Job to Satan, Satan is not impressed. Instead, the devil invents excuses for Job's upright character. *You've put a hedge about him. You've protected him and prospered him.* Satan is saying that God has to buy His friends, and so he poses a challenge to God – a challenge that God is pleased to take up.

You can be sure that what the devil did to Job, he does to every believer in Jesus Christ. The devil is so full of malice toward Christ and toward Christians that he will not cease seeking ways to oppose them.

When Christ resisted the devil in the wilderness, the devil "departed from him for a season." Christians can be sure that if the devil's malice toward Christ was such that he would depart from Him only

to return again, he will certainly make repeated attempts to make Christians stumble and fall. Like Job, the Christian today faces a spiritual foe who, "As a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8).

The final spiritual reality is the sovereignty of God. Perhaps no other book in the Bible places such emphasis on God's sovereignty as the book of Job. The Lord's word to Isaiah the prophet becomes very evident throughout the book of Job. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8-9).

Based on the truth of God's sovereignty, it would be easy to conclude that the major lesson of the book of Job on suffering declares that the Christian must submit to God as the Ruler of all creation. James provides a very important key for interpreting the book of Job. "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy" (James 5:11-12). From start to finish every part of Job's trial was directed by the God who loved him and would send His Son to die for him. Job's trial, therefore, contained a purpose of grace.

In the end, Job gained a sense of his own sin and a sense of the greatness of the God whom he worshiped. As you read the account of God's dealings with Job, you will discover God's greatness and majesty. It will change how you worship the Lord, how you serve Him, and how you face your trials.



Rev. Geoff Banister
is the minister of Indianapolis
FPC.



Revitalizing the Prayer Meeting

What should a church prayer meeting look like? If I had been asked that question a number of years ago, I think I might have responded with some bewilderment. Surely there's only one way to do a prayer meeting? I have since learned through personal experience and through conversation with others that prayer meetings are not all alike in their structure and purpose. I trust you have known the sweetness of meeting with the saints of God in prayer – times when God draws near, hearts are filled with faith, and blessings sought descend upon the church of Jesus Christ.

As wonderful as it is, such experiences are rarely permanent and I believe prayer meetings become targets for satanic assault. If the devil could close the church prayer meeting, he would. Short of that, his preference is that our times of prayer become ineffective. We've all known what it is to endure a prayer meeting where there seems to be a dullness over all our souls. Perhaps we've had to acknowledge, "The prayer meeting was dead." Can such language really be used to describe a prayer meeting?

A few months ago, I was listening to Dr. Alan Cairns preach in a Free Presbyterian Church in Ulster. In this sermon he spoke very candidly at one point with reference to the church prayer meeting, "There is a deadness in our prayer meetings. It used to be there was a pleading with God in prayer, a passionate pleading with God, a holding up of the promises of God, where the prayer meeting wasn't all taken up with health and wealth. Now I believe in praying for the sick, I believe in being compassionate to the needy, but men and

women, there's a greater burden. Our land is going to hell, our nation is under judgment, our churches are facing the greatest challenge they've ever faced since the days of the Reformation and we are at our weakest point. We need to get through to God. There has to be a pleading. A yearning. A burning out in prayer, the burden that Knox had when he looked at Scotland and he cried, 'God, give me Scotland or I die!'"

None of us want to admit that our prayer meetings are dead, but the realization of their deadness is often the first step on the path of revitalization. The prayer meeting has always had a very high place in my estimation of the work of God. God has so ordered things so that nothing is accomplished without prayer. It was Charles Spurgeon who said, "We shall never see much change for the better in our churches in general till the prayer meeting occupies a higher place in the esteem of Christians."

Over the years, I have learned a number of things about the prayer meeting which, by the grace of God, I am seeking to implement through my own ministry. If you detect that the prayer meetings you are involved with need to be revitalized, perhaps these points may be helpful.

Take direction from the Word. There is no greater motivator to prayer than the Word of God. As individuals, we should come to the season of prayer with scriptural arguments, passages of comfort, and words of promise to rehearse in the ear of our God. We can bring no stronger plea than, "Lord, thou hast said..." It is also helpful when the message brought at the meeting

leads the people into prayer which has been enriched and directed from the Word.

Draw from what God has done in the past. In Psalm 44 and other places, we see that the past had a distinct influence upon how to pray. Being aware of what God has done for His people in the Word and in church history is a great stimulus to purposeful corporate prayer.

Focus on the eternal. One of the fastest ways to kill the vision of a church is to focus the time spent together in prayer on matters of temporal need. I'm not against praying for the sick, or financial needs, but these matters can quickly become the sole purpose for gathering. None of these matters are as pressing as the conversion of souls, spiritual strengthening of saints, raising labourers, the revival of the church, etc. The vast majority of prayer offered needs to focus on matters of eternal significance.

Mention only your burdens. If you like to pray for everyone whom you know is in need, and every matter you know needs prayer, God bless you. Just don't do it at the corporate prayer meeting. To quote Mr. Spurgeon again, "It is dreadful to hear a brother or sister pray us into a good frame of mind and heart, and then, by their long prayer, pray us out of it again." Thus, before you open your mouth, prioritize your burdens and take only one or two to mention in your audible prayer. Some of the best prayer meetings I've ever been in have been ones where nearly everyone prayed, and they focused solely on just one or two matters each.

Revitalizing the prayer meeting could also include meeting for specific prayer for one matter solely. We see such a prayer meeting in Acts chapter 12, when the church united to pray for Peter's release from prison. By such a united focus on one pressing need, they got through to God. Dr. Cairns is right, "We need to get through to God" in our prayer meetings.



Rev. Armen Thomassian
is minister of Calgary FPC,
Alberta



Taking Aim: The Focus of Sabbath School Teaching

It has been said that if you aim at nothing you will be sure to hit it. Knowing why we do something and what we hope to achieve are vital parts of earth's labors and no less seen than in the Sabbath School ministry. I am certain that most of our readers would agree that such a ministry plays an important role in the work of the church. But Thomas Murphy, in his work on Pastoral Theology, states: "There are but very few persons, probably, who duly appreciate the importance of the Sabbath School work. We must fix our minds upon it, awake our attention to it, measure its proportions and study it well, before we can see it in anything like the greatness to which it has attained."

Why do we hold Sabbath School classes on the Lord's Day? Is it because we think we should? Or do we do it because we've always done it? For we have not always done it. The history of Sabbath Schools only dates back about 250 years. There is evidence of some schools in England in the early 1700s, but the 1780s is looked upon as the era of their increase. That was the time of the Industrial Revolution when many children worked long hours in the factories, including Saturdays. The Sabbath School program was established as an attempt to deliver these children from a life of illiteracy, and the Bible served as an excellent reading textbook. This idea quickly became popular on both sides of the Atlantic and one writer observes: "By the mid-nineteenth century, Sunday School attendance was a near universal aspect of childhood. Even parents who did not regularly attend church themselves generally insisted that their children go to Sabbath School."

So, why are we still holding Sunday School classes? To address literacy concerns? Some parents send their children to Sabbath School in order for them to learn "right from wrong." Is this our purpose?

Let me suggest that our aim should be that the children in our classes know and walk in truth. I think of the words of the Apostle John: "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth" (3 John 4). Of course, the Sabbath School cannot achieve this goal on its own. It should not be used as a substitute for parents teaching their children at home, but children should also be instructed in the regular, public ministry of the church.

Keeping this aim will influence and govern how we run our Sunday Schools. When we realize that children are "born in sin and shapen in iniquity", we will desire to evangelize children from Christian and non-Christian homes. Children within our church families need to be saved too. Our grasp of truth reminds us that they will not be saved simply by being raised in a Christian home. Faith comes by hearing the Word; thus, we want our children to be under the Word when possible. But that is not all. D.L. Moody was not long converted before he had a tremendous burden to present children with the gospel. In fact, he wanted to teach a class in a mission Sunday School on the North side of Chicago. The superintendent initially refused as they already had enough

teachers for the number of pupils. He told Mr. Moody that he would be free to conduct a class provided he would get his own pupils! The next Sunday Mr. Moody appeared with eighteen dirty, unkempt children. The young teacher observed that each child had a soul to be saved. Sunday School work is an evangelistic opportunity. Are we willing to go out and bring children in under the sound of God's Word?

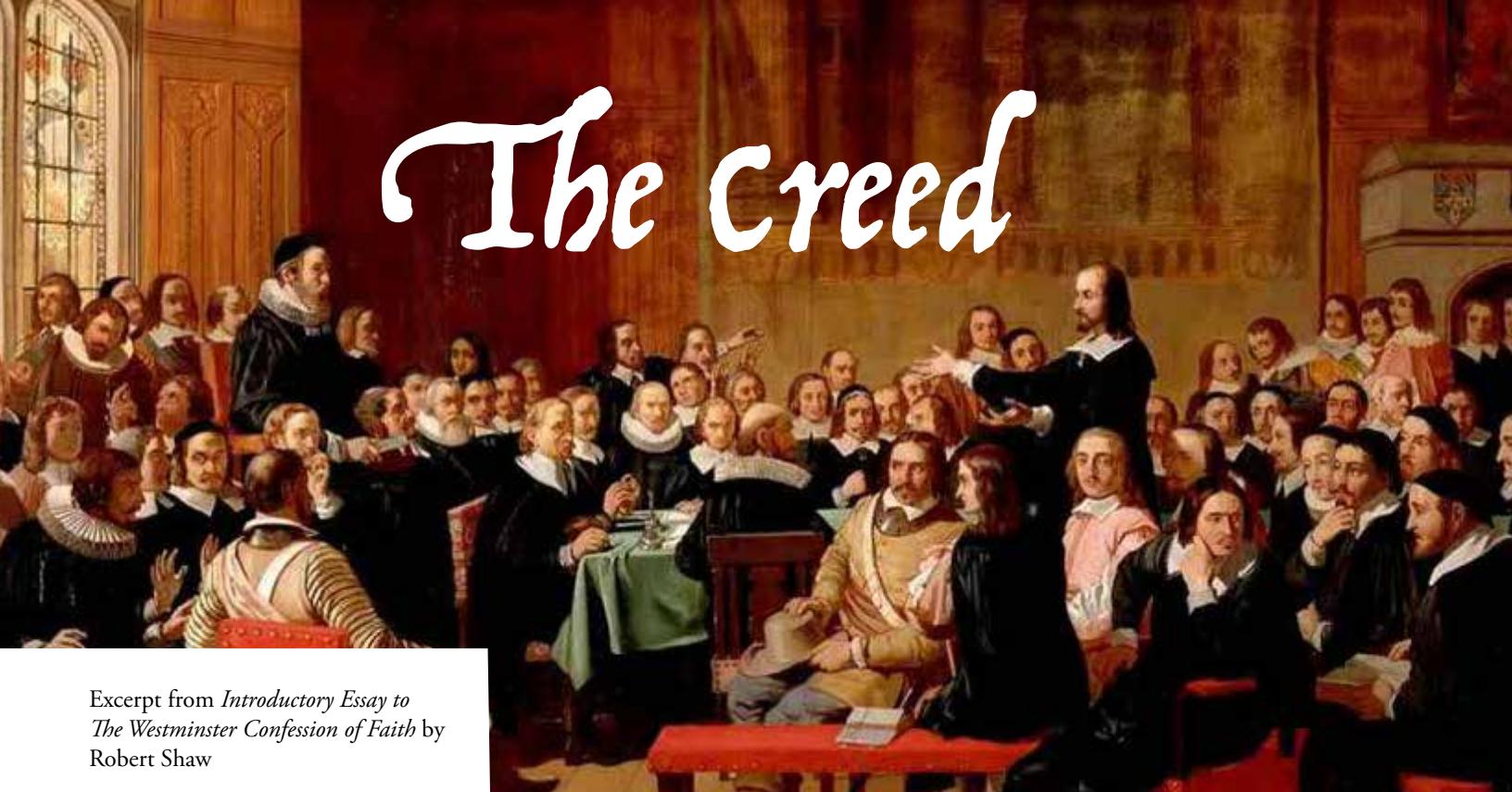
Evangelism will not be the only outcome from the aim of seeing children walk in truth. Not only do we believe that children need to be saved to walk in truth, but we also believe that children can be born again and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Thus, Sunday School teachers will desire that their lessons are used by God in the edification of believing children who need to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In summary, our one aim produces two outcomes, and each is obtained through one work. In order to evangelize and edify, our Sunday Schools must prayerfully focus on presenting Christ in all the Scriptures. And in order to see children walking in truth, we must present them with the Word of truth about the Christ who is the Truth.



Dr. Stephen Pollock
is minister of Malvern FPC,
Malvern, PA.

The Creed



Excerpt from *Introductory Essay to
The Westminster Confession of Faith* by
Robert Shaw

There have been many objections urged against the use of Creeds and Confessions of Faith, at different periods, and with various degrees of skill or plausibility. It is not necessary either to enumerate all these objections or to answer them all, since many of them have sunk into oblivion, and others have already met sufficient refutation.

Almost the only objection which is now urged with any degree of confidence, is that which accuses Confessions of usurping a position and authority due to divine truth alone. This objection itself has its origin in an erroneous view of what a Confession at Faith really is, and of what it is in which the necessity of a Confession being framed consists. The necessity for the formation of Confessions of Faith does not lie in the nature of the sacred truth revealed to man; but in the nature of the human mind itself. A Confession of Faith is not a revelation of divine truth – it is “not even a rule of faith and practice, but a help in both,” to use the words of our own Confession; but it is a declaration of the manner in which any man, or number of men – any Christian or any Church – understands the truth which has been revealed. Its object is, therefore, not to teach divine truth; but to exhibit a clear, systematic and intelligible declaration of our own sentiments, to furnish the means

of ascertaining the opinions of others, especially in religious controversies.

The truth of this view, and the explanation which it gives of the necessity for the existence Creeds and Confessions, may be easily shown. The human mind is so prone to error, and of such widely diversified capacity in every respect that when even a simple truth is presented for its reception, that truth may be reproduced in almost as many different aspects as there were different minds to which it was presented. Suppose it a single sentence, uttered in a voice, or written in a language understood by all – each man might understand it in his own way, putting upon it the construction which, to him, seemed the clearest; but it would be impossible to ascertain, whether they all understood it in the same sense or not by their merely repeating the very words which they had heard or read, unless they were all to state, each in his own words, what they understood it to mean. Each man might then say, “I believe its meaning was to this effect.” This would be really his Creed, or Confession of Faith, respecting that truth; and when all had thus stated their belief, if any thing like a harmonious consent of mind among them could be obtained, it would be their united Confession of Faith, with regard to that particular truth so revealed and understood.

But it would be more than this – it would be both a bond of union among themselves on that point, and also a conjoint testimony to all other men; not as absolutely and certainly teaching that truth, but as also absolutely and certainly conveying the sense in which these men understood it, so far as their statement was itself distinct and intelligible; and it might prove the term of admission to the body of those who had thus emitted a joint declaration of what they believed to be the meaning of that truth.

To this extent, we think, all intelligent and candid persons will readily concur; and so far, it must be evident that there is no attempt to control or overbear his conscientious convictions respecting what he believes to be truth in any given or supposable case. If any man cannot agree with the joint testimony borne by those who are agreed, this may be a cause of mutual regret; but it could neither confer on them any right to compel him to join them, contrary to his convictions, nor entitle him to complain on account of being excluded from a body of men with whose opinions he did not concur. No man of strict integrity, indeed, could even wish to become one of a body of men with whom he did not agree on that peculiar point which formed the basis of their association.

WELCOME TO THE MARITIMES!



For the first time since the inception of the Fredericton, New Brunswick church in the early 1990s, the presbytery gathered there for its October Week of Prayer and meeting of the presbytery. New Brunswick is one of four provinces (the

others being Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland) that go under the collective title of Atlantic Canada. Dr. Larry Saunders of Toronto assumed the responsibilities of the host minister since the Fredericton pulpit is vacant. The

people of the congregation, some of whom have been involved in the church for most of its history, looked forward to meeting many of the ministers, most of whom they had never seen. As the capital of the province of New Brunswick and occupying both banks of the Saint John River, Fredericton provides a central crossroads for the provincial commerce, and is reasonably accessible to the neighboring provinces of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.



Because of an extended period in which the area received little or no rain, the church encountered a problem with its water supply just before most members of the presbytery arrived. However, through the efforts of Mr. George Robinson, the presbytery's treasurer, arrangements were made for an emergency water supply that met the needs in the church building. The members of the presbytery enjoyed the generous hospitality of the congregation throughout the week, especially in a wonderful meal at the church on Monday evening and in a very pleasant dinner

at the hotel where the men stayed while they were in the city. The moderator conveyed to the people of the church the appreciation of the presbytery for all the efforts that the congregation expended to make the stay in the city so pleasant. A major objective for bringing the presbytery to Fredericton was to encourage the members to pray more urgently for the Lord to send a man there to take up the care of that congregation.

The presbytery welcomed to its prayer sessions and business meetings three students who are under care of the presbytery—Mr. Ramón Sosa from Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, along with Mr. Marcus Reyes, and Mr. Lalo Peña, who are from the Veracruz area in Mexico. Mr. Peter Banfe, a student in Geneva Reformed Seminary and member of the Greenville church, arrived in time to attend most of the meetings during the week. In addition, Rev. John Kelly, a young independent church planter from northern Maine, within driving distance from Fredericton, traveled to Fredericton with his family, and joined the meetings on Tuesday and part of Wednesday.

Following the pattern of the previous year, the week began with a Monday evening communion service in which Rev. Myron Mooney, the moderator of the presbytery, preached the Word. On Tuesday, the prayer session and the presbytery meeting took place in a conference room at the hotel while Mr. Robinson oversaw the work going on at the church. Dr. Stephen Pollock, installed earlier in the year as the minister of the church in Malvern, PA, preached on the theme of humility. Others who preached during the week were Rev. Jason Boyle from the church in Mexico City on Wednesday, Rev. Reggie Kimbro from Winston-Salem, NC on Thursday, and Rev. Anthony D'Addurno from Barrie FPC on Friday. Rev. D'Addurno served as the minister of the Fredericton church from 1996-2008 and was visiting the congregation for the first time since his move to Barrie.

On October 3, Rev. Myron Mooney of Trinity FPC in Alabama, moderator of the presbytery, called the fall 2017 meeting to order. He welcomed the students

under care of the presbytery who were visiting from the Dominican Republic and Mexico. The presbytery received the report of the special commission that visited the Columbia, SC church on July 27 to conduct the service of ordination and installation for the church's first ruling elders. The presbytery received that report under the cloud of grief that followed the murder of one of those elders, Mr. Duaine Hamilton, almost exactly one month after his ordination. The surviving elders, Mr. Paul Peters and Mr. Bryan Barwick, are continuing in the work to which the Lord has called them.

The presbytery also received a report from some of its members who attended the Farewell Dinner that the Greenville session organized on July 28 in honor of Rev. and Mrs. Colin Mercer. The Mercers left Greenville on August 1, and on August 31, the Ulster presbytery conducted the service of installation for Rev. Mercer as the new minister of Omagh FPC.

One of the highlights of the presbytery meeting was the report of the Examination Committee concerning the application by Mr. Peter Banfe to be received under the presbytery's care. Mr. Banfe is in his final year at Geneva Reformed Seminary. As part of his application, Mr. Banfe preached before the presbytery. The members voted to approve the application and found much cause for which to give praise to the Lord.

The presbytery appointed two of its members to join the Liaison Committee for the International Congress, with their membership continuing at least until after the Congress meeting in 2018. The committee reported to the presbytery that it elected Dr. Stephen Pollock to be its new chairman. He reported on plans for the 2018 meeting of the Congress, scheduled for the facilities of the FPC of Malvern beginning on Monday, July 30 and continuing each evening through Friday, August 3. Dr. Pollock reviewed possibilities for accommodations in the Malvern area and indicated that he would communicate with the members of the presbytery closer to the end of 2017. At the conclusion of the committee's report, the presbytery appointed Rev. David Mook

and Dr. Mark Allison to join the roster of speakers for the Congress meeting. The presbytery will also name a third speaker for the missionary emphasis evening of that meeting.

Among the highlights of other committee reports was the adoption of the Mission Board's proposed budget for 2018, and the following day, the adoption of the Finance Committee's proposed presbytery budget for 2018. The Mission Board also advised the presbytery of Miss Kathy Walker's plans to retire during 2018 and to return to her home in Florida. In addition, the Mission Board updated the presbytery on the operation of the radio station as part of the ongoing mission work in Liberia.

Toward the close of the meeting, the presbytery voted to create a special commission that would prepare an official statement reflecting the denomination's steadfast opposition to homosexuality, same-sex marriage, transgenderism, and the related contemporary issue of same-sex attraction. The commission hopes to submit a draft statement to the presbytery as part of the May 2018 regular meeting. The members of the presbytery expressed their desire that the commission was not to explore what the denomination's position should be but rather what it has always been and continues to be.

Before the presbytery adjourned late on the afternoon of October 5, the moderator thanked those in attendance for their contributions during the meeting, and relayed the thanks of the members to Dr. Saunders and the people of the Fredericton church for their diligent efforts in hosting the Week of Prayer. Rev. Mooney reminded the members of their next regular meeting, to be held in Trinity FPC, Trinity, AL, May 7-11, 2018.



Rev. David G. Mook is the minister of Phoenix Free Presbyterian Church in Peoria, Arizona. He serves as clerk of the presbytery of the FPCNA, chairman of the Constitutional Documents Committee, and is an adjunct professor in the field of practical theology at Geneva Reformed Seminary.



The Testimony of Peter Banfe

I was born in Bethesda, Maryland. My mom and dad were morally upright and went to church on and off, but they weren't saved until later in life. Apart from going to different churches every now and then, the first church that I remember attending faithfully was a very large charismatic church in Ohio, when I was about twelve years old. While attending this church, I became very involved in leading worship in different churches and camps. I wrote my own music, sang, and played piano and guitar. Eventually, I was involved in a Contemporary Christian Music band which recorded in Nashville, Tennessee, and I was able to play in a concert in Chicago along with some big name bands. Although I made a profession of faith when I was five years old, I do not believe that I was saved this whole time. I attended Liberty University after high school, and it was there that the Lord first began to draw me to Himself. While there, I was waiting for a record deal, a scholarship for leading worship, and a girl that I thought I would marry.

Back home in Ohio, my parents had been saved and were attending an Independent Baptist church. They were all praying that the Lord would get a hold of me. Different things happened through which the Lord stirred my heart, such as reading 1 John 2:15, "Love not the world." By God's grace, my band broke up, my record deal fell through, I didn't get the scholarship, and the girl broke up with me. I was miserable, angry at God, and seriously doubted whether there was a God at all. That summer while at home, I began to attend Grace Baptist Church. I couldn't stand being there, but God was

dealing with me. I remember just sitting through the sermon weeping, without being able to explain why. The pastor, Dr. Corey Bane, was a godly man who took me under his wing. I began to change a number of things in my life as I sat under the preaching, but I still wasn't saved, even though I thought I was. I felt a very strong impression that I should go to Bible college, particularly Crown College in Tennessee.

Before school started, the students held a retreat at the campgrounds. During that time I was asked, "If you died today, do you know if you would go to heaven?" No one had ever personally asked me that before. The next summer, I was involved in a traveling quartet with the college, but I was still living apart from God. For months during that summer I came under great conviction of my sin before a holy God, and I felt that I was going to hell. I knew that the Lord Jesus Christ had died in my place, to bear the wrath of God for my sins, but I was not saved. I cried out to God to save me more times than I can remember. To this day I don't know which time He saved me, but I know He did.

My life began to drastically change, and as I sat under the preaching of Dr. Clarence Sexton at Temple Baptist Church, a fire burned in my heart to serve the Lord. I just knew that I had to preach, even though no one ever explained to me what a call to preach meant. As a junior, I traveled to England to work with James Zenker and Crown College, UK. The Lord taught me much there as we knocked doors, did children's work, and held open air meetings. There I attended the Free

Presbyterian Church in Ulster. My future wife Jackie also went to England and attended the FPC there. When I came back, Jackie and I had a great burden to reach England with the gospel and to work with Crown UK, which we respected very highly.

After we were married, we came to grips with Reformed theology from the Word of God. Not wanting to sacrifice the burden for evangelism, separation, and practical holiness that we had learned at Crown College, we weren't sure where to go. Through *SermonAudio*, the Lord led us to Faith FPC and Geneva Reformed Seminary. A word of thanks is owed to Rev. Mercer for his friendship and counsel during this time. During seminary our plans to go to England changed. Our first daughter, Lydia, was born with cerebral palsy and significant brain damage, so that it appeared that the Lord had closed that door. The Lord also burdened our hearts to work with the FPCNA here in the U.S.A. We have a desire to reach the lost in our own country with the gospel of Christ. We owe a great debt of gratitude to all who pray for us, and to ministers of our denomination for their godly example and counsel, especially Dr. Allison. Please continue to pray for us, that the Lord will direct us and use us for His glory and the salvation of precious souls.



Peter Banfe is a student at Geneva Reformed Seminary under Care of Presbytery. He hopes to graduate in June 2018.



The Fallacy of Macroevolution

Scholars speculate regarding which of Darwin's observations inspired his evolutionary theory. The often suggested Galapagos Island finches, which today bear his name, probably had little to do with inspiring him and are actually poor examples of his theory. Darwin raised pigeons and quite probably these birds contributed to his evolutionary thinking.

By selecting odd traits one can breed rather unusual pigeons. Generally we breed domestic animals and plants for useful traits: cows that produce large quantities of milk, dogs that track game, corn with high per acre yields. Since man chooses who gets to breed, Darwin called this *artificial selection*.

Results of artificial selection led Darwin to conclude that natural selection would be

able to go much farther. In *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* he wrote,

Slow though the process of selection may be, if feeble man can do much by artificial selection, I can see no limit to the amount of change . . . which may have been effected in the long course of time through nature's power of selection, that is by the survival of the fittest.

Basically Darwin proposed that the conditions in each of the world's various habitats served as the "natural selecting agent" to breed organisms ideally suited to that habitat. At first glance this might

appear logical. Observe the vast variety of dogs man has bred. Darwin essentially suggested that by selecting certain traits for a long, *long* time, future canine offspring could be cows. Selecting for other traits you might get horses.

Based on this line of reasoning every new breed is more proof of Darwin's tree of life. Through natural selection a common ancestor at the base of the tree has produced all physically living things. Keep selecting and in time you could get humans.

Microevolution & Macroevolution

Today *microevolution* refers to the varieties obtainable by selection. There is ample evidence of artificial microevolution on any farm or among our pets. Microevolution,

however, has limits. Even with the pigeon's short life span and the countless generations that have been bred since their domestication over 3000 years ago, we have not seen non-pigeon-like characteristics among pigeons. Assumption: more generations and more careful selection must be needed to get pigeons to become eagles or penguins.

In the lab, multiple generations of fruit flies and other short-lifespan organisms can be observed. These organisms have been subjected to all kinds of conditions to speed up the evolutionary process. Results: strange varieties of the organism the scientists started with. In these labs, deformed fruit flies abound, but a fruit fly with a hint of butterfly, beetle or any other kind of organism has not been seen.

Today developing new kinds of organisms, which is what Darwin thought natural selection would do, is called *macroevolution*. In the mid-1980s evolutionists were shocked when a few renegade scientists suggested that, although microevolution happens, there was no scientific evidence that macroevolution had ever taken place. All those mutant fruit flies and deformed organisms in the lab are merely additional examples of microevolution. Those renegades also suggested that the reason their colleagues had not noticed this lack of evidence is because they all *believed* macroevolution had happened.

Natural Selection & Habitat Suitability

When studying nature one cannot help but be amazed at how organisms are ideally suited to their native habitat. We will call this *habitat suitability*. The concept impressed Darwin and his writings cite interesting examples. His theory of evolution was, in part, to explain how habitat suitability came to be. He proposed that the conditions of the habitat (nature) favored organisms most suited to live there and forced others (the not-so-fit) to either move on or die. Thus natural selection was to

account for macroevolution and habitat suitability.

Theorizing the *how* based solely on observations of the *result* is weak. Even Darwin knew his theory needed corroborating evidence. He expected microevolution examples to expand into macroevolution examples, yielding that support. But in the 150 years since his proposal, those expectations have not been realized.

possibility to become all the canines found in nature as well as the ones we have bred. Within a few generations after leaving the Ark various groups of canines had migrated to various habitats for which they were ideally suited. The same is true for cattle, pigeons, and other kinds of organisms.

Like Darwin's theory, the Sovereign selection theory is based on observations of artificial selection and habitat suitability seen in nature. But unlike Darwin's



I would like to propose a theory for microevolution and habitat suitability: Sovereign selection. The all-knowing God was aware of the various habitats that existed in His perfect world, in the world following the Fall, and in the world following the Genesis Flood. The all-powerful God can design into the living things He creates the genetic potential to become the varieties of organisms needed to fit those habitats.

As God created the canine kind, for example, He put into its genes the

theories, Sovereign selection fits with other observations of the physical world, fits within the timeframe of Scripture, and fits under God's command that animals reproduce "after their kind."



William Pinkston teaches science at Bob Jones Academy in Greenville, South Carolina. He is a member of Faith FPC.



TORONTO BAPTISMAL SERVICE

On Thursday, January 25th, Dr. Larry Saunders had the joy of baptizing three people at Toronto Free Presbyterian Church.

They are from left: Adam Vanderfeyst, Valyncia Croisière, and Wen Chen. Adam

grew up in a Christian home and attended the Sunday School before moving to London, Ontario with his family where he came to know the Lord at the London FPC. He testified of the difficulty he faces as a Christian teenager in a public school, but is determined to honor the Lord. Valyncia was born into a Roman Catholic family in Haiti. She came to Canada as a

young woman, but in a state of depression and religious confusion, she turned to the Word of God and cried out to the Lord to save her. She received an invitation in her mailbox to come to the Toronto church through its local community outreach and began to attend the services regularly in the fall of 2017. Valyncia's bright testimony for Christ is a blessing to the congregation. Wen Chen was born in China and began to attend the church about six years ago. Duncan, one of the church members, witnessed to her and she readily accepted the Lord. Marjorie, another church member, has been quietly discipling her on a regular basis for the past few years. Wen wanted to obey the Lord and make public her profession of Christ by being baptized. Wen's desire to grow in grace has been a blessing to the church family. "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes" (Psalm 118:23).



Free Presbyterian International Congress

Monday July 30 through Friday August 3, 2018.

Meetings each evening at 7:00 p.m. in Malvern FPC with preachers from Ulster and North American Presbyteries.

Hotel rooms have been reserved in The Desmond at a competitive rate. \$115 per room per night (Room options are King or double queen).

Booking requests can be made by emailing Dr. Pollock at malvernfpcc@yahoo.com. Daily tours are also being arranged to visit the sites of historic and beautiful Pennsylvania.



The Desmond Hotel, venue for the Congress.
View at <http://www.desmondgv.com>



TENSIONS IN THE KOREAN PENINSULA

Due to North Korea's nuclear experiments, the tension on the Korean Peninsula continues to build. We have not had such a serious situation as this since the ceasefire of the Korean War in 1953. Even though there were several provocations by North Korea before, South Koreans have remained relatively patient because they do not wish for another tragic war. In America, most assume that the North and South will fight; however, both sides know that they will never openly attack each other first. The situation now is a bit different. It is becoming clear that there is a greater chance that an outside force will start a war. This is due to the extreme hostility between the United States and North Korea. North Korea desperately needs a leverage over the United States for its own regime and safety, and it believes that the means to obtain an American response lies in nuclear development that could threaten the United States. Therefore, they will never stop developing nuclear weapons and intercontinental ballistic missiles that can be used against the United States. This, in turn, has aggravated the U.S. into considering military actions against North Korea, which could be devastating for this whole peninsula.

America's greatest obstacle is not North Korea's military or even their missiles. It is the lives and safety of 20 million citizens living in Seoul and its surrounding cities. North and South will not attack each other first. So, despite the complex and dangerous situation, people go about their lives normally and everyone wishes for a peaceful resolution. That is why the negotiations between the U.S. and North Korea are important, and the two countries

should remember that the lives at stake are more important than any reputation or benefit. It is obvious that if a war does happen, North Korea will be wiped off the map, but we should first think about who will take responsibility for the hundreds of thousands and millions of victims who will be sacrificed during that time.

That is why we cannot help but admit that the fate of this country and its inhabitants is in God's hands. It is hard to find a solution, and man's power or patience is not something to be trusted. The churches in South Korea can only remember our painful history and desperately pray for God to bless this country. However, I feel that the long, patient, earnest prayer is decreasing. The churches are becoming more and more secular, and the young people are slowly leaving the churches. There is a rise in prosperity and an anthropocentric gospel that robs God of His true glory. We hope that more people will rise up and pray, realizing that this country is dependent upon God's mercy and grace.

The Free Presbyterian Church in Korea has just completed its third year. Every Sunday we meet for services, and on Wednesdays there are prayer meetings. In addition, there is a campus Bible study for the college students every other week. This meeting is to give our church's college students a chance to have fellowship and spiritual training in the gospel and an opportunity to bring friends to hear the gospel in a secular college society. We meet in a place called a "study café" where we can drink tea and coffee, but it is designed so that college students can also study. It is a joy to read A. W. Pink's books and study the Bible with them. Please pray that God will use

this ministry for spiritual growth and an opportunity to spread the gospel.

We also have a book club every other week where we read and study books together. At this meeting we invite our friends and neighbors to join us. We are currently studying Thomas Watson's "A Body of Divinity", and a neighbor with two children has joined us. Pray that this family will learn the gospel and join us to worship the Lord.

God has allowed us to move our church. The previous place was old with uncomfortable facilities. Now our building is in a more accessible area with a parking lot and an elevator.

I remember when I attended the Korean Free Presbyterian Church in Greenville, how earnestly the late Pastor David Lee prayed for the other Free Presbyterian churches. That is one of the biggest reasons why I decided to start a Free Presbyterian Church in Korea. I believed that with such prayers God would surely be with us. Please pray for the conversion of our young people and for the church in Korea to be revived. I believe that God has a people who will pursue after Christ in this world. If we continue to work faithfully, God will lead them to us. We are all praying for God to bless the ministry in North America, Northern Ireland, Africa, and every one of the Free Presbyterian Churches.



Pastor Seongkyu Lee
is minister of Gwangmyeong
Faith FPC in Seoul, South
Korea

A History of “Missions” to the Aztecs



The Aztecs were several tribes in the North of Mexico that settled near the Lake of the Texcoco and dwelt there until their conquest in 1521. Prior to the arrival of the Spaniards, the Aztecs, or more appropriately the “Mexicas”, were the dominant civilization, politically, militarily, and culturally. The concept of “nationality”, as we can now observe it in our country, was non-existent at the end of the 15th century.

The name “Mexico” comes from the predominance of “Mexicas” or “Aztecs” over other cultures located in the current national territory and because of their location and enormous influence during those years. Today Mexico recognizes more than fifty ethnic groups. Modern Mexico is a multicultural country which began the difficult process of *miscegenation* after it was conquered by Spain in 1521. The presence of the ancient pre-Hispanic nations is unquestionable in the national culture and can be seen in our national character, festivity, color, architecture, gastronomy, and even in the most prevalent religion, Roman Catholicism.

In addition to the political and military alliances that Spanish Conquistador Hernán Cortés achieved to conquer Mexico, the arrival of the Dominican and Franciscan monastic orders, as well as the Jesuits swept in to advance colonization of the native peoples by their “evangelization” in true Romanist style: by sword and by syncretism.

Cleverly the Spaniards presented their new Spanish gods as victors over the pre-Hispanic pantheon by destroying their temples and building Roman Catholic temples on the ancient ruins of pre-Hispanic places of worship and by shrewdly merging both types of beliefs, such as the revelation of the

ancient goddess “Tonantzin.” She was worshipped on the hill of Tepeyac, now known as the hill of “Guadalupe” (a name of Arab origin) and replaced by a new deity, the Virgin Mary. The “evangelists” gave the statue of Mary a brown skin color characteristic of our indigenous ancestors.

It is necessary to say that there is no evidence of a supposed appearance of the Virgin Mary in that place, nor are there records of the existence of “Juan Diego”, to whom the Virgin Mary of Guadalupe allegedly appeared in the seventeenth century. Perhaps the most brilliant idea was to subdue the different ethnic groups and cultures by the Spanish and Catholic hierarchy. Syncretism continues to be a powerful weapon of subjugation in our country.

On December 12 each year, Mexico holds national celebrations to venerate the “Queen of Mexico.” Mexico is more Marian than Roman Catholic. This presence of Marian paganism is a factor that, according to anthropologists, makes it very difficult for Islam to succeed in our country. Although we are a multicultural nation, we are not a country of plurality, nor of great openness to other religions.

This mixture of prehispanic paganism and Roman Catholicism (already pagan in the Europe of the Middle Ages) makes Roman Catholicism a very peculiar religion in Mexico. When you compare Mexican Catholicism with Catholicism from the rest of the American continent, you will observe a flagrant idolatry overlapped by the Romanist hierarchy in Mexico. So the true gospel evangelist in Mexico must face the double issues of ancestral paganism and Roman Catholic paganism.

Eighty percent of Mexicans are Catholic, but most only follow its traditions nominally. Protestantism entered Mexico towards the end of the nineteenth century through historical denominations such as Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Free Brethren, and Lutherans.

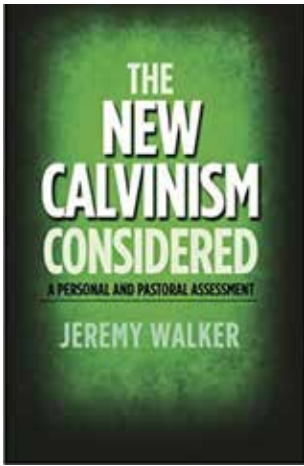
Around 1920, Pentecostals began to “evangelize” Mexico with great success, but by the 1970s their efforts were superseded by the Charismatic Movement, adding confusion and creating more difficulties for Biblical evangelism. With the entrance of theological liberalism, many of the historical denominations have become less effective in their testimony of the gospel and with strong ecumenical influence, the presence of the extreme Charismatic Movement is a challenge.

Due to the spurious influences of these so-called “evangelicals” who preach a distorted gospel, it is necessary for us to re-evangelize by preaching the gospel of grace according to the Scriptures. My ministry is based in Córdoba in the center of the coastal state of Veracruz, where I have had the opportunity to work in urban and suburban areas of other states such as San Luis Potosi, Queretaro, Guanajuato, and Chiapas. The influence of our pre-Hispanic cultures is always palpable.

Regardless of the global situation, the preaching of the gospel remains compelling, for it is “the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth” (Rom 1: 16b), regardless of location, culture, and time period. Please pray for me and my people here in Córdoba. Pray that we may know God’s enabling grace to preach the gospel in His power to precious souls here in Córdoba and other parts of Mexico. In the words of the Apostle Paul, “I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise” (Romans 1:14).



Mr. Lalo Peña ministers in Córdoba, Mexico. He is under care of the Presbytery of the FPCNA and studies with Geneva Reformed Seminary by distance learning.



The New Calvinism Considered: A Personal and Pastoral Assessment

By Jeremy Walker

New Calvinism was listed in *Time Magazine's* March 11, 2009 issue as one of the ten ideas changing the world. The article named John Piper, Mark Driscoll, and Al Mohler as leaders of the movement. At the time of the publication, John Calvin's 500th birthday was less than four months away. Now that the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation has come and gone, Calvin's birthday has been largely overshadowed by Martin Luther's work; however, the new religious phenomenon bears the name of Calvin. Actually, the writings of the great American theologian Jonathan Edwards have more profoundly impacted New Calvinism, which could be called "Edwardsism." Piper's desiring God emphasis came to him by reading Edwards. With the publication of *Desiring God* in 1986, Piper created a renewed interest in Reformed theology. Young pastors and many young people became known as the "New Calvinists" because of their zeal and enthusiasm for this theological perspective.

Journalist Collin Hansen of *Christianity Today* became so interested in the movement that he wrote a book about it called *Young, Restless, Reformed: A Journalist's Journey with the New Calvinists*. His book traces New Calvinism all across the United States from the east coast to Seattle. The movement has been greatly spread and supported by two large conferences: *Together For the Gospel* (T4G), which meets every other year, and *The Gospel Coalition* (TGC), which meets annually. These conferences have been attended by tens of thousands of pastors and young people. Crossway Books has provided

huge stacks of Bibles and books of Reformed theology for the attenders.

Many have written in favor of the movement and many others have written critiques of it. A young Reformed pastor, Jeremy Walker, has written a 126-page book called *The New Calvinism Considered*. Jeremy's critical yet irenic probe into the movement contains both positive and negative aspects. He defines the movement, commends the positive, and warns of dangers. In defining the movement, New Calvinism is rather difficult to nail down. The movement is not monolithic; rather, it is a conglomeration of many different religious groupings who all say that they believe in the sovereignty of God in salvation. But quite a few of them are *Amyraldian* in their theology. Moses Amyraut (1596-1664) was a moderate French Calvinist, who denied a definite atonement. He taught universal atonement and limited election. He believed that an atonement made for all is offered freely and only the elect will embrace it by faith. B. B. Warfield labeled this "an inconsistent and therefore unstable form of Calvinism." Warfield's conclusion is very telling in regard to New Calvinism.

On the one hand, Rev. Walker rejoices that Christ is preached by the New Calvinists. He believes the movement is Christ-centered, Gospel-powered and God-glorifying. Much excitement and enthusiasm characterize the New Calvinists who have discovered in the writings of the Reformers and Puritans the beauty, power, and refreshing nature of God's saving grace. In addition, New Calvinists zealously evangelize online and on the streets. They are reaching many people groups that some of the stricter Calvinists have never been able to reach. New Calvinism highlights complementarianism; that is, men and women fulfilling their God-given roles. Reading the great works of Reformed theology characterizes the New Calvinists.

On the other hand, Rev. Walker points out some of the dangers in New Calvinism. First, regarding corporate worship, the traditional Reformed position adheres to the regulative principle, which limits the use of elements used in public worship to those revealed in Scripture. Singing psalms and hymns and Bible reading are permissible; however,

the New Calvinists tend more toward the normative principle which allows anything the Bible does not forbid. In other words, if it works, use it. This pragmatic approach is seen especially in musical choices: rap, country, and contemporary instead of the sole use of traditional Christian music. In addition, an obvious tendency exists toward worldliness, which seems to stem from an incipient antinomianism. The abiding validity of the moral law with particular reference to the fourth commandment is not strictly upheld. This is obviously the case with some who hold new covenant theology, which does not promote obedience to the moral law as they do not believe that the moral law is the rule of life for the New Testament Christian.

Holiness, duty, and obedience are terms somewhat avoided by many of the New Calvinists; instead grace and love have an overemphasis. One can easily enjoy a comfortable profession of faith in the doctrines without a rigorous pursuit of godliness, and a greater concern for unity prevails rather than a strong desire for separation from heresy. A point of contention among the conglomeration is whether spiritual gifts continue as Reformed charismatics believe or whether they were for apostolic times only as cessationists believe.

Critics of New Calvinism must remember that many New Calvinists are brethren in Christ. They should be treated graciously even when dealing firmly with them on the dangers evident in the movement.

We admire their zeal and vision to reach millennials with the gospel, but lament their failure to adhere more strictly to Biblical orthodoxy. We must all seek a revival of true Calvinism as it promotes the purity and power of the gospel. Let every child of God earnestly pray and seek the Lord for this blessing and endeavor daily to revel in God's grace and enjoy closer fellowship with Christ.



Rev. Myron Mooney
is minister of Trinity FPC,
Decatur, Alabama. He
presently serves as moderator
of the FPCNA.



HOW WELL DO YOU LOVE *YOUR* BIBLE?

Do you remember that we looked at the Protestant Reformation and the great reformer Martin Luther in the last few issues? There is a man who lived many centuries before Martin Luther who deserves our notice. This very learned man was one of the first men to translate parts of the Bible into English. This man loved his Bible so much that he wanted to read it all the time. This “mysterious man” had a very unusual name. His name was the “Venerable Bede,” and this is how some people have described him:

“When Bede was a boy he began to love his Bible—mark that! And he loved it so that he read it every day of his reading life, and I will tell you how much he loved it. He had a long illness when an old man; and a clergyman—called a ‘scholar’ in those days—writes word that for fifty days they took in turns to read the Bible together. He says, ‘We read and wept, and

wept and read’—they never read without weeping, not unhappy tears, but sweet tears—‘We read and wept, and wept and read for fifty days, and when we had done reading, we wept.’ ”

The Venerable Bede was a literary genius who, even on his deathbed, translated the gospel of John into English. He began this important work before he became ill, and finished it while he was ill. When he came to the last chapter, he said to the young man who was reading it to him, “We have reached the last chapter. You must write fast—for I am soon going. I hope God will spare me to finish it. It is such a happy task!” He wrote on and on; at last the young man said, “We have come to the last verse, Sir. It is finished.” Then the Venerable Bede said, “Good words—my Lord—it is finished. All is finished for me. O blessed Bible—sweet Bible! I should like to get out of bed and sit in that chair

where I have often been so happy in reading that Bible!”

They lifted him into the chair, and there he folded his hands and said, “Glory to God in the highest: and on earth peace, good will toward men.” His head sank, and such was the end of the Venerable Bede!* Do you love your Bible? I wish we would cherish our Bibles like this old man did. Has someone wished you a “prosperous” new year? Then put your hope in the promise of Joshua 1:8 for 2018. “This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.”

**Excerpt from The Expositor's Treasury of Children's Sermons published by Hodder and Stoughton: London, 1912*

A WORD WORTH KNOWING

Venerable--ven(ə)rə-bəl

deserving respect because of age, fine character, or accomplishment; honorable



Ethan Munger
Grace FPC, Winston Salem, NC



Jonathan Trimble
FPC of Malvern, Malvern, PA

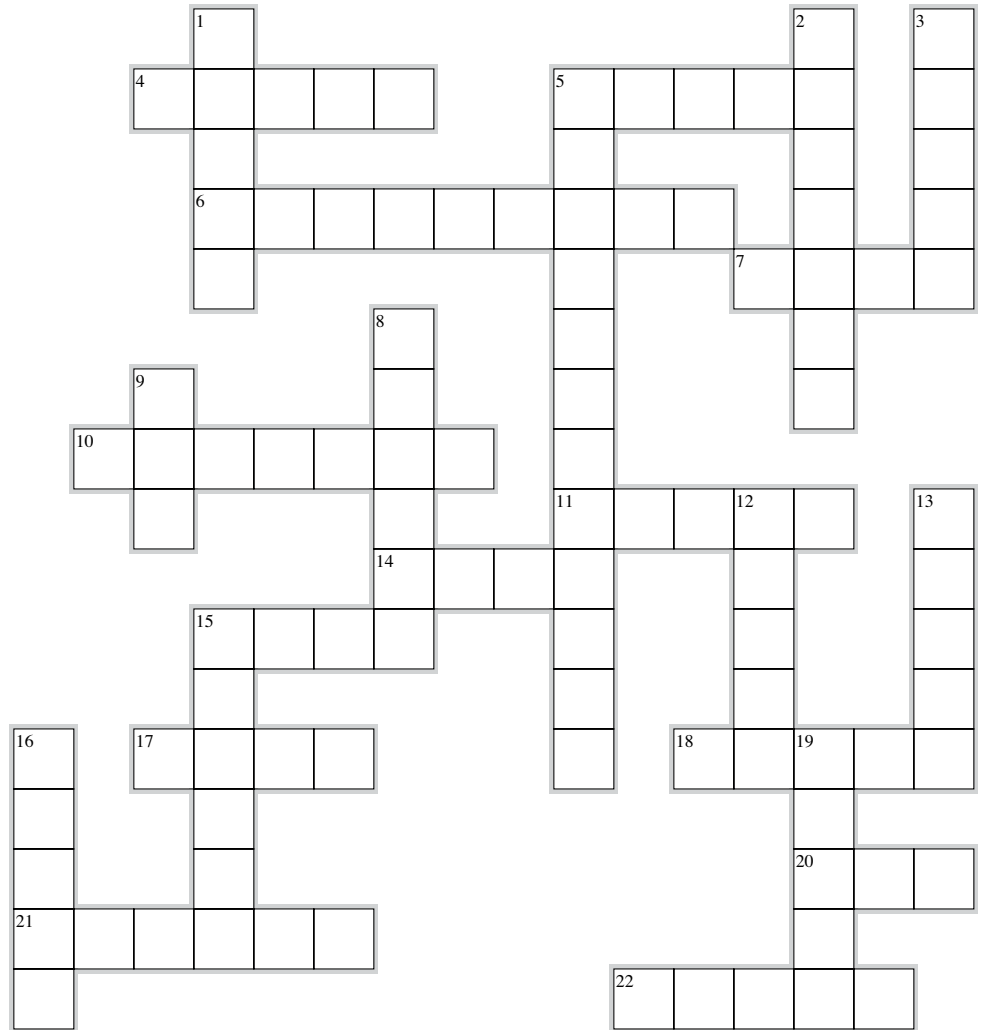


Talitha Trimble
FPC of Malvern, Malvern, PA

Kids' Crossword Puzzle

Across

4. "Behold ____ was fallen on his face." (1 Samuel 5:3)
5. "A ____ witness that speaketh lies." (Proverbs 6:19)
6. "Ye hold the ____ of men." (Mark 7:8)
7. "Thy ____ is truth." (John 17:17)
10. "The LORD ... brought thee forth ... from the house of ____." (Deuteronomy 6:12)
11. "God ... commanded the ____ to shine out of darkness." (2 Corinthians 4:6)
14. "____ ye not unto idols." (Leviticus 19:4)
15. "When ye ____, use not vain repetitions." (Matthew 6:7)
17. "____ yourselves from idols." (1 John 5:21)
18. "____ and see this great thing." (1 Samuel 12:16)
20. "I have considered the days of ____." (Psalm 77:5)
21. "No man ____ unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6)
22. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven ____." (Exodus 20:4)
2. "He is a ____ God." (Joshua 24:19)
3. "Upon this rock I will ____ my church." (Matthew 16:18)
5. "Thy counsels of old are ____ and truth." (Isaiah 25:1)
8. "Who can utter the ____ acts of the Lord?" (Psalm 106:2)
9. "____ unto you, scribes and Pharisees." (Luke 11:44)
12. "Their ____ is far from me." (Matthew 15:8)
13. "All the knees which have not ____ unto Baal." (1 Kings 19:18)
15. "Without faith it is impossible to ____ him." (Hebrews 11:6)
16. "Ye heard the ____ out of the midst of the darkness." (Deuteronomy 5:23)
19. "Come out from ____ them." (2 Corinthians 6:17)



Down

1. "The just shall live by ____." (Romans 1:17)

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@ju.edu by March 16, 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.



CALENDAR

OF EVENTS

APRIL 1	Easter Sunday
MAY 7 -11	Presbytery Week of Prayer in Trinity FPC Alabama
MAY 31-JUNE 5	40th Anniversary for Malvern FPC
JULY 14-21	Free Presbyterian Youth Camp, Rock Mountain Bible Camp, Scranton, PA
July 30 - August 3	International Congress of Free Presbyterians, Pennsylvania, USA



MY FAVORITE HYMNS

Asking me to write about my favorite hymn is like asking me to write about my favorite daughter. I could never choose! And yet upon reflection, I realize that every moment holds a different favorite, depending on which daughter is speaking to me at that moment. So it is with hymns.

God honoring, Christ-exalting hymns are a precious means of grace that provide corporate expressions of worship and praise, as well as private meditations when our hearts are perhaps too full to frame our own words. Hymns provide a sight of Christ that comforts us in the midst of heart-breaking sorrow, grants courage in the face of overwhelming fear, or reveals truth to combat fierce personal temptation. A specific hymn used of the Lord at such times can be forever linked to that event and become an Ebenezer we look back upon in recounting God's faithfulness. I have experienced this time and again. There are countless hymns that hold specific significance for me. "Be still my soul when change and tears are past, all safe and blessed we shall meet at last" transports me to the bedside of my godly father where my family sang these words

as he passed into eternity. My heart is filled with praise for my godly heritage each time these words are sung. Hymns are powerful. I could never recount all of the times that I have come to see Christ more fully or been overwhelmed by His presence in the midst of worshipping Him in song. "Sometimes a light surprises the Christian while he sings; It is the Lord who rises with healing in His wings." So, what is my favorite hymn?

When insecure because of my unworthiness, I'm drawn to the words, "From whence this fear and unbelief? Hath not the Father put to grief His spotless Son for me?"

When I'm overwhelmed with Christ's love for me, I recite "My song is love unknown, my Savior's love to me, love to the loveless shown that they might lovely be."

When tempted to think wrongly, I pray, "May the mind of Christ my Savior live in me from day to day, by His love and power controlling all I do and say."

In times of rejoicing, I remember, "Jesus Thou joy of loving hearts, Thou fount of life, Thou light of men, From the best bliss

that earth imparts, we turn unfilled to Thee again."

In worship, I proclaim, "Praise my soul the King of heaven, to His feet thy tribute bring; ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven, who like me His praise should sing?" In prayer, I affirm, "Before the throne of God above I have a strong, a perfect plea, a great High Priest whose name is Love who ever lives and pleads for me." Space forbids sharing them all.

And which is my favorite hymn today? As I face a new season as an "empty nester," I pause to remember the Lord's faithfulness to me throughout years past, and I commit to Him afresh what is most precious to me in years to come. As I do so, my heart is drawn out to the familiar paraphrase of Psalm 23:

The King of love my Shepherd is,
Whose goodness faileth never;

I nothing lack if I am His and He
is mine forever.

And so through all the length of
days Thy goodness faileth never;

Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy
praise within Thy house forever!

May we each have a storehouse of hymns quick on our tongues to meet every circumstance. And may we have many favorites—a hymn for every season of our lives!



Jan Kimbro is wife of Rev. Reggie Kimbro, senior minister of Winston Salem FPC, in North Carolina