



Working to see what Christ will do in Scotland tomorrow.

Stornoway Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland

part of a global church with a glorious heritage



April 2017 Newsletter



WELCOME

LORD'S DAY

Morning Worship—11.00am

Evening Worship—6.30pm

PRAYER MEETING

Thursday—7.30pm

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NEWS & EVENTS

ORDINATION & INDUCTION

The ordination and induction of Mr Stephen McCollum, as Minister of Stornoway RPCS, will take place on Friday 28 April at 7 p.m. at Stornoway Town Hall. The reception afterwards will be held upstairs in the Garry Suite at the Caladh Inn. The service will be conducted by Rev Kenneth Stewart.

NEW WEBSITE

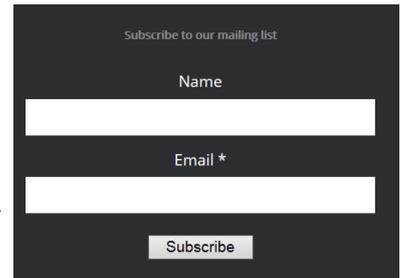
We are excited to announce that our new congregational website has gone live! Over the last few months, we have been working on developing a new website and church logo. We hope that the new website will better serve our members and adherents, along with any visitors looking for a place of worship. Visit www.stornowayrpcs.org.

The website is easy to navigate through clicking the “Go to...” bar on the Home page, which provides a drop down menu, to the various areas of the website. It is a “responsive Website,” which means that it adapts the display of the website, according to the size of the screen you are using.

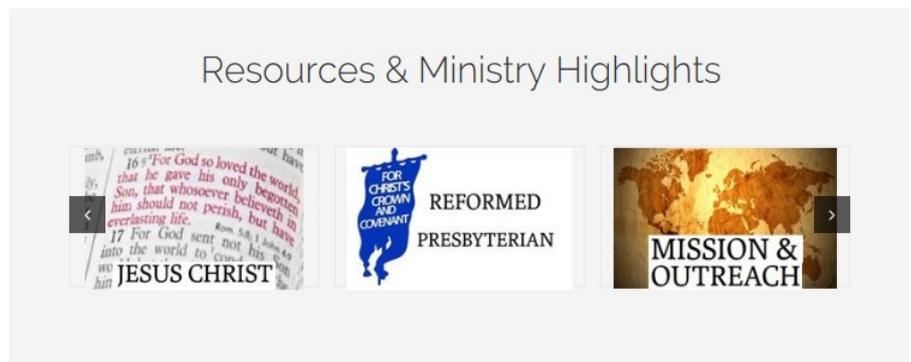


New Logo

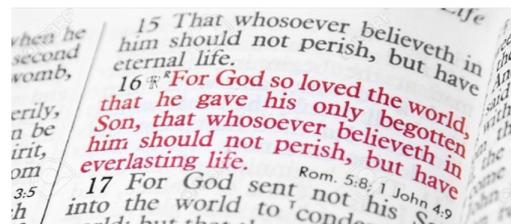
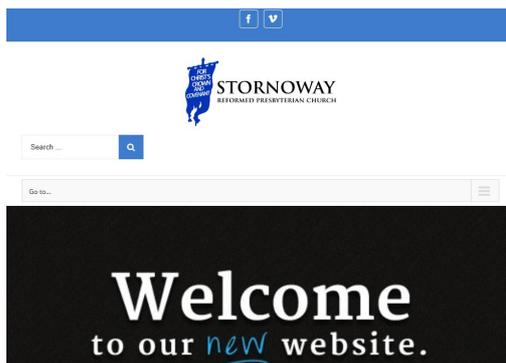
If you scroll to the bottom of the homepage, you will be able to subscribe, through your email address, to automatically receive any news updates. We would encourage everyone to take the time to subscribe, as this is intended to be updated regularly.



One of the new features available on the homepage is the “Resources & Ministry Highlights,” which brings to the fore various distinctives of our ministry, along with the basics of the Gospel, for anyone looking to find out more. We also now have a Facebook page, which will reflect the work of the congregation on social media.



We have retained the most important feature of the previous website, which is the embedded online sermons via Sermon Audio, which regularly attracts downloads from all over the world.



Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is the most important person that has ever lived. The reason for this bold statement is because He both was and is fully God and fully man. Jesus was not merely an interesting religious teacher. No, as the Son of God, He has always existed without beginning and without end. He was never dependent on anyone or anything, in fact He created the world and all things are dependent upon Him.

Jesus voluntarily took on human form to live in our world, sharing our experiences, our infirmities, our sorrows, but crucially not our sins. While we break God's commands every day in our hearts and fail to give Him the complete obedience He demands, Jesus lived a life of perfect and full obedience to the requirements of God's Law. Never has there been one so perfectly acceptable to God!

GRAND RAPIDS RPCNA

The following series on “The Ruling Elder,” is currently being preached through by Rev Craig Scott at Grand Rapids RPCNA. The services are available on Sermonaudio.com

	Introduction Craig J. Scott The Ruling Elder First Reformed Presbyterian	  Play SUN 02/12/2017 Sunday - PM 55 min
	Shepherding God's Flock Craig J. Scott The Ruling Elder First Reformed Presbyterian	  Play SUN 02/19/2017 Sunday - PM 57 min
	Protecting God's Flock Craig J. Scott The Ruling Elder First Reformed Presbyterian	  Play SUN 02/26/2017 Sunday - PM 53 min
	God Keeps His Elders Craig J. Scott The Ruling Elder First Reformed Presbyterian	  Play SUN 03/12/2017 Sunday - PM 48 min
	A Qualified Man Craig J. Scott The Ruling Elder First Reformed Presbyterian	  Play SUN 03/19/2017 Sunday - PM 53 min

ZOE MCCOLLUM BAPTISM



Stephen, Brenda & Zoe McCollum

Zoe McCollum, daughter of Stephen and Brenda McCollum, was recently baptised in Airdrie. Rev. Quigley preached in the morning on Baptism – The Promise! from Genesis 17 and in the evening on Baptism – The Responsibility! from Deuteronomy 6. These sermons are available to listen to on sermon audio. Here are some pictures taken after the worship service:

GLEANINGS BY BILL LUCAS

WAITING

Waiting is a form of prayer. Let us come to terms with the pace of eternity. So often we run ahead -- or take side paths -
- instead of following the Master Shepherd.

Catherine Marshall

THY FIRST LOVE

Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou has left thy first love (Rev 2:4)

There are times when, like Ephesus, many of God's children lose their first love. Iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold. Believers lose their close and tender walking with God. They go out of the holiest, and pray at a distance with a curtain between. They lose their fervency, sweetness, and fullness in secret prayer. They do not pour out their hearts to God.

They have lost their clear discovery of Christ. They see him but dimly. They have lost the sight of His beauty -- the savour of His good ointment -- the hold of His garment. They seek Him, but find Him not. They cannot stir up the heart to lay hold on Christ.

The Spirit dwells scantily in their soul. The living water seems almost dried up within them. The soul is dry and barren. Corruptions are strong: grace is very weak.

Love to the brethren fades. United prayer is forsaken. The little assembly no more appears beautiful. Compassion for the unconverted is low and cold. Sin is unrebuked, though committed under their eye. Christ is not confessed before men. Perhaps the soul falls into sin, and is afraid to return; it stays far off from God, and lodges in the wilderness.

Ah! this is the case, I fear, with many. It is a fearfully dangerous time. Nothing but a visit of the free Spirit to your soul can persuade you to return.

Robert Murray M'Cheyne (God Makes a Path).

THE PSALM OF PENITENCE

"I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee, O Lord, only, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in Thy sight."—Ps 51:3-4.

"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God."—Rom 3:23.

This Psalm is a temple-staircase, worn by the feet of myriads of penitents. The page is wet with the tears alike of the most saintly and the most sinful. Augustine had them written on the walls of his tiny cell at Hippo, that he might appropriate them constantly. Perhaps they are more precious to us at the end of life than the beginning.

Note the definitions of sin. It is an erasure or blot on the fair page of life; hence the cry, "Blot out my transgressions." Oh that God would blot out the scribblings and smudges of our later years, and bring back the fresh beauty of our youth! It is a stain on the white robe of the soul; hence the petition: "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity."

There is but one way into the Holy City: "Blessed are they that wash their robes, and make them white in the Blood of the Lamb." It is leprosy; hence the cry, "Cleanse me from my sin; purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean." There was special significance, then, for thee and me when Jesus reached forth His hand and touched the leper, saying: "Be thou clean."

Note the condition of forgiveness. It is confession. Transgression must be acknowledged. We must realise that sin is not only against man, but God, to whom man belongs, and who is affronted by all sin as committed directly against Himself. And our confession must not be superficial, but deep and heart-searching. We must go back to our earliest origins, to our connection with a sinful race, to our inward and hidden parts.

4

Note the cry for purity and righteousness of life. The clean heart has to be created, for there are no materials within us out of which it can be shaped or moulded. *Eph 4:24* tells us that full provision has been made for this. We desire a "right," or steadfast spirit, which shall not deviate to the right or left, but bear straight onward to the goal. The Greek word for sin is "missing the mark." We long for a spirit that shall not be deflected. We desire a "free" or willing spirit (R.V. marg.). Ah, what a transformation is here! But it has been effected in myriads (*1 Cor 6:11*).

F B MEYER (Our Daily Walk)

OUR CHRISTIAN HERITAGE

"That the generation to come might know them" (Psalm 78:6)

We seem to have little appreciation of our Christian heritage today. Great men and women missionaries have come and gone, yet so few have any knowledge of their lives and work. Biographies of great Christian men and women from the past are important to understanding God's work throughout history.

The psalmist here is speaking of an even earlier historical period and exhorting an understanding of it. We need to see how God has worked in the past to understand our place in the divine continuum of His dealings with mankind.

N C Funston

Be still, my soul! Thy God doth undertake

To guide the future as He has the past.

Thy hope, thy confidence, let nothing shake;

All now mysterious shall be bright at last.

K von Schlegel

WHAT LIES AHEAD

I do not know what lies ahead,
the way I cannot see;
yet One stands near to be my guide,
He'll show the way to me:

I know who holds the future,
and He'll guide me with His hand;
with God things don't just happen,
everything by Him is planned.

So as I face tomorrow,
with its problems large and small,
I'll trust the God of miracles,
give to Him my all.

I do not know how many days
of life are mine to spend;
but One who knows and cares for me
will keep me to the end:

I do not know the course ahead,
what joys and griefs are there;
but One is near who fully knows,
I'll trust His loving care.

Alfred B Smith & Eugene Clarke 1947.

THE PEACOCK OF PRIDE

He is the most lovely Christian who is the most lowly Christian. As incense smells the sweetest when it is beaten smallest, so saints look loveliest when they lie lowest. God will not allow such a weed as pride to grow in His garden, without taking some course to root it up.

Pride is a sinner's torment, but humility is a saint's ornament. *"Be clothed with humility."* The garment of humility should always be worn on the back of Christianity. Where humility is the corner-stone there glory shall be the top-stone.

God many times places a thorn in the flesh to pierce the balloon of pride. He makes us feel a sense of our misery that we may sue for His unmerited mercy. The first Adam was for self-advancement but the second Adam is for self-abasement. The former was for having SELF deified, the latter is for having SELF crucified.

"Clothe yourselves with humility, because God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." 1 Peter 5:5

(William Secker, "The Consistent Christian" 1660)

Many years ago an Inverness minister observed that "the peacocks of today are the feather dusters of tomorrow."

A PRECIOUS LIFE SAVED

How true are the words of William Cowper who once said about providence: "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform"! Little did I think when I wrote a letter to the Scottish press about the desperate need to repeal the abortion law that it would save someone's life far away in the Gambia. But it did, in quite a wonderful and perfect way.

The story began in June 2015 when I commenced writing to the press, highlighting the appalling abortion statistics in this country and appealing to politicians to annul one of the sickest laws ever enacted in this country, namely the Abortion Act 1967.... In England and Wales 7,661,051 abortions were carried out while 459,767 abortions were carried out in Scotland. This is scandalous and shocking.

LETTER TO THE GAMBIA

What was unknown to me at this time was that my letter, and newsletters about my evangelistic work around Scotland, were being collated by a close Christian friend, Scott, living in Stornoway. Like me, he too has missionary interests abroad, his being in The Gambia, one of Africa's smallest countries, with a population of around 1.8 million people.

It transpired that he sent the literature to various individuals he was associated with in the mission fields of The Gambia, including a certain Pastor, called Sylvester Konteh. Though Scott was unaware of his personal circumstances, the wheel of providence ordered that this Pastor should be one of the recipients of the letter.

DIVINE PROVIDENCE

On the day he read it, Pastor Konteh put pen to paper and wrote to Scott: 'Your article on abortion has just changed my life and that of my wife. Although we have never done it, we were seriously contemplating abortion recently when my wife suspected she was pregnant. She almost died during the last pregnancy, so I was scared this time that I would lose her. We already have four kids, but it was such a risk to have another one. We felt it best to abort this baby.

'I was really surprised when I received your letter, because I had asked a friend to send me a reformed article on abortion. After reading your article which addressed the killing of innocent children, this completely altered the whole process. My wife was about to undergo abortion for health reasons but God was working behind the scenes to stop me in His Divine providence. To Him I will be forever thankful and to you for sending me the letter. Together, my wife and I will now walk by faith.'

SCOTT MUIR KONTEH

The very happy news is that, with deep thankfulness to God, a healthy little boy, weighing 8.4 pounds, was safely born on 28 March 2016 to Pastor Sylvester Konteh and his wife, Johnette. That day, Pastor Konteh sent a text to Scott: 'Thanks be to God, my wife has just delivered a baby boy. God used you to send a timely abortion article which saved my boy's life. To God be all the glory! Scott Muir Konteh is going to be his name'.

Baby Scott and mum are both doing well. We rejoice with them all as a family at this very, very happy time. Our hope and prayer is that wee Scott will be 'twice born' and by the grace of God, become a son of the King of kings. Also that the Lord will raise him up to be a mighty and faithful 'sower of the seed' on the mission fields of The Gambia. Yes, to God be the glory, great things He has done!



Pastor & Mrs Konteh & Scott

Edwards on Prayer

THAT WHICH GOD ABUNDANTLY MAKES THE SUBJECT OF HIS promises, God's people should abundantly make the subject of their prayers. – **Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758)**

The Medicine of Prayer

PRAYER IS A MEDICINE SENT TO US FROM A DELAYED physician, to be taken faithfully until His arrival and healing. – **William Gurnall (1617-1679)**

Bunyan on Prayer

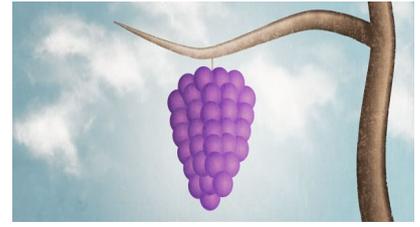
PRAYER IS A SINCERE, SENSIBLE, AFFECTIONATE POURING out of the soul to God, through Christ, in the strength and assistance of the Spirit for such things as God has promised. – **John Bunyan (1628-1688)**

Pink on Prayer

PRAYER WAS NEVER DESIGNED TO BE A SUBSTITUTE FOR diligence in keeping God's precepts, but is a means whereby we obtain grace for obedient conduct. Diligent endeavor and fervent prayer are never to be separated. – **Arthur Pink (1886-1952)**

THE CURE FOR A LACK OF FRUIT IN OUR LIVES

The Westminster Confession of Faith insists that Christians may be “certainly assured that they are in the state of grace” (18:1) and goes on to assert that this “infallible assurance of faith” is “founded upon” three considerations:



1. “the divine truth of the promises of salvation”
2. “the inward evidence of those graces unto which these promises are made”
- 3.. “the testimony of the Spirit of adoption witnessing with our spirits that we are children of God” (18:2).

The possibility of “certain” and “infallible” assurance is set against the backdrop of medieval and post-Reformation Roman Catholic views that paralyzed the church with an “assurance” that was at best “conjectural” (wishful thinking), based as it was on rigorous participation in a sacramental treadmill. Few epitomized the contrast more starkly than Cardinal Bellarmine (1542–1621), the personal theologian to Pope Clement VIII and ablest leader of the Counter-Reformation, who called the Protestant doctrine of assurance “the greatest of all heresies.” What, after all, could be more offensive to a works-based and priest-imparted system of salvation than the possibility that assurance could be attained without either? If Christians can attain an assurance of eternal life apart from participation in the church’s rituals, what possible outcome could there be other than rampant antinomianism (the belief that God’s commandments are optional)?

But what exactly did the Westminster divines mean when they implied that our assurance is “founded upon” inward evidence? Behind this statement lies a practical syllogism:

- (major premise) True believers demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit.
(minor premise) The fruit of the Spirit is present in me.
(conclusion) I am a true believer.

It should be obvious that the subjectivity of this argument is fraught with difficulty. While the certainty of salvation is grounded upon the (objective) work of Christ, the certainty of assurance is grounded upon the (objective) promises God gives us and the (subjective) discovery of those promises at work in us. And it is this latter consideration that gives rise to one or two problems.

Theologians have made a distinction between the direct and reflexive acts of faith. It is one thing to believe that Christ can save me (direct act of faith). It is another thing to believe that I have believed (reflexive act of faith). Apart from the first consideration (that Christ is both willing and able to save) there can be no assurance of faith. Indeed, it is pointless to move forward with the discussion about assurance apart from a conviction of the truthfulness of this statement: “Christ is able to save those who believe.”

Assuming, then, that there is no doubt as to the ability and willingness of Christ to save those who believe, how may I be assured that I have this belief? The answer of the New Testament at this point is clear: there is an “obedience of faith” (Rom 1:5; 16:26). True faith manifests itself in outward, tangible ways. In other words, the New Testament draws a connection between faithfulness and the enjoyment of assurance. True believers demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit, and this fruit is observable and measurable.

FOUR WAYS OF KNOWING

The Apostle John addresses this very issue in his first epistle: “I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life” (1 John 5:13). Apart from belief “in the name of the Son of God,” there is no point in furthering the discussion about assurance. The question at hand is, “How can I know if my belief is genuine?” And John’s answer emphasizes four moral characteristics of the Christian life.

First, there is obedience to the commandments of God. “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments” (1 John 5:2-3). True faith is not and can never be antinomian.

8 **Second**, there is practicing righteousness: “You may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him” (1 John 2:29). Those who have a genuine faith will display a life of faith, a life molded and shaped by the obedience of faith. They demonstrate a desire for godliness.

Third, there is a radical breach with one’s former life. John expresses it radically (by employing a relative contrast in absolute terms): “We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning” (1 John 5:18; cf.

3:6,9). The explanation of this admittedly difficult language requires more space than is allotted here, but it is clear enough that a true and genuine faith is incompatible with a continuation in the pattern of sinful behavior that characterizes the life lived in unbelief.

Fourth, there is walking in love: “We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death ... whoever loves has been born of God and knows God” (1 John 3:14; 4:7). Loving our brothers and sisters is something dear to the Apostle John’s heart. After all, according to tradition, the elderly Apostle in Ephesus, carried by the arms of his disciples, was heard to repeat, “Little children, love one another.” And when asked why he kept repeating it, he answered: “It is the Lord’s command. And if this be done, it is enough.”

These four marks then collectively contribute to an assurance that our faith in Christ is genuine. But what if I cannot discern these outward evidences in myself and wonder if they are lacking? Should I then conclude that my faith is hypocritical or insincere? Yes, that is a possible conclusion. But it is not necessarily the correct conclusion, because our assessment of the evidence of outward faith in these four marks may be faulty. We may be too hard on ourselves. We may doubt what others can clearly see. Satan may cloud our thinking. The lack of consistency may lead us to conclude that no evidence at all is present. And personality and disposition may lead us to negative assessments when a more objective scrutiny deduces a different conclusion. But the possibility exists that our faith may be insincere. What then?

FAITH IN EVIDENCE OR FAITH IN CHRIST?

And it is here that differences of counsel appear. A predictable counsel might be, “Try harder.” It is a comment I most remember from annual school reports—“Could do better.” A person who doubts the genuineness of his faith due to inconsistency of behavior would then be urged to “be more consistent.” Read more Scripture, pray with greater fervency, love with greater altruism, and so on. But what would such counsel achieve? First of all, it is doubtful that someone predisposed to read the presence of fruit negatively would fare any better in his evaluation simply by increasing effort. But more importantly, such counsel is predisposed to commit the fatal error of viewing the fruit of the faith as the root of faith. It is fundamentally predisposed to appeal to self-justification—something for which we are all hardwired.

The counsel to “do more” in the belief that works provide the ground of assurance rather than the evidence of assurance is the path to legalism—and legalism in its proper sense. In his book *The Whole Christ*, Sinclair B. Ferguson urges a “gospel logic” to the effect that “there is no assurance of faith that can be experienced apart from faith.”

And it is here that one perceives a counterintuitive counsel that must be given to the one lacking assurance. To look to works (and the counsel to “do more works”) as a means of gaining assurance is essentially counterproductive and pastorally deadly. Only Christ can save us, and assurance, when lacking, must be found by looking to Him. Apart from faith in Christ, no work on our part will assure us of anything except Pharisaism.

Far from being a counsel to laxity, what this counsel intends to secure is an understanding that faith gives rise to obedience rather than obediences giving rise to faith. And the difference is crucial. One gives rise to legalism; the other to evidentiary, evangelical (gospel-based) works.

ABIDING IN CHRIST

Is not this counsel (to look first to Christ) precisely what Jesus said in His final word to the disciples in the Upper Room?

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. (John 15:4-5) Bearing fruit, something that Jesus identifies as keeping His commandments (15:10), is intimately related to abiding in Him. It is in the sphere of abiding in Christ and not apart from it that fruit emerges.

There is only one cure for a lack of fruit in our Christian lives. It is to go back to Christ and enjoy (yes, enjoy) our union with Him. The “love of Christ controls us” (2 Cor. 5:14). The Greek verb translated here as “controls” is elsewhere rendered as “surrounds” and “hems in” (Luke 8:45; 19:43). That’s what the experience of abiding in Christ does—it hems us in to obedience. From such gracious love, compliance with His commands emerges. Disobedience drives Him away. But when we enjoy His presence, we also desire to “please him” (2 Cor. 5:9). And as we bear the fruit of this union, assurance grows.

DOCTRINE



“That we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine...” (Ephesians 4:14)

Many people today react negatively to the words, “theology” and “doctrine.” They are said to involve dry, irrelevant matters, which have no bearing on real life. If that were true, it would be quite understandable why we might want to steer clear and focus our attention elsewhere. Then, there are others who would not consider theology and doctrine to be irrelevant, rather something only for the ministers, theologians and elders. It is not something for the laity, the ordinary man or woman in the pew.

DEFINING OUR TERMS

Theology is the study of God, an attempt to understand what God has revealed to us in the Bible. Doctrine simply means “teaching.” Doctrine is really associated with the teaching of major truths, the basic beliefs of Christianity, revealed to us in the Bible. They include, for instance, the deity of Christ (Jesus Christ is God), His substitutionary atonement (Jesus died on the cross for the sin of His people) or His bodily resurrection (Jesus rose again from the dead on the third day).

AN ENDURING PROBLEM

Dislike of doctrine is not something that is peculiar to our day and age. J.C. Ryle, who ministered in England in the 19th century, addressed this particular issue, in relation to the church of his day,

“[It] is an epidemic which is just now doing great harm, specially among young people...it produces what I venture to call...a “jelly-fish” Christianity in the land: that is, a Christianity without bone, or muscle, or power...Alas! It is a type of much of the religion of this day, of which the leading principle is, “no dogma, no distinct tenets, no positive doctrine.”

We have hundreds of “jellyfish” clergyman, who seem not to have a single bone in their body of divinity. They have no definite opinions . . . they are so afraid of “extreme views” that they have no views of all.

We have thousands of “jellyfish” sermons preached every year, sermons without an edge, or a point, or corner, smooth as billiard balls, awakening no sinner, and edifying no saint. . . .

And worst of all, we have myriads of “jellyfish” worshipers—respectable Church-going people, who have no distinct and definite views about any point in theology. They cannot discern things that differ, any more than colourblind people can distinguish colours. . . . They are “tossed to and fro, like children, by every wind of doctrine”; . . . ever ready for new things, because they have no firm grasp on the old.” (J.C. Ryle, *Principles for Churchmen* 1900, PP.97-98)

If it is true that aversion to doctrine was an epidemic in Ryle’s day, the same must also be said of the church in our day, surely more so. Sadly, should you walk into the majority of churches in Scotland today, the sermon you hear may likely be Christless and devoid of any offence. The call to repentance is absent, there is no mention of sin and judgement and Christ is not declared as the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6).

The liberal church teaches its own doctrine of tolerance, yet at the same time is particularly intolerant of Biblical doctrine. One such instance was brought to the fore a few years back where a Church of Scotland minister preached a sermon which denied the substitutionary atonement of Christ, “Jesus did not die for our sins. No No No No. That is Ghastly theology. Don’t go there.” As shocking a statement as that is, in and of itself, it is perhaps even more shocking, as that particular pulpit was once the home of reformed preaching dating back to the 19th century.

That surely raises a question in our minds. How does a once Christ preaching pulpit so capitulate over time, that the very foundation of the Gospel is openly denied? How does any congregation or denomination surrender to such an extent that the Gospel has been abandoned altogether? Perhaps Ryle's words of warning, all these years ago, provide one such reason for the dilapidated state of the church in Scotland today? Theology and doctrine have not been taught from the pulpit. The focus has shifted from teaching the great doctrines of the Bible, to an over emphasis on reaching others with the Gospel, which involves a lowering of standards and watering down of the message to bring people through the door. Eventually, over time, the church, not taught, is tossed to and fro, discernment has gone and the Gospel is lost to the next generation, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6).

REMEDY TO THE EPIDEMIC

What then, is the remedy to what Ryle referred to as an epidemic? Ryle himself, answers with the following words,

"Mark what I say. If you want to do good in these times, you must throw aside indecision, and take up a distinct, sharply-cut, doctrinal religion. . . .

The victories of Christianity, wherever they have been won, have been won by distinct doctrinal theology; by telling men roundly of Christ's vicarious death and sacrifice; by showing them Christ's substitution on the cross, and His precious blood; by teaching them justification by faith, and bidding them believe on a crucified Saviour; by preaching ruin by sin, redemption by Christ, regeneration by the Spirit; by lifting up the brazen serpent; by telling men to look and live—to believe, repent, and be converted. . .

Show us at this day any English village, or parish, or city, or town, or district, which has been evangelized without "dogma." . . . Christianity without distinct doctrine is a powerless thing. . . . No dogma, no fruits! (J.C. Ryle, *Holiness*, 1879, PP. 355-356)

These words are as apt today for us living in 21st century Scotland, as they were for those living in Ryle's time in England, nearly 140 years ago. Scotland is in desperate need of doctrine. Scotland is in desperate need of ministers who are called by God, to fill the pulpits of our land, who will declare the unsearchable riches of Christ, along with a distinct doctrinal message.

Doctrine is practical. To study doctrine, or for a minister to preach doctrinally from the pulpit is not intended to lead to a mere head knowledge. It is intended to lead to the learning of essential theological truths for the purpose of embracing them in our lives. This is exactly the counsel Timothy was given when he was instructed, "If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed" (1 Timothy 4:6). We ought to pray that the ministers of our land would not only know Christ savingly, but nourish those under their charge with sound doctrine, as good ministers of Christ. We ought to pray for the many in our land who are under a false Gospel, in order that they would be led to hear the Word preached, where Christ is proclaimed and doctrine is taught.

If we, as members of the body of Christ, avoid theology and doctrine and consider it as something purely for the ministers, theologians and elders, how do we expect to be able to live according to the main tenets of the faith? How do we expect to avoid those who teach false doctrine (Romans 16:17)? How are we to engage with those in our daily lives who question how the Bible can be true over and against other religions? We need to study theology and doctrine and be taught it from our pulpits, in order to live out our Christian lives. We ought not to live our lives, according to the changing whims of society and by being tossed to and fro by false doctrine. We ought to live our lives with clarity and consistency, confident that the word of the Lord does not change but endures forever (1 Peter 1:25). This doctrine must conduct and fashion our lives, so that our experience and practice flow from it,

"Some people preach only doctrine; that makes people all head, which is a monster. Some preach only experience; that makes the people all heart, which is a monster too. Others preach only practice; that makes people all hands and feet, which is likewise a monster. But if you preach doctrine and experience and practice, by the blessing of God, you will have head, heart and hands, and feet – a perfect man in Christ Jesus." (John 'Rabbi' Duncan).

Children's Corner



Dear Children

Would you like some puzzles this month? Well, here are some for you.

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE See if you can do these without looking up the Bible.

1. What is the first book in the Bible?
2. Name a book called after a woman.
3. Name a book full of wise sayings.
4. Name a book in the Old Testament beginning with Z.
5. Which book do we use for singing?
6. What is the last book of the Old Testament?
7. Which book comes after Genesis?
8. What is the first book of the New Testament?
9. Name a book in the New Testament beginning with R.
10. How many books of the Bible have only ONE chapter?
(You can look this up in the Bible.)

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

OLD TESTAMENT	JOB	HABAKKUK	COLOSSIANS
GENESIS	PSALMS	ZEPHANIAH	1 THESSALONIANS
EXODUS	PROVERBS	HAGGAI	2 THESSALONIANS
LEVITICUS	ECCLESIASTES	ZECHARIAH	1 TIMOTHY
NUMBERS	SONG OF SOLOMON	MALACHI	2 TIMOTHY
DEUTERONOMY	ISAIAH	NEW TESTAMENT	TITUS
JOSHUA	JEREMIAH	MATTHEW	PHILEMON
JUDGES	LAMENTATIONS	MARK	HEBREWS
RUTH	EZEKIEL	LUKE	JAMES
1 SAMUEL	DANIEL	JOHN	1 PETER
2 SAMUEL	HOSEA	ACTS	2 PETER
1 KINGS	JOEL	ROMANS	1 JOHN
2 KINGS	AMOS	1 CORINTHIANS	2 JOHN
1 CHRONICLES	OBADIAH	2 CORINTHIANS	3 JOHN
2 CHRONICLES	EZRA	GALATIANS	JUDE
NEHEMIAH	JONAH	EPHESIANS	REVELATION
ESTHER	NAHUM	PHILIPPIANS	

LAW • HISTORY • POETRY & WISDOM • MAJOR PROPHETS
MINOR PROPHETS • GOSPELS • HISTORY • LETTERS OF PAUL
GENERAL LETTERS • PROPHECY

BIRDS OF THE BIBLE

1. These fed Elijah at the brook Cherith. 1 Kings 17:4
2. The Israelites ate these in the wilderness. Exodus 16:13
3. This one descended from heaven upon Jesus at his baptism. John 1:32
4. David says: Your youth is renewed like this one. Psalm 103:5
5. This was the first bird Noah sent out of the ark. Genesis 8:7
6. Jesus said we are of more value than many of these. Luke 12:7
7. Which bird leaves her eggs on the earth forgetting that a foot may crush them. Job 39:14-15
8. Which bird is said by Jeremiah "to know her appointed times". Jeremiah 8:7

Now, how about a Word Search? Try and find these words:

GLORY AND COME SINNED OF (twice) GOD ALL THE SHORT HAVE

You can go ACROSS, DOWN and DIAGONALLY (X). Look out! Some also go backwards!

Then put them in the right order to form a sentence. Check with Romans 3:23 to see if you got it right.

P K W I G Q I S G K

W X B M D E M O C S

S P R A I T D F H E

I C Q R N Z U O B D

N F I L A D R G W E

N L P E J T H E S N

E L V H M O A R U V

D A E T G L O R Y L

12 H C F R O D Y E A X



I hope you have a good time finding the answers. Send me your answers and I will send you a puzzle book.

With my love and prayers. Granny M