



October 2018 Newsletter



WELCOME

LORD'S DAY

Morning Worship—11.00am

Evening Worship—6.30pm

PRAYER MEETING

Thursday—7.30pm

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WORD FROM THE MANSE

Dear congregation,

“An environmental chaplain is urging people to re-read the Bible with ‘green specs’ in a bid to encourage churches to take action against climate change,” reads a headline on the website of the Church of Scotland.

There is a lot that could be said about this article, but does this not expose a serious problem of Biblical interpretation? Let me introduce you to two terms – *exegesis* and *eisegesis*. These two terms sound very similar, but they are in fact completely opposite in meaning.

Exegesis literally means “to lead out.” *Exegesis* begins with the Biblical text and tries to understand what it means in its own context, according to the grammar and syntax of the words. The text has an original, intended meaning and it is to be found. *Exegesis* allows Scripture to interpret Scripture. The reader’s conclusions arise from the text.

Eisegesis, on the other hand, literally means “to lead into.” It begins with the interpreter’s own opinions or thoughts which are read into the text. The grammar and context are sacrificed if they hinder this process. *Eisegesis* is an imposition of the interpreter’s ideas on the text and thus is a mishandling of the text.

The above quotation is a clear example of an exhortation to *eisegesis* – “re-read the Bible with ‘green specs.’” Begin with the conclusion that climate change is one of the world’s deepest and most serious problems and interpret the Bible so that it repeats your conclusions to you. Let’s be clear, the Bible does have something to say about how we are to view the earth. But by beginning with the conclusion that climate change is a great evil, and reading that into various texts, the message of the Bible will become misconstrued. This *eisegesis* will fail to see the central problem of sin and the resulting curse on the earth. Instead, because the interpreter wants us to take “climate action,” steps towards this end will be read into the text.

Other examples of *eisegesis* can be seen, for example, “Christian socialists” begin with the conclusion that poverty or inequality are the biggest problems facing us. This conclusion is read into the text of Scripture and so the interpreter makes Jesus agree with their political position. The Bible has a lot to say about money, its place and its abuse, but surely the Bible must speak for itself.

But we who are committed to the authority of Scripture may also be guilty of *eisegesis*. This happens:

A. When we see a word in the text and read in our modern meaning without thinking of what it meant in Biblical times.

Example 1: Psalm 47:2 “For the Lord Most High *is* awesome” (NKJV) or “For the Lord most high *is* terrible” (KJV). The meaning of the word *is* is that we should tremble before God, reverencing and obeying Him. But it would be *eisegesis* to take modern views of these words (*awesome* = impressive or cool; *terrible* = extremely bad) and read them into the text.

Example 2: “False friends.” In regard to the meaning of words, we must be especially careful with the King James Version since English has changed through the years and some words may not mean quite what you would first think- they are in fact “false friends”. “Be **careful** for nothing” does not prohibit attention to detail. “careful” here means anxious. “For our **conversation** is in heaven” does not refer to prayer as a chat before the throne of grace but rather to our citizenship in heaven. “But unto thee have I cried, O Lord; and in the morning shall my prayer **prevent** thee,” does not mean that our prayers can hinder God. “Prevent” here means to come before.

B. When we take a modern idea which has developed after Biblical times and read it back into the Bible

I once heard someone speak on the reason why Gideon took the 300 men who lifted the water to their mouth rather than those who bent down to the water. Concert trumpeters apparently don't drink too much before playing as it can affect their playing. Gideon required those who could play the trumpet well. But is the modern practice of concert trumpeters really the reason for God depleting Gideon's army? Were there even concert trumpeters in Gideon's time?

C. When we take a verse out of its context.

Example 1: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." From the context this verse refers to the grace of Christ strengthening Paul for trials, afflictions, and hardships, not the fact that he can get through an exam or a job interview.

Example 2: "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope." From the context this verse refers to how God will bring His people through chastening with hope, not that every aspect of my life will be rosy and happy. We may be guilty of taking a verse out of context when we say "what this verse means to me is..." rather than "what this verse means is..."

In short, we must always seek to be students under the Word rather than placing ourselves over it. *Eisegesis* is so easily done simply because it is so easy. *Exegesis* is hard because it involves study. And yet which is the most rewarding? *Eisegesis* begins with man's voice and concludes with man's voice; *exegesis* listens to the voice of God. Is there really a choice?

In Christ,
Stephen

NEWS & EVENTS

REV. GARY GUNN'S INDUCTION TO MEADVILLE



Rev. Gary Gunn

The Rev Gary Gunn was inducted recently as pastor of the Covenant Reformed Presbyterian Church of Meadville in Pennsylvania, USA. A Commission of the Presbytery of the Alleghenies met for the installation of Gary and the Rev Martin Blocki, clerk of the Presbytery, moderated the service.

Isaiah 6: 1 - 8 was read as the call to worship and Psalm 100A was sung by the congregation. Martin Blocki then led the congregation in prayer and then constituted the court.

Elder Bib Stivason read the narration of steps leading up to the installation service. Members of the congregation indicated their adherence to their call upon Gary Gunn to be their pastor by rising to vote. Gary then indicated his acceptance of the Call and then answered affirmatively to the queries of installation. He also publicly renewed his commitment to the questions for ordination.

Pastor Barry York read Scripture from 1 Timothy 4: 11 - 16 and then preached God's word and gave the charge to the congregation. This was followed by the singing of Psalm 139A. The Rev Martin Blocki then put the questions for installation to Gary who responded affirmatively. The prayer of installation was offered by Pastor Jeff Stivason.

A motion was then passed to transfer the membership of Gary Gunn from the Glasgow RPC to the Covenant RPC of Meadville.

The Covenant RPC elders and other elders in attendance extended the right hand of fellowship to Gary Gunn and Pastor Martin Blockie gave the charge to the congregation.

The congregation then sang Psalm 122B and Pastor Gunn pronounced the benediction.

We wish Gary and his wife Jill every blessing in his new charge.

Bill Lucas

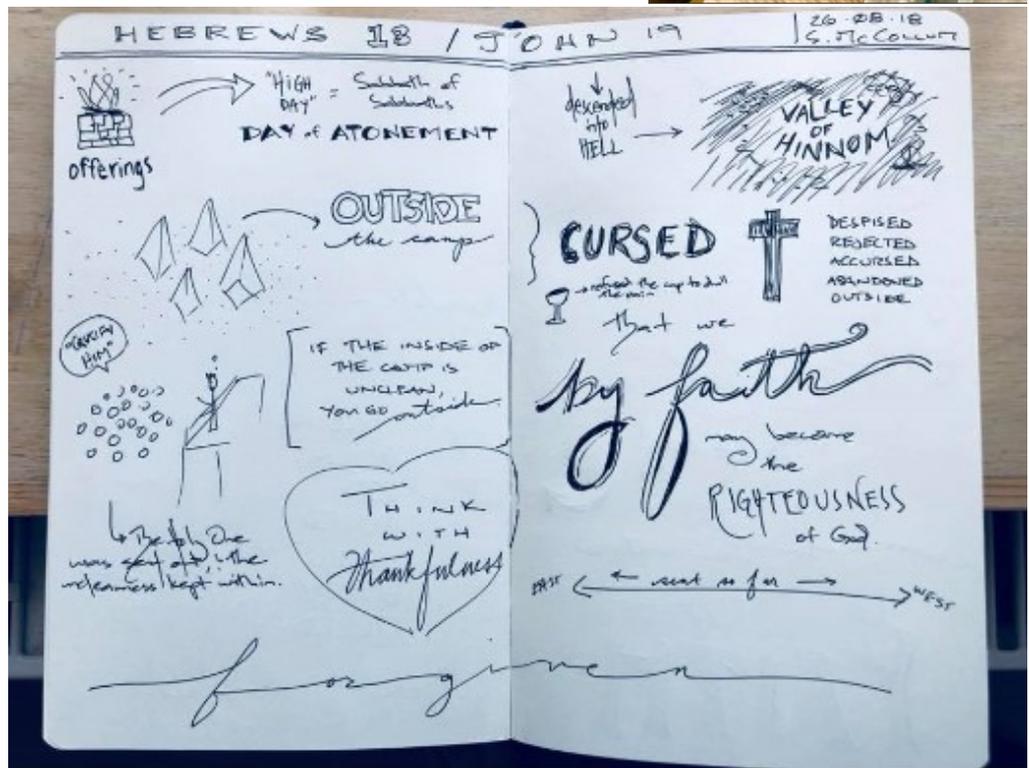
REFLECTIONS ON A SCOTTISH COMMUNION SEASON

This was the impetus for my taking the trip to Lewis this weekend: our church on Stornoway has its “communion season”, which is a series of services to prepare for communion itself on Sunday, and a thanksgiving service when it’s done.

I love the practice (my own church only does communion itself once a quarter, with no services surrounding it) but had never yet made it up to Stornoway for one of theirs. It was like a week of Sundays packed into a weekend - four services (and that was me missing two of them), a prayer meeting, fellowship evenings and lunches after service to talk about what was shared.... I was both very refreshed and physically exhausted! They even use communion “tokens”, which you get during the preparatory service and give to the elder on communion day. (I took the photo in a hurry but it says “let a man examine himself” from i Corinthians 11, a reminder that communion is not something to be taken lightly.) .



For me it was a double break from normal life. Simply going up to the islands slows you down and reminds you life doesn't have to be so fast paced. And being part of a communion season reminds me that spiritual wealth is far greater than any other kind, and is the only thing you can take with you into the next life. The Sunday evening sermon was particularly excellent: when you consider Jesus - who He was, who He is, and whether you will follow Him - there are only two options. You can say yes, or you can say no. You can't hover or delay or think about it at a more convenient time. You don't know whether you'll get that time or not.



The principle applies to anything in your life. If it's important to you, you will make time for it. You will do it. You will sacrifice other

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things for it. And if you do not, we can infer that thing isn't really that important to you. For most things that doesn't matter. But for following Jesus it matters immensely. It matters more than anything. It's a matter of death and life. "Choose this day whom you will serve: as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Karen Reyburn, Airdrie RPCS

WESTMINSTER CONFERENCE

On September 8, 2018, the Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary held its annual Westminster Conference. The purpose of the conference is to analyze the Westminster Confession in a twenty-first century context. This year's topic was Soundly Preaching the Word of God.

Speakers included, Dr. Joel Beeke, President of Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, Dr. Ligon Duncan, Chancellor at Reformed Theological Seminary, Dr. Michael LeFebvre, Adjunct Professor of Old Testament Studies at RPTS, and Dr. Barry York, President of RPTS.

Dr. Beeke spoke on Plain Preaching: Demonstrating the Spirit and His Power. Dr. Duncan spoke on Faithful Preaching: Making Known the Whole Counsel of God. Dr. LeFebvre spoke on Wise Preaching: Applying Oneself to



the Abilities of the Congregation.

Dr. York finished the day with a sermon on Zealous Preaching: Exercising the Fervent Love for God and His People. A panel discussion was also included with the speakers answering questions from the conferees

Panel Discussion

Audio copies of the lectures are available with a form on the Seminary's Facebook page. Also this year's conference will be in manuscript format in the Reformed Presbyterian Theological Journal due out later this fall. The Journal is found at www.rpts.edu and is available digitally or in print format.



Dr. Barry York



Dr. Ligon Duncan

GLEANINGS BY BILL LUCAS

BARRENNESS

Though we have brought forth some fruit unto Christ, and have a joyful hope that we are "plants of His own right hand planting," yet there are times when we feel very barren. Prayer is lifeless, love is cold, faith is weak, each grace in the garden of our heart languishes and droops. We are like flowers in the hot sun, requiring the refreshing shower. In such a condition what are we to do?

The text is addressed to us in just such a state. "Sing, O barren, break forth and cry aloud." But what can I sing about? I cannot talk about the present, and even the past looks full of barrenness. Ah! I can sing of Jesus Christ. I can talk of visits which the Redeemer has aforesaid paid to me; or if not of these, I can magnify the great love wherewith He loved His people when He came from the heights of heaven for their redemption. I will go to the cross again. Come, my soul, heavy laden thou wast once, and thou didst lose thy burden there.

Go to Calvary again. Perhaps that very Cross which gave thee life may give thee fruitfulness. What is my barrenness? It is the platform for His fruit-creating power. What is my desolation? It is the black setting for the sapphire of His everlasting love. I will go in poverty, I will go in helplessness, I will go in all my shame and backsliding, I will tell Him that I am still His child, and in confidence in His faithful heart, even I, the barren one, will sing and cry aloud.

Sing, believer, for it will cheer thine own heart, and the hearts of other desolate ones. Sing on, for now that thou art really ashamed of being barren, thou wilt be fruitful soon; now that God makes thee loathe to be without fruit He will soon cover thee with clusters. The experience of our barrenness is painful, but the Lord's visitations are delightful. A sense of our own poverty drives us to Christ, and that is where we need to be, for in Him is our fruit found.

CHS

A NEED FOR REFRESHING

Your church, Lord, languishes for want of refreshing. We are poor and needy. We seek water. We are thirsty. Create rivers in the hills and fountains in the valley. Make the wilderness a pool and the dry land a place of springs.

THE UNBELIEVING BELIEVER

F B Meyer

And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut and stood in the midst and said: "Peace be unto you." Then saith He to Thomas: "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing." (John 20: 26 - 28).

When Thomas came to the meeting of disciples that evening, I doubt not his heart was very desolate. Unbelief and unhappiness always go together. An unbelieving believer is of all men most miserable. His brethren around him were full of joy, for they had seen the Lord. Mary still remembered the blessed tone of His voice when He said: "Mary!" and she answered "Rabboni?"

Peter was wondering over His amazing love when He said: "Go tell the disciples, and Peter." And the bosom of John was filled with a silent feeling of unutterable love.

All were glad but one. That one was Thomas. But now, when Christ came in, when He revealed Himself a crucified but risen Redeemer, when He showed His special kindness to Thomas, the heart of Thomas could stand out no longer, and he cried out, in words of appropriating faith, before all: "My Lord and my God."

Robert Murray M'Cheyne

THE BENEDICTION

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen. (2 Corinthians 13:14)

What a gracious way to end a letter -- the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the last line of the last chapter of Paul's epistle. You might call it the bottom line for had it not been for the grace of God we'd all be hopelessly lost. But grace has appeared in Christ and with it the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. The fullness of the Godhead is enjoined in this benediction that begins with His marvellous grace.

Rex Trogdon

THE MILLSTONE

“For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (Mark 8:36)

The millstone which turns about all day, grinding corn for others and not for itself, at night stands in the same place where it was in the morning. After a great volume of grain has passed by, it is now emptied of all, having received nothing in the bargain but wearing itself out for the profit of others.

In the same way, worldly men engrossed in the pursuit of earthly vanities toil throughout the day, and when the night of death comes they are in the same position as they were when they began. All they have is labour for their pains; they retain nothing of the things which have passed through their hands, and are ultimately forced to leave them to the world, from which they first had them ...

Let us not foolishly imagine that our minds can be satisfied with worldly vanities; nor should we greedily seek for a greater measure of them, when we are not satisfied with a less. The hunger in our hearts proceeds not from want of early abundance, but from the unnatural nourishment they offer to the mind of man. It can no more satisfy our soul's hunger, than it can satisfy our bodies to feed on the wind ...

If, therefore, we would have such sufficiency of these worldly things to bring us contentment, we must attain it by moderating our affections, rather than by multiplying these vanities. If we would have our thirst slaked and abated, it must not be by a larger drinking of these unsatisfying drinks, which will only increase our appetite, but by purging away worldly lust and concupiscence, which are the true cause of our insatiableness.

George Downname (Puritan)

IT IS FINISHED

This is my blood ... which is shed for many for the remission of sins. (Matthew 26:28)

And without shedding of blood is no remission. (Hebrews 9: 22)

And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. (Hebrews 10:17)

God exacted the full penalty for all our sins when He laid them upon His Son on the cross. The blood of the Lord Jesus Christ was shed for us. As Jesus died He cried out "It is finished" (John 19:30), the price was paid in full and now whoever comes to Him, trusting only in His substitutionary death for us, will hear these wonderful words, "Your sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

David Croudace

29 YEARS

“Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord...their works follow them” (Revelation 14:13)



David Brainerd (1718-1747) was an 18th century American missionary to the native American Indians of New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Robert Murray M'Cheyne (1813-1843) was a 19th century Scottish minister in Dundee. These two men lived in different centuries, were born in different countries, ministered in differing circumstances and therefore, in some senses, had little in common. However, in another sense they had much in common: each were called to be ambassadors for Christ, gave much in His service, died at 29 years of age, yet were to greatly influence generations to come.

David Brainerd

David Brainerd was born in Haddam, Connecticut, on 20 April 1718. His father died when he was 9 and his mother died when he was 14. Brainerd was converted when he was 21 on 12 July 1739. Of this experience he wrote, *“Attempting to pray ... for nearly half an hour: then, as I was walking in a dark thick grove, unspeakable glory (1 Peter 1:8) seemed to open to the view and apprehension of my soul.”* (P.69)

In September of the same year, he enrolled in Yale University in order to become a Minister, only to be expelled a year before his graduation, for suggesting that his tutor “had no more grace than a chair.” The normal ministerial route was no longer open to him, so he became a missionary.

On 1 April 1743, Brainerd began his mission to the Native Americans. In many respects Brainerd considered himself to be a failure. He was afflicted by ill health, loneliness, self-doubt and extreme depression, yet, as he preached to small numbers of relatively inattentive Indians, he had a strong desire to reach the lost with the Gospel of Christ

Wonderfully, in the summer of 1745, revival broke out amongst the Indians of Crossweeksung, New Jersey. Brainerd recorded in his diary of 6 August 1745, *“In the morning I discoursed to the Indians at the house where we lodged. Many of them were then much affected and appeared surprisingly tender, so that a few words about their souls’ concerns would cause the tears to flow freely, and produce many sobs and groans. In the afternoon, they being returned to the place where I had usually preached among them, I again discoursed to them there....There were scarce three in forty that could refrain from tears and bitter cries. They all, as one, seemed in an agony of soul to obtain an interest in Christ...It was surprising to see how their hearts seemed to be pierced with the tender and melting invitations of the gospel, when there was not a word of terror spoken to them. It was very affecting to see the poor Indians, who the other day were hallooing and yelling in their idolatrous feasts and drunken frolics, now crying to God with such importunity for an interest in His dear Son!”* (P 84-86)

Brainerd taught the Indian converts Christian doctrine, which impacted greatly upon their lives. *“Much of the goodness of God has appeared in their acquirement of knowledge, both in religion and in the affairs of common life. There has been a wonderful thirst after Christian knowledge prevailing among them in general...They have also taken pains, and appeared remarkably apt in learning to sing Psalm-tunes, and are now able to sing with a good degree of decency in the worship of God. They have also acquired a considerable degree of useful knowledge in the affairs of common life. They now appear like rational creatures, fit for human society, free from that savage roughness and brutish stupidity, which rendered them very disagreeable in their pagan state.”* (P.478).

Brainerd died of tuberculosis, in the house of Jonathan Edwards, at 29 years of age on 9 October 1747. His life was short, only 8 years as a believer and 4 of those as a missionary. His life has had quite an impact over the years, primarily as Jonathan Edwards publishing of Brainerd's diary in 1749. His life is a testimony to the Lord's power in using a sick, lonely, discouraged believer as an ambassador for Christ and ultimately, the saving of perhaps several hundred Indians.

Robert Murray M'Cheyne

The impact of Brainerd's ministry on the church at large, through his diary, is impossible to measure. Many well-known ministers and missionaries bore testimony to the great encouragement Brainerd has been to their lives and ministries, including William Carey, David Livingston, Jim Elliot and Robert Murray M'Cheyne.

Robert Murray M'Cheyne was born in Edinburgh on 21 May 1813. He was the youngest of five children and raised in an outwardly religious home. M'Cheyne was academically able and entered the University of Edinburgh at 14. However, he was given as much to the social side of university life, what he later considered to be worldliness—as much as he was to his studies.

The death of his eldest brother David, who died from a fever, at the age of 27, was to profoundly impact M'Cheyne. His brother had been converted and had been given to prayer for his family, "the death of his brother, with all its circumstances, was used by the Holy Spirit to produce a deep impression on Robert's soul." (P.5)

M'Cheyne was awakened and began reading sound Christian literature, including the Westminster Standards, the Life of Henry Martyn and Edward's diary of Brainerd;

"June 27 – Life of David Brainerd. Most wonderful man! What conflicts, what depressions, desertions, strength, advancement, victories...I cannot express what I think when I think of thee. Tonight, more set upon missionary enterprise than ever." (P.18)

He sensed a call to the ministry and studied divinity in Edinburgh under Thomas Chalmers (1780-1847). At this time, he became well acquainted with fellow students, brothers Horatius (1808-89) and Andrew (1810-1892) Bonar and George Smeaton (1814-1889), amongst others. They were godly, gifted young men, whom the Lord raised up to serve the Church in Scotland. Andrew Bonar was to write M'Cheyne's biography, "Memoir & Remains of Robert Murray M'Cheyne," not long after his death, by which so many have become acquainted with M'Cheyne, his life, letters and sermons.

Following the completion of his studies in 1835, M'Cheyne became an assistant minister in Larbert and Dunipace Church of Scotland, before accepting the call to St. Peter's Church of Scotland in Dundee at 23 years of age. He was to remain in that charge for the remainder of his short life, although he travelled and preached extensively. His preaching was blessed of the Lord in preparing the ground for revival, which was to come as M'Cheyne was away from the pulpit for 8 months as part of a mission of enquiry to the Jewish people, from which arose a Jewish mission, based in Budapest.

M'Cheyne was a diligent pastor, engaging in early morning meditation and prayer for two hours and visiting many homes each day:

"September 26 1838 – Good visiting day. Twelve families; many of them go nowhere. It is a great thing to be well furnished by meditation and prayers before setting out; it makes you a far more full and faithful witness." (P.60)

Above all else, M'Cheyne was a Christ-centred preacher. In a sermon on Psalm 90:14, on the importance of flying to Christ without delay, M'Cheyne stated, "Some of you may have seen how short life is in those around you. *"Your Fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever?"* How many friends have you

lying in the grave! Some of you have more friends lying in the grave than in this world. They were carried away, “as with a flood,” and we are fast hastening after them. In a little while the church where you sit will be filled with new worshipers – a new voice will lead the Psalm – a new man of God fill the pulpit. It is an absolute certainty that, in a few years, all of you who read this will be lying in the grave. Oh, what need, then, to fly to Christ without delay!” (P585-586)

M’Cheyne died of typhus on 25 March 1843, a few weeks short of his thirtieth birthday. He was a man of outstanding gifts, which he put to use in service to the Lord’s cause. One of his most famous quotes well summarises his Christ-centred ministry, which in turn we would do well to heed, “for every look at yourself, take ten looks at Christ.” (P.293)

Lessons

What lessons can we learn from the lives of Brainerd and M’Cheyne? Firstly, 29 years would seem to us to be a very short life, yet lived for Christ, the influence of a life, whatever its length, may continue for many years to come. It is doubtless true, that neither Brainerd nor M’Cheyne could have fathomed that their lives would be the subject of spiritual discussion in 2018, yet “their works follow them,” (Revelation 14:13).

Secondly, whatever our gifts may be, a life lived for Christ in whatever century, country or calling we may have is a life lived well and of eternal significance, as Brainerd and M’Cheyne’s lives clearly demonstrate. Thirdly, perhaps the value of writing a diary, particularly in relation to our spiritual experiences, is to be brought to the fore here. Most of us would never be the subject of written biographies, yet we may underestimate the value, for ourselves or others, in keeping such a record.

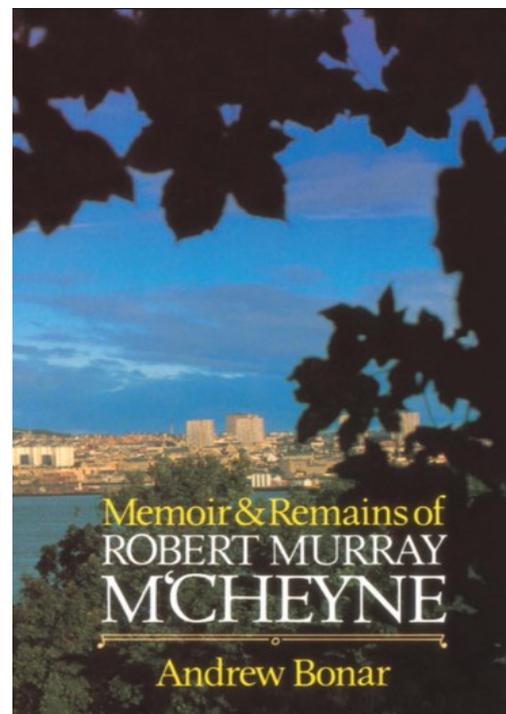
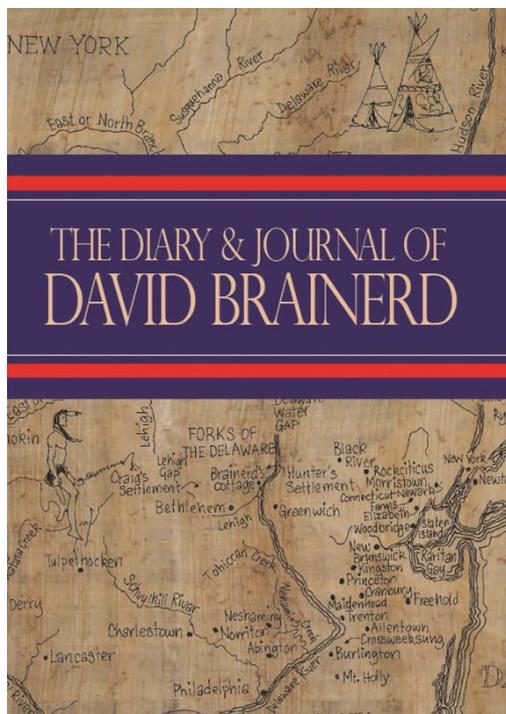
Finally, both Brainerd and M’Cheyne experienced great spiritual awakening in their ministries, while we live in a day and age where the Church has fallen to a low ebb. Emphasis is put upon gimmicks and church surveys, which seek to discover what the community wants from the church. We have lost confidence in the Gospel. Our churches are in desperate need of awakening and it is our duty to pray God to raise up more and many for faithful ministries like those of David Brainerd and Robert Murray M’Cheyne, “Will You not revive us again, that Your people may rejoice in You?” (Psalm 85:6)

SM

References:

The Life & Diary of David Brainerd, Jonathan Edwards

Robert Murray M’Cheyne: Memoir and Remains, Andrew Bonar



CALL SINNERS TO DO THE IMPOSSIBLE

Recently, I was approached by a friend who asked me a question after I had preached. In the message, I had made a gospel call to the congregation. My friend asked, "Can a person dead in their sins ask Jesus for a new heart? Is that not the sole work of the Spirit?"

I understood the reason for his question. I had preached that those who knew they had a dead heart should ask Jesus for a new one. His commitment to Reformed theology made him believe this was a contradiction. The syllogism of the logic behind his question undoubtedly went along these lines:

Sinners are dead in their trespasses, having a heart of stone dead to God (Eph. 2:1).

Only the Holy Spirit can give someone a new heart (Eph. 36:26).

Therefore, a sinner cannot ask for a new heart.



Though I want to hold fast to Reformed theology and remain open to correction as well, on this occasion I did not believe I was inconsistent with the Bible or Calvinistic preaching. For as I answered my friend's question, I reminded him that God often asks us to do what is impossible to do yet what He also promises He will do. I mentioned at the time that in the Bible God says that He alone can circumcise hearts, which is a sign of removing sin from them (Deut. 30:6). But he also commands the people of God to do it themselves (Deut. 10:16; Jer. 4:4). Upon further reflection, I believe the Scriptures illustrate and teach that every time the gospel is preached we are asking sinners to do what is impossible to do.

In Jesus' ministry, do we not see Him demonstrating this phenomenon? The Lord told a paralyzed man to rise up and walk (Matt. 9:6). He commanded a man with a crippled hand to stretch it out (Luke 6:10). He even called Lazarus, a dead man, to come out of a tomb (John 11:43). He called sinners to do the physically impossible.

Likewise, is not preaching the gospel a call to sinners to do the spiritually impossible? When Jesus proclaimed, "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand" (Matt. 4:17), who was His audience? Those who were not yet repentant. So, applying the logic of the syllogism above, how can you ask hardened sinners to repent? Unbelievers to believe? The blind to see? The lame to walk? The dead to rise?

Well, the answer is not that we have to become an Arminian, giving sinners an ability they do not possess, to call sinners to the impossible. Rather, we improve the syllogism to draw the proper Biblical conclusion:

Sinners are dead in their trespasses, having a heart of stone that is dead to God (Eph. 2:1).

Only the Holy Spirit can give someone a new heart (Eph. 36:26).

Therefore, only a sinner in whom the Spirit is working will be able to ask for a new heart.

These things speak to the dynamic of the preaching moment and the need for prayer to accompany preaching. The gospel call goes forth, calling all sinners to repent of their sins and believe in Christ. Yet only those sinners in whom the Spirit is working to regenerate them at that time will be able to respond. So when a sinner does repent and believe, only what is possible for God to do has happened. The power of God is revealed!

So we do not need to try to "protect" Reformed teachings by over-qualifying gospel calls. Go ahead and proclaim the impossible to sinners. Then watch God do what only He can do!

Children's Corner



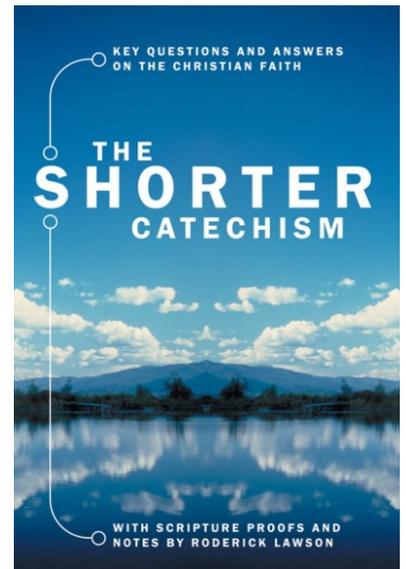
Dear Children

There is a little while since I gave you some puzzles to do so how about a few this month. Some months ago we saw some of the names that Jesus gave to Himself e.g. I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. We also saw some of the names that others gave Him e.g. Teacher, Lamb of God.

This month we will look at some words that describe God in both the Old and New Testaments. Remember that Jesus is God, so whatever description you read of God it is also true of Jesus for He too is God. Your Shorter Catechism Question 6 tells you that “There are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.”

Look up the reference in the following and then fill in the blanks:

1. Daniel 6:20 Daniel, servant of the _____ God.
2. Nehemiah 1:5 O _____ and _____ God.
3. Psalm 7:9 The _____ God tests the hearts and minds.
4. Malachi 3:6 I am the Lord, I _____.
5. Revelation 4:8 _____ Lord God Almighty.
6. Matthew 5:48 Your Father in heaven is _____.
7. Acts 10:42 _____ of the living and the dead.
8. Jeremiah 3:4 You are the _____ of my Youth.
9. 1 John 4:8 God is _____.
10. Hebrews 12:29 For our God is a _____.
11. Isaiah 45:21 No other God besides Me, a _____ God and a _____.
12. Psalm 25:8 _____ and _____ is the Lord.
13. Exodus 34:6&7 The Lord God, _____ and _____ and _____ and _____ abounding in _____ and _____, keeping _____ for thousands, _____ iniquity, transgression and sin.
14. 2 Samuel 22:2&3 The Lord is my _____ and my _____; the God of my _____ in whom I will trust; my _____ and the horn of my salvation; my _____ and my _____.



There are other words that we can use to describe God. See if you can match the words to their meanings.

Eternal	in every place	Omniscient
Invisible	all powerful	not subject to death
Immortal	no beginning, no ending	Omnipresent
Omnipotent	knows everything	can't be seen

I hope that by finding out these descriptions of God it will help you understand and appreciate a little of who God is and what He is like. The prophet Isaiah tells us that He is “wonderful in counsel and excellent in guidance”. He also wants us to come to Him and place our trust and confidence in Him. He is a wise, kind and faithful friend. Make sure that you are one of His friends.

May the Lord bless you all with His salvation.

With my love. Granny M