



CURRENT

QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA

VOL. 10/No. 3 Summer 2021

SUPPLICATION

MAN IN A SELF-
SUSTAINING WORLD

TRIBUTES TO
DEAR FRIENDS

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Subscriptions

Current is published quarterly by the Free Presbyterian Church of North America (www.fpcurrent.com). 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, Dr. Stephen Pollock. Copy Editor, Jill Saunders. Graphic Design, Moorehead Creative Designs. Printer, GotPrint.com.

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SUPPLICATION

Dr. Stephen Pollock

I think I must have been nine or ten years old when I was taught ACTS. I wasn't learning about the book between John and Romans, but rather a clever acrostic to help guide in prayer—Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication. I think it must have helped because I still remember learning it! But supplication? What did that mean?

As I've grown in grace, I've come to understand that true prayer is founded mostly on ACT. We pray in our relationship with the Lord. We praise and worship. We confess sin and thank the Lord for His mercy. I'm not suggesting that we always do this very well, but this is the essence of prayer. We should do more ACT, but we tend to focus on the "S". Even here we need direction, for as we offer supplications, we battle with praying for the wrong things or for the right things with the wrong motives.

There is no question that we have biblical warrant for supplication as part of our praying. In Philippians, Paul connects supplication with requests. "Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy" (Philippians 1:4). The word for *prayer* in this verse is the same as is translated *supplication* in Philippians 4:6. Supplication involves approaching God and presenting requests to Him, yet these texts show that supplication means more than simply making a request or petition to God. This word denotes an approach to God out of a sense of need and urgency. It conveys the idea of our utter inadequacy to do anything and our utter dependence on God for all things. Supplication comes from a heart convinced of the truth of Jesus' words: "Without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5).

The requests presented in our supplications to the Lord must have a biblical warrant. "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us" (1 John 5:14). The will of God is revealed for us in the Word of God. This issue of *Current* is based on the theme of supplication. You'll find several short articles dealing with various biblical supplications. We need the Word of God to inform us not only *how* to pray, but also *what* to pray for. I make supplication to the Lord that these articles will be a blessing to you. I pray that we'll not neglect ACT, and that we'll improve on the "S" component of prayer. ■

SUMMER 2021

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

(Philippians 4:6)



NEW MODERATOR

The presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of North America met via Zoom during the second week of May 2021. Part of the business was to elect officers of the presbytery. Rev. Geoff Banister was elected as the new moderator, replacing Rev. Ian Goligher who served with great dignity and wisdom over the past three years. Rev. Banister has been married to Sandra for forty-five years and they have four children and ten grandchildren. He is in his twentieth year as pastor of the FPC of Indianapolis having graduated from Bob Jones University with a BA in Bible in 1983 and from the Whitefield College of the Bible (now Geneva Reformed Seminary) in 1985. Please keep Rev. Banister in prayer as he assumes this vital role in our denomination.

At the end of the presbytery, many members paid fulsome tribute to the outgoing Clerk of Presbytery, Rev. David Mook. Rev. Mook is retiring from the ministry of Phoenix FPC in June and felt it was time to step down as clerk after thirteen years of service. Words cannot do justice to Rev. Mook's work. He has given himself for the good of the Lord's work in presbytery using all of his many skills to ensure the smooth operating of presbytery business. We know that the Lord does not forget such a labor of love (Hebrews 6:10).

The new Executive Committee is Rev. Geoff Banister, Moderator; Rev. Larry Saunders, Deputy Moderator; Rev. Stephen Pollock, Clerk; Rev. Ian Goligher, Deputy Clerk; and Mr. George Robinson, Treasurer. Please pray for these men and the work of the presbytery.

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PRAYING FOR REVIVAL

We often talk about revival, and wonder what it would be like to experience a mighty outpouring of God the Holy Spirit in revival power. We have probably mentioned revival in our prayers from time to time, but what is revival? Revival has been described as a Divine intervention in the normal course of spiritual things. It is a manifest working of God the Holy Spirit. Human personalities are overshadowed, and human programs are abandoned as God reveals Himself to saint and sinner alike in awful holiness and irresistible power.

Pray with Passion

We need to pray with a passion for revival. The great Scottish reformer, John Knox, would often cry out to God in prayer, "Give me Scotland or I die." That's the cry of a man who had a passion for a move of the Spirit of God in his land. Many years later, two elderly sisters in the same land, Peggy and Christine Smith, were unable to attend public worship, as Peggy was blind and Christine was crippled with arthritis. Their humble cottage became a sanctuary, where they met with God. They had a passion for revival and so they prayed and claimed the promise, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground" (Isaiah 44:3). They pleaded this promise before God day and night. God wonderfully and graciously answered their prayers, and the Isle of Lewis revival was the result. Revival came as two aged saints laid hold on God in prayer, pleading His promises.

Was it not revival that Elijah had on his heart when he prayed to the God of Israel to send down fire from heaven, and turn the hearts of the people from worshipping dumb idols and false gods, to worshipping the one living and true God? The Lord heard Elijah's prayer and He answered. And when the fire fell, the people cried out, "The Lord he is the God; the Lord he is the God." Christ was revealed as the sacrifice was consumed and not the guilty people. Revival had come.

We believe that the God of Elijah still answers prayer. Let us call upon God for mercy so that we will see men and women abandoning their sin.

Pray for Power

We need God the Holy Spirit to work by His power in the hearts of saved and unsaved, as He did on the Day of Pentecost. God's servants spent their days in prayer in an upper room in Jerusalem, waiting in anticipation for "the promise of the Father." Then, suddenly "there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting...and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost..." (Acts 2:2,4). Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, went forth and preached Christ unto the people in the city, and "about three thousand souls" were saved. The believers had prayed for power, Peter preached with power, and the Holy Spirit worked by His power. A breath of revival swept through Jerusalem.

Pray with Purpose

Surely, if we want to see and experience revival in our day, we need to pray with purpose. We must be willing to give ourselves to laying hold on God and saying, "Not until thou bless me, will I let thee go." Matthew Henry said, "When God intends great mercy for His people, the first thing He does is to set them praying." When God moved in revival blessing in the days of George Whitefield, the great evangelist said, "Sometimes whole nights were spent in seeking God's face in prayer; often we have been overwhelmed with the Divine presence, saying how dreadful is this place, this is none other than the house of God, the gate of heaven."

Such accounts of revival blessing should surely stir us to give ourselves to praying with purpose for a mighty moving of God the Holy Spirit in revival blessing. Special times of prayer, nights of prayer—God has given us every encouragement to seek His face for revival. He has said, "Call unto me and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not" (Jeremiah 33:1). ■



Rev. Reginald Cranston
Minister of Port Hope FPC,
Port Hope, ON

PRAYING FOR THE NATION & ITS LEADERS

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty (1 Timothy 2:1, 2).

When Paul calls for prayer for kings and for all in authority, he does not introduce anything new to the Christian's practice. Centuries earlier, when Jeremiah wrote to the Jews in captivity in Babylon, he instructed them to "seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace."

Such a precept is in keeping with what Paul writes in Romans 13:1-4. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." A few verses later he states the purpose that civil authorities are to serve: "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."

The Christian may find himself challenged when those in authority seem to have little or no regard for good or evil, but only what serves their own personal ambitions. This is where prayer enters the picture. The Christian should pray that those that rule over him may distinguish right from wrong based on what God says in His Word rather than by the direction the political winds are blowing. Deep down in his heart, every civil ruler does know right from wrong whether he's a Christian or not (Romans 1:32). Very often it can be a matter of needed courage more than a matter of knowledge of right and wrong. And so the Christian should pray that those in civil authority will not only have the right convictions, but will also have the courage of those convictions. Pray that they'll be ruled by the fear of God rather than the fear of man (Proverbs 29:25).

Keep in mind that the civil authorities at the time Paul was writing to Timothy were not exactly God-fearing, Christ-honoring men. More than once Paul found himself being mistreated by the civil authorities. A number of his epistles, including this one to Timothy, were written from prison; however, he never lost sight that God was on the throne and that "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will" (Proverbs 21:1). This is why we pray!

So how should the Christian pray for those in civil authority? He should pray that they would know something of

the fear of the Lord and have a sense of their accountability to Him. Of course, the best way to learn the fear of the Lord is through salvation, so pray for the salvation of your civil rulers. Pray also that the Lord will keep restraints on whatever evil policies they may be contemplating and that the Lord would be pleased to raise up Daniels or Mordecais to influence them in the ways of the Lord. Finally, don't forget to pray for yourself that, as the Lord gives you seasons of peace and quiet in answer to your prayers, you'll make the most of such blessings by striving to live in all godliness and honesty. Pray as well for the needed grace to stand true to Christ no matter what laws contrary to God's laws civil rulers impose on you. Even from a prison cell Paul was confident that the gospel would still advance (Philippians 1:12-14). Therefore, all of the Christian's praying, including his praying for civil authorities, should be subordinate to the petition Christ Himself gave us to pray: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." ❧



Rev. Geoff Banister
Minister of Indianapolis
FPC, Indianapolis, IN



PRAYING FOR THE *Lost*

The concept of a Christian earnestly seeking God to have mercy upon lost sinners has a great deal of biblical warrant. We are not short of examples in Scripture of praying for the lost: Abrahams persistent pleas for Sodom; Christ weeping over Jerusalem; and Paul's remarkable words in Romans 10:1, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved." Such prayer is a natural, practical extension of the many wonderful gospel invitations and promises.

For many believers, this matter comes close to home, in that many of us pray over unconverted children and loved ones. Paul's words, cited above, give us important instruction and encouragement.

Prayer for the lost springs out of a desire in the heart. This state of heart lovingly longs for the spiritual welfare of those still in sin. Paul's concern for sinners was a deep-seated burden that lay at his heart. His was not a cold, clinical, professional concern (Romans 9:1-3). Rather, this is a wonderful reflection of the love which compelled Christ to become accursed to secure the salvation of the lost.

In addressing these words to his spiritual brethren, Paul indicates that every child of God should cultivate a similar burden! How much we need an experience of the love of Christ for the lost worked into our hearts to enable us to pray for the unsaved. It

was an understanding of Christ's love for him that constrained Paul to act as he did (2 Corinthians 5:14). There are many things that people may need, and which may be properly prayed for, but none is greater than the sinner's need for salvation. Paul's prayer priority was that sinners be rescued from sin.

It is obvious that he offered his prayer to God. The desire for the salvation of the lost must be converted into active supplication for God to have mercy. It is not the love of the burdened heart but the powerful, direct intervention of God that can alone save the sinner, for salvation is of the Lord.

It is God Himself whom we must deal with for the souls of men. An understanding of the being and character of God is ever a discipline for the Christian to be careful, deliberate, and diligent in prayer. Yet the way to God is fully opened to us through Christ. We have free access to His very presence and a claim upon His grace and power in the Savior.

The large scope of Paul's desire and subsequent prayer is revealed in the words "for Israel". Paul prayed for a whole nation of sinful Christ-rejecters! In Romans 11:28 he acknowledges them to be the bitter enemies of the gospel! With wicked hands this nation had crucified the Savior (Acts 2:23). They must have seemed to be inveterate sinners and utterly impervious to the gospel. Yet, for such Paul prays! If we follow Paul's example we can surely

pray for sinners that may appear to be beyond hope.

A question looms large over these words. What did such praying accomplish? Paul recognized the sovereign purpose of God in salvation with reference to this very matter. His words in Romans 11:5 indicate that he understood that there was a remnant according to the election of grace out of the nation. His petition was humbly subjected to the sovereign purpose of God and the salvation of this remnant was an answer to his prayers! No doubt Paul was directly involved in the salvation of many Jews, and therefore, saw this prayer answered before his eyes. Paul also prayed in the assurance of a future salvation of Israel alluded to in Romans 11:25-26, when he writes that "all Israel shall be saved" when the Redeemer comes to Zion to deliver the nation from sin.

We may not immediately see all of the answers to our prayers for the lost. So much of the prayer made by God's people is invested in the future. As we desire and pray as Paul did, let us be encouraged that it may please God to work in answer to those petitions both now and far into the future according to His will. ☒



Rev. Andrew Foster
Minister of Penticton FPC,
Penticton, BC



PRAYING FOR LABORERS

Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest (Matthew 9:37-38).

Leonhard Keyser was a friend and disciple of Reformer Martin Luther. He was condemned to be executed and as he drew near the stake, he looked at the large crowd gathered and cried out, “Behold the harvest—O Master send forth thy labourers.” These were his last words. The problem here, and also in the Lord’s day, was a shortage of laborers. This is still one of the overwhelming problems in our church today. There is much preaching and evangelizing to be done, but the number to do the work is few. In this great need for laborers, the Lord encourages His people to pray to the Lord of the harvest, God Himself, in whose hand “is the soul of every living thing and the breath of all mankind.”

THE HARVEST IS PLENTIFUL

The Lord conveys to His disciples the present state of men’s souls by using the analogy of a crop, rich and ready to be harvested: “the harvest truly is plentiful.” He sees the multitude before Him as a crop ready to be harvested. On another occasion, He uses a similar analogy when He tells His disciples, “Lift up your eyes and look on the fields for they are white already to harvest” (John 4:35). In the gospel harvest, it pleases the Lord through the preaching of the

Word to gather in a harvest of souls.

LABORERS ARE FEW

Ministers of God are laborers under God, sent of the Lord to preach the gospel. The Lord chooses and employs men, as He did the disciples, with power and authority to minister in His name. Only the Lord can send out laborers who are willing in the day of His power. These are the laborers the church needs today. Every subsequent generation has felt the need for more men called of God to proclaim the riches of Christ; however, the church itself cannot equip or qualify men and send them forth for this task. Our desire is that God will call and empower men to fill our pulpits and fill the great need in our mission fields.

PRAY YE THEREFORE

The Lord’s burden in Matthew 9 was that the people being led astray by the current spiritual leaders would hear His words and be brought to saving truth. He saw them as sheep without a shepherd. As the disciples gathered around Him, the Lord Jesus instructed them to simply pray. Much prayer of the early church was offered up to God also in regard to Saul of Tarsus, that God would stop the trail of persecution against the church. God’s response was not only the miraculous conversion of Saul, but the miraculous calling of Paul as “a chosen vessel unto me to bear my

name amongst the Gentiles.”

When a church begins to pray seriously, all things are possible with God. God sends forth laborers in response to the prayers of His people. Prayer is something every Christian can do. Not all will be called of God to be laborers in far off fields, but we can all commit ourselves to earnestly labor in prayer to the Lord of the harvest.

Today, the urgency and need is much the same as it was in the days of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the days of Leonhard Keyser. If we faithfully pray to the Lord, we will have a caring and compassionate heart like the Lord Jesus. Many of our vacant pulpits and needs in the mission fields have been filled as a result of the prayers of God’s people. Prayer is the God-appointed means whereby the hearts of laborers respond to the call of God, ensuring the survival and progress of the Lord’s work in our denomination. The Lord waits to hear our prayers. I encourage you all to seek the Lord and in doing so, your own souls will be blessed and refreshed knowing that God has heard your prayers. ■



Rev. Anthony D'Addurno
Minister of Barrie FPC, Barrie,
ON

PRAYING FOR FELLOW CHURCH MEMBERS



The prayer life of a Christian is the health meter of the soul. As the hymn writer James Montgomery aptly put it, “Prayer is the soul’s sincere desire...the motion of a hidden fire that trembles in the breast.” Our prayer life forges vital communication between us and the Lord. An important dimension of that should be intercession for our brothers and sisters in Christ, particularly those within our own church fellowship. Praying for others is a spiritual investment that will not only benefit those we pray for, but our own souls. Andrew Murray said, “Just like the Lord, each believing intercessor has his own immediate circle for whom he first prays. Parents have their children, teachers their pupils, pastors their flocks, all workers their special charge, all believers those whose care lies upon their hearts. It is of great consequence that intercession should be personal, pointed, and definite.”

Praying for other believers is “just like the Lord”—the pattern of Christ—who said to Peter, “I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not” (Luke 22:32). It is a gracious privilege, a selfless act, and one that encourages unity in the fellowship. It helps to heal misunderstandings and shrivels the root of bitterness. Holding up a brother or sister struggling with turmoil strengthens a weak heart and honors our Father in heaven.

One verse that illustrates the heart of praying for fellow believers is Galatians 6:2, “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” Burdens are weights. When we are overloaded

with the cares of this life and its responsibilities, sometimes the weight can be overwhelming. At such times, it is an encouragement to have a brother or sister lift up our name, our cause, our trial, to the throne of grace. Burden-bearing in prayer for one another is a vital ministry that is the privilege and duty of every Christian.

The God-glorifying result of bearing one another’s burdens is fulfilling the “law of Christ.” The law of Christ is the whole compendium of teaching in the gospel. It is all that Christ taught about loving our neighbor as ourselves. It is at the core of what selfless service to others means. It is impossible to fully comprehend how the “law of Christ” can be distilled down to such a simple expression of bearing the needs of others. But this is how the Lord thinks. And we would all be wise to consider deeply the things that God values most. It is more often the seemingly small things that God takes the most pleasure in. This behavior is near to the heart of God. Proverbs 17:17 says, “A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.” When we reach out to someone in time of adversity, we are showing the true nature of Christ’s love. He leads the way as a Friend who loves us at all times and an elder Brother who ever lives “to make intercession for us” (Hebrews 7:25). Reaching out in prayer is Christ-like.

Are we too busy or preoccupied to do this ministry for others? Perhaps

the illustration of Samuel’s prayer for Israel is relevant here. Israel desired a king and Samuel gave them God’s warning about the consequences, but they persisted. Their choice cost the nation when God revealed His displeasure. As the people repented for ignoring God’s warning, they pleaded with Samuel to pray for them. They didn’t deserve his prayers, but they needed his intercession on their behalf. Samuel could have told them, “I told you so” but he responded lovingly, “Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you” (1 Samuel 12:23). May the sin of neglecting others not be crouching at our door. It can happen so easily with demanding schedules and burdens of our own. If so, we need to seek God for help and guidance, so that we don’t grieve Him by our lack of engagement at the throne of grace on behalf of others.

Praying for one another within the church membership is a worthy sacrifice. A good place to start is by taking the names from the church address book or the list of members and adherents and praying down through the list—not robotically, but with the purpose of helping to ease those burdens in their life. This kind of meaningful praying will please the Lord, benefit others, and greatly enrich your own spiritual life. ❏



Dr. Larry Saunders
Minister of Toronto FPC
Toronto, ON



Jesus taught His disciples to pray in part, “Give us this day our daily bread” (Matthew 6:11). It is the petition that follows the words at the opening of the Lord’s Prayer. The initial petitions focus on the glory of God, the kingdom of God, and the will of God. Christ’s message to the disciples was that prayer needs to concentrate on those divine objectives before any concern about the problems that believers face in the routine of daily life.

Nevertheless, the inclusion of this particular petition evokes the experience of the children of Israel in the wilderness over the span of forty years. Since they could not engage in farming, God sustained them day by day with the provision of manna. On each of five days, the people found the manna on the ground after the evaporation of the dew, and their instruction was to gather only as much as they needed for that day. Anything that was left over bred worms and stank. But on the sixth day, the eve of the Sabbath, the people were to gather enough for two days so that they would not have to leave their tents on the Sabbath. Some who were foolish went out on the Sabbath despite the warnings and found no manna. The message was that the daily provision did not require the violation of the Sabbath commandment.

The experience of the Israelites in the wilderness witnessed God’s concerns for the physical welfare of His people. Yet, it also underscored that the people

were not to take God’s miraculous provision for granted. Their going out to gather their daily manna was a way of praying, “Give us this day our daily bread.” The people of God must depend on God every day for the supply of their basic needs.

The answer to Question 104 in the Shorter Catechism is that we pray in the fourth petition, “That of God’s free gift we may receive a competent portion of the good things of this life, and enjoy His blessing with them.” At the same time, the petition limits the extent of the prayer. Christ’s wish, according to William Hendriksen in his *Commentary on Matthew* was for “his disciples to be moderate in their desires and requests.”

Christ taught His disciples that they must approach the challenges of each day humbly, recognizing that even the necessities are those things for which they must depend on the Lord. This petition is the confession that, though a believer has a livelihood and means of support on which that believer may reasonably depend, the meeting of the needs of this life requires God’s daily provision. Thus, it is not in vain for the believer to pray, “Give us this day our daily bread.”

Christ impressed on His disciples the truth that God takes care of His people. In the same chapter of Matthew, He urged them to seek the kingdom of God and His

righteousness first. Then, they would find that all the material things they needed, whether food or raiment or housing or other means of support, would be their portion.

The spirit of this petition runs against the delusion of this age in the pursuit of prosperity for its sake. Christ taught His disciples to be content with such things as God provided for them each day. Years later, Paul wrote from a prison to the believers in Philippi. He said, “I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content” (Philippians 4:11).

In his words is the great challenge of the fourth petition. The needs are great, but their boundary is that of a single day. Therefore, the petition aims at the cultivation of contentment in the place of anxiety. Concerns about financial challenges are natural and anxiousness about the ability to provide for everyday needs often arises. But those who seek the Lord as Christ has directed them will find that they arrive at the place of which Paul spoke—the place of contentment and peace. It could be that one of the lessons of the events of the past year in the world is to refocus our praying on those things we need for each day. ❧



Rev. David G. Mook
Retired Minister of Phoenix
FPC, Peoria, AZ

Adjunct professor in the field
of practical theology at GRS

Tribute to Dr. Mark Allison

by Rev. Geoff Banister



If you have ever corresponded with Dr. Mark Allison, you will know that his signature verse at the bottom of his emails was Habakkuk 2:4, “The just shall live by faith.” The doctrine of justification by faith certainly characterized Dr. Allison’s vision and burden. Even before he joined Faith Free Presbyterian Church (FFPC), he carefully scrutinized the churches he visited to be sure their understanding and appreciation of that foundational truth met his expectations. He was very concerned that this great doctrine of the Reformation was not understood or emphasized enough in fundamental churches throughout America. Where the light of such an important truth diminishes, churches become more driven by guilt than by salvation. The Christian life becomes a life of bondage rather than the life of a soul set free to follow Christ by God’s grace.

When Dr. Alan Cairns was called to be the minister of FFPC, Dr. Allison was a regular Sunday guest in his home. During those times of fellowship, Dr. Allison shared his vision that the truth of justification be established again in the pulpit ministries across America and beyond. This focus, of course, dovetailed with Dr. Cairns’ vision that Christ be preached, i.e., that every doctrine and duty and relationship taught in the Bible be viewed through the lens of the person and work of Christ.

Once Dr. Allison joined Faith Free, it didn’t take long for the members of the church to recognize that he was wise beyond his years. He soon became one of the youngest men in the church to be ordained as an elder. During this time, he had been pursuing various degrees in the School of Religion at Bob Jones University until he had earned just about every degree that it could confer. His academic accomplishments included a BA in Bible, a Master’s degree in Theology, followed by a Master of Divinity degree, and eventually a PhD in Old Testament studies with his dissertation being written on the topic of Creation.

Dr. Allison was recognized by many as one who very carefully sought the Lord’s will in every decision of his life. He knew how to patiently wait for the Lord’s leading. This was especially the case in marriage so that many of his peers thought he was perhaps too patient. They were pleasantly surprised when he became engaged to Miss Charlene Killian who became his wife. Sometime later, they welcomed a beautiful baby girl, Hannah, who would grow up to love and serve Jesus and would be very close to her father throughout his days on Earth.

Since its inception, Dr. Allison was involved with the seminary which eventually became Geneva Reformed

Seminary. His main reason for pursuing a PhD at Bob Jones University was to equip himself to serve in the training of ministers. In 2016, the presbytery issued a call to Dr. Allison to become the next president of GRS. In this particular instance, he knew immediately that the Lord wanted him to serve in this role. He was certainly equipped for it, bringing with him years of pastoral experience, including sixteen years in Malvern, PA, as well as his academic achievements. Dr. Allison always had ready access to everything he ever learned. He was also gentle and approachable. You could count on him to be straightforward with you, while being kind and gracious at the same time. Dr. Cairns referred to him as one of the best biblical counselors a Christian could hope to find.

Dr. Mark Allison will be greatly missed, but it seems appropriate that he joins Dr. Cairns in glory as the two labored together for many years. They leave an invaluable legacy to future generations and an influence that will be felt in the FPC for decades to come. Now we who are left in this world anxiously anticipate the coming day when we will join them both when all who follow Christ will be “openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all eternity” (*Shorter Catechism*, question 38). ■

Kim's Journals

Mrs. Kim Wagner was called home on June 10, 2021. The following excerpt from the funeral Order of Service written by Kim's husband, Rev. John Wagner, has been reprinted with his permission. May the reader be edified and encouraged by Kim's testimony.



Kim had several journal-type books which consisted mainly of verses that spoke especially to her as she read her Bible. However, sometimes she made a little personal note of what she was thinking or how she was feeling at the time. Through these little windows into her heart, you could see that she often thought on her sins, failures, and weaknesses in the light of the Lord's amazing grace and unending mercy. One of the very last things she penned in her journal was

I am Thine. O how can it be?? With all my unworthiness, sin.

It was amazing to her that she would be found among those who could say, "O I am my Beloved's and my Beloved's mine! He brings a poor, vile sinner into His house of wine." She loved to sing, "My sin—oh the bliss, of this glorious thought—My sin, not in part, but the whole, Is nailed to His Cross, and I bear it no more! Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!" As the disease progressed, she became weaker and weaker, unable to do much of anything for herself. When it reached the point when her handwriting was barely legible, she scribbled these words from the hymn "Abide with Me":

Help of the helpless.

She didn't like being dependent on people for everything because, as she often put it, "I don't want to be a bother." So, she persevered in trying to do as much as she could around the home, in spite of the constraints of a walker. However, she knew the day would come when she would no longer be able to walk, and she dreaded it. But the Lord slowly took that ability away from her. It was not easy to accept, but God gently led her to the place where she was also able to write these words in her journal:

Taste and see that the Lord is good. Not just what He gives us, but Himself. He is good. He is sufficient. He is more than sufficient. I don't need to walk to be content. I don't need to walk to be happy. I just need Christ. I just need you, Lord.

All of the hymns in the service were the ones Kim wanted to be sung at her funeral. She wanted them to be to "the praise of his glorious grace." Found among those heart-thoughts she jotted down here and there is this prayer which God answered abundantly:

May I live out my days bringing honor to Thy name desiring to bring glory to Thee alone.

MAN IN A SELF-SUSTAINING WORLD

We know very little about the pre-Curse world beyond the Garden of Eden. Since Adam and Eve were to “dress” and “keep” the Garden (Genesis 2:15) it appears logical that the rest of the world would be able to exist without human intervention. Thanks to a few Scripture descriptions and a fossil record, the antediluvian world is a bit less obscure. But it seems safe to assume that it was also able to maintain itself without human intervention.

Our increasingly detailed observations of the present world present a variety of biomes. A biome is a large area of similar environmental conditions in which plants and animals co-exist. Examples include deserts, grasslands, tropical forests, pine forests, savannas, chaparrals, tundras, etc. Some ecologists include aquatic biomes like swamps, estuaries, lakes, rivers, coral reefs, and the like. Some scientists recognize eight biomes, others list dozens. While all biomes have plant and animal interactions with the environment, a primary commonality is that they do just fine without human intervention.

God made the world “very good” (Genesis 1:31). After Adam’s sin, God “cursed” the ground (Genesis 3:17). It still works—just not as well. Although sin results in today’s environmental “groaning” and “travailing” (Romans 8:22), natural biomes are still self-sustaining. The intricate inner workings of a self-sustaining biome is sometimes called the “balance of nature.” But, as one theologian put it, “The balance of nature we observe today is but a shadow of the perfection God originally created.”

The interactions between living and non-living things in an environment

are not static. Biomes quickly deal with an overly wet year, a late cold spell, a mid-winter thaw. The occasional significant upset, like volcanic eruptions, major floods, and fires may appear to destroy the biome, but given time the area’s naturally occurring biome will return. After a major fire, for example, it may take decades and have several intermediary phases, but the forest will regrow and the animals will return. The process of a natural biome reestablishing itself is called *ecological succession*. Although it can be helped along, even major disruptions of a biome do not mandate human intervention. Ecological succession appears to be a natural process.

KINDS OF LIVING THINGS

Ecologists generally group living things into two occupational groups: producers and consumers. Producers take non-living materials and “make food.” Plants and plant-like microorganisms use water, air, and light to carry on photosynthesis which provides their sustenance. They are producers. Consumers, like animals, fungi, and similar microorganisms “eat food.” All living things in a biome are either producers or consumers (with the exception of some microorganisms that can be both).

There is, however, another occupation an organism may have in an environment: a manager. A manager changes the environment to suit its needs. While a bird’s nest or a mole’s hole could be considered managerial changes, they are insignificant. No ecological succession needed. Beavers, however, are an example of a more significant ecological manager. They build dams. The trees and other

vegetation in the flooded area die; land animals move out and aquatic organisms move in. Beavers maintain and extend their dams for generations, significantly changing the area for decades. In time, however, their work is abandoned. The dam falls apart, the stream returns, and ecological succession begins. This appears true of all ecological managers, with one possible exception: man.

THE ULTIMATE MANAGER: MAN

Since humans do not carry on photosynthesis, ecologically we are consumers. There are people who believe that man should only consume what the unmanaged world supplies. Plant no crops. Domesticate no animals. Humans should be what can be termed “ecological nibblers,” not managers. There have been groups that lived without managing the environment. Today there are people who hold that ecological nibbling should be the extent of human use of the environment. Generally these people have a pantheistic worldview (See *Current*, vol. 10, no. 2, Spring 2021).

There are Christians who hold that since Adam and Eve were “ecological nibblers,” today we can help “usher in the Kingdom” and “do our part to reverse the curse” by becoming vegetarians, or better yet, vegans. Some assume that since this was man’s original diet, it must be the appropriate human diet.

Two considerations for these-well meaning Christians. First, attempting to be like Adam and Eve does not erase original sin nor an individual’s sins. Cleansing from sin is only available through Christ’s blood. Only the risen Savior can reverse sin’s curse of spiritual death. By creating a new heaven and a new earth and giving Christian’s new physical bodies, Christ will also remove the physical effects of the Curse. Just as only the sinless Christ could die to save our souls, only God can reverse the physical effects of the Curse. Changing one’s diet does neither.

Second, God gave humans instruction to eat meat. While most of us would probably be healthier by eating more fruits and vegetables, eliminating meat and animal products from our diet is

not medically prudent, nor is it recommended in Scripture. While a person may choose to eat only certain things because he wants to, such a position is not supported in Scripture for physical or spiritual reasons (Genesis 9:3; 1 Corinthians 8:8).

Natural biomes only support so much “ecological nibbling.” This greatly limits the size of a nibbler’s population. God, however, instructs man to “be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth” and to do this we are to “subdue” the physical world (Genesis 1:28-29). God places animals under man’s dominion (Genesis 9:1-7) and Scripture gives many examples of human use of animals for food and labor. Put in modern terms, these Divine instructions and examples indicate that humans are to be ecological managers to support population growth. The question becomes, “How should we subdue the various biomes of the earth?”

For centuries man was limited to what combined muscular strength and natural building materials (wood, stone, metals) could do. During this time many developed a “macho attitude” toward the environment. “It’s me against the elements. I have to force the land to feed, clothe, and shelter my family. It’s the sweat of my brow against those thorns and thistles.”

During most of human history our ecological managing was like the beaver’s pond. With much effort we could clear the forest, plant a crop, harvest it, and maintain the area as farmland for generations. Once we stopped farming the land, ecological succession would begin. It might take decades, but eventually the area would become forest again.

Succession rates vary. A stone pyramid in a desert may remain for centuries since few environmental factors are involved in ecological succession there. A stone pyramid in a tropical forest will go through ecological succession more rapidly

because of what plants and animals can do to stone. The same holds true for the natural materials humans have used to manage in different biomes. But eventually, if man has used only natural materials, once he stops sweating in an area, ecological succession would begin.

Viewing ecological succession as a natural process, some people maintain that man can manage the environment but only in ways that succession can reclaim the area. Since this concept greatly limits what man can do to the environment, it is popular with pantheists and with some who hold an evolutionary worldview. Many of today’s “extreme environmentalists” hold to this, or a similar position. Some Christians buy into this position because they feel it “shows respect” for God’s creation. They claim this allows man to “use, but not abuse” the physical world—it can always go back to the way it was. While this may sound good, Scripture to back such a position appears to be lacking.

MANAGING TODAY

Today man can literally move mountains. In an area so significantly changed ecological succession may not reach the original biome. Would this be human ecological management gone too far? Is it wrong because natural ecological succession is hampered?

Fertilizers, herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, and other man-made chemicals may increase the productivity of an area while decreasing the effort needed to produce it. Holding the macho attitude toward the environment, many saw victory using these tools, and embraced them as they became available; however, in the past many of these tools had significant harmful side effects on ecological succession. Sometimes the harm unintentionally spread to other biomes. While improved materials and methods have significantly reduced or eliminated many of these side effects, ecological succession may still be affected. Since harm can still happen, does that make using these tools wrong?

Biblical cities and buildings (e.g., Jerusalem and the Temple) were constructed of natural materials and

would go through ecological succession if abandoned. Much of the materials used in modern cities and buildings would not go through normal ecological succession. Are modern cities wrong because they hamper ecological succession? In vain I have searched the Scriptures to find a passage that condemns man’s use of the physical world when ecological succession is affected. But does that make such practices acceptable?

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES TO APPLY

The Bible repeatedly teaches that actions have consequences; we reap what we sow. Scripture admonishes us to make wise decisions and to seek wisdom when we don’t have it.

A hundred years ago a man who cleared a Canadian forest and planted banana trees would discover he had made an unwise decision—not because he cleared the forest, but because he planted something which would not bear fruit in Canada. No matter how much he enjoyed bananas, wisdom would dictate a different crop. Wheat would be a better choice. But which variety? Would barley be more productive? Or oats? Is canola a better choice for this field? Today the market value of these commodities could play into making a wise decision. With more knowledge and more choices, a wise decision is often harder to make.

In the past it was easy to understand and apply the macho attitude to ecological management, and with limitations on what one could do to the environment, even poor decisions were not of lasting ecological consequence. Today, however, the macho attitude is often unwise, and even determining what is wise is not always easy. Doing the wise thing may not be easy either.

More about making ecologically wise decisions, Lord willing, in the next article in this series. ▀



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GENESIS

GOD'S BOOK OF BEGINNINGS STUDY NOTES

BIBLE STUDY NOTES

Chapter 9:8-17

Key verse: “And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.” (Genesis 9:11)

In a primary rainbow, the seven colors will be in the order of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. Red has the longest wavelength, with each color decreasing away from it.

SUMMARY

Genesis 9:8-17 focuses on the covenant of the rainbow. It holds forth God's promise to Noah and his sons that He would never again judge the world by a flood. It is far reaching and stands until the end of the world. It is one of the most dramatic, visible, and universal decrees regarding God's dealings with men. Unbelievers, however, dismiss it as a natural phenomenon to be stared at, for they will not believe in God's covenant of mercy to men.

OBSERVATIONS

God made a covenant of preservation with Noah. It was a gracious covenant. It was initiated by God Himself to promise mercy, not because man was good, but despite him being evil. The rainbow-covenant was God's lovingkindness freely granted to undeserving sinners. God determined to turn from judging man to showing mercy “for man's sake” (Genesis 8:21) to spare him. Man was hopeless and incorrigible. His nature was so polluted by sin that God recognized that man would

not be reformed through judgments. He needed grace. The seeming explanation, “for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth” (Genesis 8:21) makes no sense. That was not a reason for mercy, but for judgment. This is, therefore, a non sequitur; it makes no sense to human logic. We must go back to ch.8:20 to discover the channel for God's mercy. It was through the sweet savor of the blood sacrifices which Noah had offered on the altar that God ceased from His judgment of man. These blood sacrifices were a type of Christ and of His atonement through which God administers grace to sinners. As covenants are ratified by blood, sinners must look by faith to the blood of Christ to enjoy all the blessings of the covenant of grace.

FAMILY COVENANT

God made this covenant with Noah and his seed. God said, “And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you” (verse 9). Noah was a representative head. By this method of dealing with Noah and his offspring God set a precedent to deal with families under the headship of fathers (Genesis 6:18; 7:1). This is a special characteristic of God's covenants. He chooses one representative head to bless all who come under his headship. The covenant-head of redemption is Christ. God bestows grace to sinners who believe in the redeeming work of His Son and who call upon Him for mercy.

UNIVERSAL COVENANT

It was a universal covenant as it involved the preservation of all Creation. It included every living thing in the earth (Genesis 9:10-16). “The whole of the created universe,

including the totality of humanity, benefits from this covenant. Not only Noah and his seed, but ‘every living creature’ lives under the sign of the rainbow (Gen. 9:10). This inclusion of the totality of the universe in God's redemptive covenant finds vivid recognition in Paul's expression [in Romans 8:22], concerning the final expectation of the redeemed” (O. Palmer Robertson, *Christ of the Covenants*, pp. 122-123).

God is holding back His wrath from the earth until all of God's elect people are personally redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. Then the earth itself shall be renewed. Then the curse shall give way to earth's redemption. Then all things shall be made new with new heavens and a new earth. Until then, the church is commissioned to preach the gospel of Christ's atoning work to all people of every tribe and nation.

PERPETUAL COVENANT

It was made as a perpetual covenant as exhibited in the rainbow. The visible nature of the rainbow and its attachment to the rain falling on the earth would remind men of God's promise to spare the earth from judgment by water (Genesis 9:15-16). God called it “the everlasting covenant.” John the apostle saw the rainbow that exists around the throne of the Lord in heaven (Revelation 4:3). It teaches us that God's covenant of mercy is eternal. God will always deal with His people based on mercy. All saints and all creatures in heaven will tirelessly praise God for His grace and mercy to sinners. The sight of the rainbow in the cloud was intended to bring comfort to men's hearts. Henry Morris emphasized this point:

“In these verses the Lord seems to be repeating, over and over in various ways His great promise and covenant with all



flesh. Such repetition was no doubt of great comfort and assurance to those who had been through such traumatic experiences during the awful year of the Flood and who apart from God's promise, would have had little hope for the future" (*The Genesis Record*).

APPLICATION

God deals with men based on His covenant of grace made with Christ our covenant head. God reveals Himself as a covenant making and covenant keeping God. Every covenant teaches about God's grace to our souls. Each covenant in the Bible is like a telescope. The further it is extended the stronger the focus on the object, who is Christ our Redeemer. The covenants of Scripture progressively lead us to focus on Christ, our covenant-head and covenant-keeper.

God is the initiator of our salvation. It begins with Him and ends with Him. Apart from grace, we would be

left in the hopeless estate of sin and eternal condemnation. For this we must praise Him. This must be the focus of our worship by prayer, praise, and preaching.

Our assurances and comfort come from God's covenants to us. God's eternal purposes in our salvation are sure and certain. We can rest in the purposes of God to do us good. The sight of a rainbow in the sky, therefore, should fill us with assurance that God is in control of the earth and abides faithful to His promises.

God's control over the earth means that we are to "subdue" the earth and use it for His glory. Research into natural laws of science and the various disciplines of study of the universe, which God has created, is God's will for man. The laws of God's Creation are to be discovered, harnessed, and used for His glory. The recognition of design in Creation leading us to acknowledge and worship the Designer is the

proper Christian perspective. When God is both Creator and Preserver of all things, then nothing happens by chance. We are predestinated by God's purpose to show forth His praises (Ephesians 1:11-12).

TO DO

Turn your prayers into covenant prayers. Base them on what God has decreed and promised to do for His people. With both believers and sinners, use the rainbow as a discussion point on God's infinite mercies. ☒



Rev. Ian Goligher
Retired Minister of
Cloverdale FPC, BC



PRAY FOR YOUR *Pastor*

Do you notice people's feet? Not so much in our day, but in Bible times, a host offering water to wash dusty, tired feet was just exercising normal hospitality. Jesus Himself washed His disciples' feet, teaching them about serving others. In Romans 10 Paul asks these pertinent questions, "How shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they be sent?" Faithful ministers are God's gift to the church and to the world through the ages. Paul answers with this praiseworthy statement: "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things!" With this commission upon their lives, pastors go forth to serve God. They are frontline workers in God's kingdom and greatly need our prayers. How can we pray for our pastors as they serve Christ?

First, praise God for your pastor and his faithfulness to preach the truth of God's Word week by week. Also, pray fervently for his preaching ministry and for his study and preparation during the week. When I surveyed several ministers about their top three prayer requests, they requested prayer for God's blessing upon their preaching ministry: strength for studying and preparation; knowing the Holy Spirit's power in preaching Christ; joy and power in preaching the Word; and the Holy Spirit's anointing on public ministry.

Pray for the Holy Spirit's application of the message to the hearts of the hearers. In the Romans 10 passage, the pastor's beautiful feet bringing the glad tidings

is framed with verse 13, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" and verse 17, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Pastors long for lost souls to come to Christ and for believers "to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). Ask the Holy Spirit to save the lost—the children, ministers' children, and the unsaved who attend services. Pray for the strengthening of God's people to walk by faith rather than live in fear.

Pastors are concerned for the growth of their churches—for outreach opportunities and greater exposure in their localities. They long for people and families to visit, attend, and join the church. They desire good physical and spiritual health and for their churches to be well-established. That's why Paul left Titus in Crete so that he could set in order things not yet done and ordain elders. Pray earnestly for these matters. Also, pray for your pastor's faithfulness to the call of God upon his life. Trials and temptations will come and difficulties will arise from without and within. Your pastor needs your prayer support as he follows Paul's injunction to Timothy: "Watch thou in all things; endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (2 Timothy 4:5).

Pray that God will give your pastor wisdom, courage, and steadfastness. Next, pray for his personal and family life. Pray that he'll keep a tender heart, walk closely with the Lord daily, and

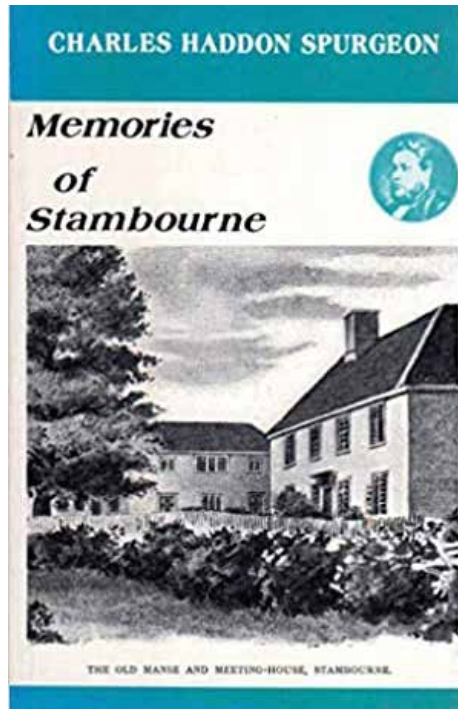
manage his time wisely. Pray for his wise and loving leadership as a husband and father in his own home. Pray for his physical well-being and strength for each day. Pray that he'll emulate Micah 6:8, "...to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."

Pastors have a vision of legacy. Pray for the Lord's protection for Christian homes as babies and children are trained up for the Lord. Pray for wise parental guidance directing young people to heed God's Word and to consider God's call for service. Pray for the seminary students preparing for the ministry. As Paul commissioned Timothy to commit what he had learned from Paul to "faithful men...able to teach others also" (2 Timothy 2:2), pray for faithfulness in the passing of precious gospel truth from one generation of preachers to the next to the glory of God.

As a pastor's wife, I see my pastor up close. Like your pastor, he has God's call upon his life. Although we may not have thought of pastors' feet as beautiful, the next time your pastor steps up to preach the Word, lift your grateful praise and pray for him as he "preaches the gospel of peace and brings glad tidings of good things!" ❧



Mrs. Barbara Mooney
wife of Rev. Myron Mooney,
Trinity FPC, AL



Memories of Stambourne

C.H. Spurgeon

"All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children" (Isaiah 54:13).

This wonderful promise was graciously fulfilled in the Spurgeon family. For four generations, God used them in sowing the seed of the gospel while maintaining faithful and Spirit-filled orthodoxy. Rev. James Spurgeon and his dear wife faithfully served Christ in Essex for 58 years. Their lives made a tremendous impact on their young grandson Charles Haddon Spurgeon as he lived with them in the village of Stambourne during several years of his childhood.

Rev. John Spurgeon and his wife Eliza were the parents of Charles and his sixteen siblings. As a Congregational minister serving in various chapels, John found difficulty in providing for his growing family. For this reason, Charles' grandparents were glad to have him stay in their home during some of his formative years.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon pastored in London for 38 years, regularly preaching to thousands and on one occasion to over 23,000 people. His

published sermons and books have won countless souls to Christ. He also established homes for orphans, the poor, and the aged, as well as founded a college for training new generations of ministers and missionaries. The life and ministry of C. H. Spurgeon has touched every corner of the globe.

The Lord blessed Charles and his wife Susannah with twin sons, Charles and Thomas. They trained these boys to be godly young men. Eventually, both sons became pastors. Thomas succeeded his father as pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London, while his brother Charles built and pastored the great Gospel Tabernacle in Auckland, New Zealand. That meeting house comfortably seated a congregation of two thousand.

The final book that Spurgeon authored was *Memories of Stambourne*. This little book of 144 pages delightfully displays Spurgeon's sense of humor in describing the village of Stambourne and his cherished childhood experiences. One of those accounts is astoundingly prophetic. As a small boy in his grandparents' huge manse, Charles loved to explore. One little

room upstairs proved to be a special delight: it was the minister's study and prayer closet. The window-panes had all been painted to darken the room. That was because of the "wretched window-duty," a tax that the government levied upon the British citizens. If you darkened some of the windows, you paid less since the tax was calculated by the number of glass panes that let light into your home!

Spurgeon described it this way: "In my time it was a dark den; but it contained books, and this made it a gold-mine to me. Therein was fulfilled the promise, 'I will give thee the treasures of darkness.' Some of these were enormous folios, such as a boy could hardly lift. Here I struck up acquaintance with the martyrs, and specially with 'Old Bonner,' who burned them; next, with Bunyan and his 'Pilgrim,' and further on with the great masters of Scriptural theology, with whom no moderns are worthy to be named in the same day. Even the old editions of their works, with their margins and old-fashioned notes, are precious to me. It is easy to tell a real Puritan book... I confess... a preference for the originals, even though they wander about in sheepskins and goatskins... It made my eyes water a short time ago to see a number of these old books in the new manse: I wonder whether some other boy will love them and live to revive that grand old divinity which will yet be to England her balm and benison.

"Out of that darkened room I fetched those authors... Out of the present contempt into which Puritanism has fallen, many brave hearts and true will fetch it, by the help of God, 'ere many years have passed. Those who have daubed up the windows will yet be surprised to see heaven's light beaming on the old truth."

Oh, that the Lord will use His church to declare that old truth in these days!

Memories of Stambourne is available online: Kindle \$1.00 and paperback \$4.00-\$10.00 📖



Rev. Myron Mooney
Minister of Trinity FPC,
Trinity, AL



William Tyndale

Protestant Reformer who gave us the English Bible

William Tyndale was born in the 1490s in Gloucestershire, England. He was educated at Oxford and Cambridge Universities and spoke seven languages. He was most skilled in Greek and Hebrew, which helped him greatly when translating the Bible into English. Even though he loved academic subjects, he mostly loved learning the Bible. He had come to understand justification by faith through Christ alone while reading a Greek version of the New Testament by an important Dutch scholar, Erasmus.

At eighteen, Tyndale became a priest in the Roman Catholic Church, but he soon realized most fellow priests did not even read the Bible. They only knew readings from Latin Mass books, but they didn't study the Bible nor did they teach salvation through Christ alone. Tyndale also began to understand their dishonesty and greed when he saw them telling people that their family members would go to heaven if they gave money to the church. These payments were called indulgences.

William really wanted others to find true saving faith in Christ and reject

the church's false teaching. He often argued with other priests about their false doctrine. He told one priest: "If God spare my life... the ploughboys will know more of the Bible than many... priests do." So, he set about translating the New Testament into English so ordinary people could read Scripture in their own language. Translating the Bible was illegal in England, but Tyndale began anyway. Shortly after, Tyndale was found out and fled to Europe. He began translating again in a town called Worms (pronounced *Vorms*) in Germany. Here, he published the entire New Testament in English. The printing press had been invented by Johannes Gutenberg in 1440, just 86 years before Tyndale published his New Testament. Isn't God's timing amazing?

Since Tyndale was forbidden to go home, how was he going to distribute Bibles there? He and some friends formed a plan. They smuggled Bibles by ship, hidden in boxes of wheat and other goods. Friends of Tyndale secretly handed out Bibles to as many people as they could all across England.

At the time, England's Roman Catholic king, Henry VIII, found out about Tyndale's Bible and made a law

forbidding anyone to have a copy. London's bishop was so determined to destroy Tyndale's Bibles that he gave money to a business friend of Tyndale's to buy all of his Bibles. Then, he burned them. He thought he had stopped Tyndale's work. But Tyndale's friend gave the bishop's money to Tyndale who used the funds to print an even better edition of the English Bible and even more copies! Many more people in England were now reading the Scripture in their own language. The bishop's plan had been defeated!

Soon after, Tyndale was betrayed by a man he thought was a friend. He was arrested in Europe and was sent to prison in Brussels, Belgium for a year and a half. Then, sadly, in 1536, he was tied to a wooden stake, strangled, and his body was burned. He was fifty-two. What hatred these men had for God's Word! Tyndale's last words rang out for all around to hear: "Oh Lord, open the king of England's eyes." Knowing he was going to die at the hands of evil men, he still wanted them to come to Christ. A year after Tyndale's death, his prayer was answered. Henry VIII decreed that a copy of Tyndale's Bible be placed in every church in England.

So often, we neglect our Bibles without giving thought to people, like Tyndale, who risked their lives to bring us God's Word in our language. Never take your Bible for granted. Spend time reading it daily, and ask the Lord to help you understand it and live out what it teaches. ✠



Rachel Huffman
member of Lehigh Valley
FPC, PA

A WORD WORTH KNOWING

Justify

To declare someone to be righteous



SPRING 2021



Jeremy Escobar
Cloverdale FPC



Kristen Escobar
Cloverdale FPC



Alana Rose
Toronto FPC



Liam Rose
Toronto FPC

Kids' Crossword Puzzle

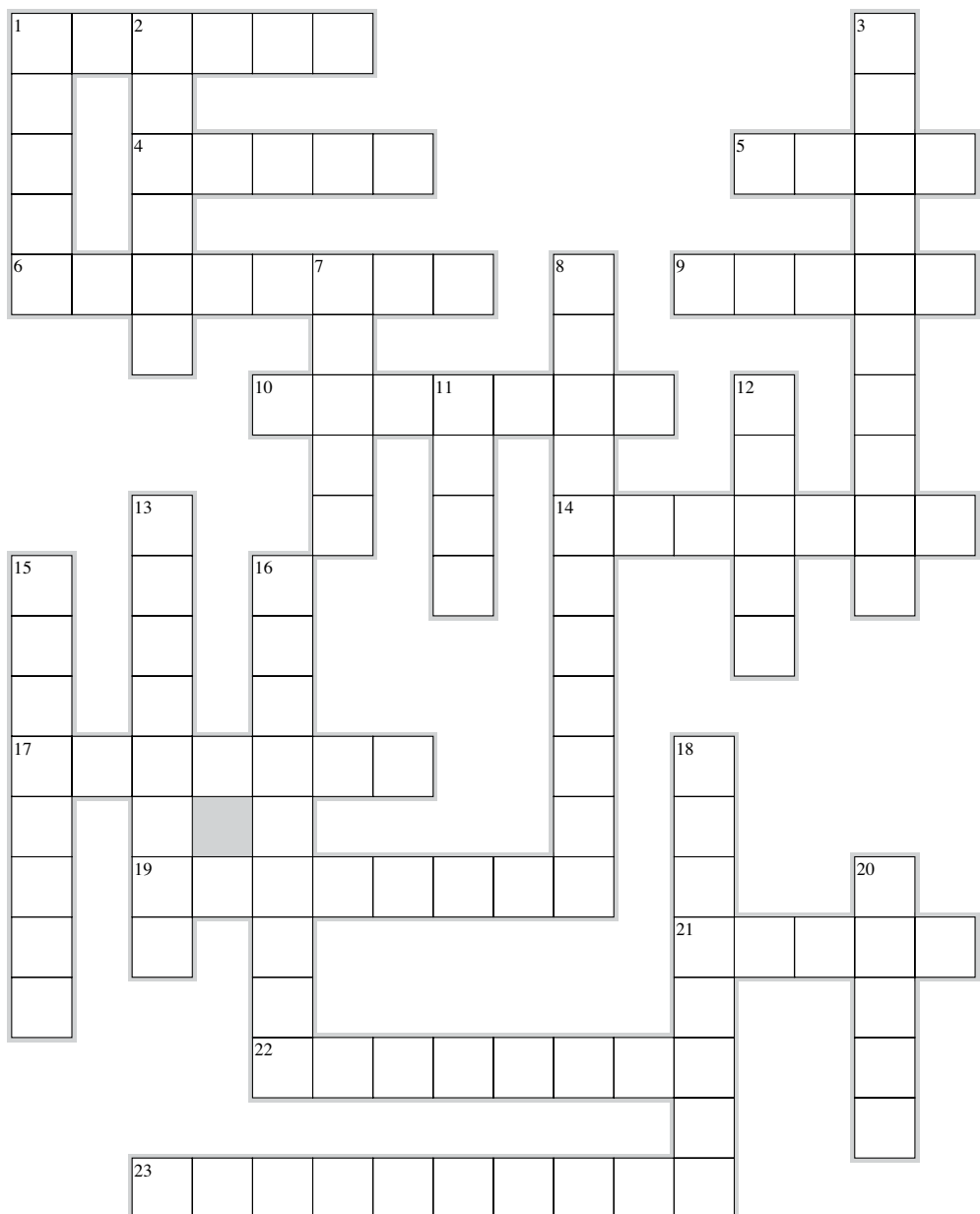
Answers are found in the article on William Tyndale on page 18 and in Psalm 119:9, 11,165; 2Timothy 3:16, and Hebrews 4:12. Answers must be spelled as they are found in the article or in the Bible (KJV).

Across

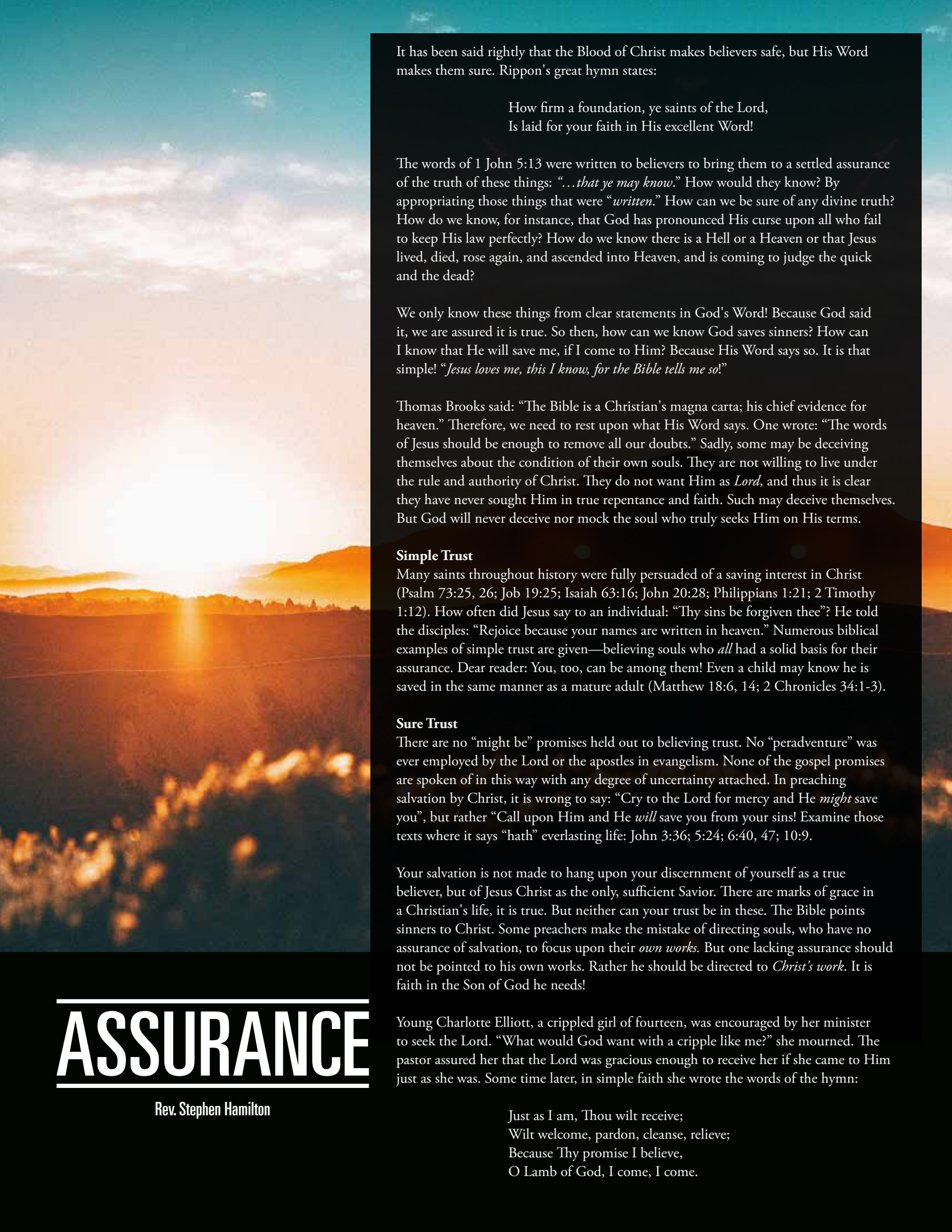
1. One of the languages in which the Bible was written
4. The Word of God is sharper than this.
5. Young men can cleanse their way by taking heed to this.
6. The Word of God is a discernor of this.
9. One of the languages in which the Bible was written
10. Language into which Tyndale translated God's Word
14. The Scripture is profitable for this.
17. Tyndale's birthplace
19. Tyndale's age when he became a Roman Catholic priest
21. Number of languages Tyndale spoke
22. The Scripture is profitable for this.
23. Tyndale said they would know more of the Bible than the priests did.
8. The Scripture is profitable for this.
11. God's Word is this to our feet.
12. City where the first New Testament in English was printed
13. How Bibles got into England when it was against the law to have them
15. This happened to the bishop's plan to destroy Bibles.
16. How Tyndale died
18. Place of Tyndale's imprisonment
20. Those who love God's law have this.

Down

1. God's Word should be hidden here.
2. Paid money for copies of the Bible so he could burn them
3. The Scripture is profitable for this.
7. Decreed Tyndale's Bible should be in every church in England



PLEASE NOTE: Please send your completed puzzle to Current Kids' Corner, c/o Judy Brown, 651 Ponden Dr., Greer, SC 29650 or to ljsbrown2@gmail.com by September 13, 2021. Include your name, address, age, and the name of the church you attend. Please also include an email address in case we need to contact you about your entry. Five winners will be drawn from all correct submissions received. The contest is open to young people ages 5–12. Winners will receive a \$10 cash prize.



It has been said rightly that the Blood of Christ makes believers safe, but His Word makes them sure. Rippon's great hymn states:

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!

The words of 1 John 5:13 were written to believers to bring them to a settled assurance of the truth of these things: "...*that ye may know.*" How would they know? By appropriating those things that were "*written.*" How can we be sure of any divine truth? How do we know, for instance, that God has pronounced His curse upon all who fail to keep His law perfectly? How do we know there is a Hell or a Heaven or that Jesus lived, died, rose again, and ascended into Heaven, and is coming to judge the quick and the dead?

We only know these things from clear statements in God's Word! Because God said it, we are assured it is true. So then, how can we know God saves sinners? How can I know that He will save me, if I come to Him? Because His Word says so. It is that simple! "*Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so!*"

Thomas Brooks said: "The Bible is a Christian's magna carta; his chief evidence for heaven." Therefore, we need to rest upon what His Word says. One wrote: "The words of Jesus should be enough to remove all our doubts." Sadly, some may be deceiving themselves about the condition of their own souls. They are not willing to live under the rule and authority of Christ. They do not want Him as *Lord*, and thus it is clear they have never sought Him in true repentance and faith. Such may deceive themselves. But God will never deceive nor mock the soul who truly seeks Him on His terms.

Simple Trust

Many saints throughout history were fully persuaded of a saving interest in Christ (Psalm 73:25, 26; Job 19:25; Isaiah 63:16; John 20:28; Philippians 1:21; 2 Timothy 1:12). How often did Jesus say to an individual: "Thy sins be forgiven thee"? He told the disciples: "Rejoice because your names are written in heaven." Numerous biblical examples of simple trust are given—believing souls who *all* had a solid basis for their assurance. Dear reader: You, too, can be among them! Even a child may know he is saved in the same manner as a mature adult (Matthew 18:6, 14; 2 Chronicles 34:1-3).

Sure Trust

There are no "might be" promises held out to believing trust. No "peradventure" was ever employed by the Lord or the apostles in evangelism. None of the gospel promises are spoken of in this way with any degree of uncertainty attached. In preaching salvation by Christ, it is wrong to say: "Cry to the Lord for mercy and He *might* save you", but rather "Call upon Him and He *will* save you from your sins! Examine those texts where it says "hath" everlasting life: John 3:36; 5:24; 6:40, 47; 10:9.

Your salvation is not made to hang upon your discernment of yourself as a true believer, but of Jesus Christ as the only, sufficient Savior. There are marks of grace in a Christian's life, it is true. But neither can your trust be in these. The Bible points sinners to Christ. Some preachers make the mistake of directing souls, who have no assurance of salvation, to focus upon their *own works*. But one lacking assurance should not be pointed to his own works. Rather he should be directed to *Christ's work*. It is faith in the Son of God he needs!

Young Charlotte Elliott, a crippled girl of fourteen, was encouraged by her minister to seek the Lord. "What would God want with a cripple like me?" she mourned. The pastor assured her that the Lord was gracious enough to receive her if she came to Him just as she was. Some time later, in simple faith she wrote the words of the hymn:

Just as I am, Thou wilt receive;
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

ASSURANCE

Rev. Stephen Hamilton