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Purpose: The Evangelical Forum is a fellowship of concerned evangelical Pastors and laymen who desire to see renewal and reformation within Baptist churches in Virginia. We affirm the *Second London Baptist Confession* (1689) and the *Baptist Faith and Message* (2000).

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New Baptist Covenant Reflection: Where were the Moderate Prophets?

The so-called “New Baptist Covenant” held its meeting January 30-February 1 in Atlanta. This group was supposed to be a non-partisan gathering of moderate Baptists to present a more favorable picture of Baptists to the world as opposed to that put forward by the mean old, narrow-minded, poor-people-hating Southern Baptist Convention (aka the Evil Empire).

When the gathering was announced last year, Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton were on stage, front and center. In the background were various moderate Baptist leaders, including BGAV Executive Director John Upton. Carter and Clinton were among the keynote speakers at the gathering. Al Gore also hosted a luncheon promoting a pseudo-Christian view of environmentalism. Moderates have long criticized the SBC for being in the back pocket of the Republican Party (and they were often not far off mark!), but they somehow fail to see the hypocrisy in their own actions, hosting such a meeting in a Presidential election year (just days before the super-Tuesday primaries no less!) and allowing former President Clinton (and husband of Hillary) to be the keynote speaker on Friday. What exactly qualifies Clinton to speak at a supposed religious gathering anyhow?

Tender to this criticism, the organizers reached out to include token Republican Senator Chuck Grassley and featured him prominently on the front page of their website. Little was said about the impact to religious liberty of Grassley’s recent questionable actions investigating various televangelists (no matter how doctrinally deluded those ministries might be). One of the interesting criticisms of the New Baptist Covenant came not merely from the right but also from the left. Some more progressive Baptists chided the organizers for not coming forward to openly endorse homosexual practice. Even the old guard moderate Baptists are still squeamish on the homosexual issue.

Everyone knows the New Baptist Covenant was far from bi-partisan. How about the mere fact that this so-called Baptist gathering was called together by and most prominently features politicians and not preachers! This meeting had nothing to do with the gospel and everything to do with trying to get soft-evangelicals and other muddle-minded “Baptists” to support Hillary in November. Of course, I don’t think the organizers and participants (which include the mainline African-American Baptist denominations) anticipated the challenge Obama has given her, especially among African-American voters.

Another of the keynote speakers was author John Grisham from Charlottesville. His presence too was more than a little odd. Grisham is apparently a member of a local moderate Baptist church in Charlottesville, but what exactly are his qualifications as a Baptist statesman? The fact that he hosted a high profile fundraiser for Hillary at the Paramount Theater when she visited Charlottesville last year is perhaps a more key clue as to why he was invited. That and the star-power.

What kind of Baptist gathering is it when high-profile entertainers and politicians fill the podium and preachers the pews? I thought we were supposed to speak to the culture from God’s Word rather than invite the cultural elites to dictate to us how we ought to read the Bible, practice the faith, and vote in the election booth. The question I was left asking was this: Where were the moderate separation of church and state prophets? Baptist were stronger when we preached election rather than worried about elections. ♦

The Doctrines of Grace: An Introduction By Jeffrey T. Riddle

What evangelical church has not sung Newton's classic hymn, "Amazing Grace"? Christians are familiar with the Biblical word "grace," but have we fully grasped the radical nature of what the Bible teaches about grace? We are well familiar with Paul's statement that salvation is by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9). What, however, does one mean when he speaks of "the doctrines of grace"? This essay will examine (I) the names and titles given to these doctrines; (II) a brief explanation of these doctrines as a theological system; (III) a history of the rise, fall, and revival of these doctrines; and (IV) a concluding summary.

I. The name

The doctrines of grace are also known as "Reformed Theology." This title refers to the fact that these doctrines reflect ideas reclaimed during the Protestant Reformation. They are also often referred to as "Calvinism" (or "the five points of Calvinism") because they were articulated by the followers of John Calvin (1509-1564), the great Reformer of Geneva. Note: John Calvin did not articulate these five points himself, but his disciples did. Some would argue that Calvin might not have affirmed these doctrines in exactly the same manner as his disciples, but it is safe to say that he would have been in firm agreement with them.¹

II. A system

The doctrines of grace are a theological or doctrinal system, consisting of five basic affirmations. The five points are also known by the acronym TULIP:

T-Total Depravity;
U-Unconditional Election;
L-Limited Atonement;
I-Irresistible Grace;
P-Perseverance of the Saints.

The five points are really five-inter-related sub-doctrines of the larger doctrine of salvation (soteriology). It is an attempt to understand how God saves people in Christ. The doctrines of grace stress man's spiritual inability due to the total impact of sin (T); God's plan to save the elect in Christ (U); God's particular work of redemption for the elect in Christ's death on the cross (L); the effectiveness of God's grace in applying redemption to the elect (I); and God's ability to keep the elect in a state of grace (P).

Joel Beeke offers the following succinct summary of the five points:

- *Total depravity* (sovereign grace needed): man is so depraved and corrupted by sin in every part of his being that he is by nature incapable of doing any spiritual good and cannot effect any part of his salvation (Genesis 6:5);
- *Unconditional election* (sovereign grace conceived): from eternity past, God chose to save certain individuals irrevocably to everlasting life and glory in Christ Jesus without seeing any intrinsic goodness in them, and He ordained the means by which they would be saved (Romans 9:15-16);

¹ For an affirmation that the doctrines of grace do, indeed, reflect the theology of John Calvin, see Paul Helm's study, *Calvin and The Calvinists* (The Banner of Truth Trust, 1982).

- *Limited atonement* (sovereign grace merited): while the death of Christ is sufficient to cover the sins of the world, its saving efficacy is intentionally limited to His elect sheep whose sins He bore and for whom He fully satisfied the justice of God (John 17:9);
- *Irresistible grace* (sovereign grace applied): God irresistibly calls the elect to saving faith and salvation in Christ with such sovereign power that they can no longer resist His grace, but are made willing in the day of His power (Ps. 110:3; John 6:44-45); and,
- *Perseverance* (sovereign grace preserved): those whom God saves, He graciously preserves in the state of grace so that they will never be lost. They may be troubled by infirmities as they seek to make their calling and election sure, but they will persevere until the end, fighting the good fight of faith until the final victory shall be realized in the coming again of their Savior and Lord as Judge (John 10:28).²

One will sometimes hear people say that they hold some of these doctrines but not others. Most Baptists, for example, will at least agree with “P” (“Perseverance of the Saints,” which they might call “once saved always saved” or “eternal security”). So, we will sometimes hear people claim to be three point or four point Calvinists, etc. There is a logical problem, however, with the notion that one might hold to some of the five points and not all. To take one point away is to have the system collapse like a house of cards.

Again, the doctrines of grace are a system. Some will say they want to be simple Biblicists, free from a systematic approach. Some will even denounce all so-called “man-made” systems. These overlook several important facts. First, human beings have a tendency to think in orderly ways. We are “meaning-makers.” Our desire to see things in an orderly way reflects the fact that we were made in the image of a consistent and orderly God (see 1 Cor 14:33). Though our reason has been tainted by sin (see “T”) we retain a rational capacity. The doctrines of grace, rightly used, are not an attempt to impose a system on Scripture but to make sense of or to systematize what Scripture teaches. Second, those who dismiss all systemic approaches to Scripture also dismiss the fact that God was pleased to use human means to write the Scriptures and that he intended the Scriptures to be clearly understood by those who read them.

Those who denounce efforts at a systematic and meaningful approach Scripture have the burden of explaining why God is more glorified by disorganized and contradictory thinking than by organized and harmonious thinking. Many of those who denounce clearly defined systems are in fact operating with highly developed systematic doctrinal interpretation that is merely left unspoken and unwritten. Their problems with the doctrines of grace are not with the fact that it is a human interpretation of Scripture but that it contradicts their own human interpretation of Scripture.

The great Baptist leader Andrew Fuller (1754-1815) wrote:

The man who has no creed has no belief; which is to say the same thing as an unbeliever; and he whose belief is not formed into a system has only a few

² From Joel R. Beeke, *The Heritage Reformed Congregations: Who We Are and What We Believe* (Reformation Heritage Books, 2007): p. 11.

loose, unconnected thoughts, without entering into the harmony and glory of the gospel. Every well-informed and consistent believer, therefore, must have a creed—a system which he supposes to contain the leading principles of Divine revelation.³

Fuller makes clear that the problem for early Baptists was not the having of a system but the ecclesiastical or civil authority's unjust imposition of a creed on the conscience of a believer.

III. History: rise, fall, revival

The five points of Calvinism actually came as a response to what are called "The Five Points of Arminianism." James Arminius (1560-1609 AD; a.k.a. Jacob Hermann) was a Dutch Pastor and Scholar, influenced by humanism, who had corrected the teaching of John Calvin. In 1610 his followers issued the "Arminian Remonstrance" to the Dutch Parliament which included the five points of Arminianism:

1. Conditional election;
2. Unlimited atonement;
3. Sinfulness capable of being overcome;
4. Resistible (prevenient) grace;
5. Precariousness of the Saints.⁴

Calvin's followers responded with an international conference (with delegates from across Protestant Europe) in 1618-19 called the Synod of Dort (meeting in Dort or Dordrecht, Holland). They met for seven months (November 1618 to May 1619) in 154 sessions and, in the end, issued a firm rebuke of each of the Arminian points. The five points of Arminianism were rejected in five heads of doctrine:

1. Of Divine Predestination (Unconditional election);
2. Of the Death of Christ, and the Redemption of Men thereby (Limited Atonement);
3. Of the Corruption of Man (Total Depravity);
4. Of his conversion to God, and the Manner thereof (Irresistible Grace);
5. Of the Perseverance of the Saints.⁵

From these five points (with the Dortian order shuffled) came the TULIP designation.

Among the doctrinal heirs of Arminianism we would list those in the Methodist movement (following John Wesley), Holiness movement, Pentecostals, General ("Free-Will") Baptists, Disciples of Christ, and most mainline Protestants. Among the heirs of Calvinism we would list the Presbyterians, Calvinistic Methodists (following George Whitefield), Particular Baptists (including John Bunyan, John Gill, Andrew Fuller, William Carey, Charles Spurgeon, and John Broadus), and various other Reformed Churches.

Many early Baptists in America were explicitly Calvinistic in outlook. The Philadelphia Baptist Association, the first Baptist association formed in America, adopted as its confession in 1742 the Philadelphia Baptist Confession, a creed that

³"Creeds and Subscriptions," in *The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, Vol. 3 (Sprinkle Publications, 1988): p. 449.

⁴To read the Arminian articles in parallel columns of Dutch, Latin, and English, see Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. 3 (Baker Books, 1998): pp. 545-49.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 550-97.

warmly expounds the doctrines of grace.⁶ From c. 1900 onward this emphasis declined until the start of the current modern resurgence. Theologian Samuel Waldron lists seven major factors for the decline of the doctrines of grace among Baptists in America:⁷

1. The American, Democratic Ethos.

“There was something in the political philosophy associated with the American Revolution which was profoundly antithetical to Calvinism. There was something in the Baptist alliance with the likes of Thomas Jefferson which did not bode well for the future.”⁸

2. Revivalism.

3. Methodism.

4. Inclusivism.

By this Waldron means an effort to downplay the doctrinal divide between Arminian (“free will”) and Reformed Baptists.

5. Hyper-Calvinism.

The “Hard-shell” views of men like Daniel Parker (1781-1844) led to “passivism in the Christian life and the rejection of evangelistic effort,” placing the doctrines of grace in a distorted light.⁹

6. Modernism.

Liberalism began to creep in after the Civil War, and by the 20th century “it was a flood of heresy among Baptists.”¹⁰

7. The Fundamentalist movement.

Waldron notes three harmful tendencies here: (1) dangerous reduction of focus to a few “fundamentals” that downplayed doctrines of grace; (2) domination of Dispensational Premillennialism; (3) Kewick focus on “higher life,” a modification Wesleyan perfectionism rooted in “a Pelagianizing view of sin.” Some of the ill byproducts here have included “Easy-believism” and the teaching of “Carnal Christian Theory.”¹¹

By the mid-20th century all these factors had led to the serious decline of the doctrines of grace among Baptists and most other evangelicals as well. In the last few

⁶ The *Philadelphia Baptist Confession* is identical with the *Second London Baptist Confession of 1689* with the addition of two articles, one that sanctions hymn singing and one that sanctions the practice of laying on hands. See William L. Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith* (Judson Press, 1969): pp. 348-53. The *Second London Baptist Confession* is a revision of the venerable *Westminster Confession of Faith* (1647). The English Baptists who wrote the *Second London Confession* modified the Presbyterian views on baptism, church government, and the relationship between the church and state but not the Westminster’s classic reformation emphasis on the doctrines of grace.

⁷ Samuel E. Waldron, *Baptist Roots in America* (Simpson, 1991).

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

years, however, there has been a marked renewal of interest in and revival of these doctrines. It is fair to say that we are seeing a modern resurgence of the doctrines of grace as a doctrinal system, especially among younger people.¹²

Mark Dever, Pastor of Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, D.C., noted the following top ten explanations for resurgent Calvinism:¹³

1. The writings of C. H. Spurgeon;
2. The ministry of D. Martin Lloyd-Jones;
3. The publications of the Banner of Truth Trust;
4. Calvinists evangelizing—D. James Kennedy and *Evangelism Explosion*;
5. Calvinist Leadership in the Inerrancy Controversy;
6. The founding of the Presbyterian Church in America;
7. J. I. Packer and *Knowing God*;
8. The teaching ministries of R. C. Sproul and John MacArthur;
9. John Piper;
10. The rise of Christian nominalism.¹⁴

Among Southern Baptists this renewal was certainly enhanced by the acrimonious battle over the inerrancy of Scripture. At the end of a two-decade long struggle (1979-1990), doctrinal conservatives had taken firm control of the Southern Baptist Convention from moderate-liberals. Having affirmed the complete reliability of Scripture, however, many have begun to ask about the sufficiency of Scripture. What does the inerrant Bible teach about the doctrine of salvation? As Baptist historian Tom Nettles has put it, “If only the acceptance of the divine *authority* of the deposit gains adherence but the *content* of the treasure itself lies dormant, the recovery is a sham.”¹⁵

The doctrines of grace are also finding a ready hearing among many who are disillusioned with the pragmatism and doctrinal superficiality that characterizes so much of evangelicalism. Jerry Walls and Joseph Dongell note that many young Southern Baptists, in particular, “have observed that segments of their denomination, like much of American evangelicalism, have become theologically thin, spiritually superficial and morally confused” and concluded that “Arminian theology is a major (if not *the* major) cause of these ills.”¹⁶

LifeWay, the publishing arm of the Southern Baptist Convention, has recently released research noting that while at present only one in ten SBC pastors are “five point” Calvinists, among recent SBC seminary graduates serving as Pastors one in three identify themselves as five-point Calvinists, and the number is growing. A major conference was held in November 2007 called “Building Bridges” to discuss the resur-

¹² See Colin Hanson, “Young, Restless, Reformed: Calvinism is making a comeback and shaking up the church,” *Christianity Today* (September 2006): pp. 32-38.

¹³ See the post on the blog of 9 Marks Ministries (blog.9marks.org) under the title, “Where’d all these Calvinists come from?”

¹⁴ A Reformed Baptist Pastor friend noted to me that Dever’s list should have also included the ministry of Albert Martin of Trinity Baptist Church in Montville, New Jersey.

¹⁵ Tom Nettles, *Ready for Reformation?: Bringing Authentic Reform to Southern Baptist Churches* (Broadman & Holman, 2005): pp. 9-10.

¹⁶ Jerry L. Walls and Joseph R. Dongell, *Why I Am Not a Calvinist* (InterVarsity Press, 2004): p. 15. See also the response to Walls and Dongell in Robert A. Peterson and Michael D. Williams, *Why I Am Not an Arminian*, (InterVarsity Press, 2004): p. 15

gence of the doctrines of grace in SBC life. It does not appear that interest in the doctrines of grace will be declining any time soon.

The battle over the Bible in evangelical life sent many back to the historical roots of their denominations. They have rediscovered the distinctively Protestant roots of their churches, including the firm commitment of their forebears to the doctrines of grace as essential for right understanding and propagation of the gospel. The doctrines of grace are moving back into the mainstream of evangelical and Baptist life.

IV. Conclusion

The doctrines of grace are an exposition of Paul's affirmation that "by grace have you been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph 2:8-9). The doctrines of grace boldly affirm with Jonah that "salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah 2:9) and with John that "we love him, because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19). The doctrines of grace are an exposition of the gospel. Men are sinners who deserve God's wrath and punishment, but God sent his Son to save sinners. ♦

Note: This is the first of a six part series. Next issue: Total Depravity.

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Review of Mark Driscoll: Commendations and Cautions
By Jeffrey T. Riddle

The “Emerging Church Movement” is, by postmodern definition, a difficult movement to define. In more recent days it appears that the Emerging Church movement is dividing along the lines of a left wing (embracing doctrinal liberalism) and a right wing (embracing doctrinal orthodoxy). An example of Emerging Church on the left would be Brian McLaren. On the right would be Mark Driscoll.

This article will offer a review and some reflections on the ministry of Mark Driscoll as expressed in two of his recent books, *The Radical Reformation* (Zondervan, 2004) and *Confessions of a Reformation Rev.* (Zondervan, 2006). It also draws on a feature article on Driscoll in the September 2007 issue of *Christianity Today* under the title of “Pastor Provocateur.”

Driscoll’s ministry has been increasingly embraced and promoted by mainstream, new evangelicals, including some Southern Baptists. He has spoken at John Piper’s Pastors’ Conference. Piper has also preached in Driscoll’s church. Driscoll is a council member of D. A. Carson and Tim Keller’s “Gospel Coalition.” Driscoll was a featured speaker at a 2007 conference on the emerging church movement (The “Convergent Conference”) held at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and is slated to speak at the 2009 Student Conference at Southeastern. At the recent “Building Bridges” Conference on reformed theology in SBC life, Southeastern President Danny Aiken noted that while he was unwilling to work with those on the left end of the emerging movement spectrum (like Brian McLaren, Tony Evans, and Doug Pagitt), he was more than willing to work with men like Driscoll. Ed Stetzer of the North American Mission Board and LifeWay is on the board of directors of Driscoll’s Acts 29 Church Planting Network. Driscoll also has several books that will soon be released by Crossway, a respected publisher of evangelical books. Of course, not all evangelicals have embraced Driscoll and his message. John MacArthur, for example, issued a harsh critique of Driscoll in a December 2006 article on the *Pulpit Magazine* blog. There is no doubt that Driscoll has already had a large impact on many younger pastors and church planters and he is poised to have an even greater impact on evangelicalism. How should one evaluate his ministry?

Biography

We begin by attempting to understand the man and his story. Who is Mark Driscoll? He is the founding Pastor of Mars Hill Church in Seattle, Washington. This is an alternative church in an alternative town. Driscoll founded the church in 1996 when he was in his mid-20s. He proudly notes that he planted the church having never attended seminary or Bible college and having never been a member of any church.

Driscoll, born in North Dakota in 1970, grew up in a hardscrabble neighborhood in Seattle as a nominal Catholic. He was president of his class in high school, played baseball, and edited his school paper. He went to college at Washington State, where he was converted after reading an NIV Bible a high school friend gave him when he was seventeen. The friend, a pastor’s daughter, later became his wife.

Mars Hill has grown from humble beginnings to have attendance over 4,000, and Driscoll has expressed hopes that it would eventually grow to over 20,000 in attendance. He started out trying to plant a “Gen X” Church, but later jettisoned the whole notion of generational targeting. His church later became identified with the Emerging Church Movement. The story of his planting of Mars Hill, with all its ups and downs, is told in the book *Confessions of a Reformation Rev.*

Driscoll sees himself more as a cross-cultural missionary rather than merely as a Pastor. As early as 1995 he started traveling and speaking with Leadership Network, out of which has come the so-called “emerging church movement.” Around 2001 that group became *Terra Nova* and then *Emergent Village*. At this time Driscoll broke with other emerging church leaders over doctrine. Driscoll also started the Acts 29 Network, a church-planting ministry network, seeking to start like-minded “missional” churches.

Driscoll’s Views on Ecclesiology

Driscoll sees four different churches models, relating to three key areas: Church; Culture; and Gospel.¹ There are three typical models:

1. Gospel plus Culture minus Church = Parachurch;
2. Church plus Culture minus Gospel = Liberalism;
3. Church plus Gospel minus Culture = Fundamentalism.

Finally, there is a fourth option which Driscoll advocates:

4. Gospel plus Culture plus Church = Reformission.

Driscoll wants to combine a clear gospel message from a defined church that is relevant to contemporary culture. He wants to be “culturally liberal yet theologically conservative.”²

Commendations

Our critique of Driscoll begins with six areas in which his ministry is to be commended:

1. Driscoll claims to be reformed in theology.

Driscoll identifies his theology as reformed, and he stresses the sovereignty of God in salvation. He notes he came to these convictions after preaching through Romans at Mars Hill. He commends reading and embracing the doctrines of men like the Puritans, John Piper, and J. I. Packer.

2. He rejects postmodernism.

In *Radical Reformission*, Driscoll describes the rush of young pastors to jump on “the present-day postmodern bandwagon.”³ He denounces postmodernism as “basically a philosophical junk drawer in which people toss anything and everything they cannot make sense of. If you ask four philosophers what postmodernity is, you will get five answers.”⁴ As a philosophy major in college who made a name for himself discussing “postmodernism” on the Leadership Network circuit, Driscoll has more than a passing acquaintance with postmodern theology, but he rejects any uncritical embrace of these perspectives as dangerous for orthodox theology.

¹ Driscoll claims to borrow his views on the merging of Church, Culture, and Gospel from Lesslie Newbigin. See *Radical Reformission*, pp. 11-23 and *Confessions*, pp. 14-16.

² *Confessions*, p. 16.

³ *Radical Reformission*, p. 161.

⁴ *Ibid.*

3. He is openly critical of emerging church liberalism.

In *Confessions of a Reformissionary Rev.*, Driscoll distinguishes between “**emergent** liberal churches” and his own “**emerging** evangelical churches.”⁵ He describes the “emergent church” as “the latest version of liberalism.”⁶ He notes in particular the following ways in which the *emergent* church has drifted from the gospel:

- a. In its rejection of the penal, substitutionary view of atonement;
- b. In its resistance clearly to denounce homosexual acts as sinful. Driscoll references here Brian McLaren’s infamous quote in the February 7, 2005 *Time Magazine* cover article on “The 25 Most Influential Evangelicals in America.” When asked about his views on gay marriage, McLaren replied, “You know what, the thing that breaks my heart is that there’s no way I can answer it without hurting someone on either side.” Driscoll rightly notes, “Sadly, by failing to answer, McLaren was unwilling to say what the Bible says.”⁷
- c. In its rejection of the concept of a literal, eternal torment in hell for the wicked.
- d. In its embracing of open theism.
- e. In its rejection of Biblically defined gender roles.

Here is one typical jab he takes at the left wing of the emerging church in *Radical Reformation*, in discussing his church’s efforts to reach young men in Seattle with the gospel:

In Seattle young men are, generally, pathetic. They are unlikely to go to church, get married, have children or do much of anything else that smacks of being responsible. But they are known to be highly skilled at smoking pot, masturbating, playing video games, playing air guitar, free-loading, and having sex with their significant others. However, the emerging-church massage parlor tactics of labyrinth-walking by candlelight will do little more than increase the pool of extras for television’s *Will and Grace*.⁸

4. He rejects homosexuality and fornication.

5. He rejects egalitarian notions of church leadership.

As an example, he chides those emergent churches that have jettisoned preaching in the name of egalitarianism among believers:

Some churches have gone so far as to replace a preaching monologue from a recognized leader to a spiritual dialogue among a group of peers who refuse to acknowledge any leader in authority over them. This makes about as much sense as shooting your doctor and gathering with the other patients in the lobby to speculate about what is wrong with one another and randomly write out prescriptions for one another in the name of equality.⁹

Driscoll stresses the need for strong, purposeful pastoral leadership.

⁵ *Confessions*, pp. 21-23. Emphasis added.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 199, n. 7.

⁸ *Radical Reformation*, p. 184.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

6. He affirms expositional and doctrinal preaching and teaching.

Driscoll's preaching method is verse by verse Biblical exposition. He preaches long sermons that directly address doctrine.

Concerns

Alongside these affirmations, however, we must also offer the following six cautions:

1. Personal conduct and language.

This is likely the most controversial area with Driscoll. This critique first came to light when Don Miller in *Blue Like Jazz* (a cult classic among emerging church types) referred to Driscoll as "Mark the cussing preaching." Driscoll's language is often coarse and irreverent.

Christianity Today quotes a *Seattle-Times* article that noted Driscoll often "comes off as a smart-aleck former frat boy." It proceeds to say that Driscoll's "sharp tongue" is "his greatest strength and his glaring weakness." Of course, Driscoll justifies his language as an attempt to avoid sanctified preacher talk and to speak in a manner that unchurched people can understand.

Driscoll also is particularly notorious for his frank discussion of sexual topics. One of his first breakthrough message series that drew large crowds was one on the Song of Songs.

In *Radical Reformission* he caused waves by advocating the consumption of alcohol (without drunkenness) including the brewing of beer. He notes three views on alcohol: (1) *prohibitionists* who think that "alcohol itself is evil"; (2) *abstentionists* who think Christians should avoid alcohol so as "not to cause anyone to stumble"; and (3) *moderationists* who say "drinking is not a sin and that each person must let the Christian conscience guide them without judging others."¹⁰

In this area, in particular, Driscoll parodies those who object to alcohol consumption as unbiblical, frivolous, and narrow-minded. He does not address serious and conscientious objections to alcohol use by believers not merely based on simplistic or naïve exegesis or prudishness but in light of the great harm that has been done to individuals and society through alcohol abuse. Any pastor knows the damage done by alcohol in the lives of people. Driscoll's in-your-face advocacy of alcohol use does not fairly address this issue. The chapters of *Radical Reformission* feature profiles of Mars Hill members, including a man who is founder and president of a brewery who even advocates drinking by pregnant women, stating, "With regard to the fetus, my mother drank during her pregnancy, as did most mothers in that era, without undue harm. I don't believe that moderate drinking is any threat to the unborn."¹¹ Other members profiled, by the way, include a tattoo artist and a rock-n-roll band manager.

Phil Johnson in an October 25, 2006 article on his *Pyromaniacs* blog¹² made the following observation on Driscoll:

But I don't think his perpetually coarse language in the pulpit and his apparent preoccupation with off-color terms and ribald subject matter are merely minor flaws in an otherwise healthy ministry. It is a *serious* shortcoming.

No, it's actually worse than that, because it blatantly violates the clear principle of Ephesians 5:3-4 ("3 But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 149-50.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 156

¹² Teampyro.blogspot.com.

even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; 4 neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.”). It is shameful (v. 12) and therefore a reproach. It's characteristic of the old man and one of the fleshly behaviors we are expressly commanded to put aside (Colossians 3:8: “But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.”). Scripture even seems to indicate that unwholesome language signals an impure mind (Matthew 12:34: “For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.”). And yet this seems to be a deliberate, calculated, and persistent practice of Driscoll's. It is practically the chief trademark of his style.

Many evangelicals are more than a little bothered by Driscoll's irreverent speaking and writing style. Equally disturbing is his advocacy of questionable practices and the dangers these poses for the preservation of holiness and separateness in the Christian life.

2. Advocacy of cultural engagement.

Driscoll urges Christians in general and pastors in particular to be fully engaged with contemporary culture. He notes they should do this not merely in the name of “entertainment” but in the name of “education.”¹³ He says, “As a missionary you will need to watch television shows and movies, listen to music, read books, peruse magazines, attend events, join organizations, surf websites, and befriend people that you might not like to better understand people that Jesus loves.”¹⁴

He does note the dangers of getting this close to worldliness:

All this is to say that worldliness is a sin, and before we naively seek to be relevant to a dying world, we must realize the dangers before us and proceed with our eyes wide open and our hands ready for spiritual war.¹⁵

He frequently chides young pastors, particularly in the emerging church, who have fallen into moral error.

Driscoll is more critical, however, of what he calls “fundamental sectarianism” which he denounces as being at least as harmful as “liberal syncretism.” Driscoll argues:

To let go of culture is fundamentalist sectarianism. Sectarianism is huddling up God's people to enjoy each other and Jesus without carrying about anyone who is lost and dying outside of Christ.¹⁶

He concludes, “Eventually, sectarians become so dated and removed from people in the world that their churches are little more than museums dedicated to the past, with dumb reader boards outside that sound like silly telegraphs from an alien planet.”¹⁷

In evaluating Driscoll's method, however, the question remains: Is such cultural engagement really required for effective Biblical ministry? Is this really what Paul was advocating in 1 Corinthians 9:19-23? What of his call in 2 Corinthians 6:17 to “Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. And do not touch what is unclean and I will receive you”?

Though complimentary of Driscoll's soteriology, John MacArthur notes that this does not make up for his “infatuation with the vulgar aspects of contemporary society.” He adds, “The lifestyle he models—especially with his easy going familiarity with all this

¹³ *Radical Reformation*, p. 103.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

¹⁸ As quoted in *Christianity Today*, September 2007.

world's filthy fads—practically guarantees that [his disciples] will make little progress toward authentic sanctification.”¹⁸

3. Doctrinal drift in spiritual experience.

Driscoll is a non-cessationist. This is strikingly presented in *Confessions of a Reformation Rev.*, as Driscoll describes confrontations with the demon possessed, miraculous dreams and visions, words of knowledge, and even a dream that came to him from Satan. Such outspoken advocacy for extra-Biblical spiritual experiences raises serious questions about Driscoll's understanding of the sufficiency of Scripture.

4. Doctrinal drift in Ecclesiology.

Driscoll speaks of people becoming part of the church before they become Christians. He also speaks of non-Christians “discipling” Christians in the ways of the world. This lack of clarity on the boundaries of the church is confusing.

5. Doctrinal drift in Manhood and Womanhood.

Driscoll affirms what he calls a “moderate” complementarian view of gender roles in the church. This means that he rejects women pastors and elders and affirms male leadership in the marriage relationship. Driscoll advocates male spiritual leadership in the home, and he even endorses and encourages those in his church to be fruitful and multiply. One might even say that Driscoll puts forward a view of Christian manhood on steroids. He writes of carrying a hand-gun, watching “Ultimate Fighting,” brewing his own beer, and of his disdain for limp-wristed wimps.

Though he rejects outright egalitarian (liberal) views and embraces complementarian (moderate) views, he contrasts this with what he calls hierarchical (conservative) views. So, he notes that at Mars Hill, “All church ministries are open to qualified men and women, with the singular exception of elder-pastor, which is only opened to qualified men. Women can be deacons, teach, lead worship, serve communion, and be in full time paid ministry.”¹⁹

The danger here is with Driscoll's definition of “complementarian” roles. One wonders if in future years Driscoll and his church will not move further in the egalitarian direction despite all the macho bravado. For warnings in this area, read Wayne Grudem's *Evangelical Feminism: A New Path to Liberalism?* (Crossway, 2006). Driscoll has clearly rejected what he calls a “hierarchical” view on the roles of men and women but offers no Biblical justification for this move. The hierarchical view Driscoll rejects is, in fact, what many evangelicals merely refer to as the true complementarian position.

6. Myth of the moral neutrality of medium and means.

This is perhaps the most important caution. Driscoll urges a *neutrality of means* view of ministry. That is, his view seems to be one of, “It doesn't matter how you get them to come as long as they come,” or “you have to catch the fish before you can clean it.” He maintains that the gospel can be mediated through high, folk or pop culture. He notes, “While each of these cultural forms can mediate the gospel (arguably some more easily than others), this fact is often overlooked because people tend to attach a moral value to the cultural form they prefer.”²⁰ Driscoll, thus, sees little difference in what his church is doing and what Bill Hybels is doing at Willow Creek. In his view they have the same goal

¹⁹ *Confessions*, p. 111.

²⁰ *Radical Reformation*, p. 99.

(evangelism) but merely use different methods. Also, Willow Creek is “attractational” (focus on getting people in) while Mars Hill is more “missional” (focus on sending people out).

Driscoll notes that the growing criticism between these two camps (“attractational” or seeker sensitive and “missional” or emerging church) is unnecessary “because they are working for the same goal—the reaching of lost people for Jesus—but simply using different methods, methods that are complementary, not contradictory.”²¹ He adds, “Jesus’ incarnation is in itself missional.”²² This conviction leads Driscoll to offer praise of the Puritans alongside Billy Graham, Bill Hybels, Rick Warren, and John Piper. Many will find this more than mildly discordant. For Driscoll the end (“reaching people for Jesus”) justifies various means. What is lacking here, however, is a sound evaluation as to whether or not the means themselves are Biblically faithful.

This is perhaps most evident in the area of music. Driscoll is, of course, an advocate for rock music. Not just rock music, however, and certainly not watered-down contemporary Christian music, but hard, edgy, alternative rock music. His church even sponsors secular rock concerts at the church owned Paradox Theater. He is proud of the fact that his church’s worship bands are respected by the alternative music scene in Seattle and that one of his drummers is part of a popular Punk Rock band.

One might wish, however, that Driscoll would read Dan Lucarini’s book *Why I Left Contemporary Christian Music*, in which the author notes that rock music “is clearly and unequivocally associated with immorality, especially promiscuous and adulterous sex, glorification of drugs, and rebellion against authority.”²³ Lucarini thereby raises the question: “With what moral dimension is my favourite music associated?”²⁴ Lucarini concludes: “We should not accept just any worldly method to reach the lost. Instead we must discern carefully what methods are acceptable for use in the kingdom of God.”²⁵

In reading Driscoll I could not help but think of Joel Beeke’s little booklet *A Loving Encouragement to Flee Worldliness*, in which he writes to Christian parents that refusing to love the world “includes turning away from worldly music: hard rock, soft rock, Christian contemporary music, and many forms of today’s music which either in their lyrics or in their beat promote the lusts of the flesh. Of all the music that we and our children listen to, we must ask: Can I pray over this music? Does it glorify God or ignite fleshly lusts? Does it pass the test of Philippians 4:8, being ‘honest, pure, lovely, and of good report’? If it encourages lust, rid yourself of it.”²⁶ Ministry means are not neutral. The very means we use in ministry communicate a spiritual message.

Conclusion

Driscoll is a very gifted and able young man, but he holds ideas that are dangerous to the faith in the long term. He sees himself as a missionary to culture in contrast to fundamentalists who avoid culture. The problem is that Driscoll both overestimates his own ability to use culture as a gospel tool and underestimate the culture’s corrosive impact on those who immerse themselves in it. Many young Calvinistic Pastors are prone to jump on the “Reformation” bandwagon as the latest “next big thing.” We should, however, heed John’s warning: “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God” (1 John 4:1). ♦

²¹ *Confessions*, p. 26.

²² *Ibid.*

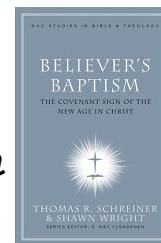
²³ Dan Lucarini, *Why I Left the Contemporary Christian Music Movement* (Evangelical Press, 2002): p. 91.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

²⁶ Joel R. Beeke, *A Loving Encouragement to Flee Worldliness* (Reformation Heritage Books, 2002): p. 4.

Book Review: *Believer's Baptism* By Marcus Deel



Thomas R. Schreiner and Shawn D. Wright, eds. *Believer's Baptism* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2006): 364 pp.

“Believer’s Baptism is not essential for being an evangelical...Still, it does not follow that the matter is unimportant” (p. 96). *Believer's Baptism*, edited by Thomas Schreiner and Shawn Wright, is a compilation of essays that presents a biblical, theological case for believer’s baptism. Moreover, this work seeks to expose the artificial structures and inconsistent arguments supporting the paedobaptist position. Assuming the mantle of Paul Jewett’s classic work, *Infant Baptism and the Covenant of Grace*, *Believer's Baptism* will certainly become a standard treatment on this topic.

The work begins by surveying the biblical witness in an attempt to deduce the correct purpose, agent, and mode of baptism. Andreas Köstenberger analyzes the four canonical gospels and concludes that the gospels teach baptism is only for those who are able to profess Christ and follow him, a conclusion that contradicts the paedobaptist position. Then, Robert Stein and Thomas Schreiner demonstrate from Luke-Acts and the Pauline epistles that Scripture intimately links baptism with faith, repentance, forgiveness of sins, and reception of the Holy Spirit. These two chapters argue that baptism accompanies conversion, a process that consists of activities (e.g., repentance) that only a mindful person can accomplish. Baptism also accompanies the reception of blessings (e.g., the gift of the Spirit) that God bestows only on the regenerate.

Most of the remaining chapters work to deconstruct the paedobaptist argument from theological and historical angles, while at the same time presenting an argument for believer’s baptism. In “Baptism and the Relationship Between the Covenants,” perhaps the most important chapter in the book, Stephen Wellum articulates a cogent explanation of covenant theology. He then argues that although much of covenant theology is commendable, discontinuity does exist between the covenants. “But covenant theology’s discussion of ‘newness’ fails to reckon that in the coming of Christ the *nature and structure* of the new covenant has changed...” (p. 105, emphasis original).

Next, Steve McKinion provides insight into the early church’s practice of baptism, concluding that paedobaptism, not believer’s baptism, was the innovative practice. Jonathan Rainbow, in “Confessor Baptism,” offers a subtle admonition to Baptists, arguing that by not taking baptism seriously enough, the logic of Baptists often more closely resembles that of Ulrich Zwingli than that of historic advocates of believer’s baptism. Then, Shawn Wright exposes the inconsistent teachings on baptism of three prominent paedobaptists: John Calvin, John Murray, and Pierre Marcel.

Addressing a more novel understanding of paedobaptism, Duane Garret explores and critiques Meredith Kline's argument that circumcision and baptism are signs of judgment. The final chapter that approaches the baptism discussion from a historical perspective is "Baptism in the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement." Ardel Caneday first pleads for more careful scholarship of Alexander Campbell's teaching on baptism. He then interacts with Campbell's original writings to demonstrate "failure to distinguish the *means* from the *ground*, or *instrument* from the *basis*, or *intermediary cause* from *efficient cause* wreaks havoc in Christian theology, in the church, and in the lives of individuals within the church" (p. 324).

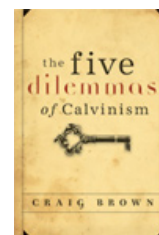
Mark Dever pens the final chapter addressing baptism in the local church. He raises a number of thought-provoking questions regarding such topics as when to baptize, who should baptize, should baptism be delayed, and baptism in relation to entrance to the Lord's Supper and membership.

Perhaps the greatest strength of *Believer's Baptism* is the way various approaches (biblical, historical, theological) coalesce to present an unrivaled thoroughness. Each chapter provides a wealth of information that merits much rumination on behalf of the reader. Every Baptist pastor and lay leader should welcome this fresh discussion of believer's baptism. Not only will *Believer's Baptism* serve as a guide to understanding the paedobaptist position, but will also be a catalyst for much-needed discussion on this vital topic. With the rise of fellowships that stretch across denominational lines and prominent Baptists raising significant questions on the relationship between baptism and membership, *Believer's Baptism* has arrived at just the right time, beckoning and forcing Baptists to understand their position anew and equipping them to defend it vigorously.

Marcus Deel is a graduate of the University of Virginia and The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He serves as Pastoral Assistant at Jefferson Park Baptist Church, Charlottesville, Virginia.

2008 Evangelical Forum: September 26-27

The tentative plan for the 2008 Meeting of the Evangelical Forum is for the gathering to take place Friday-Saturday, September 26-27, at Jefferson Park Baptist Church in Charlottesville, Virginia. More details on the program and speakers will be available in the Spring issue of the *EFN*. Make plans now to join us.



**Book Review: *The Five Dilemmas of Calvinism*
By Steven R. Hills**

Brown, Craig R. *The Five Dilemmas of Calvinism* (Ligonier Ministries, Lake Mary, Florida, 2007): 127 pp.

Those looking for *The Five Dilemmas of Calvinism* to be the next great apologetic for Reformed Theology will likely be disappointed. However, this book does not set out to be a complete apologetic resource. As its title suggests, *The Five Dilemmas of Calvinism* has a far more limited scope. As author Craig Brown states in the Introduction, “The overriding purpose of this book is to defend the Reformed faith, sometimes known as Calvinism, against some of the misconceptions that have hindered its acceptance by the modern Christian community” (p. 9). He states that his book has a threefold application as 1) comfort for those who are Reformed but have questions because of perceived inconsistencies, 2) challenge to Arminian Christians to look at the Reformed faith with an open mind, and 3) apologetic to unbelievers against the beliefs that Christianity is a religion of distortion, contradictions, and ritual and for the display of the beauty of an electing God (p. 10).

Chapters 1-2 begin by briefly outlining the historical and doctrinal foundations for Calvinism. Chapter 1 on the historical background of Calvinism will leave many readers wanting more, but it succeeds in its purpose of showing that, rather than springing without precedent or wide support from the head of John Calvin, “Calvinism” has been the default doctrinal position of the Church at least since the Council of Ephesus in AD 431 and that it has been the dominant theological position among Protestants until fairly recently. Surprisingly, in his discussion of the Reformation, Brown fails to mention the Catholic Church’s synergistic view of salvation versus the monergistic view of the Reformers and neglects to link Reformed doctrine with the “solas” of the Reformation. Chapter 2 compares the doctrinal systems of Calvinism and Arminianism and references extensive Scriptural support for the Doctrines of Grace. Some Arminians misunderstand what Calvinists mean by terms like “total depravity” or “limited atonement,” and this chapter ably shows both *what* Calvinists mean by those terms and *why* they believe these doctrines.

After setting the context in the first two chapters, Brown discusses in chapters 3-7 what, in his understanding, are the five most important misunderstandings that non-Calvinists have about Calvinism. Brown attempts to show that, rather than being unscriptural dilemmas for Calvinists, the dilemmas proceed from misunderstandings both of Calvinistic doctrine and of the implications of that doctrine. The dilemmas he presents are these:

1. Responsibility—If God is in complete control of everything, to the point of pre-determining all human actions, how can man be held accountable for what he does?
2. Motivation—If we are saved by grace and not by works, why should we do anything good? What purpose do good works serve? Are there rewards in heaven for what we do here on earth?
3. Obedience—If God has predetermined everything that comes to pass, why should we spend valuable time in prayer or evangelism?

4. Evil—Since God created everything and He cannot sin, how did evil come into being?
5. Babies—If people are born totally depraved, as Calvinism says, where do babies go when they die?

In each section, Brown carefully and without rancor corrects each misunderstanding of Calvinism by describing what Calvinists actually believe about each of these issues and by showing with an abundance of Scripture references where Calvinists derive strong Biblical support for their positions. Due to the brevity of each chapter, Brown's arguments may not constitute a "slam-dunk" for the Reformed position, but each chapter concisely lays out the logical rationale and biblical support for its positions and could be used with non-Calvinist friends open to dialogue to stimulate further discussion.

For the most part, this book is a helpful, if brief, summary of Reformed doctrine and apologetic against misunderstandings of that doctrine. However, the Calvinist who seeks to use this book to stimulate the thinking of his non-Reformed friends should be aware of its glaring weakness—its occasional cheap-shots against and mischaracterizations of Arminian theology. Thankfully, these weaknesses disappear by chapter three, but they are obvious and grating in chapter two, "The Tulip and the Daisy," which seeks to show the differences between Calvinism and Arminianism. For instance, after observing that Calvinistic doctrine is characterized by the acronym TULIP, Brown parenthetically remarks, "(Arminians also have a flower, the daisy, because their doctrinal system says, in effect, 'He loves me, He loves me not.')" (p. 24). Though one of the tenets of strict Arminian theology is Conditional Security, or the belief that one can lose his salvation through apostasy, this remark is a cheap shot that makes the God of Arminian theology seem like a fickle teenager and will quickly turn off an Arminian that might otherwise be willing to have an open mind to Reformed theology. Additionally, when discussing Total Depravity, Brown asserts that Arminians believe that man is born good (p. 25). Certainly, Arminian theology views the effect of the Fall on Man's will differently than the Calvinist, but that is a far cry from believing that man is born "good." Rightly so, any Arminian reading that statement will feel that he is being misrepresented. In a book that correctly asserts that Calvinism has often been misunderstood and mischaracterized, such a surprisingly false mischaracterization will prejudice the reader against being open to his arguments. Additionally, when Brown presents quotes defining Arminian theology, one wishes that he would reference Arminian sources instead of works by Calvinists in an attempt to "go the extra mile" to be fair. Does this weakness invalidate the rest of the book? No, for there is much within its pages to stimulate discussion, but the wise Calvinist who recommends this book to a non-Calvinist reader will warn him about deficiency ahead of time so he won't be unduly prejudiced against the rest of the fine material that is presented.

Is this book a "slam-dunk" for Calvinism? No; there are other books that provide a full apologetic for the Doctrines of Grace. However, *The Five Dilemmas of Calvinism* does give well-reasoned, Scripture-saturated answers to the ways that Calvinism has been misunderstood and can be a good launching point for further discussion. ♦

Steven R. Hills is Pastor of Western Branch Baptist Church in Suffolk, Virginia.



Book Review: Ministry of Grace By Howard H. Anderson

Steve West, ed. *Ministry of Grace – Essays in Honor of John G. Reisinger* (New Covenant Media; Frederick, MD, 2007): 245 pp.

This book is a fitting tribute to a gifted trophy of God’s grace while he is still living. It reminds me of the words in an old song recorded by bluegrass musicians Flatt & Scruggs:

Won’t you give me my flowers while I’m living and let me enjoy them while I can?

Please don’t wait till I’m ready to be buried and then slip some lilies in my hand.

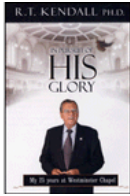
I am pleased that each contributor to this book has honored Pastor John G. Reisinger in this special way, giving him flowers while he’s living.

I have been very blessed by Pastor John’s preaching and teaching for many years. My wife and I had the privilege in the 1970s to take him to lunch one day in Staunton, Virginia. We always appreciated his humor, and when I tried to pin him down on his eschatology, I heard for the first time the expression “pan mill”. It’s all going to pan out in the end, he said.

Each essay (flower) in the book stands on its own, and all are easy to read yet “substantial.” Some weave experiences with Pastor John in the essays themselves while others separate the essays from their mention of Pastor John’s life and ministry. Both approaches are effective, and there is an appropriate focus throughout the book on the God whom Pastor John serves. This delightful book is topped off by two of Pastor John’s own sermons. I believe even those who may not fully agree with Pastor John’s New Covenant Theology can nevertheless enjoy these beautiful flowers.

Howard H. Anderson is a member of Jefferson Park Baptist Church, Charlottesville, Virginia.

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Book Review: In Pursuit of His Glory: My 25 Years at Westminster Chapel

By Jeffrey T. Riddle

R. T. Kendall, *In Pursuit of His Glory: My 25 Years at Westminster Chapel* (Charisma House, 2004): 310 pp.

As a missionary back in the early 1990s I picked up a copy of R. T. Kendall's book *Jonah* in London and found it, at the time, to be spiritually helpful. I did not know then that the book came from Kendall's first expositional preaching series in 1977 as the successor of Martin Lloyd-Jones at central London's famed Westminster Chapel. It is the strange direction Kendall's ministry took in subsequent years at Westminster that is the subject of this book.

In Pursuit of His Glory is a pastor's memoir of Kendall's controversial and, by his own admission, disappointing tenure at Westminster from 1977 to 2002. In some ways, one might say that Kendall's ministry was doomed from the start. He began with at least two strikes against him. First, he was an American coming to serve a British congregation. Second, he was succeeding the famed pulpit ministry of the deeply influential Martin Lloyd-Jones. Kendall began behind in the count and never measured up to Westminster standards.

The strange aspect of the story is Kendall's account of his embrace of the charismatic movement in an effort to produce revival at Westminster. It began with his welcoming of the Jesus movement street evangelist Arthur Blessitt, the introduction of contemporary choruses in worship, and the extending of altar calls. In retrospect these changes were mild compared to what would come. Stunning is Kendall's subsequent bold and rapid embrace from there of the most fringe elements of the charismatic movement. This included his welcoming of the "Kansas City Prophet" Paul Cain into membership and the pulpit at Westminster and then laughing evangelist Rodney Howard-Browne of the notorious "Toronto Blessing." In some ways, one might say that Kendall merely returned to his Nazarene roots, but was this what the Chapel members who called him in 1977 bargained for?

How did the Chapel go from such a staunch citadel of Reformed theology under "the Doctor's" leadership to a place promoting the Toronto Blessing? The transformation, again, is stunning. This is not to say that these changes were unopposed. Kendall cryptically describes opposition that developed to his ministry at Westminster, including a painful "church meeting" on January 16, 1985 which he barely survived. He also refers often to his "total forgiveness" of those who opposed his ministry. One of the strangest elements of the book is Kendall's insistence that he consulted with the aged Lloyd-Jones and gained his support for the introduction of these novel teachings. Kendall's recollections have been openly challenged by Iain Murray in a review of this book in *The Banner of Truth*.

Kendall speaks with disappointment of the never achieved revival he sought to bring about at Westminster. His attempt to marry his version of Reformed theology (the "Word") with charismania (the "Spirit") did not bring renewal and revival. One of the saddest parts of this memoir is Kendall's often expressed despair at the dwindling congregations to which he preached over the years. By the end of his ministry, the cavernous chapel, capable of holding thousands, held only a few hundred at best. Sadly one wonders in the end if his desire to see vast numbers in attendance was

really an effort to pursue God's glory or an effort to gratify his own pride and fleshly desire for popularity. This book should be read by Pastors and laymen alike not as an exercise in seeking methods to employ but as a cautionary tale of what to avoid in pastoral ministry. ♦

Jeffrey T. Riddle, Pastor, Jefferson Park Baptist Church, Charlottesville, Virginia.

Quick Quote

*In a chapter titled "Visible Churches Warned" in his classic work **Holiness**, J. C. Ryle examines the letters to the seven churches in Revelation chapters 2-3 and spurs the faithful toward victory in Christ:*

The one point I want to impress upon your soul just now is this, that the true believer is not only a soldier, but a victorious soldier. He not only professes to fight on Christ's side against sin, the world and the devil, but he does actually fight and overcome.

Now this is one grand distinguishing mark of true Christians. Other men, perhaps, like to be numbered in the ranks of Christ's army. Other men may have lazy wishes and languid desires after the crown of glory. But it is the true Christian alone who does the work of a soldier. He alone fairly meets the enemies of his soul, really fights with them and in that fight overcomes them.

One great lesson I want men to learn from these seven epistles is this, that if you would prove you are born again and going to heaven, you must be a victorious soldier of Christ. If you would make it clear that you have any title to Christ's precious promises, you must fight the good fight in Christ's cause, and in that fight you must conquer.

Victory is the only satisfactory evidence that you have a saving religion. You like good sermons perhaps. You respect the Bible, and read it occasionally. You say your prayers night and morning. You have family prayers, and give to religious societies. I thank God for this. It is all very good. But how goes the battle? How does the great conflict go on all this time? Are you overcoming the love of the world and the fear of man? Are you overcoming the passions, tempers and lusts of your own heart? Are you resisting the devil and making him flee from you? How is it in this matter? You must either rule or serve sin and the devil and the world. There is no middle course. You must either conquer or be lost.

I know well it is a hard battle that you have to fight, and I want you to know it, too. You must fight the good fight of faith and endure hardships if you would lay hold of eternal life. You must make up your mind to a daily struggle if you would reach heaven. There may be short roads to heaven invented by man, but ancient Christianity, the good old way, is the way of the cross, the way of conflict. Sin, the world and the devil must be actually mortified, resisted and overcome.

This is the road that saints of old have trodden in, and left their record on high. ♦

Paradosis

Paradosis is the Greek word for “tradition.” It is also the title for this recurring section featuring voices from the Baptist past.

Andrew Fuller (1754-1815) was a very gifted and influential English Pastor-theologian. He served as the first secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society, which sent out William Carey as the father of modern missions. He was often called upon to preach at the ordination of young men as they entered the pastoral ministry. Here is one such sermon. It is found in The Complete Works of Andrew Fuller, Volume I (Sprinkle Publications, 1988): pp. 524-26.

CHRISTIAN CHURCHES FELLOW HELPERS WITH THEIR PASTORS TO THE TRUTH.

“We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellow helpers to the truth.” – 3 John 8.

The ordination of elders over the churches was a practice among the primitive Christians, Acts xiv. 23. And I hope it will never be dispensed with in our churches. Besides being sanctioned by apostolical examples, it is a guard against the introduction of improper characters, who, by getting an artificial majority in a church, may intrude themselves on a people to their great injury. Hence the exhortation, “Lay hands suddenly on no man.” It also furnishes an opportunity of solemnly addressing both parties on the intimate relation into which they have entered. In compliance with this custom, I would affectionately address the members of this church on the present interesting occasion. ...

It is the work of your pastor to spread the heavenly truth, and yours to be fellow helpers to the truth. Particularly,

I. It is his work to PREACH THE GOSPEL to you. There are many ways in which you may be his fellow helpers.

1. In your prayers to God for him. –I have lately read of a man who despised the prayers of a people. But so did not Paul. “Brethren, pray for us.” “Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me.” Prepare the way to God’s house by prayer. Do not expect to profit else. It is a great mercy that God sends to us by men like ourselves; men whose everlasting interests are involved in their doctrine. But they are sinful creatures, subject to temptations in common with others, and to some peculiar to themselves; they therefore need your prayers.

2. By an early and constant attendance, and spiritual attentiveness to the word, you may be fellow helpers. –What an effect do empty pews, and yawning, sleepy hearers, produce! How delightful for a minister to enter his pulpit, as Paul speaks of coming to Rome, –in the hope of being comforted by the faith of his hearers! Rom. i. 12. Where faith is seen to glisten in the eyes of an attentive audience, it produces feelings and thoughts more interesting and affecting than could ever have been produced in the study; while the contrary has a tendency to chill and freeze the feelings of the soul, and to reduce a minister to a situation resembling a ship locked in by islands of ice near the poles.

3. By rendering his circumstances as easy as possible, so that his mind may not be harassed by worldly cares, you may be fellow helpers. – I never felt it a hardship to be dependent on a people who loved me. I have thought it an honour to be so supported. The expressions of love are sweet. But if love be wanting, all goes wrong. Little is done, and that little is not done heartily.

4. By enabling him by your habitual deportment to speak strongly is to the holy effects of religion, you may be fellow helpers. – He will wish to be able to point the world to the people of his charge, and say—There are my epistles of commendation, known and read of all men! And to address you boldly in their hearing, in the language of the apostle—“Such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” But if your conduct does not answer the description, who will believe him?

II. Another part of your pastor’s work is VISITING HIS PEOPLE FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE, AND ENCOURAGING HOPEFUL CHARACTERS TO STAND FORWARD ON THE LORD’S SIDE. And in this you may be fellow helpers.

1. By welcoming him, and teaching your children and servants to respect him.—Much depends on this. They will form their opinion of him by the sentiments they hear you express towards him; and if they do not think highly of him, it cannot be expected they should profit under his ministrations. On the contrary, if they witness in you a high esteem for his character and his talents, they will attend his ministry greatly prepossessed in his favour, and with minds prepared to receive his instructions.

2. By noticing those in the congregation who are inquiring after the way of salvation, and directing them to the good old way, you may be fellow helpers.—There are some who, like Barnabas with Saul, get acquainted with and assist converts in the Divine life, and introduce them to the church, Acts ix. 27. Such persons are great blessings in a church, and great helpers to the pastor. Be friendly with the poor; encourage the modest and timid; visit the sick, and converse and pray with them. This will strengthen the hands and cheer the heart of your pastor, and greatly promote the interests of the truth.

III. Another part of his duty is THE MAINTENANCE OF A STRICT AND FAITHFUL DISCIPLINE. And in this you may be fellow helpers. He must reprove, and rebuke, and sometimes separate from the church some of whom he once thought well. This is a painful duty. But it is a duty, and it is your duty to stand by him. Say to him, as the people said to Ezra, “Arise; for this matter belongeth unto thee: we also will be with thee: be of good courage, and do it.” Do not consult relationship, or worldly interests, or private friendships. Do not weaken his reproofs by siding with the sinner. Act in unison. “Have no fellowship with such a one, no, not to eat!”

You especially who are deacons, you must be fellow helpers. You must be to your pastor as Aaron and Hur were to Moses. Encourage him to advise with you. It is customary in some of our churches, and I wish it were in all, for the pastor and deacons to meet and consult on the affairs of the church an hour or two, some evening immediately preceding the monthly meeting of the church. These meetings, in connexion with the stated meetings of the church, constitute a happy union of Christian wisdom with Christian liberty.

Thus, my dear brethren, I have pointed out, very briefly and plainly, a few ways in which you and your pastor may be fellow helpers to the truth. Consider what I have said as dictated by love and a desire for your own welfare, and for the promotion of the cause of our common Lord; and may the Lord give you understanding in all things. ♦