

REDEEMING THE TIME

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:16).

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Justification by Faith Alone

BY MARK W. EVANS

The doctrine of justification by faith alone is under attack. Incredibly, there are those among the heirs of the Reformation who have corrupted this pillar doctrine of the Church. Some preachers are sounding the alarm, but many remain indifferent or actually approve of those propagating the errors. Today's Fundamental Presbyterians need iron in their souls to confront this heresy. Biblical knowledge is essential to maintaining a clear witness. When the truth is known, the counterfeit can be detected. Here are some essential teachings concerning the soul-saving doctrine of justification by faith alone:

1. Justification is God's judicial act.

It is not a process, but a single, non-repeatable legal declaration. This act of the Judge of all the earth pardons all sins of believing sinners and reckons them perfectly righteous in His sight. God's justification never changes and stands forever. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1; cf. Romans 8:1; 29-33).

2. Justification is an act of God's free grace.

No sinner deserves justification. He is guilty and totally depraved through Adam's transgression. Not only does he stand condemned for original sin, he is guilty and polluted

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"Living Water" in the Kaisut Desert

BY BRAD K. GSELL

In February, my wife and I were privileged to visit Kenya and Tanzania as the guests of Miss Judith Collins, Rev. and Mrs. Mark Kim and Rev. and Mrs. Eben Yoon—all missionaries of The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions (IBPFM).

Our initial invitation came from Miss Collins, who asked me to speak at the dedication services of the Baalah Bible Presbyterian Church and the second classroom building

of the Baalah Primary School in northern Kenya. Following is an account of this visit to Baalah. We hope to present other mission works in future editions of *Redeeming the Time*.

THE KORR AIRSTRIP in northern Kenya is as unremarkable as an airstrip can be. In fact, during a recent visit, we watched as a Land Rover drove halfway across it before having to back up to the combined

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"Fellowship in the Gospel": Faith Presbytery Meets in Charlotte

The spring meeting of Faith Presbytery, Bible Presbyterian Church, was held in Charlotte, NC, with ministers and elders present from eight states and the country of Guatemala.

Elder Dan Swain (Kingsville, MD) was elected Moderator; Rev. Mark Evans (Greenville, SC), Vice Moderator; Elder Brad Gsell (Charlotte, NC), Stated Clerk/Treasurer; and Rev. Ellis Johnson (Blythe-wood, SC), Assistant Stated Clerk/Treasurer. Heartfelt appreciation was expressed to Rev. Johnson, who requested retirement from the office of Stated Clerk after 16 years of superb and faithful service.

Faith Presbytery,
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FAMILY CAMP

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It was a special joy when the delegates unanimously accepted the applications of the Rev. Robert Anderson and the Rev. John Mills for membership in the Presbytery. These ministers have served for over 40 years each as Bible Presbyterian ministers.

Greetings were brought from the Rev. Chet Chapman, endorsing agent for the Chaplains Commission of the American Council of Christian Churches; from Dr. H. Ronald Vandermeij, on behalf of the Southwest Presbytery of the Bible Presbyterian Church; and from the Rev. Paul Elliott, on behalf of the Evangelical Reformed Presbyterian Church.

The delegates voted to accept the invitation extended by Elder Edward Zimmerman to hold the fall meeting of the Presbytery at the Marcus Hook, PA, Bible Presbyterian Church on September 25,



2009. All left blessed and encouraged in the fellowship together around God's Word, and many of the farewells included the words, "We'll see you in September, but we'll see you at camp first!" •

REDEEMING THE TIME

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"LIVING WATER" IN THE KAISUT DESERT

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Departures/Arrivals lounge—a small patch of shade under a thorn tree.

Upon disembarking from our small Cessna plane, the searing heat and the starkness of the landscape left an immediate impression. Except for the occasional thorn tree and ubiquitous seiss plants, one might wonder if he were looking at a moonscape.

Soon we were traveling across the barren Kaisut Desert in the region known as Baalah—inhabited by members of Kenya's Rendille tribe. It is so isolated that it is identified on few maps, and the best description one can give of its location is that it sits just north of the 2nd degree north latitude and between the 37th and 38th degrees longitude. With no real roads, and the desert sameness spreading to the horizon, this was not a journey to be attempted alone by the uninitiated!

After traveling a number of kilometers, the igloo-shaped "mins" (huts) of the village of Kimogol came into focus. Constructed of bowed branches bound together and then covered with animal hides and any other materials that can be obtained, the mins surround circular goat and camel enclosures consisting of brush taken from the thorn trees. Right in the middle of the village sits a single min. It is not the residence of the Baalah head man, but rather has been built for missionary Judith Collins—the only female they have honored with the title of "village elder."

Miss Collins has served in Kenya with The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions (IBPFM) for much of the last 40 years as a Bible college professor. However, in 2001, after being told by one of her students from the Rendille tribe of the great need in Baalah—an area virtually unreachable with the Gos-

pel—Miss Collins set out to do what few younger missionaries would even consider. Working in partnership with her former student, Peter Lkayo, together they have brought "springs of living water" to the desert!

During her frequent safaris from Nairobi to Baalah, Miss Collins travels to the various villages and goes from min to min witnessing one-on-one to the Rendille "mamas" (see photo on page 1). A number have come to know Christ as their Saviour. Now, some of these mamas have expressed the desire to go visit other mamas and also be witnesses for Christ! Mr. Lkayo preaches the Word of God to the people, talks with the village elders under the thorn trees, and offers counsel to a seemingly endless stream of people who come for help and advice.

If this were the end of the story, it would be tremendous indeed. However, as this work developed, questions presented themselves which demanded answers and solutions:

How could the people learn of salvation through Christ from God's Word if they couldn't read? How could believers study the Bible and grow in grace? With these concerns, and the pleading of the Rendille village elders for Miss Collins to establish a school for the education of their children, the Baalah Primary School was begun and the money was raised for the construction of two beautiful classroom buildings which house seven classes with a combined enrollment of approximately 300 children! Mr. Lkayo serves as Project Administrator and Miss Collins as Academic Principal.

How could the Gospel be presented while the people were starving in the midst of severe drought and famine? In the most recent of several famine relief efforts over the years, \$50,000 was raised to ship bags of maize and other staples to Baalah for distribution to each household.

How could the believers function together as the body of Christ as the Bible commands? A church was

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1. Village Elders meeting under a thorn tree; 2. Rendille mamas with their homes ("mins") in the background; 3. Colorful beadwork made and worn by the Rendille mamas; 4. Beleisa, a Rendille man who came to Christ this past year, intently reading the Scriptures; 5. A Rendille student begins the long walk to school, with books under arm; 6. Judith Collins joins in with one of the choirs; 7. Peter Lkayo greets a mama before the church service; 8. The new church building in Baalah, with the school in the background; 9. Pastor Andrew Nacha Dhahaleyo with the students in one of the classrooms; **BELOW:** The Baalah Primary School.



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formed and a new building has just been erected near the school. On Sunday, February 22, 2009, over 300 people attended the dedication services for the church building and new classroom building.

Please pray for the work of this outreach in the desert. If you would like to receive more indepth reports of this work, which are sent out periodically, please send a request to info@ibpfm.org or write to: The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions (IBPFM), P.O. Box 1346, Blue Bell, PA 19422-0435. Any contributions can be made payable to IBPFM and marked "Rendille Outreach."



The Fruit of the Spirit

Galatians 5:22,23

Love

by Brad K. Gsell



In Galatians 5, the Apostle Paul describes for us the fruit which is to be found in the life of every Christian. This is the second in a series of articles which will discuss these characteristics of the Christian life.

The very first “fruit of the Spirit” which Paul mentions in Galatians 5:22 is love. It is not for us to rank the importance of these godly attributes; however, it is safe to say that love is given a place of unequalled prominence throughout the Scriptures.

Indeed the Scriptures tell us that “God is love” (1 John 4:8,16). The Gospel itself is predicated on the love of God: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 John 4:10).

In fact, Christ taught that the sum of the 10 Commandments is love. He tells us in Matthew 22:37-41: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

Paul devoted much time to discussing love. In 1 Corinthians 13 he writes: “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.”

Jonathan Edwards, the great New England Puritan, preached a number of messages on this chapter. He stated: “...everything which has not charity [love] in some way contained or implied in it, is nothing, and that this charity is the life and soul of all religion, without which all things that wear the name of virtues are empty and vain.”

Edwards further stated: “This love would dispose to all duties, both toward God and toward man. And if it will thus dispose to all duties, then it follows, that it is the root, and spring, and, as it were, a comprehension of all virtues. It is a principle which, if it be implanted in the heart, is alone sufficient to produce all good practice; and every right disposition toward God and man is summed up in it, and comes from it, as the fruit from the tree, or the stream from the fountain....

“Charity is the sum of all that is distinguishing in the religion of the

heart. And therefore the doctrine that I would derive from these words [in 1 Corinthians 13] is this: THAT ALL THAT MEN CAN DO, AND ALL THAT THEY CAN SUFFER, CAN NEVER MAKE UP FOR THE WANT OF SINCERE CHRISTIAN LOVE IN THE HEART.”

The Greek language has several words for “love” including *eros* (physical love) and *philos* (a mental or emotional love; brotherly love). However, it is the word *agape* which Paul employs in this passage. It is generally considered a voluntary, unconditional and sacrificial love. It is often used in the Scriptures for the love God has for us.

The love we as Christians have must also be voluntary, unconditional and sacrificial. As Christ said, our love for God should be all-consuming—with all of our heart, our soul, our mind and our strength. And we are to love our neighbor as we love ourselves.

The Bible teaches us that there are certain things that the child of God is to love and certain things they are not to love. There is a clear line separating these things. Psalm 97:10 says: “Ye that love the LORD, hate evil....” We are to give our lives and all that we have to love the Lord, but we are to flee from that which is evil.

Psalm 119:97 says: “O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.” Psalm 1 talks of the man who stays away from those men who are evil, but then it says that “his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in his

law doth he meditate day and night.” The man of God loves the Lord and he loves God’s Word, and that is where his time, focus and energy are concentrated.

2 Corinthians 5:14 tells us: “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” The man of God is constrained to love the Lord, and he is a new creature whose heart is set on things above.

However, it is of interest that it is possible to have *agape* love for the wrong things! For example, Paul tells us in 2 Timothy 4:10 that “Demas hath forsaken me, having loved (*agapeo*) this present world.” It is fair to say that to use the words of Psalm 1 to describe Demas, it would read something like: “Demas’s delight was in this present world, and in the pleasures of this present world is where Demas spent his time, focus and energy.”

The Apostle John tells us in 1 John 2:15-17: “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. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”

In contrast, Paul tells us in Colossians 3:2: “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.” We can spend our lives going after the delights of this world,

but it will only lead to disappointment and emptiness. Only Jesus Christ can satisfy.

IF WE LOVE THE SAVIOUR, we will love those around us as well. Peter admonishes us in 1 Peter 1:22: “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.” Our love for others should not be based in any way on what others can do for us. It must be totally unselfish and from the heart.

We should be willing to sacrifice for our brethren. Philippians 2:4 says: “Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.” If you have someone in your church who is having a hard time, are you able to help them? If someone is hungry, are you able to take them food? If someone is tired and discouraged, are you able to give them a kind word? There are so many ways that we can show love for others. In the body of Christ, when one member is suffering, we all suffer, and we should all help.

A Christian who has bitterness in his heart and ill will for others is a defeated Christian. You may have someone who has treated you wrongly or has disappointed you greatly. But, you are commanded to love that person. John is very clear in 1 John 2:9,10: “He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.”

If you have hatred in your heart for a brother, you do not have a proper understanding of what Christ has done for you. Paul tells us in Colossians 3:13,14: “Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.” If you ever think ill of a

brother, you immediately look to the Saviour who DIED for YOUR sins; and any quarrel you have with this brother will look terribly small and insignificant in comparison!

The teaching of the Bible on love goes to the affections of the heart. What things bring joy to us and energize us? What things bring revulsion and do we do everything possible to avoid? The challenge from God’s Word is for us to hate evil, love not the world, and set no evil thing before our eyes. We should not be deterred in taking great delight in the love of God which Romans 5:5 says “is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” We in turn must love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. And then, that love in our hearts will be turned outward toward others. John tells us quite clearly to “Love one another”! Those who do not believe will be able to see the Gospel in us. “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:35). •

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by his own sin. He has no merit and can do nothing to earn God’s favor. His “righteousnesses are as filthy rags” (Isaiah 64:6). The Apostle Paul said, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Romans 3:23,24; cf. Titus 3:7; Ephesians 2:1-9; 2 Timothy 1:9).

3. Justification is based upon the active and passive obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ’s active obedience is His keeping the law in the stead of His people. When they savingly believe in Him, He imputes to them His perfect righteousness. “To impute” means

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“to put to one’s account,” “to declare,” or “reckon” one to be righteous. It does not mean that righteousness is infused into the sinner, but that God declares the true believer righteous, on the basis of Christ keeping the law in his place. That righteousness is perfect and complete. “For as by one man’s [Adam’s] disobedience many were made [declared] sinners, so by the obedience of one [Jesus Christ] shall many be made [declared] righteous” (Romans 5:19; *cf.* Isaiah 53:11; 54:17; 64:6; Jeremiah 23:5,6; Romans 4:1-5; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Philippians 3:9; Galatians 4:4,5).

Justification is also grounded upon Christ’s passive obedience, which is His suffering in the stead of His people. “But 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” (Isaiah 53:5). Christ completely satisfied the legal penalty demanded by God’s infinite justice. “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed” (1 Peter 2:24; *cf.* Isaiah 53:8-12; Matthew 1:21; 20:28; John 10:11; 11:52; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 3:18).

4. Justification is received by faith alone

Faith is the instrument—not the basis—of justification. Justification is appropriated by faith alone, not by faith plus works. Mixing works with faith in order to be justified is a false gospel: “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed

by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe...” (Romans 3:20-22; *cf.* Romans 3:28; 4:3-5; Acts 13:38).

The Apostle Paul gave a solemn warning concerning those who corrupt the doctrine of justification by faith alone: “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:8,9).

We marvel at the boldness of those who create and defend changes to this saving doctrine. Former Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) minister Norman Shepherd, while teaching at Westminster Theological Seminary (Philadelphia)(WTS) for 18 years, devised a novel idea. O. Palmer Robertson, a fellow faculty member, explained that Shepherd taught that “baptism rather than regeneration marks the point of transition from death to life.” Shepherd also believed “faith and its fruits never can be abstracted from one another, for to believe is to obey. As a consequence, the way of justification before God is the way of obedience, and obedience is the way of justification.”¹ That is, the elect begin justification by ceremonial baptism and hold on to justification by faith and obedience. If they do not hold on, they lose their election and their justification. Shepherd also taught a final justification at the Judgment Throne, based upon personal righteousness.

This teaching is clearly opposed to Scripture and the Gospel that saves our souls. The astounding fact is that this false teaching was presented at one of the premier schools of conservative Presbyterianism. It took the board and faculty of WTS some six years to reach a decision to

dismiss Shepherd. The decision came after an external outcry concerning Shepherd’s views. The professor transferred from the OPC to the Christian Reformed Church of North America without censure.

Elder John Kinnaird, a defender of Shepherd, took up the banner in his part of the OPC vineyard and taught similar ideas. Kinnaird claimed a justification at baptism, maintained by faith and works, finalized at the Last Judgment, based upon personal righteousness. Preachers of the true Gospel do not proclaim such doctrine. The same distortions surfaced in the Presbyterian Church in America and other ecclesiastical bodies. The presence of such Rome-like teaching within the tent of conservative Presbyterianism is cause for alarm and underscores the danger of the spirit of compromise permeating evangelical churches in general, and Reformed denominations in particular. The Lord has always maintained a remnant to bear witness to the truth. The Bible Presbyterian Church, years ago, saw the need of remaining separated from compromising denominations. We must continue to follow our Savior in these dark and confusing days by separating from ecclesiastical bodies which have the spirit of accommodation. Charles Haddon Spurgeon said: “Separation from such as connive at fundamental error, or withhold the ‘Bread of life’ from perishing souls, is not schism, but only what truth, and conscience, and God require of all who would be found faithful.” •

¹O. Palmer Robertson, *The Current Justification Controversy* (Unicoi, TN: The Trinity Foundation, c. 2003), pp. 90,91.



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