

CURRENT

QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA

VOL. 4/No. 1 WINTER 2015

GOD'S CALLING
THE HOPE OF THE LORD'S CHURCH

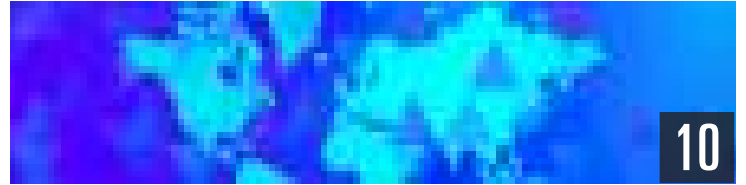
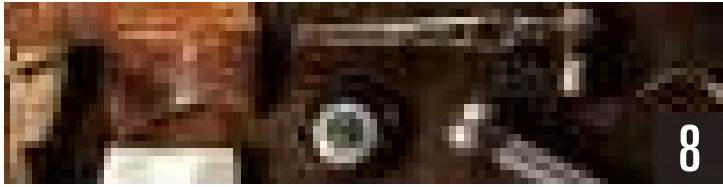
REWARD FOR
GOOD WORKS

BILLIONS
OR
THOUSANDS?

WHAT MAKES CHRISTIANITY
UNIQUE?

BLINDED





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Subscriptions

Current is published quarterly by the Free Presbyterian Church of North America (www.fpcna.org). The annual subscription price is \$15.00 (US/CAN). To subscribe, please go to www.fpcna.org/subscriptions. You may also subscribe by writing to Rev. Derrick Bowman, 4540 Oakwood Circle, Winston-Salem, NC 27106. Checks should be made payable to *Current*.

General Editor, Rev. Ian Goligher. Assistant Editor, Rev. Andy Foster. Copy Editor, Judy Brown. Graphic Design, Moorehead Creative Designs. Printer, GotPrint.com. ©2015 Free Presbyterian Church of North America. All rights reserved.

The editor may be reached at cloverdalefpc@telus.net, phone: 604-897-2040, or Cloverdale FPC, 18790 58 Ave., Surrey, BC V3S 9A2.



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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 3:18) 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.



GOD'S CALLING THE HOPE OF THE LORD'S CHURCH

by Rev. Ian Goligher

Notwithstanding his strict Jewish upbringing and the rigors required to reach the status of Pharisee, it was his dramatic conversion to Christ on the road to Damascus and God's call to minister to the Gentiles that set Paul apart as an apostle, an evangelist, and a senior pastor over many New Testament churches.

On his first missionary trip, when Paul travelled to Cyprus with Barnabas and John Mark and then on to Asia Minor, he preached where the name of Jesus had never been known. Souls were converted to Christ and churches were born. On his second missionary trip he went back into Asia Minor, confirming the churches in the faith of the gospel before receiving the Macedonian call, which took him into Europe. Paul believed that each local church was a divine institution ordained by the Lord. He lived day and night to forward the work of each church. Time and time again he laid his life on the line for their advance in the world. He suffered cruel hostilities, especially from Jews, who on a number of occasions stoned him and at other times plotted to kill him. Paul endured these things for the advance of the Lord's church, and he never lost hope in her special ministry in the world as God's way to declare the gospel and give pastoral support to Christians.

Through his letters to the churches Paul instructed converts in the doctrines of the gospel. He prayed for each church and for many church people by name. By hand-delivered letters and by firsthand reports he rejoiced in the triumphs of the gospel in each church and in many individual believers. He took every opportunity to comfort and sustain them through the highs and lows of their newfound faith in the death and resurrection of Christ.

In Ephesians chapter one we read Paul's prayer that the Lord would enlighten believers to grasp more and more of the hope of God's calling. Paul knew that their knowledge of this sure and certain hope was not only the anchor of their salvation, but also the driving force of their future service.

From Paul's prayer we know that he did not consider the believer's hope to be a mere wish. He prayed that God would cause His people to grow in their understanding of the glorious hope of God's calling unto salvation. That hope is based on a sure inheritance with Christ and the "exceeding greatness" of God's power toward His people. When Paul declared that the church is united to Christ just as a body is united to the head, he penned these doxology-like words: "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all" (Ephesians 1:22–23). Paul declared that the Lord is on the throne, that the church reigns with Him, and that she gains each victory through His power. Truly the Lord is ruling the world to build His church.

Paul wanted this high view of the church to thrill the hearts of God's people. He knew that when this hope got a hold of their hearts it would move them to serve the Lord with a deeper consecration. Later in the letter to the Ephesians Paul calls these saints to battle for the truth of the gospel against all the powers of hell (6:10–17). With this hope Paul called believers to prayer (6:18–20). Prayer takes on a whole new meaning when the Lord is on the throne invested with might and power to personally rule over all things to build His church. With this hope Paul called believers to a humble walk and faithful discipleship (chapter 4).

No one has more hope than a born-again Christian for biblical hope is always a sure thing. It is never the mere roll of the dice. It is the perfect and personal fulfillment of God's eternal purposes in the life of each professing Christian. Hope, then, is also our watchword in the Christian life. Waiting with expectation to see what the Lord will do through our service in the gospel stirs our souls to do all the more for Him. Let this hope be multiplied in any congregation of

God's people and that church can become the Lord's vessel to change the world.

It is my prayer that your heart will be filled with this gospel hope and that as you read the reports and stories of God at work in our denomination your sense of hope for the Lord's church will be increased. The God of hope is with us today. He is still sending forth laborers into the fields that are white unto harvest. He is still leading sinners to repentance and bringing them into His church to enjoy more and more of the hope of His calling. ■

THIS ISSUE OF *CURRENT* IS GOING ONLINE

The Publications Committee has received presbytery approval to take our *Current* magazine online. While only time will tell the impact this will have on our readership in its paper format, it is our desire to use the Internet to take the news of our denomination to readers around the world. Without increasing costs for printing and mailing, the opportunities to share the truths of Christ and His gospel online are beyond anything we could accomplish by print alone. We want to make the magazine readable on all devices including mobile phones. In various parts of the world millions of people can access online gospel content only by their mobile phones. To further assist these people, online issues of *Current* will be available free of charge.

You can help promote the magazine by sending a link to your friends and contacts. From your browser you can cut and paste a link into the body of an email. Our churches can also provide a link on their websites and Sermonaudio pages.

As we enter the cyberworld of communication to promote the gospel we do so by faith. May God in His grace lead sinners to learn the way of salvation and may believers be built up in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. We also look to the Lord to use the online magazine to stem the tide of false gospels and the spirit of compromise that is widespread in Christianity today. Please pray with us for the Lord's blessing on this venture. Anyone interested in making donations towards the magazine ministry can do so online at www.fpcna.org under "magazine."

In Their Own Words

Questions & Answers

with

Rev. Anthony D'Addurno



Rev. Anthony D'Addurno is minister in our Barrie church in Ontario. He and his wife, Pina, attended our Toronto church before being called into fulltime gospel ministry. Mrs. D'Addurno is well known for her specialty pizzas, as we found out when our presbytery visited the Barrie church in October 2010. As a native of Toronto's Italian community, Mr. D'Addurno is known as a member of the Italian band. We are thankful for his life and testimony as one dedicated to preaching the gospel and shepherding God's people. Rev. Andy Foster, our assistant editor, interviewed Mr. D'Addurno so our readers could learn more of his life and ministry.



CURRENT: Please introduce yourself and your family to our readers.

AD: For the last six years I have been minister of Barrie Free Presbyterian Church, situated seventy miles north of Toronto. As one of Toronto's bedroom communities Barrie is a vast field for the gospel. The Lord has given us a band of faithful believers who stand with me in the work of the gospel. My wife, Pina, is my loving and loyal companion in this ministry. We have three grown children: Tania, Frankie, and Melissa.

You are from a Canadian-Italian background. Tell us a little about your family background and history.

I was born in Toronto to first-generation Italian parents. We grew up in an area of the city known as "Little Italy" where the culture, language, and traditions were preserved and observed. My dad worked construction and my mom stayed home with the children. I have one younger brother and a younger sister. We grew up in typical Italian fashion, where the families are close knit. There was never a shortage of food and Dad ruled with an "iron fist." We were taught from a young age to respect our parents, elders, and family members.

You were born and raised in Catholicism. Please explain how God brought you to salvation.

It was difficult to separate Italian traditions from the church traditions. The two were intertwined to the point where it was difficult to distinguish what were cultural traditions versus religious observations. We attended the Roman Catholic church and took part in the various ritualistic sacraments. I was baptized as an infant; then at age eight, I had my first communion, and then later at age fourteen, I was confirmed. Each was a big event in the family, celebrated with relatives, more food, entertainment, and, of course, the receiving of many gifts.

As time went on, I became more disillusioned with the church and its rituals and at one point in my teens, I actually had no religious beliefs whatsoever and had no interest in religious matters at all. Then at age 22, I came to a saving knowledge of our Saviour. I had begun searching for the truth and had many questions. I desired to know if God really existed and if so, how could I know? As I searched, God began to work in my heart and one night in my bedroom, a compelling power led me to believe and brought me to the realization that God did indeed exist. A few days later, I picked up a Bible and the words were suddenly very real to me. I read of Jesus Christ, my sin, and



how I needed the Saviour. I understood what God delivered me from and was saved by His grace. Several months later, the Lord also graciously saved my wife, Pina, who was my girlfriend at the time.

How did your family react to your conversion? Are they still opposed to the gospel?

My family initially thought I was involved in a cult and was brain-washed. Their reactions were harsh. I quickly learned to stay quiet and pray. My siblings did not want to hear what I had to say. My mom kept telling me, "Don't let your dad hear you talk that way." My dad would threaten to disown me as I had disgraced the family and gone against long-standing traditions. As time went by, there was much softening. My grandmother was saved. Both my brother and sister have made professions, and my parents are currently very receptive to what I have to say. Please pray that the Lord will soon save them as they are up in age.

How did God call you to the gospel ministry within the Free Presbyterian Church?

My call to the ministry came shortly after I was married. We had been attending the Toronto Free Presbyterian Church for a couple of years. It was through the preaching of Dr. Frank McClelland that the Lord began to speak to me about full-time service for Him. It was confirmed to me after a series of messages on the call of Matthew and on the will of God. That was in February 1986.

Are there any special memories from your time of training for the ministry that you can share with us?

We have very fond memories of our time in Northern Ireland. We met many wonderful people, ministers, and staff. We stayed at the "gate house" on the college grounds of the Whitefield College and were the "house of refuge" for many of the students living on campus. The companionship helped us through the tough times of homesickness and studies. Our eldest daughter was born in Northern Ireland.

For quite a few years you were pastor in a small congregation in Fredericton, New Brunswick. Please give us a brief account of your time there and perhaps any special challenges or blessings you enjoyed in those years that may be helpful to others in a similar work.

We ministered in Fredericton, New Brunswick, for thirteen years. We moved from a small daycare to a church building that had been empty for some time. The church was signed over to the Free Presbyterians by the remaining board members without hesitation. There were several folks that had attended the church in the past who were glad that the doors reopened. We were thankful to have them join us and later accepted them into membership.

Unfortunately, there was some bad history affiliated with this church, and many people in the area were disillusioned with Christianity altogether. It was difficult to convince them to attend and that our message was one of forgiveness and salvation in Christ. We learned patience and faithfulness to Christ and His Word.

Tell us about your current pastorate in Barrie, Ontario. Do you have any special plans for the future of the ministry there that our readers can pray about?

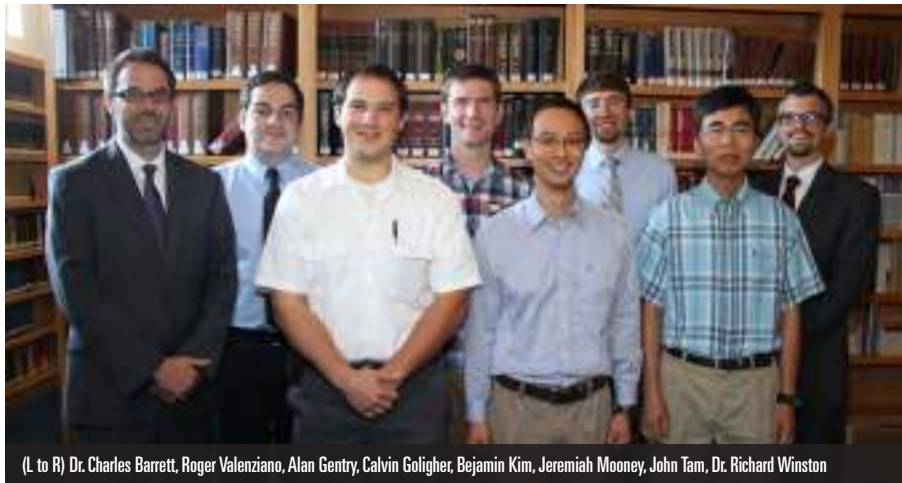
We would like to see the work progress to the next level. The core group is strong and faithful, and we would like to see younger folk and new families come in. We would like to elect elders in the near future to help oversee the work. As pastor in Barrie, my burden is to see God's people grow in grace and become equipped to be faithful witnesses in this community. We look to the Lord who planted the church to make it grow and bear fruit for His glory. Please pray to that end. ☒



Barrie, Ontario

Located on the west side of Lake Simcoe, the city of Barrie was once a trading route for central Ontario. As a bedroom community to the mega city of Toronto seventy miles to the south, Barrie has grown to a population of 136,000 people. The Barrie Free Presbyterian church was first formed in 1991 with Rev. Reggie Cranston as its first minister. He was followed by Rev. Kevin McLeod and Rev. Graham Middleton. The present minister, Rev. Anthony D'Addurno, was installed on September 5, 2008. As one of the fastest-growing communities in Canada the city has rising potential for gospel ministry. Pray for God to equip His servant to preach the gospel with power and for the congregation as they reach out to the people in Barrie and its surrounding areas. If you live in the area you are invited to attend the church services on Sundays at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Barrie Free Presbyterian Church is located at 229 Crawford Street. Phone: 705-728-4751. For a map and further details, click on "Churches" at www.fpcna.org.



GRS NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT

Geneva Reformed Seminary is grateful for the consistent support of the people of the Free Presbyterian Church of North America. Without it the seminary would not be able to continue. I want to let you know about some particular needs for your prayerful consideration.

First, we need finances to maintain the student aid fund. God has blessed us with a small student body of gifted men. Each man comes to the seminary at great expense. Although the tuition costs at GRS are considerably lower than at other seminaries, the cost of living can be a big problem, especially for men who have cut back on work hours or who have stopped working altogether in order to train for the ministry. Most of our students also have families to care for as they study. They must continue to be faithful husbands and fathers while training for the ministry. The student aid fund was established to help such students. Over the last two years several of our students have been able to study full time because of the generous gifts of GRS donors to the fund. It is good for students to learn to wait on and trust in God to meet their needs, and it is always exciting when God uses you to answer their prayers. God has blessed us with many gifts for the fund in the past, and we would like to see God continue to meet the needs of the students through supporters of GRS like you.

The seminary also needs help with its library fund. A good library is essential for a seminary. The students need to have valuable and trustworthy resources available to them as they train. As with the student aid fund, we have seen God provide resources for our library in many ways, but the needs are ongoing and additional funds are always required. If you would like to give financial support to GRS, you may send

your gift to Geneva Reformed Seminary, 1207 Haywood Road, Greenville, SC 29615.

While your financial support of the seminary is essential and greatly appreciated, the most important thing we need is your prayers. Prayer is essential for all Christians and all ministries, and we are conscious of our need for the prayers of the saints. I have recently been re-reading a wonderful little book on prayer by Douglas Kelly, *If God Already Knows, Why Pray?* In it he argues, “The seeking of God in prayer releases the blessing of God.” We need God to bless the professors and the students of GRS. We need God to sanctify us by conforming us to His Son. We spend many hours in God’s Word, but if we do not do so while submitting to the Spirit’s teaching, it will be in vain. The human heart can remain cold in the study of the Word. We need God to bless the study of the Word to the hearts of both instructors and students.

I want to leave you with a remarkable answer to prayer for your encouragement. Over the last two years GRS has been in the midst of a recertification process that will enable us to continue educating international students. Because we are a small institution and not accredited by the major accrediting agencies recognized by the Department of Education, we have had trouble in the process. GRS had much at stake since four of our six full-time resident students are international students. After many discouragements and setbacks, the government agency that oversees these matters granted approval to GRS to continue educating international students. We received official notification Thursday, August 14, 2014, just four days before our fall term began. We are grateful to God for His provision in this matter. I am also thankful to Jennifer Knutson, GRS administrative assistant, for working for countless hours on the application process.

Many of you have contacted me over the last year to receive updates on the process, and I am encouraged to be able to communicate this clear token of God’s grace to us.

I thank you again for your support of the ministry of GRS. Pray that we remain faithful to the God who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. ✠

— Dr. Charles Barrett, Interim President

SPECIAL GRS SEMINAR: FOLLOWING THE BIBLE’S STORYLINE AS YOU STUDY THE BIBLE

March 23, 30, April 6, 13
7-9 p.m.

Geneva Reformed Seminary will host a special lecture series on the subject of reading the Bible’s storyline responsibly. Lectures are open to members of Faith Free Presbyterian Church, students of GRS, and the public. The aim of the series is to help Christians read God’s Word, trust God’s Word, and be transformed by God’s Word. The speakers will present an overview of the Bible’s storyline within the various genres of Scripture and will provide principles of interpretation to help Christians read the Bible more responsibly in order to know God more deeply. All sessions will be recorded and made available for individual use as well as for churches that may desire to use them in a Sunday school series on God’s Word. We pray that this series will benefit the church at large for the glory of God.

March 23: *The Bible’s Storyline and Foundational Principles of Interpretation*, Charles M. Barrett

March 30: *The Bible’s Storyline in the Pentateuch and Old Testament Historical Books*, Renton Rathbun

April 6: *The Bible’s Storyline in Old Testament Poetry and the Prophets*, Michael P. V. Barrett

April 13: *The Bible’s Storyline in the New Testament*, Richard Winston

Why Study the Middle Ages?

Seminaries exist to train men for the gospel ministry. A seminary education includes the following main disciplines within its core curriculum: Biblical Studies, Systematic Theology, Biblical Languages, Practical Theology, and Church History. Within each main discipline are more specific categories. It is easy to see a connection between the first four disciplines and preparation for ministry, but Church History often needs some justification for its inclusion in a seminary curriculum. That need for justification is even more pronounced when the main discipline of Church History is broken down into its more specific periods: Early Christianity (Apostolic period–500), Medieval Christianity (500–1517), Reformation Christianity (1517–1650), and Modern Christianity (1650–the present).

It's not hard to understand why a minister should know something about early Christianity, the Reformation, and modern Christianity. But why would anyone need to study medieval Christianity? Let me answer that question.

The medieval era encompasses a little over a thousand years. That is roughly the same length of time as the Early, Reformation, and Modern eras combined. Yet no period receives as little regard as the medieval. I contend, however, that because we are a Protestant and Reformed seminary it is especially important for us to study the Middle Ages. Let's consider the connection between Protestantism and medieval Christianity.

Objections to studying the medieval period tend to focus on two common assumptions. The first assumption is that there is really nothing to study because it is, after all, the Dark Ages. What could possibly fill up a class hour four days a week for ten weeks? Yet when you consider various developments that took place within

this period, the description of it as a “dark” time seems less than accurate. The medieval era saw the advancement of education with the universities of Paris, Bologna, Padua, Oxford, and Cambridge all coming into being as centers of learning. The Romanesque and Gothic architecture of the time reveals an awareness of aesthetic creativity and beauty among those who designed the structures that still exist today. And building such edifices without modern technology speaks to abilities that make us marvel.

The second assumption is that the religion and theology of the medieval era are completely opposite and antithetical to Protestantism today, and especially to the Reformed tradition, and that there is therefore no value in studying it. There is certainly truth to the claim that there is much to disagree with in medieval theology. But it does not follow that there is no value in its study. Much of medieval theology stands in opposition to Reformed theology. But not all of medieval theology was wrong. Trinitarian thought in the medieval period was orthodox and provides insights for us even today, helping us to understand how we are to think about God and who He is. Men like Anselm of Canterbury addressed the question of why God would become man and in answering it drew out the truth of the satisfactory nature of Christ's atonement, which was further developed by the Reformers in their time.

While there was a move during the medieval era toward unbiblical notions of church authority and justification, we must remember that the Reformation had not yet happened and therefore, there was not yet a Protestant church. In the West during the medieval period, the church was mixed. It is in the medieval church that we find men like John Wycliffe and John Hus, who sought to reform the errors they saw

in their day. It is difficult to understand men like Wycliffe and Hus without knowing the context in which they lived.

Finding good men in the medieval church should not threaten our commitment to Protestantism and the Reformed faith, nor should finding positive things from that era. To be sure, there is much to object to. That is why there was a need for a Reformation. We cannot adequately understand the Reformation without knowing about the Middle Ages. And we should not ignore a thousand years of church history because there was slow decline over centuries. The study of that slow decline ought to teach us about the tendency toward decline that could affect us in our own ecclesiastical context.

In studying the medieval era we will see how the Reformation changed the landscape of the West. We will see in what areas the Reformation enjoyed continuity (the Trinity and Christology) and in what areas there was discontinuity (church authority, justification, and assurance). We will learn how ideas shaped the flow of history in the past in a way that can help us see how ideas shape the cultural context in which we live and minister in the twenty-first century. We will also see how even in the midst of corruption Christ still builds His church, rather than assuming Christ took a thousand-year hiatus in the West. And we will hopefully grow more committed to the truthfulness of the catholic (universal) and Reformed expression of the faith once delivered. ■



Dr. Charles M. Barrett is interim president of Geneva Reformed Seminary and assistant minister at Faith Free Presbyterian Church in Greenville, South Carolina.



REWARDS FOR GOOD WORKS

by Rev. Ian Goligher

Only an antinomian would object to doing good works in the Saviour's name. That is a shocking statement, but it is true because antinomians are against God's law as a rule of life for the Christian. The Scriptures consistently teach, however, that it is the will of God that His children, who are washed in the blood of Christ and indwelt by the Spirit, bring forth good works.

Sadly, when many professing Christians hear the term *good works* they become alarmed because they think it is being used to teach salvation by works. We need to get beyond that if we are saved by grace. Grace is never the enemy of godly living; rather, it is an impetus to doing greater good for God out of gospel love and faith. It is what we call "evangelical obedience." The apostle Paul succinctly answered the question, "Shall we sin because we are not under the law, but under grace?" by saying, "God forbid!" (Romans 6:14). In a recent article in *Current*, (Summer 2014, p. 5) on the subject of antinomianism, Rev. Reggie Kimbro summed it up well: "God does not change the definition of right and wrong after a person gets saved."

The Westminster Confession of Faith has devoted a whole chapter with seven sections to the subject of good works. It weeds out the differences between doing good works out of legalism before conversion and doing good works out of a new life of obedience to God through faith in Christ after conversion.

The Confession's statements on good works lead us into an exciting aspect of Christian living. Because the Christian's person is accepted by God on the basis of his union with Christ,

his new works of obedience are also accepted through Christ. On this point the Confession teaches us that in doing those things which are well pleasing to God there is great reward:

Yet notwithstanding, the persons of believers being accepted through Christ, their good works also are accepted in him, not as though they were in this life wholly unblameable and unproveable in God's sight; but that he, looking upon them in his Son, is pleased to accept and reward that which is sincere, although accompanied with many weaknesses and imperfections. (16.6)

One of the proof texts given to support this statement is taken from the Lord's parable of the talents: "His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Matthew 25:21). In the exposition of that parable the Lord gave a thorough treatment of the attitude of those who were counted faithful servants. They did not boast in their works as worthy of such rewards. Rather the righteous replied, "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?" (verse 37). The Lord insisted, however, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (40).

The point we must not miss is that while we lament that our works are imperfect, yet God is well pleased with them. Men may see them as very little and even pathetic, but because they are

works done unto the Lord by a Christian clothed in Christ's righteousness, they are acceptable to God.

All parents know the joy of meeting a child after school as he or she brings home the artwork of the day. The drawing that took so much effort, never mind so much paint, was the child's attempt to draw Mom and Dad or the whole family that day they went on a picnic. When you ask your child, "What is that messy thing on the splattered page?" and you are told, "It's my picture of you," your heart melts. You praise your little budding painter for the wonderful display of talent and you accept the piece of art as a precious token of true love. In such a manner God accepts our attempts to do those things that please Him. As the Confession states, "He looking upon them in his Son is pleased to accept and reward that which is sincere, although accompanied with many weaknesses and imperfections."

Even a single cup of cold water offered in Jesus' name shall not go unrecognized nor unrewarded.

This truth should not be lost in our service for the Lord lest we think we must reach a perfect standard of service before it is acceptable to God. While we should use our talents to the full and strive to be our very best for God, we should not feel shut out of doing what we can in
continued on page 15 >>>>

BILLIONS OR THOUSANDS?

On November 12, 2014, at 16:05 GTM, it was confirmed by the European Space Agency that a robot probe called Philae from the Rosetta Mission had made the first-ever landing on a comet, some 6.4 billion kilometers from earth. The mission's prime objective, as set forth on the European Space Agency's website is "to help understand the origin and evolution of the Solar System. The comet's composition reflects the composition of the pre-solar nebula out of which the Sun and the planets of the Solar System formed, more than 4.6 billion years ago."¹

This 4.6-billion-year age for our solar system stands in stark contrast to the Christian's belief in a young earth, an earth that is only thousands rather than billions of years old. Belief in a young earth is based on evidence such as the decay of the earth's magnetic field, the presence of fragile organic molecules in fossils supposed to be millions of years old, the lower-than-expected levels of helium in the atmosphere and salt in the sea (for an earth supposed to be billions of years old), the presence of fossilized trees that crosscut layers of rocks indicating a rapid burial in a Noah-like flood, and the lack of human skeletons when human civilization is taught by evolutionists to be 200,000 years old.

Where then does this 4.6-billion-year figure for the age of our solar system come from and can it be relied upon? Such a figure was bandied about when I was a geology student at Edinburgh University, Scotland, and I found myself asking the question, where do they get such an age from, especially when the Bible presents the earth as only some six thousand years old?

The unsatisfactory answer the lecturer gave to my question was based on radiometric dating. Radiometric dating is used to determine the age of something by measuring the relative

concentrations of "parent" and "daughter" isotopes in an igneous (volcanic) rock, a rock that is formed through the cooling and solidification of magma or lava. This is how it works: radioactive atoms, such as uranium (known as parent isotopes), decay into stable atoms, such as lead (known as daughter isotopes), and do so at a measurable rate. To date an igneous rock the geologist first measures the concentration of the parent isotope (such as uranium-238) and then measures the concentration of the daughter isotope (such as lead-206). Taking these measurements and applying the known rate of radioactive decay, they estimate the time it has taken for the daughter isotope to accumulate within the rock. The problem with this type of dating method, however, is that it is based on certain assumptions that cannot be scientifically proven.

First, the geologist assumes that the starting conditions of the rock are known. He cannot be sure, however, that there weren't already some daughter isotopes at the start of the rock's formation because no one was there to measure such data. When a sample of the lava in the Mt. St. Helens crater, which had been observed to form and cool in 1986, was analyzed in 1996 (only 10 years after the eruption), it contained so much argon-40 (the daughter isotope of the parent isotope potassium-40) that it had a calculated age of 350,000 years!

The second assumption is that the decay rates of the isotopes have always been constant. The problem with this assumption is that every process in nature operates at a rate influenced by many different factors and if one of the factors changes the rate is altered. We have no way of knowing whether the decay rates of isotopes have changed.

Third, the geologist assumes a closed system whereby no processes have resulted in the addition or subtraction of parent or daughter isotopes. The idea that a system in nature could remain closed for millions or billions of years is absurd to the highest degree.

Rather than base our knowledge of the age of the world upon the flawed dating methods of man, God would have us place our faith upon the accurate record of the Word of God. We know that Adam was created on the sixth day of creation, and using the Bible's record of his offspring recorded in Genesis chapters 5–11, we calculate that two thousand years passed between the time Adam lived on the earth and Abraham. Most scholars would agree that Abraham lived about 2,000 B.C. (four thousand years ago). So adding these years together—Adam to Abraham to the present day—we believe the earth to be around six thousand years old.

As Christians we accept the biblical account of creation and, "through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Hebrews 11:3). I know where my faith rests—not in the changing theories of man but in the unchanging truth of God as revealed in His Word. ■

¹ http://www.esa.int/Our_Activities/Space_Science/Rosetta/Frequently_asked_questions.



Rev. David Stewart

is the minister of Portglenone Free Presbyterian Church in Northern Ireland.



FPC WITNESS OPENS IN SEOUL

In the clerk's report in this issue of *Current* you may read of Rev. Seonkyu Lee's acceptance to work under the FPCNA presbytery with the intention of planting a Free Presbyterian church in Seoul, South Korea. Rev. Seonkyu Lee was born and raised in South Korea by Christian parents who were converted through some of the first Presbyterian missionaries to arrive in Korea. As a young man he became involved in church ministry, but it wasn't until he read Dr. Lloyd-Jones' commentary on Romans chapter one that he came to understand the gospel and the need to fully surrender his life to Christ.

After moving to America for study he became a regular worshipper at Greenville Korean FPC. Rev. David Lee's ministry, especially his teaching on the beliefs and positions of the Free Presbyterian Church in the Sunday school classes, convinced Mr. Lee and his wife of the denomination's beliefs. He says, "Finding the FPC is the most precious treasure that I gained while in America." Consequently, the Lord has given him a spiritual burden to share the gospel with his fellow Koreans.

Mr. Lee asks for prayer that the Lord will give his people spiritual growth and suitable facilities

to conduct Sunday school classes and worship services. They are presently building a website to promote their church ministry.

If it pleases the Lord to bless the establishment of GwangMyeong Faith Free Presbyterian Church in Seoul, it will be a spiritual legacy to the life and ministry of Rev. David Lee, as this was his burden prior to his passing in November 2013. May every servant of the Lord be encouraged to "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days" (Ecclesiastes 11:1).



YOUTH OUTREACH 2015

In 2015 the Toronto Free Presbyterian Church is hosting the Presbytery Youth Outreach Initiative for young people ages 14–20. The outreach will coincide with the Pan Am

Summer Games, which will provide excellent outreach opportunities. If you are interested in this ministry, please download an application form from www.FPCNA.org and send it to

torontofree@bellnet.ca. This opportunity is for youth who are regularly attending one of our churches and who have their local session's recommendation.



THE WORLD CONVERGES AT VANCOUVER WEEK OF PRAYER

October 6–10, 2014, for the first time in nine years, the Free Presbyterian Church of Cloverdale, British Columbia, hosted the Week of Prayer. It proved to be a most remarkable time as the Lord's providence arranged circumstances so that men from around the globe met for prayer and to attend the regular meeting of the presbytery. Rev. David DiCanio, missionary-at-large who serves in Liberia, was present for the first time since his ordination in 2009. From the Republic of Korea came Seongkyu Lee, who applied to come under the care of the presbytery. Joining Rev. Jason Boyle were two other men from Mexico. Marcus Reyes, an American citizen serving as a pastor in the Veracruz area, and Lalo Peña, a Mexican national who is also a pastor in the same area, traveled to Vancouver to explore how they could become affiliated with the FPCNA. Such a confluence of visitors from other parts of the world has been rare in the history of Weeks of Prayer. In addition, the presbytery had on its agenda action to respond to the request from the Nepal Free Presbyterian Church to enter close fraternal relations with the FPCNA.

During the days of the week, the ministers, elders, and students in attendance enjoyed the wonderful hospitality of the host church, especially appreciating the efforts of Rev. and Mrs. Ian Goligher, whom the church honored earlier in the year for their thirty years of faithful service. The congregation provided for all the men a wonderful meal at a nearby restaurant on

one evening and pleasant refreshments following the ordination service on Thursday evening. Morning by morning, the prayer sessions took place with various men preaching the Word. On Tuesday afternoon, October 7, Dr. Larry Saunders, moderator, called the regular meeting of the presbytery to order. Among the items of business, the presbytery ratified the report of the election in Korean FPC of Rev. Sanghoon Han to be the successor to the late Rev. David Lee as the minister. His ordination and installation took place on October 31. The presbytery also ratified the report of the election of Mr. Andy Roersma and Mr. Alan Samuel as ruling elders for the Cloverdale church and conducted the service for their ordination and installation on Thursday evening, October 9.

The global atmosphere of the week also appeared in the report of the election of a minister for Calgary FPC. The presbytery ratified the report of the unanimous call to Rev. Armen Thomassian, a licentiate in the Ulster presbytery, to assume that position in the church. Upon the receipt of his response to the call, the Ulster presbytery scheduled his ordination for January 2015, and the Thomassian family expects to move to Calgary shortly after that event. The North American presbytery will arrange an installation for Mr. Thomassian during the early months of the year.

Another report the presbytery received concerned the status of the training and ministry

of Mr. Milos Solc, a missionary candidate serving in his native Czech Republic. The Examination Committee reported on the application of Mr. Seongkyu Lee, a member of Korean FPC, to be accepted under the presbytery's care. Mr. Lee, previously ordained in a Korean denomination, expressed the desire to be a Free Presbyterian minister, already having taken steps to begin a new Free Presbyterian mission in the area of Seoul. Ultimately, the presbytery determined that he required no additional training and proceeded to license him just before the presbytery adjourned.

The Examination Committee also reported on the applications of Mr. Reyes and Mr. Peña to become affiliated with the denomination. The presbytery rejoiced in the new opportunities for the expansion of the mission work in Mexico and agreed to accept both men under care of the presbytery.

The report of the Constitutional Documents Committee led to the adoption of six new sections for the Code of Practice and Discipline in the *Book of Church Order*. The committee also submitted an additional five newly drafted sections for the review of the sessions. The Finance Committee presented its draft budget for 2015 and the presbytery voted to adopt it.

Other committee reports revealed that progress is occurring in other committee assignments and that the new academic year in Geneva Reformed Seminary began well, with the prospect of two students completing their degrees in May 2015.

The decision to approve the establishment of close fraternal relations with the Nepal FPC underscored the expansion of the Free Presbyterian family to a third continent. The presbytery agreed to explore sending at least two of its members to visit Nepal during 2015 and rejoiced in the demonstration of the Lord's power in that country.

When the presbytery adjourned on Thursday evening after the ordination and installation service for the ruling elders and a subsequent licensing ceremony for Mr. Lee, Dr. Saunders reminded everyone that the next Week of Prayer and regular meeting of the presbytery will take place May 11–15, 2015, in the facilities of Grace Free Presbyterian Church of Litchfield, New Hampshire. ■

— Rev. David G. Mook, Clerk of Presbytery



Jason Boyle (center) with Lalo Peña (left) & Marcus Reyes

PASTORS IN MEXICO ACCEPTED UNDER CARE



Two pastors who labor east of Mexico City were accepted under care of the presbytery by the ministers and elders attending the Free Presbyterian Church of North America (FPCNA) Week of Prayer, held October 6–10, at Cloverdale Free Presbyterian Church outside Vancouver, British Columbia.

Marcus Reyes and Lalo Peña sent a letter to the FPCNA requesting affiliation with the denomination after coming into contact with Rev. Jason Boyle, the FPCNA missionary stationed in Mexico City since 2010.

Mr. Reyes contacted Mr. Boyle after doing a Google search for “head covering” and “Reformed.” The contact led to a one-year friendship resulting in the men’s making application to come under care of the FPCNA presbytery, which means they would be trained and eventually considered for licensing and ordination. Mr. Peña comes from a Charismatic background, and Mr. Reyes from a Brethren assembly.

“Lalo left his old Charismatic church of about 2500 members where he was pastor after he learned of the doctrines of grace,” Mr. Reyes said. “He now leads a small group of believers who are learning Reformed theology.”

Mr. Reyes ministers to about a hundred churches as an itinerant in Mexico, and also sends out Bible studies via the Internet.

Rev. Colin Mercer, secretary of the FPCNA Mission Board, and Dr. Charles Barrett, interim president of the denomination’s seminary, made a trip in March 2014 to visit with Mr. Boyle and these men. As a result, they brought a positive report to the presbytery in May.

Then in September two more ministers paid a visit: Rev. Reggie Kimbro from Grace FPC in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and Rev. Myron Mooney from Trinity FPC in Alabama.

“The good testimony these men have lived is evident in the impact their lives and decisions have had upon those they minister to,” Mr. Kimbro said. “Their impact is not only upon lay people in the area where they serve, but also upon other local pastors.”

In mid-November Mr. Boyle took a four-day trip to the state of Veracruz in Eastern Mexico to preach for both men where they labor. After preaching at a midweek meeting at Grace Church where Mr. Reyes pastors in the city of Orizaba, Mr. Boyle then travelled thirteen miles to the sister city, Córdoba, where Mr. Peña pastors. Mr. Boyle’s wife, Danielle, spoke to the women in the Orizaba church.

“We really enjoyed the opportunity to strengthen the growing bond between our churches,” Mr. Boyle said, “and are continually encouraged that Marcus and Lalo were accepted under care of the North American presbytery.”

The state of Veracruz is one of 31 states in Mexico. It sits on the Gulf of Mexico 180 miles east of Mexico City where Mr. Boyle ministers to a congregation of fifty at Redeemer Christian Church, an FPCNA mission work. Both Mr. Reyes and Mr. Peña have been preaching in Veracruz for over fifteen years, helping many pastors come to a greater understanding of the Scriptures.

“The Lord has given these men a heavy work load in Veracruz, not only in their own local churches, but also among many other pastors and churches who have left the Charismatic movement for solid, biblical doctrine,” Mr. Boyle said.

Mr. Boyle urged his supporters to pray especially for the work of these men and also for their unique witness in Omiquila, a remote Aztec village nestled in a mountain range south of Orizaba and west of Córdoba where both men minister.

“I was not aware until we arrived that much of the work that Marcus has been doing for the last fifteen years was with these unreached Nahuatl people in the mountains above the city of Orizaba,” Mr. Kimbro said. “It was a real blessing and challenge to see the energy and sacrifice that [Marcus] and his family put into the work there, and also [to see] the work the Lord is doing through our Brother Lalo.”



EBOLA

BATTLE IN LIBERIA

photo credit: ©iStock.com/Bethany Park

Rev. David DiCanio, a North American missionary-at-large in Liberia, and Ulster missionary Joanne Greer who is serving a three-year term in the country, have been assessing the situation on the ground in Liberia by phone, email, and Skype, after being evacuated from the country on August 5 because of the rapid spread of the Ebola virus in West Africa.

Both missionaries recently coordinated a food and medical relief effort for the three mission churches, two outside Monrovia, the capital city of the country, and a third a hundred miles inland. The church also gave assistance to an unaffiliated work on the Liberian border of two neighboring countries, Guinea and Sierra Leone.

The help came from congregations in the FPC of Ulster and North America, after the latter set up a relief fund on September 27 to aid all overseas works.

The Liberian churches sent a letter of thanks on November 3 for thirty large bags of rice and five bags of beans to share with the most needy people in each congregation.

A midwife in the Ballah Creek congregation just outside Monrovia died after assisting an expectant mother who had Ebola, and others in the church were quarantined after they had contact with both her and another person who died from the virus. The North American Mission Board continues

Monrovia's West Point slum, housing an estimated 75,000 residents, was the scene of deadly clashes in late August after a 10-day Ebola quarantine.

to assess the situation on the ground, and some members have suggested the missionaries may not be able to return until June of 2015. However, after news reports of an early November lull in the virus, the missionaries are hopeful they may be able to return sooner. ■



In the past, the Reyes family would hike two hours up the mountain to reach the village, but since a new road was put in a year ago, the trip takes only 45 minutes. The village also got electricity for the first time a few months ago!

"It was sweet to spend time at the church there," Mr. Boyle said about those in the mountain village of Omiqila. "The people are timid, but truly are brothers and sisters in the Lord."

After the presbytery's informal examination in Mexico, Marcus Reyes and Lalo Peña

were invited to Vancouver where they were examined by the Church Extension Committee and then by the entire presbytery. Once accepted to come under care, the men gave a spontaneous testimony to God's goodness.

"I have been praying for a long time to find a church with similar views to my own," Reyes said with tears as he spoke to the presbytery. "I believe the Lord has brought us together." Lalo also expressed thanks and said that he appreciated the presbytery's taking the time to consider them.

Mr. Kimbro said, "I was impressed that not only are these men both very busy in outreach and pastoral work, but it is obvious that they both are spending much time in the study of the Word in order to bring strong and solid doctrine to all that they reach."

The moderator of the presbytery, Dr. Larry Saunders, commended Mr. Boyle for his faithful work in Mexico for these four years and expressed thanks for all that the Lord is doing there. ■



WHAT MAKES CHRISTIANITY UNIQUE?

Type “world religions” into Google and here’s what you get: “There are twelve classic world religions ...: Baha’i, Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Shinto, Sikhism, Taoism, and Zoroastrianism.” Simple enough.

Then type, “Which religion is right?” This answer is more complicated—“Each religion describes its ‘God’ or gods as the right one(s), and they are all different. By logic, either they are all false or only one is true.”

Note two of the points: (1) the God or gods of the religions are all different, and (2) only one God is true.

I agree that there is only one true God. Question 5 of the Westminster Shorter Catechism asks, “Are there more Gods than one?” The answer is definite: “There is but one only, the living and true God.” This answer is based solely on Christianity’s authority, the Bible. In Isaiah 44:6, God says, “I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.” Many other Bible verses say the same.

I believe this truth not only because it’s in the Bible, but because the God of the Bible and of biblical Christianity is unique. This is where I take exception with the point that the God or gods of the religions are all different.

Except for Christianity, all world religions, though *distinct*, are actually not that *different* from each other.* Their writings, leaders, gods, and message all share the same characteristic—they are man-centered. Their gods are fickle, their writings lack authority, their leaders are

fallible, and their message throws man upon himself for answers. Christianity, in contrast, is completely different from all other religions: its God is holy, its Scripture is infallible, its leader is divine, and, most importantly, its message points man away from himself to an all-sufficient Saviour, Jesus Christ. Theologically this is known as *grace*, and this is what makes Christianity unique!

Grace is about the sinner getting what he does not deserve—heaven, and not getting what he does deserve—hell.

When we talk about grace, we are speaking of the way God treats people in relation to eternal matters. In other words, why does God accept or reject men when they die? Does He accept them for the goodness that is in them? Does He accept them for the good they have done? Or does He accept them on the basis of grace alone?

The formal definition of grace is “the unmerited, unearned, undeserved favor of God.” This means that God favors man with forgiveness and salvation apart from anything that man does, apart from any effort, work, or merit. Grace is totally free.

Man cannot earn his salvation; God had to do that on his behalf. The message of grace is that God came in the flesh, in the person of Jesus Christ, and earned salvation by His obedience to God’s law as the believer’s substitute. Christ did this because the believer could not earn his own salvation since all man’s righteousnesses are “filthy rags” (Isaiah 64:6).

Grace is contrary to man’s common sense. It is not what man expects. As the psalmist says, “[God] hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities” (Psalm 103:10). We naturally expect the opposite to be true. We expect to be treated the way we deserve to be treated; we expect to be punished for our sins and iniquities. The idea of grace insults our deepest sense of justice and righteousness. Grace cannot be true, we say. But it is.

Grace is about the sinner getting what he does not deserve—heaven, and not getting what he does deserve—hell. Grace is the unmerited favor of God.

According to Romans 6:23 the only thing we’ve earned is death. Death is all we can legally claim as ours; it is what we have earned by our sin. But grace says that even though we deserve death, if we believe the gospel, we will be given eternal life: “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

So biblical Christianity offers grace. What do all the other religions offer? Works. Do some research on the major leaders of the world religions to see whether any of them had grace or offered it. Look at Zoroaster, the founder of Zoroastrianism in Iran; Buddha from India; Laozi, the founder of Taoism in China; Confucius from China; Mohammed from Arabia; Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism in India; and Baha’u’llah, the founder of the Baha’i faith—you will find that not one had or offered grace. All of these men—from the sixth century up through the nineteenth century—offered something utterly different from Christ. They offered works, self-merit!

Even pseudo-Christian religions reject grace. The Roman Catholic Church says, “We must perform good works. We must truly merit Heaven” (*Pocket Catechism*, St. Joseph edition, question 67). Mormonism and the Jehovah’s Witness cults say the same. Sadly, they see religion itself as the means of gaining the acceptance of God. Yet here again biblical Christianity is different.

The apostle Paul reminded Titus that God's favor is obtained "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy" (Titus 3:5). That's grace—the *undeserved* favor of God. Paul describes how undeserving any person is in light of God's favor: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8.)

But grace is not just a doctrine or concept; it is a person. Grace is the doctrine of God's unearned favor, but grace is also Jesus Christ. The Bible says that grace "came by [through] Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). Christ was the one who merited, earned, and deserved the favor of God on behalf of all those who trust Him. If you have trusted in Jesus Christ then you have grace.

One way to think about grace is to use the acronym GRACE: God's Riches At Christ's Expense. God's riches include justification, forgiveness, strength, help, and many other things. These all belong to those who belong to Christ by grace through faith. Is it any wonder the hymn writer joyously wrote, "Saved by grace alone! This is all my plea: Jesus died for sinful men, and Jesus died for me"?

Think about it: Jesus died for sinful men, and Jesus died for me! What a testimony! No follower of any other religious leader can say anything like it. When they must answer to God in the last day they will be speechless and lost.

What sets Christ and biblical Christianity apart from all the other religions of the world? Grace! You might have religion, but do you have grace?

*Note: I am broadening the discussion here to the religions, not just their God or gods. ☐



Rev. David DiCanio is a minister-at-large currently serving in Liberia.



Rev. David McClelland
is the minister of Grace Free
Presbyterian Church in Litch-
field, New Hampshire.

REWARDS FOR GOOD WORKS



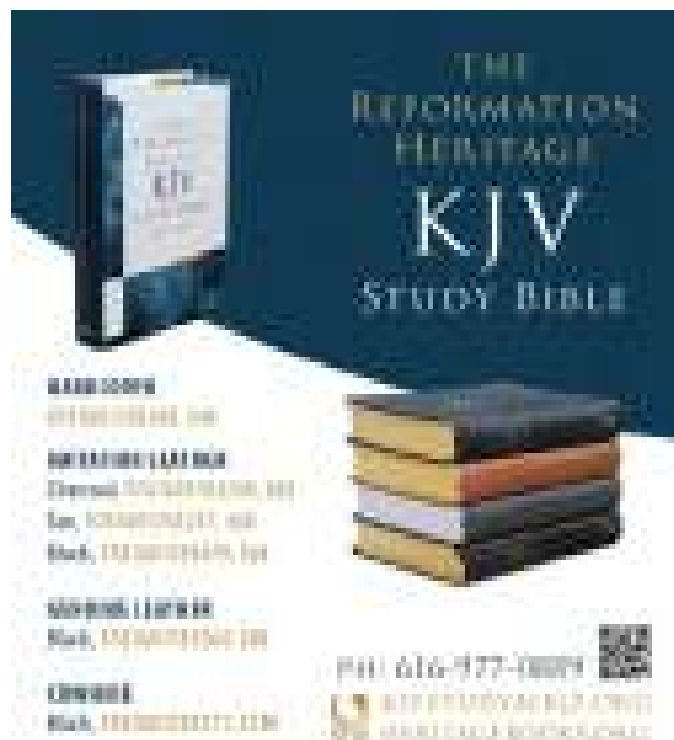
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the Lord's name. Are any of God's people experts at Christian service? Certainly there are no infallible servants and there are many weaknesses in our efforts at music, prayer, preaching, and witnessing. No two attempts to bear witness for Christ are equal. We sometimes shine for the Lord, while at other times we show forth very little light. We also know that when we succeed to some degree to be a good witness for the Lord, it is the Holy Spirit who enables us. When we are left to ourselves we don't do so well. However, our reward is not lost, for the Lord taught that even a single cup of cold water offered in Jesus' name shall not go unrecognized nor unrewarded.

When we quote the words of Isaiah to unconverted sinners that “we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags” (Isaiah 64:6), we speak the truth as it applies to unregenerate

men, for all attempts to honour God out of a heart that is dead in sin are rejected. However, that does not apply to a Christian, who is clothed in Christ's righteousness. When we seek to honor God according to His Word through faith in Christ, every effort to glorify the Lord is accepted and will be rewarded by God. We will have the "well done thou good and faithful servant." The Puritan Anthony Burgess taught, "For a work to be good it must be commanded by God, done by the Spirit of God coming from an inward principle of grace in a believer, and ultimately done for God's glory."

The Saviour said, “Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal” (Matthew 6:20). Born again Christians do this each time they serve the Lord with an eye to His glory. ❏





REFORMED RUNNERS BENEFIT GRS

Geneva Reformed Seminary thanks the Reformed Runners for their fundraising efforts this past October. A group of men and women with a passion for the Reformed tradition and the proclamation of the gospel of Christ throughout the world, the Reformed Runners has in the past run 100-plus-mile relays to raise money for foreign missions. In 2014 they ran to raise support for GRS. After months of training and spreading the word of the mission of Geneva Reformed Seminary, Reformed Runners raised over \$11,000. Dr. Charles Barrett, interim president of GRS said, "It is with humble gratitude that I thank the Reformed Runners for their efforts." If you would like to learn more about the ministry and mission of the Reformed Runners, please visit their website, reformedrunners.com.



NEW ELDERS FOR CLOVERDALE

On Thursday, October 9, during the presbytery's fall meeting in Cloverdale, British Columbia, Canada, two men were ordained as elders to serve in the Cloverdale congregation. The deputy moderator, Rev. Myron Mooney, led the service, and the clerk of presbytery, Rev. David Mook, asked the elders elect to answer the prescribed questions set by the presbytery. Both men answered in the affirmative and signed the Westminster Confession of Faith as a confession of their own faith.

With ministers and elders gathered around to lay on their hands, the moderator of presbytery, Dr. Larry Saunders, proceeded to ordain Mr. Andy Roersma and Mr. Alan Samuel as ruling elders. Dr. Saunders then preached a message from Hebrews 13, which commands elders to be faithful as overseers of the Lord's people. Toward the close of the meeting, the newly ordained

elders gave testimony of the Lord's grace in their lives and of their commitment to the work of the gospel. They requested that the presbytery members and the congregation pray for them that they would know God's help to fulfill their duties and live exemplary lives becoming elders with the care of precious souls. Rev. Ian Goligher, minister of the church, welcomed the men to the office of eldership and said he looked forward to their service in the church.

At the close of the service family members and friends of the new elders along with the members of presbytery were invited to enjoy refreshments and fellowship with the congregation.



KOREAN ORDINATION & INSTALLATION

Since the fall of 2013, when Rev. David Lee was called to his eternal home, the congregation of the Korean FPC in Taylors, South Carolina, has continued without an ordained minister and has prayed for the Lord's will to be done in supplying another pastor for the flock.

Towards late summer of 2014 Rev. Sanghoon Han, a native of Korea and assistant pastor in the congregation, obtained his H1B visa permitting him to take up paid employment in the U.S. Subsequent to the approval of his visa, the congregation issued him a unanimous call to be its senior minister. Mr. Han duly accepted the call and on Reformation Day, October 31, 2014,

he was ordained and installed as the minister of the congregation.

The ordination service was conducted by a specially convened commission of presbytery. Rev. Colin Mercer, who had acted as the interim moderator, led the service and called upon Dr. Charles Barrett, Rev. John Wager, and Rev. Richard Winston to participate. The prescribed questions were put to Mr. Han by the deputy clerk of presbytery, Rev. Reggie Kimbro, and the ordination was conducted by Rev. Myron Mooney, deputy moderator, who also preached the charge to the newly ordained minister.

We trust our brother, his wife, and two children will know God's blessing. Let all our readers pray for God's power to be upon the preaching of God's Word in Greenville KRPC and in the greater Korean community.



65TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY IN CALGARY

The Calgary congregation held a luncheon on November 2 to celebrate the 65th wedding anniversary of long-term members Mr. Howard and Mrs. Julia Ainslie. They were married at Magnetawan, Ontario, on October 22, 1949, during a "Scottish" mist. Thankfully, their love and their faith in Christ gave them a sound foundation for a full and blessed life. The congregation wishes them many more years together. Their family of two children, four grandchildren, and three great grandchildren were all in attendance at a family reunion in August in Calgary.

THOMASSIANS IN CALGARY

Rev. Armen Thomassian and his wife, Melanie, along with their two girls arrived safely in Calgary on January 21. They were greeted with excitement at the airport by a number of the people in the church. Even the weather was kind to them as the city was enjoying unseasonably mild temperatures. The attendance at all weekly

services has been most encouraging, with people of all ages showing good interest. In the will of the Lord the presbytery installation service for Mr. Thomassian will take place on March 6. Rev. and Mrs. David Park along with Mr. and Mrs. Norman Hanna, from Ballymoney FPC, are planning to attend. The Thomassians were members of the Ballymoney church for many years, and Armen served his internship in that church to complete his ministerial training with the Ulster presbytery. The Ballymoney congregation has shown whole-hearted support to our brother and his call from the Lord to minister in Calgary.



ORDINATION OF ELDERS AT FAITH FPC

On Wednesday, January 21, 2015, Dr. Paul Overly and Mr. Steven Lee were ordained by the presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of North America and installed to serve as ruling elders in Faith FPC in Greenville, South Carolina. Dr. Larry Saunders of Toronto FPC, who serves as the moderator, preached the charge to the newly ordained men and urged them to rest in the Lord. He reminded the congregation of God's unfailing power and urged a prayerful dependence upon Him. A large commission of presbytery was involved in the service with some ministers and elders being able to stay in the Greenville area for several days. This ordination service is especially encouraging as it follows the ordination of two elders in Cloverdale FPC, Canada, and the ordination of Rev. Sanghoon Han as the minister of the Korean FPC in Taylors, South Carolina.

Paul Overly, 53, trusted Christ as a child at his mother's knee. After some difficult teenage years, he returned to Christ during his senior year at Bob Jones University. He began attending Faith FPC in 1986, joining the membership in 1990. His approach to Scripture and to living the Christian life

bears the clear imprint of the ministries of Dr. Alan Cairns and Dr. Michael Barrett—men he considers spiritual mentors. At Faith FPC he has served in the music ministry, in vacation Bible school, and for one term as a deacon. Currently, he is part of a team ministering to the college-age students. Paul is a professor of music at Bob Jones University. He and his wife, Debbie, have been married for 27 years and have three children: Daniel (married to Alayna), David, and Claire.

Steven Lee, 42, was born in Seoul, South Korea, and emigrated with his family to Canada when he was two years old. He was saved under the ministry of Dr. Frank McClelland, pastor of Toronto Free Presbyterian Church. He moved to Greenville to attend BJU and has been a part of the FPC in North America for over thirty years. In 2000, he launched SermonAudio.com, now one of the largest libraries of free online sermons available on the Internet. Steven has served as a deacon of Faith FPC and serves on the board of New York Gospel Mission. Steven and his wife, Jamie, have been married for thirteen years and have five children (Katie, Calvin, Justin, Gracie, and Martin).

The Greenville church recently welcomed twelve new members into its fellowship. While some of the additions were transferring membership from

other Free Presbyterian congregations, the majority were new to the FPC. Pastor Colin Mercer said, "It is especially heartening to see the Lord work in this great way. As a congregation we are thankful for those who have joined with us and pray with them that they will be blessed among us."



MARY MOOK RETIRES

Mary Mook retired on December 19 after a 29-year career as a municipal employee of the City of Phoenix. In addition to her labors in her home and in Phoenix FPC, where she taught Sunday school and helped in the work of the Youth Fellowship among other activities, she rose through the ranks of the Water Services Department, retiring as the Administrative Assistant to the director of engineering in the Wastewater Services Division. Mary established a reputation for helpfulness to her colleagues, and one who learned of her plan to retire said, "You will be missed." Mary plans to continue her life of service to the Lord by working as a transcriptionist for a Phoenix-based company that plans to use her to convert insurance company interviews into text. The church in Phoenix thanks the Lord for her selfless life and her care for the work of Christ.



NEW KIMBRO BOOK

Rev. Reggie Kimbro has just published a new book, *Not as a Thief: A Historic Premillennial Perspective on the Rapture*. The book, which is available through Amazon.com, calls into question the viewpoint of the end times as depicted in the popular *Left Behind* series. Mr. Kimbro examines the evidence for a secret rapture and finds it lacking. Originally written as a research thesis for the Masters of Theology degree, the book has been altered and enlarged to appeal to a wider audience.



BLINDED

Brian Forrester

The town where I live invites weather jokes. We often chuckle that sometimes we get all four seasons in one day. In the winter and spring months we can start out warm and end up freezing, or start out freezing and end up hot. Forecasts don't always turn out as predicted, and you never know when you might need a sweater or an umbrella. It's better to have a sense of humor about the weather; otherwise, it can be a source of frequent frustration. But extreme weather changes are sometimes no laughing matter. That was the case on January 12, 1888, the day a sudden, monster blizzard brought death and disaster to the Great Plains.

After a seemingly endless stretch of cold and winter storms, Plains dwellers saw the warm, sunny morning of January 12 as an unusual but welcome change. Men headed to town for much-needed supplies as the snow around them melted. Children trotted off to school, some without their winter coats. Word had not gotten to them that a fierce blizzard was approaching—a wave of arctic air that would send temperatures plunging nearly 100 degrees, from 40 degrees above zero to more than 40 degrees below.

As skies darkened and the snowstorm hit, teachers had to choose whether to send their students home—and hope they got there in time—or keep them inside the school house to wait it out. One group of children in Great Plains, South Dakota, huddled in what had become a freezing school house. They may well have frozen to death, had they not been rescued by two quick-thinking men who strung a rope from the school building to a warmer shelter nearby. Clinging to this lifeline was the only hope they had for directing them through the blinding storm. One young student in Groton, Nebraska, was not so fortunate. As soon as the men of his town realized the storm was coming, they went to the school with heavy horse-drawn carts to pick up the children. Before boarding a cart, the boy ran back into the classroom to get something. When he came back out, the storm was already raging so wildly that he could not see the cart or horse. Having lost all sense of direction, he wandered about and would have perished if his brother hadn't found him.

More than 400 people are said to have died as a result of the blizzard of 1888. Because many of them were school children on their way home,

it is often called “The Children’s Blizzard.” When they set out for home, they were blind to the great danger that was coming, and once they were surrounded by it, they were blinded to any safe haven near them.

The unbeliever suffers from a blindness far more dangerous than the physical blindness many experienced on that January day long ago. A lost soul gives little thought to what lies ahead and to how soon or how swiftly the breath of life can be taken away. Because he or she chooses to ignore the danger, the lost person sees no need to seek shelter in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners.

The only hope the unbeliever has of seeing his or her great danger and then of coming to Christ, is for the Lord Himself to open spiritually blind eyes. The Lord states in Luke 4:18 that part of His mission in coming to earth was for the “recovering of sight to the blind.” Have you, dear young person, taken hold of the soul’s only lifeline—the Lord Jesus Christ? Christ and Christ alone can remove the threatening storm and lead you safely home.



A WORD WORTH KNOWING

Lifeline

A rope, sometimes around the deck of a ship, for crew or passengers to grasp to keep from going overboard, or an anchored line thrown to someone who is drowning.



FALL 2014



Nolan Bowman
Grace FPC (Winston-Salem, N.C.)



Elizabeth Kim
Korean FPC (Greenville, S.C.)



Emma Munger
Grace FPC (Winston-Salem, N.C.)

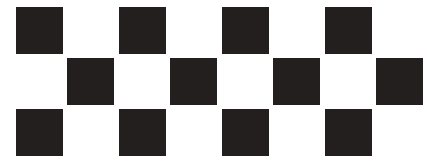


Jonathan Trimble
Grace FPC (Winston-Salem, N.C.)



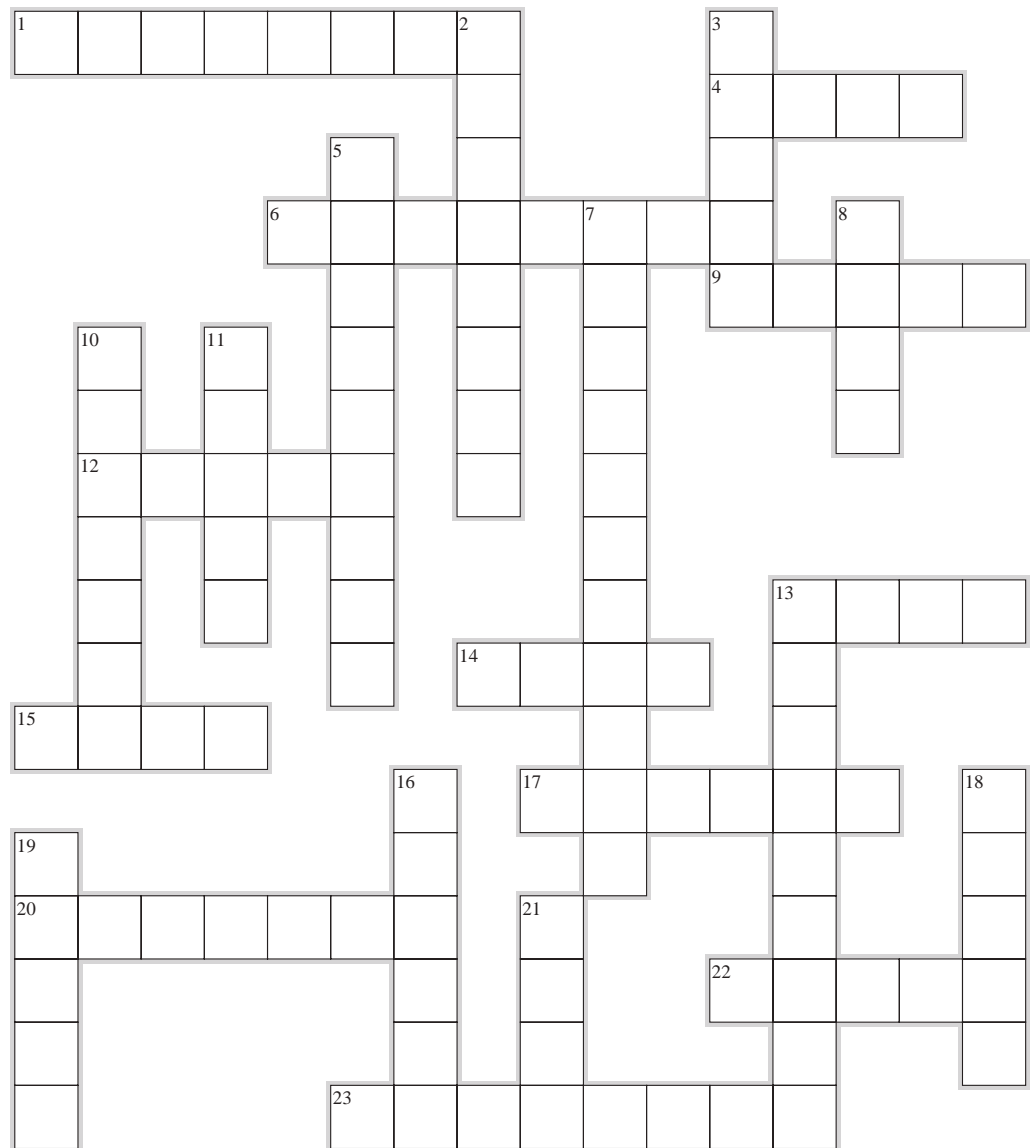
Sharon Trimble
Grace FPC (Winston-Salem, N.C.)

Kid's CROSSWORD Puzzle



Across

1. "Flesh and blood hath not ____ it." (Matthew 16:17)
4. "I have ordained a ____ for mine anointed." (Psalm 132:17)
6. "The ____ shall cover the earth." (Isaiah 60:2)
9. "Whose ____ the Lord opened." (Acts 16:14)
12. "He asked him if he saw ____." (Mark 8:23)
13. "And the eyes of them ____ were opened." (Genesis 3:7)
14. "Then the ____ of the blind shall be opened." (Isaiah 35:5)
15. "And he said, Amos, ____ seest thou?" (Amos 8:2)
17. "The hearing ear, and the ____ eye." (Proverbs 20:12)
20. "The LORD will ____ my darkness." (2 Samuel 22:29)
22. "By all the prophets, and by all the ____." (2 Kings 17:13)
23. "A light to lighten the ____." (Luke 2:32)
8. "And they ____ the blind man." (Mark 10:49)
10. "As the blind ____ in darkness." (Deuteronomy 28:29)
11. "And the ass saw the ____." (Numbers 22:23)
13. "Because of the ____ of their heart." (Ephesians 4:18)
16. "For thou wilt light my ____." (Psalm 18:28)
18. "Thou God ____ me." (Genesis 16:13)
19. "Bring in hither the poor, ... and the ____." (Luke 14:21)
21. "I will ____ up mine eyes." (Psalm 121:1)



Down

2. "Let their eyes be ____." (Psalm 69:23)
3. "Yet in my ____ shall I see God." (Job 19:26)
5. "Stand still, and see the ____ of the LORD." (Exodus 14:13)
7. "The eyes of your understanding being ____." (Ephesians 1:18)

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 March 29, 2014. 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.

JANUARY 21

Ordination of elders in Greenville FPC

MARCH 6

Installation service for Rev. Armen Thomassian as minister of Calgary FPC

MAY 11–15

Presbytery Meeting and Week of Prayer, Grace FPC, Litchfield, New Hampshire

MAY 29

Graduation Day at Geneva Reformed Seminary

JULY 11-18

Free Presbyterian Youth Camp at Rock Mountain Bible Camp, Pennsylvania

JULY 20-27

Presbytery Youth Outreach Initiative at Toronto FPC



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