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EDITORIAL

Dear readers,

Like it or loathe it but politics is unavoidable in our world. Whether you interact much with politicians, their policies affect each of us - for better or for worse. But how do we respond as Christians? Tim Donachie's article on this topic is certainly one which leads to profitable discussion. Also in this issue, Peter Loughridge seeks to address the perennial question of each generation "How can I know God's will?" This question is important for people of all ages to wrestle with, although here written especially for young people. We also begin a helpful two-part series on the Trinity with an old article by J.G. Vos (1903-1983), an American RP minister. This doctrine is a great mystery and so difficult to understand, but it is important. The article is best read slowly and carefully in order to digest it fully. Don't worry if you can't understand all of it in one go! Another new series explores some practical steps to improve our worship – the most important of Christian duties! As usual, there are the usual children's pages. Thanks to Margaret Murray for agreeing to write regularly. Also, children, don't miss out on your chance to win a prize!

If there are any topics which you would like to see addressed from a Biblical perspective, please get in touch. If you find Good News helpful why not share it with a friend?

In Christ,
Stephen

because his citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3:20) and he is an ambassador of another kingdom (2 Cor. 5:20), he has no reason to involve himself in the affairs of an alien kingdom. As a believer he is to be subject to the powers that be (Rom. 13:1), he is to pray for those in authority (1 Tim. 2:1-2), and he is to pay his taxes (Rom. 13:6-7), but that is to be the extent of his involvement. Others, however take a different view! They argue that although society may be corrupt and godless, it will never improve unless Christians become involved at all levels of society, including politics, after all, Christians are to be salt and light in the world (Mat.5:13). The duty of Christians is to seek to reclaim society for Christ and that can only be done as Christians become deeply involved in the decision making and legislative process by voting for suitable candidates, campaigning and standing for political office.

Obviously, within these two contrasting views, there will be a variety of opinions: some holding the non-involvement position will accept the need to vote but will hold back from active involvement, whilst some holding the second view will urge the establishing of a Christian political party. There is also a third view that has been traditionally held by Covenanters. The United Kingdom has been signally blessed by God especially as the Reformation spread gospel truth throughout the land, leading to a solemn recognition of the authority of Christ over the nation. In 1643 the nation, through public representatives, church and people, swore a Solemn League and Covenant to order the affairs of Church and Nation in accordance with the revealed will of God. This Covenant was ratified by the parliaments of Scotland and England and signed by the king. This Covenant was later repudiated and burnt and has never been reinstated, even by the so-called Glorious Revolution of 1688! The nation has deliberately turned its back on a solemn and binding commitment

made to Almighty God and refuses to give any place to Christ in the legal and constitutional framework of the country. This rejection of Christ and of a solemn covenant led Covenanters to adopt a position of political dissent as they believed it would be disloyal to Christ to have active participation in a political system that excluded Christ. They could not, in good conscience, take an oath of allegiance to a monarch who usurped the headship of Christ over a branch of the church of Christ. If they could not themselves take the oath of allegiance, neither could they allow somebody else to take it on their behalf.

“ The United Kingdom has been signally blessed by God especially as the Reformation spread gospel truth throughout the land.”

It should be obvious that Christians should seek for a righteous and godly state where rulers submit themselves to the law of Christ and try to rule in accordance with the will of God, but is such a state achievable, and if it is. what is the best and most God honouring way to achieve it? Opting out of any involvement in the political process may give the impression that society is irredeemable, and the Christian should only be concerned about ‘plucking brands from the burning’ and leaving a wicked society to its own devices’. Covenanters have sometimes been accused of a similar attitude, but that is far from the truth. Covenanters have always had a desire for a godly state and have always taken a keen interest in

politics and the welfare of the state but if the state is in rebellion against Christ and has no place for Him then, reluctantly it has no place for them! Those who believe that Christians must be involved in every part of the political system must carefully consider how they can do that without compromise: Can they be members of a political party when the policies of a party are anti-christian (eg Abortion, Homosexuality etc.)? Could they conscientiously stand for election on a party platform at local or national level when election would mean being subject to the party whip?

There are, however, some things on which all Christians should be able to agree:

1. It is God who orders the affairs of men and nations. ‘he removes kings and sets up kings’. God is sovereign over the affairs of men and does as he pleases – nothing is out of his control (Dan. 4:35).
2. There is a responsibility to pray for the rulers; always remembering that God is the God of the impossible – he opened the Red Sea, he defeated the Midianite army with Gideon’s 300 men, he released a chained Peter from a dungeon with no human agency – nothing is too hard for the Lord and he can change the hearts of the leaders of nations in answer to prayer.
3. There is a great need to evangelise the lost for it is Christian people that make up a Christian nation.
4. The Church has a responsibility to campaign for the kind of righteousness that exalts a nation and to instruct politicians with regard to their duty and responsibility before the king of kings and the lord of lords.

Every Christian has the responsibility to live a quiet, godly life as a good and honourable citizen so that others may see his good works and glorify God in heaven.



Practical

Rev. Stephen McCollum
Stornoway RPCS

SERIES

Improving Our Worship, Part One



We begin a series on worship in which we will focus on the individual elements of the service, (e.g. singing, prayer, sermon, etc.). Let's begin with some general observations.

The Importance of Worship

Thomas Watson says, God's "worship is the apple of his eye, that which he is the most tender of; and there is nothing he has more showed his displeasure against than corrupting his worship." Consider how much God's Word focuses on worship. It gives:

- reasons to worship
- laws governing worship
- a whole book of worship songs
- accounts of punishments for corrupters of worship, and
- a glorious prospect of eternity worshipping God.

This emphasis testifies to its importance. The second commandment (regulating **how** we worship) is enforced with the following, "For I, the Lord your God, *am* a jealous God" (Ex. 20:5). We ordinarily teach children that it is wrong to be jealous. More accurately it is not wrong to be jealous for what is yours by right. Certainly, God has a right to be worshipped in the manner He has chosen.

In the Bible different words are used for worship, each bringing out a different flavour of this highest duty. For example, one word emphasises the reverence that we should have towards God; another points to the humility as we "kneel" before Him. In older versions of the Bible you may see God referred to as "terrible" or "dreadful." These words now tend only to have a negative meaning, but

they do stand out of the page and make us think. God is not a tame pet – He is to be feared as we approach Him, reverencing Him. Many modern versions of the Bible use "awesome" instead of these words, which is fine as long as we understand it as something producing awe – a very solemn impression – rather than as I heard it overused in America to describe anything "cool!" When we worship God there should be real solemnity because He is to be revered.

The English word "worship" comes from an older form "worth-ship." God is worthy to be praised. How often the Scriptures remind us of that. "I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised" (Ps. 18:3). "You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; for You

created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created” (Rev. 4:11). It is self-evident that God is worthy to be worshipped; to hold back worship is an act of rebellion.

Hypocritical Worship

Did you know that each week in our congregations there are hypocrites? No, I can't point my finger at them, but the Bible admits that not all who profess to worship God do so in sincerity and truth. A true worshipper and a hypocrite may sing the same words, listen to the same sermon, close their eyes at the same prayer, yet one is worshipping and the other is not. If worship is not from a heart that loves God, motivated for His glory, it is hypocritical – merely to be seen and applauded by men, perhaps to give a sense of respectability or ease of mind. How do you worship God?

Practical directions to prepare for worship

The time to prepare for worship is not when you sit down at the service, but well before. Practically we must be ready. Sabbath mornings can be a rush. Why is it easier to get the kids to school and yourself to work during the week than it is to get to church? If you constantly arrived late for your job, you could face discipline. Why treat God with such contempt? It is key to be organised so that nothing hinders you from being at worship on time.

Try not to come to worship exhausted, although this is not always possible. A word to young people (since it's not that long since I was one), there are lots of things to do on Saturday nights but if it results in you dragging yourself out of bed in just enough time for worship or in you struggling to participate, then you need to re-evaluate your priorities.

Spiritual preparation is even more important. We should confess any sin that would hinder us as we approach God and seek to have a heart of reverence, humility, and love so that

we can worship Him. Don't save this preparation until you sit down in the pew. We should be thinking about them earlier in the morning and even on the day before. Some examples of things to think of:

- God is incomprehensibly great, infinitely glorious, and perfectly holy.
- We are unworthy to approach God because of sin and may only do so in Christ, in whom we are received as beloved children of God.
- While we are unable in ourselves to worship God acceptably, Christ is our Mediator who presents our worship to God.
- We need the Holy Spirit to stir up our hearts and enable us to worship.
- God has given sure and precious promises about the preaching of His Word and so we should pray expectantly for a blessing on minister and congregation alike.

Let me give some directions regarding families with children. It is important for children to be welcome in the worship service. I'm firmly committed to that theologically and I'm thankful my children are welcome in our congregation. If we remember our covenant theology, the children of believers are members of the church, therefore we should not treat worship as if it is only for adults. Those from a different generation may prefer for children to be seen and not heard and any noise in worship may frustrate you. As parents and children try to be sensitive to you, could you try to be encouraging to parents and children? Very simply, you don't know the difficulties in their family that morning which may have made getting there very hard. With children there may be 101 reasons why they won't settle that day. Obviously, parents shouldn't let their children get away with everything during worship but we must have age-appropriate expectations. Advice can be given by more mature Christians, but try not to make young mothers feel like failures when they have tried so hard.

Parents, it is primarily your job to train your children to worship. Do this by positive example and, if necessary, by appropriate punishments for disobedience. Think of ways that you can cultivate in your child an expectation for the Lord's Day, to call it a delight. It should be the highpoint of the week. Easier said than done! And yet, some people do an excellent job at passing on to their children the delight of a particular hobby or the love for a sports team. If your child can see the love that you have for the Lord and your anticipation for worship, it may be impressed upon them. Why not start by simply tell your child how much you are looking forward to worship as you drive to church?

“ We should confess any sin that would hinder us as we approach God and seek to have a heart of reverence, humility, & love so that we can worship Him.”

The single biggest help to train children is daily family worship. If your children are used to Scripture reading, singing a psalm, and prayer each day then they will be much better prepared for sitting through and participating in public worship. Again, it will not always be easy. There may be temper tantrums during family worship, yet you will be surprised how effective it will be in the long run. Don't be tempted to give up because you can't see immediate results.

In the next article we will consider how we can pay more attention to worshipping God by singing Psalms.

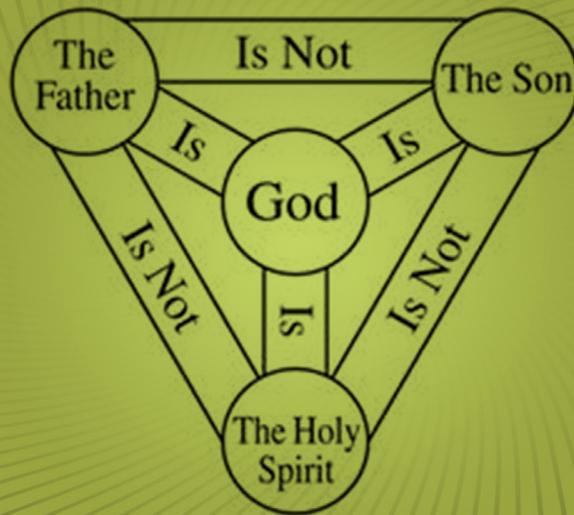


Doctrinal

Rev. Dr. J.G. Vos (1903-1983)
Minister, RPCNA

SERIES

Understanding the Trinity, Part One



The subject of this article may perhaps seem dry and abstract, or of little practical importance for the Christian life. But really there is no truth of the Christian Faith that is more important for the way of salvation and the Christian life. Christianity stands or falls with the doctrine of the Trinity; where this truth has been abandoned, Christianity soon disappears. It is the landmark of the Christian Faith.

The divine Trinity (or the Tri-unity of God) is a mystery in two senses. It is a mystery in the Biblical sense; that is, it is a truth that we never could have known if God had not revealed it to us in the Bible. And it is also a mystery in the ordinary sense, for it is a truth which baffles our understanding and transcends our power to comprehend. "The Lord hath said that he would dwell in the thick darkness" (2 Chronicles 6:1). God is clothed with impenetrable mystery; He can never be comprehended by

finite beings. We should not expect to be able to rationalize the truth of the Trinity.

For the present discussion we shall assume that there is a personal God, that this God has revealed Himself in the Bible, and that God can be known from His revelation in the Bible. We shall consider, first, what the doctrine of the Trinity means; second, the Bible proof for the doctrine of the Trinity; and third, the practical value of the doctrine of the Trinity.

What the Doctrine of the Trinity Means

First of all, we should realize that the background of the doctrine of the Trinity is the truth that there is only one God. If we define God as the Supreme Being, it follows necessarily that there can be only one God. Also the Bible teaches this truth from cover to cover. We should always remember that any idea of God

which loses sight of His unity must be false.

In the divine Being there exist three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. When we say "three persons," we do not mean exactly the same thing by the term "Persons" as we do when speaking of human beings. The word person is just the nearest approach, in our common speech, to what the Bible teaches about the distinction between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In the one God there exist side by side three centers of self-consciousness, each different from the other two. Each can call the others "Thou" or "He" and can speak of Himself as "I" or "Me." Thus there is a true distinction of Persons in the divine Being.

Philip Schaff, in his History of the Christian Church, in discussing the doctrine of the Trinity, says: "... the term person must not be taken

here in the sense current among men, as if the three persons were three separate individuals, or three self-conscious and separately acting beings. The word person is in reality only a make-shift in the absence of a more adequate term.”

Schaff also says: “ There is only one divine essence or substance. Father, Son and Spirit are one in essence, or consubstantial. They are in one another, inseparable, and cannot be conceived without each other.” “The three persons are related to the divine substance not as three individuals to their species, as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, or Peter, John and Paul, to human nature; they are only one God. The divine substance is absolutely indivisible by reason of its simplicity. . . . the whole fullness of the one undivided essence of God, with all its attributes, is in all the persons of the Trinity. . . . The church teaches not one divine essence and three persons, but one essence in three persons. Father, Son, and Spirit cannot be conceived as three separate individuals, but are in one another, and form a solidaric unity.”

We should not suppose that each of the three Persons possesses a part of the divine nature and attributes. That would seem the natural and logical explanation to us, but it is not true to the Biblical data. On the contrary, each of the three Persons is truly God and possesses all of the divine nature and attributes. Just how each of the three Persons can possess all there is of God is something we cannot hope to understand; it baffles our human intellect. But the Bible teaches just that. As John Gray wrote in his poem “ On the Holy Trinity” :

“ Equal, and none Can make but one;
One are the three; Yet what it be
That triple spirit only knows.”

Though this truth is indeed a mystery, still it does not involve a contradiction as has often been alleged against it. It would be a contradiction if we were to say that God is one and God is

three in the same sense. If that were the doctrine of the Trinity, no reasonable person could believe it. But the doctrine of the Trinity affirms that God is one and three in different senses; He is one in substance and three in personality. We admit the mystery, but we deny the alleged contradiction.

The three Persons of the Trinity are equal in power and glory. So far as their nature is concerned, no one of them is subordinate to any of the others. If there were any personal subordination, they could not all three be truly God. There is a certain kind of functional subordination in connection with the working out of the plan of salvation for the human race. Because of His state of humiliation on earth, the eternal Son could say, “ My Father is greater than I.” But in their nature none of the three persons can be subordinate; all are equal in power and glory, just because they are the same in substance.

All three Persons co-operate in every work, yet certain works are attributed more particularly to each. Thus we think of God the Father as most prominent in the work of creation, yet the Gospel of John tells us concerning God the Son that “ without him was not anything made that was made.” The purchase of our redemption was particularly the work of God the Son, and the application of redemption is more particularly the work of God the Holy Spirit. Yet it is all part of one great plan in which all three Persons cooperate at all times.

All comparisons fail to do justice to the doctrine of the Trinity. Many people have sought to find illustrations of this truth in the realm of nature or in human life. Some of these illustrations may help us a little, but none of them is really adequate. Really even the reciprocal terms Father and Son used in the Bible itself do not mean the same as “ Father” and “ Son” in the ordinary sphere. They are just the nearest conceptions

in human speech and human thought to suggest the relations between the first and second Persons of the Trinity.

One illustration that has been suggested is that of water, which exists in the three forms of liquid, vapour, and ice, yet always has the same chemical composition of two atoms of hydrogen to one of oxygen. This illustration is faulty because water is not liquid, vapour and ice all at the same time; when it becomes one of these it ceases to be another. But God exists as one substance in three Persons at the same time and continuously.

Another suggested illustration is that of the sun; the matter of the sun is said to represent God the Father, the light of the sun to represent God the Son, and the heat of the sun to represent God the Holy Spirit. This is a better illustration than that of water, for heat and light are distinct from the matter of the sun, yet inseparable from it. The sun is the sun, light is light, and heat is heat, yet the sun is continually radiating light and heat through the universe. But the illustration breaks down, because matter, light and heat are not the same in substance as the persons of the Trinity are. It may be that modern physics has shown that matter, light, and heat are basically similar in substance because they are all based, ultimately, upon energy in the atomic nucleus; but the three Persons of the Trinity are not merely similar or related in substance; they are identical in substance, each of them possessing all of the one divine essence or substance.

While such illustrations may help us a little in grasping this baffling concept, none of them is really adequate, because material things and forces cannot really represent relationships between persons, and especially not relationships between the Persons of the divine Trinity. For the divine Trinity is really unique and has no parallel in the created universe; it is truly a mystery.

TRINITY

*God eternally exists as three persons,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and each person is fully God,
and there is one God.*

THREE FOUNDATIONS

THERE IS ONLY

ONE GOD

THERE ARE

3 DIVINE PERSONS

THE PERSONS ARE

**COEQUAL
AND
COETERNAL**

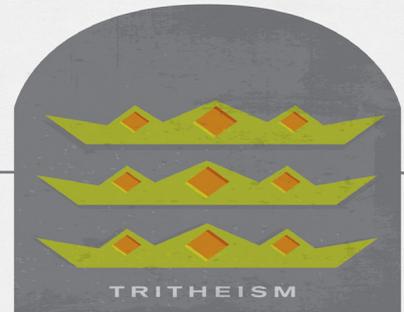
THREE ERRORS



MODALISM
Modalism claims that there is one person who appears to us in three different forms or modes.



SUBORDINATIONISM
Subordinationism claims that the Son and Holy Spirit are subordinate to the Father in nature and being.



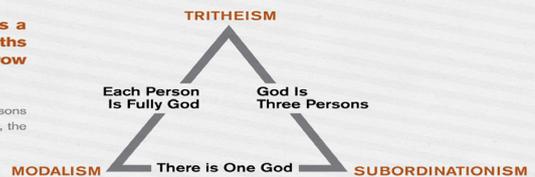
TRITHEISM
Tritheism denies that there is only one God and instead claims that there are three Gods.

*In the doctrine of the Trinity
beats the heart of the whole
revelation of God for the
redemption of humanity.*

HERMAN BAVINCK

Each of the three sides of the triangle is a foundational truth. When any of these truths is denied, the other two sides make an arrow that points to the resulting error.

Example: If you deny the equality of each of the three persons of the Godhead [thus removing that line from the triangle], the other two lines now point to the error of subordinationism.



BAD ILLUSTRATIONS



Three-Leaf Clover

Illustration The Trinity is like a three-leaf clover because the clover has three parts yet remains one plant.

Error Polytheism

Explanation Each leaf is only part of the clover & cannot said to be the whole clover. In the Trinity, each person is fully God.



Water/Ice/Steam

Illustration The Trinity is like water because water can be ice, steam, or water and remain H₂O.

Error Modalism

Explanation Water is never all three forms at the same time. In the Trinity, God is always and at all times each person.



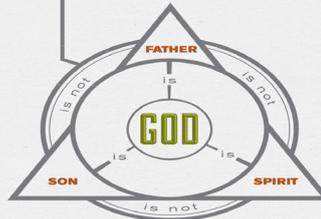
Father/Son/Husband

Illustration The Trinity is like a man who is at the same time a father, a son and a husband. He is one man, but has three roles.

Error Modalism

Explanation Father, son and husband describe functions or roles of one person. In the Trinity, God is three distinct persons rather than one person in three modes or roles.

ONE GOOD ILLUSTRATION



FUNCTIONS OF THE TRINITY

God eternally exists as three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and each person is fully God, and there is one God. Yet each of the persons of the Godhead is distinct in his primary function in relating to the world through creation and redemption: The Father plans, the Son executes, the Spirit applies.

God the Father is the great Architect of creation, redemption and consummation, who plans, directs and sends. The Son and Holy Spirit are willingly subordinate to him in role even while equal in deity.

God the Son obeys the Father, accomplishes redemption, and with the Father sends the Holy Spirit to apply the work he has begun. In all things he glorifies the Father.

God the Holy Spirit brings to completion the work planned by the Father and begun by the Son. In all things he works to glorify the Son.

*The doctrine of the Trinity is the
differentiating doctrine of the Christian Faith.*

D. MARTYN LLOYD-JONES

Resources

The Forgotten Trinity | James White
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit | Bruce Ware
Systematic Theology | Wayne Grudem

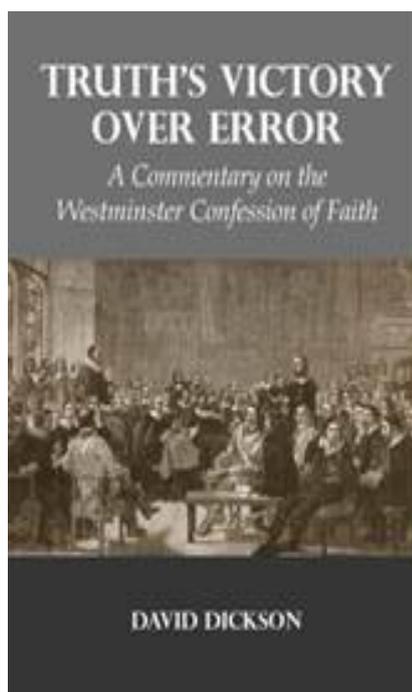
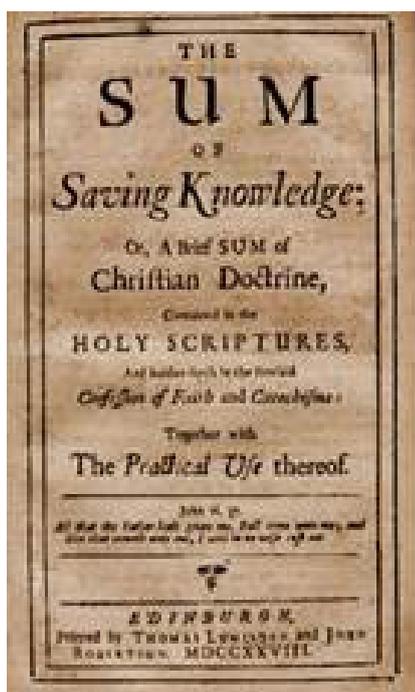


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Church History

Rev. David Dickson (1583-1663)
Covenanter Minister



David Dickson (c.1583–1663), was a Scottish Presbyterian and Covenanter minister who served as a minister in Irvine, Ayrshire. Dickson was faithful to the Reformed faith, even when he had to pay a high price for it. For opposing the Five Articles of Perth, which brought Episcopal practices into the Presbyterian Church, Dickson was deprived of his ministry in Irvine and banished to Aberdeenshire for a time. Later, when he served as the Professor of Divinity at Edinburgh, he refused to take the Oath of Supremacy to Charles II. As a result, Dickson was ejected from this post and he eventually died of failed health. Nevertheless, the Lord used him to write many excellent works such as *The Sum of Saving Knowledge* (along with James Durham) and various commentaries. Below is a poem penned by Dickson.

Honey-Drops, or Crystal Streams; Flowing from Christ, the Fountain and Head thereof.

By David Dickson

Of God's great mercy now I'll sing,
I will his mercy praise,
For to extol Jehovah King,
a quiv'ring voice I'll raise

I'll be thy God thou say'st O Lord,
this promis'd is to me;
What highest heaven can afford
I will vouchsafe on thee.

For this poor earth, thou needs not care,
thou shalt inherit all;
With Christ my Son thou shalt be heir,
in glorie celestial.

O pause my soul, and be amaz'd,
at this transcendent grace;
And for thy vileness be abas'd,
be sure to make thy peace.

Oh what am I but sinful dust,
and shall I have such store
Of riches, that shall never rust
in that eternal glorie?

Is't not enough, I'm not in hell,
tormented in that fire?
For oft I did thy voice repel,
provoking thee to ire.

And shall not only thou relieve
me from the infernal lake?
But also promisest to give
good things for mercie's sake.

And shall I have not only crumbs,
which from thy table fall:
But more than all the richest sums
of gold and silver all.

And shall it not suffice to give
what creatures can afford?
But thou wilt have me for to live,
ev'n with thyself, O Lord!

Shall God then be my portion?
his wisdom to direct?
His goodness for compassion,
his power to protect,

His holiness to sanctify,
his all sufficient store,
Me to provide with rich supply,
blest be my God therefore.

Shall his high habitation,
ev'n be my dwelling place?
And shall his creatures ev'ry one
make way for my solace?

Shall his brave angels me surround,
and guard me from all ill?
O this great mercy hath no bound!
sing praises then I will.

O then, my soul, let all my strength
and faculties each one,
Be consecrate to God at length,
for his salvation.

Thy time and talent then bestow,
his name to glorify;
Who did to thee such mercy show
praise him most cheerfully.

But as his mercies great and free,
so doth it still endure,
Most firm and sure t'eternity,
none shall their souls enjure.

A woman may forgetful be
of infants of her born;
But tho' she would, yet would not God
me leave to be forlorn.

The mountains may removed be,
the day and night may change,
The hills cast into the sea,
tho' heav'n and earth do range.

Yet sure he will most tenderly,
his precious saints embrace;
In spite of hell, they shall prevail,
and see his glorious face.

I grav'n am on his palms, therefore
I'll not forgotten be;
Tho' I were ev'n at death's dark vale,
it shall not terrify.

His wrath may for a moment last,
to chasten me for sin;
Yea, everlasting kindness, I,
and favour hope to find.

Then I'll begin to banish sin,
contemning worldly toys;
With wings I'll fly and soar on high,
seeking for heav'nly joys.



PRESBYTERY NEWS

Camps and Conferences

A number of people from all of the RPCS churches participated in Irish RP Camps and Conferences over the summer. 8 were at Senior Camp; around 40 at the Irish RP International Conference; 11 at the Junior Camps; and 2 at the Young Adults Weekend. Here are some of their comments:

Senior Camp - "As it was my first camp, I loved getting to know people and everyone was really easy to get on with. Being in fellowship and amongst other Christians really strengthened me and by the end, I had not only made some great friendships, but had also grown in faith with God." – Sarah Turnbull (Glasgow RPCS)

Irish International Conference – "One of the stand out elements of the conference is living in what is essentially a village of Christians for a week; nobody passed on the street without offering a warm greeting and everyday people were popping into each other's houses to share a meal, to share in fellowship, or to borrow some cooking implement. During a time of reflection on the final evening, several people referred to the week as "a small taste of heaven" and with such a spirit of fellowship and the representation of 12 different nationalities, it is little wonder." – Gemma Macdonald (Glasgow RPCS)

Junior Camps – "Something else that I loved about camp this year was seeing the friendships developed

by our Scottish girls, and how they were making plans to stay in touch with others met at camp. Christian friendship is such a big blessing and something that is so needed, so it's great to see God using camp to bring that about between our churches." – Rachel Nelson (Leader) (North Edinburgh RPCS)

Young Adults Weekend – "It's nice to be together with other young Christians in a situation which is much more relaxed than some of the other youth retreats. With plenty of free time, it's nice to just relax with friends- especially when being from Scotland and not seeing people so often." – Calvin Quigley (Airdrie RPCS)





CONGREGATIONAL NEWS



Dr. Andrew Quigley & Family

Airdrie

Over the summer 9 children and young people from Airdrie went to the Irish RP Camps, Conferences, and were involved in 3 GO Teams. We are

so thankful to the Irish RP Church for providing these opportunities for our young people to hear good teaching and spend time with other Christians.

The 29th of July was Dr. Andrew Quigley's last Sabbath as our minister after 24 years with us. Needless to say it was an emotional day for all and a day that clearly demonstrated the deep love of one for the other. As a congregation we are so thankful for all the ways in which the Lord has richly blessed us through the Quigley family and used Dr. Quigley in his faithful preaching and pastoring for our growth in grace.

Glasgow

The minister was away for an extended period in the summer - part of which included speaking at the St Lawrence Silver Lake Camp in Canada - and our pulpit was ably supplied by Mr Ian Gillies and Revs Andrew McMillan, Gerald Milligan and Matt Kingswood. At the end of

August, we said farewell to Ian Gillies, and made a presentation to him, as he was leaving to begin training for the Ministry in the RP Seminary in Pittsburgh. The congregation was hugely blessed by May McCullough's kind donation of her late husband's library to the congregation. At the time of writing, it is still being sorted on the church but it should prove and excellent resource and a lasting reminder of Marcus' ministry too. Some of our young people were involved in camps over the summer and around 30 represented our congregation at the conference in Southern Ireland which was a blessing to all.

North Edinburgh

From Monday 4th to Wednesday 6th June we hosted three nights of outreach services. Peter Loughridge preached on the theme: 'Ordinary Heroes – Normal People Whose Lives Have Been Transformed by Jesus'. On Monday, we considered 'The Quitter God Didn't Quit On' (John Mark); on Tuesday, 'The Runaway who Returned' (Onesimus); and on Wednesday, 'The All Kinds of People Church' (Romans 16).

With the help of this year's RP Mission Team, 7500 invitations were distributed in the local community. We were encouraged that 18 people who have never been or don't normally attend church were there over the three nights.

The Mission Team were not able to participate in RME classes in the local high school this year. However, God in His grace opened doors into the local primary schools – which we'd not been in before, and where there is now opportunity for ongoing involvement in a Scripture Union club.

Stornoway

We were thankful to God for His blessing to us during our August communion season. The services were taken by our minister and Rev. Donald MacDonald. It was

encouraging to be joined by a handful of members from two other congregations in the Presbytery and we particularly enjoyed times of fellowship together.

We are delighted to welcome our newest member as baby Eloise was born to Stephen and Brenda. Eloise was baptised by Rev. Donald Macdonald on 21st October.

We continue to pray for a suitable manse to become available and the necessary funds to purchase it. We would like to become more established as a congregation and believe that purchasing a manse is the next step. Currently, our manse is rented but this is not a good long-term investment. We are thankful that we have received donations and pledges to help us, but we still fall short of enough to make a purchase. We would therefore appeal to the wider church that if any individuals would like to contribute towards this need they may get in touch with our treasurer by email: info@stornowayrpcs.org. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Stranraer

Since our last update we have been encouraged by having a couple of new people coming along to church and Bible studies. It was also nice to have holiday makers joining us every week in July and August. It's always an encouragement to meet believers from different places, and hear about the different sorts of challenges and encouragements they're experiencing.

For a few weeks in August we had Jude Colhoun with us on placement from the Irish Baptist College. Jude threw himself willingly and wholeheartedly into whatever was happening, and the congregation took him to their hearts. During his time with us he preached the book of Habakkuk. The summer finished with a GO Team, who helped organise our Church Family Fun Day. This included two talks on family worship from Rev. David McCullough, and provided an opportunity for our children to be encouraged by other Christian young people, and also for deepening fellowship within the congregation.



Stranraer



GLOBAL NEWS

Ireland

A number of GO Teams took place over the summer months in Northern Ireland and Ireland.

The Irish Synod has approved an exciting new event for young people that is due to be launched in Summer 2019. Theological Foundations for Youth Ireland will provide an opportunity to learn more about the

Lord Jesus Christ and to dig deeper into the teachings he has given his church. It is open to anyone aged 16-22 who is currently attending a congregation of the Reformed Presbyterian Church and is approved by their session to participate.

Mr Peter Dundee, a licentiate of the Northern Presbytery, has

received a call to Clare Reformed Presbyterian Church.

A new session has begun at the Reformed Theological College. There are three students training for the ministry, Paul Wallace, Paul Flynn, and John Coulter. Continue to pray that the Lord would raise up labourers to go out into the harvest.



Newry Go Team

Japan

At a meeting of the Japanese Presbytery on Monday 13th August, Dr. Yusuke Hirata was licensed and is now eligible to receive a call to the ministry. Please uphold him in your prayers.



Dr. Yusuke Hirata

North America

There are new RPCNA church plants in Reno, Nevada (Great Basin RPC) and Louisville, Kentucky. These cities have very large populations. Both of these new church plants

have Facebook pages and so can be followed online. In September, Living Way RPC in Bryan, Texas was organised as a congregation.



Reno RPC



Louisville RPC

A number of inductions have occurred since our last edition:

Joel Hart – associate minister at Second RPC (Indianapolis, Indiana)

Gabriel Wingfield - associate minister at Christ RPC (East Providence, Rhode Island)

Derek Baars – associate minister at The Shelter RPC (Edmonton, Alberta)

Bryan Schneider – minister at Sharon RPC (Morning Sun, Iowa)

Greg Stiner – minister at Shawnee RPC (Kansas)

George Gregory – minister at College Hill RPC (Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania)

Dr Barry York is the new president of the Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Remember him in your prayers as he leads the Seminary in the work of training men for the Christian ministry. We are thankful for the input that he and the other professors at RPTS have into the training of Sylvester Konteh and Ian Gillies.

The Coldenham-Newburgh RPC in New York state celebrated their 220nd anniversary as a church in August, while Winchester RPC turned 150 in September. These milestones are a reminder to us of God's faithfulness to His church.



Rev. Joel Hart



Rev. Gabriel Wingfield



Rev. Bryan Schneider



Rev. Greg Stiner



Rev. George Gregory

Gambia

Copies of Good News have made it all the way to the Gambia. Below are photos of Sylvester Konteh, distance learning student at RPTS, along with some from his congregation and some fellow pastors.



Gambian Pastors



Pastor Sylvester & Mrs Konteh

TEENS

How can I know God's Will for my Life?

Rev. Peter Loughridge
North Edinburgh RPCS

Knowing God's will for our lives means knowing the direction He wants us to go and the steps He wants us to take. It's like using Google Maps for a journey: Google gives you an overview of the whole journey (the blue line, the distance, the time), and then once you start, you're given the directions step-by-step. Knowing God's will is like this – we need to always have the big picture overview of our lives, but there are also times when we need His guidance about a specific choice.

To get the BIG PICTURE, there's no substitute for reading our Bibles and praying! To know God's will, we need to know God! And knowing His will is needed all through our lives, not just on certain occasions. So the more we feed our understanding and grow as Christians, the more we will know the ways He wants us to go. The Bible gives many good principles for any decision-making: remember where we're heading ultimately – heaven (Hebrews 11:13-16). Remember your purpose in everything in life – to bring glory to God (1 Cor. 10:31). Remember that life is short (James 4:13-15). Remember that we are answerable to God for how we have

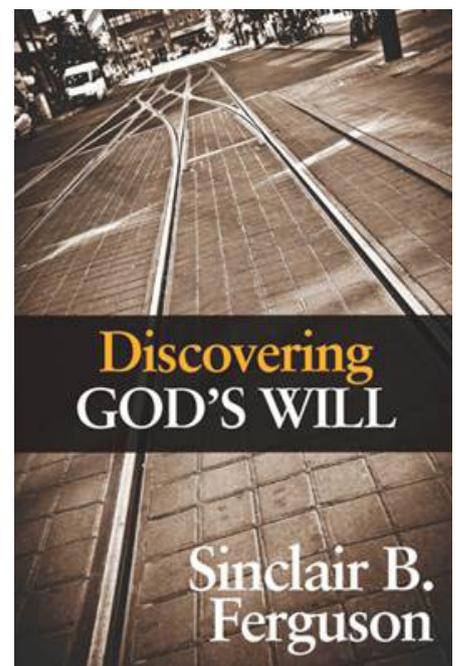
used the life and the opportunities He has given us (2 Cor. 5:10; Matt. 25:14-30).

To know specifically what the NEXT STEP is when you need to make a decision in life (for example, what does God want me to do with my life? Where will I live? Will I get married? If so, who?) – prayer is once again vital. The Christian life is a lifetime of constantly asking: **Make me to know your ways, O LORD; teach me your paths** (Psalm 25:4). Here are 6 questions (drawn from the Bible) that we can ask about any decision we face, which God might use to help lead us in taking the next step:

- Is it against God's Word?
- Am I allowing Jesus to be Lord of my life with this choice?
- Is this thing too important to me (i.e. an idol)?
- Will it benefit me as a Christian?
- What impact will my decision have on others?
- Are there Biblical examples that can guide me in this choice?

Let me give one warning: sometimes as Christians we might say we don't know God's will, when we actually do but we just don't want to do it. Don't kid yourself that you have a problem with guidance if really your problem is with obedience!

If you want to know more about this important topic, I found Sinclair Ferguson's book 'Discovering God's Will' very helpful as a younger Christian.





ONESIMUS

Brenda McCollum

Onesimus was a slave who ran away from his master, Philemon. Philemon was a leader in the church in Colossae. In those days this was a crime punishable by death. When Onesimus ran away he met the apostle Paul and became a Christian by listening to him preach the Gospel. Paul loved Onesimus so much that he wanted him to stay and help him in his ministry. However, since Onesimus had run away from Philemon, Paul sent Onesimus back to be forgiven by Philemon first. You can read the story for yourself in the book of Philemon in the New Testament.

What was the relationship between Paul and Philemon like (v1)?

- a) they were strangers
- b) they were both Christian ministers
- c) they didn't get on well

How was Philemon to respond when Onesimus came back (v15-16)?

- a) treat him as a slave
- b) welcome him as a Christian brother

How did Paul get Philemon to forgive Onesimus (v8-10)?

- a) he appealed to him in love
- b) he commanded him to do it

The name Onesimus has a very special meaning. Can you rearrange the letters to figure it out?

FSULUE

When Onesimus was converted he was able to live up to his name's meaning (v11). When we believe in Jesus it changes us for the better.

Send me a drawing of a part of this story by the 1st December and I'll send a prize to the best one. My address is RP Manse, 63A Newmarket, Isle of Lewis, HS2 0ED

CHILDREN'S STORY

AMY CARMICHAEL



Amy Carmichael

In our last magazine, we learnt a bit about the life of William Carey. He was a man who had realized that God's plans are better than our plans, and that He is worth giving up everything for. We learnt that he went all the way to India to tell the people there about God.

Not too long after William Carey died, God sent another missionary to India. This time, it was a woman. Her name was Amy Carmichael. She was from a country that we now call Northern Ireland... I wonder if you might know anyone who comes from there!

Much of Amy's work was similar to William Carey's at first. She spent a lot of time learning the local language, meeting the local people, and telling as many as would listen about the Good News of God. Soon though, God would send someone special to Amy that would change her life in India forever.

It did not take Amy long to see that India was a very dark place spiritually. The people worshipped idols, and did evil things. One of the terrible things they did was to take very young children as prisoners in their temples. They treated them very cruelly all their lives long. When Amy heard about this, she prayed and prayed and prayed for God to show her a way to help these poor children. What do you think God did next?

Let me tell you. He did something very special.

He began to send children to Amy.

Preena was a little girl, living as a prisoner in one of these temples. One day, she somehow managed to escape her awful prison and was led to Amy. No matter what the people from the temple did, they could not get Preena to come back with them. She lived with Amy and called

her 'Amma,' which means 'mother.' Preena's new Amma taught her all the wonderful things about Jesus, and Preena learnt to live a happy life, full of hope and free from cruelty.

Shortly after Preena arrived came another little child, and another and another. Before long, Amy and her helpers had to pray for a new place where they could all live. What do you think God did this time?

Let me tell you. He gave them a place where they could all live, and it was big enough that even more children could come and join them.

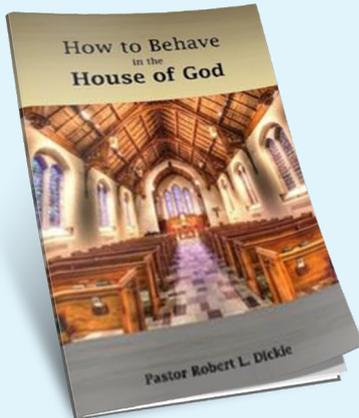
Amy Carmichael spent the rest of her life loving, caring and raising these lost little children from India, and it all happened because she prayed. She saw that there were people needing help, she asked God if she could help them, and He showed her the way.

I wonder if you notice that there are people around you that need help. Maybe there is someone in your class who isn't treated very kindly, or there is someone in your family or church that needs something. Think about Amy Carmichael, and pray to God. I am sure He will show you a wonderful way you can help them!

Margaret Murray, Glasgow RPCS



RECOMMENDED READING



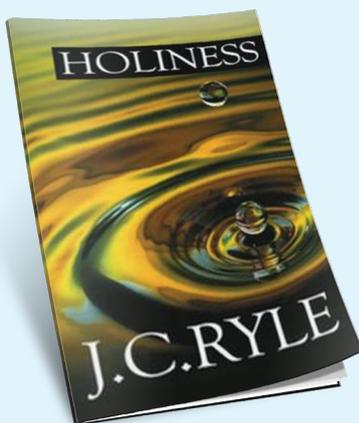
Robert L. Dickie

How to Behave in the House of God
(Emmaus Road Press 2018) 76pp.

Psalm 89:7 says of worship: ‘God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be held in reverence by all those around Him.’ Accordingly the worship of God must express a decorum and dignity appropriate to the meeting of God with His children. This reviewer would agree with Dickie’s observation of the tendency even among some Reformed Churches to make services more user-friendly: “For the most part today, the church is characterized by a worldly spirit of casual and careless Christianity... The church is feverishly working at being relevant to the world around it.”

The author critically highlights in detail the modern trend of casual dress and behaviour in worship as being symptomatic of a number of deeper concerns, including a defective ecclesiology coupled with the loss of the concept of the majesty and holiness of God. This timely and relevant little book ought to be prayerfully read by every believer and minister of the Gospel alike to encourage right and God-honouring behaviour in the House of God!

Andrew McMillan



J.C. Ryle

Holiness: Its Nature, Hindrances, Difficulties, and Roots.
(Banner of Truth) 480pp. Banner ed.2014

J.C. Ryle writing in the nineteenth century describes the issue of scriptural holiness as ‘a cause which is exciting much interest in the present day.’ Oh how that interest needs to be revived today! For, regardless of the Word of God clearly instructing the necessity of and the inducements unto holiness; one of the greatest problems confronting the modern Church is a neglect of the pursuit of evangelical holiness.

‘Holiness’ provides guidance for every Christian. Writing with much practical wisdom and scriptural discernment, Ryle highlights the real nature of holiness – how to get it and by what means, as well as temptations and difficulties to be expected along the way. ‘Holiness’ both encourages and warns the Christian, thus the reader will find his conscience pricked and his soul examined. Holiness is our greatest need, not an optional extra – Are you heeding this call?

“Follow Christ for His own sake, if you follow Him at all. Be thorough, be real, be honest, be sound, be whole-hearted. If you have any religion at all, let your religion be real. See that you do not sin the sin of Lot’s wife.” (JC Ryle, Holiness)

Andrew McMillan

“For the Lord loves justice, and
does not forsake His saints.”

- Psalm 37:28

