

# The Presbyterian Banner

August 2019



**Farel, Calvin, Beza and Knox – central figures in the Reformation Wall, Geneva**

Last month the famous monument was vandalised, presumably by LBGT activists, with paint dropped from above.

*Contents:* Editorial (Falou case) : How long, O LORD? (Psalm 6) : Wine in the Supper : Holy Moderation : The Laver of Brass : News : ICRC Asia Pacific Conference : Overseas Visitors



## FROM THE EDITOR

**THE ISRAEL FALOU SAGA** continues. Falou is a Tongan and Tonga is largely Methodist. Falou's father, a self-described pastor, was at one time a Mormon and Israel was brought up in that faith, but in 2011 he and his father became active in Hillsong, then an Assemblies of God church (now independent). Israel's father is a pastor. Subsequently there was a breach with Hillsong and Israel's father adopted Oneness Pentecostal teaching. This rejects the Trinity and insists that baptism must be in the name of Jesus and is necessary for salvation, otherwise you are damned.

What was already known in Christian circles about this travesty of Biblical truth has now featured in the Sydney Morning Herald and associated papers and is being used to discredit Falou's facebook post in April that gave rise to the present controversy.

That facebook post simply summarised certain Biblical passages about those who come under God's condemnation unless they repent. Christians and Muslims alike would agree in the substance. It was posted as Falou's personal disagreement with a statement that had been made on behalf of the team to which he belongs. There no evidence that Falou expressed hatred; in fact he believes in inclusion in the sport.

It is said that the post was contrary to a contractual commitment. If that is so it puts somewhat of a different completion on the matter of his sacking, but raises the question of whether such restrictions are lawful, involving as they do a significant restriction of freedom of speech. If there is no contract issue the position is even clearer. Christians should be concerned about the case which is not about whether his other views are orthodox but whether the abridging of freedom of speech for *anyone* is to be countenanced.

In a landmark judgment on 3 July, the Court of Appeal in the UK upheld the rights of Christians to freely express their faith, as it ruled on the case of the trainee social worker, Felix Ngole, who had been expelled from university for quoting the Bible on social media. The University had terminated his studies because of this. The Court of Appeal held 'The mere expression of religious views about sin does not necessarily connote discrimination.' It was also recognised that Felix Ngole had never been shown to have acted in a discriminatory fashion.

As a concluding point, one does have to remember that gender issues, serious though they are, must not so dominate Christian minds that multiple other practical concerns, including the needs of the weak and marginalised are neglected. #

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# How long, O LORD!

## Psalm 6

George Ball, Taree PCEA

In this psalm David is confronted by troubles of various kinds both from within and without. He's a soul in distress; surrounded by foes; his life was in turmoil. The psalm is possibly the product of the period of Absalom's rebellion when David was in flight and in fear. The psalm illustrates what a draining experience that was for the king.

### 1. The Pain He Endured (1-3, 6-7)

He was in a dark place (1). David cries out not to be rebuked by God's anger and wrath. Why should God be angry with him? Has he committed some great sin? No particular sin is mentioned. But surely it's implied. If David is running from Absalom it's because of his own sinful mismanagement of his family and his kingdom. That's why this psalm has been traditionally classified as one of the seven '*penitential psalms*' (6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130 and 143). Though a better term might be, '*sorrowful psalms*'. David bears a sense of responsibility for the mess he's in. His plea is that the Lord will not treat him like the wicked in wrath – but be gracious to him (2a). The prophet Jeremiah prayed the same thing when the going got tough. '**Correct me, O Lord, but in justice; not in your anger, lest you bring me to nothing**' (Jer. 10:24). As David fled Jerusalem he was worried that the Lord had turned against him and rejected him. It's a natural and understandable reaction. When things go wrong we often think that God has it in for us: somehow, He's punishing us for something we have done or failed to do.

If we were counselling David, we might turn to Proverbs 3: 11-12 and explain its meaning. '**My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline or do not resent his rebuke, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.**' A father only disciplines his own son – not his neighbours' son. He does it for the good of the child. God '**disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness**' (Heb. 12:10).

He was distressed (2). He says, '**I am weak**' (the word is also used to describe wilting vegetation). He was faint and languishing. His bones were in agony. He's aching all over.

He was dismayed and discouraged (3). He cries out, '**But you, O LORD, how long?**' He didn't even

finish the sentence. He probably means – how long Lord will you allow this to go on? It seemed to go on forever. Why are You so slow? Davis comments, '*Our troubles – it seems – are as much with God as with our circumstances*'. God's clock seems so slow. Waiting is hard!

He felt deserted (4a). He cried, '**Turn, O Lord, deliver my life**'. He implies that God has turned His back on him; shunned and rejected him. It may also mean that David is asking God to 'turn' from seeming inactivity, intervene, do something and bring relief?

He was depressed and exhausted (6-7). He was worn out from sobbing. His bed was drenched with tears. He couldn't sleep.

He was in real danger (7b, 8 and 10). He was surrounded by hostility, opposition and persecution. He mentions, '**all my foes**', '**all you workers of evil**', and '**all my enemies**'.

All things considered, he was in a dreadful state. This was David's experience. Perhaps some of you can identify with many of David's complaints? Life is tough and often disappointing. We may not have the enemies that David had. But this old body lets us down and causes much us pain and suffering. The old nature tries to drag us down into sin. Others may let us down: even friends and family. Trust is broken, and relationships are severed. It may even seem that God has let us down. Such is life. We might complain with David, '**How long, O Lord?**'

### 2. The Pleading He Expressed (4-7)

Kidner writes, '*The psalm gives words to those who scarcely have the heart to pray*'. James exhorts, '**Is anyone in trouble? He should pray**' (5: 13). How does David pray?

He pleads on the basis of God's '**unfailing love**', His '**steadfast love**', His '**covenant love**' (4b). It's His ever-unchanging committed love. It's the special love of God that promises to never let us go – not because we're perfect - but because He is. It's an appeal to God's character and reputation. Davis comments, '*sometimes this is your only stay in trouble – simply what God has said about Himself and about what He will do. Which suggests how massively important the doctrine of God is for the Christian life*'.

He pleads on the basis of *his desire to continue to sing praise to God* (5). He's not denying life after death. He affirms that elsewhere (cf. Ps. 16: 8-11). He's simply saying that if he's dead and gone he can't serve God or sing His praise here on earth. He wants to continue to be a positive witness in life. David proves himself to be a 'Shorter Catechism' man. '*What is man's chief end? The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever*'.

He pleads on the basis of *his sheer misery* (6-7). He's a

physical and emotional wreck. But why does David rehearse all this to God? Does He need to be informed? No. Davis comments, *'He assumes that our misery arouses God's mercy: touches God's heart. A prayer like this assumes that the Father is like Jesus – always going around being moved with compassion'*.

### 3. The Peace He Experienced (8-10)

There's a sudden change of mood in these verses. The attitude of defeat, despair and distress disappears. There is now an assurance that the Lord has heard his pleading and will grant him peace and victory. And it happened (take note) while he was still praying and bearing his soul to God. The Lord is able to quickly change our hearts and attitudes. James tells us, **'the prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective'** (5:16).

Davis writes, *'Prayer doesn't change things, but prayer lays hold of God who changes things and who, in prayer, changes you'*. We never come to the throne of grace in vain. **John Newton** wrote a letter in August 1775 to a member of his congregation in London who was going through trials. He concludes his letter with this advice, *'When you cannot see your way, be satisfied that He (Christ) is your leader. When your spirit is overwhelmed within you; He knows your path; He will not leave you to sink. He has appointed seasons of refreshment, and you shall find that He does not forget you. Above all, keep close to the throne of grace. If we seem to get no good by attempting to draw near Him, we may be sure we shall get none by keeping away from Him'*.

David concludes the psalm with these remarkable words, **'For the Lord has heard the sound of my weeping'** (ESV). God can even interpret our tears. There's an echo here of Romans 8: 26, **'For we do not know how to pray as we ought but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words'**. That should encourage us to persevere.

The psalm is not only about David. Like every other psalm, it was sung by Jesus and is fulfilled in Him. It's a psalm about Him. As we sing it we should keep an eye upon Him because He is our song leader and precentor. *'He is the tuning fork by which we pitch the psalms correctly'* (R.S. Ward).

Jesus quotes a couple of phrases from this psalm. He quoted **verse 3a** (**'My soul also is greatly troubled'**) in **John 12: 27** as He contemplated His death on the cross. **'Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? But for this purpose I have come to this hour'**. Jesus knew what it was to be **'greatly troubled in soul'**. We see it again in **John 11: 33** (*when He came to the tomb of Lazarus*); and in **John 13: 21** (*after He washed the*

*feet of the disciples*) and in **Mark 14: 33-34** (*when He prayed in Gethsemane*). Jesus knew all that David knew – and more: darkness, distress, dismay, discouragement, desertion and exhaustion.

Often Jesus troubled death is compared to the peaceful death of many unbelievers. But Jesus death was unique. He knew exactly what lay ahead of Him. He knew He was encountering the thrice holy God as our substitute – knowing what the punishment of our sin deserves – eternal death – damnation – separation from God. It wasn't merely the physical aspect of dying that troubled Him – though crucifixion was the most cruel and barbaric form of death. It was the suffering of His righteous soul in hell that troubled Him. That's what was unique about His suffering. Every other soul in hell is there as a sinner. There is therefore no analogy to Jesus death. The unbeliever doesn't know – and often doesn't care about sin or death or hell or judgement. But Jesus approached the Cross knowing exactly what lay ahead. No one suffered as He did.

Jesus also quoted **verse 8a** in **Matthew 7: 23** and in **Luke 13: 27**. **'On that day many will say to me, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons, and do mighty works in your name? And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness'** (Matt. 7: 23). King Jesus the Judge will declare and demonstrate God's victory over His enemies – the workers of evil – **'who shall be turned back and put to shame in a moment'** (10).

We can therefore sing this psalm in light of the cross and resurrection of Jesus. As we do we enter into the intensity of Jesus' troubled soul as He identifies with us as our representative head. **Verses 8-10** is the answer to Jesus prayer. We have the assurance that because Jesus prayers were heard, our prayers will be heard too when we pray in Jesus name. Hebrews reminds us, **'We have a high priest who is able to sympathise with our weakness and was tempted in every way, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need'** (Heb. 4: 15-16).

This is a good psalm to sing when we are in deep trouble. You may not be in trouble now. But there are others who are. As we sing this psalm, we unite with our wider church family. #



## WINE IN THE LORD'S SUPPER

*Rowland S. Ward, Melbourne*

*This article is a paper written in March 2018 and circulated in Southern Presbytery in response to the views expressed by a minister from overseas who was visiting among us but whom we did not find suitable for a number of reasons/*

*I print it here as our Brisbane PCEA brothers sought clarification from Synod 2019 of the acceptability of individual communion cups. They were not opposed but wanting to avoid disunity. They did not proceed as they found individual cups were quite widely used already, but I thought article might be of use for any who wonder about the subject.*

**F**ruit juice, grain and honey have been used for thousands of years to make alcoholic drinks. If thorns and thistles symbolised the difficult relationship with the environment that sin brings, Noah planted a vineyard which produced bountifully and Noah ended up drunk in his tent. Clearly this righteous man, who, as a kind of second Adam, had stepped on to a newly cleansed earth after the Flood, was not so righteous that the redemption of the world would be accomplished by him. Mind you, the process of fermentation was not understood properly until demonstrated by Louis Pasteur about 1858. Grapes in the wild contain natural sugars which, when the skin of the grape is broken, interact with yeasts that live on the skin. The yeasts grow and metabolise the sugars producing alcohol and carbon dioxide as waste products. The carbon dioxide gas produces a boiling effect hence the term *fermentation*.

By selection of different yeasts, the alcohol by volume [ABV] in wine can vary between 5 and 20% but 10 to 15% is usual as yeasts typically succumb to the toxicity of alcohol above this range. Beer is 2 to 6% ABV. Given the frequent difficulty of reliable and safe water supplies for drinking, it is understandable, if for no other reason, that use of wine and beer has been common throughout human history. In fact, the Bible, while having many warnings against excess and drunkenness, has positive comments on the value of wine which gladdens the heart.

The scientific process of distillation of fermented wine to remove excess water and increase the alcoholic content is usually credited to the medieval Arabs in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, brandy is typically 35% alcohol by volume and whisky 40% or more with Polish vodka almost 100% pure alcohol. Port wine is wine with additional alcohol added to be about 20% ABV. It is perhaps not surprising that drinks with a high alcohol content through distillation (ie. spirituous liquors) have been often criticised due to health issues, the danger of abuse and the cost.

In some Christian circles, particularly since the temperance agitation of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the use of any drinks containing alcohol has been regarded as itself sinful. This is a claim without foundation in the word of God. On the other hand, many Christians consider there is much to be said for total abstinence given the prevalence of excessive use in our society when non-alcoholic drinks are readily available. The first minister of our church in Victoria, the Rev. James Forbes (1813-51), urged moderation but ultimately was a strong supporter of total abstinence as the most appropriate practice in the infant colony. [The writer shares this approach in today's society, particularly when so many attractive non-alcoholic drinks are available.]

### Scripture

While it is clear drinking to excess can lead to the sin of drunkenness and thus involved fermented drinks, and while it is clear some, like those who took the Nazarite vow (Numbers 6:1-4) or the nomadic Rechabites, who for their own reasons vowed total abstinence (1 Sam 30:29; Jeremiah 35), it is not so clear that wine was always of the typical 10 to 15% ABV but rather less. Then again, by NT times it was common to add water to wine so diluting the alcoholic content. Indeed, a very early record of the Lord's Supper recorded by Justin Martyr of Rome (AD 150) specifically refers to 'a cup of wine mixed with water' being used (*Apology* 1:65). If Genesis 40:11 is understood as its surface meaning suggests, the cup-bearer pressed the grapes directly into Pharaoh's cup, thus the drink was virtually unfermented. At any rate, this may remind us of the words of Proverbs 31:4 – 'It is not for kings to drink wine nor for rulers to crave beer lest they drink and forget what has been decreed and deprive all the oppressed of their rights.' Alcohol relaxes and reduces inhibitions, so used wrongly it distorts judgment, produces mockers and leads to fighting (Proverbs 20:1). Of course, it should not be supposed that the ancients were entirely ignorant of ways to limit fermentation or to remove the alcohol content (the simplest method being by evaporating the alcohol at its boiling point of 78 degrees Centigrade).

### The supper

It is of interest that at the institution of the Supper by our Lord Jesus refers to 'the fruit of the vine' (Matt 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18) rather than wine as such. It is true that the Mishnah, the collection of traditional interpretations made by rabbinic Jews about AD 300, uses this phrase to describe wine (at *Berakoth* 6:1) but it is not obvious that a particular wine is exclusively meant any more than the reference in the same place to bread limits the kind of bread, whether leavened or unleavened (or gluten free!). While the term does not exclude wine made from fermented grapes, it does not exclude wine made from grapes the same day when fermentation had not progressed, nor exclude dilution of fermented wine with water. A little wine for medicinal reasons rather than only drinking water was good advice for Timothy (1 Tim 5:23). Modern knowledge suggests the antioxidants in red wine convey health benefits, even when the alcohol content has been lowered.

This writer has been a life-long total abstainer but is no more prepared than James Forbes to brand as sinful what is not so regarded in the Word of God. The debate over the presence of alcohol in communion wine is ultimately pointless. Unfermented grape juice or de-alcoholised wine are valid within the terminology as is ordinary fermented wine. The drunkenness evident at Corinth certainly demonstrates fermented wine was in use there, although we also need to recall that the abuses occurred because a regular meal was at that time associated with the celebration of the Supper.

Again, the colour of the wine is irrelevant. Similarly, the kind of bread is indifferent so long as it is bread suitable to nourish the body. The bread to hand at the Last Supper was unleavened, because the Passover required the exclusion of yeast from certain grains. And whether the wine is delivered through a common cup (regularly refilled in larger congregations), or common cups (for example, two were used in earlier times in our East St Kilda congregation), or via individual cups is also not a matter of doctrinal significance. The basis of unity is Christ not a single physical loaf or a single physical cup (1 Cor 10:17). The church is not broken into pieces if more than one loaf or more than one cup is used, or if communities of believers celebrate in their geographically distant localities!

Our Reformed fathers also recognised that in cases of necessity something other than the usual rule may apply. They did not wish for innovations but they looked at the fundamental idea of the Supper as using the ordinary staples of food and drink to represent spiritual realities. Thus, in cultures where bread and wine are not used in ordinary life or are not obtainable, something equivalent may be used. By the same token they generally rejected the wavers of the Roman Church since these at best provided an obscure analogy, not being normal food and not even taken into the mouth by the communicant's hand.

The Supper is a real but spiritual meal. A normal meal, represented by the staples of bread and wine, sustains the body and gives joy to the heart. The spiritual meal of the Supper is the feast of fellowship and union with Christ through the Spirit for the community of the faithful. Although the Supper rests on the sacrifice of Christ for his people, it is not a kind of passion play, and so is celebrated at a table not an altar. (Our Scottish Reformed fathers insisted on the table idea being evident in the administration.) The Supper is often described in terms of three Cs. (1) *Commemoration* – looking back in faith to the reality of the person and work of Christ for our redemption – his life, death, resurrection, and glorification for us; (2) *Communion* – feeding on Christ through faith - the receptacle of the soul as the mouth is the receptacle of the body. Thus, so surely as I take into my mouth the symbols of his redeeming love so through faith in Christ I just as surely have communion and union with Christ and share in all the benefits he has secured for his people; (3) *Consummation* – as surely as I have union with Christ through faith, and thus are here and now nourished and refreshed spiritually, so surely will I

share in the resurrection glory with my Saviour at the final feast, the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

### Fermented wine?

As an addendum, one final point may be noticed. It is sometimes claimed that fermented wine must be used because it represents a kind of spiritual resurrection: the grapes are crushed but take on a new life as fermentation occurs. Others argue that the joy in the Holy Spirit is signified by the use of *fermented* wine. These analogies are forced, leave us wondering about the bread, and miss the true analogy of the Supper as a meal that nourishes and sustains. They readily lead to the original simplicity of the Supper being lost. They suggest that some modern Reformed authors have not pondered deeply enough and cannot see beyond the bare letter of Scripture to what Scripture is really getting at.

In Melbourne we moved from the port wine at the East St Kilda church when I came in 1981, to Jewish wine about 8% ABV, to the use of grape juice from about 1990. Some years earlier (1982) we had moved to individual cups which we found appropriate given concerns (well-founded or otherwise) about health issues including AIDS.

- In the Lord's Supper the elements of a normal meal (bread and wine) represent spiritual realities. The Lord's Supper is therefore a spiritual meal, the feast of fellowship and union with Christ through the Spirit for the community of the faithful.
- Whether the wine is delivered through a common cup or cups (regularly refilled in larger congregations), or via individual cups is not a matter of doctrinal significance. The basis of unity is Christ, not a single physical loaf or a single physical cup (1 Cor 10:17). The Church of Christ is not broken into pieces if more than one loaf or more than one cup is used, any more than when communities of believers celebrate in their geographically distant localities.
- Wine that has a relatively low alcohol content or unfermented grape juice are both acceptable contents of the cup. It is preferable that one or the other be used in a particular celebration rather than have a suggestion of division at the Table.

### An afterword:

#### Children

Children are within the covenant of grace and are baptised and share its benefits. But they are not admitted to the Lord's Supper until conscious and active faith is in exercise since the Supper is the sacrament suited to that stage. Hence when a young baptised person can make a personal profession of faith he is admitted, to the Supper although the church does profess to judge the heart only the credibility of the profession.

#### The sick

The Supper belongs to the church so is not administered to the sick or dying except there be at least a gathering of believers present. #

# HOLY MODERATION

## Towards a Presbyterian Mind

Rev. Dr John Nicholls

*This address was delivered at the first London Presbyterian Conference, in 1986. I've always valued it and a recent visit with the author near Inverness not only was a delightful reunion from the time we were students in the Free Church of Scotland College in Edinburgh, but a reminder of its lasting value. John Nicholls was for many years the CEO of the London City Mission which progressed markedly under his leadership. He was Moderator of the Free Church of Scotland General Assembly in 2016.- Ed.*

### What is 'Holy Moderation'?

**PRESBYTERIANISM** is a system of doctrine and of polity but there is more to it than that. There is a Biblical Presbyterian mentality, a Presbyterian mindset which can be summed up in the phrase '*holy moderation*'. Moderation has had bad connotations in Britain ever since men in Scotland in the eighteenth century delighted to call themselves moderates as opposed to evangelicals. Their religion was formal, limited and cold. Moderation in that sense is the last thing that we want, but in Philippians 4:5 we are told to let our moderation be known to all men. It is a word that can be translated 'gentleness'; it has the idea of clemency and forbearance. It is one of those qualities which is required of an elder (Titus 1: 18) and it implies a sense of balance and proportion. The word 'moderation', so long as we define it thus, is a useful one because it reminds us that the right way is the middle way in many practical areas of life. We need to avoid errors of both extremes.

There is a special need for us to study holy moderation because of our situation in England. Anglicanism glories in its embrasiveness and tolerance. This is vague moderation, as opposed to holy moderation. On the other hand, there seems to be a glorying in disagreement and intolerance in many nonconformist circles. The text over independent evangelicalism in our land seems to be, 'Every man did that which was right in his own eyes'. Were we living in the days of the Commonwealth, some would say of us as they said of John Lilburn, 'If he was left all alone in the world, John would argue with Lilburn and Lilburn with John'!

Are we doomed? Is it the will of God that our land should only be faced with these two options in its church life - a vagueness which embraces virtually everything or a narrowness which is constantly fragmenting fellowships and churches? Is there not an alternative, a holy moderation?

Presbyterians ought to exemplify this moderation. But I cannot claim that all have done so. Too often Presbyterians have been characterised by a sad lack of moderation. Nor am I claiming that holy moderation is a quality that none but Presbyterians can have. There are wonderful examples of this moderation in brethren of many different Christian backgrounds. But holy moderation is a fruit that ought to

grow on our Presbyterian tree, and it is one that this tree, above all others, is best suited to grow. The genius of Presbyterianism leads to and develops its fullness in holy moderation.

Holy moderation is not indifference to the truth. Holy moderation is never developed at the expense of the truth. Indeed, it can only thrive where the truth is exalted. This is not the moderation of fuzziology, of the vagueness that passes for theology today. In the rest of this paper the emphasis is mainly on the need for greater tolerance. That is not because I undervalue sound theology. Everything we do must be founded on the word of God. I take it for granted that we are firmly committed to the reformed faith. My emphasis is due to a perception that we have neglected true liberty.

Holy moderation is not lukewarmness towards evangelism. Paul was a moderate man, yet Paul had continual sorrow and heaviness of heart for his brethren. He cried literal tears as he wrote to that erring church in Corinth because 'unbelievers will think you are mad'.

As Presbyterians we must be *immoderate* in our desire to see the cause of Jesus Christ spread in our land. We must have a holy intolerance of inertia. We must have a holy abhorrence that there are areas and communities in our nation that have never heard the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in its biblical clarity. We cannot be moderate about our desire to see the gospel spread.

Holy moderation is rather a way of life in which zeal for the truth is harmoniously blended with biblical wisdom, compassion and self-restraint. It is better seen in action than defined in abstract. The lives of men whom we revere as Presbyterians, such as Calvin, Chalmers, Hodge and Murray, have much to teach us here, adding a further dimension to their theological writings.

### Five Aspects of Holy Moderation

1. The first aspect of holy moderation is ***concern for truth without over-reaction to error***. Brook, the author of *The Lives of the Puritans*, said, 'Persons who have embraced sentiments which afterwards appear to them erroneous, often think that they can never remove too far from them and the more remote they go from their former opinions, the nearer they come to the truth'. This is swerving out of the ditch on the left only to plummet into the ditch on the right. The Anabaptists reacted to the evils of the medieval church by throwing out the covenant baby with the polluted font-water.

Over-reaction to error can take many forms. Remember, for instance, the sad story of Whitefield and the Erskines. Ebenezer and Ralph Erskine and their fellow Seceders left the Church of Scotland during the 1730's in what they saw as a stand for truth. When George Whitefield arrived in Scotland in 1741, they insisted that he preach nowhere but in their churches. He must not preach even for evangelical men of the Church of Scotland. When Whitefield refused to be bound by that command, the Seceders attacked him as being virtually the devil incarnate and guilty of all heresies and errors. One can understand their actions as human beings. These men had been deeply hurt and shamefully treated. But holy moderation should guard against such 'secondary picketing'. It was not Whitefield himself to whom they initially objected nor even the evangelical men for whom he preached, but the fact that those congregations were in a church with whom the Seceders had a dispute. This was over-reaction to error.

There is also the danger that people will become 'trigger

happy'. How often there is a dispute over the very core of the gospel and a secession church is formed. Very soon, however, that church itself is in turmoil, arguing not over liberalism and unbelief, but secondary issues. Thus a church which forms as a result of a bold and clear stand for the true gospel against modernism soon divides again over these secondary issues. When we have been in fierce battle, we become men of war, especially when we are young. Like young men in the Middle East today, we grow up knowing nothing but conflict, and we tend to look for fights. Holy moderation is knowing when to hold your fire.

2. The second aspect of holy moderation is *concern for detailed holiness but not at the expense of the kingdom's goals*. We should be concerned about consistent obedience in every area of life, but holy moderation requires us not to get things out of perspective. Are our eyes fixed on the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ? Are we conscious that the church is in this world today because God has a work of salvation to complete? God has called us to herald His grace and to be His effective servants in this world. There is the perennial danger that the church will become obsessed with secondary details and forget its urgent duty.

We could easily spend the rest of our lives arguing about unfulfilled prophecy or the qualifications for coming to the Lord's Supper, but that is not going to extend the kingdom of Christ. We want everything to be biblical, but our time is limited and our energies are finite. Holy moderation means keeping a right balance. The predominant thing that should absorb our attention, emotions and time must be the spread of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thomas Chalmers was such a 'balanced' believer. He warned of the 'vast amount of misplaced zeal (that) has been expended' on the 'magnification of small matters'. He went on to say, 'There are thousands of the minuter controversies which I cannot sympathise in on either of the sides, and just for a lack of a clear or important principle to hold by'. Among these issues he mentions sitting or kneeling at Communion, organs and stained glass windows, and clerical attire. The people who show 'zeal and tenaciousness' on such matters are often at the same time faithful in upholding the great principles of the gospel and are to be highly esteemed for that. Nevertheless, their attitude is one that Chalmers 'infinitely regrets, because of the contempt which is thereby drawn on Christianity' (T. Chalmers, *Prelections on Butler's Analogy, etc.*, 1849, p393ff.)

Chalmers was no latitudinarian - after all, he led the Disruption of 1843 - but he fought to keep sight of the kingdom goal. Likewise, many of Calvin's letters are written warnings to people not to become obsessed about details. His comment that the English Prayer Book contained 'many tolerable foolishnesses' was a reminder that there are things with which we do not agree but which must not divert us from the advance of the gospel itself.

3. The third aspect of holy moderation is *a concern for unity but not an attempt to press all believers into the same mould*. Calvin warned against a forced uniformity in ceremonial matters. He says, 'When we appear before the judgment seat of God ... we will not be asked about ceremonies. In any case, such uniformity in outward matters will receive no consideration; we shall rather be

asked about the right use of freedom. But the right use will be one that has contributed most to the edification of the church' (Calvin: *Opera Selecta* 1.432). He even says that it is good that complete uniformity does not prevail 'so that it may be manifest that the Christian faith does not consist in such matters'.

It may be uniformity in terms of dress. Is there not a danger of saying to people today, 'We want you to become Christians. But you will have to become middle class first. You will have to start wearing suits and ties. Otherwise you cannot possibly be a reformed Christian'? Or it may be a uniformity of language. Do we say, 'You must use pronouns in the way we do or you cannot pray with us'? *Why?* Why force people into a man-made pattern?

Of course, moderation must always look to both sides. We need unity with regard to that on which the Bible has explicitly delivered itself and liberty with regard to that on which the Bible has left no distinct or authoritative statement. We need to realise that the Epistle to the Romans has a chapter 14 and a chapter 15, as well as chapters 1 to 8! We must learn the lesson of enlightened forbearance in the mere circumstantial of worship and the outward forms of Christian living in contrast to the furious intolerance which characterised and disgraced a former age.

There are many questions of ceremony and activity on which we Presbyterians could dispute with each other. But is there no alternative to arguing? What I hold out to you today is that it is possible to have differing views on such things and to live and work together. Let me give you an example. Professor John Murray strongly believed that only psalms should be sung in public worship. When the denomination of which he was a minister changed its practice to allow its congregations to sing hymns if they so chose, Professor Murray did not leave the church. He lived for the rest of his days as a minister of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, enthusiastically helping in the outreach work of hymn-singing congregations.

Last century, when the Free Church of Scotland issued a hymn book, there were those who fought strongly against it. The book was approved and congregations in the church began to sing hymns, yet not one minister withdrew from the church. There was no secession over that issue. They did not practice it in their own congregations, but they did not split the church on it either.

My challenge to you quite simply is this: *Are we going to be Presbyterians like these men?* Are we going to say, 'Look, there are things about which some of us feel strongly. We do not think they are unimportant things, but we recognise that brethren whom we respect in the faith take a different view of Scripture. So long as no one forces us to practice what we think is wrong, we are happy to live with them and work with them to the utmost of our ability'? There can be unity without uniformity. Let Calvin have the last word on this point: 'I entreat you, my dear brother [Farel], in so great iniquity of the time in which we live, that you will do your utmost endeavour to keep together all who are in any way bearable. As to the trifling ceremonies, strive to induce the brethren not to dispute the point with those of their neighbourhood with so much of stiff-necked obstinacy'.

4. The fourth aspect of holy moderation is *the recognition of the continuing imperfection of all believers, including ourselves*. Perhaps we should say '*especially ourselves*'. Because our understanding is imperfect we need to learn from

and be corrected by our brethren. We need to recognise, too, that we are a bundle of prejudices and scars. There are places in our lives where someone hurt us years ago; when people come near those places we jump. We get defensive and belligerent because our memories, prejudices and emotions continue to be imperfect though renewed by grace. When we recognise that, we will want the help of other believers.

Calvin comments on Luke 9, where John and James wanted to bring down fire on the Samaritans, that, 'they were elated with foolish confidence'. In his reply, 'Christ not only restrains the wild impulse of his two disciples but lays down a rule for us all that we should not let our zeal have its own way'.

We need to admit that our zeal may be mingled with error. How often have people used the zeal of Jesus Christ in cleansing the temple as an excuse for devastating the church? Indeed, Christ did cleanse the temple, but you and I are not perfect like Christ. Our zeal has impure motives mingled with it. We are continually affected by our upbringing and our background.

I. H. Marshall emphasises this in his definition of 'moderation': 'The essential meaning of the word is fairmindedness, the attitude of a man who is charitable towards men's faults and merciful in his judgments of their failings, because he takes their whole situation into his reckoning'.

John Knox once wrote to Calvin about the continued use of sponsors at baptism. Knox was strongly against the practice. Although Calvin agreed in principle, his reply counselled caution: 'The parents ought to come and recognise their commitment in the Lord, but, because of the long ages in which the people have lived under a corrupt church, sponsors could take their place provided they promised to see the child brought up in the true faith'.

Calvin was saying that this situation involved more than a theory. Knox was dealing with fallen people who were the product of a long tradition. As ministers, we have to recognise that we are dealing with ordinary, imperfect people. We do not profess to have a perfect church membership. By that very admission we recognise that there is continuing sin. Moderation faces up to and deals with this sin.

5. The fifth aspect of holy moderation is *patience*. In his letter to Knox quoted above, Calvin agreed that he wanted to be rid of sponsors, but it did not have to be done immediately. He counselled Knox to be patient. In another instance, Knox was complaining about the ex-priests who were still enjoying their pensions and rents from church lands. Knox wanted to get this money for the church. Calvin wrote back that 'in the meantime, provided the church recover by their death the ecclesiastical property, it does not seem fitting to raise a strife about the annual revenue'. Why did he say that? Because he saw that a weapon would be handed to the enemies of the gospel if Presbyterians were perceived as people who threw old men out of their homes and filled Edinburgh with beggar priests. Calvin was saying in effect, 'Wait. They will die one day. Make it clear that when they die the resources come to the church where they belong. You can afford to be patient'.

The English language has a proverb counseling such

patience: 'Geneva was not built in a day'. It is interesting to compare this with the motto of the radicals and Anabaptists: 'Reformation without tarrying for any'. There is a world of difference between them. Calvin was not using patience as an excuse for doing nothing. In his 'tolerable foolishnesses' letter, he also complained of people who used the fact that the Church of England Prayer Book had always contained blemishes as an excuse for indefinitely tolerating all sorts of 'papist dregs'. But Calvin was sharply aware that a hasty impatience frequently creates more problems than it solves. On the whole we can afford to be patient. This is a practical application of the sovereignty of God. Is this not what Paul says in Philippians 4? 'Let your moderation be known unto all men; the Lord is at hand.' That 'at hand' includes both a reference to our Lord's return and his present control. We do not have to rush around insisting that everything be done today. We must faithfully proceed, wisely considering every situation and patiently looking to the Lord. Presbyterians should know where they are going. Presbyterians should swallow when their brother Presbyterians do secondary things differently. In a right sense, Presbyterians should wait. This is holy moderation.

### How Presbyterianism produces Holy Moderation

We have seen what holy moderation is. Our next question is why should Presbyterianism produce these characteristics?

First, because *Presbyterianism has a high view of the unity of the church*. Calvin did not like candles in churches. But he wrote to Reformed refugees in Wesel who were troubled by Lutheran candles: 'Let us lay it down as a settled point that we ought to make concessions in all ceremonies that do not involve any prejudice to the confession of our faith and for this end, that the unity of the church be not destroyed by our excessive rigour or moroseness. The important consideration is, that you do not yield to a faulty pliancy in the confession of your faith ... There is not one of us who from spite against a candle ... would separate himself from the body of the church'.

The old Scottish Presbyterians such as George Gillespie and James Durham passionately believed in unity in the church. Durham wrote: 'Never did men run to quench fire in a city, lest all should be destroyed with more diligence than men ought to bestir themselves to quench this in the church; never did mariners use more speed to stop a leak in a ship lest all should be drowned, than ministers especially, and all Christian men should haste to stop this breaking in of the waters of strife, lest thereby the whole church be overwhelmed' (James Durham, *On Scandal*, p313f.)

George Gillespie, addressing the independents in the Westminster Assembly, wrote: 'Let there be no strife between us and you for we be brethren . . . Let it not be said that there can be no unity in the church without prelacy . . . Alas! how shall our divisions and contentions hinder the preaching and learning of Christ [*the kingdom goal, do you see?*], and the edifying of one another in love? ... There is but one Christ; yea, the head and the body make but one Christ, so that you cannot divide the body without dividing Christ ... Oh brethren, we shall be one in heaven; let us pack up differences in this place of our pilgrimage the best way we can. Nay, we will not despair of unity in this world ... Hath not God promised to give us one heart and one way? ... Brethren, it is not impossible, pray for it, endeavour it, press hard toward the mark of accommodation'. (James Walker, *The Theology and Theologians of Scotland*, p.102).

Presbyterianism leads to holy moderation because it has a strong view of the unity of the church. Presbyterianism is an internationalist religion. Presbyterians have always favoured international conferences, because they recognise their brethren in Korea, Japan, Africa, North America and South America. Meeting people from those diverse lands is a great corrective. Speaking to those from the Dutch Reformed Churches, we find that they have a strong commitment to the reformed faith, but many of their circumstantial practices are different. We cannot say, 'You are not reformed'; we must say, 'We do things differently'. Immediately such things are put into perspective.

Secondly, Presbyterianism leads to holy moderation **because it has a biblical view of the Old Testament in relation to the New.** The unity of the people of Israel under the old covenant and the continuity (with development) between the New Testament church and Old Testament Israel are fundamental. They provide the materials for building a holy moderation of New Testament Christianity. There is still only one 'people of God', one holy community that must dwell in unity. Yet the New Testament has no book of Leviticus. The Spirit-indwelt, mature (Gal. 4: 1-7) church does not need a rule book fitted to the juvenile age of the covenant people. When people cut asunder the Old and New Testaments or when they blur the distinction between them, trouble inevitably results. Presbyterians ought to have holy moderation because of their covenant theology.

Thirdly, Presbyterians ought to develop holy moderation **because the very system of Presbyterian government expresses this moderation.** People who are not involved in a Presbyterian government may not understand it. They ask, 'How can we give to a presbytery the right to change a local decision?' The question I would put back to these people is this: Do you know how often that happens? The answer is, 'Very, very seldom. Almost never.' Well, then, is it all necessary? Are we just arguing about abstractions? No. I am more and more convinced that this court of appeal has a restraining influence on all sides in disputes in the church. .

No wonder there is often tyranny in Independency if the pastor knows that he can treat people as he pleases and they can do nothing about it as long as he has a majority in the church meeting. No wonder bitterness and division occur if a group is passionately concerned about something it believes is true but knows that it does not have a majority in the church meeting. It has nowhere to turn. The very fact that in Presbyterianism there is a court of appeal, a wider venue in which these things can be aired, produces moderation so that only in exceptional circumstances is it needed. Presbyterianism safeguards the rightful liberties of the local church - guarding it against an unrestrained individualism, against intolerant factionalism, and against doctrinal error.

Presbyterianism with its checks and balances, with its limitations on human foolishness, exercises a tremendous influence towards holy moderation. We are reminded that the church of Jesus Christ does not end at the door of the local church. It is not you in your small corner and I in mine, but all of us in the one body of the Lord Jesus Christ. That restrains the strong-minded individual who imagines that

wisdom will die with him and that he alone knows exactly what is wrong with the church. What tremendous trouble a person like that can cause in an independent church! Yet in Presbyterianism we can say to him, 'Go talk to the presbytery and see what those men think. There is your court of appeal, a wider body with whom you can deal'. When approached in this fashion, these do not sound like important biblical principles, do they? But is it not lack of such 'little' things that so often has wrecked our churches and ruined the witness of the evangelical cause in our land?

It is my conviction that Presbyterianism is wonderfully suited to foster and grow holy moderation. 'Here', said Alexander Henderson, 'is superiority without tyranny, ... here is parity without confusion or disorder and lastly, here is subjection without slavery'. #

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## Tabernacle Studies, #4 of 5

**The Laver of Brass.**

Rev. S N Ramsay

### Exodus 38:8

**'And he made the laver of brass, and the foot of it brass, of the looking-glasses of the women assembling which assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.'**

As to the brazen altar, to which we gave our attention in the last meditations so we may see to-day in the laver of brass what has been described as a **tangible testimony to a spiritual reality.**

Let us call to mind again the lay-out of the Tabernacle. The gate, the brazen altar, the laver of brass, the holy place of service, and the sanctum sanctorum – the HOLY OF HOLIES, where was the *'mercy seat above the ark'*, and in the ark the Testimony.' Let us note therefore that the laver stands between the altar of sacrifice and the Holy Places...**it follows in order - the brazen altar...and no man may come to the laver who has not been to the altar.**

### **The gate that leads to sacrifice...**

We saw in our last lesson how the gate stands for the WORD, the way by which we must come to God in Christ. The gate then leads us to the place of sacrifice – the pattern of the eternal truth of **the substitutionary atonement of Him who offered Himself one sacrifice for sins for ever** and is now set down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. And if we truly believe in the efficacy of that eternal sacrifice then we will find no place for any altar so-called in a Christian church. For these things were but *'the figures of the true'* (Heb 9:24)- a merely temporary and figurative arrangement – which would find their complete fulfilment in Christ Jesus.

### **... leads also to sanctification**

But we left our discussion the last day with the observation that 'the ground is well-trodden around the brazen altar.' The altar, as we observed, stands for the atoning work of Christ the Son. But the Apostle, writing to the Hebrews, calls upon us in what may at first sight, be strange words – *'Leaving aside the principles of the doctrines of Christ, let us go on to perfection.'* What does he mean? – 'leaving aside the principles of the doctrine of Christ'? Haven't we always believed and taught that the principles of the doctrine of Christ must be held at all

costs? But there is no difficulty when we understand that, that by the 'principles' he means those most elementary truths of the faith. He wants us to grow up, to progress...he wants us to be weaned of the sincere 'sincere milk' and to learn to eat stronger meat...he calls upon us to penetrate more deeply and more fully into truth and the ways of righteousness. He calls upon us to **move on** – not to stand and or to wander ceaselessly around and around the altar of sacrifice, as though that were the be-all and end-all of true religion **but to go onward** in the way of truth and of Christian living.

**If you have come to find forgiveness through the great sacrifice of Calvary...if you have come to find pardon for sin by Christ's death...then you are called to come and experience sanctification and cleansing by His Spirit.** The laver then stands for cleansing, and is set next in order after the altar of sacrifice.

### A kingdom of priests

Now note that the laver was for the purification of the **priests**, and let us bear in mind that under the Gospel **every believer** is made 'a priest unto God' (Rev. 1:6). – 'To Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us a kingdom, **priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory... forever.**' It behoves every one of us then to learn the lesson of the laver of brass, as it speaks to us of the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit of God.

Upon their consecration, the priests must come to Moses, and they must surrender their garments, and there at the place of cleansing they must submit to the washing of their entire person, and then be invested with the new and shining robes of their office. **Remember** that this first washing was not an act of their own, but was performed for them by another; and throughout the entire course of their ministry, the ceremony would never be repeated.

The work of regeneration consists not merely in atonement for sin...but in cleansing and in imputation of the perfect righteousness of Christ. 'For when the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Saviour appeared, He saved us not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of His own mercy by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit which He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour so that we might be justified by His grace, and become heirs in the hope of eternal life.' (Titus 3:5-6)

This washing ...once accomplished, the priest stands under its abiding efficacy; so it is with the second birth, the washing of regeneration.' Zechariah 3 shows Joshua standing before the angel of the Lord and Satan at his right hand to resist him. And we see Joshua stripped of his filthy garments, and clothed in a change of raiment.

### Looking in a mirror

The laver was made of the 'looking-glasses' of the serving-women of Israel. Have you ever stood before the mirror which is Christ – have you ever examined, in the light of His perfection, the shameful filthy rags which are our own righteousness?

Has there ever been a time in your life when you have been brought to feel honestly and thoroughly **ashamed** as you saw your **self** in the light of His divine perfection? For you must see these things before you can see your need of

that regeneration...that being 'born again' which is the combined gift of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

Andrew Bonar asks, 'may we not see here something to remind us of each Person of the Godhead. There yonder Holy of Holies, beyond the veil, in light inaccessible, is the symbol of God the Father; there at yonder gate is the Altar of Sacrifice which is the symbol of God the Son, and between stands the Laver of pure water, the symbol of the Holy Ghost.' The whole might be called Ephesians 2:18 in sacred hieroglyphics, 'through Him we have both access by one Spirit unto the Father.'

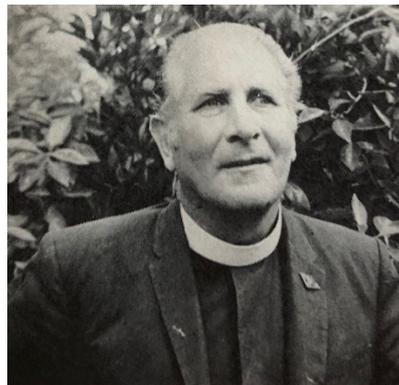
Yes friends, praise God that laver of the brazen mirrors, reflecting all the imperfection of our human weakness and fault and failing, bears within the **waters of cleansing** and points us to the sanctifying and purifying power of the Holy Spirit of God. 'Sanctification...the work of God's Spirit whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin and live to righteousness.' (Shorter Catechism Q. 35)

The priest was ceremonially cleansed from head to foot, by the hand of another; yet he must come regularly, to cleanse his hands and feet. 'The man who is regenerated by the grace of God has received a new nature – he is 'born again' – and cannot become unregenerate, though he may degenerate. Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word.' (Ephesians 5:25 ff).

And how we **need** this daily and continuous cleansing. For full well we know that while there is something wrong in our lives – while there is a sin on our conscience that we deliberately ignore, or, for which we try to excuse ourselves – maybe even because we elect to consider that someone else is responsible for it – **when we refuse to dip our hands in the laver of cleansing** – full well, I say, we **know** that we cannot really enter the Holy Places. We cannot serve, **neither can we pray.**

As we stand then in the presence of these things which were the 'patterns of the true,' may God give us the grace to experience the realities of which the earthly symbols speak, to be brought to repentance and faith to receive and rest upon the 'Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world; to be ushered into the presence of the Almighty and Eternal Father, where cherubim and seraphim unite in heavenly song, **Holy Holy Holy Lord God Almighty.** 'Who is the man that shall ascend to the hill of God?' (Psalm 24:3 ff).

*From Sermon Notes of the Rev Stewart Ramsay, PCEA minister on the Hunter 1954-84.*



## NEWS

### Christianity's Shifting Centre of Gravity

By 2060 six of the countries with the top ten largest Christian populations will be in Africa, according to a new Pew Research Centre report. The projections are in line with the gradual shift that has increasingly seen Christian populations live outside the historical centres of Christianity. The size of the Christian population in Nigeria alone, already the largest on the continent, is projected to double by 2060. In addition, Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya are projected to join the list of countries with the top ten largest Christian populations, replacing Russia, Germany and China. The spread of Christianity is clearly visible in several African countries with an explosion in the number of churches across urban and rural areas. The World Economic Forum reports that the Christian population in the six African countries will account for just under a quarter of the projected global Christian population of three billion people.

– World Economic Forum via *New Life Christian Newspaper*

### ASIA PACIFIC REGIONAL CONFERENCE, MELBOURNE 2019



International Conference  
of Reformed Churches

Joint Hosts: Presbyterian  
Church of Eastern  
Australia  
Christian Reformed  
Churches of Australia

Following the very successful Conference in Seoul in 2015 the next Regional Conference is scheduled for Melbourne jointly hosted by the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia and the Christian Reformed Churches of Australia.

#### 1. Time

The Conference will begin on Tuesday morning **1 October 2019** with registration from 9.00am and conclude by 3pm on Thursday **3<sup>rd</sup> October 2019**.

#### 2. Venue

The venue is the Robert White Hall within the Assembly Hall at 156 Collins Street, Melbourne. This is a modern facility in the CBD owned by the Presbyterian Church of Victoria and close to a number of attractions such as the National Gallery of Victoria, the Aquarium etc. etc.. The venue has wi-fi and an overhead projector.

#### 3. Accommodation

Those flying into Melbourne Airport can get the Airport Bus to Southern Cross Station (30 minutes) and stay at whatever accommodation in the CBD suits their wish and budget. The cost of fares and accommodation including breakfast is the responsibility of those attending.

Delegates' meals will be at the venue or nearby restaurants at the cost of the hosts.

The CRCA has 10 churches and 1300 communicant members in the Melbourne metropolitan area (one Chinese) and the PCEA 4 (one Southern Sudanese) and 140 communicant members. If people are staying longer preaching opportunities could be available on the Lord's Day.

#### 4. Topics

We are resolutely committed to making the Conference one which deals with matters of practical value which doesn't mean that the theological underpinnings will be neglected - far from it! Topics and Speakers are:

*Trinitarian shaped worship – its Basis and Necessity and Presentation in Preaching* – Rev. Dr Peter Adam OAM, former Principal of Ridley College and Emeritus Vicar of St Jude's, Carlton, He is internationally known as a speaker at Bible and missionary conventions and preaching training conferences.

*An Overview of World Reformed Missions* – Mr Mark Bube, since 1991 the General Secretary, Committee on Foreign Missions of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, US. who has travelled widely.

*Diaconal ministry* - Rev Dirk Van Garderen, Reformed Churches of New Zealand

*A Positive Eschatology in an Age of Negativity* – Rev Dr Rowland S. Ward, PCEA Melbourne, Lecturer in Church History, Presbyterian Theological College.

*Luther's Theology of the Cross* - Rev Dr Martin Williams, Lecturer in New Testament and Greek, Head of Theology, Editor of *Vox Reformata*, Reformed Theological College, Melbourne/Geelong.

We want to ensure plenty of time for networking and private discussions. There will also be a four hour block of free time on Wednesday afternoon. Once all those attending are confirmed we will ask different ones to take short devotions and others to introduce their churches, and we will arrange for small discussion group leaders.

Visitors welcome for the main addresses.

**Enquiries:** Rowland.ward@gmail.com or Rev. Lourens Nel <pastor@lrcr.org.au>

#### OVERSEAS VISITORS

The Rev Dr **Jack Whytock** and his wife **Nancy** arrive in Melbourne soon and will speak at a mission meeting at the Knox Church on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> August at 2.30pm. This is a great opportunity to hear about the work of Dumisani Theological Institute in South Africa where Jack was recently Acting Principal and his wife librarian. After Victoria, they will visit other PCEA congregations in NSW. Rev **Samit Mishra** and Mr **Pradeep Kumar** from the Presbyterian Free Church of Central India will be visiting Australia to attend the Regional ICRC Conference but also to visit PCEA Churches in NSW and Q.

*The Missions Convener, Rev Dr Dennis Muldoon has the interstate arrangements for these visits in hand. (dkmuldoon@hotmail.com).*