

the presbyterian banner

July 2013



*These all look to you to give them their food at the proper time.
When you give it to the, they gather it up;
when you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.*

Psalm 104:27—28

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Editorial

It was a bit of a rush to get last month's *Banner* out and I missed a bit – as you'll see on the back page. I wouldn't be surprised if I missed some other aspects as well but please understand none of it was intentionally so!

I remember rolling up to the printer when my first literary baby was born. It was a local history telling the story of a big steam engine used to mill timber on New Zealand's West Coast. It was some short term work I had between University years and I had been able to get this work as the local Steam Engine Museum where I was doing some labouring found out I was a history student. Anyway, after doing a lot to get it together, with much travel, interviewing, research, even raising sponsorship money to pay for it, I turned up at the printer to check the first draft. The printer spotted that this was quite new for me. But his words weren't so encouraging. In fact, he very bluntly said, "As soon as you have the printed copy of this in your hands you will find mistakes – and lots of them!" So much for an affirming pat on the back or warm encouraging words about a great future in publishing, and so on!

His words proved very true, however, and they have been true for every published work I've done since then – even some real humdingers of mistakes! But, with the Lord's help, I've been able to continue on and even found I have a certain gifting in this work (At least that is what my fellow ministerial colleagues assure me of each Synod—but then again their motives might sometimes be a little mixed!).

What is especially helpful for me in my work, though, is **you!** Your prayers and practical support make all the difference to our humble publication. Your news and articles and photos help us. And when you receive *The Presbyterian Banner* don't be shy about sharing it around.

...as you help us by your prayers.

2 Corinthians 1:11

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‘Love so Amazing, so Divine, demands my Soul, my Life, my All’

Considering Romans 12:1-2

After 11 chapters of doctrine telling us what to believe, we now turn (perhaps with a measure of relief?) to the practical application – how we should live. This is a pattern Paul follows in many of his epistles. This pattern underscores the fact that doctrine (though essential) is not enough – there must also be devotion. Belief (though vital) is not enough – it must be followed by behaviour. Learning (though important) is not enough – it must be accompanied by living. Jesus says, ‘If you know these things blessed are you if you do them’ (John 13:17). James says, ‘Faith without works is dead.’

Though we enter a new section, the book’s theme and keyword of ‘righteousness’ continues. To summarise, what we have seen so far is: - **Righteousness rejected** (chapters 1-3). **Righteousness revealed** (chapter 3: 21- chapter 5). **Righteousness realised in salvation** (chapters 6-8). **Righteousness required by Israel** (chapters 9-11). And now finally, **Righteousness reflected in everyday life** (chapters 12-15). The first two verses set the scene for the standard of our conduct. William Temple said, ‘**Christianity is the total commitment of all I know of me to all I know of Jesus Christ.**’

‘I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect’ (12: 1-2 ESV).

1. The Appeal to Commitment is based on the Mercies of God

The appeal to holiness and obedience is based on the mercies of God. This is vital for us to understand. We are called to holiness of life because of who God is, and what God has done. Paul has spent 11 chapters telling us about the mercies of God – our need of it,

God’s provision of it and the blessed results of it. He mentioned it last in chapter 11: 22, in the context of reminding Gentile believers that we are part of the olive tree by the sheer kindness of God. Never forget that! Now therefore he says, in light of God’s mercies: this is what you should do; this is how you should live; this is how you should respond. There is a parallel here to the Ten Commandments in the book of Exodus. Not only do the commandments begin with a pref-

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God — which is your spiritual worship.

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Romans 12:1—2

ace, ‘**I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the land of bondage**’; but they are preceded by 19 chapters telling the story of what God did to redeem His people. Therefore in the light of God’s redemption He therefore commands us, ‘**You shall have no other Gods before Me,**’ etc.

This is foundational. We need to understand this; even those of us who have been believers for many years. As in a marriage of many years – so in the Christian life – love can grow stale. We can forget what it was that once caused us excitement. We can become overly familiar with each other and there isn’t the same ‘spark’ or love or respect any more. Life can settle down to a

George Ball

peaceful and predictable humdrum – a mere routine. The Christian life too can become a mindless pattern; a routine; a treadmill; more of a duty than a joyful response to the gospel. That’s why we need to bathe our minds and hearts in the gospel every day. We need to preach the gospel to ourselves each day. The psalmist prayed, ‘**Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love that we may rejoice and be glad all our days**’ (Ps. 90: 14). If we recalled God’s mercy to us every morning, it would provide a good start to the day. **The Gospel (the mercies of God) is the greatest motivation to yield our bodies as a living sacrifice to God.** ‘The animal sacrifices of an earlier day have been rendered forever obsolete by Christ... the sacrifices of the new order do not consist in taking the lives of others, but in giving one’s own’ (Bruce). We are not our own; we are purchased by God; we belong to Him.

2. Commitment Means offering our Body as a living, lasting and logical Sacrifice

A holy life will be expressed through our bodies. This should not surprise us. After all, it was through our bodies that sin first expressed itself. (**See chapter 3: 13-18**). But now as Christians the apostle says, ‘**let not sin reign in your mortal body... Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God and your members as instruments for righteousness**’ (6: 12-13).

The Bible doesn’t buy the (Greek) mystical idea that the body is inherently sinful; that the body is a mere tomb for the spirit. No! ‘**Our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit**’ (1 Cor. 6: 18-20). When Jesus came to do God’s will, He came in a body. It was said of him, ‘**Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me.**’

Behold I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the volume of the book.' Jesus went about doing good. Jesus offered up his body freely and lovingly as a sacrifice unto God. Jesus came not merely to save our souls but to redeem our bodies, too. Our bodies are therefore important. The apostle says, 'I want you to offer your body as a sacrifice to God. I want you to do it willingly and freely. I want you to do it decisively and definitely.' (The verb 'present' is aorist active infinitive.) It's to be done once and for all time. The commitment is to be absolute and unconditional.

One man who understood this was **Jonathan Edwards**. He wrote in his diary: - **'I have this day been before God and have given myself, and all that I have and am, to God; so that I am in no respect my own. I can no longer challenge any right in myself, in this understanding, this will, and these affections. Neither have I the right to this body, or any of its members. No right to this tongue, these hands, these feet, these eyes, these ears. I have given myself clean away.'**

Frances Ridley Havergal (1836-1879) expresses the same idea when she wrote: - 'Take my life (and my hands, my voice, my will and my love) and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee; take my moments and my days, let them flow in ceaseless praise.'

As kids we perhaps used to sing, 'O be careful, little feet, where you go, O be careful, little feet, where you go, for your Father up above is looking down in love, so be careful little feet where you go.' As the song continues it mentions the various parts of the body – the eyes, the hands, and the tongue – and it is a helpful reminder how we should live. But it stops short of the most fundamental truth for the believer. The issue is not merely that we have a heavenly Father who is watching over us, but that we are actually united with Christ; because of that, how then can we drag Him into sin with us?

When we are grasped by this truth, **'our feet will walk in His ways, our lips will speak the truth and**

spread the gospel, our tongues will bring healing, our hands will lift up those who have fallen and perform many mundane tasks as well as cooking, cleaning, typing and mending; our arms will embrace the lonely and the unloved, our ears will listen to the cries of the distressed, and our eyes will look humbly and patiently towards God' (Stott).

The kind of sacrifice we offer is 'holy, acceptable and spiritual (or reasonable)' (1). The word translated '*spiritual*' or '*rational*' is the Greek word '*logikos*' from which we get the word logical. Cranfield says that Paul's 'point was that it was rational, as being consistent with a proper understanding of the gospel'. The offering of our bodies to the service of God is the only **rational, logical and appropriate response** that we can make in view of God's mercy. A number of the commentaries illustrate this with a quotation from the first century philosopher Epictetus: 'If I were a nightingale, I would do what is proper for a nightingale, and if I were a swan I would do what is proper to a swan. In fact, I am *logikos* (a rational being) so I must praise God.'

C.T. Studd (1862-1931) was a brilliant cricketer and Cambridge scholar and heir to a great estate. He gave it all up to preach the gospel, first in China and then in Africa. This for him was the most reasonable thing to do, saying, **'If Jesus Christ be God and he died for me, then there is no sacrifice which is too great for me to make for him.'**

3. Commitment Means Having our Minds Renewed (2a)

There is logic and progression here. If we are to present our bodies as a living holy sacrifice – it must begin in the mind. Our mind controls our body. Our thoughts control our actions. Holiness begins in the mind. Some wag has said, 'We are not what we think we are; but what we think; we are.'

There is a negative and a positive involved. The negative is: - **'Do not to be conformed to this world'** which J.B. Phillips has famously translated, **'Don't let the world squeeze you into its mould.'**

Don't let this world, whose idols are

health, wealth and pleasure, become your idols. Don't be swept along by the spirit of the age. Whether you realise it or not, our minds are being assaulted and influenced every day in many ways by the world. As D.L. Moody once said, **'The ship belongs in the water, but if the water gets in the ship, it sinks.'** We are in the world – but if the world is in us we are in danger. **This is very relevant for our own age. A generation has arisen in the church that claims to be Christian – but who are in fact worldly in their thinking. The church has become too like the world. The water is leaking into the ship.** The tragic fact is that today in many cases there may be little difference in the lifestyles of those who claim to be Christian and those who are not. They both fall into the same sexual sins. They are just as materialistic and pleasure loving. They spend the same time around the TV. They treat the Lord's Day much as any other day of the week. Their language and laughter are the same. They think and act similarly.

Don Carson gives us an insight into the mind of this Gen Y generation. He says: - **'...baby busters do not want to be lectured; they want to be entertained.** They prefer videos to books; many of them have not learned to think in a linear fashion; they put more store than they recognise in mere impressions. As a result they can live with all sorts of logical inconsistencies and be totally unaware of them. How many times have I tried to explain to a university-age young person who has made some kind of profession of faith that it is fundamentally inconsistent to claim to know and love the God of the Bible, while cohabiting with someone.'

As James says in a different context, **'these things ought not to be, brothers!'** Hence the acceptance today of Christianity and homosexuality; Christianity and women's ordination; Christianity and lawless (careless) living; the lone ranger Christian where 'every man does that which is right in his

own eyes.'

What is the answer? The positive. Paul says, '**Be transformed by the renewal of your mind.**' Use your mind! A. W. Tozer said, '**The mind is good – God put it there. He gave us our heads and it was not his intention that our heads would function just as a place to hang a hat.**'

Scripture affirms that our hearts are to be renewed through our minds; and our minds are to be renewed as they are exposed and trained in the Scripture. We need to read it, study it, meditate on it, hear it, memorise it, repeat it, and practise it! (See e.g. Joshua 1: 8; Psalm 1: 2; Psalm 119: 15, 48, 105, 130, 148, 169; Psalm 143: 5, Romans 8: 5; Col. 3:

2; Phil. 4: 8, etc.).

4. Commitment Means Affirming, Doing and Enjoying God's Will 'That by testing you many discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect' (ESV). God's will is knowing God's word; doing it and enjoying it. The Devil would have you believe that God is a mean and niggardly kill-joy: that He will rob you of your freedom and your fun. It's a lie. The opposite is true. Doing God's will is not misery – but joy. God's will is good, pleasing and perfect. It's what we are made for. The Shorter Catechism No. 2. Q. **What rule has God given to direct us how to glorify and enjoy him?**

Answer. **The word of God, which consists of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how to glorify and enjoy him.**

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The Past for Today

The PCEA (3) Difficult Decades 1865-1900

Rowland Ward

PART 1

By the close of 1865 there were just three ministers in Victoria, five in New South Wales and one in South Australia holding the original Free Church principles, as well as three in Tasmania. The developments in each colony would, humanly speaking, depend on the quality of leadership.

Tasmania

The three ministers of the Free Church Presbytery of Tasmania (at Launceston, Oatlands and Hobart) were a stable but ageing group. Although greetings were exchanged with the PCEA and FPCV, the barrier of Bass Strait limited relations. Of course the FCS was in favour of

union in Tasmania, even sending a minister to the Church of Scotland Presbytery in 1858 and providing some financial help to it in subsequent years. It was a practical repudiation but not a formal one. Union with the Church of Scotland Presbytery was not on the table in the 1860s and 1870s, given the internal problems in that Presbytery, which was in law the Church of Scotland in Tasmania until 1874

and lacked clear rules and procedure until 1880.

In Scotland the law concerning the appointment of ministers to Church of Scotland parishes was amended in 1874 so as to abolish patronage, and to that extent removed one ground of difference. The vener-



A rare example of the collection box for the New Hebrides Mission. This one is from Hamilton FPCV, circa 1870.

able Rev Dr William Nicolson (1796-1890) of Hobart obtained a colleague from the Free Church of Scotland in 1876. There was co-operation with the Church of Scotland Presbytery in supporting the New Hebrides Presbyterian Mission – also supported by the FPCV –

and in *The Tasmanian Presbyterian Magazine*, which began in mid- 1877. New storm-clouds of serious heresy were very much on the horizon in Scotland at this time, but largely passed Tasmania by. In 1888 607 members were reported by the FC presbytery, whose centres now included Scottsdale and Upper Piper. The old stalwarts had passed on and union came about in 1896. The Free Church contributed about 40% of members in the united body.

South Australia

In South Australia the remarkable Rev James Benny (1824-1910) of Morphett Vale, the sole representative of Free Church principles in South Australia, trained three men for the ministry (George Benny, John Sinclair and William Buttrose), and operated a Presbytery from 1869. Wonderful work among hundreds of people was done by this faithful and pastoral-hearted minister and his colleagues, particularly Kingston SE and in the Naracoorte area, where there were devout church members. Being established in smaller centres subject to population

shifts to larger centres was a problem, as was a lack of labourers. The Kingston SE church was damaged beyond repair in the earthquake of 10 May 1897, but a work was begun in Adelaide in 1892 which continued, somewhat tenuously and mostly without a resident minister, for some 60 or 70 years. James Benny retired in 1904 and his successor, Rev J. S. Macpherson from the PCEA, didn't have an easy time. Hero-worshipping of the former minister played a significant part in wrangling that ended up in court, and the work was rendered incapable of effective extension even before Macpherson died in 1921.

Victoria

In Victoria the ministers were Arthur Paul (1826-1910) of East St Kilda and Peter MacPherson (1826-86) of Meredith – the church of Peter and Paul, as some wag called it. He overlooked the evangelist Rev Alexander McIntyre (1807-78), who had an international reputation in Highland communities, and had oversight of Geelong, although he commonly spent the colder months on the Clarence River in New South Wales. A Gaelic speaking catechist, Malcolm McInnes (1825-1903), who had laboured extensively in the SE of South Australia and the Western District of Victoria for many years before settled ministry was available, withdrew from the PCV in 1869 and cast in his lot with the remnant FPCV. He did extensive and valuable work in the Wimmera and later in the Charlton district. There were difficulties between 'Peter' and 'Paul' (as was the case in the New Testament), and the Synod lacked a quorum from 1870 because MacPherson did not attend. He moved to Raymond Terrace PCEA in 1874. Anticipating better times, Paul and McIntyre met at Geelong on 25 April 1876 and resolved on an 'Act of Reconstruc-

tion' which, for the safeguarding of the church in the future, defined the sense in which the Westminster Standards were understood. The



Rev John Sinclair

two most interesting aspects were (1) an interpretation of the WCF 4.1 which distinguished the initial creation and the disposing of all into order in the space of six days and so allowed for the 'gap' theory; and (2) definition of the leading features required in worship being (a) avoidance of set forms of read prayer, (b) *a capella* singing of inspired psalms, (c) preaching having the principal place, and (d) the rejection of so-called holy days like Christmas and Easter. William McDonald (1848-1930), from Victoria but trained in the

PCEA, was ordained at Hamilton/Braxholme in 1876. The existence of the South Australian work had become known in Victoria

after James Benny commenced publication of *The Free Presbyterian* in 1875. In 1878 William Buttrose demitted Robe, whose population had declined when the railway bypassed the town, and was inducted at Nareen FPCV. Three years later Rev John Sinclair (1851-1932) of Kingston SE was inducted to Geelong, where he continued an active ministry until his death. Sinclair had commenced training for the ministry at age 11 and was ordained at age 17! Despite such youthfulness he proved to be an organized, active and pastorally-sensitive minister in the mould of his mentor, and the Geelong work was soon revitalized. Sinclair died in harness in 1932.

Further ministerial recruits were a mixture: John A. Nicol (1852-1918) and Hugh Livingstone (1844-1922) came from the PCEA. Nicol was inducted at North Rupunyp to the Wimmera charge in 1881. His wife died a few months later. Nicol was deposed in January 1884 for contumacy and alleged inappropriate conduct towards two women, but the real issue appears to have arisen from the painful dispute then affecting the PCEA/FPCV (more about this next time). In latter years Nicol was a temperance missionary, died in Melbourne and was buried in the Church of England section of Coburg Cemetery. Livingstone was a refugee from the PCEA dispute and came from Lismore NSW to the Wimmera in 1886. He was an able man who worked hard amidst many difficulties. He resigned in 1902 and joined the union church. Arthur Paul of East St Kilda also was impacted by the PCEA dispute and from 1887 isolated himself from his brethren. The next two ministers were almost opposites and both were received in 1892. John James Stewart (1852-96) was a fine ex-

ample of a thoroughly orthodox man who was concerned to speak to the times without in any way departing from Scripture. He advocated new psalm versions, and criticized that element among the orthodox men in Scotland who resisted every attempt at moving forward. After serving areas around Ballarat, his health failed in 1896 and he died in Scotland later that year. Walter Scott (1854-1916) was a man steeped in the Covenanting history of Scotland but of narrowly severe outlook. He was ordained as a missionary to the far north-west of NSW based on the 440,000 hectare Yancannia Station in which a Gee-

long FPCV elder (W. J. Reid) held a half-share, but soon went to Brushgrove PCEA between Grafton and Maclean, serving there from 1895 to 1908. He joined the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland in 1911. The new century was to open up a new chapter of stability and consolidation, much attributable, humanly speaking, to renewed relations with the Free Church of Scotland remnant following the union in Scotland in 1900 between the Free and United Presbyterian churches. The raising up of ministers from within the community of the Australian church also showed there was spiritual life in her, even if the church

courts had been fractious.
Next time: New South Wales

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Doctrine in the Banner

God's Righteousness in Romans 5:1

My aim is to consider our righteousness before God. The thought of guilty man standing justified in the presence of God through faith in Christ is central to Paul's argument in the Epistle to the Romans. In Romans 5:1 Paul says, 'therefore having been justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.' Paul begins the verse with 'therefore,' for what he is about to say flows logically from what he has already said in the first four chapters of the epistle. In these chapters Paul basically set forth two major propositions. Firstly, that everyone stands guilty before God and because of their guilt are under the sentence of death. Thus Paul is only asserting the Old Testament truth, *In Thy sight shall no man living be justified* (Ps 148:2). Secondly, it is fallacious to think that we can change our status before God in any way apart from identifying by faith with Christ's work of death and resurrection.

The Divine Law Court

Because of God's absolute moral perfection, He requires spotless and perfect righteousness from His people. In Rom 5:1 Paul is saying that this perfection is provided by God for His people, in that Christ's righteousness is imputed to them so that when God looks upon the re-

deemed He sees them clothed with the perfect righteousness of Christ. In this verse Paul is describing the act by which we are acquitted in the words, 'having been justified,' using the aorist passive participle of the verb rendered 'to justify.' The verb may also be translated, 'to apply justice to someone,' 'to treat someone justly' and 'to pronounce judgement.' It is important to notice that this aorist participle means that for once and for all, the Christian has been 'pronounced righteous,' rather than 'made righteous.' The verb always has a judicial or forensic flavour about it and we need to think ourselves into the atmosphere this verb engenders – that of the divine law court, where God demands that we need perfect righteousness if we are to be acquitted and then declares and accepts that we have the perfect righteousness of Christ, through faith. This means that God in the act of justification declares that the sinner has a new status of righteousness before Him (Rom 8:33). We know from Rom 4:24 that this declaration is, 'a free gift of grace.' Therefore none of us deserve this legal status, none of us can earn it. The Bible often asserts that salvation is of grace because it knows the difficulty that the fallen heart has in coming to the truth that salvation cannot be earned through our own

works. Augustus Toplady in his hymn 'Rock of Ages,' expresses the same thought:
*Nothing in my hand I bring
Simply to Thy cross I cling
Naked come to Thee for dress
Helpless look to Thee for grace
Foul I to the fountain fly
Wash me Saviour or I die*
Augustine too reflected on the grace of God in this declaration on justification when he prayed:
*O Lord, demand what you will
But supply what you demand*
The basis of this justification is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Rom 5:9). God is just, He has set the sentence of death for our sin (Rom 6:23), yet One who is sinless (Heb 4:15) has paid the penalty of death for us that was not His own (2 Cor 5:21). Because it was not for the penalty of His own sin that He died, the penalty of death did not have any power to hold Jesus (Acts 2:24) and so Paul makes it clear that it is the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which is the basis of our justification (Rom 4:25). Thus God is both just and the justifier of sinners because, 'He is just and the One who justifies the man who has faith in Jesus' (Rom 3:26), because we are linked by faith to Christ, who has paid the penalty for sin, and His once and

for all payment appeases God's wrath against sin.

Judicial Not Ethical

If we are to understand justification correctly we must have a very firm hold on its juridical meaning – i.e. that it is a declaration of innocence, it is a declaration of righteousness. The great difference between Rome and Protestants is precisely in this area, as to whether justification is merely a legal act or an ethical act. The Roman Church asserts that justification consists of Christ's righteousness being poured into man. Man is therefore made just and he sanctifies himself by doing good works. In this view a person is made righteous and then declared righteous. But Scripture sees justification as the deliverance from the penalty of sin and sanctification as deliverance from the power of sin – these terms are synonymous to the Church of Rome. The council of Trent made these two terms inseparable.

Justification in Scripture is a judicial process which Rome has made an infusion of the quality of righteousness. Thus for Rome the external judicial acquittal is used to signify an earlier internal reality. According to this ethical doctrine of justification man is ultimately acquitted by virtue of what he is and what he does, and not through what Christ has done. According to this erroneous view God grants justification to man, but man must do something about it first before he can be justified. Against the judicial view of justification Rome argues that God would be false to proclaim the guilty guiltless, but this is to neglect the grace of God by which the wicked receive acquittal. Over against the ethical view of justification we have to cling to the juridical significance of the concept, whereby God the Judge absolves the guilty of their guilt and punishment.

But in Rom 5:1 Paul also shows us the means by which the individual is to appropriate this justification or the declaration of righteousness. It is, Paul says, through or by faith. Even this faith itself is a gift of God (Eph. 2:9) coming to the individual by divine grace.

WCF 11 states ... 'faith, thus receiv-

ing and resting on Christ and His righteousness is the alone instrument of justification...'

Christ Alone

This simply means that if the individual is to be clothed in the righteousness of Christ then he must wholeheartedly rely on what Christ has done and place all his trust in the all sufficient sacrifice of Jesus on his behalf (Rom 3:22). The truth of faith alone cannot be overstated. It means that salvation is not something I do. Salvation does not depend on my strength in holding onto God. Rather the events of salvation history, namely the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, are something which God has done and to be right before God I must simply rely in a dynamic ongoing way on those events and see them accomplished on my behalf.

This means that every other man-made means of salvation must be abandoned: baptism, church membership, philanthropy, holding outward religious office. These are all good things of themselves and perfectly appropriate for Christian participation, yet as a means of personal salvation, totally useless. The ground of our acceptance with God is the death and resurrection of Christ. God gives us the righteousness of Christ which comes to us as faith is exercised in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour (Rom. 4:5).

Reconciled To God

But the apostle goes on in the verse and shows us the fruit of 'having been justified' – we have, 'peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.' This peace is not the fruit of the Spirit to which Paul refers elsewhere (Gal 5:22). This peace which we have means that we are no longer the objects of God's displeasure and we are no longer to live in dread of divine wrath, for we have been reconciled to God or made His friends, through the death of His Son (Rom 5:10).

The phrase means we have peace with regard to God, that more literally, God is at peace with us and His wrath towards us is removed through the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Paul's main thought here is that we are at peace with

God and as a corollary of this peace we have peace within, and so inward peace is also the fruit of justification by faith.

The peace we have with God comes to us only on His terms. Relying on your own good works will not appease the righteous wrath of God. True peace can only be realised when we recognise that our sin has been justly punished through the death of the sinless Christ, that the justice of God has been satisfied and that God's law has been honoured and vindicated in Christ.

It is only as the believer sees God's mercy and peace kissing each other in this manner that we experience true peace. As Calvin says, 'now if we ask in what way the conscience can be made quiet before God, we shall find the only way to be that unmerited righteousness be conferred upon us as a gift of God (Institutes 13.3). The truth of Rom. 5:1, of an imputed righteousness coming to us by God's grace appropriated by faith, based on the finished work of Christ, is the heart of Paul's teaching on our righteousness and right standing before God. As Christians we need to rediscover and understand afresh these great truths of Scripture which are the great truths of the Reformation. The great truths which alone can satisfy the heart that hungers after God, the truth which when appropriated, give us peace with God.

Salvation is by grace alone

Through faith alone

In Christ alone

So that to God alone be all the glory.

The Rev. J. A. Scheepers is the minister of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia congregation in Ulverstone, Tasmania. He has previously served with the Reformed Churches of New Zealand and the Free Church of England in South Africa.

The World in the Banner

The Battle For Aleppo, Syria

On 5 June the Syrian Arab Army (SAA), supported by the Lebanese Hezbollah, liberated the strategic city of Qusair near the Lebanon border in Syria's central province of Homs. Qusair, which had been under rebel control for over a year, had been home to more than 3000 Christians, some of whom are now trickling back. The battle now moves to Aleppo, a city of nearly three million people, with a sizeable Christian minority. Rebels in Aleppo recently executed a 15-year-old boy they accused of blasphemy. Since 1 May, some 3000 Free Syrian Army [rebel] fighters have defected to the al-Qaeda-linked al-Nusrah Front, which has raised its flag in Aleppo. The battle for Aleppo will be protracted with many casualties. Please pray for Syria and for the Church, especially in Aleppo.

+ *Religious Liberty Prayer Bulletin* | RLPB 214 | Wed 12 June 2013

Teach Your Children Sound Doctrine

Big Truths for Young Hearts, by Bruce A. Ware

Big Truths for Young Hearts equips parents to guide their young children through all major doctrines in an understandable, chapter-a-day format. Sure, it's easy to teach your children the essentials of Christian theology when you're a theology professor. But what about the rest of us?

With *Big Truths for Young Hearts*, Bruce Ware, (you guessed it!) a theology professor, encourages and enables parents of children 6–14 years of age to teach through the whole of systematic theology at a level their children can understand. Parents can teach their children the great truths of the faith and shape their worldviews early, based on these truths.

The book covers ten topics of systematic theology, devoting several brief chapters to each subject, making it possible for parents to read one chapter per day with their children.. With this non-intimidating format, parents will be emboldened to be their children's primary faith trainers – and perhaps learn a few things themselves along the way.

Here are some comments from a friend of mine who went through the book with his own children when they

were 5, 7 & 8 and now again three years later. Several months ago we began reading Bruce Ware's excellent book for our morning family worship.

The book is divided into 10 chapters. Each chapter contains on average six sections. Each section is on average 4 pages long.

We were able then to read one section each morning after breakfast, before I left for work. In general we do this on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, & Friday.

The book is essentially a Systematic Theology for young people! The chapters are: 1) God's Word and God's Own Life as God, 2) God as Three in One, 3) Creator and Ruler of All, 4) Our Human Nature and Our Sin, 5) Who Jesus Is, 6) The Work That Jesus Has Done, 7) The Holy Spirit, 8) Our Great Salvation, 9) The Church of Jesus Christ, and 10) What Will Take Place in the End.

It has been great to read through this together as a family. My wife & I have found ourselves challenged and our thoughts on various theological points clarified. Ware writes with clarity while at the same time using extremely helpful illustrations. Our children (age 8, 10, & 11) have listened intently – most of the time – and have been stimulated in their own thinking. Many of the readings have generated excellent questions and points of discussion.

You can purchase the book from The Book Depository for \$17.20NZD or from Amazon for your Kindle for \$8.00USD. Amazon also has the introduction and the first chapter available for free if you want to sample the book before buying it.

+ *Bruce Hoyt, RCNZ Oamaru Newsletter*

Kate, Sex, Lies and the Truth

Here is another story you likely did not hear about in the lamestream media. And if you did, you would have gotten a terribly one-sided slant on all this. So how many of you know about Kaitlyn Hunt? Nope, didn't think you would. However, a few of you may have heard something about a "Free Kate" movement.

So what is all this about, and why should Kate be freed? Well, the story is quite straight forward – except to the homosexual activists and a pro-homosexual MSM (Main Stream Me-

dia) who are trying to pretend it isn't. Kate is an 18-year-old lesbian who was caught out having a sexual affair with a child – a 14-year-old girl.

Now that is illegal in the state of Florida, where this sordid event occurred. So we have here a clear case of paedophilia: adults having sex with children. That should be the end of the story, except that the homosexual activists have turned Kate into a poster girl – and even a victim – for their cause.

They can find absolutely nothing wrong with this, and are bending over backwards to justify it to the world. Just imagine if a man was found to have had sexual relations with a 14-year-old girl: he would be in jail by now and the whole world would think justice had been served.

But because this is a lesbian affair, the media as a whole and a homosexuality-drenched West is having trouble finding anything wrong with this. Thus we have yet another clear indication that the granting of special rights to homosexuals simply opens the door to every other sort of sexual perversion – in this case paedophilia.

Once again it is only the alternative media which has been reporting this story, and doing so free of the pro-homosexual bias. One writer who has been closely following this story, attempting to accurately present the facts on the case, is Robert Stacy McCain.

He has now penned a number of important articles on this deviant case, with his first entitled "Liberals Now Arguing for a Lesbian's Right to Have Sex With a 14-Year-Old Girl". He points out how the secular left – the cheer squad for all things homosexual – are throwing up all the usual sick defences: "but it's consensual," "equality," etc.

Kate's own mother has come out wholeheartedly defending the actions of her daughter. She "says that the parents of the 14-year-old who pressed charges are 'out to destroy my daughter [because] they feel like my daughter "made" their daughter gay,' and these 'bigoted, religious' parents 'see being gay as a sin and wrong, and they blame my daughter.'"

See? You deviant weirdos thought *Jailbait Lesbian School Girls* was just a popular DVD title, but now it's a civil right. And the only people who disagree are bigoted religious zealots — including the authorities in Indian River County, Florida: "If this was an 18-year-old male and that was a 14-year-old girl, it would have been prosecuted the same way," Indian River County Sheriff Deryl Loar said during a Monday news conference...

"The idea is to protect people in that vulnerable group from people who are older, 18 and above," said Bruce Colton, state attorney for Florida's 19th circuit, which includes Indian River County and other parts of the Treasure Coast. "...The statute specifically says that consent is not a defense."

"Colton said this case exemplifies the purpose of the current law and added he would not support any effort to make consensual relationships among peers legal. 'There's a big maturity difference between them,' he said. 'You're talking the difference between a senior in high school and a freshman in high school. That's what the law is designed to protect'."

He begins a follow-up article this way: "In January, Rush Limbaugh warned that there was 'an effort under way to normalize pedophilia,' and was ridiculed by liberals (including CNN's Soledad O'Brien) for saying so. But now liberals have joined a crusade that, if successful, would effectively legalize sex with 14-year-olds in Florida."

He continues, "Using the slogan 'Stop the Hate, Free Kate' (the Twitter hashtag is #FreeKate), this social-media campaign has attracted the support of liberals including Chris Hayes of MSNBC, Daily Kos, Think Progress and the gay-rights group Equality Florida. Undoubtedly, part of the appeal of the case is that Hunt is a petite attractive green-eyed blonde. One critic wondered on Twitter how long activists have 'been waiting for a properly photogenic poster child of the correct gender to come along?'"

"Portraying Hunt as the victim of prejudice, her supporters claim she was only prosecuted because she is homosexual and because the parents of the unnamed 14-year-old are 'bigoted religious zealots,' as Hunt's mother said in a poorly written Facebook post. The apparent public-relations strategy was described by Matthew Philbin of Newsbusters: 'If

you can play the gay card, you immediately trigger knee-jerk support from the liberal media and homosexual activists anxious to topple any and all rules regarding sex.'

"None of Hunt's supporters seem to care about the possible consequences of issuing what Philbin calls a 'Get Out of Jail Free' card to their teenage lesbian hero-victim. Some have deliberately falsified the narrative of Hunt's crime, claiming that the sexual relationship began when she was 17, when in fact Hunt turned 18 last August and the incidents at issue occurred between November and January...."

"Prosecutors in the case are apparently determined to resist the politically correct demands of the ACLU, MSNBC and other liberals who don't care about the precedent that might be set by nullifying Florida's age of consent laws. What is remarkable — and alarming to many parents — is that liberals appear to be unashamed to argue for legalizing sex with 14-year-olds."

And in another piece he writes, "Perhaps the most devastating blow to the 'Free Kate' campaign's narrative of victimhood, however, was a local TV station's interview Thursday with the younger girl's parents, a mixed-race couple who scarcely appeared to be 'vindictive bigots.' Jim and Laurie Smith (he's white, she's black) told WPEC-TV reporter Jana Eschbach that they had twice asked Hunt to leave their daughter alone, and only went to police after a January incident in which their daughter ran away and spent the night at Hunt's house."

Another commentator also discusses these parents: "No matter what they feel they're protecting their daughter from, they have both the legal right and moral responsibility to protect their daughter, and that's exactly what they did. That they've become the biggest target of contempt because of the Hunt family's efforts is horrific. It's not just. It's unforgivable. That the basic truths of the case were wildly misrepresented by the Hunt family to do it make it that much more outrageous."

"That manipulation was used to take advantage of a community full of generous people with good hearts who are ready to fight for equality is just as offensive. The dishonesty of the architects of the Free Kate campaign does damage to the credibility of the

effort of legitimately persecuted people fighting against real abuse... "Not to mention the lives of the parents who fought to protect their daughter, and a 14 year old girl whose life will never be the same after becoming an unwitting participant in an international media firestorm that didn't need to happen. All of this... so an 18 year old doesn't have to accept the consequences of her own actions."

And the lefties and homosexual activists insist that paedophilia has nothing to do with their agenda. Yeah right.

+www.billmuehlenberg.com

Free e-books

R.C.Sproul has produced a series of short books addressing 14 crucial questions. They are intended to help Christians address their own questions as well as giving tools to help others asking these questions. The questions addressed are: Can I Be Sure I'm Saved?; Can I Have Joy in My Life?; Can I Know God's Will?; Can I Trust the Bible?; Does God Control Everything?; Does Prayer Change Things?; How Should I Live in this World?; What Can I Do with My Guilt?; What Does It Mean to be Born Again?; What Is Baptism?; What Is Faith?; What Is the Trinity?; Who Is Jesus?; Who Is the Holy Spirit? These e-books can be downloaded for free at <http://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/sdg/freeforever.html>

Latest "Junk" Research On Same-Sex Parenting

According to the Sydney Morning Herald today, "Children of same-sex parents are doing as well or better than the rest of the population on several key health indicators, according to initial findings of the world's largest study of such children. The Australian Study of Child Health in Same-Sex Families collected data on 500 children nationally, up to the age of 17. Of the 315 gay, lesbian and bisexual parents who completed the globally recognised child health questionnaire, 80 per cent were women."

Here's the problems: (according to expert advisers who can see through these ... studies).

"The big problem is pretty much as it is with other such studies.

1) These are moms recruited through gay/lesbian community

sites, orgs and bookstores, etc. Therefore they are more politically active and motivated than the general population.

2) These are light years away from any kind of representative sample. They essentially admit that in saying their samples are "snowball and convenience samples." That is like what a poor grad student would use.

3) The moms all self-reported with no exterior objective checks. And they know they are participating in a major lesbian parenting study.

Given these, it is a really laughable study of which nothing can really be determined.

And the news outlets that report on it without even digging into it at the most basic level have no excuse."

And from another analysis "...the Sydney Morning Herald article makes several references, including in the headline, to "same-sex couples." However, it is NOT a study of children raised by same-sex "couples" – it is a study of "children... with at least one parent who self identifies as being same-sex attracted." The study design refers vaguely to "same-sex families," which cleverly seems to IMPLY same-sex couples, but which actually, under the design of the study, could refer to a family consisting entirely of a male child being raised by a single female parent – if that mother merely happens to be sexually attracted to other females.

Remember that one of the chief criticisms of Regnerus was that his subjects were not necessarily raised by same-sex couples, and therefore it was argued that his research was irrelevant to the debate over the re-definition of marriage. If that was true of Regnerus, then they ought surely to concede that the same is true of this study (but don't hold your breath)! It also shares the sampling weaknesses of most other studies of ho-

mosexual parenting (but not Regnerus) – to quote, "Initial recruitment will involve convenience sampling and snowball recruitment techniques... Primarily recruitment will be through emails posted on gay and lesbian community email lists aimed at same-sex parenting." This type of recruitment is anything but random, and will tend to bring out the "cream of the crop" of homosexual parents, eager to make a good impression."

What a shambles. They're getting desperate – but the media are too thick to ask the real questions.

+ *FamilyFirst NZ*, 6 June 2013

Center for Christian Statesmanship Dedicates New Home on Capitol Hill

The D. James Kennedy Center for Christian Statesmanship will host a gala Grand Opening of its new ministry facility on 13 June 2013 at the Center's new location in Washington DC, two blocks from the U.S. Capitol building.

The Center for Christian Statesmanship, which serves legislators, staffers, and interns on Capitol Hill, recently purchased and renovated a stately four-story row house originally built in 1890. The facility serves as a center for ministry and houses on its third floor the new D. James Kennedy Library on Capitol Hill. Both the building and the Library were dedicated at the Grand Opening event.

"It is our hope and prayer to see a dramatic expansion of the Center's outreach with this wonderful new facility," said Dr John B. Sorensen, President of Evangelism Explosion International, the parent organization of the Center for Christian Statesmanship. "This elegant building will be an enormous asset to the Center's outreach on Capitol Hill."

Dr Sorensen noted that the new D. James Kennedy Library "will help

form Christian statesmen, as Members and staff, access a library of some 2,000 volumes drawn from Dr Kennedy's personal collection, as well as about 2,000 sermons he preached during his lifetime."

"We are absolutely thrilled to have the new center for ministry so close to where lawmakers and their staff work," Sorensen said, noting that the new ministry complex is two blocks from the U.S. Capitol building and within easy walking distance of Congressional office buildings.

Founded in 1995 by the late D. James Kennedy, a minister, author and evangelical leader, the Center for Christian Statesmanship has impacted thousands of lives by bringing a gospel witness, Christian discipleship, and a vision for Christian statesmanship to leaders in Washington.

The Center's Executive Director Dr George Roller leads a wide range of ministry activities, including "Politics and Principle Luncheons" at which Christian Members of Congress share their faith testimony; Bible studies for legislators, staffers and interns; special intern events, such as backyard barbecues, where hundreds of interns gather in a Christian setting; and special lectures where key Christian leaders and thinkers share a Christian witness to the Capitol Hill community.

+ *Christian News Wire*, newsdesk@christiannewswire.com

+ *Evangelism Explosion*, Post Office Box 23820, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida 33307, 954-491-6100, Fax: 954-771-2256

Camp memorabilia

While we all recognise the importance of keeping Presbytery and Synod records etc, accounts of other church activities, including camps, are often discarded. However they were a regular part of church life and form an important part of our church history.

Consequently, it would be advantageous to try and collect what we can while it is available.

If you have photographs, programmes, reports or anything else from camps (we used to call them rallies) that you think would be suitable, please either contact Anna Ward (Phone 03.9720.4871/ Email: rowland.ward@gmail.com) or the convener of Youth and Fellowship Committee, Rev Andres Miranda (Ph 03.9779.3295 / Email: alethias2000@yahoo.com.au.)

If you wish to retain ownership of items they can be copied and returned to you.

Children under the Banner

From: 'Search and Solve: Bible Activity Sheet',
by Betty De Vries, [Illustrated by Donna Greenlee]
Baker Books, 1998

Solomon Says

_____ that rush into evil



haughty (proud) _____



a lying _____



_____ that shed innocent blood



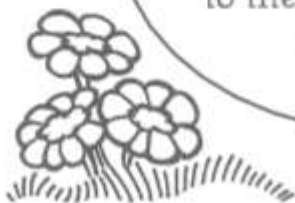
a _____ that devises wicked schemes



a _____ who stirs up dissension (trouble)



In Proverbs
6:16-19, Solomon lists
things that God hates. Fill in
the blanks; then draw a line
to the correct picture in
column two.



Prescribed Search / Youth Work

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

JULY 2013

SENIOR and INTERMEDIATE (Intermediate omit questions 7 and 8)

1 CORINTHIANS chapter 15:12--58

1. What happens to our faith if Christ be not risen?
2. When Christ rose what did he become to them that had fallen asleep?
3. Complete the verse: "For as in Adam all die...."
4. What will be the last enemy to be destroyed?
5. The body is sown in corruption, but how is it raised?
6. The first man was of the earth. What of the second man?
7. What is the mystery which Paul revealed concerning the resurrection? (2 verses)
8. What is the sting of death, and the strength of sin? Nevertheless, for what does Paul thank God? (2 verses)

JUNIOR

LUKE chapter 20

1. What did Jesus say about the stone that the builders had rejected? (2 verses)
2. What should we render to Caesar, and what should we render to God?
3. Is God the God of the dead or of the living?
4. In the quotation from Psalm 110, what does David say about his Lord? (2 verses)

Please send the answers to:
Mrs I Steel
PO Box 942
Epping NSW 1710
Or email to: iesteel@gmail.com

Life under the Banner

You Gotta Have A True Faith

Jim Klazinga

"I've gotta have faith." So admits pop singer George Michael in his 1987 mega-hit, "Faith," from the album of the same name. What he is supposed to have faith in is another matter. The album cover has the singer sporting a cross-shaped earring, but I have my doubts that this represents a genuine faith in the Savior who died on the cross.

Still, I can state with certainty that he does have faith. Everyone has some sort of faith. Each and every one of you reading this article has faith in something or other. The question is, though, what do you put your faith in?

We all believe in something. But, is the focus of our faith true?

Does Everyone Have Faith?

If you were to inform the common person on the street that he has faith, there is a chance that he would deny it. He might say that he is not a religious person, so he does not put his faith in anything. Perhaps these faithless folks would define faith as trying to believe in something without having any real proof. I imagine the word 'proof' here means: concrete verification in terms of empirical evidence. If you cannot prove it this way, but you still choose to believe it, then you have no choice but to accept it on faith.

For some, this is not a good thing. If you cannot touch it, see it, hear it, smell it, or taste it, if no instrument of science can help you obtain verifiable observations of it with your physical senses, then you can't know that it is real. And having faith in something you cannot prove to be real is foolish and backwards.

Here is the problem: this is inconsistent. This thinking itself requires faith.

If you say you can't know anything exists aside from that which you can perceive with your senses,

then you are making a faith statement about the nature of the universe, and about the nature of knowledge. Or, to put it another way: to say that we should only believe in that which can be verifiably perceived, this in itself is a statement that cannot be verifiably perceived. Really, people who say they have to see it to believe it, are in essence putting their faith in their senses, and ultimately, in themselves.

All this may seem a bit complicated, but the basic point is simple: it is not a question of whether or not we have faith, but what are we going to have faith in. Everyone lives by faith. If you live as if there is something else beyond the physical realm, then that demonstrates your faith. If you live as if the physical universe is all that exists, then that too demonstrates your faith.

What Faith Should We Live By?

This is a Christian magazine. If you are reading this article, chances are good that you are a Christian. So you know well enough to say that we should have faith in God. Or, more specifically, we should have faith in Jesus Christ.

However, here is where it gets complicated: saying we have faith in Jesus, and actually having it, are two different things. Anyone can say that he believes in Jesus. In fact, a surprising number of people in our day would still say this. But does this mean that all of them actually have a true faith? Sadly, no.

The question then becomes, how do we know if our faith in Jesus Christ is true or not?

Hebrews 11:1 can help us here.

"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." Now, the writer of Hebrews is not trying to give us a full-blown theological definition

of faith. But what this verse does do is describe certain aspects of faith that are important to keep in mind.

Faith Is the Conviction of Things Not Seen

Let us consider the second half of the verse first: "the conviction of things not seen." Faith involves conviction. Faith involves a certainty that says, "I know that this is true. I am convinced it is true."

And what is it that we are convicted of? Things not seen. What things? Well, shortly before this verse, in Hebrews 10:32-36 we read, "But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one. Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised." What is promised. When the writer of Hebrews talks in chapter 11:1 about things not seen, he is referring to these promises of God. These promises are an abiding possession. We can be certain of them.

And what are these promises? Well, God promises His people forgiveness. God promises His people salvation. God promises His people a future of blessed eternal life. God promises that Jesus Christ will return. God promises a future in which all the suffering of his people will be

ended, and they will never again have to endure suffering.

It is obvious that the fulfillment of these promises has not yet been completely seen. God's people were, and still are, living in a time of suffering.

And yet, God's people have faith. They are certain that God will keep his promises. We do not need to see the fulfillment of those promises right at this moment; because we trust, we are positive, that God will do everything he has said he will do.

This certainty goes beyond just God's promises. We also know, we are convinced, that everything revealed in the Scriptures is true. As Jesus prayed to his Father in John 17:17, "Your Word is truth." God had a purpose in giving us the Bible, the whole Bible. God had a purpose in giving us everything in His Word. There might be parts that we do not fully understand. Still, we can know and be convinced that everything God has to say to us is truth.

True Faith Focuses on What Is True

It's essential that when we talk about true faith, we talk about believing everything God reveals in His Word. This reminds us that true faith focuses on the truth.

So many people these days act as if it doesn't really matter what you believe, it does not matter what you have faith in, so long as you are sincere. What's important is the quality of faith, rather than the object of faith.

Of course, quality of faith is important. But here's the kicker: you can have the strongest faith possible, you can be totally convinced that something is true, but if you do not believe in the God of the Bible, if you do not believe in the God who sent his Son to die on the cross, then your faith is not a true faith at all.

Faith involves conviction, but it does not mean a thing if you are not committed to the truth. We must be convicted that the revealed promises of God which

have yet to be fulfilled, are true. We have to be convicted that everything that God reveals in his Word is true. We have to be convicted that Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation. If we are not convinced of these things, then our faith is meaningless. Worse than meaningless, because we would be holding to a lie.

Faith Is the Assurance of Things Hoped For

Getting back to Hebrews 11:1: the first part of the verse states, "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for." Things hoped for: this too refers to the promises of God. The promises of God are what give us hope for the future.

But now, note the word 'assurance.' Not only do we have conviction, but we also have assurance. This is an important distinction.

The Heidelberg Catechism in Lord's Day 7 beautifully expresses this assurance. "True faith is not only a knowledge and conviction that everything God reveals in his Word is true; it is also a deep-rooted assurance, created in me by the Holy Spirit through the gospel that, out of sheer grace earned for us by Christ, not only others, but I too, have had my sins forgiven, have been made forever right with God, and have been granted salvation."

This is the confidence of the Christian who has faith. We have a deep-rooted assurance that we have been made forever right with God. We have a heart-felt confidence that we are recipients of the wonderful grace earned for us by Christ.

This confidence is important. Having faith in someone means trusting in that someone. But can you really say that you trust in God, if you are not assured of His promises for you? You can believe the right things, but if you do not have confidence in what you believe, then what is the point of believing? You might sit in church every week, you might hear the message of the gospel all the

time, you might know all the right doctrines, but if the message of the gospel does not fill your heart with assurance, then your faith is very weak, at best.

Mind you, because of the ongoing reality of sin, there will be times of struggle, times when we wrestle with our faith. The devil, the world, and our own sinful nature attack us. We feel these attacks, and it clouds our hearts with uncertainty. We might even begin to question whether or not we have any faith at all.

In such times, only the Spirit strengthening our fundamental assurance can enable us to endure. As we see expressed in the Psalms so often, it is in the midst of struggle that we need even more to put our trust in God, and know that He will deliver us.

No matter what our trials may be, we should learn to always put our trust in God. If we can say, "I'm really hurting, but I still know that my hope is in the Lord, and I look to Him to deliver me," then we can have assurance.

The God in whom our hope lies, He is ultimately faithful. He will deliver us. It's not a matter of if He will save us or not. Having faith means we can know He has indeed saved us.

I pray that each one of you reading this may have this faith. This is the faith you gotta have. This is the faith you can have, thanks to the faithful and true God.

The Rev. J. Klazinga is the minister of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia congregation in Brisbane, Queensland. He has previously served in the Reformed Churches of New Zealand and the United Reformed Churches of North America.

Churches in the Banner

Synod 2013 (cont), A Baptism, Profession of Faith, Ordination & Call



Two on the Youth & Fellowship Committee:
The Rev's J. Klazinga & A. Miranda

Synod 2013 Report (Continued)

Synod was also thankful for the Youth & Fellowship Committee's work. In their report they noted the ongoing work amongst our children through the Memory Work, Essays, the Birthday Roll, the Search Work, and the Prescribed Work. In particular the service of Mrs Margaret Kinder and Mrs Irene Steel was noted with gratitude.

Synod also recognised the ongoing work that is done in each of our local Sunday Schools and Youth groups. It is quite a commitment and yet what a valuable part of congregation life it is, also for the future.

Another vital part of this Committee's work is oversight and interaction with the various church camps. We presently have two regular Church Camps – the Church-wide camp held near Sydney, and the Brisbane congregation camp held in Northern New South Wales. These have been a blessing to those who have participated, with opportunity to fellowship with folk from across our denomination.



New Taree elders and their wives

Daughters of the Manse – A Baptism on the Hastings

On the Lord's Day, 28th April, 2013, Emily Charlotte Lillian Kerridge was baptized. Rev. Ray Murray conducted the service and a wonderful time of fellowship was enjoyed that day, with members of Emily's family present from as far away as Tasmania. A much beloved member of the congregation, Mrs Margaret Hockett, commented at morning tea afterwards that on that day were present "the oldest



The two daughters of the manse

daughter of the Manse and the youngest." She was referring, of course, to herself being the daughter of Herbert Ramsay, Minister of the Grafton-Brushgrove Congregation from 1915 to 1945, and Emily being the daughter of the current Minister in Wauchope. We caught up with Mrs Hockett at the Synod and were able to get a photo of her with Emily, the day after Margaret's 91st birthday.

Newcastle

On Saturday 15th July the Newcastle (Hunter-Barrington) congregation issued a Call to Mr. Robin Tso. The photograph shows Rev. John McCallum, Moderator of the Central Presbytery, who presented the Call to Robin. The Call has been accepted and the date for the ordination and induction has been arranged for Friday 12th July 2013 at 7 pm in Raymond Terrace (DV).



The Central Presbytery Moderator, Rev. J. McCallum, extends the call to Mr Robin Tso

Taree

The congregation rejoices in God's gift of two new elders in the Manning. During the morning service on 16th July 2013 Rev. Trevor Leggett and David Wilson were inducted into the eldership of the congregation. The photograph shows the two new elders with their wives. Trevor now lives in the Manning Valley and uses the Tinonee church building as the headquarters of AIM.

Mrs. Audrey Muldoon, one of the congregations most faithful and devoted members celebrated her 90th birthday on 31 May 2013. Many of the members joined with family and friends the following day to celebrate the occasion. The speeches from the family paid tribute to her life and faith. Audrey replied appropriately and modestly. We can testify of her that, 'she speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue.'



Faith Yoa seen here on the occasion of her profession with her mum, Elizabeth, on the left and her dad, the Rev Tut Yoa