

REDEEMING THE TIME

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

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 3

SUMMER 2011

"What Fellowship....?"



BY BRAD K. GSELL

Following five years of collaboration, the World Council of Churches (WCC), the Roman Catholic Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID) and the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) held a public meeting at WCC headquarters in Geneva. The June 28, 2011, meeting was called to unveil a new joint declaration: "Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World: Recommendations for Conduct."

In his speech in Geneva, WEA CEO/Secretary General Dr. Geoff Tunnicliffe stated: "The World Evangelical Alliance, representing over 600 million Christians worldwide,

is grateful that the World Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church have accepted us as collaborators in the process of developing the *Recommendations*." Throughout his speech, Tunnicliffe

At Left: Portion of a page on the World Evangelical Alliance website showing member churches. It is to be noted that the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC) are members of the WEA — and thus are part of this unholy alliance.

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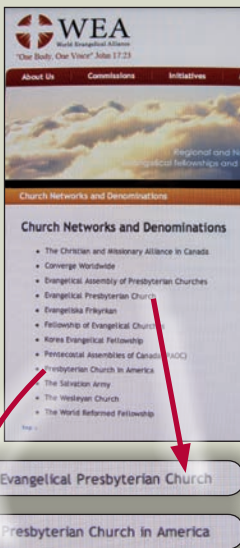


Photo above: (left to right) Dr. Geoff Tunnicliffe, CEO/Secretary General, World Evangelical Alliance (at lectern); His Eminence Jean-Louis Cardinal Tauran, President, Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue; Rev. Dr. Olav Fykse Tveit, General Secretary, World Council of Churches; Msgr. Andrew Thanya-anan Visanu, Undersecretary Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue; Professor Dr. Thomas Schirrmacher, Chair, Theological Commission and Speaker for Human Rights, World Evangelical Alliance.

Casting Out the Lake of Fire

The recent book *Love Wins: A Book About Heaven, Hell, and the Fate of Every Person Who Ever Lived*, by Rob Bell, has once again brought the subject of eternal punishment into the public discourse. *New York Times* columnist Ross Douthat wrote on April 24, 2011: "Large majorities of Americans believe in God and heaven, miracles and prayer. But belief in hell lags well behind, and the fear of damnation seems to have evaporated." Douthat continues that with our neighbors increasingly being Hindu or Buddhist, "Americans find the idea of eternal punishment for wrong belief increasingly incredible."

He then delves into the opening question of Bell's book: "Are Christians required to believe that Gandhi is in hell for being Hindu?" Similar questions have been asked about such notables as Mother Teresa of Calcutta. The assumption is that someone who has done many good works on earth could not possibly then spend eternity in hell. Douthat, buying this logic, states: "It's a question that should puncture religious chauvinism and unsettle fundamentalists of every stripe."

Apparently Roman Catholic Fox News commentator Bill O'Reilly, who cautions his viewers that they "are about to enter the no-spin zone," agrees. Following are some letters written by

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"OTHER GODS BEFORE ME" In These United States

BY BRAD K. GSELL

The main landmark on Sugar Creek Road in north Charlotte is the Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church, founded by Presbyterian missionary Alexander Craighead in 1755. The area had been settled by Scots-Irish Presbyterians, and later centuries saw the arrival of many Southern Baptists, Methodists, and other Protestants. These were mostly sturdy hard-working folks in a tight-knit community, who feared God and loved their country. This is the area where the present Bible Presbyterian Church of Charlotte was planted in 1966.

Things have changed dramatically. In the last two decades, folks from all over the United States and around the world have made this area of Charlotte their home. Within view of the Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church and in walking distance of Craighead's grave, a new Islamic school and center have been established (photo at right). Just a few miles down the road is a Buddhist center with an increasing number of statues and idols springing up across the expanse of the property (photos above and on page 15). On an adjoining road, a new Jain center is rising from the ground (photo on page 15).

This is not a unique situation. All over America, once solidly Prot-

estant communities are experiencing the same changes. This may bring different reactions and feelings among those whose families have lived there for generations. We as Christians must consider how we should react as patriotic Americans — but, much more importantly, as believers in God's Word.

America: A Beacon of Freedom

The United States has been singularly blessed by God for well over two centuries. Sadly, many secularists today are trying to destroy the foundations on which America was built. They want to excise from our history the belief of our Founders, based on Biblical principles, that all of our rights come from God, and that God is the Author of Liberty. The Declaration of Independence firmly established these principles of the new Constitutional republic! Fortunately, there is much historical documentation to prove these things.

Biblical Principles of Liberty Eroding at an Alarming Rate

In the waves of immigration in previous centuries, these principles of freedom were taught and largely understood by those who came — even those who were not Christians. Since many today see the government as our god, to take care of us from cradle to grave, many of these precious precepts are no longer being taught to these newcomers, let alone to our own children. If they are taught, they are often purposely distorted and subverted beyond recognition.

We also see millions here illegally, who make a mockery of our entire rule of law. Without being given a proper understanding of what has made America great, they often bring with them the failed principles which were at the root of the pain and suffering they experienced in the lands they chose to leave. However, the even bigger danger comes from those who grew up in America who hate God and are seeking, with great zeal, to destroy the foundation of American liberty.



As citizens we should stand up for our historic freedoms, for strict enforcement of immigration laws, and for the election of representatives who will do the same. We also must not follow the syncretistic attitude of our generation in saying that all religions are paths to God, that God and Allah are the same, and that God will take those to heaven who remain in their heathen religions.

We Must Stand for Freedom Even for Those With Whom We Disagree

However, one thing which differentiates true Christianity from all other religions is the belief that it is not our job to force our faith on others. Jonah 2:9 tells us that “salvation is of the Lord! — and indeed it is! “It is God that justifieth,” says Paul in Romans 8:33. God has chosen us to be witnesses, but it is He alone who is “mighty to save” (Isaiah 63:1)!

Just 12 years after the first American Presbyterian synod met in Philadelphia, it passed the “Adopting Act” of 1729, whereby the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms were received as the doctrinal standards of the church, to which all ministers and elders were required to subscribe. Just a few hours before this historic action, the Synod passed a preliminary statement, which reads in part: “... The Synod do [sic] not claim, or pretend to any Authority of imposing our Faith upon other Men’s Consciences; but do profess our just Dissatisfaction with, and Abhorrence of such Impositions....” Most Presbyterian Forms of Government maintain this same belief. The very first point in the Bible Presbyterian Form of Government, under the heading “Preliminary Principles,” states: “That ‘God alone is Lord of the conscience’; and ‘hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are in any thing contrary to his word, or beside it in matters of faith or worship’: There-

fore we consider the rights of private judgment, in all matters that respect religion, as universal and unalienable: we do not even wish to see any religious constitution aided by the civil power, further than may be necessary for protection and security, and, at the same time, be equal and common to all others.”

Although we must stand for godly principles in government, it is not the place of the church or the state to seek to convert men by force. True repentance and faith come from God

through the preaching of the Word of God.

A Great Opportunity

As godly citizens, we certainly should stand for a sound, lawful immigration policy. We should by conviction refuse to allow the false spirit of “tolerance and diversity” to lead us to think that other religions are good or acceptable before God.

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“Hear Our Prayer”

A Message to the PCUSA:

God Will Not Bless Rebellion Against His Word

On May 10, 2011, it became apparent that another rotten plank had disintegrated in the edifice of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area (covering Minneapolis and St. Paul, MN) voted to approve “Amendment 10A,” which changes the PCUSA constitution. This topped the 2/3 majority required for the Amendment to pass.

Until now, the constitution has required all candidates to the ministry and other church offices to vow to live “in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman or chastity in singleness.” **The real significance of the vote was that practicing homosexuals will now be allowed to be ordained to the offices of minister, elder and deacon, as will non-celibate single men and women, and adulterers.** This will go into effect in July, one year from the close of last year’s General Assembly. In typical fashion, the liberals have

kept bringing this issue up repeatedly — over and over and over since 1973 — until many with any Biblical scruples at all had either passed off the scene, or had just given up in the name of peace and love.

A few days later the seven-county Presbytery of Charlotte also voted to approve this ruling. Prominent laymen in the Charlotte area presented a petition to the Presbytery, stating: “As lay members of the Presbyterian Church (USA), we wish publicly to support gays and lesbians and their ordination (when qualified) to leadership as Pastors, Elders, and Deacons in our denomination. Our business, legal, medical, educational, and civic institutions have welcomed them as colleagues and benefited from their leadership. We believe the preponderance of Scripture calls us to be inclusive rather than exclusive, and we call upon our denomination to be a church as generous and just as

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"HEAR OUR PRAYER"

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God's grace." The first of 68 signatures was that of Hugh McColl, former Chairman and CEO of Bank of America.

The lack of integrity shown in this petition is astounding. How can anyone speak of "the preponderance of Scripture," when both the Old and New Testaments clearly, without equivocation, condemn homosexuality? How can we speak of a church being "as generous and just as God's grace," when Paul says in Romans 6:1,2: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Why did Christ tell the woman taken in adultery: "Go and sin no more"?

Even those who know what is right do not present the issue from a Biblical standpoint. Recently, two Charlotte PCUSA ministers held a "discussion" concerning the subject. The Rev. Kate Murphy of Hickory Grove Presbyterian Church and the Rev. Robert Austell of Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church spoke for and against homosexual ordination. Rev. Austell took the right side in the debate, but said of his opponent: "She loves Jesus Christ and the Church.... I would have her as my pastor." The *Charlotte Observer* reported that Austell said: "We really want you to listen to the other person, because we respect that person." The faithful servant of the Lord would rather have said: "We want you to listen to the Word of God, because it is 'our only infallible rule of faith and practice.'"

Likewise, Charlotte Presbytery Stated Clerk, the Rev. Sam Roberson, wrote a column in the *Charlotte Observer*, May 12, 2011, defending the move. He stated: "Historically, the Presbyterian Church (USA) has

both adapted to and challenged the society within which it has participated." However, when the church disobeys the Scriptures in order to "adapt" to a wicked and corrupt society, it has fatally compromised any hope of being a godly "challenge" to the society around it.

Some presbyters admirably were not so accommodating. The Rev. Paul Saleeby of Benton Heights Presbyterian Church in Monroe, NC, told his congregation on May 22, 2011: "... This past Tuesday, the Presbytery of Charlotte — of which we are a part — aligned itself with a majority of our denomination in setting aside a faithful, Biblical witness. This particular issue concerns the ordaining into church leadership practicing homosexuals. But it goes deeper than that. It's really about calling into question Biblical authority ... do you believe what the Bible says, or not.... The solution is not trying to redefine some sin as acceptable in the sight of God.... Our denomination is deciding for a different path. I realize I'm only one voice, but as your pastor, and the pastor of this church, that's not good enough."

A young elder in this same congregation, Adam Speer, courageously spoke before the Presbytery concerning his young daughters: "I don't want to have to explain to my daughters why it's acceptable for Pastor So-and-So to have an adulterous affair because the ordination standards have watered down the Word of God.... I don't want my daughters to grow up with the idea that marriage is anything but a lifelong commitment of fidelity. Nor should I have to explain why a church leader could set the examples of a homosexual lifestyle, even though Scripture specifically forbids that."

Already, the official PCUSA website has included a "liturgical resource" to be considered for use in churches after the new measure goes

into effect. One pre-written "prayer of confession" states: "We have damaged your church, created factions, and caused harm by stereotyping and demeaning one another." A "Statement of Ministry" states: "In faith we embrace a new openness to what God is doing in our time...." The final prayer is responsive, with the congregation answering "Hear our prayer" after each paragraph. One such paragraph states: "We pray for all members of the Presbyterian Church (USA) in this season. May those who have opposed this change, and those who welcome it, set aside disagreements to remember that you have called us together for salvation and service. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer."

It is so sad, but one cannot help but think of Elijah and the prophets of Baal. The prophets of Baal prayed fervently, but 1 Kings 18:29 tells us that "there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded." Felix Mendelssohn masterfully portrays this in his oratorio *Elijah*. Almost in desperation, the prophets of Baal cry out asking Baal to "heed the sacrifice we offer." Finally, they cry: "Hear and answer." [Silence.] One last attempt: "Hear and answer, Baal!" [Silence.] God is not going to favorably answer the prayers of those who willfully rebel against His Word, and lead the flock astray.

Unfortunately, as Dr. Benjamin B. Warfield, noted Princeton Theological Seminary professor at the beginning of the 20th century, stated: "You can't split rotten wood." After a number of Bible-believers were put out of the Presbyterian Church following the infamous Mandate of 1934, Dr. J. Gresham Machen and others declared the denomination to be "officially and judicially apostate."

It is our prayer that all of those who may finally have had enough of the apostasy and heresy in the PCUSA will follow the example of

an earlier pastor in the Presbytery of Charlotte. On April 16, 1939, the Rev. E. Archer Dillard stood in the pulpit of the Tenth Avenue Presbyterian Church in Charlotte. Dillard began: "In my text, Paul is giving a prophecy that the time will come when Christendom will turn its ears away from the truth and shall be turned unto fables. Paul says that. The Spirit of the Living God says that. And I want to say to you that that day has arrived.... The controversy is between 'Thus saith the Lord,' and 'Thus saith Dr. So and So'; between *God's Word*, and the natural wisdom of *man*."

Later he stated: "As other ages have refused the Word of God, so will this; and it is sad to see Christendom turning from the Word of God. Our own Southern Presbyterian Church is saturated with unsound teaching. In many quarters another gospel is being substituted for the gospel of Christ."

Dillard closed the message that historic day with these words: "So, the issue is: SHALL WE SUPPORT TRUTH OR ERROR[?] ... I have faced the issue / I have prayed it through / I am standing for TRUTH / How about YOU?" About 300 members left with him to start the Bible Presbyterian Church of Charlotte. •

REDEEMING THE TIME

Editor: Brad K. Gsell

Associate Editor: Mark W. Evans

Redeeming the Time is a quarterly publication with the purpose of encouraging God's people and applying God's Word to the issues of our day.

Individual copies are distributed free of charge, but the generous donations of God's people are necessary for this ministry to continue. Checks may be made payable to "**Redeeming the Time**," and mailed to: **P.O. Box 26281, Charlotte, NC 28221-6281**. All donations are tax deductible.

Sponsored by Publication Fund • Bible Presbyterian Church • Charlotte, NC

Faith Presbytery, Bible Presbyterian Church



Photo courtesy of Jan Coleman



Photo courtesy of Faith Luella Photography



Photo courtesy of Jan Coleman

The spring meeting of Faith Presbytery, Bible Presbyterian Church, was held at Pilgrim Presbyterian Bible Church, in Kingsville, MD. The Rev. Jerry Gardner was elected Moderator.

Two highlights of the meeting were the licensure to the gospel ministry of Mr. Chris Salerno (bottom photo above). Mr. Salerno was questioned extensively by the Candidates and Credentials Committee the day before the Presbytery meeting. •

The Sodus Center, NY, Bible Presbyterian Church, was also received into the membership of the Presbytery, which was a real encouragement to all. This follows the reception last year of Bethany Bible Presbyterian Church of Glendale, CA.

The fall meeting of the Presbytery will be held on September 30, 2011, at the Bible Presbyterian Church of Collingswood, NJ. All are invited to attend. •

Patrick Hamilton & Biblical Separation

BY MARK W. EVANS

In early decades of the 20th century, the liberals gained control of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (PCUSA). They accomplished this feat by the acquiescence of compromising conservatives who failed to stand against the evil. J. Gresham Machen and others sounded the alarm, but were unable to turn the tide of Modernism. In his book *Christianity and Liberalism*, Machen explained the urgency for separation: “Liberalism is not Christianity. And that being the case, it is highly undesirable that liberalism and Christianity should continue to be propagated within the bounds of the same organization. A separation between the two parties in the Church is the crying need of the hour.”¹

The end of the battle came when Machen and other Christian ministers, including Carl McIntire, J. Oliver Buswell, Jr., Merrill T. MacPherson, Edwin H. Rian, Charles J. Woodbridge, Paul Wooley, Harold S. Laird, and R. Laird Harris were placed on trial and unjustly suspended from the ministry. These leaders gathered a remnant to establish a continuing Presbyterian Church.

In the new assembly, our Bible Presbyterian forefathers experienced division. On June 4, 1937, they met in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to pray and seek the Lord’s will. They formed themselves into the “Bible Presbyterian Synod” and composed a document called the “Articles of Association of the Bible Presbyte-

rian Fellowship.” In this declaration, they stated a sacred resolve: “We are persuaded that the great battle in the world today is the faith of our fathers versus modernism, compromise, indifference and worldliness. With all our hearts we throw our strength into the great task of winning lost souls to Jesus Christ by the Gospel of the Grace of God.”² For the sake of peace and a continuing witness to American Presbyterianism, our forefathers departed from the denomination that was later called the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Subsequently, New Evangelicalism surfaced, and our forefathers raised the banner of Christ against this subtle, but deadly movement.

These warriors for Christ contended against Darwinism, false ecu-

menism, communism, socialism, liberalism, humanism, and worldliness, and left us a heritage of ecclesiastical separation from apostates and compromisers. They taught us to remain faithful to Biblical Christianity, to proclaim the Gospel to a dying world, and to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3).

It is an encouragement to see how the Lord has blessed a separated testimony through the ages. The history of Scotland provides glimpses of His blessing upon those who stayed on the old paths. Shortly after the time of Christ and His Apostles, the armies of the Roman Empire invaded Scotland, only to find barbaric tribes that “practiced horrid rites and worshipped, under other names, the deities to which the ancient Assyrians had bowed down.”³ Roman armies attempted to subdue the savages, but utterly failed. An entire legion entered the land to engage the enemy, but no survivors returned. Hadrian’s Wall, with its 30-foot moat, many towers and forts, was more than a boundary marker. It was a means of protecting the Romans from the wandering Northern tribes.

Only the Gospel could conquer such implacable souls. Church historian J.A. Wylie wrote, “In the wake of the Roman power came the missionaries of the Cross, and the Gospel found disciples where Caesar had been able to achieve no triumphs.” For many centuries, Christians who were untainted by Roman Catholicism remained in the rugged land. Johannes G. Vos, in his book *The Scottish Covenanters* said: “Scotland early received Christianity in its Celtic, non-Roman form. It was not until the time of Queen Margaret, in the latter part of the eleventh century, that Celtic Christianity finally gave way to Roman Catholicism. From that time until the middle of the sixteenth century, Scotland was a land of dense spiritual darkness, a land of many priests but very few witness-

es for Jesus Christ, a land of many Churches but very little Gospel.”⁴

Kings and noblemen surrendered Scotland to the papacy. This treachery brought misery to the inhabitants. Iain Murray said of the Roman Church in Scotland: “It was a Church abundant in possessions, revenues and men. In a country where the population was only around 800,000, priests numbered perhaps as many as 3,000. Amid a poor population, the Church owned the finest buildings in the land. But it was a Church far gone in moral and intellectual decay.”⁵

Another author said: “Nowhere else had the [Roman] clergy reached such a pitch of flagrant and disgraceful immorality, and the Roman Catholic religion become such an utter corruption and mockery of all that is good and holy.”⁶ Yet, a small Christian remnant remained. In the fifteenth century, James Resby, a Wycliffe scholar, was burned at the stake for his teachings against Rome. A few years later, Paul Craw, a disciple of Hus, suffered the same unjust execution. In 1494, Robert Blackatter, Roman Archbishop of Glasgow, imprisoned some 30 individuals, called “Lollards,” who were “mostly persons of distinction, accused of reformation principles.”⁷ The archbishop and his underlings failed in their murderous scheme, because the “Lollards” so boldly defended themselves that the king protected them. J.A. Wylie said, “The Lollards of Scotland could be none other than the descendants of the Chaldee missionaries, and such of the disciples of Wickliffe as had taken refuge in Scotland. On the testimony of both friend and foe, there were few counties in the Lowlands of Scotland where these Lollards were not to be found.”⁸

The sovereign God used a Scottish nobleman of royal blood, Patrick Hamilton (1504-1528), to begin a Reformation in his native land. Hamilton studied in Paris when the city was ablaze with the news of

Martin Luther’s Biblical doctrines. He left Paris to travel to Germany and learn God’s Word from Luther and his associate, Philip Melancthon. He also met with the exiled William Tyndale, the future martyr who translated the Scriptures from the original languages into the English language. His translation would eventually enter Scotland.

With a burning heart, Hamilton returned to his homeland to proclaim God’s Word and denounce the lies of Rome. In the early days of 1528, he began his brief ministry. The Archbishop of St. Andrews, James Beaton, invited him into the city for a friendly discussion. The

young Reformer fell into the trap. A deceitful priest drew from him the evidence to convict him of teaching against the “Church.” His arrest and incarceration soon followed. He was quickly summoned to the Archbishop’s tribunal, because of fear of the nobility. Even the king was sent on a pilgrimage, to prevent his intervention. Beaton and his handpicked court condemned the preacher as a heretic and committed him to the secular authorities for punishment. His sentence was death by burning. Within a brief time, he was brought to the stake, where his executioners

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YOUTH RETREAT



Photos courtesy of Christian Spencer



Faith Presbytery, Bible Presbyterian Church, held a youth retreat from May 20-22, 2011, hosted by the Bible Presbyterian Church of Collingswood, NJ. The theme was “The Rocks Cry Out!” from Luke 19. Speakers included Rev. Peter Cellini, Elder Keith McCoy, Rev. Jerry Gardner, Rev. Chris Sidwell (pictured lower right) and Rev. Christian Spencer.

PATRICK HAMILTON AND BIBLICAL SEPARATION

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had placed wood, coals, gunpowder, and other materials. Hamilton was tied to the stake and the trail of powder was set on fire. The first try only succeeded in severely scorching the martyr. Patiently, the calm Christian waited while more gunpowder was brought from storage. The friars harassed him, demanding that he call upon the Virgin Mary. Hamilton replied, “Depart, and trouble me not, ye messengers of Satan.” One friar, Friar Campbell, persisted in taunting his prey. Hamilton said to him, “Thou wicked man, thou knowest that I am not a heretic, and that it is the truth of God for which I now suffer — so much didst thou confess unto me in private — and thereupon I appeal thee to answer before the judgment-seat of Christ.” The fire was finally lit and out of the flames came the last words of the martyr, “How long, O Lord, shall darkness cover this realm? How long wilt Thou suffer this tyranny of men? Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”⁹

The death of such a noble Christian soon affected the entire land. One of Archbishop Beaton’s servants said, “My lord, if ye burn any man, except ye follow my counsel, ye will utterly destroy yourselves. If ye will burn them, let them be burned in deep cellars: for the reek of Mr. Patrick Hamilton has infected as many as it did blow upon.” John Knox wrote that in the University of St. Andrews there were many beginning to “call in doubt what they had before held for a certain verity, and to espy the vanity of the received superstition.”¹⁰ There was another forceful testimony spread abroad. Friar Campbell, who taunted Hamilton, “soon after went distracted, and died in the utmost horror of mind, with the last appeal of the martyr ringing in his ears.”¹¹

Once Patrick Hamilton knew the truth, he did not compromise it. He sealed it with his life. These are solemn facts. While others cry for outward unity at the expense of doctrinal purity and practical holiness, our obligation is to “buy the truth, and sell it not” (Proverbs 23:23). Reformation will not come by corrupted doctrine and worldly practices. •

¹J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1935), p. 160.

²Margaret Harden, ed., *A Brief History of the Bible Presbyterian Church*, n.d., p. 61.

³J.A. Wylie, *The History of Protestantism*, (London: Cassell and Company, Ltd., 1935), p. 466.

⁴Johannes G. Vos, *The Scottish Covenanters* (Edinburgh: Blue Banner Publications, 1998), p. 17.

⁵Iain Murray, *A Scottish Christian Heritage* (Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, c. 2001), p. 6.

⁶John Tulloch, *Leaders of the Reformation* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1860), p. 329.

⁷John Howe, *The Scots Worthies* (Glasgow: W.R. M’Phun, 1858), p. 11

⁸Wylie, p. 468.

⁹Thomas M’Crie, *The Story of the Scottish Church* (Glasgow: Bell and Bain Ltd., n.d.), pp. 10,11.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹¹*Ibid.*



The Rev. Mark Evans is a minister in Faith Presbyterian, Bible Presbyterian Church, and is pastor of Hope Presbyterian Church, Greenville, SC.

Questions Even Hawking Can’t Answer

Stephen Hawking, the renowned British physicist, has suffered more than most, with his long-standing fight with Lou Gehrig’s disease. Despite incredible physical difficulties, Hawking has soldiered on, writing several books and holding a top research position at Cambridge University, once held by Isaac Newton. His refusal to allow the ravages of this disease to conquer his still-active mind is commendable.

Sadly, Hawking sees no prospects for a better life after death. He recently told Ian Sample of the *Guardian* newspaper: “I have lived with the prospect of an early death for the last 49 years. I’m not afraid of death, but I’m in no hurry to die. I have so much I want to do first. I regard the brain as a computer which will stop working when its components fail. There is no heaven or afterlife for broken down computers; that is a fairy story for people afraid of the dark.”

In a recent book, *The Grand Design*, Hawking challenged his

predecessor’s (Newton) view that the design of the solar system requires that there must be a God. He writes: “Because there is a law such as gravity, the Universe can and will create itself from nothing. Spontaneous creation is the reason there is something rather than nothing, why the Universe exists, why we exist. It is not necessary to invoke God to ... set the universe going.”

Yet, the next obvious question is not answered: Who made the laws which hold our universe together? As brilliant as Mr. Hawking may be, there is certainly very much which he is unable to answer. He would do well to observe the words of Dr. Robert Dick Wilson, who after exhaustive study stated: “I have come to the conviction that no man knows enough to attack the veracity of the Old Testament....” The Bible states in Psalm 14:1: “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.” Sinful man always rises up in the face of God, but God is still in control! •

IS 400 YEARS LONG ENOUGH?

Is the King James Version Too Old?

BY KEN OLSON

The King James Version (KJV) is 400 years old this year (1611-2011). It has stood head and shoulders above every other translation of the Bible ever made. It was the unquestioned standard of the English speaking world for over 300 years, being used by generations of preachers, theologians and missionaries. It was used greatly by God in spreading the gospel to the ends of the world and in great revivals such as the Great Awakening. The men who translated the KJV were tremendous scholars. One translator of the NIV remarked that these men were full-time scholars, supported by the state, who did not have to teach for a living. The KJV is a marvel of translation work, rendering word for word from the originals, yet coming out in stately, poetic and memorable English.

The question remains, “Is the KJV too old to continue to be used by the English-speaking church in the 21st century?” In today’s world, the quest is always for the latest and greatest: the newest car model with the most bells and whistles; the most recent, fastest and smallest computer; and any just-off-the-press translation of the Bible being promoted at the moment. Anything old is looked upon with suspicion.

I was recently in a contemporary church Bible study where a man stated that he did not like the traditional church he used to attend because “They use statutes that are more than fifty years old.” He implied that that made them inherently bad.

In the past 40 years or so, everything traditional has come under attack — from traditional values of morality (such as the sanctity of life and marriage), to everything traditional in churches. There has been the watering down of preaching, music, Bibles, and so forth, as the church does not want to be seen as too narrow or offending anyone. Is the casting off of the KJV just part of this modern trend?

In answering these questions, I would like to expand on a statement from the last issue of *Redeeming the Time*: “Voices are growing exceedingly louder in stating that the King James Version is obsolete, [1] that its language is hopelessly outdated and archaic, [2] that it is not understandable by today’s young people, and [3] that it is translated from inferior texts.”

1. Is Its Language Hopelessly Outdated and Archaic?

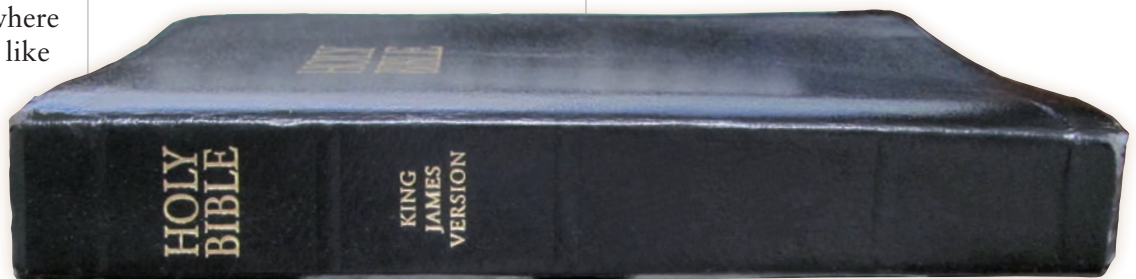
This charge is overstated and exaggerated. To begin with, technically speaking, the KJV is well within the period known to English scholars as “Modern English.” This period runs from about 1450 to the present day. The English of the KJV is not “Old English” or “Middle English.”

The most obvious “outdated” words are “thee” and “thou.” These words are actually an argument in favor of the KJV. The KJV differentiates between second person singular used as subject (“thou”), second person singular used as object (“thee”), second person plural used as subject (“ye”), and second person plural used as object (“you”). Today’s English uses “you” for all four of these and therefore is less precise in translating the original languages than is the KJV.

The other most obvious evidence of old-fashioned English is the use of “-eth” on the end of verbs instead of today’s “-s” (“speaketh” versus “speaks”). Once one gets past this simple use of “-eth” and the “thees” and “thous,” there are actually very few words in the KJV that are “hopelessly outdated and archaic.” I would daresay that in all of the KJV there are only a couple of hundred words out of many thousands used that fall into this category. Let me illustrate.

People tend to show the utterly “outdated” and “archaic” nature of KJV words thus (is “thus” one of them?): “When was the last time you used the words ‘vex’ or ‘gird’ or ‘eschewed’?” You might naturally an-

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IS THE KING JAMES VERSION TOO OLD?

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swer, “never.” But that is not really the true test of an outdated word. A truly outdated word is one that is not used any more at all in the secular world or media (let alone the church) around us today. Words can be used today in the media that we would seldom use in our day-to-day conversations. I have collected many examples of this but I will give just three examples in current news reports and headlines: “Political Chaos in Illinois Vexes Obama” (1/29/2010, Yahoo); “... Catholics had eschewed the 2004 Democratic presidential candidate ...” (11/11/2009, Associated Press); “Boehner Tells Republicans to Gird for Shutdown”(4/5/2011, Reuters). I also have seen recent examples on billboards, with such slogans on them as: “Enjoy Thyself” and “What Hath God Wrought?” If the words, “vex,” “gird,” “eschewed,” “thyself,” and “wrought” are “hopelessly outdated” and incomprehensible, why does the media still use them?

2. Is It Not Understandable by Today's Young People?

Once again this charge is exaggerated and overstated. It is true that the English of the KJV does not flow as smoothly in modern English as the latest versions. This is also an argument in favor of the KJV. The reason the English does not flow as smoothly is that it tries to strictly follow the word order of the Greek and Hebrew as much as possible. The modern versions generally use the translation principle of “dynamic equivalency.” They take what they think (THEY think!) the thought in the verse is and then translate it freely in smoothly flowing English, without careful regard for the exact words and word order of the original. Is it

more important to flow smoothly or to reflect the exact words and order of the original?

The KJV translators did a marvelous work making the English flow as well as it does, while sticking closely to the word-for-word original. It even goes to the length of putting words in italics that have been added to the original language to complete English sentences.

Something that sold me forever on the reliability of the KJV was an assignment I had in seminary. I had to translate the Greek text into English of the entire book of Revelation, without looking at another translation. When I finished, I compared what I had done with the KJV and

Does it really make sense to get rid of a completely reliable Bible that has stood the test of time just because of a relatively few outdated words?... Let us not exchange the birthright of the English speaking world for a “mess of pottage” (another old-fashioned KJV quote).

the two translations were nearly identical. We can depend on the KJV to give us as closely as possible in a translation what God gave us in the originals. It does not give us a paraphrase like modern versions. At the reading of a will, do you want to hear a paraphrase of the will or the exact words the deceased used?

As the saying goes, “the proof is in the pudding.” I have used the KJV together with people of very limited English reading ability and have had few problems. For years I taught Bible studies in a program that used the KJV in the local state prison in Delaware. Many men in the studies could barely read and

yet they had little problem with the English of the KJV. For years I also taught English classes and preached English services using the KJV in Cameroon in Africa. The Africans did not know much English but they encountered few difficulties arising out of the English of the KJV. Not too long ago I was using the KJV for intensive memorization in vacation Bible schools, using the Summer Bible School Association program developed by Dr. A.L. Lathem of Chester, PA. These were small children memorizing substantial passages of the KJV. They had little problem. In all of these situations, a difficult word could be explained in a couple of minutes.

We need to try to **lift up** the educational level of people in the churches and not “dumb down” our Bible. On the one hand, people talk of how advanced modern young people are with their knowledge of technology and computers. On the other hand, it is maintained that they cannot possibly understand the not-very-difficult language of the KJV.

The problem is that few want to make the even relatively small effort required to dig in and study the Bible. It is true that there are some difficult words in the Bible such as “justified” and “sanctified.” The KJV leaves these difficult words as they are, while other versions try to explain them within the translation. Our translation should have the exact words of the original and then afterward they can be explained in preaching or study.

An illustration of this is found in the Bulu translation of the Bible in Cameroon. When they came to the passage asking if when a son asked for a fish would his father give him a serpent (another old-fashioned word, but still used as in “sea serpent” or “serpent mound”), they translated “serpent” as “millipede.” That was done because, in Cameroon, serpents are considered a delicacy, while millipedes are not

eaten. It would have been much better if they had accurately translated the word as “serpent,” and then explained that in most cultures people would never think of eating a serpent. With an explanation, one is expanding the horizons of the people and advancing their education. Let us increase the vocabulary of our young people with some words of the KJV with which they are not familiar.

3. Is It Translated From Inferior Texts?

Let me say first that there can be differing views among genuine Christians on this point, but I personally believe that the KJV is translated from the best texts, and the latest versions are translated from inferior texts. We believe in the verbal inspiration of the Bible, that each word of it was inspired by God. I believe that the Bible teaches (Isaiah 40:8; Matthew 24:35, 1 Peter 1:23-25) and it logically follows that God has preserved His Word down through the centuries. Would God take the great care to inspire every word and then not take great care to preserve His word for the use of the church?

God did preserve the Old Testament carefully through Jewish scribes (another old-fashioned word?) and today there is little question concerning the text of the Old Testament. I believe, as did the King James translators, that the New Testament was carefully preserved, just like the Old Testament was, by faithful copyists of the Eastern Roman Empire. This Greek Byzantine empire stood stable for a thousand years amid great upheavals in Europe. The manuscripts made by these Byzantine copyists are known as the Byzantine text type used by the KJV. This text is also known as the *Textus Receptus* or Received Text, which was passed down by one generation to the next through the ages.

Today, many true Christians believe that a sizable number of errors crept in during the copying of the New Testament, and the text which has been received by the church must be corrected by newly discovered manuscripts. A concrete example of this is Mark 16:9-20, the last 12 verses of the gospel of Mark. For many centuries, preachers, theologians and ordinary Christians considered these verses to be part of the Bible. They studied them, wrote commentaries on them, and preached from them. Then at the end of the 19th century, a couple of new manuscripts were found that did not have these verses in them, and so many Christians now say that these verses really should not be in the Bible. My copy of the New International Version says at the beginning of this section: “(The most reliable early manuscripts omit Mark 16:9-20).” I believe that we have a “more sure word of prophecy” (2 Peter 1:19) than this. I believe that God has preserved His Word in the Received Text and we are not going to find out tomorrow that 12 verses of the Bible that we have been using really were never inspired. Even though we do not have the original manuscripts in hand, we can have assurance that the KJV used texts faithful to those original manuscripts in Greek and Hebrew.

One Standard English Text

There is much to be said in having one standard English Bible that does not change. Today memorization is a lost art. One reason for this is the plethora of new Bibles. It is hard to remember something that is always changing. If you keep using the same Bible, the words will stick in your mind. Of course, pew Bibles and projections can be used in church, but there is nothing like seeing something in your own personal Bible in studies, in services, and for responsive readings. People are be-

coming more and more unfamiliar with finding things in their own Bibles with the overuse of projections of Bible texts. When everyone has the same Bible, it facilitates verse-by-verse and word-by-word studies of the text.

Quotations are also facilitated with a standard Bible. An example of a KJV quote was recently seen in a secular economic news report, which said: “Naturally all forecasts are fallible. Time and chance happen to them all” (4/26/2011, taken from Ecclesiastes 9:11).

Today many are switching to the New King James Version (NKJV) as an updated alternative to the KJV. It has been touted as a KJV that has gotten rid of the “thees” and “thous.” The NKJV changed more than just the old language and not necessarily for the better. One problem with the NKJV is that it is a copyrighted Bible undertaken for profit and it is continuing to make big money for Thomas Nelson Publishers. The specious argument is used that it must be copyrighted to preserve the integrity of the text. The KJV is not **copyrighted** (in most of the world) and yet there are no problems with alterations to the text.

Does it really make sense to get rid of a completely reliable Bible that has stood the test of time just because of a relatively few outdated words? The KJV is not absolutely perfect — no translation is — but it is more than close enough for me. The King James Version is not too old. It has many years of life left in it. Let us not exchange the birthright of the English speaking world for a “mess of pottage” (another old-fashioned KJV quote).



Rev. Ken Olson is a minister in Faith Presbyterian Church, and serves as a missionary to Brazil under The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions.



GENESIS US GENOME?

Once again, some evangelicals are clamoring to appear relevant and respectable by selling out Biblical truth for the latest assertions of the “scientific community.” *Christianity Today*, in a cover story entitled “The Search for the Historical Adam,” details the recent postulation that there couldn’t have been a literal, historical Adam and Eve.

Based on scientific advances with human genome research, it is now claimed by some that humans could not have descended from a single couple, but must have come from an original group of perhaps 10,000.

Scientist Francis S. Collins, who headed up the Human Genome Project under the National Institutes of Health (NIH), stunned many when he announced that he was no longer an atheist, but had become an evangelical Christian. This caused much consternation to many liberal scientists when President Obama appointed Collins to direct the NIH. However, Collins won unanimous Senate confirmation.

Unfortunately, Collins still believes firmly in evolution, while holding that God is the Creator. Further, Collins’ writings present the Genesis Creation account as perhaps “a poetic and powerful allegory,” rather than truth.

In *The Language of Science and Faith*, Collins and coauthor Karl W. Giberson (a physics professor at Eastern Nazarene College) state that a literal Adam and Eve “do not fit the evidence.” This book was published

by InterVarsity Press, which states concerning itself: “As an extension of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship/USA, InterVarsity Press serves those in the university, the church and the world by publishing resources that equip and encourage people to follow Jesus as Savior and Lord in all of Life.”

Others climbing on board are Dennis R. Venema, chairman of the biology department at Trinity Western University, and Darrel Falk, bi-

To believe in theistic evolution, with man descending gradually from a lower primate form, is to destroy the foundation of Scripture. This new assertion moves yet another step down the path towards unbelief.

ologist at Point Loma Nazarene University. Venema and Falk, in a paper written for BioLogos, an organization promoting theistic evolution (see “Bruce Waltke and Theistic Evolution, Summer 2010 issue of *Redeeming the Time*), deny a literal Adam and Eve. They state that humanity “was definitely never as small as two.... Our species diverged as a population. The data are absolutely clear on that.”

Peter Enns, who presently serves as the biblical expert at BioLogos, denies a literal Adam and Eve as

well. The *Christianity Today* article states: “To Enns, a literal Adam as a special creation without evolutionary forebears is ‘at odds with everything else we know about the past from the natural sciences and cultural remains.’ ... Enns has little doubt that Paul indeed thought Adam was ‘a real person.’ But Enns suggests that the apostle was reflecting beliefs about human origins that were common among the ancients. After scanning various interpretations of Genesis, Enns joins those who see the Genesis passages on Adam as ‘a story of Israelite origins,’ not the origin of all humanity...”

Enns made news several years ago when he was removed from the faculty of Westminster Theological Seminary for views which compromised belief in an inerrant Bible. Sadly, although removed by a majority of the trustees, the faculty protested the removal.

It is astounding that schools which were founded to give young people a Christian education have slipped so far. We have just mentioned several of these. Trinity Western University describes its purpose as: “to transform lives through Christ-centered higher education.” Point Loma Nazarene University states that its founder established the school with an “intense love for God and His Word.” Eastern Nazarene College claims it “continues to serve God, the Church, and the World.” Another college whose president serves with BioLogos is Gordon College. Gordon says it was founded “to prepare the people of God to do the work of God.”

How can we possibly hope our young people will live productive lives of leadership as Bible-believing Christians when the colleges to which they are entrusted betray the Word of God?

Fortunately, not all have bowed the knee to the god of such fallible and incomplete scientific theories. *World* magazine Editor in Chief

Marvin Olasky writes a major cover story on the subject in the July 2, 2011, issue of that magazine. He promotes two recent books written to counter this: *Should Christians Embrace Evolution? — Biblical and Scientific Responses*, edited by Norman C. Nevin; and *God and Evolution*, edited by Jay Richards. A number of other evangelicals have also come to the defense of the Scriptures.

The article in *Christianity Today* was written by Richard N. Ostling, who served as a religion writer with *Time* magazine. Although Ostling quotes several pastors who oppose these new assertions of evolutionary veracity, he appears dismissive of Bible believers by referring to “the old man-from-monkeys fuss.”

Is this just a “fuss,” with little meaning to the Christian? We assert firmly that it is of foundational importance to the entire Christian faith, and all of Christian doctrine.

The Gospel message is completely predicated on the fact that our first father, Adam, sinned against God. As the federal head of all humanity to follow, we all were born with his sinful nature. In Romans 5:12, Paul says: “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Paul clearly believed in the Genesis account of the fall of man, and clearly believed that it began with “one man.” In verse 14, he identifies that man as Adam, and speaks of death reigning “from Adam to Moses.” He considered Adam as much a real person as he did Moses.

He further reveals that Adam is “the figure of him that was to come.” In verse 19, he states: “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” In 1 Corinthians 15:22 he again reveals the correlation between a real person (Adam) and another real person (Jesus Christ): “For as in Adam all die,

even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” Paul believed every bit as much in the literal reality of Adam as he believed in the literal reality of Jesus Christ.

To believe in theistic evolution, with man descending gradually from a lower primate form, is to destroy the foundation of Scripture. This new assertion moves yet another step down the path towards unbelief.

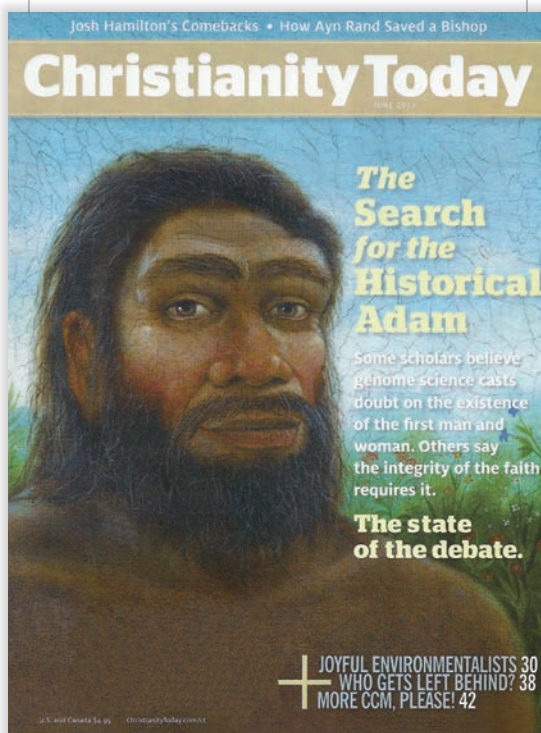
The problem is NOT with science. Christianity is a fact-based religion. Therefore, the Bible believer is the friend of proven scientific fact. However, man simply cannot prove with accuracy and certainty all of what occurred at the dawn of Creation. The human genome project is an amazing feat of scientific dis-

We Stand: No Adam, No Eve, No Gospel.” The first part of the article makes some good points about the need for “the disobedient exercise of the will by the first humans” for the message of the Gospel to stand.

However, always fearful of being too dogmatic, the magazine hedges its bets: “Hebrew thought offers one clue to resolving this tension: the corporate nature of humanity. Scripture often calls groups of people by the name of their historical head. Israel is an obvious example. So are Canaan and Cush. At times, Scripture also holds groups of people morally responsible for the actions of some of their members. Thus, some have suggested ... that if both biblical and scientific clues suggest a larger population contemporary with Adam and Eve ... we can still conceive of Adam and Eve as leaders of that original population. That suggestion has the virtue of embracing both a prehistoric couple and a prehistoric population.” The only problem is that this takes such great grammatical and historical leaps of logic as to make any literal belief in the words of Scripture impossible.

Almost as if they were expecting criticism from Bible believing Christians, the editors begin the last paragraph of their article: “At this juncture, we counsel patience. We don’t need another fundamentalist reaction against science. We need instead a positive interdisciplinary engagement that recognizes the good will of all involved and that creative thinking takes time.”

When all else fails, those who compromise resort to attacking the despised “Fundamentalists.” Apparently the plain historical-grammatical interpretation of Scripture is now to be replaced by “good willed creative thinking” as the paramount spiritual virtue we should pursue in determining “what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man.” We think not. •



covery and endurance. However, we believe in a God who created the world and humanity SUPERNATURALLY. To say that the human genome PROVES anything about our first parents is to accept the atheistic concept that the Biblical teaching concerning God’s supernatural acts is wrong, if there is a God at all.

Christianity Today, later in the same issue, carried a position statement on the subject entitled: “Where

“Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World: Recommendations for Conduct”

We encourage our readers to examine the entire document, which is available online. There are many things in it to which all of us could agree. However, following are a few excerpts which show just how far much of modern “evangelicalism” has been willing to compromise. We cannot imagine our Bible-believing forefathers putting their names to such statements.

- “Christian witness in a pluralistic world includes engaging in dialogue with people of different religions and cultures....”
- “Christians ... are to listen in order to learn about and understand others’ beliefs and practices, and are encouraged to acknowledge and appreciate what is true and good in them.”
- “World Council of Churches and the PCID of the Holy See in collaboration with World Evangelical Alliance with participation from the largest Christian families (Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, Evangelical and Pentecostal) having acted in a spirit of ecumenical cooperation....”
- “... conduct regarding Christian witness ... Where possible this should be done ecumenically, and in consultation with representatives of other religions.”
- “Build relationships of respect and trust with people of all religions, in particular at institutional levels between churches and other religious communities, engaging in on-going interreligious dialogue as part of their Christian commitment.... Interreligious dialogue can provide new opportunities for ... reconciliation and peace-building.”
- “Cooperate with other religious communities engaging in interreligious advocacy.”
- “In today’s world there is increasing collaboration among Christians and between Christians and followers of different religions.” It speaks of WCC and IRDC collaborations in the past over “Interreligious Marriage,” and “Interreligious Prayer.”
- “The WCC-IRDC invited the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) to participate in this process, and they have gladly done so.”
- “Initially two consultations were held: the first in Lariano, Italy, in May 2006, was entitled ‘assessing the Reality’ where representatives of different religions shared their views and experiences on the question of conversion.”
- “We affirm that, while everyone has a right to invite others to an understanding of their faith, it should not be exercised by violating others’ ... religious sensibilities.”

in the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches ... and we hope that this is just the beginning of many other such collaborative efforts. We know that our witness is made stronger and more truthful to the extent that we work together for the glory of God’s reign.”

This is the same World Evangelical Alliance that has in its membership the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) and the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE). This latter group has been the leading organization for what was called the New Evangelicalism in the last half of the 20th century. L. Roy Taylor, Stated Clerk of the PCA, released a statement concerning the PCA General Assembly, held in Virginia Beach from June 7-10, 2011. In it, he relates: “In 1986, the 14th General Assembly [of the PCA] approved the PCA’s entering into full membership of the NAE. Through the NAE the PCA is also related to the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA). Under the WEA the PCA participated in the formation of the ... World Reformed Fellowship. Since 2006 the PCA Stated Clerk has served as the Chairman of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee [of the NAE]....” Some in the PCA continue to push it to drop out of the NAE and WEA. So far, they remain a distinct minority.

Many other familiar evangelical organizations are members of the WEA, including The Evangelical Alliance Mission, Africa Inland Mission, SIM International (formerly Sudan Interior Mission), the Billy Graham Center, Youth for Christ, to name a few. Bible-believing Christians fund many of these organizations, with no idea of their tragic associations with the enemies of Christ.

Kevin Mannoia, professor of Ministry at Azusa Pacific University and a past president of the NAE is quoted in a June 29, 2011, post on the *Christianity Today* website as saying:

“WHAT FELLOWSHIP?”

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spoke glowingly of the “collaboration between three Christian families of faith,” and declared it “a major achievement in Christian unity — it has brought together Christians

from different backgrounds and traditions and with the grace of God and the help of the Holy Spirit, has enabled these people to work together on a text that will be of service to all churches and all Christians worldwide.” “It has been an honour and a privilege to work with our colleagues



"I think the fact that the WEA is engaging with the WCC and the Catholic Church here indicates that they are becoming more willing to embrace interreligious dialogue." The magazine continues: "But there has been an apparent thaw lately, especially between the WCC and WEA. It

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?... And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?..."

2 Corinthians 6:14-17

reported further that the two groups have recently issued other joint statements, and WCC General Secretary Olav Fykse Tveit spoke at the Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization, held last October in Cape Town, South Africa. The leadership of WEA collaborated in that event — sponsored by the Lausanne Movement, begun by Evangelist Billy Graham.

Yet there is no recognition given of the terrible apostasy and heresy both in the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches. The WCC has had many leaders of false religions on its Assembly platforms and has cooperated with them in many ways. The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue likewise shows itself to be syncretistic and universalistic in its many letters of greeting and congratulation on the occasion of false religious celebrations. During the Hindu feast

of Deepavali last year, the PCID sent greetings, which included: "May God, the Supreme Light illumine your minds, enlighten your hearts and strengthen the human bonds in your homes and communities! We wish you all a joy-filled *Deepavali!*"

In a message earlier this year for the Buddhist Feast of Vesakh/Hanamatsuri, PCID sent glowing greetings, wishing "serenity and joy." However, the message could not end without pointing out the true dangers "in today's world" — "secularism and fundamentalism that are often inimical to true freedom and spiritual values, interreligious dialogue can be the alternative choice by which we find the 'golden way' to live in peace and work together for the good of all." It should not surprise us that those who choose to willfully disobey God's Word should want "peace" and "love" with nearly everyone but the Bible-believer! •



Mr. Brad Gsell is an elder and minister of music of the Bible Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, NC, and President of The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions.

"OTHER GODS ..."

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However, the Lord has given us all an enormous opportunity to spread the gospel. We all give of our income to support foreign missionary work. Now, as never before, the mission field has come to us! May we have a renewed love and zeal for the souls of our neighbors and coworkers! May the love of Christ shine through our lives! May we be in prayer to the Lord for those who are lost in darkness — whether on the other side of the globe or right next door!

Perhaps you could befriend and work with students who are here studying from another country. Perhaps God will use your Christian testimony, witness and compassion to work in the lives of the family that has moved in beside you from a far-away land. As we pray for our country and stand for righteousness, let us not be remiss in ignoring these great opportunities that God has placed in our way! "... and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). •



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IBPHM Elects New Board Members

The Independent Board for Presbyterian Home Missions met on Saturday, March 26, 2011. New members added to the Board include Rev. Randy Ardis, Rev. Mark Evans, Rev. Jerry Gardner, and Rev. Chris Sidwell.

Officers elected include Rev. Chris Sidwell, President; Rev. Jerry Gardner, Vice President; and Mrs. Carole Whitbeck, Secretary.

The Board is working with several groups which have shown an interest in Faith Presbytery, Bible Presbyterian Church. Rev. Sidwell has already traveled to meet with a group in Texas.

Please keep the Home Missions Board in your prayers and giving. •

CASTING OUT THE LAKE OF FIRE

Continued from page 1

viewers, with comments by O'Reilly interspersed on the April 26, 2011, telecast:

“Rene Gustus, Fishers, IN: ‘Bill, I agree with you. God has never sent anyone to hell. We choose to go by our choices. It’s called free will.’

“Len Crawford, Guthrie OK: ‘Mr. O, you mention that Gandhi might be in heaven because he was a good man. I disagree. Jesus said you must go through him.’

“O’Reilly, in an exasperated voice: ‘We explained that, Len. Consider this. Many human beings have never heard of Jesus. Are they all damned? That wouldn’t be the work of a just God, would it?’

“Allan Gustafson, Long Beach, FL: ‘There is no hell, but God has a special place reserved for those who are evil in this life. They will not be saved.’

“Ryan Johnson, Chicago: ‘There are 1,850 verses in the New Testa-

ment that demonstrate Jesus speaking. In thirteen percent of those, he refers to judgment and hell. Jesus spoke more about hell than heaven.’

“Frank Lenarlowicz, Stratford, NJ: ‘As a lifelong Catholic, I do not believe in hell. God is all-merciful.’

“O’Reilly: ‘But also, all-just. It is theologically inconceivable then that Josef Stalin and Mother Teresa will inhabit the same place. Think about that.’”

A profound misunderstanding exists. The Word of God states that no good work is enough to keep us from hell. Romans 3:10: “There is none righteous, no not one.” Romans

Many, even in evangelical circles, have sought to present a sanitized version of hell — that it is simply a separation from God. Stating it that way, although true as far as it goes, doesn’t sound quite so terrible — particularly to those who are already quite satisfied not to have anything to do with God!

3:23: “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” Titus 3:5: “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us....”

Ephesians 2:8,9: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.”

The *New York Times* article referred to earlier was printed in papers across the country. One headline read: “Americans Still Believe in Heaven; in Hell, Not so Much.” Our sinful, selfish natures want to believe in a good God and a glorious after-life — no matter what we do here on

earth. Yet, it is for sure that Christ spoke more of hell when He walked the earth, than of heaven. To believe in what the Bible teaches concerning heaven, and not believe its teaching on hell is ludicrous. Either it is all true, or none of it is true. Even many ministers no longer preach on hell. Douthat states: “Doing away with hell, then, is a natural way for pastors and theologians to make their God seem more humane.”

Many, even in evangelical circles, have sought to present a sanitized version of hell — that it is simply a separation from God. Stating it that way, although true as far as it goes, doesn’t sound quite so terrible — particularly to those who are already quite satisfied not to have anything to do with God!

But the Scriptures teach that hell is a real place, with specific characteristics. It is repeatedly referred to in the Bible as a “lake of fire.” Mark tells us several times that “the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” Samuel and David tell us that there will be great “sorrows” there, and “pain.” Solomon tells us that it is a place of “destruction.” John tells us that it is a place of “death,” and Matthew tells us that it is a very real “danger,” and a place where the body and soul are “killed,” while still suffering. Christ spoke often of hell, and said it was a place of “damnation.” Luke says it is a place of “torments.” Peter speaks of it as a place of “judgment” with “chains of darkness.”

Folks today find humor in the old revivalists who are often called “hellfire and brimstone preachers.” But, instead, we should all soberly consider the words of Scripture: “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God” (Psalm 9:17). Then, tell the blessed Gospel message to all whom you know: “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23)! •