

English Churchman

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“PRECIOUS IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD IS THE DEATH OF HIS SAINTS”

Psalm 116:15

"Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due ... honour to whom honour."

Romans 13.7

by Mr Stephen Toms

I have come here today to bury one whom I regarded as a very dear friend, a very good friend, and a very great friend.

Mr Albert George Ashdown was affectionately known by many as 'George' but I have always called him 'Mr Ashdown'. He was born at Walton on the Hill in Surrey on May 29th, 1914, less than three months before the commencement of World War I. His mother and father had four sons. He attended a Church school, and he used to say that he there acquired a good understanding of the Romanising influence in the land.

He often related how, when he was young, his aunt would take the boys, with a picnic basket, up to the Protestant Martyrs' memorial on Cliffe Hill, Lewes and there set out the picnic on a tablecloth and tell the stories of the martyrs. Mr Ashdown told us that that was where he learned his Protestantism.

After leaving school he became very successful at work, being employed as a manager in a seed shop in Sussex. I have heard him describe seeds as 'fascinating things'. In the shop there were rows and rows of drawers, each containing seeds of different shapes, different sorts, and different forms.

In private life, he became a scout master and in this movement met Miss Marjorie Nancy Over, who was a scout mistress. They married in Brighton Road Baptist Church, Horsham in Sussex on December 4th, 1937, less than two years before the commencement of World War II. I never met the first Mrs Ashdown, but my mother and father knew her and thought highly of her.

When hostilities broke out in 1939, Mr Ashdown was called upon to serve king and country. He was a medical orderly in the army during the war and witnessed many unpleasant and disturbing things during that time whilst he served in Africa, coming up through Egypt to the Middle East, and later in

Italy. He understood something of the awfulness of war.

At the end of the war, in 1945, he felt the call to Christian ministry and became the pastor at the High Street Baptist Church in Isleham, Cambridgeshire. He had some happy years there, and he particularly liked baptising believers in the River Lark, where the great C.H. Spurgeon had been baptised.

He had, however, been brought into Protestant lecturing a long while before all this. In 1936, at the 400th anniversary of the death of William Tyndale, he had been called upon to give a lecture upon the great Bible translator and martyr. And it seems obvious that this work of lecturing was the service which God had determined for Mr Ashdown. He left Isleham and joined the Protestant Truth Society. It was in this Society that he had much to do with Mr J.A. Kensit, whose father had been murdered by Romanists in Liverpool. He had many interesting and witty stories of his days with Mr Kensit. For example, he made a model, and on presenting it to Mr Kensit, he told him it was a 'protestant' one. When Mr Kensit asked what he meant, he said it was completed on the 12th July and was made from orange boxes.

It was when Mr Ashdown joined the P.T.S. that I first came into contact with him. Mr Philip Rand had been asked to preach at the mission hall I attended, but Mr Rand was just about to go to Bournemouth, so he said he would send Mr Ashdown. I shall never forget that first time we heard him. He spoke on Samuel's circuit and he brought out so many interesting things from his knowledge of the places in the Middle East. I would have loved to have heard that sermon again, but I never did.

From that time our friendship grew. Mr Ashdown left the P.T.S. and joined the Protestant Alliance as their deputation secretary. I had not previously heard of the Protestant Alliance, which indicates how the Lord used His dear servant in the building up of this work.

When my wife and I moved to Chelmsford it was not long before Mr Ashdown started making regular visits to the church we had joined. Our people gained much from his spiritual ministry. The first time he came to Chelmsford, he spoke at our children's meeting and was due to take the main meeting later in the evening. But a terrible thick fog descended and hardly anybody turned up. I told him he

should go home rather than lecture to the few that were there, but he seemed reluctant to do that. However, he ultimately agreed and I took him to the railway station - he had no car in those days. The return fare to London at that time was six shillings and sixpence, so I gave him a £1 note in the hope that would cover his expenses. To my surprise, he used that note to pay his fare home, and I could only assume that he had no money and was relying on a collection to get home. That certainly was the way he had to work in those early days.

He continued his lectures in various meetings all over the United Kingdom and, as far as I am aware, he was the only person doing such work. These lectures were mainly on historical subjects and were extremely informative. For myself, I was very desirous of hearing them whenever I could, and it was a joy to listen to the same lecture over and over again as he always brought out different details on the subjects being considered.

But there were other things he did apart from lecturing. He more or less, with the help of Mr Gutteridge, ran the office of the Protestant Alliance for many years. For that reason, he was always reluctant to stay anywhere overnight as he would say that he had to get back to start office work early the next morning. Amongst the things accomplished in the office, there was the usual publication of tracts and accounts of the lives of many martyrs.

Then there was the work at the shows, in which he manifested an extremely keen interest. In later years, I was pleased to be able to join him in this work and it astounded me that he had carried on for so long on his own. He used to set it all up, opening up the little trailer that he had made, and he gave a superb display. I found that the models that he himself had made were very useful, being a great attraction to children, who frequently pulled their parents over to have a look. At these county shows, he used his considerable knowledge. He could speak to farmers about seeds, and plants, and trees, but he spoke equally intelligently about the various animals - sheep, pigs, cattle, goats, etc. But he would always come back to the gospel, and the Roman controversy, being equally a master in these subjects.

He also did a tremendous amount in organising and conducting martyr memorial meetings. I understand that the first gathering of this kind was at

Ely, now in Cambridgeshire. I well remember when the first such meeting at Brentwood in Essex in memory of the boy martyr, William Hunter, was arranged. It was in 1953, 52 years ago. My father was extremely interested in this meeting and organised for a party of people to walk to Brentwood from North Romford! The many meetings of this kind were faithfully continued, through thick and thin, with or without much support throughout subsequent years.

He had a great interest in the Waldensians and, year by year, organised holidays in that area of North Italy, where these early Protestants resided. He loved telling the history of this people. And he wrote a book entitled, 'The General with the Wooden Leg'.

Then, of course, there was his visiting of Canada in the cause of Protestantism.

He continued working to an age when most men would have retired much earlier in life. That was, no doubt, because he loved the work. In fact, he used to say that he would rather wear out than rust out.

He had a good wit and all that knew him personally would have heard many of the stories of incidents in his life which he considered to be highly amusing.

So much else could be said, and some may feel I have omitted things that ought to have been said. But it would be impossible to give the history of such a full life in so few minutes.

After being a widower for some time, he married Miss Pat Bell on March 14th 1992. The present Mrs Ashdown has sought to look after him in these latter years, when his physical strength began to wane.

Following a period of incapacity, he has now been received into glory, washed in the immaculate Blood of the Spotless Lamb of God, Who came to save poor and needy sinners. Mr Ashdown believed the Bible to be the Word of God. He held tenaciously to the Authorised Version of Holy Scripture. And he understood that the way of salvation revealed in the Bible is the only way of salvation. He trusted not in his own merits or abilities, but solely in the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

For that reason, he may not have wished for a lot to be said about him-

self, but this Bible says "Remember them... who have spoken unto you the Word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation."

I described him at the start of this tribute as a very dear, a very good, and a very great friend. I believe he was a great man. There is so much else which could be said about him. But I finish, seeking to emphasise that he was to me, and many others, a very real friend.

Mr A.G. Ashdown's funeral was conducted by Mr Stephen A. Toms; Mr Jeremy Bailey read the Scripture; and Dr. S.J. Scott-Pearson led in prayer at the graveside. Halland Chapel folk kindly recorded the service, and cassettes may be obtained from them or from Mr Toms, 1 Donald Way, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 9JB. Tel: 01245-268815.

“Let God Arise, Let His Enemies Be Scattered”

Psalm 68:1

This edition of the English Churchman, like all editions, is dedicated to the glory of God. We thank God especially for the Protestants who were burned by Roman Catholic Queen "Bloody" Mary. This tribute to Mr Ashdown shows how his religion and ours stands in stark contrast to the blasphemies of the Roman Catholic Church and the Pope. The biblical Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is the most precious thing in this world as it saves even the worst sinner out of misery and into everlasting life. Rome on the other hand is an absolute misery offering no hope. It is most disturbing that our people both rich and poor, educated and illiterate, from the least to the greatest have become almost utterly ignorant about this. Furthermore, the majority of those who are not ignorant, are silent! We pray that God will have mercy on us as a nation and that he will once more send forth the glorious Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ with power from on high and with His Holy Spirit. In previous dark ages He has thus dispelled the superstitions of Rome from our shores and raised people up to live to His praise and glory.

"GOD Shall Send Them STRONG DELUSION, That They Should Believe A Lie"

2 Thessalonians 2:11

by Rev Peter Ratcliff

This edition of the *English Churchman* is written to the Glory of God and with much heartache. One has experienced hours of great distress and sorrow as the awfulness of the scene before us is observed. It is tragic to watch a deluded nation that was once Great Britain bowing her knee to the false god of the Roman Catholic Church. It is abhorrent that Her Majesty the Queen's Prime Minister changed the day of the announcement of the General Election and that the heir to throne changed the date of his marriage to fit in with the burial of a man whose teachings are leading more than a billion souls to hell.

This edition of the *English Churchman* is definitely not a tribute to the Pope but if it is a tribute to men it is rather to those who have suffered at the hands of the papacy for the truth of the Gospel. It is in memory of our martyrs killed 450 years ago in the year 1555 under the evil papist Queen "Bloody" Mary. Yet for such wickedness Pope John Paul II followed the pride of previous Popes as a man of sin without repentance. The pope claims infallibility. We therefore righteously and soberly judge that the Pope was not infallibly good but rather, like his predecessor Judas Iscariot, infallibly wicked.

While this all sounds so negative and critical it is important to remember that light shines best in darkness. As one said of the Protestant Reformation, it is often darkest just before the dawn. One has felt in preparing this edition that it will either earn one praise or, if it was still in operation, the gallows. We desire neither of these but rather that the will of God is done and we are praying fervently that this will be used to break the chains of ignorance that bind this sleepy nation.

The Bible reminds us that we fight not against flesh and blood but against spiritual wickedness, evil powers. Therefore it is in prayer that we seek not to take revenge upon the enemies of the Gospel, but that they might be saved. Like the Bible, our prayer is that our brethren according to the flesh will be saved and become our brethren according to the Spirit by the glorious work of justification by faith alone by grace alone to the glory of God alone.

Chapter 2 of the Second Letter to the Thessalonians refers to a certain "Man of Sin" who traditionally and reasonably is understood to be the Papacy. Not many today agree with this because that same chapter speaks of "strong delusion" sent by God that punishes the wicked before they are destroyed. Perhaps like never before we can say that this is a time when people are under "strong delusion". However the book then says, "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you" and that because they are not deluded but rather are chosen by God and saved by His grace as they are called by the Gospel and have a good and comfortable hope of obtaining the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is time to strike hard at the various delusions to reprove the unfruitful works of darkness (Ephesians 5.11). It is as if we help

to save some by dragging them out of a burning house.

The Strong Delusion of New Evangelicals

In an ambiguous statement sent to Assist News Service, Billy Graham said of the Pope, "He was convinced that the complex problems of our world are ultimately moral and spiritual in nature, and only Christ can set us free from the shackles of sin and greed and violence... May his death remind each of us that some day we too must die and enter into God's presence... and may we each commit ourselves afresh to Jesus Christ, who died and rose again for our salvation." This was no surprise as Graham had previously commended the Pope. Graham was supposedly a great evangelist leading people out of darkness but Romanism is darkness. Such contradictions are so damaging to the cause of Christ as disgruntled Romanists may decide that they should not make the costly decision to leave Rome after all.

Neither was it a surprise to hear so many Church of England bishops praising the Pope as they have proved themselves time and again to be thoroughly downgraded from biblical standards for ministers. Would a real Anglican Bishop outside the Free Church or the Continuing Church please stand up! Are you shepherds or wolves! The supposedly evangelical Bishop of Liverpool, a supposed follower and admirer of the firm anti-ritualist Nineteenth Century Bishop of Liverpool JC Ryle, praised the Pope! We feel to write a new verse of amazement to Wesley's, "And Can it Be!"

However a greater tragedy, although we can hardly call it a surprise, was to receive a press release from the Evangelical Alliance praising the Pope. This explains why they were so pathetic in their treatment of the penal substitution hater, Steve Chalke. We do not mean to be unkind but we must stand for the truth, not merely the truth as an idea but the Truth as it is in the life and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is impossible to stand with Him and with those who degrade Him by denying crucial doctrines. A 'Jesus' who did not suffer and die in my place to take the chastisement or punishment that brought about my peace is not the real Jesus. Those who give us a half saviour give us no saviour at all. Can it really be that the EA had to keep Chalke on board so as not to have appeared hypocritical in praising the Pope!

The Strong Delusion of the Public

Another "strong delusion" that has been highlighted since the death of the Pope is that of the British public in general. Christians and others have recently been active in opposing certain authorities such as the BBC with its blasphemous programmes and there are also pro-life initiatives as well

as campaigns to pressure MPs and Members of the House of Lords to give us better laws rather than abandoning decency and morality. However the death of the Pope has shown what evangelicals really knew already, that the problem is not merely moral but spiritual.

By spiritual delusion we mean that there is ignorance of the Word of God. That is the root of immorality but it is also the root of the spread of the doctrines of cults and the greatest cult is Rome. Technically Rome may be an apostate (turned away from the truth) church but effectively that is a cult.

Because of spiritual delusion when an important person dies, the people's dumbed down consciences prick them a little and they go into a religious frenzy. As a result they grab at whatever they see and do whatever they imagine appropriate. If it is to bring flowers they do that and if it is to fly to Rome they do that. The Roman Catholic Church feeds on this like pop music seduces children. The scenes of adulation in the media are reminiscent of Beatlemania. They once claimed to be more popular than Christ but now the Pope as antichrist is even more popular than the Beatles!

The Strong Delusion of Political Correctness

We love Roman Catholics. They live next door to us and in the flat above and we get on well. However, political correctness claims that the hatred of popery is religious hatred and therefore wicked. Therefore many Christians are scared to speak out about the evil of Rome or of any other false religion or any other sinful belief or practice. The Christian commandment is to love your enemies. The Christian prays that his unbelieving neighbours will be converted. He loves them. He prays for them whether they are atheists, Roman Catholics, unconverted Protestants, Muslims, Buddhists, Sodomites or worshippers of Star Trek. If he did not love them he would not pray for them but would want them to die in their sins.

Any who seek evil to their neighbour are not Christians. Those who confuse sincere Christians with thugs are themselves wicked brainwashed deluded fools or are being unkind and deceitful in order to silence lawful debate in society.

So the next time you hear all the nonsense about religious hatred please expose it for what it is ... another lie of the devil.

The Strong Delusion of Ecumenism

Roman Catholic Religion according to its own doctrinal statements, whether those of the 16th or late 20th Centuries absolutely always denies the pure Gospel of salvation and replaces it with its own system. Our cri-

tique is as sure and fair as could be. If a political party accuses another of lies or deceit, even if done in the strongest of terms, it is never accused of hatred. Such stifling of religious debate and discussion feeds anti-Protestant anti-Gospel feeling and keeps people under "strong delusion".

This is aided and abetted by the Ecumenical Movement and now the InterFaith movement which are liberal takeovers to destroy distinctive features of religions. It could destroy all religions but the effect on the Gospel is particularly damaging as evangelical religion is the only religion from God that gives all the credit or glory to God for the salvation of man.

The Strong Delusion of Silence

Some Evangelicals say that their actions speak louder than words so they won't speak out! Ask any advertising company how that will work! This strong delusion of silence means that the few evangelicals who do speak out are thought to be a tiny minority and are ridiculed.

The Strong Delusion of The Media

Subjecting the soul to the Papacy, like submitting to Islam is a strong delusion. An example is that according to Roman teaching, which is the Pope's own teaching, the dead Pope is in the torment and terror of purgatory until his so-called beatification. However from the way it has all been portrayed anyone would think he was in heaven already. There is now total confusion as to whether people should be praying for the Pope or praying to him so he will pray for them. The whole thing is absurd at best. Even the *Independent* newspaper described it as being a cult, ie a personality cult. Have the press nearly exposed the manipulation behind it all as the media are milked for all they are worth. But then it works both ways as deluded viewers are glued to their TVs.

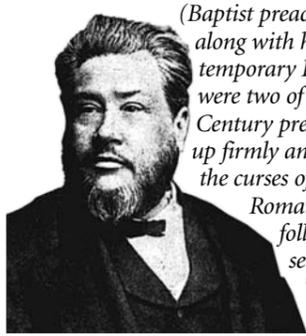
God is Sovereign

However just as God has sent strong delusion, so it is only God who can remove the scales from the eyes. We must pray fervently and specifically for this, like victorious Elijah who was a mere man like us but was heard to the peril of false gods and to the glory of Almighty God.

◆
Rev Peter Ratcliff is minister of St John's, South Wimbledon and editor of this newspaper

Give No Glory to this Rubbish!

By Charles Haddon Spurgeon



(Baptist preacher CH Spurgeon along with his Anglican contemporary Bishop JC Ryle were two of the very few 19th Century preachers who stood up firmly and clearly against the curses of liberalism and Roman Catholicism. The following is from a sermon entitled, "Christ the Glory of His People")

Alas! alas! It makes a Christian's blood boil to see glory given to a pack of scamps who call themselves priests!

Does it not make a man feel, when you see pictures of 'his holiness' and the cardinals, and so on, scattering their benedictions at the Vatican, or at St. Peter's, while admiring crowds fall down and worship them, that it were infinitely better to bow to the devil himself?

We give glory unto God, but not a particle of glory to anything in the shape of a man, or an angel either.

'I have marvelled to see people so infatuated as to think that such idolatry was pleasing to the most high God.'

Have I not stood and seen the crowds by hundreds fall down and worship images and dressed up dolls? I have seen them worship bones and old teeth; I have seen them worship a skeleton, dressed out in modern costume said to be the skeleton of a saint.

I have marvelled to see people so infatuated as to think that such idolatry was pleasing to the most high God.

We, brethren, the people of God, who know Christ, can give no glory to this rubbish, but turn away from it with horror!

Our glory must be given to Christ, and to Christ alone!

Christ and Christ only must be the grand object of the Christian; the promotion of His glory must be that for which he is willing to live, and for which, if needs be, he would be prepared to die.

Oh! down, down, down, with everything else--but up, up, up, with the cross of Christ!

Down with your baptism, and your masses, and your sacraments! Down with your priest-craft, and your rituals, and your liturgies! Down with your fine music, and your pomp, and your robes, and your garments, and all your ceremonials!

But up, up, up, with the doctrine of the naked cross, and the expiring Saviour!

"In Understanding Be Men"

1 Corinthians 14:20

by Rt Rev Edward Malcolm

Understand the 'Mystery' of the Papacy

When the pope before last died, the old father of Canon Cecil Green was ill in bed and he had the radio or TV on, I forget which, and found it all blocked up with the three hour funeral of the pope, and kept saying, "bury him! bury him! get him out of the way! what do we want with him?" That would not have been untypical of the attitude of that generation to the papacy, as of no interest to Englishmen. By contrast, the present goings on have blocked up the media for days.

The cause of Rome is in the ascendant, in spite of falling numbers, the scandal of Calvi, the financial goings on in the Vatican, and dioceses bankrupted by payments out to those wronged by her 'celibate' priests. This is indeed the 'Mystery', of Revelation 13 and 17, that after his "deadly wound was healed", "all the world wondered after the beast". Two hundred world leaders at the funeral plan to "have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast."

Pray "Lord, Open the King of England's Eyes".

That was the dying prayer of Tyndale when burned by the papacy for translating the Bible. In a mere two years Henry reversed his policy and, amazingly, put a Bible in every parish Church.

I note that the Vatican had the choice of four days for the funeral, and chose the day of the royal wedding. Coincidence? No, but a put-down for the British Crown. Were you to say so, the confident, mildly-spoken reply would be, "Of course not, but the Church takes a firm moral stance against the remarriage of divorcees." This is based on certain teachings she has on marriage as a sacrament. Yet you will have seen reported in your newspaper from time to time some prominent RC divorced, remarried and continues to be accepted at the Mass. How come? It is because Rome is two-faced. Outwardly she is orthodox, the most orthodox of all churches, putting us Protestants to shame. However, when you look deeper, she acts according to expediency, in this case the weakening of the British Protestant Monarchy. Pray this may open our Monarch's eyes, and ask, "Lord, open the future King of England's eyes."

Teach the Bible Continually

On the Sunday following the death, I pointed

out that whilst ninety five percent of sermons in the land would be on the pope, we would look at the prophet Nahum, as what is exceedingly big to man's way of thinking, is ephemeral and transient, just a cloud of steam, in God's reckoning. What Nahum said about Nineveh well over 2,600 years ago, is of much greater moment today, because it is God's Word.

They will say the pope was the great communicator, who swept youth off its feet in mass rallies, brought the papacy to life again, re-energizing it, was the great pro-life campaigner, the only one indeed who was against the sin of contraception. He was the one who clung to the old, conservative values. The man, who above all others, was beaten into a sword under Stalin's brutal rule, who later, bravely, with gentle but effective words, freed Poland and Eastern Europe from Communism. The saintly man, the soul of humility, who was behind the dream of a united Europe, the intellectual who reached out to non-Christian religions, especially Islam, loved by millions, who weep today. There, they would say, is your important subject! I reply, God's Word through Nahum is far more relevant here and now.

It is obvious that since the various nineteenth century Protestant Societies arose as a bulwark against Rome, she has advanced unchecked. The truth is, the only way of withstanding both Rome and her twin, Islam, both rule-book religions, is to preach the Bible. Taught people do not go off to Rome. My objection to much Gospel preaching today is that it is simply pew-filling for Rome. There is a lack of Bible teaching, the desire to get people in outweighing everything else. Well, you may fill your churches, but what for? The vast majority of Protestantism is now busy admiring the pope, thus proving my contention. Contrast the great living churches of the world. They have long sermons, long services, even of several hours duration, and demand very high standards of the worshippers. They are the ones making headway against Rome and Islam.

Avoid Overstatement

This newspaper, many years ago had correspondence about certain matters alleged against Rome. A reply appeared saying, an accusation is made that a man and a dog disappeared whilst in the custody of Rome. Rome produces the dog, and laughs off the accusation.

Show Where Rome Has Erred

The proper way is to expound the Bible. The reason is that this both shows a solid basis for our opposition, and just when interest is there in the hearer, enters ear-gate, which is shut to protests. You will inevitably and shortly come to a Bible statement which denies one of the teachings of Rome. It is both cowardly and wrong to preach, say, on the Beatitude "Blessed are the meek", and not point out the pride of the papal pretensions; or, "I am the way, the truth and the life", and not refer to Rome. In Vatican II the Roman Church, for the first time, took the position that God reveals Himself in all faiths:

"Each branch of the human family possesses in itself and in its worthier traditions some part of the spiritual treasure entrusted by God to humanity, even though many do not know the source of this treasure."

Pope John-Paul worshipped in a mosque, according to the BBC report, a practice which, even by being present at such prayers, is a denial of the Faith and of the Trinity, but accords with Vatican II. The way things are

heading is for one world religion, mainly the joining up of Rome and Islam. We should indeed suffer were that so.

Take another example, it is a sin to preach on say, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake...", or "I am made all things to all men..." and not to point out Rome's error at Vatican II, when it was said epistemology also involved the adaptation or accommodation of the Gospel to the world's wisdom:

"(The church) has learned to express the message of Christ with the help of ideas and terminology of various peoples, and has tried to clarify it with the wisdom of philosophers, too. Her purpose has been to adapt the gospel to the grasp of all as well as the needs of the learned, insofar as such is appropriate. Indeed, this accommodated preaching of the revealed Word ought to remain the law of all evangelization. For thus each nation develops the ability to express Christ's message in its own way. At the same time, a living exchange is fostered between the Church and the divers cultures of the people ... she must rely on those who live in the world, are versed in the different institutions and specialities, and grasp their innermost significance in the eyes of both believers and unbelievers."

That is a new agenda for missions. Previously the Roman Church added the traditions of the church to the Scriptures as normative for believers. Now:

"This sacred synod affirms the legitimate authority of human culture and especially the sciences".

That is a call for a synthesis of the theories of science and Christianity. Hear Vatican II again:

"Let them blend modern science and its theories and the understanding of the most recent discoveries with Christian morality and doctrine."

Who rules, the Word of God, or unbelieving science?

Conclusion

The next pope is likely to advance the cause of Rome the same way as the rest, by expediency dressed up as principle, denial of the faith masquerading out front as perfect orthodoxy. Let us rise up and pray and preach, letting the light of God's Word in on Rome. Let every preacher find out what Rome is really like, in the way our Reformers understood. An Irish lady converted from Rome said to me, "I understand the whole system thoroughly."

Edward Malcolm is presiding bishop of the Church of England (Continuing) and editor of 'The Gospel Magazine'.

"THE SIMPLICITY THAT IS IN CHRIST"

2 Corinthians 11.3

BY REV GORDON MURRAY

It is understandable that widespread publicity would be given to the death of a man who has been so prominent in world affairs.

Whatever the late Pope's earthly achievement, nothing has altered the Roman errors concerning the way of salvation. All the ceremonial at the present is very far from the simplicity of the New Testament church.

The need for a clear Protestant voice to be heard in our nation is more necessary than ever.

Rev Gordon Murray is Chairman of the Protestant Truth Society

WELCOME TO THE

83RD ANNUAL FINCHLEY BIBLE CONVENTION

AT KENSIT EVANGELICAL CHURCH,
104 Hendon Lane, Finchley, London N3

Thursday 16 June 2005 - 8pm

Speaker: Rev Alun McNabb (Staffordshire)

Friday 17th June 2005 - 8pm

Speaker: Rev Peter Landy (Muswell Hill)

Saturday 18th June - 2.15pm

PUBLIC SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING
CENTENARY OF KENSIT MEMORIAL BIBLE COLLEGE

Chairman: Rev Philip H. Eveson MA MTH

(Principal of London Theological Seminary)

Speaker: Rev Gordon Murray MA

(Former Principal - Chairman of Protestant Truth Society Council)

Lord's Day 19th June 11am-6.30pm

Preacher: Rev Stephen Clark (Bridgend)

FRIENDS DESIRING FULL BOARD ACCOMMODATION FROM THURSDAY TEA-TIME TO MONDAY BREAKFAST SHOULD BOOK NOW SENDING PART PAYMENT OF £20 TO RON PEARCE, KENSIT MEMORIAL COLLEGE, 104 HENDON LANE, LONDON N3 3SQ TOTAL CONFERENCE FEES £85

“WOE unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!”

Isaiah 5:20

by Pastor Ralph Ovadal

As I write this, Pope John Paul II is near death. Once he draws his last breath, a Vatican official will lightly tap three times upon the deceased pontiff's forehead with a golden hammer and call his name. Upon receiving no reply, the cardinal chamberlain will remove John Paul's fisherman's ring and smash it. Thus begins the pagan Romish spectacle of choosing and crowning a new pope.

The pope's death is the dawn of a defining moment for all who claim to be born-again followers of Jesus Christ, whether they call themselves Protestant or evangelical or just plain Christian. It does not take a prophet to state that the passing of Pope John Paul II will trigger a flood of statements and discussions among Christian pro-family leaders, talk show hosts, and nationally known preachers. It also does not take a prophet to know that the dead pope will have mountains of compliments heaped upon him by many of those same individuals. Going a step further, it is safe to say that the presupposition underlying those eulogies and the recurring theme at the heart of them will be that the pope was a wonderful, godly man, a Christian who is now in heaven.

As I said, this is a defining moment. It is, in fact, an evangelistic moment catching the attention of virtually the entire world. What should any true follower of Jesus say about such a man as Pope John Paul II? What should one who has assumed a role as a shepherd of Christ's flock or a spokesman for His Church say about the pope? Plainly and simply put, they should say that John Paul II was a counterfeit, a minister of Satan (2 Corinthians 11:13-15). They should tell the truth that he was an accursed man who deceived millions. Those who cannot tell the truth should not say anything. Those evangelical leaders who feel so compelled to express their affection and respect for Pope John Paul II do not seem to know or care that they are at the same time showing anything but love for the Roman Catholic people whom the pope has deceived and enslaved. They are certainly not showing respect for the Word of God which the pope, that man of sin, trod underfoot and the blood of Jesus which he counted as an unholy thing.

The pope preached the false Roman Catholic gospel which features a false Christ who cannot save without the aid of priests practicing pagan rituals and penitents performing works and a pagan goddess sharing her favours. The pope blasphemed the Lord Jesus Christ as a way of life, most especially during the mass when he claimed to call down our Great High Priest from

the right hand of the Majesty in heaven and turn Him into a wafer and a goblet of wine. The pope blasphemed against the Holy Spirit, claiming to displace Him as Christ's

The tragedy which is upon us and which the pope's death will clearly emphasize once more is the dearth of integrity, discernment, and courage among evangelical-or should I say neo-evangelical-leaders in our nation.

substitute and voice on this earth. The pope championed the cause of the Roman Catholic Virgin Mary goddess. He prayed to her, worshiped her, and adored her. He consecrated the nations to her. He endorsed and reveled in her demonic apparitions. He credited her with saving his life.

There is so much which could be said about Pope John Paul II, about his corrosive, damning influence and his pagan practices. But why belabour the point? The truth has been apparent for all to see for twenty-six years. And simply put, the pope was a pope. The nature of popes is the nature of antichrist because they are antichrist just as the Roman Catholic Church is the woman who rides the beast as described in Revelation chapter 17. That the pope and his church are evil is an understatement. The Word of God shows the pope to be an accursed man no matter what good causes he may have championed.

The tragedy which is upon us is not the death of the pope, although neither will we revel in the death nor damnation of any man. The tragedy which is upon us and which the pope's death will clearly emphasize once more is the dearth of integrity, discernment, and courage among evangelical-or should I say neo-evangelical-leaders in our nation. Remaining silent at this time, as reprehensible as that is, would be a vast improvement to the message many such leaders will feel the need to proclaim. The world's impression that Pope John Paul II was a true Christian man leading the true Christian Church, teaching the true Christian gospel will be strongly reinforced by the accolades heaped upon the pope by evangelical leaders. At the same time, the great milling mixture of sheep and goats which fill up the evangelical church-

es in our land will be further compromised and confused. The death of Pope John Paul II is a defining moment which will reveal the hearts of many who present themselves as born-again, blood-washed followers of Jesus Christ but by their words will reveal that they are either not His or that they should not publicly represent Him.

Reams of paper could be expended documenting the heresy of Pope John Paul II and citing the Scripture verses proving that such a man is not a Christian, not a servant of God, and will not be a citizen of heaven. But in reality, Galatians chapter one, verses eight and nine should settle that matter:

"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."

Ralph Ovadal is pastor of Pilgrims Covenant Church, Monroe, Wisconsin, Director of Wisconsin Christians United and hosts <http://www.theheartofthematteronline.org/> radio programme.

There is an excellent interview with ex RC priest Richard Bennet on this subject at <http://www.sermonaudio.com>

“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away”

1 Tim. 3:5

by Rt Rev David N. Samuel

We should be in no doubt as to what the papacy represents when the titles which belong to Almighty God are ascribed to a man in the Vatican - 'Holy Father', 'Vicar of Christ', the 'Vicegerent of God on earth'. We should be in no doubt as to the real character of the Roman Catholic priesthood when it arrogates to itself the power to bring God down upon the altar at the word of command and to offer the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary to the Father. We should be in no doubt about the nature of a church that binds the Word of God in fetters of human tradition and enslaves the conscience with man-made laws. All these things make it an apostate church, an unfaithful harlot church. Yet the ecumenical movement has succeeded in creating a climate in which these errors are regarded with equanimity by many Protestant Christians, who even consider that they are not wholly incompatible with their own beliefs.

Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones described the Church of Rome as 'Satan's masterpiece' for this reason, that it seeks to overthrow Christianity not by open, frontal assault, but by counterfeiting its doctrines and presenting its own version to the world

as the truth. In Scripture it is spoken of as "the mystery of iniquity", which sets out to work in the Church in opposition to "the mystery of godliness". And even in the apostle Paul's day, Satan was initiating that apostasy which, beginning in small ways in the Church, would in time grow to become universal. The mystery of iniquity is not open sin and wickedness, but dissembled piety, specious errors, wickedness under the form of godliness, cunningly managed, which is why the apostle warns specifically against it and gives clear instruction concerning it. They will be men, he says, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (1 Tim. 3:5). Shun them, have nothing to do with them.

David Samuel is a founding bishop of the Church of England (Continuing) and author of among other things the excellent book "Pope or Gospel?" which was written in 1982 to challenge the first visit of a Pope to the United Kingdom. The above is taken from his recent book "The Church in Crisis" p. 128 - 129, and is available from the Protestant Truth Society, 184 Fleet Street, London EC4A 2HJ for £3.95 inc. P&P.

In the multitude of Counsellors there is safety *Proverbs 11:14*

by Rev John Macleod

The Westminster Assembly was probably the greatest gathering of learned and godly men ever

held over the period between the apostolic age and the present. The Westminster divines were very careful to define the status of the Pope of Rome and they declared him to be no head of the church but that Man of Sin and Son of Perdition who exalteth himself in the church etc. It is a testimony to the strength of the delusion to which people are given over, and the Bible tells us they are given over to a strong delusion, that we find all this adulation on the death of John Paul II.

It is particularly sad that President Bush should regard him as the successor of Peter and that he should assign him that place in so definite a manner. It is also sad that Prince Charles and Camilla were present at the Mass, as I understand it, at Westminster Cathedral together with all the prominent political leaders in Britain. Britain is a Protestant nation and in what is written of its constitution, clearly declares the Pope to be the man of sin. It is difficult for those who are endeavouring to adhere to the principles and doctrines which were held by the Reformers to get their voice heard.

If we believe what we are preaching and agree what is the body of doctrine we are to maintain, assert and defend then we must surely make known our minds clearly as far as the Papacy is concerned. After all whatever men may say now, Calvin regarded it as "Satan's Masterpiece".

Rev John Macleod is a minister of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland

“...one mediator between God and men”

1 Timothy 2:5

by Rev Dominic Stockford

I am appalled to see the way that this country, a historical bastion of the true faith, scriptural and Godly, bends over backwards at the death of a man. We did not respond in this way to the death of hundreds of thousands in Indonesia - including true believers - why are so many doing this now. The sight of the heir to the British throne, supposedly the next defender of the Protestant and Reformed Faith, joining in prayers for a dead man whose denomination does so much to lead so many astray by teaching that which is unbiblical and ungodly is beyond belief.

The Vicar of Rome committed Karol Wojtyla into the hands of the 'Mother of God' - unable

even at this most public of times to accept that it is Jesus Christ alone who is our mediator, Jesus Christ alone in whom lies salvation, Jesus Christ alone by whom we can be justified. My prayer, forlorn as it may be, is that the next pope will be an 'accident' and will sweep away the lies and additions taught by Rome, turning those who misguidedly follow that church back to the Gospel, back to Jesus Christ, back to truth, and into Salvation.

Rev Dominic Stockford is the minister of Christ Church, Teddington, and describes himself as "now living in the freedom of the Gospel after 'escaping' from the clutches of Rome".

English Churchman EVENTS DIARY APRIL 2005

Saturday April 16th

REMEMBERING PROTESTANT
MARTYR ROWLAND HILL OF
HADLEIGH
Study Day including guided tour
St Mary's, Hadleigh
01449 740673

Lord's Day April 17th

10.30am
COMMEMORATION SERVICE LED BY
THE BISHOP OF IPSWICH
St Mary's, Hadleigh
01449 740673

Monday April 18th 8pm,

MARTYR COMMEMORATION
MEETINGS
Faversham, The Gospel Mission,
Tanners Street,
Speaker: Mr. Chris Richards

**Wednesday April 20th
7.30pm**

**Sovereign Grace Union (Surrey
Auxiliary)**
Col. DV Underwood (London)
Bethel Chapel
The Bars
Guildford
Enquiries: Mr. Charles Sleeman
01428 643488

**Friday April 22nd
Sovereign Grace Advent
Testimony**

SERIES OF STUDIES CONCERNING
THE LIFE OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST
4:00pm - His First Miracle, J A Green
7:00pm - The Sermon on the Mount,
J A Green
New Life Bible Presbyterian Church,
Salisbury Road, London, N.W.6.
S.G.A.T. Secretary: Stephen A Toms,
Enquiries: 01245 268815

**Monday 25th April 10.30am
for 11am**

JOHN OWEN CENTRE DAY SEMINAR
**"Style or Substance? - 21st Century
Holiness"**
Mostyn Roberts and David Green
£15 including lunch
Please pre-book on 020 8346 7587

Thursday April 28th 7.30pm

'Ebenezer' Chapel, Chelmsford
TRINITARIAN BIBLE SOCIETY
Speaker: D. Allen
Enquiries: 01245 268815

Friday April 29th

EAST CORNWALL CHRISTIAN
RENDEZVOUS
The Power of God
Bruce Jenkins - Berkshire
Contact: John Hollins 01503 264062
John Hooper 01752 843300
Peter Isaac 01503 272586

**Saturday April 30th
From 10.00am - 4.45pm**

CREATION.
Professor Andrew C. McIntosh
(University of Leeds)
(Bring own lunch, drinks provided)
St John's Congregational Church
Bensham Manor Rd
Thornton Heath
Details: Rev Peter Taylor on
020 8683 0682

"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect"

Matthew 24:24

by Rt Revd Dr J Barry
Shucksmith *Royal Navy (Rtd.)*

I have never met Pope John Paul II. At his death, the media seem to adulate him. The politicians admire his power and influence. Many who have personally met him consider him to be an outstanding human being. Thousands see him as the liberator of former communist countries and the champion of human rights and the cause of the poor. The only information I have to guide me is in his writings and the claims of the Roman Catholic Church which he has served with remarkable zeal and unremitting diligence. I have several friends and some close relatives who are Roman Catholics. But love for Roman Catholics and respect for relatives and friends alike is no reason for remaining silent, at this present time. Neither are threatening laws to religious incitement or misguided ecumenical pretence. Indeed, what could be more unloving than to remain silent and give the impression that all religions are true and the Roman Catholic Church is the truest of all?

*...there is not one text
in Scripture which
states that the
supreme authority of
the Church would be
vested in one person.*

In the same chapter that Jesus says, 'judge not, that ye be not judged, he also warns us, 'not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven' (Matthew 7:1,21). The Apostle John, apostle of love, exhorts us, 'Little children let no man deceive you', (1 John 3:7) and again, 'Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world' (1 John 4:1). Christians are not intended to be weak and gullible people who accept every claim made in the name of Jesus Christ. They are to test all things. They are to bring all matters to the touchstone of Scripture, for 'doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness' (2 Timothy 3:16). Why? Because the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachings, having itching ears; and shall be turned unto fables' (2 Timothy 4:3-4). Surely, these words apply to all beliefs whether they claim to be catholic, evangelical, cultic, or even secular? True Christians settle for the finality of the Word of God - 'let God be true, but every man a liar' (Romans 3:4).

The latest edition of the Roman Catholic Catechism (1994) states: The Pope, Bishop of Rome and Peter's Successor, 'is the perpetual and visible source and foundation of the unity both of the bishops and of the whole company of the faithful. For the Roman Pontiff, by reason of his office as Vicar of Christ, and as pastor of the entire Church has full, supreme and universal power over the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered.' (para 882 The Episcopal College and its head, the Pope).

Is the Pope the Vicar of Christ? Will the newly-elected 265th Bishop of Rome be truly Christ's Vicar? If this is true it is incredible beyond words. If not, it is a blasphemy and deceit of the most wicked kind imaginable. What could be more serious than to claim direct appointment and authority by Christ, without credibility? If it is false, such must surely come top of our Lord's list of warnings, 'and many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many', 'for there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect' (Matthew 24:11, 24).

It has always been the understanding of the Protestant churches that these claims are outrageous. Only in recent years have Protestants failed to bring these teachings before their congregations. A new spirit of 'love and unity' prevails which demands acceptance of one another, of equal Christian claims, without rigorous biblical analysis. Truth has given way to so-called love. Historical belief is exchanged for freedom to hold any belief you like. Some even dare to suggest, truth no longer matters as long as we all get on together. All faiths must unite in order to unite the world. They forget that our Lord Jesus Christ failed to unite any religious bodies. He did not even try to bring Sadducee and Pharisee, Samaritan and Jew together, for true unity is not to be found in any sinful human person, or in the best of faith-bodies. There can never be unity without incorporation into Christ Himself. Rebirth of the Holy Spirit is essential for entrance into the kingdom of God. 'Christ is the Head of the Body, the Church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence' (Colossians 1:18). Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all

"DRUNKEN WITH THE BLOOD OF THE SAINTS AND WITH THE BLOOD OF THE MARTYRS OF JESUS"

Revelation 17.6



by John Milton (1608-1674)

The following poem was written by Milton about the massacre of Protestants by Roman Catholics in Italy in the 17th Century. It alludes to Tertullian's famous phrase, "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church" and the parable of the sower (Matthew 13:3-9) where the seed that fell on good ground brought forth as much as a hundredfold.

Sonnet XVIII**'On the Late Massacre in
Piemont'**

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones
Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold,
Ev'n them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipp'd stocks and stones;
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese that roll'd
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubl'd to the hills, and they
To Heav'n. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
O'er all th' Italian fields where still doth sway
The triple tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundred-fold, who having learnt thy way
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

things are become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17).

In fact, the Vicar whom our Saviour appointed immediately before His sufferings was no mere man, but the Holy Spirit Himself (John 14:16,17, 26. John 15:26 and John 16:7, 13-15). Commenting on these verses, Bishop John Charles Ryle says, 'the Holy Ghost is most probably so called because He brings truth especially home to men's hearts, because truth is His great instrument in all His operations and because He bears witness to Christ as the truth ... here our Lord teaches that it is one great mark of the unbelieving and worldly that they neither receive, nor know, nor see anything of the Holy Ghost. This is strikingly true. The indwelling of the Spirit is the true dividing point between the wicked and the godly. Many false professors and unconverted people receive Christ's name and talk of Him, while they know nothing experimentally of the operations of the Holy Spirit. It is written, "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them" ' 1 Corinthians 2:14 (J C Ryle, Expository Thoughts, p82 vol 3 BOTT Edinburgh). Furthermore, commenting on John 16:7, John Calvin shows the value of Christ's body being removed from earth, not to identify Himself in another body (the Pope) but, 'far more advantageous and far more desirable is that presence of Christ, by which He communicates Himself to us through the grace and power of His Spirit, than if He were present before our eyes'.

First, there is not one text in Scripture which states that the supreme authority of the Church would be vested in one person. Second, Scripture expressly forbids all lording of one office over another (Luke 22:25,26). Third, where is it written in Holy Scripture that the other apostles subordinated themselves to Peter? Fourth, our Lord sent them all forth with the same commission (Matthew 28:19, John 20:21-23). Fifth, Peter did visit Antioch where he was rebuked by Paul (Galatians 2:11) but we read nowhere that he had been in Rome, or assumed a primacy over the other churches. In Acts 15, it is James, our Lord's brother, who takes the chair and leads the Church.

The one-sided Roman concentration on ecclesiastical security against wrong doctrines is a strange perversion of the Christian religion. The teaching of Christ was almost entirely on a good life, on overcoming sin. "He shall save His people from their sins." His call was: "Follow Me." His main commandment was love. It is by love that discipleship is proved. It is not underrating the importance of right belief to point out how the chief insistence of our Lord was on a right life. The regarding it as necessary that He should provide a series of Vicars with "plenitude of power" "to defend the truth of faith" is utterly out of keeping with His life. It is due to this fundamental misconception that the promise that the gates of hell shall not prevail against His Church is deflected to the excluding of heresy. "The question is whether God hates error so very much more than He hates sin, that He has taken precautions against the entrance of the one which He has not seen fit to use in order to guard against the other ... His great gift to His people, that of the Holy Spirit, is equally their safeguard against sin and against error. He is equally the Spirit of Truth and the Spirit of Holiness (Salmon, Infallibility of the Church, quoted by Bishop W S Kerr, A Handbook on the Papacy).

We have to ask with great kindness, love for all men, and sensitivity to our many Roman Catholic friends, to say nothing of concern for our own once-Protestant and more-enlightened nation, what does it say about a Church which claims authority for the position occupied by God the Holy Spirit Himself? What are we to make of any occupant of the Papal Throne, known as His Holiness, the Holy Father, the Vicar of Christ? Perhaps the answer is best given by Church of England Bishop John Hooper, whose martyrdom we recall this year, 'seeing that Christ doth govern His Church always by His Holy Spirit and bindeth all the ministers thereof unto the sole Word of God, what abomination is this that any Bishop of Rome, Jerusalem, Antioch, or elsewhere, should claim to be Christ's vicar in the earth, and take upon him to make any laws in the Church of God to bind the conscience of man, beside the Word of God' (Hooper: A Declaration of Christ and His office, 1547, in works, Vol.1, p22 of Theology of the English Reformers Philip E Hughes 1980 Baker House Books).

We should heed the words of Jesus' favoured disciple, the loving Apostle John, 'we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen. (1 John 5:20-21).

Rt Rev Dr J Barry Shucksmith

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(Evangelical Connexion)

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Think Again, Mr Howard

Michael Howard's election campaign has run into trouble on two fronts. First, there is the case of Howard Flight, the Conservative candidate for Arundel and South Downs, and a former party vice-chairman, whom Mr Howard has dismissed for remarks about spending cuts. What Mr Flight had to say at a private meeting was perfectly legitimate and a matter for debate. Britain is heading back in the direction of being a high-tax country. Politicians will have to face these issues, for they will have adverse effects upon the economy. However, we can appreciate Mr Howard's point that the position stated in the Conservative Party Manifesto must be adhered to. Secondly, there is the case of Adrian Hilton, which is altogether different. Mr Hilton had been selected as the Conservative candidate for Slough. He has the full backing of the Constituency Association. However, he has been removed from that position as a consequence of two articles which he had written for the *Spectator* in 2003. In those articles he made two points: one was that the Act of Settlement must be maintained in the face of Roman Catholic attempts to undermine it; and the second was that the EU was a Roman Catholic inspired project which threatened the constitutional position of this country. However, party officials were aware of those articles when Mr Hilton was selected for the seat, and the shadow attorney general has said that there is nothing in either article that is contrary to Conservative philosophy or present party policy.

It seems that John Gummer, formerly an Anglican, who became an RC at the time of the Women's Ordination Measure, and is on the board of the *Catholic Herald*, informed the board of that paper of these articles, which led to it making representations to the Conservative Party to have Mr Hilton removed as the candidate for Slough, which was what the Party then proceeded to do.

In both these cases the judgment of the Party seems to have been harsh and hasty. This is particularly true in the case of Mr Hilton. This is a free country and it ought to be possible to express an opinion both about the Roman Catholic Church and the British Constitution. It is a matter of common knowledge that the Roman Catholic Church has worked ceaselessly to repeal the Act of Settlement. Roman Catholic MPs like Kevin McNamara never miss an opportunity to attack it, and to call for its removal from the statute book. They seem

to be perfectly free to do this, while any public figure who defends the constitutional position is immediately branded by them a bigot and inspired by religious hatred. If the term conservatism means anything at all in politics it must surely stand for the defence and maintenance of the constitutional position which has served this country so well.

That the EU is a project that was inspired from its inception by Roman Catholics is again something that nobody can deny. The founding fathers of the EU are at this time being considered for beatification by the Roman Catholic Church for their contribution to the EU. The late pope has frequently spoken of the EU and its development as infused with the spirit of Roman Catholicism. Last year the *Times* reported that the Roman Catholic Church had come out in support of the EU Constitution and that the Roman Catholic Bishops of England and Wales give their blessing for a 'yes' vote. The *Catholic Herald* itself wrote in an editorial in November 2004 on the EU opposing the admission of Turkey and any further dilution of the spirit of Roman Catholic social teaching which informed the central structures of the EU, and itself uses the phrase "the Catholic roots of the European Union".

Why, then, is it all right for the Church of Rome to make its interest in the progress and success of the EU known, yet it is anathema for anybody else to point this out and warn of the consequences to our nation of its involvement in a Union which is dominated by the RC Church? This is suppression of free speech with a vengeance.

Both the case of Mr Flight and Mr Hilton send warning signals to the nation. Liberal values and the climate of open debate seem to be threatened. Perhaps this is not surprising. They were bequeathed to this nation by its Protestant constitution and history. They were won for us by the martyrs of the Reformation; the struggle of the Puritans under Oliver Cromwell; the stand of the Bishops in the Glorious Revolution; and the continuing influence of the Protestant Reformed religion upon our nation down the centuries. But these influences are now fading. The spirit of intolerance is taking over. We are entering a phase of repression of free speech. The Conservative leaders may not be aware of what is happening, but by their actions they are contributing to the growing ascendancy of intolerance.

NOTES

COMMENT

The Papacy's Failure is still the Devil's Success

While it appears that the Roman Catholic Church has struggled to maintain its position under Pope John Paul II the overall result is not quite as disastrous for them as it might at first seem. With an ever falling number of men entering the priesthood and attendance at Mass diminishing it might be thought that the papist religion was in its death throes. Countries such as Ireland are now almost in complete rebellion against the Man of Sin and his paedophilic priests. It is said that popery is widely despised, not secretly as by a previous generation of submissive people, but now openly by an assertive youth culture.

However the picture for the papacy is not as grim as might be imagined. It must be remembered that behind the grandeur of the Vatican lies the deceit of the devil who leads this counterfeit Christian church that swallows up around a billion souls. The aim of the devil is not so much to triumph with the Pope on his shoulders but to destroy the true church. Here is where the papacy has aided him as the Roman Catholic religion has encouraged her disciples to flirt with Protestants not as with apostates but as separated brethren. The majority of Protestants have taken up a watered down religion with a large measure of worldliness and lack of discernment that has embraced Romanism. They no longer see popery as being the religion of Antichrist, but as just another denomination of the 'true' church.

The result is that many who carry the name Protestant or Christian are now without true saving faith and are on the road to hell. This is a great success for the devil through his Roman Catholic slaves. Consequently the sheep of Christ are scattered running from one church to another to escape the apostasy of ecumenism yet desperate to hear the voice of the Good Shepherd. Here and there some have remained firm and yet the distrust of the church has got so great that many have nowhere they feel at home.

The death of John Paul II is quite insignificant in this whole process which seems quite out of control in human terms as sympathies and speculation and publicity for the papacy fill the news media.

Thank God that the Lord Jesus reigns until He makes His enemies His footstool and that all His people will be saved from their enemies and that the gates of hell shall not prevail as He continues to build His church in each of our towns and throughout the whole world.

Meanwhile the death of the Pope presents a time for true Christians to stand up and be counted. Who will say the Pope is a man of God and of heaven and who will say he is a man of the devil and of hell?

There may be some surprises in heaven but there will be plenty in the days ahead as the Pope is spoken about by religious leaders. He will no doubt be praised by deluded fools who do not know the difference between true Christianity and ecumenical lies. This blasphemous and false 'Holy Father' will be declared by a few brave souls, who cannot deny their One and Only 'Holy Father', to be a son of hell because they know that the leader of the fallen and apostate anti-Christ Church of Rome must be a false teacher under the devil.

Finally in response to cosy evangelicals who claim our writing so much on all this will fright-

en people away, we say this, it will not frighten the elect sheep of God, only the wolves in sheep's clothing. The sheep will realise they are lost and come to the Good Shepherd's voice and the wolves will be scattered.

General Election Hopes

We are not in the business of helping our readers to decide how to vote in the general election. We do of course believe that you should vote for the best people you can who you believe will be the best representative or ruler under God. Yet the heart of the king and the politician too is in the hand of God who can turn these leaders which ever way he will.

However our hopes are not ultimately dependant on politicians but on the life of faith which gets us through all circumstances and political regimes and brings us to our eternal haven of heavenly mansions prepared for us by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

There is now a terribly serious problem with our democracy. It is seen in the rejection by the Conservative Party of Dr Hilton who stood for Christian truth and against Rome. The reason is that the nation has altogether rebelled against and rejected her maker and turned instead to idols of self and wealth. The problem is that the democracy's voters want to vote for unashamed sinfulness and so the parties must appeal to the sinful base nature of fallen man if they are to win an election.

While some of us have been battling against the scourge of so-called political correctness we have failed to grapple with the cause which is the growing dominance of non-Christian ways of thinking in society. While some have been tricked into thinking that the residual decency in the UK was sufficient to keep us afloat and that it did not matter on which religion or guru it was based, others have said 'live and let live' and the devil has been having a field day.

Now the voters will vote for anything but godliness and anything but Christianity and the tactical voting of a few Christians, whether in coalition with other religions or not, will make no difference. There is only one Great Commission and like its Great Commissioner, the Lord Jesus Christ, it is the same yesterday, today and forever. Christians should continue to lobby MPs and stand for office that evil may be restrained but our hope is in the Lord who fights for us and our warfare is spiritual to the bringing down of strongholds. While there are particular times for different things, our Lord is truly a man for all seasons and His Gospel is to be preached to every creature in and out of season.

Christian Mosques and Muslim Cathedrals

In what must be either total confusion or utter deceit the ecumenical and interfaith movements are continuing to swallow up gullible folk. On the one hand a new Dudley Mosque is due to be a place of worship for people of all religions! On the other hand Roman Catholic and Methodist Ecumenical Canons are being appointed to Bath and Wells Cathedral. It must only be a question of time until the Cathedrals go further down the road of apostasy and, as fully blown synagogues of Satan, appoint interfaith Canons from the so called world religions that they hold in such high esteem.

We are told that we cannot say that anything is wicked. It is very unkind to say that anyone or anything is wicked because to do so is unkind and wicked itself. Even true Christians seem to say that we must not say such things.

But "What saith the Lord" should be our position, not as dictators but as fallible men in the light of God's truth. The position that anyone must arrive at to become a Christian is to agree that they are themselves wicked. To deny the absolute universal wickedness of mankind is to deny the Bible, to deny the truth. It is to deny the Righteousness, Holiness and Glory of Almighty God. It brings man up and puts God down. It makes man greater and God lesser. Such liberal doctrine is not a Christian doctrine.

On the contrary the biblical view shows the perfect glorious nature of Almighty God, His holiness, His righteousness, and yes we will come to His love, but first His wrath, the anger of God. God is angry with the wicked every day (Psalm 7:11). He is furious with sinners and all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. All are sinners. None is righteous, no not one. There is not one that seeketh after God. See the Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Romans and chapters one, two and three. If those chapters are not clear on the matter how are we to say that we understand the Scripture at all! These words are very very clearly saying that man is a sinner, he is fallen, he is under the wrath of God because of his sin and it is universal.

So when we say that someone is wicked we mean that they are not a believer, they are not a Christian. We can say it of many things, we are not just picking on one thing or one sin. We could talk about Islam or we could talk about homosexuality or people who are living together intimately but not married. We can talk about other religions, we can talk about Roman Catholicism, we can talk about Atheism, we can talk about liberal so-called Christianity which

denies the absolute authority of the Bible and replaces it with human ideas and thoughts. We can talk about all these different ideas and religions and the people who follow them as being wicked and evil.

Of course as Christians we would accept ourselves as wicked. I have no righteousness of my own and no good thing dwelleth in me. (Romans 7) We may from time to time look at ourselves and consider ourselves and be horrified how wicked and sinful we are, how deceitful our hearts have been for example when we have been carried away to think better of ourselves than we have done of others. We must be firm on this teaching. We

must be clear that we are not looking down on people. We are speaking from the perspective of those redeemed by the blood of the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is none good but God. And so Jesus is not just a good man but is God Himself. He is perfect as we should be but we fall short of this perfection so we are in need of a saviour. So we would rather with the Apostle Paul glory in our

infirmities (2 Corinthians 12) and glory in nothing except the Cross of Christ. What a wonderful thing it is that wicked people can go to heaven! That is the love of God that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us! (Romans 5) Praise His glorious name! Hallelujah!

Jeremiah was a no-nonsense preacher and was prepared to suffer for it but he did not want people to remain in their sin and wickedness but rather that they would turn to God and so he commanded them to repent. He asked rhetorically who can know the heart. He wanted people to face the truth rather going around saying "peace, peace" when there was no peace but a false peace. The answer is that because the heart is deceitful and wicked it cannot know itself except by the sovereign grace of the living God who is the only one who knows us so we must humbly go to Him as He is revealed to us in Jesus Christ.

The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it?

Jeremiah 17:9

"And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments ..."

Luke 16:23

Not even John Paul II himself, during his time on earth, would claim that at death he would be with Christ in paradise. For according to official Roman Catholic teaching, no one can know that they will go to heaven when they die, except by special direct revelation. The supposed merit of masses, penance, prayers to the saints, fastings, pilgrimages, indulgences and all the rest cannot bring the comfort and assurance of everlasting salvation. For who can say that their works are pure? And when have they done enough?

The deceased pope denied justification by faith alone in Christ alone, which is called by God "the truth of the gospel" (Gal. 2:5, 14). John Paul II lived "in bondage" (4:9; 5:1) and under God's "curse" (3:10), for he did not obey "the truth" (3:1; 4:16; 5:7) being "bewitched" by Satan and sin (3:1). God is not mocked: every one who "perverts the gospel of Christ" (1:7) "shall bear his punishment, whosoever he be," including the pope (5:10). The apostle Paul proclaims, "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" (1:8). Then the apostle repeats the solemn word: "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" (1:9).

If apostles or angels are accursed if they preach another gospel, how will the pope escape? As the leader of over 1 billion Roman Catholics, John Paul II preached the false gospel of salvation by faith and works on all continents leading millions upon millions of people to Hell. He even presided as the head of a church which officially damned the gospel of Christ and all who believe that gospel, for the Council of Trent with all its anathemas (1545-1563) was affirmed at Vatican II (1962-1965).

Think too of all his idolatries as the pontiff of the false church of Rome. John Paul II is a life-long worshipper of the wafer in the mass, and he adores and kisses religious pictures, idols, crucifixes etc. He dedicated himself and his whole pontificate to the Virgin Mary and has sought to promote Mariolatry all around the world. He made no secret that his personal

THE CALENDAR

April 24th to May 7th 2005

PRAYER BOOK WORSHIP

APRIL 24TH

The Fourth Sunday after Easter
M. Deuteronomy 4:1-22; St. Luke 18:1-30
E. Deuteronomy 4:23-40 or Deuteronomy 5; Philippians 1

THE COLLECT.

O ALMIGHTY God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men; Grant unto thy people, that they may love the thing which thou commandest, and desire that which thou dost promise; that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Epistle. St. James 1:17-21
The Gospel. St. John 16:5-14

MAY 1ST

The Fifth Sunday after Easter and St. Philip and St. James

M. Deuteronomy 6; James 1:1-12; St. John. 14:1-14 E. Deuteronomy 9 or Deuteronomy 10; Colossians 3:1-17

THE COLLECT

O LORD, from whom all good things do come; Grant to us thy humble servants, that by thy holy inspiration we may think those things that be good, and by thy merciful guiding may perform the same; through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Epistle. St. James 1. 22-27
The Gospel. St. John 16. 23-33

"Buy the Truth and Sell it Not"

Proverbs 23:23

The Pope's death and stage-managed funeral have raised a wave of popular emotion. The general chorus of praise poses a problem for Bible-believing Christians. One does not wish to give the impression of hardheartedness, for we can all be touched by the sight of a pitiable, broken-down old man's struggle to carry on until death. But our duty is to denounce the system that keeps many in spiritual darkness.

Despite the repackaging of Rome, papal methods of deception have not basically changed. The same boastful self-display (boosted by modern communications) distracts multitudes from Christ's Gospel. Unctuous reference to Scripture and biblical piety screens corrupt practice and doctrine. The shocking misuse of divine titles such as 'Holy Father', and the wilful ignoring of harassment of Evangelicals by Romanists in the third world give evidence of the same malign spiritual power.

There has been no change of heart in Rome; but some 'Evangelicals', duped by an illusion of reform, seem convinced that Rome has changed, and so past abuses ought to be forgotten. The wish to think well of opponents is laudable, but is no reason for endorsing a Christian veneer which disguises dark-age superstition. Our unfashionable duty is to hold fast to the Faith once delivered to the saints: that followed by our forefathers in

countering the errors of the papacy and departing from them.

The surprise is that men with a sounder view of the Gospel can speak with fawning respect for an institution with such false credentials. The theatrical gush of the Vatican publicity-machine, followed by the blind praise of an 'establishment' adulating a man who championed a welter of corrupt doctrine and dubious dealings, was to be expected.

But it is a distortion for 'Evangelicals' to praise the late Pope as a great Christian leader, and to pray for the choice of a successor to lead their 'Catholic' brethren! They unwittingly slight their forefathers whom popes loved to send to the stake. Why are 'Evangelical' leaders so willing to persuade their people that this last Pope was less anti-Christian than his predecessors, less autocratic, less wedded to manipulative clerical power, less hostile to Evangelical churches in South America etc., or less devoted to the dark cult of a mother-figure under the name of Mary?

With the Vatican reeling from the exposure of papal involvement in numerous scandals, the gewgaw ceremonies are a useful distraction. But 'Evangelical' leaders are helping to bury the grim facts, instead of exposing them.

Rev John Harding
Free Church of Scotland (Continuing)

motto is *totus tuus sum Maria* (Mary, I'm all yours). Then there are his blasphemous claims to be the head of the church and the vicar of Christ on earth. God's Word, the standard of His judgment (John 12:48), is very clear. "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Neither fornicators, nor idolaters ... shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 6:9-10). Outside the heavenly city are "idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie," for "idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev. 22:15; 21:8).

But there is mercy with God for all Hell-deserving sinners like us who turn from the "dung" of their own self-righteousness (Phil. 3:8; Isa. 64:6) to God's perfect righteousness in Christ alone!

Rev. Angus Stewart
Covenant Protestant Reformed Fellowship, Ballymena, N. Ireland

"Reserved in Heaven for You"

1 Peter 1:4

As many of our Roman Catholic friends suffer a sense of loss because of the death of Pope John Paul 2, it provides evangelical Christians an opportunity to do at least two things: to show love and sympathy in the name of Jesus Christ, and to raise the question of how we can be certain of going to heaven. Peter the apostle spoke of the certainty of an inheritance in heaven (1 Peter 1:4).

This certainty of heaven does not arise from a life lived under oppression, from living a life that has influenced others, from personal suffering or indeed from serving in high office in a religious order, but simply from faith alone in Christ alone. Let us at this time of the sorrow of our friends direct them to Christ alone for the peace and comfort that they seek.

Rev Dr John Scott
Minister of Chelmsford Presbyterian Church

English Churchman Book Review

Christian Hymns Evangelical Movement of Wales and Christian Hymns Committee, 2004 Words edition £7.95, ISBN 1 85049 207 7

The Evangelical Movement of Wales has now published its new edition of Christian Hymns, one of the most widely-used hymn-books among Reformed Evangelical churches. This project involved consultation over a period of several years, and the Editorial Committee, wishing to produce a work of genuine usefulness, sought the opinions of both churches and individuals. The resulting book is modern in appearance and presentation, comfortable to

handle, and of improved typeset compared to the first edition. However, much is retained, including the original order of hymns, and this feature in particular will help existing users "find their bearings". It should be stated from the outset that this review is of the words edition; comments about the musical aspects of the publication will therefore be of a general nature.

The publishers state that they have added over two hundred items to the book, and that around one hundred and ninety "little-used" hymns from the first edition have been omitted. Concerning the latter, one must assume that wide-ranging research has been done to establish which hymns could be reasonably left out. However, some pieces of relatively high value are missing: examples include Isaac Watts' "Are we the soldiers of the cross", Charles Wesley's "Inspirer of the ancient seers", "Tis to Thee we owe allegiance" by Thomas Kelly and "For a season called to part" by John Newton. One might perhaps ask: does a hymn have to be in current usage to merit its place in a compilation such as this?

Many of the omissions are of hymns employing a heightened poetic language, such as "Extended on a cursed tree/Besmeared with dust, and sweat, and blood" and "From Greenland's icy mountains/From India's coral strand" (nos. 202 and 441 in the original edition). The sections "Marriage, Home and Family" and "Hymns for Children" are much slimmer in the new edition, although this aspect of the revision has been handled with sensitivity. One welcome deletion is John Henry Newman's "Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom", which speaks so tellingly of that writer's journey into apostasy.

The inclusion of just under twenty metrical Psalms was a commendable and helpful feature of the original Christian Hymns. The "List of Metrical Psalms and Hymns based on Psalms" now appears at the front of the words edition, and contains around thirty more titles than its predecessor. However, some of the older Psalms, particularly those from the 1650 Scottish Psalter, have been omitted: the losses of "Give praise and thanks unto the Lord (Ps.106; CH 14), "Pray that Jerusalem may have peace and felicity" (Pss.122, 133 and 116; CH 356) and "Teach me, O Lord, the perfect way" (Ps.119:33-37; CH 786) are regrettable. Conversely, among the new Psalm-based items are many from the modern Evangelical Anglican school, which has been so productive in this field. These writers, such as James E Seddon, Michael Baughan and Christopher Idle, have generally sought to adhere to each line of the Psalm itself, even though they do not aim to produce "strict" metrical versions. The linguistic style of their hymns may not always rise to the grandeur of authors from earlier times, but it is nonetheless refreshing to be able to follow the Psalm itself whilst singing the paraphrase. One ought perhaps to consider that this is a hymn-book, not a Psalter!

Turning to the newly-introduced material more generally, it will be helpful to quote at length from the publisher's

preface:

"The last quarter of a century has seen many changes in worship style and practices, not least

in the sung praise of God. Consequently we have included quite a number of more modern compositions, as well as rediscovering a few hymns from former generations..."It has not been an easy task, not least because historically music has been such a powerful medium amongst the people of God. The hymns that poured forth from the pen of Charles Wesley had a powerful effect upon the Methodists. They learned their theology and had it confirmed to them very largely through the biblical truth often expressed in memorable poetic forms in their hymns.

"A veritable torrent of material continues to pour forth, both from pens and keyboards, no doubt assisted, it not occasioned, by the technological revolution that has transformed the contemporary musical scene. Inevitably, a substantial amount that has come has already gone; of the rest, time will tell how much is ephemeral and what is of lasting value. It is the lot of editors to attempt some assessment of available material, and this we have tried to do - with how much success others must judge."

One of the striking contrasts between this statement and the original 1977 preface is the increased prominence given to the musical aspect of the hymn-book. Whereas the former edition spoke mainly of "tunes", we now hear of music as having been "such a powerful medium amongst the people of God", of a "veritable torrent of material ... both from pens [literary or musical?] and keyboards", and of a "technological revolution that has transformed the contemporary musical scene". In making these statements, the editors appear to be accepting the modern Charismatic-led style of sung praise, in which the experience of "worship" is largely dependent upon the potency of the music - the words of a song standing in mere partnership to its harmonies, rhythms and melodic shapes. Whereas in established hymnody, emotional response was to the theological truths contained in the words (albeit coloured and heightened by the tune), it is now the case that the music itself is the provider of mood and feeling, especially when performed by a band of musicians (as the authors originally intend), and not merely by a pianist or organist. A prime example from the new edition of Christian Hymns is "Led like a lamb to the slaughter" by Graham Kendrick, in which the musical setting of the words is overtly dramatic. At one point, men's and women's voices are used separately to portray the meeting of the risen Lord Jesus with Mary Magdalene (John 20:16). The seeming endorsement of this contemporary style of "Christian" music -- and the inclusion of a number of songs of this type in the book itself - will surely not be helpful in encouraging a deeper understanding of the words being sung in worship - something that is much needed in our day. Neither, more importantly, will it help to promote the true, spiritual worship of God.

A further practical result of the Editorial Committee's approach is that contemporary items are found alongside established hymns. In fairness, it must be pointed out that this has not come as a surprise; the Committee outlined their policy as early as April 2003, when an article in an Evangelical newspaper set out their intentions for the revision. It has since been suggested that such inclusivity should not be seen as a barrier, as congregations may simply ignore the material they do not wish to use. However, on sight of the finished product, the effects of this policy become striking, as different types of composition appear side by side - even allowing for a separate section containing "Songs and Choruses". For those who disfavour the work of Graham Kendrick due to its Charismatic ethos, it can be somewhat disconcerting to see his hymns alongside those of Charles Wesley and Philip Doddridge - an experience that one first remembers from the time of Mission Praise.

The problem here is that Reformed Churches do not wish any distracting thing to be brought into their life of worship - whether it be in their preaching, prayer or praise. Such a "mixed" hymn-book violates this desire, as it introduces an element of impurity into one of their highest forms of service. At the conclusion of the book of Zechariah, we read of Gospel worship in these words:

"In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea,

every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts" (ch.14:20-21).

It appears, then, that despite meeting its own objectives, the new edition of Christian Hymns has fallen short of the Reformed understanding of worship. This has occurred because the Editorial Committee have included much material by writers whose view of worship is compromised, particularly by Charismatic thinking. The argument is raised (as it was in the preface to the original edition) that the theological background of a hymn-writer is not important, only the words themselves. However, more discernment is needed where an author's background can have such a profound effect on a hymn's underlying theology, psychology and ethos, especially with regard to its accompanying music.

This criticism could equally be applied to many other hymn-books published during the past few decades. Although some do still exist that cater for those of Reformed thinking, it seems that in the future such congregations will either have to make their own compilations, or rely on those who are willing to publish to serve a minority, guided by conviction rather than by consensus.

Paul Austen

New Hymn Book Set to Turn the Tide of Modernising Downgrade

Christian Worship is the name of a new hymnbook planned for publication in 2010. The result of a meeting of some two-dozen ministers in Dudley on Thursday 3rd March, Christian Worship intends to offer a traditional alternative to contemporary books such as Praise! and the new edition of Christian Hymns.

Christian Worship is seeking to take traditional evangelical worship, as represented by twentieth century hymnbooks such as Christian Hymns, Gospel Hymns and Grace Hymns, forward into the twenty-first century. The book will be contemporary in its production but traditional in its contents.

Christian Worship intends to include a complete metrical Psalter, and approximately 1,000 traditional hymns including numerous paraphrases. Also, the personal pronouns "Thee", "Thou" and "Thine" will be retained and not edited away as in other modern books.

Christian Worship is being produced by a small committee chaired by Neil Pfeiffer and including Vernon Higham, author of contemporary classics such as 'Great is the gospel of our glorious God' and 'I saw a new vision of Jesus'. The editors believe that Christian Worship will make a unique contribution to traditional evangelical worship in the coming years.

"Thou Shalt Love Thy Neighbour" Matthew 5:43

Rev. Peter Simpson, Minister of Penn Free Methodist Church

John Wesley wrote, "I can by no means approve the scurrility and contempt with which the Romanists have often been treated. I dare not rail at, or despise, any man ... But I pity them much ... (for) no Romanist can expect to be saved according to the terms of his covenant" (Journal 27 August 1738). Here surely is the right balance: to point out the grave dangers of Roman Catholic teaching, but to do so in a manner which is gracious towards people's persons.

Historically speaking, Methodism has always been unashamedly Protestant. Wesley listed ten doctrinal areas in which Catholicism has added to Scripture: "1. Seven sacraments; 2. Transubstantiation; 3. Communion in one kind only; 4. Purgatory, and praying for the dead therein; 5. Praying to saints; 6. Veneration of relics; 7. Worship of images; 8. Indulgences; 9. The priority and universality of the Roman Church; 10. The supremacy of the Bishop of Rome. All these things therefore do the Romanists add to those which are written in the Book of Life" (Journal 27 August 1738).

A vital point to stress in the ecumenical climate of today is that there has actually been no fundamental change in Catholic doctrine since the time of the Protestant Reformation. In the interests of brevity we shall cite a single example: The 1994 Catechism of the Catholic Church states, "The Lord made Simon alone, whom he named Peter, the rock of his church ... The Roman Pontiff, by reason of his office as Vicar of Christ, and as pastor of the entire church, has full, supreme and universal power over the whole church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered" (Catechism paragraphs 881 & 882).

Wesley wrote in contrast: "That (Christ) gave one Apostle pre-eminence above the rest, much less absolute power over them, we

read not (in Scripture). This power they were forbidden to attempt or desire (Matt. 10:26), and St. Paul was so far from acknowledging it, that he challenged (claimed) an equality with the rest of the Apostles (Gal. 1:15,17,) and, upon occasion, withstood St. Peter (Gal. 2:11)" (A Roman Catechism with a Reply).

Thomas Walsh, one of the early Methodist preachers, was himself a convert from Roman Catholicism. He wrote concerning his former allegiance to Rome, "I freely profess that now, since God hath enlightened my mind, and given me to see the truth as it is in Jesus, if I had still continued a member of that church, I could not have been saved". Now it was out of love that Walsh made that statement, for he immediately went on to pray for his Catholic friends, "Jesus, thou lover of souls, and friend of sinners, send to them thy light and thy truth, that they may lead them. O, let thy bowels yearn over them, and call those straying sheep, now perishing for lack of knowledge, to the light of thy word, which is able to make them wise unto salvation" (Lives of the Early Methodist Preachers, ed. T. Jackson).

"Woe unto you when the world speaks well of you" Luke 6:26

Pastor David Carson Chairman United Protestant Council

The last days and death of Pope John Paul II has received unprecedented coverage in the media. Every breath that he took and every word he supposedly uttered was recorded in minute detail. I cannot recall any other person receiving such publicity. It goes to demonstrate what influence the Vatican has over the media worldwide.

Predictably the ecumenians have been falling over themselves to do him homage. Sadly, several leading evangelicals have been doing likewise. Billy Graham, Pat Robertson, Gerry Falwell, James Dobson and Charles Coulson were among those who were fulsome in their praise. Billy Graham said he was sure he was in Heaven. Evidently he was more sure than the Romanists since they buried the "Holy Father" with a Requiem Mass. It should be remembered that, according to RC teaching, the mass is a sacrifice for the living and the dead.

The late Pope, like all his predecessors, was a blasphemer, participating in blasphemous rituals and believing in salvation by works and ritual. He incurred the apostolic malediction of Galatians Chapter 1.

There is one very simple way of telling whether a person is a genuine Christian or not and that is how the world views them. Christ said "Woe unto you when the world speaks well of you". A true man of God, like Dr Paisley, would barely get a mention.

It is very alarming, though, to see the way the whole event has been manipulated. It should serve as a warning to all true Protestants.

Zimbabwe elections rigged again

The Zimbabwe election was, sadly, a foregone conclusion. Polling stations run by ZDF troops, CIO operatives and Zanu PF Election officials along with some 500,000 "ghost" voters on the electoral register. Opposition MDC electoral agents at many stations were in fact locked in while results were sent off - and changed. Research by NGOs (Sokwanele and others) and MDC polling agents, the results were almost certainly to have been 94 seats to MDC, 25 to Zanu (P) and one Independent.

There will be no "Orange" revolution because Zimbabwe is isolated. Mugabe is a dictator who has had 40,000 murdered in 25 years of misrule. This is no Ukraine. The withholding of food bears out Mugabe's own words that power lies in the hands of the man who can feed the hungry. South Africa's President Thabo Mbeki's policy of "quiet Diplomacy" is a blatant sham. He is seen as the key supporter of Mugabe. Even against the very vocal criticism by the ANC's key political allies. Archbishop Tutu also criticised Mbeki and received a public diatribe in return. The *Washington Times*, this week, slammed Thabo Mbeki's stand (South Africa being the "example" to Africa) as a very bad sign for responsible government in Africa.

Andrew Hall. (UK Based human rights activist for Zimbabwe and member of Christian Watch).

CLERGY APPOINTMENTS

31 March 2005

Revd Des Foote, Honorary Curate NSM, Twyford (Oxford) : to be Priest [House for Duty], Woolhampton w. Midgham and Beenham Valence, and Aldermaston w. Wasing and Brimpton (same diocese).

Revd Richard Frank, formerly Curate [Senior Mission Curate], Cranham St Luke (Chelmsford) : to be Priest-in-Charge, St Margaret's on Thames All Souls (London).

Revd Christopher Fuller, Vicar, Stoke Newington St Matthias (London) : to be Vicar, Freezywater St George [Enfield St George] (same diocese).

Revd Mark Laynesmith, Assistant Curate, Tadcaster w. Newton Kyme (York) : to be Chaplain, University of Reading (Oxford).

Revd Lyndon North, Curate, Roxbourne St Andrew (London) : to be Curate NSM, Sudbury St Andrew (same diocese).

Other Appointments

Amanda Ford, Curate, Leicester Resurrection Team Ministry (Leicester) : to be Priest-in-Charge, Beaumont Leys Christ the King (same diocese).

Virginia Thomas, Associate Vicar, Chelsea St Luke and Christ Church (London) : to be Priest-in-Charge, St Mary the Boltons [West Brompton St Mary w. St Peter] (same diocese).

Joanne Thorns, Assistant Curate, Durham North Team Ministry (Durham) : to be Team Vicar, Durham North [with special responsibility for Newton Hall All Saints and Bearpark St Edmund] (same diocese).

Resignations and Retirements

Revd Canon Peter Elvy, Vicar, Chelsea Old Church [Chelsea All Saints] (London) is to retire with effect from 31 July 2005.

Revd John Hess, Curate-in-Charge, Brents St John the Evangelist and Davington St Mary Magdalene and St Lawrence w. Oare St Peter and Luddenham St Mary (Canterbury) is to retire with effect from 30 June 2005.

Revd Graham Morris, Rector, Northwood St John the Baptist, and Vicar, Gurnard All Saints (Portsmouth) : to be Priest-in-Charge, Ventnor St Catherine w. Holy Trinity and Bonchurch, and Rural Dean of East Wight (same diocese).

Linda Hunter, Assistant Curate NSM, Chale, Gatcombe and Shorwell w. Kingston (Portsmouth) is to retire with effect from 6 March 2005.

Corrections

Revd Martyn Hawkes, Curate, Isle of Dogs Christ Church w. St John and St Luke (London) : to be Associate Vicar, Brownswood Park St John the Evangelist and Stoke Newington St Mary (same diocese).

7 April 2005

Revd Robert Bailey, Assistant Curate, Dewsbury Team Ministry (Wakefield): to be Associate Priest NSM, Felkirk [with pastoral responsibility for Felkirk], and Associate Priest of Kinsley w. Wragby (same diocese).

Revd Dr John Breadon, formerly Assistant Curate, West Bromwich All Saints (Lichfield) : has become Chaplain, St George's Post 16 Centre (Birmingham).

Revd Christopher Butler, Curate, Retford St Saviour [Retford Team Ministry] (Southwell) : to be Priest-in-Charge, Holbeck St Luke (Ripon and Leeds).

Revd Clive Doran, Assistant Curate, Maghull St Andrew (Liverpool) : to be Vicar, Huyton St George (same diocese).

Revd Graham Foulis Brown, Rector, Rotherfield Peppard and Kidmore End and Sonning Common (Oxford) : to be also Area Dean [Acting] of Henley (same diocese).

Revd John Hadjioannou, Vicar, Kinsley w. Wragby (Wakefield) : to be also Priest-in-Charge, Felkirk (same diocese).

Revd Canon Roger Hindley, Vicar, Hill St James (Birmingham) : to be Team Rector, Willington (Newcastle).

Revd John Lawson, Priest-in-Charge, Birchencliffe, and Assistant Diocesan Director of Ordinands (Wakefield) : to be Diocesan Director of Training, and a Canon Residentiary of Wakefield Cathedral

(same diocese).

Revd Peter Murphy, formerly Vicar, Lyndhurst (Winchester) : to be Priest [House-for-Duty], Avon Valley Partnership Team Ministry (same diocese).

Revd Christopher Peter, Assistant Curate, Burnley St Andrew w. St Margaret and Burnley St James (Blackburn) : to be Chaplain, Royal Liverpool NHS Trust (Liverpool).

Revd Ben Phillips, Vicar, Bodicote St John the Baptist (Oxford) : to be also Area Dean of Deddington (same diocese).

Rt Revd Tony Robinson, Bishop of Pontefract (Wakefield) : to be also a Canon Residentiary of Wakefield Cathedral (same diocese).

Revd Anand Sododasi : to be Curate NSM, Ray Valley (Oxford).

Revd Richard Steel, Communications Director, Church Mission Society, and Honorary Curate, Stoke-next-Guildford St John (Guildford) : to be Rector, Kirkheaton St John the Baptist (Wakefield).

Revd Jonathan Still, Vicar, The Bourne and Tilford (Guildford) : to be also Rural Dean of Farnham (same diocese).

Revd Timothy Tunley, Vicar, Swaledale w. Arkengarthdale (Ripon and Leeds) : to be Team Vicar, Seacroft Ascension [Seacroft Team Ministry] (same diocese).

Resignations and Retirements

The Ven. Mark Wilson, Archdeacon of Dorking (Guildford) has resigned with effect from 11 April 2005.

Revd Malcolm Anker, Vicar, Oatlands (Guildford) is to retire with effect from 30 June 2005.

Revd Anthony Betts, Team Rector, Knaresborough (Ripon and Leeds) is to retire with effect from 30 September 2005.

Revd John Chamberlin, Master, St Mary Magdalene and Holy Jesus Trust, and Honorary Curate, Newcastle St John (Newcastle) is to retire with effect from 31 May 2005.

Revd Kevin Chandra, formerly Team Vicar, Erdington St Chad LEP [Local Ecumenical Project] (Birmingham) has resigned with effect from 31 March 2005.

Revd Martin Hughes, Vicar, Shamley Green (Guildford) is to retire with effect from 30 June 2005.

Ruth Lichtenberger, formerly Curate NSM, Warrington Holy Trinity (Liverpool) has retired.

Revd Paul Rich, Vicar, Crondall and Ewshot (Guildford) is to retire with effect from 30 September 2005.

Revd Ian Shackleton, Vicar, Southport St Luke (Liverpool) is to retire with effect from 31 December 2005.

Revd Colin Sowter, Assistant Curate NSM, Womersley w. Blackheath (Guildford) is to retire with effect from 23 July 2005.

Revd George Townshend, formerly Airport Chaplain and Co-ordinator [part-time], CIGB, Birmingham International Airport (Birmingham) is to retire with effect from 31 March 2005.

Jennifer Williamson, Priest-in-Charge, Gilling w. Kirkby Ravensworth, and Assistant Area Dean of Richmond (Ripon and Leeds) is to retire with effect from 31 July 2005.

Corrections

Joanne Thorns, formerly Assistant Curate, Durham North Team Ministry (Durham) : has become Team Vicar, Durham North [with special responsibility for Newton Hall All Saints and Bearpark St Edmund] (same diocese).

Other appointments

Judith Hampson, Rector, Allendale w. Whitfield and Ninebanks (Newcastle) : to be Vicar, Haydon Bridge and Beltingham w. Henshaw, and Deanery Missioner, and to remain Chaplain, Northumberland NFU (same diocese).

Ruth Harris, Assistant Curate, Kinsley w. Wragby (Wakefield) : to be also Assistant Curate, Felkirk (same diocese).

Angela Weaver, Vicar, Hamstead St Paul (Birmingham) : to be also Area Dean of Handsworth (same diocese).

Sarah Wright, Curate, Leicester The Martyrs (Leicester) : to be Curate NSM, Leicester The Martyrs (same diocese).



CHURCHES & MINISTRY

ABERDEEN. Free Church of Scotland [Continuing].

Pittodrie Community Centre, Golf Road. Sabbath 11.00am & 6.30pm. Prayer Meeting Tuesday 7.30pm. AV & Metrical Psalms. Rev David Blunt 01224 895979. Dial-a-Message: 01224 897372. Website: www.fccontinuing.org/aberdeen

BALLYMENA, NI; Covenant Protestant Reformed Fellowship, Protestant Hall

(Opposite Police Station). Sabbath: 11am, 6pm. Expository preaching, Metrical Psalms, AV. Rev Angus Stewart: (028) 25891851 www.cprf.co.uk

CHELMSFORD. Presbyterian Church.

Sunday: 10.30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Worship services (Children's instruction during both services). Location: Springfield Parish Centre, off New Bowers Way. Minister. Rev. Dr. John Scott. Telephone: 01245 399570.

EDINBURGH. Free Church of Scotland [Continuing].

33 Barony Street. 11am and 6.30pm. Wednesdays 7.30pm. AV and Metrical Psalms. Minister: Rev James Gracie, Tel: 0131 667 4730.

FRINTON & TENDRING DISTRICT.

Holy Trinity, C of E (Continuing) Lord's Day Morning Prayer 11am at Frinton Community Centre. 5pm Evening Prayer. BCP (1662) & AV. Mr Philip Lievesley (01255) 679572.

GLASGOW. Cumbernauld, Reformed Evangelical Church.

Fleming Rd, Seafar. Services: Sabbath: 11 am and 6.30pm. Thursday: 7.30pm. Psalms only. A.V.

Contact: J. Dowson. Tel 01236 630594

HENLEY-ON-THAMES. Nuffield Church.

11 am Morning Prayer. 6.30 pm The Lord's Supper (3rd Sunday only). Authorised Version and Book of Common Prayer. Tel: 01491 641305

LONDON. London, Pilgrim Tabernacle.

Reformed Evangelical (1689 confession of Faith) Stirling Road, Wood Green N22. Lords Day 9.30am and 4pm service and Tuesday 7pm Bible Study. Contact Pastor John Sherwood 0208 3688080/0781 4507432

LONDON. South Wimbledon, St Johns C of E [Continuing].

Sabbath Day Services 11am, 6.30pm. AV. Prayer Book (1662). Phone: Rev. Peter Ratcliff 0208 417 0875.

MORECAMBE. Lancashire. Emmanuel (Free Church of England).

Marine Road East, Prayer Book Service, 10.30 a.m. Rt. Rev. J. D. M. McLean 01524 412230.

READING. St. Mary's Chapel.

Castle Street. Sundays: 11 am Morning Prayer (1st Sunday, Lord's Supper); 6.30 pm Evening Prayer (3rd Sunday, Lord's Supper). Prayer Book Services, A.V. Bible Study and Prayer Meeting Tuesdays 8pm (2nd Tuesday Missionary Prayer Meeting). Rev. E. J. Malcolm 0118 959 5131

SOUTH BUCKS. The Free Methodist Church, Penn (near High Wycombe).

Traditional worship, expository preach-

ing. Lord's Day 11.00am, 6.30pm. Rev. Peter Simpson Website: www.realchristianity.org. Telephone: 01494 816202.

STROUD. Eastcombe Baptist Church.

Reverent worship, AV. Lord's Day: 10.30am - Gospel Service; 6.30pm - Evening Service. Mid-week: 8.00pm, with prayer meeting. Rev R Mortimer: (01452) 770595. E-mail: revrpm7@hotmail.com

WEST MIDLANDS. Tipton, St. Paul's,

Owen Street. Sundays 10.30am; 6.00pm. Prayer Meeting, Bible Study, Wednesday 7.30pm; BCP services. Rev. John Dunn. 01215571902

WOLVERHAMPTON. St. Silas. C of E [Continuing],

St. John's Cloisters, St. John's Square. MP 11.00am (1st Sunday, HC); EP 6.00pm (3rd Sunday, HC). AV. 1662 Book of Common Prayer. Tel. 01902-656514.

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“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.”

Exodus 20:4-6

The second commandment forbids the worshipping of false gods, and of the true God in a false manner. God knows best how he should be worshipped. He prescribes the way in which it should be done, and we must obey him. We must not presume that we know better, or seek to devise some other way of our own invention. That was the sin that Saul committed. When he was commanded to go against the Amalekites and destroy them, he decided to spare the best of the sheep and oxen. When Samuel came down to the camp, he heard the bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the oxen, and asked what it meant. Saul answered that he had spared them in order that they might be offered as a sacrifice to God. But Samuel replied, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fact of rams."

Clearly, to obey God's Word and to worship him in the way he has commanded is the most fitting way to serve and honour him. Yet people are so often led astray in this matter by what they consider appropriate. They think that by so doing they can make worship more honouring to God, and more attractive to those who participate in it. In fact, they dishonour God. It has been said in connexion with this second commandment, It is not merely the image, not just the likeness that is prohibited, but the "making unto ourselves". What God so severely forbids is the inventing or fashioning of his worship after our understanding of what is appropriate or fitting. This is not the principle that should guide us in this matter, but what the Lord himself has commanded and required of us. If we seek to worship God in any other way we may know what response it will meet with from him: "Who hath required these things at your hands?" And, "In vain do you worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

I. In this commandment God strictly forbids the making of any representation or image for the purpose of his holy worship. A graven image is something sculpted or carved in wood, stone or metal. There are a number of reasons why we must not do this.

First, it is impossible to make a true image of God. God is Spirit, and as such he is invisible. He dwells in light inapproachable. Moses reminded the people of Israel as they came to enter the Promised Land that when God spoke to them at Mount Horeb, in the midst of the fire, they saw "no manner of similitude". Therefore they should be careful not to corrupt themselves and make a graven image, after the manner of the indigenous inhabitants of the land. Isaiah the prophet also says, in that great passage in chapter 40, that the Lord cannot be represented by the art of the woodworker or the goldsmith. God is the creator and is himself the former of all things. "To whom then will ye liken me or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One." And our Lord himself declares "God is a spirit."

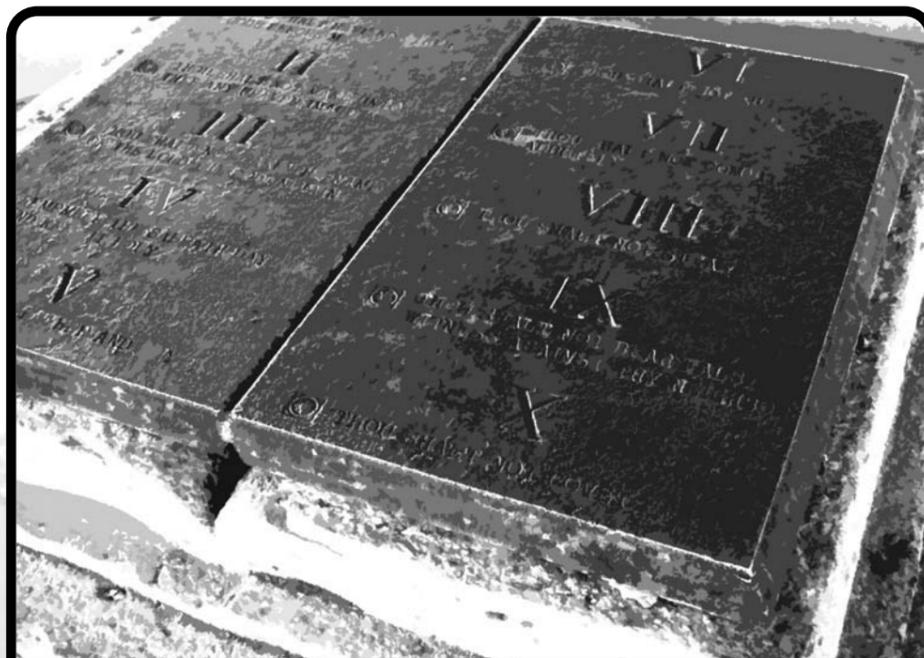
An image that purports to represent God is therefore a lie. It can only lead the worship-

per, the devotee, into error. A created thing cannot represent the infinite deity. An image is a dead, inanimate object. The Psalmist says of idols, "They have mouths, and speak not; eyes have they and see not. They have ears, and hear not: noses have they, and smell not. They have hands and handle not; feet have they and walk not: neither speak they through their throat" (Psalm 115:5-7). Images cannot be similitudes of the living God.

Nor have they power to do either good or harm. Elijah mocked the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel, for however loudly they called, Baal did not hear, nor respond to their prayers. How then can an image represent the Lord, the Creator of heaven and earth? But it may be said Jesus was a man: the Son of God became incarnate. May we not make an image of him? But it would not, in fact, be a true representation. It is Christ's Godhead united to his manhood which

to this decline in purity of worship was the invasion of the Barbarians. This brought with it a decline into ignorance and illiteracy, which was accompanied by a plea that worshippers should be given pictures and images, which are "the books of the layman". But once they had gained a foothold they gradually became objects of worship and devotion.

To accommodate this, the Word of God was altered and adjusted. The Roman Church, in all its catechisms and books of devotion, elides the second commandment, merging it to the first; and so the third commandment they call the second, and so forth. Then, to make up the number to ten they divide the tenth into two, in an artificial way. And so they have committed two great evils, in which they still persist, and from which they refuse to be reformed; they take away from the Word of God and they add to his worship.



THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

II

THOU SHALT NOT MAKE UNTO THEE ANY GRAVEN IMAGE

Exodus 20:3

makes him Christ. An image cannot represent the Godhead, therefore it is only half a Christ. The chief part is left out which proves the point, that it is impossible to make a true image of God the Father or of the incarnate Son of God.

Second, it is irrational and absurd to worship images. The workman is better and greater than his work. "He who builds the house has more honour than the house" (Hebrews 3:3). Men do not worship the craftsman who makes the idol; why should they then worship the image?

Third, it is against the express commandment of God. If God's Word says that we ought not to worship images, then that should settle the matter for the Christian. But someone may say, If that is so clear, why did images appear in the churches in the first place? For the first few hundred years, of course, there were no images in churches. If images were set up they were removed or broken down. But when the Roman Emperor was converted, the Christian religion became the state religion. Thousands of unconverted pagans and pagan priests joined the church and brought with them their pagan ways and practices. A second factor contributing

The second commandment is of permanent obligation. Paul is quite clear as to the wrongness of worshipping God under the form of anything made by man's device, as stated in Acts 17:29: "Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent."

We can see from all this how one thing can lead to another; how the desire to accommodate images and false worship can lead to the corrupting of the Word of God, and tampering with the commandments of God.

Fourth, the teaching of the Church of England clearly forbids the adoration of images. The longest of the homilies is Against Peril of Idolatry and the Superfluous Decking of Churches, and it especially warns: "The images of God, our Saviour, the Virgin Mary are of all others the most dangerous; and therefore the greatest care ought to be had that they stand not in temples and churches." A warning which,

needless to say, has been sadly neglected with the terrible spiritual consequences which have followed in the deterioration of doctrine, morals and worship in the national church. It was the glory of the Church of England that she laid aside at the Reformation image and idol worship, as is plainly stated in the words of Article 22, which declares that such practices are, indeed, "a fond thing vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God." It is her shame that today such practices have been reintroduced. In recent years the ritual of kissing an image of the cross has been revived at Salisbury Cathedral on Good Friday. What is needed today is not kissing the cross, but preaching the message of the cross. But that is rarely heard in such places.

II. The commandment forbids the making of any image of anything in the heaven above, or the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. The heathen nations made images of the sun and the moon, of animals, birds, fish, and so forth, for the purpose of worship. They worshipped the lights of heaven but not "the Father of lights, in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17). They worshipped the living creatures, the ox, the elephant, the snake; but not the living God who gives life and breath to all. They stopped at the creatures, and "worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen."

This is both a very old and yet very modern form of idolatry. Modern man also stops at secondary causes and does not trace things up to the primary cause, which is God himself. He speaks about the 'wonders of nature', and the 'wisdom of nature', but he will not acknowledge a personal God who is all-wise and all-powerful. Natural history programmes on television are extremely popular, but they persist in stopping short of acknowledging the existence of the Creator of the natural world. This is modern idolatry making a god of the natural world, and worshipping nature. These be thy gods, O modern man!

III. Finally, what is the positive implication of this commandment? First, it is a mark of true spiritual life to turn from idols. Paul, writing to the Christians at Thessalonica about their conversion reminded them of how they had "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven" (1 Thessalonians 1:9). It is the mark of true spiritual conversion to experience an abhorrence of idolatry and a cleaving to spiritual religion.

Secondly, we truly worship God not by bowing before images, but by hearing the Word of God and doing God's will. "God is a spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24).

And lastly, we beautify God's house not by decking it with images or by using costly vestments and elaborate ritual, but by worshipping him "in the beauty of holiness"; when we "rejoice before him with reverence and with fear"; and by having on "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price." (1 Peter 3:4).

"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." (Malachi 3:16 & 17.)

Let us seek to practise spiritual religion and eschew all images and idolatry and outward show for God will punish it, "for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7). Let the apostle John have the last word on this subject: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." (1 John 5:21).

Rt Rev David N. Samuel