

# the presbyterian

*Preach the Word;  
be prepared in season and out of season;  
correct, rebuke and encourage —  
with great patience and careful instruction*  
2 Timothy 4:2

May 2012

# banner

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Editor:  
Rev. Sjirk Bajema  
44 Prospect Hill Road,  
Narre Warren, VIC  
AUSTRALIA 3805  
Ph. (03) 9705 1505  
Email: sjirkb@gmail.com

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# Editorial

There are three helpful questions to think about in our conversations with others:

The first of these asks: Is it true? Of course we would never tell a downright lie, but how often don't we just stretch the truth a little? By exaggeration or withholding all the facts, we don't tell the actual truth. It is hard to be absolutely accurate in all we say, but we can do it with practice. And we especially need to be on our guard when we talk about those we don't naturally 'like'.

The second question is this: Is it kind? We can easily tear others down when they're not there, even if it is the truth we're saying. So we should be speaking as though they were actually right there with us. If you're not willing to tell them to their faces what you are sharing with someone else, then you shouldn't be speaking in that way at all!

There is a place for constructive criticism, however. But that place should be in private conversation to that person, and not to others in their absence.

The third question is this: Is it necessary? Most of us talk too much and don't listen enough. It's best to say less. Don't feel guilty about silence. Proverbs 17:28 describes it so well for us: 'Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent, and discerning if he holds his tongue.'

*The fact that people are born with two eyes and two ears  
but only one tongue suggests that  
they ought to look and listen twice as much as they speak.*

Anon

+++++

This month we have the annual Synod of our denomination being held in Wauchope (May 8<sup>th</sup> till 10<sup>th</sup>). Please pray for the discussions and deliberations being held there, especially that it may be done to God's glory and thus to the upbuilding of His saints. Remember the Moderator, the Clerk, and also those involved in guiding us. Pray also for our hosts – the folk of the Hastings congregation – as they care practically for the delegates.

*Cover Photo Credit: Andrew Wibe Bajema*

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## The End of the Law

### Considering Romans 7:1—13

George Ball

The subject of this chapter is 'the Law.' It's mentioned 35 times from Romans 7:1-8:4 – and almost in every verse from Romans 7: 1-13. For many of us it's a confusing subject. E.g. what do we mean by the law? Is it the whole of the Old Testament; or the 10 Commandments; or the Pentateuch; or something else? What is our relationship to the law? There are conflicting opinions among Christians. Some say that the law is no longer relevant to the Christian because we are not under law but under grace – and law and grace are like oil and water – they don't mix. Others say that though the law does not save, yet we ought to obey it once we are saved in order to show our grateful response. As we approach this big subject we are not going to learn everything about the place of the law in the Christian life – but hopefully enough to give us a handle.

I have given this chapter the simple title, 'The End of the Law.' At one level it is very obvious what that means. 'The end of the law' is the finish or termination of the law. There is a sense in which this has happened. Jesus said He came not to abolish the law but to fulfil it. He fulfilled it by keeping it on our behalf. He fulfilled its penalty when He died upon the Cross. He fulfilled the ceremonial and ritual law (including sacrifices, priests, temple and circumcision). He fulfilled it by filling out its meaning.

But, 'the end' can also have another meaning; it can denote the purpose of something. When we ask, 'what is the chief end of man?' – we are really asking, 'what is man's chief purpose in life?' It may be only a three letter word, but it can mean different things in different contexts. So let's see if we can get to the end of this! In the opening section of the chapter Paul explains:

#### 1. The End of the Law as a Way of Making us Right with God (vs1-6)

'The end' here means - the finish – the termination – the completion. The law cannot make us right with God. The marriage illustration makes one simple point. It's not about divorce

and remarriage – we need to look elsewhere for that. The point is that law has limits. Law is only binding so long as there is life. When death occurs, the law no longer applies. You can't be fined for speeding if you're in

*<sup>1</sup> Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives? <sup>2</sup> For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. <sup>3</sup> So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man. <sup>4</sup> Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God. <sup>5</sup> For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death. <sup>6</sup> But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.*

*<sup>7</sup> What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "You shall not covet."<sup>8</sup> But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin was dead. <sup>9</sup> I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. <sup>10</sup> And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death. <sup>11</sup> For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me. <sup>12</sup> Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.*

*<sup>13</sup> Has then what is good become death to me? Certainly not! But sin, that it might appear sin, was producing death in me through what is good, so that sin through the commandment might become exceedingly sinful.*

the cemetery. You can't prosecute a corpse. Death releases us from all our debts. The law is for the living. Mrs Jones whose husband has died is no longer under the contract of marriage. She is free to remarry; she is released from the law because there has been a death. Death spells the end of the law. Paul now applies the illustration to the law of God. 'You also died to the law through the body of Christ' (v.4). That is what we also learned in chapter 6: 2-5, 8 and 11. When the Lord Jesus Christ died – we died with Him. Everything that the law demanded of us was met in Him. He obeyed the law of God perfectly and He paid the penalty for our broken law. He paid the wages of sin – death. As a result we are now released from the law.

There are two (theoretical) ways for us to be right with God. The first is to keep the law of God perfectly. How many have done that? Only one - only Jesus Christ. This way for us then is no longer possible. The other option is the way that Paul has written about in that most important paragraph in chapter 3: 19-22...

'But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known... This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ.' Christ has fulfilled all the righteous requirements of the Law for everyone who believes. I can never be made righteous by trying to keep the commandments – it is only by saving faith in the Lord Jesus. In Him, my justification is complete. 'It's just if I'd never sinned; it's just if I'd kept the law perfectly!' I contribute zero; nil; nothing toward my justification. God has provided everything in Christ. 'Christ has become for us wisdom from God – that is our righteousness, holiness and redemption.' (1 Cor. 1: 31). Christ is the END of the law!

Does the fact that we have now died to the Law make us footloose and fancy free? Does the fact that we are now Christians mean that we are free to do whatever we want? Now that we are single again are we

free to date whosoever? No! Paul states, 'You died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another... In order that we might bear fruit to God.' (v.4). Our old marriage to the law is over. But we are not unmarried. We are not single. We are now married to Christ in a living intimate union. This is so 'that we might bear fruit to God.' We are free from the slavery and condemnation of the law – to serve the Lord by a new Spirit within us (v.6). God has united us to Christ that we might live a holy life.

I like the illustration that Stuart Olyott uses. 'Imagine a single man who decides to employ a housekeeper. Afraid that she might not do what she is paid to do, he puts up a list of rules on the kitchen wall. Meals are at 8.00, 1.00 and 6.00. Washing up is to be done immediately after each meal. Teabags are NOT to be left in the sink. Beds are to be changed once a week. And so the list goes on!... Eventually this well-off man falls in love with his housekeeper and marries her. Now what do you think he does with the list of rules on the wall? You are right: he takes them down. But his wife still produces the meals at 8.00, 1.00 and 6.00. She does the washing up after each meal; she puts the tea bags in the bin and changes the beds every week. Why does she bother since there are no longer any rules? It is because she loves him and knows that these things please him. The whole dynamic has changed!' This helps us to understand the change in our relationship. Once we were bound to the Law and resented it. Then we died. Now we are bound to Christ. We are married to Christ. Why do we serve Him? Not because we HAVE to, but because we WANT to! We love Him – because He first loved us. We can say with the psalmist, 'In doing your will I find delight.' We find His yoke easy and His burden light. We want to follow Him with wholehearted love and obedience.

## 2. The End of the Law as a Way of Pointing us to God (vs7-13)

By 'the end' here I mean the goal – the purpose of the law. 'What shall we say then? Is the law sin?' (v.7). Paul is here replying to a possible objector; who may be accusing the

apostle that teaching the law is a bad thing. What is Paul's response?

'Certainly not! No way!' Paul echoes Jesus attitude to the law when he affirms that it is holy, just and good. It shows us our sin; it drives us to our knees and then to Christ for pardon. Let's follow his argument.

He tells us that the law reveals sin (verse 7 and chapter 3: 20). The law is like a smoke detector which can warn us about a fire – but it can't put out the fire. The law is like a cat scan that can reveal the tumour but can't cure it. The law is like a mirror which shows my wrinkles and unshaven face – but it can't make me any prettier! The law can diagnose our problem, but can't deliver us from it. It can show us how far we are away from God, but cannot bring us any nearer to Him.

Paul cites his own experience. As a model Pharisee he could tick the first nine boxes. It was, however, the 10<sup>th</sup> commandment which caught him out. How come? It was the 10<sup>th</sup> commandment which taught him that the law was inward: that the righteousness the commandment requires is inward, making him realise that he had never kept any part of the law. He realised for the first time that there was a lot more to the first nine commandments than just keeping them outwardly and physically. The 10<sup>th</sup> commandment became the lense through which he came to view all the commandments. As he looked at the commandments, he now saw his dirty finger prints had messed every one of them. He was not the saint he had thought. He had not obeyed any of the commandments from the heart. The law was God's searchlight that had exposed him. The law then is good. It shows up our badness. We can't know what sin really is unless we judge it against the perfect law of God. The tragedy of our age is that the Law and the commandments are no longer believed, taught or preached in the churches.

Another function of the law is that it stirs up sin (v.8a). The law actually provokes and aggravates sin! There is substance in the story of the parishioner who objected to the reading of the 10 commandments in church, because she said, 'they put so many ideas into people's heads!' How per-

verse and obstinate we are! When we are told not to do something, the human reaction is we want to do it. The prohibition in the Garden of Eden was a challenge. Rules are made to be broken! The housekeeper never thought of putting the tea leaves down the sink – until she read the rules. Put a sign on the church fence, 'No climbing,' and you can be sure of the result! In Bunyan's Pilgrims Progress Christian comes to the House of Interpreter where he will be shown 'excellent things such as would help him on his journey'. He was shown into a large room that was full of dust. Interpreter called for a man to sweep the dust. When he did so, the dust in the room was so thick that Christian began to choke. Some water had to be brought to settle the dust. What did this mean? Bunyan explains, 'The room is the heart of man that was never sanctified by the grace of the Gospel; the dust is his original sin and inward corruptions. He that began to sweep at first is the Law... but the water is the Gospel... 'The Law instead of cleansing the heart from sin, doth revive, put strength into and increase it in the soul'. Another function of the Law is that it convicts us of sin and condemns it (vs8b-11). 'I once was alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died.' (v.9). Paul was once a proud Pharisee like the one who went up to the temple to pray. He prayed to himself, 'God I thank you I'm not like other men – robbers, evil-doers, adulterers – or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tithe of all I get.' (Luke 18: 11-12). He knew he was 'alive.' The tax collector could not even look up but prayed, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' He knew he was 'dead' – a man condemned by the law of God. Yet it was the tax collector who went home 'justified.'

Finally, the law proves how sinful sin is (vs12-13). The law is holy, righteous and good. John Stott remarks, 'the extreme sinfulness of sin is seen precisely in the way it exploits a good thing for an evil purpose.' Let me illustrate. Why do we find child abuse so repre-

hensible? Because it exploits something good; it violates a child's trust and innocence for a wicked, malicious, selfish purpose. Why are adultery and rape and incest so despicably wicked? Because God made sex as something essentially good to be enjoyed in the security and privacy of marriage, but the adulterer and rapist ignore the maker's instructions and exploit it for their corrupt and evil ends. The Law is good but sin distorts, vandalises, ransacks and plunders it. Sin corrupts; sin abuses; sin distorts; sin is a robber; sin is a blasphemer; sin is a liar; sin is selfish. Sin is exceedingly deceitful and sinful. Where is all this leading? John Gerstner, former Professor in Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, was

once preaching on Romans – expounding on the law. One lady approached him after the service and said, 'Dr Gerstner you made me feel this big.' (As she held up her thumb and index finger). Gerstner replied, 'Madam, that's too big. That's MUCH too big. Don't you know that that much self-righteousness will take you to hell?' He was right. The law of God declares us dead in sin and unable to save ourselves. We are corrupt and unable to heal ourselves. We are guilty and unable to exonerate ourselves. We are lost and helpless and hopeless. But there is an answer. The End of the Law is to show us up, convince us of our need, and drive us to Christ for pardon, who in turn points us, as forgiven and em-

powered disciples, back to the law for our wholehearted obedience. 'The law of the Lord is perfect. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy. The precepts of the Lord are right. The law is holy, righteous and good.'

*The Rev. George D. Ball is the minister of the Manning River PCEA congregation, having previously served in Narre Warren PCEA and the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Northern Ireland.*

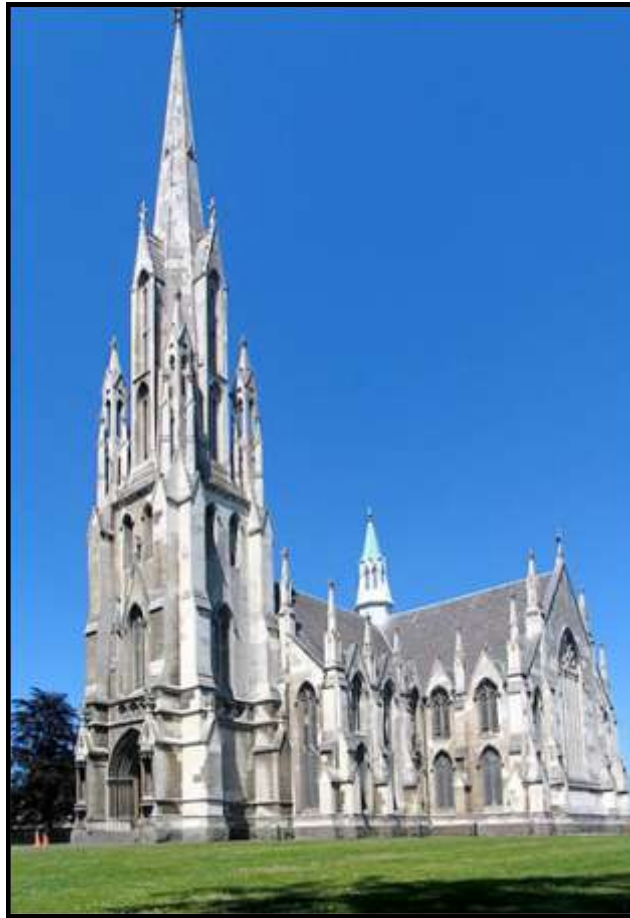
## The Past for Today

### The PCEA & New Zealand

The three men with NZ connections in PCEA pulpits, although only one of the three is New Zealand born, have all come to us through our relatively recent connection with the Reformed Churches of New Zealand. We currently have a very definite New Zealand connection, but PCEA links with New Zealand go back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Union movements among Presbyterians followed a slightly different path that in Australia, for there were only two denominations of Presbyterians and they did not overlap in territory. In the North Island the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand had been formed in 1862 and covered the north island and as far as the Waitaki river in the South Island. For the area south of the Waitaki the Synod of Otago and Southland was constituted in 1867. Its strength was in the settlers who came largely from the Free Church of Scotland in 1848 and later and founded Dunedin (Gaelic for 'Edinburgh'). The northern church was somewhat more relaxed in its approach: congregations had liberty about uninspired hymns and musical accompaniment early on, and left the question of marriage with a deceased wife's sister an open ques-

tion after such marriage became lawful in 1880. The southern church was



*First Church of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand*

slower on these issues – on worship in the 1870s, and marriage in 1895.

But meantime more general weakness was occurring. Both churches adopted a Declaratory Act rather similar to that in Australia and in 1901 officially united, with property interests of the Synod preserved.

#### Dunedin

First Church of Otago, Dunedin was founded by Rev Thomas Burns (d.1871) in 1848. Dr Burns' colleague and successor 1867-72 was Rev George Sutherland, who served St George's PCEA, Sydney from 1872-93. In November 1873 the impressive building, still in use, was opened and was certainly indicative of how some settlers saw themselves. Sutherland was an extremely capable minister, originally from Canada, but was regarded as high-handed by some in First Church – who could also be pretty difficult themselves - and the disputes led to his resignation. In 1860 a second more inclusive parish was formed in

*Rowland S. Ward*

Dunedin called Knox Church, with the notable D.M. Stuart as minister. In 1884, First Church decided to introduce hymns. A number of members were upset about this departure from Scriptural simplicity. Twelve of them met on 9 January 1884 and under the chairmanship of Mr Duncan Niven, an elder since 1880, discussed the desirability of forming a new congregation. Joining Knox Church was not an option, as it had used hymns since 1874 and had an organ under construction which would be used from August 1884. At a second meeting on 29 January 1884 it was resolved to form a new congregation on the basis of the standards of the Free Church of Scotland as set forth by that denomination in 1846, and to take the name *First Free Presbyterian Church of Otago*. Hymns and instrumental music would be excluded. They believed *'that simplicity of worship in the long run will bring the soul into closer touch with the realities of life, reveal more effectively the solemnities of death and the eternal world, and influence the life and character more permanently for good.'*



Where would a minister be obtained, given the Free Church of Scotland had itself allowed hymns (1873) and instrumental music (1883)? The only likely source was the unattached ministers or ministers of the PCEA or its sister church the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria (merged into the PCEA in 1953). And so it was. Rev John A. Nicol (ca.1850-?), minister of the Wimmera FPCV, took the first ser-

vice on 3 February 1884 and stayed for a month. But the Australian church was in the middle of a bitter dispute between strong personalities. Nicol had been deposed by the FPCV in January 1884, in part due to a refusal to appoint a Session in his congregation. But he was back and still caring for a congregation at Wallup, SW of Warracknabeal, in May 1885. His subsequent history is unclear.

Meanwhile Sutherland's colleague, Rev William Grant (1838-1919) of Canada, had been minister of Brushgrove north of Grafton since 1879. He resigned in the aftermath of the painful dispute in the PCEA and was inducted as minister of First Free Presbyterian Church, Dunedin on 22 March 1885. The congregation took on a well-organized life, and paid a stipend of £250 including house allowance. However, Grant did not find the cold winters in Otago comfortable. He resigned 31 March 1886 and returned to Australia. He laboured for a time at Brushgrove and in May 1888 was inducted at Aberdeen PCEA on the Upper Hunter.

#### Chalmers Church

Ministerial supply was still the issue, and the Australian Church could not help because of the effects of the dispute. So, after much deliberation, it was decided to become a congregation under the Presbytery of Dunedin of the Synod, subject to congregational property vesting in the Deacons' Court and a guarantee that the unaccompanied psalmody in public worship was secure. The name *Chalmers Church* was now adopted.

On 17 December 1888 Rev James M. Fraser (1837-1911) was inducted, and soon after four elders were installed: Donald Thomson, Duncan Niven, John Campbell and J. Watson Smith. St John's Primitive Methodist Church in York Place was purchased for £1,050 and opened on 30 June 1889, with Rev Dr D.M. Stuart conducting the morning service. Mr Fraser was a faithful minister. He had originally come as a youth from Nova Scotia under the zealous Rev Norman



McLeod to settle at Waipu. The membership soon increased from the initial 36 and the congregation prospered. Mr Fraser preached a Gaelic service in the afternoon of the Lord's Day once a month. He resigned in February 1900 and Rev J. Urwin Spence (1844-1924) succeeded him on 1 August 1900. This was again a strong evangelical ministry, but concluded in June 1903. Rev Duncan McLennan (1858-?), from the Free Church of Scotland, also a Gaelic preacher, was inducted in June 1905 but resigned in October 1908.

A period of difficulty followed and the pattern of worship was changed. There was litigation. The deacons, who were the trustees and favoured change, did not pay the interest on the mortgage and the property was put up for sale. It was purchased by the Presbyterian Board of Property for the Presbytery of Dunedin in 1913. Some thought the sale something of a sham to get around the trust deed. The church was reopened, but this time the old worship practice was abandoned. Subsequent ministers were Ernest Adams (1915-22) and John Pringle (1924-34). The congregation was officially wound up on 14 June 1935.

In its life, it made a worthwhile con-

tribution. Five from its ranks served on the foreign mission field – China (2) and India (3) - and one Moderator of the General Assembly came from its membership.

### Melbourne links

Interestingly, two of the first elders had connection with our church in Victoria. Duncan Niven (ca.1825-98), who was an iron-founder, was precursor and an elder in St Kilda FPCV before he went to New Zealand about 1875. Arthur Paul, the minister of St Kilda, was opposed to Rev J.A. Nicol, and so on his return about 1891 Niven was ultimately forced to worship separately at a service in the Protestant Hall on Tuesdays. It was generally led by the Geelong minister, Rev John Sinclair. In April 1895 Niven and his

wife returned to New Zealand and he died in Wellington.

John Watson Smith (1858-1928) was born in Victoria and was connected with John Knox FPCV in Melbourne. He went to New Zealand, trained for the ministry 1888-90, was licensed and served as a Home Missionary until 1904. In 1916 he returned to Melbourne, assisted with supply at St Kilda (which was vacant from 1910 with Paul's death), and was inducted an elder in 1921 after Rev Campbell Robinson became minister.

The last 20 years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was a difficult one for confessional Presbyterians in the English-speaking world. There may have been a rather one-sided emphasis on the worship question, but it was symptomatic of a move away from the centralities of the

Biblical faith. One wonders what would have happened if the Australian Church had not forgotten Galatians 5:16-25! Not only would it have been stronger, but perhaps there would have continued to be congregations of like character in New Zealand.

*The author's grandfather, Rev H.E. Carey (1881-1955), was born in Masterton, New Zealand and served the Presbyterian Church of Australia.*

*The Rev. Dr Rowland S. Ward is presently one of the ministers of the Knox (Wantirna) PCEA, with a special responsibility for supply of the All Nation's (Mulgrave) PCEA congregation.*

## Missions in the Banner

### Reports from India & South America

#### India

**Presbyterian Free Church:** The work in Central India continues with challenges and also much to give thanks for over recent years, with increasing numbers of new believers.

#### Chhapara:

The Rev Prakash Kumar Memorial Trust conducted the inter-religious conference (as reported in the February *Banner*) and as a result of that there have been various opportunities to witness to and connect with the Jain and Sikh communities.

The school, with 1100 students achieving good results, is a vital employer of the Chhapara congregation. The problems associated with the provident fund and having to make regular back payments to the government has been a burden for quite some time. Therefore the staff are behind in receiving their salary payments. The Indian Government policy of requiring schools to provide free education for up to 25% of their school enrolment numbers to the poor makes it challenging financially and dependent on foreign contributions. Endeavours to increase fees and overcome problems are being made. The Free Church of Scotland have sent a very experienced accountant to

visit the schools and make recommendations.

#### Lakhnadon:

The Rev Shyam Babu reports that average Sunday morning attendance in Lakhnadon is 80-100. The afternoon service is held at the mission school. There are many believers and seekers in surrounding villages. Mr Santosh Das and Mr Parsuram do missionary work in the Presbyterian Free Church at Lakhnadon.

#### Lakhnadon Hospital:

The arrival of Dr Heman Prasad, a surgeon, filled a great need the hospital had and good reports are being received of his leadership and endeavours to build up all aspects of the medical work and witness. Heman's wife Jewel is a pediatrician, and they were a tremendous help. Sadly, though, they have now informed the hospital that they are leaving. New staff quarters were opened and the out-patient department totally renovated last year. Subject to finance, there is a desire to carry out other projects such as:

1. Replace ramshackle shops outside the hospital, on hospital grounds, that are illegal. The new shops will provide rental income to help the hospital

and its work.

2. Further renovations to existing inpatient department and refurbishment of old staff quarters.
3. Provision of emergency vehicles, so the current problem of people arriving at the hospital too late for help will be alleviated – .e.g. in the rainy season 4-5 children a day die of diarrhoea because of this.

#### South America

##### Perú

##### Colegio San Andres:

The 2012 intake of 150 new students has boosted the total enrolment to 751, the maximum set for San Andres. This is a matter of thanks and reflects well on the leadership of the school. It also contributes significantly to the financial viability of the school and allows flexibility in managing the staffing and building budgets. Likewise, the academic results achieved by the final year students are very satisfying to all associated with the school. The two scholarships provided from the McSwan bequest have assisted students and families who would not otherwise be able to attend San Andres. Again for this academic year, additional funds have been

donated by PCEA members to assist with scholarships. These scholarships help not only the students involved, but also assist in lifting the profile of the school.

Final submissions to the long running court case were made early in 2012, but the matter may not be resolved by the courts until the second half of 2012. Attempts at mediation and settlement out of court have not been successful. It is a matter of prayer that this matter be resolved quickly and fairly. Transfer to local control is deemed to be unwise until this matter is settled.

Renovations were carried in the 2011/2012 summer break and these were completed in time for the commencement of term 1 at the beginning of March. The extra enrolments enable the carrying out of repairs, improvements and upgrading from local funding.

The possibility for short term volunteer assistance in teaching English or possibly other areas of needed expertise remain. These are self funded opportunities that need a commitment of at least 3-6 months. Young (and sometimes not so young) people, mainly from Scotland, have contributed to the school in this way. The principal will be providing further information to provoke consideration of this by PCEA members.

#### Moyobamba:

The work has continued under local leadership, and the church remains very missionary minded. There is outreach and church planting in surrounding centres close to Moyobamba as well as in Tarapoto, Arequipa and in San Lorenzo, which is situated in the Loreto Province to the north of Moyobamba. We understand that Nicholas the Pastor/ Evangelist in San Lorenzo and his wife have had some health problems towards the end of the year. The work in Lluylluvucha, a suburb of

Moyobamba, is continuing to grow with the new congregation negotiating to build on a block the church owns. As with Australia this exercise is a somewhat frustrating experience, having to deal with the local government bureaucracy. It appears as if the numbers that moved across from the Moyobamba congregation are being replaced by new people in the main Moyobamba congregation. Rev David MacPherson (Aberdeen Scotland) retains a keen interest in the Peruvian work. David and Dr Apolos Landa, plus others from the Moyobamba congregation, continue planning and negotiating for the establishment of a Christian University in the Moyobamba area on land that the Church owns. The possibility of linking with the Evangelical Seminary in Lima, which has government go ahead for consolidating university status, seems the most logical and streamlined approach to this project at this stage. The planning team is working on the feasibility of a multi site multi faculty institution, with the Moyobamba site being one of the sites. As in Australia, the granting of University status is an involved and lengthy process.

At the time of writing this report (March 2012) the enrolment in the Annie Soper School is unknown, but it appears as if the slump in numbers experienced in late 2011 may have been overcome. There has been another new headmaster appointed, Mr Ricardo Martinez. The frequent changes in headmaster are of some concern but the current appointment is an internal appointment, so it is hoped that this will lead to a more stable leadership. The two scholarships provided under the McSwan

bequest for needy students are of great benefit. The opportunity for volunteer assistance at the school remains.

#### Lima Evangelical Seminary:

The Rev Donnie Smith continues in the leadership post of Rector of the Seminary. This seminary remains the leading institution for theological training in Perú, and as such is of strategic importance. As noted above, the Seminary now has tertiary status subject to the completion of the formal application and recognition process.

#### Colombia

##### Bible Seminary Medellín:

Dr Manuel Reaño has transferred to a Christian counselling role leading mens' retreats; and along with Patty, his wife (who leads ladies' retreats), also organises couples' retreats. Dr Reaño is also sought out by pastors and leaders for counselling where it is difficult for them to find assistance within their own organisation. In addition, in late 2011 the Seminary requested Dr Reaño to act as a 'roaming faculty' attending to requests by churches and other organisations for various teaching sessions. Dr Reaño has also completed qualifications in 'Virtual Education' in preparation for the introduction of a 100% online training course under the auspices of the Seminary. Colombia is more stable than it was some years ago, but safety issues remain – particularly in some remote rural locations, including one where Dr Reaño lead a men's retreat.



*Faculty & Staff at the Lima Theological Seminary*



# The World in the Banner

## 'I Me Do Wed'

I guess it had to come to this. After all, the homosexual activists and their secular left supporters have been telling us for years now that marriage can be anything you want it to be. They have made it perfectly clear that mere gender has nothing to do with marriage, so why should paltry matters like number make any difference either?

We now know that marriage equality is everyone's right, and we dare not allow prejudice, bigotry and narrow-mindedness to come in the way of real love. So if you happen to be head over heels in love with yourself, then who are we to deny you your right to marry?

Only some religious cavemen would dare to deny the autoerotic their rights. Only some fundamentalist nut job would keep self-love banned and hidden in the closet. Only an ugly bigot would deny any person their right to marry themselves.

And as usual, I am not making this up, folks. Here is the story: 'Here comes the single bride. Last week, Nadine Schweigert married herself in a symbolic wedding ceremony. The 36-year-old divorced mom of three wore blue satin and clutched a bouquet of white roses as she walked down the aisle before a gathering of 45 friends and family members in Fargo, North Dakota.

'She vowed to 'to enjoy inhabiting my own life and to relish a lifelong love affair with my beautiful self,' reports Fargo's *InForum* newspaper. After the ring was exchanged with the bride and her inner-groom, guests were

encouraged to 'blow kisses at the world,' and later, eat cake.

'Schweigert, who followed the ceremony with a solo honeymoon in New Orleans, claims the wedding was her way of showing the world she's learned to love and accept herself as a woman flying solo. 'I was waiting for someone to come along and make me happy,' she told reporter Tammy Swift. 'At some point, a friend said, 'Why do you need someone to marry you to be happy? Marry yourself.'

'Not everyone was in agreement. Some of Schweigert's friends, who'd undoubtedly seen Carrie Bradshaw register for a pair of Manolos on season 6 of *Sex and the City*, thought she was going a little far with the single pride thing. Schweigert's 11-year-old son was her biggest critic: 'He said, 'I love you, but I'm embarrassed for you right now.'

And she has other supporters. Piper Weiss, *Shine* Senior Features Editor wrote this: 'I believe everyone has the right to marry, regardless of sexual preference. For some people being alone is what feels most natural. Shouldn't they too be entitled to tax breaks?

'Don't they get a moment in the spotlight, the chance to rationalize a way-too-expensive dress, the two weeks off from work unquestioned, the ridiculous kitchen appliances they'd never have bought for themselves? It's time we did away with the stigma of 'old maids' and the belief that you're not really complete without a partner. Some people are actually proud of their solo relationship status and even ready to commit to it.

'Maybe if more people could reap the benefits of a wedding without a partner, there would be a lower national divorce rate. And while we're on the subject of weddings, consider the benefits of a one-person affair. No duelling families, no massive guest list, no pre-wedding am-I-doing-the-right-thing meltdowns. It may seem indulgent to plan a big reception for yourself, but imagine how much less stressful it would be for your guests? They can all bring dates. Nobody's seated with strangers and forced to ask, 'do you know the bride or the groom?' So there you have it, folks. Thanks to the sexual revolution of the '60s, and the bigger counterculture it was part of, we are finally getting some real liberation and equality here. It took a while, but we are finally making some real progress in this area. Of course the conservative fuddy-duddies will be spitting chips, and will be whining about slippery slopes and the like, but that is their problem. Real love of course knows no bounds. Real love should always be recognised, celebrated, endorsed and supported by the state.

After all, that is only fair. We must end all blatant discrimination here, and offer genuine equal rights to all lovers of all stripes. Love is the only thing that matters, not outdated religious prejudices and ugly bigotry. Genuine marriage equality must happen, and must happen now.

We must stamp out this blight of autolovephobia. It has no place in a

Was this space for your church news and photographs?

*Ask your minister or elder how your congregation can be part of this positive promotion of the denomination, as well as keeping the rest of us up with what's happening!*

*Camps, special events, youth news, seniors, engagements, marriages, births, anniversaries, obituaries... the list goes on and on!*

*Perhaps you could volunteer to send in some news and photos?*

civilised society. All such phobia must be seen for what it really is: hate speech. As such, it is a hate crime which must face the full force of the law. No civilised society can allow such vile hatred and bigotry to continue.

Autophiles have as much right to love and marry as anyone else. We demand the government at once set up a high-level government ministry dedicated to the well-being of autophiles. We need a cabinet minister of autophilia, and all discrimination laws must ensure that every last vestige of autophobia is wiped out.

And while we are at it, I demand the right to marry my bookshelves.

+ *Bill Muehlenberg*

### **Egypt: Sliding Into A Dark Age**

When Pope Shenouda III (88), the head of Egypt's Coptic Orthodox Church, died on 17 March, Salafi Muslim clerics responded with a barrage of hateful, offensive and even slanderous insults. Their rejoicing over the death of the 'head of the infidels' has shocked Christians, compounding their sense of vulnerability. Meanwhile, serious anti-Christian violence is escalating. On Sunday, 4 March, some 1500 armed Muslim villagers in Abu Al-Reesh village, Aswan Province, Upper Egypt, launched a pogrom against the local Notre Dame Language School. They were responding to calls emanating from local mosques to attack this privately run public school, falsely claiming that a church was being built there. Two nuns were besieged in the school's guesthouse for some eight hours by a murderous mob threatening to burn them alive. The entire property was ransacked and looted. The next day the Muslims returned and terrorised the children.

Consequently, school attendance has dropped by at least one-third. By 8 March, one of the nuns had suffered a major nervous breakdown requiring hospitalisation. Pray for Egypt's minority Christians.

+ *Religious Liberty Prayer Bulletin | RLPB 152 | Wed 28 Mar 2012*

### **Muslims & Sikhs Attack Cameron's Gay Marriage Plan**

David Cameron's plan to legalise gay marriage is 'unnecessary and unhelp-

ful', the country's largest Muslim organisation has said. The leader of Britain's Sikh community also attacked the proposal to extend the definition of marriage to same-sex couples, describing it as an 'assault on religion'. Senior Roman Catholic and Anglican bishops have already warned that the move will undermine social structures dating back thousands of years.

(The Muslim Council of Britain said the case for the government's proposals was 'strikingly weak'.

Farooq Murad, Secretary General of the MCB, said: 'Whilst we remain opposed to all forms of discrimination, including homophobia, redefining the meaning of marriage is in our opinion unnecessary and unhelpful... With the advent of civil partnerships, both homosexual and heterosexual couples now have equal rights in the eyes of the law... Therefore, in our view the case to change the definition of marriage, as accepted throughout time and across cultures, is strikingly weak. In common with other Abrahamic faiths, marriage in Islam is defined as 'a union between a man and a woman,' he said. 'So while the state has accommodated for gay couples, such unions will not be blessed as marriage by the Islamic institutions.'

Lord Singh, head of the Network of Sikh Organisations, said the proposed reforms represented 'a sideways assault on religion'. 'It is an attempt by a vocal, secular minority to attack religion,' he told BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme. Sikhs believed in marriage as the union of a man and a woman and that changing the definition was an attack on the English language, he said. 'We have total respect for gays and lesbians and we are delighted that there is a Civil Partnership Act. We believe that this gives gays and lesbians everything they need.'

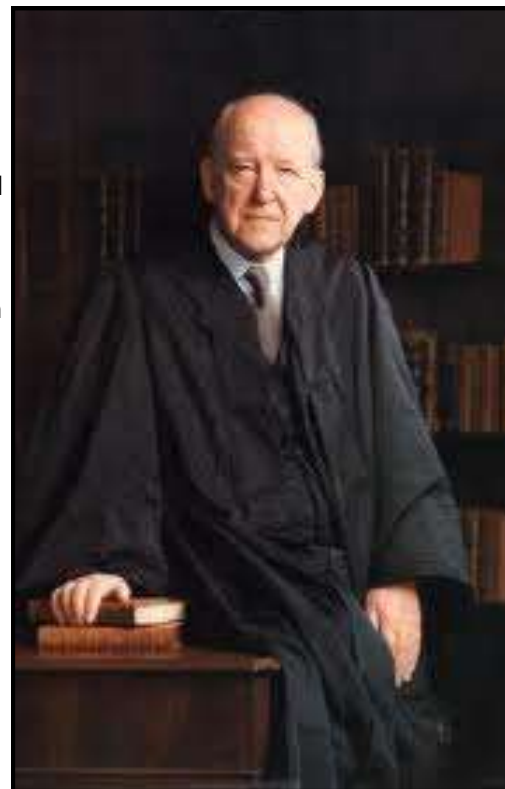
+ *Telegraph (UK) 19 March 2012*

### **Free MP3 Martin Lloyd-Jones Sermon Downloads**

The Martin Lloyd-Jones Recordings Trust has made available 1600 MP3 sermon recordings available for free download at:

<http://www.mlj-usa.com/audiolibrary>  
+ *Martin Lloyd-Jones Recordings*

*Trust, 5 Caxton House, Wellesley Road, Ashford, Kent TN24 8ET, England, 44-0-233-662-262, Fax: 44-0-1233-638-810, admin@mlj.org.uk*



*Dr D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones*

### **Lars Hedegaard: Response to Charges of Hate Speech**

*Editor's note: On April 13, Lars Hedegaard, President of the Danish Free Press Society, appealed to Denmark's Supreme Court to overturn his conviction by Denmark's Superior Court on May 3, 2011, after two years in lower courts, on charges of alleged Hate Speech. Under Denmark's Article 266(b), it is immaterial if what one says is true; evidence to support of the truth is inadmissible. All that matters is if someone has said something in public that might cause someone to 'feel offended,' or if the prosecutor thinks someone might be justified in 'feeling offended.' After Mr Hedegaard spoke privately about the Muslim treatment of women, a tape of his remarks was disseminated, apparently without his knowledge or approval. The accuracy of what he said was not in dispute. A verdict is expected this week.*

'Response to Charges of Hate Speech,' by Lars Hedegaard. From the Gatestone Institute, April 16 (thanks to David):

'The price that we all have to pay for this freedom is that others have a right to criticize our politics, our religion and our culture.'

Honourable Supreme Court, My attorney has presented juridical arguments to the effect that I must be acquitted and I shall refrain from elaborating.

However, allow me to express my quiet bafflement that somebody can claim that it has been my intention to accuse every last Muslim father in the world of abusing his children – particularly in light of the fact that I have carefully explained that it was never my intention to disseminate such an absurd contention. For precisely that reason, I would have welcomed an opportunity to review the statements I now stand accused of having uttered before they

were placed on the Internet. If the interviewer had fulfilled this basic journalistic obligation, I would have demanded that my remarks be corrected so as to reflect my true opinions and the prosecutor could have saved the trouble of dragging me through the courts. I am even more baffled at one of the claims about my person that has been circulated in connection with this case, namely that I am a racist. I have never been, I am not now and I shall never be a racist. On the contrary, all my life I have opposed racist attitudes, by which I mean hatred towards and denigrating speech about people due their descent, skin colour or other so-called racial characteristics – in other words, antipathy against or ill treatment of people due to circumstances over which they have no control.

Islam is not a race and therefore criticism of Islam cannot be racism.

Islam, which lurks behind this entire case, has been described from a variety of viewpoints. Some say that it is a religion, others that it is an all-encompassing ideology that contains a religion, still others emphasise its cultural norms, its culturally transmitted customs and practices. Some even maintain that Islam is so multifaceted that it is impossible to describe it.

They are free to think that women are inferior to men as concerns their rights and their pursuit of happiness. They are even entitled to disseminate such opinions. I cannot recall a single instance in this country where an Islamic spokesman has been prosecuted for saying that, of course, sharia will become the law of the land once the demographic and political realities make it possible. This despite the fact that we have several examples

of, e.g., imams, who have openly declared that the imposition of theocracy is a religious duty incumbent on all believers.

In return, these theocrats and sharia-advocates must accept the right of those who believe in democracy, free institutions and human equality to criticise Islam and to oppose its dissemination and the atavistic cultural norms practiced by some Muslims. It is this right – I would even say duty – to describe, criticise and oppose a totalitarian ideology that I have tried to exercise to the best of my ability. My speech and my writings have had no other purpose

than to alert my fellow citizens to the danger inherent in the Islamic concept of the state and the law. I have made no secret of the fact that I consider this fight for our liberties to be the most important political struggle of our time. I would not be able to live with my guilty conscience if – out of fear of public condemnation and ridicule – I refrained from telling the truth as I see it.

And regardless of the outcome of this trial, I intend to continue my struggle for free speech and against totalitarian concepts of any stripe.

+ *Jihad Watch*, 17/4/2012

### What about studying the Confession of Faith?

*Well, you might wonder, I did study it once, why should I do it again?*

*Or you might not have studied it and wonder what help could it possibly be. Isn't it more of an older church document that was more useful in the 16th century than what it is now?*

*If you are thinking along these lines, you definitely need to study the Confession of Faith. As a Confession of the Biblical Faith it answers the most important questions anyone could ask in this world. Questions like who God is, what He has done, how we fit into His picture, the place of the Church, and so on. It goes on to look at specific help for us in our everyday lives, all based on God's Word alone.*

*To help you do this in helpfully sized parts, you will find on the Narre Warren part of our denominational website a sermon link where you can find a series of sermons on the Westminster Confession of Faith, with Study Guides, to help you follow and understand it.*

Look it up—see what you find.

But regardless of one's approach, it must be clear that Islam is not a hereditary human attribute. If our Western freedom means anything at all, we must insist that every grown-up person is responsible for his or her beliefs, opinions, culture, habits and actions. We enjoy political freedom and we enjoy freedom of religion. This implies a largely unlimited right to disseminate one's political persuasion and religious beliefs. That is as it should be. But the price we all have to pay for this freedom is that others have a right to criticise our politics, our religion and our culture. Islamic spokesmen have the freedom to advocate their concept of society, which implies the introduction of a theocracy governed by god-given laws, i.e. sharia, the abolition of man-made laws and by implication freedom of expression and democracy.



# Prescribed Search / Youth Work

Senior Section 12 years and over; Intermediate 10—11 years; Junior 9 years and under

## MAY 2012

SENIOR & INTERMEDIATE (Intermediate omit questions 1 and 7)

PHILIPPIANS chapter 3

1. What reason might Paul have had to trust in the flesh above others? (2 verses)
2. Instead of his own righteousness, what righteousness did Paul desire to have?
3. What one thing did Paul do, forgetting the things that were behind? (2 verses)
4. When the Lord Jesus comes again, what change will he make in our bodies?

chapter 4

5. What will be the result if we let our requests be made known to God?
6. What had Paul learned, whatever his state?
7. What did Paul desire rather than a gift from the Philippians?
8. Who shall supply all our need?

## JUNIOR

LUKE chapter 6

1. Who is Lord of the Sabbath?
2. How many apostles did Jesus choose?
3. Which people should we love, do good to, bless and pray for? (2 verses)
4. What type of hearer is like (a) the man who build his house on the rock; (b) the man who build on the earth? (3 verses)

**Please send the answers to:**  
**Mrs I Steel**  
**PO Box 942**  
**Epping NSW 1710**  
**Or email to: [iesteel@gmail.com](mailto:iesteel@gmail.com)**

# Life under the Banner

## **No Images of God! — The Second Commandment**

*Jim Klazinga*

A picture is worth a thousand words. It's an old cliché perhaps, but accurate in many instances. In fact, sometimes a picture can be worth more than a thousand words.

Say you're describing the outside of your house to someone. You could use a thousand words to describe its size, the shape of the roof, the location of your doors and windows, and everything else there is to know about the appearance of your house. But then show him one picture, and that person will have a much better idea of what your house looks like.

Or say the police are looking for a criminal. They have a thousand words describing his height, his complexion, his weight, the shape of his head, the colour of his hair, the features of his face. But none of that would be as helpful as one picture in helping them to know exactly who to look for.

A picture is worth a thousand words, or even more than a thousand words. And the reason for this is quite simple: the human mind uses pictures when it thinks. Who is best at remembering? The person who has a photographic memory. The person better able to conjure up images in his mind is better equipped to remember, because the human mind operates with images.

### **The Golden Image**

The Israelites camped at Mount Sinai after escaping from Egypt must have believed that an image is worth a thousand words. They wanted to have a picture of their God. They wanted a god they could see. So they called on Aaron, who then took their gold and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf.

And he declared to the people - 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.' The Lord is the one who brought you out of Egypt. Here's an image of Him. Oh, isn't it so helpful to be able to see an image of this god? Isn't it wonderful that we could use our gold for such noble religious purposes? My, how

clever we are, making such a beautiful image.

Well, it only makes sense that they should use this image to help them worship the Lord. As we read in verse 5 of Exodus 32 - 'When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, 'Tomorrow shall be a feast to the Lord.'" Let's have a festival to worship God using this golden calf, our wonderful worship aid.

Now, this is perfectly understandable, isn't it? I mean, that's the way our minds work. We have a better understanding of something if we can pic-

*You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations who love me and keep my commandments.*

ture an image of it in our minds. So why not use a golden image to use in worshipping God? It's so beautiful. Wouldn't it help God's people in their reflection on His beauty?

There's only one problem, though. It's called the second commandment. 'You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God.'

Oops. I guess using an image to worship God is not such a good idea after all. We can't use in our worship any image of anything in heaven above or on the earth or in the water. Well, calves walk on the earth, so that defi-

nately rules them out.

In fact, any possible image would not be appropriate for use in worship, since every possible image will conceivably fall in the category of being either from heaven above, or on the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth. That covers just about everything. No room for movement.

### **God Cannot Be Pictured**

Now wait a second, isn't God being rather unfair here? After all, our minds use images. Wouldn't it help us to better remember God, and therefore better worship Him, if we could use images?

No! Absolutely not! Images must never be used in our worship of God, no matter how helpful we may think they can be. True, images have their uses, but not here. Not when it comes to worshipping God. In pure worship, images are far more of a hindrance than a help. When it comes to worship, one Word, the Word of God, is better than a thousand pictures.

Why is this? Well, the reason is quite simple. It's absolutely impossible for any image to give an adequate representation of God. There is simply no image anywhere that could possibly do justice to who God is, that could possibly do justice to His greatness, to His power, majesty and glory. Every possible image falls short. And so, we are forbidden to make images of God simply because any image that we could possibly use would never even come close to actually showing us who God is.

### **The Unimaginable Attributes of God**

Listen to how the Westminster Confession describes the characteristics of God. 'There is but one only, living, and true God, who is infinite in being and perfection, a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions; immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty,

most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute.'

So, God is a most pure spirit. Could any physical image ever adequately represent the spiritual nature of God? God is eternal. Could any image created in the realm of time possibly do justice to the God who is way above and beyond time?

God is invisible. How can anything invisible be represented by something visible?

God is immutable, meaning that He is unchanging, the same now and always. Well, any image we make is subject to change. Make a painting, and it can be changed by throwing more paint on it. Make a golden calf, and you can change it by melting it down, or crumbling it up into gold dust. How can anything which is so subject to change possibly represent the unchanging God?

God is infinite. Could any image filling a very small segment of space possibly do justice to the God who completely and infinitely transcends space?

God is Almighty, all-powerful. Could any image created by weak human beings using their weak puny hands, using inherently weak physical matter, could any such image possibly do justice to the God who is infinitely powerful, more powerful than we could possibly imagine? No matter how strong you might make an image, something will be stronger. But nothing is stronger than God.

God is most holy. Could any image made by sinful, depraved human hands possibly do justice to the God whose holiness is totally and completely perfect? No.

When we consider the nature of God, when we consider who God is and what He is like, it becomes quite clear that it is totally impossible to make any sort of image of God.

### Images of God Insult Him

What makes it worse is that any time we try to make an image of God, it will only be insulting Him. As one of the great Puritan preachers, Thomas Watson says, 'To set up an image to rep-

resent God, is debasing Him. If anyone should make images of snakes or spiders, saying he did it to represent his prince, would not the prince take it in disdain? What greater disparagement to the infinite God than to represent him by that which is finite; the living God, by that which is without life; and the Maker of all by a thing which is made?'

You would think that all of this should be obvious. You would think it would be so clear that any image we could use would not possibly do justice to who God is. And yet, the sinful mind being what it is cannot seem to get away from using images to represent God. For example, there is that famous painting on the ceiling of the Sistine chapel in the Vatican, the one painted by Michelangelo, where you have God pictured as an old man with a long flowing beard and Adam pic-



*The Adoration of the Golden Calf, by Nicolas Poussin*

tured as a younger man. God and Adam are reaching their arms out to each other and touching fingers. It's an incredibly beautiful painting, but it breaks the second commandment. There are so many other paintings that picture God as an old man. How degrading of God! Not that it's so bad to be an old man. But to portray God with a body like any human being, this is completely insulting.

### Images of God Are a Lie

Ah, but you might say, those paintings are just nice pictures. They're not necessarily being used for worship. But the fact still remains, as the Heidelberg Catechism says in Q. & A. 97, 'God cannot and may not be visibly

portrayed in any way.' It doesn't really matter whether images of God are being used for worship or not, they are not allowed in any circumstance.

And besides, consider this: even if you think you would never worship an image of God, nevertheless, the next time you are worshipping, it's quite possible that that image of God is going to come into your mind. Remember, God knows very well how we think. He knows the powerful impact images have on our minds. And He knows that any time we have an image in our mind while thinking about Him, in worship or not, then it becomes all that much more difficult to focus on the truth of who He is. We are called to worship Him in spirit and in truth, and any image of God is not truth but a lie. But what about using pictures of

God to help children and others who might have a difficult time understanding who God is, like say, the simple or the mentally handicapped? Well, this still does not give us an excuse to use images. God knew there would be such people, and He did not give us the option of breaking the second commandment for their sake. If God says we do not use images to portray Him, then we must not use images, period.

In our next article, we'll reflect further on all of this. But at this point, look at this as a way to remember how great God is.

We're not trying to disparage pictures. They play a crucial role in human life. In our society, images are everywhere: in photo albums, in ads, on television, on YouTube. And they can be great. But God is infinitely greater. Pictures can be worth a thousand words. But they can never do justice to the God who is worth more than anything.

*The Rev. James Klazinga is presently the minister of the Brisbane PCEA congregation, having previously served in the Reformed Churches of New Zealand and the United Reformed Churches in North America*

# Churches in the Banner

## Some new folk and some older folk!

### Narre Warren

We have much to be thankful for in our congregation. The commitment has steadily increased so that in many areas of church life there is an overall growth. We see this in the attendance at worship services but more noticeably in the spirit within the congregation. Nearly all our folk attending the morning worship service (over 90%) stay for fellowship over refreshments in the hall afterwards. The desire for the folk to serve in different spheres of congregational life has increased. For example, we have good help at working bees. The financial giving has continued to increase at a most encouraging figure – recently the Deacon’s Court agreed that this year we would not be applying for Synod Aid, as our last year’s giving indicated we are able to go it alone. We also have the confidence that if we were to need extra funds the congregation would



*Ulverstone’s recent new members. Left to right are: Kristine Bosveld, Sylvia and Jim Loney with Rev Andre Scheepers (rear). It was a joy to welcome them into the congregation on the 1/4/12.*

morning service it did show a most encouraging response from the congregation in distributing over a good-sized area around the church. Over the

larly to our worship services. The Adult Bible Study continued on being held twice per month, on a Wednesday evening. We use Matthias Media Interactive Bible Studies and have an excellent participation from the 10 who regularly attend. The Ladies Bi-Monthly Wednesday morning Bible Study continues in school term. They presently have around 8-12 attending. They use material also from a Sydney Anglican source. The Men’s Study Breakfast also continues on, usually on the first Saturday morning of the month. We are using John MacArthur’s very edifying book entitled *The Book on Leadership*. We usually have 5 – 7 men attending these. The Sunday School still consists of two classes, with about 6 – 7 students. A new teacher is now helping out with the Junior class and this means a helpful rotation of teachers.

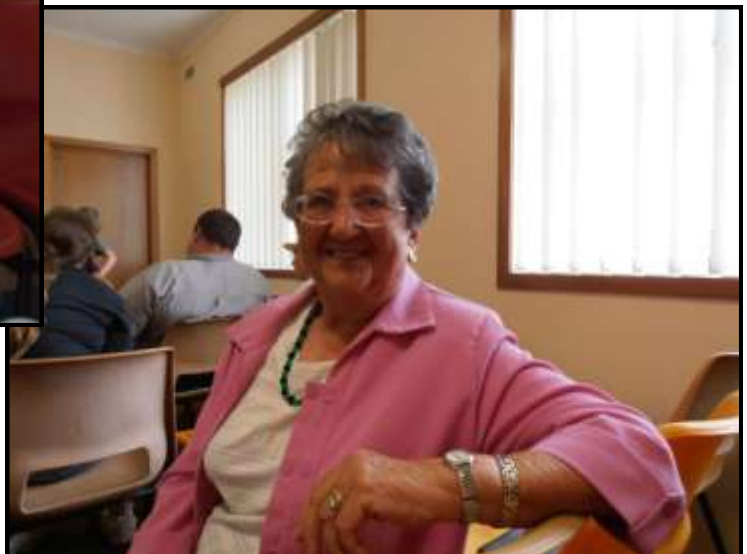
In addition to this, printed sermons are given out to those not able to attend church services, as well as some series being posted on the church’s website.



*Lil Lodge & Leonor Rifareal represent Narre Warren’s over 90’s*

respond well. Last year we did a letter box drop in the neighbourhood of the church and while this only had the immediate impact of one gentleman coming for a

last one to two years we have seen three local widowed ladies coming along regu-



*Jean Hearps is Ulverstone’s oldest member*