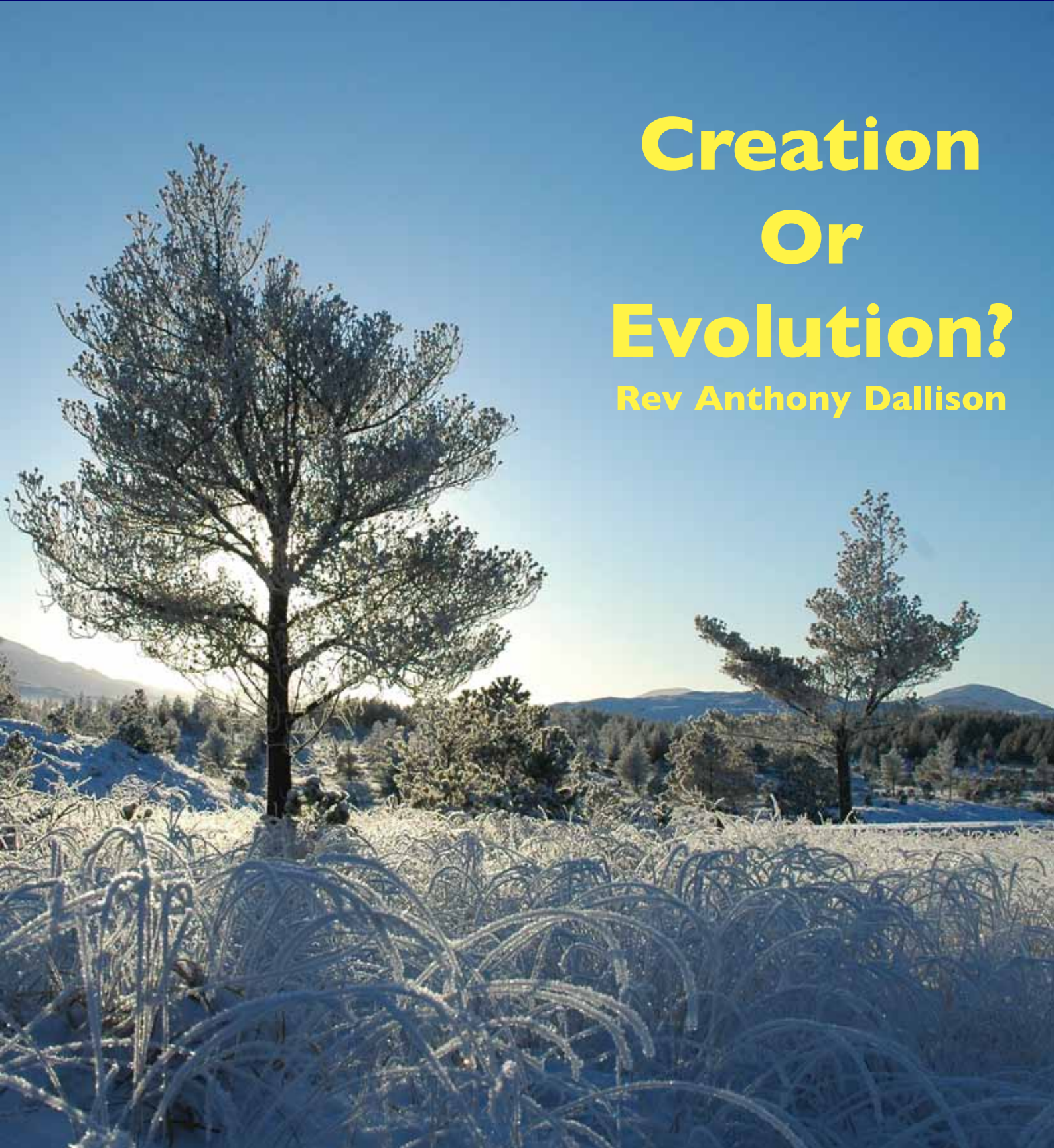


Free Church **Witness**



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Creation Or Evolution? Rev Anthony Dallison





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Backsliding



Recently an elder said to me, 'We never hear sermons on backsliding these days'. Let me hasten to say that it was an elder from another congregation! Still it made me think. Never was there more danger of backsliding than today. Temptations abound, Satan is as active as ever and the Christian life generally is at a very low ebb. Could you be a backslider? Remember it starts small and grows little by little. Often we have gone a considerable way downwards before we realise what is happening.

1 What is backsliding?

The Christian life begins with the new birth and should be a steady progress from then until we enter heaven. Like a baby growing, we should put on weight, exercise our limbs, crawl, struggle to talk and begin to serve. Sometimes the Christian life is compared to a pilgrimage or race. Our duty is to keep going and not to stop or turn back. It is like climbing a mountain and if we stand on the scree we will slide back down again. If a plane, when flying, tries to stop or go in reverse it is sure to come tumbling out of the sky. A healthy Christian life is one of steady progress. Backsliding is turning away from God into sin.

1) Old sins of the unconverted past can become a temptation. Perhaps you had a fondness for alcohol. Beware of the drinks with friends, or, even worse, on your own, which can lead to disaster. How many Christians have made shipwreck through drinking! Some have a past life of foul language and bad temper. It is crouching at the door, ready to return. Others have been immoral. It is especially dangerous for them to play with danger. Satan can take advantage of you and you fall before you realise what is happening. Internet pornography has destroyed many. It is so easy in the privacy of your own house to be sucked in and gripped with disastrous effects on your health, your family and your soul. Even those with a good-living past can fall.

2) Covetousness is a strong temptation for some. They find greed, the love of money and of material things becoming an addiction. Judas, who kept the purse for Jesus and the disciples, began to steal from it and became an extreme example by betraying our Lord for thirty pieces of silver. Could money be starting to become your god?

3) Worldliness is something that the Scriptures highlight as dangerous. 'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him' (1Jn.2:15). Paul wrote: 'Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world' (2Tim.4:10). All around us there are many worldly people and they want us to be like themselves. It is easy to follow the crowd.

4) Pride is the commonest sin. In its many forms it clings to

Christians all their lives. We are proud of our gifts, our looks and our achievements. God hates pride because it is a form of self-worship and takes the glory from Him. Pride often comes before a fall. We think we are doing so well, fail to pray for grace and God leaves us to ourselves to show us what is in us and so we fall into sin.

2. What is the cause of Backsliding?

1) Neglect of Christian devotions. Backsliding first begins in the 'closet'. We become neglectful of secret prayer. Less time is spent in private reading and meditation of the Scriptures. We find ourselves busy and we make excuses and so forget that secret prayer and the study of God's Word is more important than our daily food.

2) Neglect of the means of grace. Church services and especially the prayer meeting/Bible study are a means through which God's grace and salvation reaches our souls on a weekly basis. Carelessness in attendance is both a sign and a fruit of backsliding.

3) Sabbath wasted. The Lord's Day was instituted at creation for the benefit of man's body, mind and soul. We need the rest, but we should also remember that the day is to be kept holy. If it is used simply for sleeping and blethering it is abused. God has instituted the day for the health of our souls. Neglect it and you will backslide.

4) Christian fellowship is vital. Christianity is a social religion. The idea of the hermit is a heresy. We are to love one another, share together, support each other, enquire for the spiritual health of one another, and so we encourage one another on the road to heaven. The loner quickly becomes the backslider. 'If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another' (1Jn.1:7). Sometimes unhealthy Christians choose to move to a big church in order to be anonymous and to escape the attention of the fellowship.

5) Failure to watch. Sometimes we are tempted to make excuses for our sins. We might argue that everyone does things like this, or that we are hurting no one, or that it is impossible to be perfect, but when we begin to tolerate what we think of as 'little sins' we are in great danger. There is no little sin but a sin against a little God.

6) Self-reliance is dangerous. We are all far weaker than we realize. We think we would never steal or commit adultery or break the Sabbath. Beware, sin is easier than you think.

7) Worldly friends. Few of us are aware of the influence that our friends have upon us. 'Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners' (1Cor.15:33). Bad companions lead astray. Worldly Christians are even worse than the openly ungodly. You grow like the people you live

with.

8) Trials and persecutions. Trials come to us all but if we react angrily instead of coming humbly to the throne of grace to obtain mercy and find grace to help in our time of need, we are on the slippery slope. Let us be like Job who cried out, 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him' (Job 13:15).

3 Examples of Backsliding

1) David is a sad example of backsliding. The man after God's own heart fell badly. Instead of going out with the army, fighting the Lord's battles, he was lazing around at home. Rising from a siesta in the afternoon he spots Bathsheba washing herself. Instead of turning his eyes away and busying himself with something else he allows himself to focus his attention on her, lusts, sends for her and commits adultery. Failure in duty, idleness and letting a look become a sinful desire led to the backsliding.

2) Peter is a warning of self-reliance. He compares himself favourably with others. Thinking that no matter what others did he would not let his Master down, he did not watch and pray and so denied his Lord three times.

3) The Church at Ephesus shows how over a period of time deterioration in our relationship to God can develop. We read (Rev.2:1ff) how that church was very busy doing good works, was orthodox in the faith and was strict in the exercise of church discipline, but gradually she lost her first love. Have you lost your first love? Do you love the Lord more today than you ever did? You really should.

4 Pain brought by Backsliding

1) Backsliding leads to sin and shame. God leaves you to fall. You are disgraced in the eyes of the church and of your God. You are left feeling guilty.

2) It is a bad witness. You are a stumbling-block to the unconverted. They trip over you and perish. They say 'If that's a Christian I don't want to be one of them!' Or on the other hand they argue that all Christians are hypocrites. They see salvation and the new birth as a myth.

3) Chastisement is very painful. When God corrects

us for our backsliding with the rod of His discipline it hurts. In Hebrews we read: 'Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby' (Heb.12:11). God does not spoil His children. His correction hurts. Some Corinthians had died under it: 'For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep' (1Cor.11:30).

4) Others are also hurt. The sword did not depart from the house of David forever as a consequence of his sin (2Sam.12:10). When he wrongly numbered Israel many thousands died (1Chron.21).

5) It grieves our Lord. Our fellowship with the Saviour is broken and there is nothing that the true Christian enjoys more in this life than the presence of Christ. If we can sin and backslide and continue untroubled it is a sign that we were never truly converted.

5 But there is Hope

The devil wants us to think that there is no way back. We have offended God so badly that there is no mercy for us. We have sinned against light and committed the unpardonable sin. If we have depressive tendencies Satan will play on these. Some Christians have been known in despair to take away their own life. The evil one whispers that you might as well carry on sinning. No! Do not listen to the old enemy. God says: 'I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him' (Hos.14:4). Remember when the shepherd lost one of his sheep how he left the others behind and searched diligently for it. When he found it, he gently placed it on his shoulders, carried it home and called his neighbours together to rejoice with him. When the prodigal returned he received a great welcome. 'O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips' (Hos.14:1-2). The sooner you return the better. Think of the infinite value of the sacrifice of Christ.

Christian Education

A Crisis of our Time, Part 5

Consequences and Conclusions

Rev Gavin Beers

This is the final article in our series on Christian Education. We began by defining our terms and looking at the subject historically before working through the requirements of Scripture. Then we examined Christian education in its relation to Christian warfare and the covenant of grace. Now we want to consider some consequences of Christian education and draw some conclusions.

Fred Leahy once wrote: 'When God is left out of our thinking life becomes meaningless, pointless, worthless. When men and women are schooled in this world's wisdom, and God and His truth are given no place in their training, the loss is incalculable and we all suffer'. What then have been the consequences of our failure to grasp this issue and provide it for our children?

'We have haemorrhaged children!
The church has lost the children of far too many good and godly parents who tried to be faithful at home but whose teaching and example was being contradicted for the majority of their child's life and education'



(i) Many have Perished.

This is glaringly obvious in our churches. There has been a drastic thinning of numbers over the last two generations and a chief reason for this has been the effect of secular education. We have haemorrhaged children! The church has lost the children of far too many good and godly parents who tried to be faithful at home but whose teaching and example was being contradicted for the majority of their child's life and education. Yet this was foreseen by Christian writers who faced the introduction of secular education at the end of the 19th Century. R L Dabney observed the start of this decline in his day. 'What has been the result of secular education?' he asked. In answer he noted, 'In this country there is already a general revolt from the Christian Faith, even though the country is full of churches, preaching, and redundant Christian literature'. Leaving the immediate effect he went on to predict what would happen in the 20th century: 'Infidelity and practical ungodliness will become increasingly prevalent among Protestant young people, and our churches will have a more difficult contest for growth, if not for existence'. His contemporary, A A Hodge of Princeton, also made this stark prediction: 'The United States system of national popular education will be the most efficient and widespread instrument for the propagation of Atheism the world has ever seen'.

These men would have thought it most strange that so many people today in conservative Christian churches defend such a system of education. This is made more absurd when their predictions have proved correct. Recent studies in the US show that 75% of children from evangelical homes who pass through the public school system leave church within two years of graduating from high school or college, rejecting Christ and the Christian worldview. That is three out of every four children born into the church! On the other hand studies show figures between 75-85% for children passing through some form of thorough Christian education remaining in the church into their adulthood. That is at least three out of four children born into the church and remaining in it. As it stands in the UK many have perished and will continue to perish if we ignore the need for Christian education.

(ii) The Church is Weakened.

The result of losing two generations of children from our Church has obviously weakened our testimony in Scotland. A degree of this has been happening everywhere throughout the last century but those places that have kept hold of their children best have tended to have an associated programme of Christian education eg the Reformed churches in Holland and their sister churches in North America. A few years ago a delegate from one of these churches to our General Assembly commented that in the mid to late 19th Century the Reformed churches in Scotland and the Netherlands were comparable in size but that today there is no comparison. Tellingly, he located the reason for this in one thing: 'You gave your schools away in 1872 and they didn't!'

We have been terribly weakened. Had we listened to men like Van Til and Machen in the earlier part of the 20th Century, had we even listened to Prof John Murray in the 1970s we would have been in a much stronger position than we are now. Murray was asked in 1975, 'How do you account for the spiritual decline in Scotland?' He began his response by saying 'The surrender of the young by parents to the State. This had not been so in former years'. Had we taken their wise counsel then to provide Christian education for our children we would have more young families and more children in our churches than we do today. As it stands in 2010 it is much harder to make a start and this difficulty is being used as a further reason not to do anything. However if we continue to settle for the *status quo*, on the basis of what we have seen up to now, it will be another step to ecclesiastical suicide.

(iii) Christians are Worldly.

A common response to the necessity of Christian education is 'I went through the state schools and I survived'. This is an interesting response on two counts.

1. *It is usually evidence that the opposite is true.* It really serves to confirm how good a job the public school has done of indoctrinating us and we have not even suspected it has happened! Chris Schlect writing on the need for Christian education from the perspective of reviewing his own says, 'In not mentioning God, my public school teachers preached a

thundering sermon every day. By implication, they taught that God is not relevant to most areas of life ... with every lesson, in every class period, all day every day for twelve years, I was being taught to think like an atheist in the academic realm. And I didn't even know that I was being indoctrinated'.

This is why there are many sincere Christians who are zealous for evangelism and live a separate life as far as it goes – they don't do the things conservative churches define as 'worldly' but they are worldly! They have a worldly mind socially and even on many ethical issues. When it comes to the family they conform more to the culture than to the Bible. What is the role of the husband? What is the role of the wife? Why do we have children? What do we do with them when we have them? In this very realm of education that we have been looking at much of our problem is we have become prey to a worldly mind. The world has indoctrinated the church because the church has not indoctrinated her children.

2. Survival is not our mandate nor a Christian philosophy for educating our children.

No one disputes that a proportion of children survive public schooling, but they are certainly scarred by their experience. Meanwhile the majority were taken by the enemy and destroyed! The mandate for the education of our children is not a scarred survival – if it has become this we have set our sights far too low. Our mandate is to give our children a positively Christian education in all things, toward the development of a Christian mind. It is to train them in preparation for the time when they will stand as Christian soldiers and take on the battle in the next generation.

Some object that this is what they send their children out into the system to do, to be witnesses, 'salt and light'. But this is not how the battle is to be fought and won. As a nation we are presently at war in Iraq and Afghanistan but no one suggests that we should arm our five-year-old citizens and send them out to fight. No, they grow and are trained to be soldiers and are then sent out as soldiers to fight. Nor should we send out five-year-old, even three-year-old children

into the hostile environment of a humanistic public school education and expect them to stand. This is where Christian education is vital; it is not about molly-coddling our children or keeping them unnecessarily sheltered and naive; it is a boot camp where successive generations of Christian soldiers are prepared to carry on the fight of advancing the kingdom of God in their day. It is not about survival it is about conquest!

Conclusion

Martin Luther once wisely counselled, 'I advise no one to place his child where the Scriptures do not reign paramount. Every institution in which men are not increasingly occupied with the Word of God must become corrupt ... I am much afraid that schools will prove to be the great gates of Hell unless they diligently labour in explaining the Holy Scriptures, engraving them on the hearts of youth'. His fear has become a reality, so what are we to do?

As Christian parents we need to face the issue of Christian education honestly before God and see it not merely as an option proposed to us but an obligation laid on us by God. There are encouraging signs that more and more Christian parents are coming to see this but they do not know how to address it. The great danger is that another generation passes and nothing is done; we just keep doing what we have done because we do not know what else to do. We see real difficulties and Christian parents have real fears at the thought of starting a Christian school or beginning to home-school. However, let us remember that these difficulties and fears do not disannul the principle and if we seek first the kingdom of God in this area then God will add to us all that we need. What Van Til said of ministers and office-bearers could be applied to all Christians 'We need [Christians] who believe in Christian education not only after a fashion but with all the passion of their souls. We need [Christians] who not only say that Christian education is a nice thing, a sort of luxury, but who say and show with their deeds that they believe Christian education to be the only education that is fit for a covenant child'.

The Creation or Evolution Debate: Evolution and the Compromises of Christians

Rev A R Dallison, Virginia, USA

In this article we will look at the four most common ways that Bible believing Christians compromise in trying to reconcile evolution and the Bible.

I. The Gap Theory

A widely held opinion among fundamentalists is that the original creation of Genesis 1:1 took place billions of years ago, with all the geological ages inserted in a tremendous time gap between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. The latter verse is believed by these expositors to describe the condition of the earth

after a great cataclysm terminated the geological ages. The cataclysm, which left the earth in darkness and covered with water, is explained as a divine judgment because of the sin of Satan in rebelling against God. Following the cataclysm, God then 're-created' the world in six literal days described in Genesis 1:3-31. This is most popularly known as the 'gap theory' or 'ruin and reconstruction theory'. Sadly, it was popularised in the mid-nineteenth century by Thomas Chalmers (1780-1847) who was the foremost figure in the formation of the Free Church of Scotland in 1843. This view has also been popularised by the

notes in the Schofield Reference Bible and so has been taught in many of the Bible Institutes and fundamentalist seminaries of the United States for the past century and it was also held by A W Pink and C S Lewis.

The real purpose of this 'gap theory' is to try to harmonise the biblical chronology of a literal six day creation, with the accepted system of long geological ages which was becoming prominent in the days of Thomas Chalmers. The idea was to get rid of the problem of long evolutionary geological ages by simply pigeonholing them in the 'gap' and letting the geologists have all the ages they wanted. What shall we say of this supposed 'gap theory'?

1) Even from an evolutionary perspective, it fails. The evolutionist believes in uniformitarianism (the belief that physical processes have always functioned in the past essentially as they do at the present time), which of course precludes any worldwide cataclysm as required in the 'gap theory'. Moreover, a cataclysm of such dimensions which would leave the earth in darkness and inundated with waters would have been nothing less than an immense global explosion which would have obliterated the earth's sedimentary crust and all its (supposed) fossils, thus leaving no evidence whatever of the 'geological ages' which the gap theory is attempting to accommodate.

2) Not only is it impossible to accept scientifically, but it is also destructive theologically. The moment we accept the geological age system, we are also accepting the fossil record by which these ages are said to be identified. However, fossils speak of suffering, disease and death – of a world where violent, widespread death was a universal reality. So, if that kind of world existed *prior* to the supposed pre-Adamic cataclysm, then it existed before the sin of Satan (which is supposed to

have resulted in the cataclysm). That is, suffering and death existed for a billion years before the sin of Satan and the subsequent sin of Adam. However, the Bible says explicitly that death came into the world only when Adam brought sin into the world (Rom 5:12 & 1Cor 15:21). Furthermore, if suffering and death existed then, God Himself was responsible for such a state. And it is inconceivable that a God of love and order would create and use a system based on randomness and cruelty in His creation.

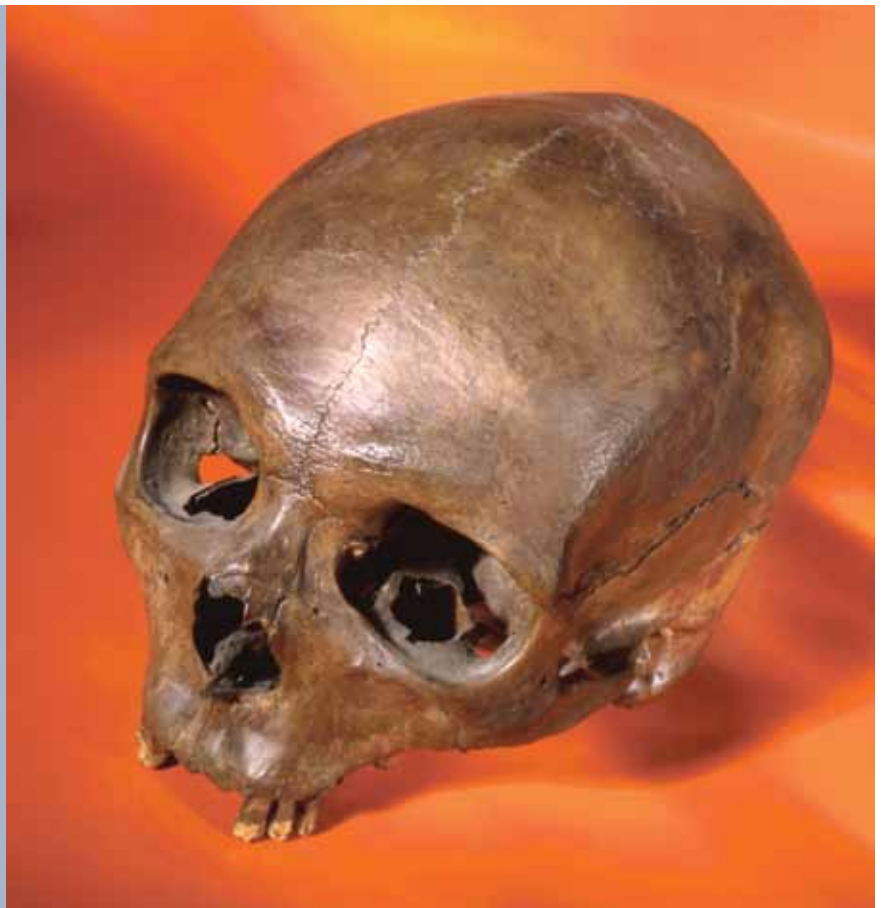
Also, the most natural reading of the text (Genesis 1:1 & 1:2) does not in any way indicate a 'gap', any more than the other pairs of verses throughout Genesis chapter one indicate any 'gap' in time. There is also no biblical foundation for rendering the Hebrew word 'was' ('the earth was without form and void') as 'became'.

Conclusion: The natural reading of Genesis 1:1-2 suggests no such idea of a 'gap theory', nor is it warranted either scientifically or biblically.

2. The Day-Age Theory

Another attempt by Bible-believing Christians to reconcile biblical creationism with the evolutionary hypothesis is the so-called 'Day-Age Theory'. Sadly, this was also popularised by a Scotsman of the mid-nineteenth century – Hugh Miller of Cromarty. He was a stone-mason for much of his life and this occupation had made him very familiar with the fossil records in the rocks of NE Scotland. Like Thomas Chalmers he was a leader in the formation of the Free Church of Scotland in 1843. Miller was convinced that the fossil record required long aeons of time for its formation, which could not be reconciled with the views of a 'young' earth as held by the mainstream Christian Church for centuries

'The moment we accept the geological age system, we are also accepting the fossil record by which these ages are said to be identified. However, fossils speak of suffering, disease and death – of a world where violent, widespread death was a universal reality.'





'No compromise is possible between evolution and creation! The Bible teaches creation from nothing (*ex nihilo*), compared to evolution's insistence on pre-existing matter; creation in six days, contrasted with billions of years'

previously. This view was adopted by James Boice, E J Young and B B Warfield.

The 'day-age theory' asserted that the six days of creation recorded in Genesis chapter one were not literal 24-hour days at all, but long periods of geological ages. Miller popularised this view in his book *Footprints of the Creator*. He also maintained that Noah's flood could not have been a universal flood as Scripture affirms, because the fossil record indicated such diversity of species that Noah could not possibly have got all the living animals and birds into the Ark! Sadly, in spite of Miller's undoubted orthodoxy in other theological matters and his great usefulness in maintaining the biblical principles of the newly-formed Free Church of Scotland, he was defying the accepted interpretation of Genesis 1 & Genesis 6-9 and denying the obvious implications of the language of Genesis 1 (which speaks clearly of normal solar days – 'evening and morning' being the cyclical succession of day time and night time). Moreover, there are several other overwhelming objections:

1) The order of creative events in Genesis 1 is very different from the accepted order of fossils in the rocks representing geological ages, (eg the first life developed on land not in oceans; plant life came first, not marine life; the earth was created before the stars, not vice-versa; birds before fish & insects; marine life created instantly; stars created on the fourth day, not still evolving etc).

2) The necessity of geological ages is based on the fossil records, and fossils speak unequivocally of suffering and death being present in the world. So, we have the same contradiction of Scripture as in the 'gap theory'. The Bible teaches that suffering and death are a divine judgment brought into the world because of man's original sin (Rom.5:12). In contrast, the 'day-age' theory must assume that suffering and death comprises an essential part of God's work of creating and preparing a world for man, which is inconceivable for the biblical God of love, grace and omnipotence.

3) As we have said, the biblical record itself makes it plain that the days of creation are literal days, not long indefinite ages. The 'days' are literal days and the events described happened in just the way described. Although the Hebrew word for 'day' (*yom*) may refer occasionally in other parts of the Bible to longer periods of time, the most natural and obvious meaning of the word in Genesis 1 is to the literal twenty-four hour day and therefore cannot be 'stretched' into millions of years! This is further borne out by the clear rationale given by the Lord when he

instituted the Fourth Commandment later at Mt. Sinai, 'For in six days, the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it' (Ex.20:11).

No compromise is possible between evolution and creation! The Bible teaches creation from nothing (*ex nihilo*), compared to evolution's insistence on pre-existing matter; creation in six days, contrasted with billions of years; oceans created before land not vice versa; life originated on land not in the oceans; plant life first, not marine life; fruit trees before fish, not vice versa; birds created before fish and insects; whales before reptiles, not vice-versa; man created before woman; light existing before the sun; plants before the sun; marine life created instantly; man's body created from the dust, not evolving from an animal ancestry; man's dominion over all creation, from the very first; man's Fall causing death both spiritual and physical, not therefore something already existing previously for aeons of time.

3. Theistic Evolution

Even though the first two attempts by Bible-believing Christians to reconcile the evolutionary hypothesis with the biblical account of creation are false, misleading and dangerous, nevertheless they had the merit of at least *attempting* to treat seriously the account of creation in Genesis 1. However, theistic evolution does no such thing. Its essence is to impose the conclusions of atheistic scientific assertions above the Bible and in place of the Bible's clear teaching about divine creation.

It maintains that step by step, God directed the process of *macro* evolution, changing one species of life into a progressively higher order through aeons of time, so that Genesis chapters 1-11 are pure mythology or allegory and not to be taken as a literal account of man's beginnings. This is the official teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, for instance, and it has been embraced by countless Protestants as well.

It is not my purpose to go into a detailed refutation of this teaching, because of space-constraints, but it is worth noting that this whole position is plainly contrary to the express teaching of Scripture. For instance, Dr. Henry M. Morris in his fine commentary on the Book of Genesis, *The Genesis Record*

points out that (1) There are at least 200 direct references to, or quotations from, the Book of Genesis in the *New Testament*. (2) All the books of the New Testament except Philemon, II & III John, contain allusions to Genesis. (3) More than half of the 200 New Testament allusions to Genesis are to the first eleven chapters of Genesis. (4) Sixty-three allusions are to the first three chapters of Genesis. (5) Twenty-five of the references are directly from the lips of Christ Himself. In other words, all the inspired writers of the New Testament Scriptures accepted the accounts in the Book of Genesis as literal, historical facts, our Lord Jesus Christ Himself referring to the creation events and the great Flood as literal and historical events. Davis Young writes, 'Theistic Evolution is logically and inevitably the death of Biblical religion'.

4. The Framework Hypothesis

This is the most recent attempt to harmonise the creation account with the evolutionary hypothesis – allowing Christians to believe in a process of millions of years. It has been popularised in our day, sadly, by a former professor at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Meredith Kline, although the origin goes back to around 1924 in Germany, where a German rationalistic theologian observed a supposed parallelism between the first three days of creation and the second three days in Genesis I (ie two trios).

The reasoning is very involved, but it amounts to this: the 'six days' are in essence merely a 'framework' for the real emphasis on the Seventh Day (when God rested from all

His work of creation). So they are merely a device to give us only general information, not to be taken as literal days, but just two triads. So the six days are designed to teach us, not how long God took to create, but the emphasis instead is upon the three spheres (heavenly, earthly, and marine). So that Genesis I is merely describing some heavenly truth, which we can only understand in earthly and inadequate language. The effect, of course, is to eliminate a literal understanding of Genesis I, because Genesis I, they say, is unconcerned about chronology and time, and to replace it by understanding the chapter as merely a poetical and metaphorical description of creation.

What are we to say of this extraordinary position? It must be rejected, because:

- 1) No other Scripture is safe from similar treatment! (ie artistic structure/poetic form), eg Christ's resurrection!
- 2) This was never espoused earlier than the 20th Century. It is, after all, an assault upon the perspicuity (clarity) of Scripture (cf WCF I:VII).
- 3) Once more, this bizarre explanation assumes that death and destruction were present in the world prior to man's Fall.
- 4) It denies and overlooks the plain fact that there is a climax in the six days of creation, leading up to the emphasis upon the 7th Day as the culmination of all of God's creative work.
- 5) This whole position is contradicted by the Lord's words in the institution of the Fourth Commandment: 'For in six days, the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it' (Ex.20:11).

Remittances - December 2010

	2010 Dec	2010 Total	2009 Total to Dec				
Presbytery of Inverness				Outer Hebrides Presbytery			
Aberdeen	1,500	14,140	11,234	Cross	1,992	23,348	23,630
Duthil-Dores	7,230	27,374	23,956	Harris - Leverburgh	1,300	15,946	14,399
Inverness	2,000	35,000	37,000	Harris - Scalpay	1,700	24,688	22,159
Kilmorack & Strathglass	1,600	20,446	17,722	Knock & Point	1,700	16,749	13,475
Total Inverness	12,330	96,960	89,912	North Uist	1,004	14,650	15,500
Northern Presbytery				Stornoway	5,881	85,682	75,854
Assynt & Scourie	5,000	6,283	5,987	Total Outer Hebrides	13,577	181,062	165,017
Brora	475	22,309	20,593	Presbytery of Skye & Lochcarron			
Kiltearn	0	18,000	23,920	Bracadale	1,000	13,785	13,800
Tarbat	7,581	17,767	18,000	Duirinish (Waternish)	500	5,000	5,200
Total Northern	13,056	64,359	68,499	Glenelg & Arnisdale	270	2,530	2,272
Southern Presbytery				Kilmuir & Stenscholl	1,300	11,246	19,000
Arran	210	7,794	7,215	Lochalsh & Glenshiel	1,031	8,069	5,764
Ayr	1,000	4,660	2,200	Poolewe & Aultbea	1,300	11,810	10,600
Dumfries	0	600	0	Ullapool	0	400	0
Edinburgh	287	38,000	39,000	Portree	5,075	23,664	23,460
Glasgow - Partick	1,000	36,000	32,500	Snizort	5,210	23,500	20,000
Glasgow - Shettleston	1,200	19,585	15,023	Strath	750	3,007	5,529
Glasgow - Knightwood	3,500	29,228	29,190	Total Skye	16,436	103,011	105,627
Rothsay	0	293	220	Total Congregations			
Total Southern	7,197	136,160	125,348	Total Congregations	62,595	581,552	554,403
				Other Donations	3,053	29,863	28,416
				TOTAL	65,648	611,415	582,819
				Including Gift Aid		91,090	75,098



News



Induction at Kilmuir and Stenscholl

Rev Richard Ross

A crowd of about 150 friends gathered on Friday 12th November 2010 for the ordination and induction of Rev Raymond A Kemp to the pastoral charge of Kilmuir and Stenscholl. Rev Murdo Angus Macleod conducted worship preaching an encouraging sermon from Judges 6:15-16 upon Gideon the servant of the Lord. He showed from the passage four aspects of Gideon's

service: **(1)** His initial Reluctance **(2)** His renewed Resolve **(3)** His lack of Resources **(4)** His great Reward. Mr Macleod summed it up by reminding us all that the Lord's cause will advance and the Lord's enemies will be driven back. Rev Andrew Allan addressed the new minister from Ephesians 4:15. He reminded him that a Minister should preach effectively, stressing three words

from the text: **(1)** Speak **(2)** Truth **(3)** Love.

Rev Richard Ross (Portree) exhorted the congregation from 1 Corinthians 12:18 that they were one body in the Lord, set by His sovereign will and purpose. They were to ensure their support of one another, and to the ministry by constant attendance at the means of grace.

Desk



After the service the congregation gathered in the nearby Community Hall in Staffin where the ladies of the Skye congregations, assisted by Mr Ewen MacLeod, had prepared a sumptuous feast of good things to eat.

Messages of greetings were read and welcoming presentations were made to the minister by Mr Donald MacDonald (Elder) and to Mrs Kemp by Mrs Margaret MacDonald. Then Mr Alistair Gillies presented a gift on behalf of the congregation to Mr Ewen MacLeod for all his work at the manse during the vacancy. A presentation was also made to Mr Roddy MacKenzie for his help in flitting the new minister and his wife to Kilmuir. Rev Raymond Kemp then took the chair. He called on Mr Alistair Gillies (Elder) to make a presentation to the Rev R Ross (Interim-moderator), who thanked the congregation for their patience with him during the vacancy.

Rev R Kemp thanked his dear wife who had been such a support to him over the years. He thanked many friends for their support, and acknowledged that it was only with the Lord's help that he was now a Gospel minister. He called on some brethren to speak: Rev Harry Woods, Rev David Blunt and Rev James Clark. Finally he asked his good friend from his days in Ayr, Mr Stuart MacKay, to address the gathering.

We pray that the new ministry begun in Staffin will be long and fruitful, and be owned by the King and Head of the church, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Missionary to Zambia

David Lachman

In October David Lachman accepted a call to serve as lecturer at Covenant College in Petauke, Zambia. God willing he will be ordained and inducted as a missionary to Zambia on 28th January, 2011 in Partick Free Church.



David & Katie Lachman, with Elijah

The Lachman family hopes to travel to Zambia on 9 February. In early January they travel to the States to sort out paperwork, collect some of their possessions, and speak about the College in four congregations. Once at the College the current plan is for David to teach two classes. He will also have administrative duties, be expected to mentor students and preach in their congregations, and will help in the overall running of the mission, all while trying to settle into a new culture and begin the work of a teacher of pastors.

The Lachman family is very grateful for all the kindness shown to them by many people and congregations in the FC(C) over the last years. While David feels a strong call to go and serve in the College, it was a difficult decision to leave Scotland. As they go, the Lachmans

would greatly appreciate prayer for safety in their travels and as they begin life in Zambia, for wisdom in making numerous significant decisions about their move, and for grace to do the work to the glory of God. The College would also appreciate prayer as they search for another lecturer to replace Cees Molenaar, who will be leaving the work at the end of the next term.

Birmingham Street Preacher wins Case

Christian Institute

An autistic Christian street preacher who was handcuffed and arrested for speaking out against homosexuality and many other sins has been awarded £4,250 in damages following a court case against West Midlands Police.

In a case backed by The Christian Institute, Birmingham County Court

ruled that PC Adrian Bill committed assault and battery against Mr Anthony Rollins when he handcuffed him unnecessarily. The court also ruled that Mr Rollins was wrongfully arrested, unlawfully detained and his human rights to free speech and religious liberty were infringed. The court ordered the police to pay Mr Rollins' legal costs.

In these days of political correctness we are thankful to record even one victory for the right of Christians to make known their faith

Dr Charles Chao Has Passed Away

Rev John J Murray

The Rev Dr Charles Chao passed away on 16th December 2010 in San Dimas, California at the age of 94. Dr Chao was the co-founder with Dr Samuel Boyle of the Reformation Translation Fellowship in 1949. The aim of the work was to translate and publish the Reformed classics into the Chinese language. The account of his early days in narrow escapes from prison and death is recorded in his autobiography, *Out of the Tiger's Mouth* (CFP). It was rare to find someone from Dr Chao's background so committed to the full-orbed Reformed Faith. The influence of his Seminary teacher, Dr J G Vos, was evident in his thinking. Dr Chao, filled with enthusiasm for the Calvinistic truth, pressed on against many obstacles to put the Reformed classics into the hands of Chinese Christians, especially ministers and students.

I had the privilege of working with him as Secretary of the supporting British Board of RTF over many years and visited China and Taiwan in his company. He was a man on whom God had obviously laid His hand to be a pioneer in the spread of Reformed literature in China. The influence of his work is being experienced in the Chinese Church today. Tony Lambert of OMF speaks of how 'many young people are now enthused for Calvinism and the doctrines of grace'. He also tells of how 'Chinese government researchers are openly discussing the likely explosion in the number of Christians over the next two decades to over 200 million'.

Eternity alone will reveal what lasting benefits resulted from this venture of faith in Reformed literature. Our sympathy is extended to Mrs Pearl Chao and the large family.

Badaguish Camp 2011

The Youth Camp returns to Badaguish, near Aviemore, for more adventure, friendship and teaching. Our dates this year run from Saturday to Saturday July 30th - August 6th. Based at the superb Badaguish Activity Centre, we stay in two timber lodges, deep in the woods around Aviemore. Activities have included cycling, hiking, Landmark, Highland folk museum, Highland Wildlife Park, Cairngorm funicular railway, adventure high ropes courses and more.

Open to boys and girls from primary 7 to secondary 4 (entering p7, leaving s4), and costing only £199 or less, book NOW to be sure of your spot. For further information please contact Rev Greg MacDonald, The Manse, North Dell, Ness, Isle of Lewis, HS2 0SW, or email greg@nesschurch.co.uk.

Globe Theatre mark 400 years of King James Bible

Christian Institute

Shakespeare's Globe Theatre is to celebrate 400 years of the King James Bible (Authorised Version) this year by hosting a cover-to-cover reading of the text. Up to 20 actors will take

part in the event, which the Globe says will be 'simple' and 'unstaged'. A spokesman for the Theatre, which is in London, said it would be a rare opportunity to 'experience one of the most significant pieces of world literature in its entirety'. The readings, which are estimated to take 69 hours, will happen between Palm Sunday and Easter Monday.

Work on the King James translation began in 1604, at the request of James I of England, and carried on until 1611. A team of 47 of the best Bible scholars of the day worked on translating the text into English and the King James translation became the version read by many English-speaking nations. It is believed to be the best-selling book ever produced. The production at the Globe is part of a season entitled 'The Word is God' and the Theatre says it will interrupt the readings with performances of Shakespeare's Hamlet.

Last October it was revealed that BBC Radio 4 is devoting a Sunday this year to readings from the King James Version of the Bible. According to reports the readings will be selected from 'the most powerful stories in the Bible' and each of them will begin with an introduction explaining its literary significance. In November a survey disclosed that more than half of young adults have never heard of the King James Version of the Bible. Last July a move by Royal Mail to celebrate the King James Version's anniversary was welcomed.

It is good to know that God's Word is being read. The Bible is powerful when God's Spirit takes it and applies it to the heart. Let us pray that the Lord will use His Word to convict and convert sinners.

Euthanasia Bill

Christian Institute

Scottish politicians have thrown out a controversial bid to make assisted suicide legal in the country. MSPs voted 85 to 16 against the End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill in a free vote. There were two abstentions. There had been widespread opposition to the contentious proposals and the Scottish Parliament committee responsible for scrutinising the Bill had said it was not convinced that there was any need for a change in the law.

Labour's Michael McMahon said the plans were 'dangerous and unnecessary'. Mr McMahon, who is convener of the Parliament's cross-party groups on palliative care and disability, said: 'Society needs to know that you can't have both physician-assisted suicide and palliative care. In reality you can only have one or the other'. Conservative MSP Nanette Milne said 'the idea of actively and deliberately hastening death, by assisting someone to die, is extremely disturbing'. Dr Calum MacKellar, from the Scottish Council on Human Bioethics, commented that the vote was 'a victory for all the vulnerable people who may have felt under pressure to end their lives'.

We are thankful that this evil bill was thrown out but we must not be complacent.

Persecution in Iraq

Barnabas Fund

Hundreds of Iraqi Christians are fleeing Baghdad and Mosul as murderers target families in their own homes and workplaces. An elderly Christian couple and their daughter became the latest victims of the relentless campaign against the country's believers when they were killed in their home on 5th December. Four gunmen raided the property in Baghdad and repeatedly shot them with silenced pistols. The victims, Hikmat and Samira Sammak – like many Iraqi Christians –

had left the capital and gone to live in the north. Tragically, they had just returned briefly to Baghdad to finalise the sale of their home and furniture. Two weeks before, Christian brothers Saad and Raad Hannah were shot dead in their car workshop in Mosul. The incident followed the assassination of two other Christians by gunmen who burst into their Mosul home. These raids come after the hostage siege at a Baghdad church on 31st October that left more than 50 people dead. The Islamic State of Iraq – an Al-Qaeda front group – claimed responsibility for that attack and threatened further violence. They said that the ‘killing sword will not be lifted’ and that Christians everywhere were ‘legitimate targets’.

Brazilian Psalter

Christian Observer

In a 10th December 2010 article titled ‘The Psalms in Brazilian Portuguese’, David Koyzis of The Genevan Psalter blog reports that the Brazilian Committee on Psalmody is preparing for publication sometime in 2011 a Brazilian Portuguese-Language Psalter, which is planned to be a versification of all 150 Psalms set to both Genevan tunes and to more familiar hymn tunes. *We rejoice in the new interest around the world in the inspired hymnbook God has given us though alas some in our own country are sadly despising them, and consider their own man-made songs more glorifying to God.*

Ernest Lloyd

Mike Moore, CWI

On Wednesday 22nd December 2010, in his 98th year, Ernest Lloyd passed suddenly and peacefully into the presence of the Lord he had trusted, loved and served for almost eighty years. At the age of five, Ernest was abandoned to the care of the Naomi Home for Women and Children, run by the Barbican Mission to the Jews. He never knew his father and the only

recollection he had of his mother was that of a tall, dark, Italian Sephardi Jewess from whom he probably inherited his height, black hair and striking looks. Life was particularly hard for Jews in the years of the First World War. A timid and melancholic child, Ernest was an object of hatred: he was a ‘Jew’, a ‘Christ-killer’ and a ‘Sheeny’ and, like many other Jewish children, he suffered frequent taunts and even stoning. In his late teens, following an intense intellectual, spiritual and emotional conflict, Ernest became convinced that Jesus was the Messiah foretold by the ancient Hebrew prophets and in 1933 commenced his life’s work with the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews, now Christian Witness to Israel.

In August 1937, he married Jessie McGowan, a blunt, independent-spirited but immensely compassionate Geordie who patiently endured his long absences in the cause of Jewish mission. The door to their flat in London’s Muswell Hill was never locked and anyone who wished could come and go as they wished, and treat the place as though it was their own. There were always guests, visitors and lodgers, and the number of social outcasts and unfortunates they helped materially, physically and spiritually was phenomenal. Even in the war years and beyond, when food was strictly rationed, the Lloyds welcomed and fed all who were in need.

In his three score years and ten of missionary service Ernest travelled more than a million miles by land, sea and air and preached more than 20,000 times in some twenty countries to countless multitudes. Although his pace of life in the last two decades of his life was nowhere near as hectic as it was when he was a missionary, in the 1990s Ernest was regularly away from home for three months each year on preaching tours that took him to Australia, New Zealand and Canada. He also served on the councils of Christian Witness to Israel (in an honorary capacity), the International Messianic Jewish Alliance, the British Messianic Jewish Alliance and the Spanish Gospel Mission.

He was an evangelist, a teacher, a preacher, an advocate of mission to the Jewish people and a spokesman for the international Messianic movement. In spite of frequent bouts of ill health, Ernest Lloyd single-handedly laid the foundations for the work of missions to the Jewish people in South Africa, India, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. Though not all remained affiliated to Christian Witness to Israel, almost all those branches continue to present a vibrant witness to the Jewish communities in their countries.

The number of Jews and Gentiles who have been saved through his ministry, either directly or indirectly, is incalculable. In many cases he led them to the Messiah himself but at other times his role was to break down prejudices and lay a foundation on which others could build or, to change the biblical metaphor, he broke up the fallow ground allowing others to sow and reap. The number of lives Ernest touched for good by preaching, teaching, encouragement, advice, kind words and actions, example and precept cannot be counted. Ernest had an almost infinite patience which enabled him to suffer being rebuffed time after time in his efforts to lead his ‘kinsmen according to the flesh’ to the Messiah.



Ernest Lloyd speaking in South Africa in the 1950s



Books

Christians Get Depressed Too

David Murray
Reformation Heritage Books
pbk, 112pp, \$10.00

This book is written by Rev David Murray, the former much-loved minister of the Stornoway congregation of our church and now the Professor of Old Testament and Practical Theology at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA.

Acknowledging that there are no quick-fixes in dealing with depression Dr Murray advises his readers to listen much and speak little, to avoid dogmatism and to seek humility in dealing with the depressed. He warns how almost anyone can experience mental health problems given the wrong sequence of life-experiences and stresses, and he includes questionnaires to be completed by sufferers to help them make a clearer assessment of their condition possible enlisting the help of a trusted friend to complete the questionnaire.

Murray argues against those who suggest that depression is always due to sin and who therefore automatically advise more repentance, faith and prayer as a cure. Strongly advising honesty in prayer and the keeping up of regular church attendance, Murray recommends establishing a sensible daily routine of sleep, exercise, food and relaxation. If necessary he also advocates the use of medication which may have an important part to play in recovery

He reminds us that illness of the mind is like illness of the body and requires the use of all available means for recovery. He explains that patients often go to their doctor with symptoms which have depression as their root cause and he warns how anger and an unforgiving spirit can lead to depression. Men particularly are at special risk of depression caused by deep-seated, irrational anger and irritability. He also deals helpfully with an inherited or genetic predisposition

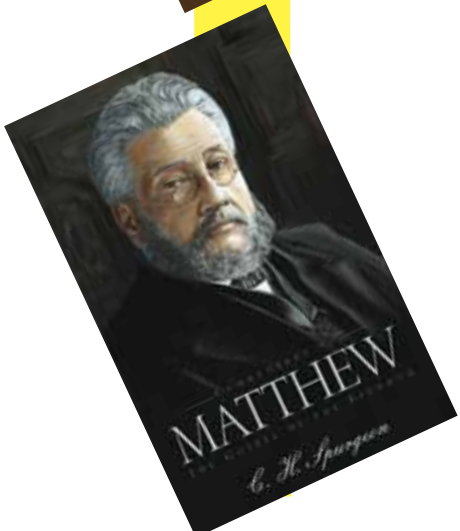
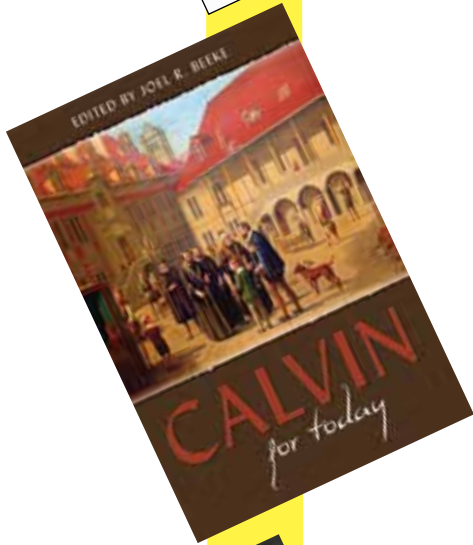
to depression, urging sufferers to seek medical help if all else fails and before a 'crash' occurs, which can take a long time to cure. And he gently cautions against concluding that the illness proves one is not a Christian.

There is much wisdom drawn from the Scriptures, such as the question posed by Christ to the man at the pool of Bethesda as to whether he wanted to get better, the case of Asaph in the Psalms, and the Sixth Commandment as expounded in the *Larger Catechism* and in the *Confession of Faith*.

Finally Dr Murray warns that just because we coped in the past we must not think we will necessarily cope in the future. Our brain chemistry changes, our bodies grow older and our responsibilities increase. An adverse reaction to difficult life events can be delayed for some years. He urges us to remember there are strategies by which we can all improve our mental and emotional health so that we become more useful Christians.

This book is the result of much study, observation and deliberation and we recommend it to our readers.

A M



Calvin for Today

Edited by Joel Beeke
Reformation Heritage Books,
hbk, 279pp, £18.99

As we should all now know the 500th Anniversary of the birth of Calvin was in 2009 and because of this many books on Calvin and his teachings have appeared in the last couple of years. This volume is an edited compilation of the stimulating addresses given at the Puritan Reformed

Theological Seminary's annual conference in August 2009, at Grand Rapids, Michigan. The book contains a wealth of information and practical applications about how Calvin's thought challenges our day.

There are fifteen chapters from eleven different authors and they cover a wide range of subjects. Specially interesting to me were the chapters on 'Calvin on preaching Christ from the Old Testament' (David Murray), 'Union with Christ' (Cornelis Venema), 'Calvin's view of Reprobation' (Donald Sinnema), 'Marriage' (Michael Haykin), and 'Calvin on Reforming the Church' (Derek Thomas). Fascinating is Ligon Duncan's chapter on 'The Resurgence of Calvinism in America'. Oh that we would see something of that renewed interest in Puritan theology and the reading of good books here in Britain!

The last chapter is particularly interesting. Dr Beeke contacted 36 Calvin scholars and friends asking the question as to why Calvin is important for us today. 24 responded and many of these mentioned similar points. Nine points were mentioned only by one correspondent so these points are noted in one brief sentence. The other twelve points raised are dealt with in detail.

The point most stressed was the influence of Calvin the exegete. Calvin as an exegete of Scripture stands out in his generation and for long afterwards and his commentaries are still greatly valued. The next point was Calvin the theologian. Here again *Calvin's Institutes* put him in a different class from the other Reformers. His work is fundamental to all that came after. The third point stressed was Calvin the Christian. Not only was he a great thinker and Reformer but he was also a man of God and an example of holy consecrated living. The fourth reason why Calvin is important for us today is Calvin the preacher. In many ways he saw this as his most important work. He preached some 4000 sermons in his lifetime, latterly at a rate of 170 per year. On his deathbed he mentioned his preaching as that which was more important to him than anything else. The church today needs to recover that same emphasis on preaching the Word.

If you want just one book which summarises the teaching and influence of Calvin this should be your choice. Warmly recommended.

William Macleod

Lionel Thomson

Fraser MacDonald

William Murray, Lonemore, Dornoch, IV25 3RW,
bklt, 9pp, Free

This is the story of a young boy who died at the age of five following an accident in which he was blown against a wall by a high wind and received a gash above his eye. He passed away while receiving treatment in the local hospital. The booklet is interesting because of the clear evidence it gives that this young lad had a saving work of God's Spirit in his heart. He had an amazing love for the Scriptures, for church, for the Lord's people and for prayer. Never too young to die nor too young to be saved.

William Macleod

Commentary on Matthew The Gospel of the Kingdom

C H Spurgeon

Banner of Truth Trust, hbk, 465pp, £15.00

As D Martyn Lloyd-Jones said, 'Spurgeon always provides a solid meal and sustenance on which one can live'. As Spurgeon's life drew to a close in 1892 he was busy writing this commentary, so he is able to draw on a lifetime of studying the Word of God. This commentary is not technical, scholarly, or difficult to read but it is full of meat. There is no doubting the thorough understanding that the author has of the text of Scripture. Scholarship is behind it, though not paraded. A verse or two is printed and then a paragraph of comment is given. It can be used as a daily devotional since the work is broken into short sections. Reading through it I found myself receiving new light on familiar passages and a desire rising in my heart to preach on the passage. I give a couple of quotations as an example of the work.

On the passage, 'let the dead bury their dead', he writes: 'Men who are unrenewed are dead, and they are quite able to attend to such dead business as a funeral. Much of the concerns of politics, party tactics, committee meetings, social reforms, innocent amusements, and so forth, may be fitly described as burying the dead. Much of this is very needful, proper and commendable work; but still only such a form of business as unregenerate men can do as well as the disciples of Jesus. Let them do it; but if we are called to preach the gospel, let us give ourselves wholly to our sacred calling'.

Commenting on 'Come unto me, all ye that labour' (Mt. 11:28), he writes: 'Here is the gracious invitation of the gospel in which our Saviour's tears and smiles were blended, as in a covenant rainbow of promise. "Come"; He drives none away: He calls them to Himself. His favourite word is 'Come'. Not, - go to Moses... In Himself as the great sacrifice for sin, the conscience, the heart, the understanding obtain complete rest. When we obtain the rest He gives, we shall be ready to hear of a further rest which we find... We are not only to bear a yoke but His yoke; and we are not only to submit to it when it is laid upon us, but we are to take it upon us'.

William Macleod

Arbroath Young People's Weekend

The topic for the next away weekend in Arbroath will be '**Loving God**' and the speaker will be (DV) the Rev Andrew Quigley of Airdrie Reformed Presbyterian Church. It is due to be held at the Windmill Centre, Arbroath, from Friday evening 18th till Monday morning 21st February 2011.

The cost for the full weekend will be: unwaged / students £45 and waged £55.00. All young people are welcome to come. The weekend is organised for persons over the age of sixteen years. Contact: **Martin Fraser** - Email: glasgowfccyf@gmail.com, Telephone: 01415737903.



The Cross of Calvary

Rev Kenneth Smith

Every thing God does is glorious. His work of creation is such, 'The heavens God's glory do declare, the skies His handworks preach'. God's providence is glorious: the nations are as a drop in the bucket to Him and He raises up one nation and puts another down. It is so likewise in the life of individuals, 'Our times are in his hand'. But the work of salvation is the greatest and the most glorious we will ever see: 'Above all his works his mercy is'.

Little wonder that the prophets rejoiced in Him though He had not yet appeared in the flesh. Abel must have rejoiced in a suffering Saviour when God accepted the sacrifice of the lamb. Job in the midst of troubles with the eye of faith piercing the dark clouds said, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth'. Abraham ascending the mount to sacrifice his son, 'saw' Christ's day and was glad. The pattern of the sacrifices in the tabernacle given to Moses all spoke of a suffering Saviour. Every day for hundreds of years, the message of the suffering Saviour was presented to Israel. All along God taught man that there was a way of approaching Him; that His love had provided this, and that it was by means of sacrifice, 'For without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin'— no access, no entrance, no acceptance to the shut-out sinner without blood. It is no marvel then that Paul and multitudes with him were 'determined' to know nothing among men but 'Jesus Christ and him crucified'.

The Glory of the Cross

What is there in Christ crucified that makes true Christians so rejoice and glory in this? Think of the wonders of that cross! Here may be seen as nowhere else, on the one hand the awful depths of human depravity, and on the other hand the mysterious heights of divine love, 'God so loved...' At the cross we see the awesome enmity in the human heart, when they cried, 'Crucify Him!' Though He was 'holy, harmless, and undefiled', yet nothing short of His being put to a painful death would satisfy them. On the other hand the infinite love of God was seen in that, 'He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with His stripes we are healed'. Here at the cross may be seen sin rising up in all its fury to put to death the incarnate God. But here too may be seen the incarnate God rising in all His might to put sin to death. Triumphant over sin, He made an end of His people's sin, 'Father forgive them for they know not what they do'. Here may be seen the holy law demanding satisfaction for the rebel creature's guilt. It will brook no abatement of its claims and bear no abasement of its majesty, exacting payment to the full. The very hosts of angels stand amazed at the sight – the great Lawgiver stooping not only to become a creature but to become a curse for man, and

yielding the very atonement needed.

Hell's Determination

Here may be seen Hell's most malignant ingenuity but here too may be seen God's higher and overruling wisdom – the one trying to hinder, and the other bent on accomplishing the most gracious purposes towards poor fallen humanity. Now indeed was the hour and power of darkness, for what more or what worse could Satan have desired, or devised to be done? Here too was the hour and power of Him who hung on the accursed tree, for now He was dealing a death-blow to Satan's hope of crushing the church's head. Now, despite the resistance and the rage against Him, from the lips of the Sufferer came the cry, not, 'It is frustrated', but 'It is finished'. Was there ever such a cry? It reaches back to the lamb offered, even further to the promise God gave in the garden of Eden (Gen.3:15). It has been accomplished, completed. Now the Serpent's head has been crushed! The cry reaches forward to the last soul who will yet trust in Christ. It is complete salvation. The work is done, Heaven is appeased, His law is perfectly satisfied, Satan is worsted, and man in Christ is redeemed. Here, if we are true believers, lies all our salvation, even in Christ and Him crucified. Out of Christ crucified there is no hope, no salvation. In Christ crucified there is mercy, the only remedy for sin and the only refuge for the soul.

Christ's Satisfaction

'He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied'. Christ would not be fully satisfied if full satisfaction had not been given. God was satisfied, heaven was satisfied, the law was satisfied. Full satisfaction was rendered, and even the grave had to release Him. The offering that Christ gave was of infinite merit, immeasurable worth, 'For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified' (Heb.10:14). The offering at Calvary was of so much worth, merit, and excellence, that nothing could be added to its value. The believer has no need to pass through a cleansing process when he dies. The Roman Catholic teaching that the soul of the Christian must be cleansed in the fires of purgatory in addition to the merit of Christ, makes Him only a part Saviour. He saves to the 'uttermost' (Heb.7:25). Neither is there a need of Christ offering Himself more than once, but again the Roman Catholic church teaches that Christ's body is broken and His blood is shed every Sabbath in their Mass. He was offered once (Heb.7:27).

We pray that the Holy Spirit would open our dim eyes and draw us more and more to see the wonder of God's provision for our salvation.

Zambia - Andrew's News

Andrew MacLeod (Portmahomack)



Right: Former Principal Jan van Straaten with a black mamba (*Cammy Macleay*)

Greetings,

Five countries, four flights, three bus journeys and two travel sickness pills later I arrived in Petauke, Eastern Province of Zambia. I'm here to help Marjanne Hendriksen in her work with local and not so local community schools.

In Zambia, as in many other countries, education is free at point of delivery and, in theory, universally open to all. However, much of Zambia's population is rural with families living too far away from established Government schools to enrol their children, even supposing they could afford the cost of uniforms, books and lodging fees. In many cases the only option is to stay in the village and grow crops of maize, soya beans and ground nuts, selling any surplus in the market, in the hope of slowly improving their lot.

Community Schools

In some villages, though, there is another option. Just as John Knox and the church in the 16th century did more than the Government of the day to bring education to the common people, here in Zambia local Christians are using whatever means available to set up community schools to provide a basic grounding in literacy and numeracy for those who would otherwise have no chance of accessing education. Marjanne in her work with the Christian Education Ministry (CEM) is responsible for supporting around fifteen of these schools, providing training for the untrained teachers, holding regular seminars and practical training sessions, liaising with schools and local communities and assisting with the supply of teaching materials. With many of these schools spread over a large area there is more than enough work to keep two people busy.

Penje Penje school

One of the schools to which I've been assigned is the delightfully alliterative Penje Penje. Penje Penje is just over an hour's drive away on once graded, but now badly wash-boarded roads. The school has four teachers, three younger than myself, and a grizzly looking headmaster who is a dead ringer for Morgan Freeman. None of the teachers has any formal training. Penje Penje school has four classrooms. Three of the classrooms are made of mud; mud walls and mud benches made by pounding the soil from anthills into wooden forms. The whole structure is topped off by a thatched roof. In summer it is wonderfully cool, the thatch absorbs the heat of the sun and the gap between the top of the wall and bottom of the roof allows cool air to circulate freely. The fourth classroom is a brick building with no windows. Mr Mwanza teaches here. It is hot at this time of year – over 30°C (90°F) – and the corrugated iron on the roof turns his classroom into an oven. The pupils sit on tree trunks which have been roughly hewn and dragged inside to serve as benches. Mr Mwanza's classroom is not just used for teaching. Walking towards it I smelled a smell which I knew instantly was either bats or rats. Inside the classroom piled

high were stacks of ground soya beans donated by the World Food Programme for the pupils to have one square meal of porridge a day. Turning the classroom into a warehouse, or rather, turning the warehouse into a classroom, meant it did not take long for rats to invade the place. As I was observing a lesson, I saw a large rat creeping stealthily along a rafter, waiting for us to go so he could get his ration of soya. Needless to say, in this school, one of the priorities was to set in place a rota to ensure the classroom was kept swept clean and rodent free with spilled sacks attended to at once

Wildlife

Wildlife intruding into buildings has been a feature of life here in the past few weeks. Various spiders, ants, unidentified flying objects and geckos are not so much visitors as permanent residents and, in the case of the latter, welcome visitors as they eat the former. However, this is the start of the rainy season, and creatures once content to live in the great outdoors find themselves washed out of their homes and in need of new lodgings. One day Phil (Bailey, Farm Manager) was working in his office when he saw a snake coming in through the window. He grabbed his Dutch-hoe and pinned it against the wall, yelling for me to come and get a look at it. I had never seen a live snake close up before, and was curious to see this one, so I came running with a selection of sticks. Now, it is true that the serpent is more subtle than any other beast of the field, and this particular one put up a good fight, but ultimately Phil and the Dutch-hoe won. I carried the snake back to my veranda to take a photo of it, and, even though dead, its twitching reflexes curled its tail round my wrist. A local was visiting me at the time, and his eyes widened when he saw the snake: 'Kapapasha', he said, 'that's a dangerous one – a black mamba'. Later that evening we found ten scorpions trying to get in to the houses. All of them got the Dutch-hoe treatment.

Work

Marjanne has now flown back home to the Netherlands to begin her furlough. I continue the work here, preparing teaching resources, assisting the local teachers and getting ready to start visiting schools when the new session begins. Many miles are covered in this job, and most of them off road. Thanks to the generosity of CEM supporters there is a now a reliable vehicle to use. You will remember that this vehicle was bought with money raised in the generous response to an appeal throughout our Church.

Our safety is in God's hands, and I would covet your prayers for safe travel here in Zambia and for the teachers at Penje Penje school, Mr Mwanza, Mr Banda, Mr Tembo and Miss Lungu who, in spite of the great difficulties they face daily, demonstrate a great love and concern for their pupils.

Andrew MacLeod

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Letter from Zambia (Part 2)

Rev Cees Molenaar

Dear Supporters,

We greet you in the name of the Lord Jesus. It is a great blessing for us that you continue your involvement in the ministries of Covenant College Zambia Trust. With this letter you receive the second part of an update on the various facets of the work.

Christian Education Ministry (CEM)

Marjanne Hendriksen

Think of a school with one crippled teacher and more than forty children. They do not have a school building. The community started to build a shelter. But until this is finished the teacher is already teaching his pupils outside. Nowhere is there shade and this is the hot season! It shows something about the commitment of this teacher! He doesn't get a salary. But – and he is not the only one – he makes such a difference in the lives of many children!

In 2010 something special has happened. Up till this year we had among the twenty schools that CEM is supporting just one pre-school. In conferences we share experiences from the different schools. So information about pre-school education was also shared. The result? Three other schools have opened a nursery this year. After the training for Sunday School Teachers at the College (see below) five of them were involved in opening two new pre-schools. Both schools

registered more than one hundred little children! And last, but not least, three students from Covenant College were involved in opening a pre-school in their village!

Together with Solomon Lungu I visit all the schools. I try to visit the new schools at least every other week. For me, a former pre-school teacher, it is a great joy to train the new pre-school teachers! I teach them how to tell a Bible story every day, and how to lay the foundation for reading, writing, mathematics and other topics. It gives joy to see a teacher playing different games with their children. And it makes you really thankful when you hear them singing Christian songs. To God be the glory!

Please thank the Lord for the great opportunities that He gives us to reach out to so many children! Thank Him for the received funds and prayers from the supporters. Please pray with us for a Zambian assistant who can join us in the work so that more teachers can be better trained; pray for committed teachers, parents and for all the children. Please also pray that Andrew MacLeod will be a blessing to CEM.

Sunday School Teacher Training

Mirjam Molenaar

Covenant College runs a children's ministry every Saturday afternoon. We teach many children from neighbouring villages the Word of God through a Bible lesson, Bible songs, Bible memorisations and colouring a picture. It is our wish to teach

locals also to minister to the children of their communities. Therefore Marjanne and I started a Sunday School Teacher Training program. From June to August we taught about 40 attendees why and how to teach Sunday School for children. After the teaching sessions we involved them in our children's program, giving them a chance to practise what they learned. Here are some of the responses we got: 'I never realized that the Bible commands us to teach children', 'I have observed in your program that I have to be kind and caring towards children', 'I didn't know that children are also sinners and need salvation' and 'From your training I have learned the importance of teaching God's Word to children and now we have even started a pre-school in our village'.



Logs on the floor: A typical Zambian classroom



Four on a Bike: A Zambian Street

We hope and pray that this training may be a blessing for many teachers and children in our area and that God may be glorified!

Women's Ministry

Mirjam Molenaar

'Madam, these days are the highlight of the year', says one of the student wives. 'Please, tell us when the next meeting is', asks a student. 'This is the time and place where our wives can be among other Christian women and learn how to be godly women in our rural communities'.

It is such a blessing to minister to the wives of our students. More and more we realize how special our conferences are for them in light of their daily life. These women don't have easy and comfortable lives. Their work as housewives and mothers is heavy – drawing water from the well and carrying it home for washing, cooking and cleaning, chopping firewood, making the cooking fires, working on the fields in the heat of the sun with almost always a baby in the sling on the back, washing clothes by hand, often caring for the sick and dying and walking long distances to reach the shops or clinic. Apart from that they face a lot of emotional challenges. Most neighbours are not Christians – they steal, lie, gossip or even cast spells on them. Traditional, unbiblical rituals are an every day reality – how do you deal with that in a culture where the village community is one of the strongest units?

In our last meeting much discussion was spent on the initiation rites. Some women believe that you cannot participate any more in these practices. Others think that it is an opportunity for Christian women to teach teenage girls the biblical view of marriage. But what about the special dance they have to perform, for example? At a certain point in the discussion the eyes go to us, missionaries, and ask 'but you, what do you think is right?' These things need a lot of study of the culture and require Bible study. The Bible doesn't

always give direct answers on certain issues.

We always study women from the Bible: Rebecca, Mary, the Proverbs 31 woman. After teaching we split into small groups to discuss questions with regard to the Bible study. The women are also very eager to learn about health. We invite a nurse to teach a specific health issue. Because most women have never been to school they have many health questions. It is one thing to keep far from traditional (witch) doctors, but only relying on tablets from the clinic is not always necessary. God has given so much in His creation for us to use for healing.

During the craft in the afternoon (often sewing) we continue discussions, have fun together and sing choruses. The daddies take care of the babies in the afternoon

as they do their chores so that mammy has a break. They even cook dinner for the wives – you can imagine how pampered they feel!

The women's ministry is still in need for support. Please consider if you can help us to keep organizing such meetings to train the wives of pastors.

Dear brothers and sisters, we are thankful that the Lord has called us to serve Him in these ministries. This work takes a lot of patience, as we aim for changes in the hearts, attitudes, and lives of people. We are encouraged to know that this change is ultimately only effected by the Holy Spirit. What a privilege it is when we observe evidences of change! We pray that your prayers and support will enable these ministries to continue.

Warmly,

Cees Molenaar



Marjanne Hendriksen at work in Penje

“Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”

Hebrews 10:38-39