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*Therefore being justified by faith we have
peace with God Romans 5.1*

*Substance of a recent message preached in the Free
Presbyterian Church Of Toronto, Ontario, Canada,
on Reformation Sunday, by Dr. Ronald Cooke.*

Martin Luther nailed his ninety-five theses to the door of Wittenburg Castle Church, on Oct. 31, 1517. A man called Tetzel was going around Wittenberg selling Indulgences. Forgiveness of sins was promised as soon as the money hit the bottom of the collection box. Luther, a monk in the Roman Catholic Church, was disturbed by how easy it was to have gross sins forgiven merely by paying money to Tetzel. He wanted to debate such a practice. At this point in time, Luther had no intention of starting what was later to become the glorious Protestant Reformation, the greatest move of the Holy Spirit in history since the day of Pentecost.

Luther was wrestling himself with the profound problem of how a sinful man could obtain right standing with a holy God. He fasted. He thrashed himself at times, so as to fall down in a faint. But he could not find the answer to his question.

THE 47th ANNIVERSARY OF THIS PAPER

We put out the first edition of this paper in the Fall of 1966. My brother-in-law David Grinstead helped me in the printing of it. When we first started we went with 6 issues a year. We managed this for about 35 years. Then we dropped to four issues per year as other duties pressed in upon us. Then in the last few years we have dropped to three issues as Father Time has now caught up to us, and other aspects of our ministry have continued to expand.

We have had three main goals in this ministry. **1. To contend earnestly for the faith once and for all delivered to the saints.** **2. To put out original articles rather than reprinting articles from other sources.** Occasionally, we do reprint an article, but only rarely. So if our articles are poor, they are poor because we have written them. No one else to blame. **3. To present biblical Christianity as opposed to the popular religion of the times.** We believe that what passes for Christianity today in many churches and academic institutions is a religion governed by the wisdom of this age and almost, if not completely, overwhelmed by the world. Accommodation to the world, acceptance of the world, and approval by the world, has almost completely eclipsed the biblical reproach of the world that the true Christian is to esteem more highly than everything this world has to offer.



The reproach of Christ is an unknown truth in the modern church. Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ whereas the modern church is all caught up in SELF- esteem. We have been reproached many times over the years, but as Luther said, it is all already forgiven. We have been called a "cul-de-sac," and a "sinking ship," and indeed must have already sunk completely a thousand times before now, had not the Lord intervened and delivered us. We want to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ as an all-sufficient Savior.

The Apostle Paul, the INSPIRED writer cuts across the sentiments of many uninspired writers of today when he wrote,

I AM PERPLEXED BUT NOT IN DESPAIR; CAST DOWN BUT NOT DESTROYED.

This verse came to me as I walked to my office the other day. Cast down but not destroyed. The Apostle Paul was in a worse place than a sinking ship or a cul-de-sac. He was referring to the Roman amphitheater where the victorious gladiator raised his sword above his head while the bloodthirsty crowd roared for him to finish off his opponent

with one final death-dealing blow. Paul is saying, I am cast down but the deathblow has not yet been delivered so I will carry on until it is. To study Paul is to see the chasm that exists between his idea of Christianity and the popular religiosity that is now confused with it in the western " church."

Ours is a faith ministry. Totally dependent upon the Lord and the Lord's people for support. Compared to popular ministries it is a "shoe string" operation. Occasionally someone may give us a large donation, but such gifts are few and far between. Most of what we receive by way of support comes in small amounts. Yet the Lord has expanded this ministry in many directions. My wife and I were trying to count up the number of publications we have sent out over the years. As far as we can ascertain our book and pamphlets have now passed the 400,000 mark, and gone out into 40 different countries. We realize this is small compared to the "mega" ministries, but it shows that God is able to take the things that are nothing to bring to nothing the things that are that no flesh should glory in His presence. Our thanks to the small band of people and churches that support our ministry without these faithful supporters our ministry would not be possible.

We cannot keep up with all the letters we receive from different countries around the world. We do what we can with the Lord's help. Our main ministry, believe it or not, is Breckbill Bible College. This is the only ministry for which we receive a salary. We do not receive a salary from Truth International Ministries. Churches where we speak give us love offerings etc., but other than that our main salary comes from Breckbill Bible College.

It is at Breckbill that we have had our hardest times. Those who once supported us, no longer do. Some have died. Some have quit. Our struggle for students continues. Unlike a church, a school loses its students as each year some are graduated. So the ranks are continually depleted. So pray for us that the Lord will send us laborers to train for the harvest fields.

The Lord said the fields are white already to harvest, but the laborers are few. It was not some negative fundamentalist (as we are usually depicted) who said, " The laborers are few." It was none other than the God-Man who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, who said: THE LABORERS ARE FEW!! And His command was PRAY THE LORD OF THE HARVEST THAT HE WILL SEND FORTH LABORERS INTO THE HARVEST FIELDS!!!

Paul Bettex, the French missionary and linguist of the last century, who traveled from Cape Horn to Mexico, on foot giving out Bibles and preaching the gospel, enduring all kinds of hardship, as a LABORER in God's harvest fields, said,

"Spiritual growth is attained by learning to say NO to all the thousand influences of the world that are not bad in themselves, but simply take the place meant for Jesus and therefore are deadlier than arsenic and strychnine. Not bad in themselves, God forbid! They compete with Christ. This is their evil. I propose to know nothing but Christ and Him crucified."

Sermon Continued

...Finally the Holy Spirit directed him to the verse in Romans 10.4 that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

This was the great theological breakthrough that he had sought for so long. It was FAITH righteousness; not WORKS. Righteousness that gave the sinner right standing with God

In looking at Romans 5.1 we want to quickly consider three main points:

I. The Repudiation of the great doctrine of Justification by faith Alone.

II. The Reception of Justification

III. The Result of Justification

I. The Repudiation of Justification by faith alone.

We live in a day of the perversion of the gospel. Everywhere the slogan God loves you, is seen. As if God's love is demonstrated toward sinners in a theological vacuum. On Larry King Live, a couple of years ago, a young Lesbian appeared with two ministers. She announced clearly, God loves me the way I am. The two ministers were brought to a nonplus by her statement. No doubt they believed in universalism, so did not know how to answer her.

Luther said, "Without Christ God will not be found, known, or comprehended." I would paraphrase that great statement, and say, "without Christ, God's love will not be found, known, or comprehended. Without the preaching of the gospel, without the hearing of the Gospel, without the believing of its saving message, no one can know anything about the love of God. God's love is expressed toward sinners in the person and work of Christ, and nowhere else.

The difference between the saved and the lost is not Phariseism or modern popular religion. It is in the confession of sin and the recognition that such sin deserves everlasting punishment. I am no better than a thief or a murderer or a homosexual in my natural state. The difference is I confess that I am a sinner. I do not set aside a day to celebrate with pride my sinfulness. I am ashamed of my sinfulness before the thrice-holy God of the Bible. So I confess my sin and ask the Lord to forgive my sin and to cleanse me from all unrighteousness, and to save me from my sin through the merits of Christ's blood and righteousness.

David said, "Against Thee and Thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight."

THAT THOU MIGHTIEST
BE JUSTIFIED WHEN
THOU

SPEAKETH AND CLEAR
WHEN THOU JUDGEST

The contrite sinner does not enter into judgments and criticisms of God. He justifies God's judgment of him. He recognizes that God's justice is perfect and absolute, and he comes to know that if he received from God what he deserved, he would be in hell. So through the gospel he comes to know that God is JUST and the JUSTIFIER of him who believes in Jesus. The truly repentant sinner confesses his sin to God and acknowledges God's absolute right to judge the sinner.

God does not leave a forgiven sinner where she or he is; He saves them from their sin. A natural born sinner, who remains in his or her sin, and glories in it, knows nothing about the love of God expressed in the person and work of Christ. The Bible says clearly, "He who believes on the Son has everlasting life: he who believes not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abides on him." (John 3:36).

Sermon Continued

II. THE RECEPTION OF JUSTIFICATION

Luther rediscovered the biblical teaching of justification by faith alone in the finished work of Christ. Now those who teach justification by works are once again eclipsing this glorious doctrine.

The Bible teaches that the believing sinner is justified by faith ALONE. That is, by believing alone. Man has always wanted to work for his salvation. So down through the ages the cry keeps going up, BELIEF IS NOT ENOUGH. We must add to it many other sacraments and duties that must be performed in order to merit our justification before God.

The all-important matter is the OBJECT of our faith. The Scripture says that God who commanded the light to shine out of the darkness, has shone into our hearts

TO GIVE THE LIGHT OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE GLORY OF GOD IN THE FACE OF JESUS CHRIST.

The face of the Lord Jesus Christ was more marred than any man's. His face was beaten by the fists of those who mocked and abused Him. They smashed his face until it was swollen and disfigured. They spat upon it. The spittle of men's venom rolled down His face. The crown of thorns was pressed down upon His brow. The blood and the spittle covered his swollen visage. "He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid as it were, our faces from Him." We did not want to look at that man who was a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. His visage was so marred more than any man; many were astonished- stunned at Him. Yet it is in the

FACE OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

That the light of salvation shines. In the FACE of Jesus Christ the Suffering Savior,

the Light of the knowledge of the Glory of God is displayed. In that mangled face of our suffering Savior, we see the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. The light of salvation has shone into our hearts, to give us the knowledge of the glory of God. Where? In that marred countenance covered in blood and spittle which reveals the rebellion and hatred of man, but also shows something far greater and far more powerful, the LIGHT and the KNOWLEDGE and the GLORY of God shines out of the darkness and out of the FACE of the Suffering Savior as Christ triumphed over the powers of the darkness and shed abroad the light of salvation in the darkness of this world.

III. THE RESULT OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ALONE

We have peace with God. The justified sinner is reconciled to God. The rebellion and enmity is taken away and the peace of God replaces it. We have peace with God, not in a theological vacuum, but we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. And true peace will never be found anywhere else. Then we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand. No sinner has any access to God until he or she is justified by faith alone in the finished work of Christ. That is by belief alone. Through this man (Jesus) is preached to us the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all who believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the Law of Moses.

The Ministry Committed to Us

ZAMBIA

The work in Zambia keeps growing. Several ministries have now been started in five different prisons, with varied numbers of inmates attending. The work continues in Mukobeko Prison in Kabwe. Several inmates have been moved to a new prison in Lusaka from Mukobeko. We are still working with men in Kamfinsa State Prison in Kitwe and also with some in Ndola, and Livingstonia.

A pastor in Lusaka is now working with us. He has a church in Lusaka but also is a chaplain to the inmates in the large prison in Lusaka, which is the capital city of Zambia, with a population of over one million. We would like to visit with him if we get an opportunity to return to Zambia, which we have visited several times.

In recent days we have received letters from the Female Section of the Central Prison in Lusaka. So we are trying to work with the women who have come to Christ in this prison.

MALAWI

The work in Malawi continues to grow with around 5000 attending 30 churches in the southern part of the country. Many of the churches need steel roofs and the need for Bibles and hymnbooks is always there.

Ten young men are enrolled in a correspondence course of Bible study through Breckbill Bible College. We are hoping to expand educational opportunities for these young men to learn more about the Bible and Theology. Pray for these young men, as they are the hope for the future of our work in Malawi.

The problem of Albinism has given us another opportunity for outreach. Those afflicted have a desperate need for sunscreen, which is in very short supply within the country. Since we returned, one of the young men that we knew about has died of skin cancer. So we are trying to collect Sunscreen lotion to help with this problem.

Another on-going project is that of yarn donations for the ladies groups. A photo of their work is to the left. The ladies are thrilled to have this skill to crochet and knit for orphans and the elderly.

The motorcycle is a great means of travel in the rural areas of Malawi where roads do not exist. They can purchase mopeds and small motorcycles for 350 dollars. If you would like to purchase one for one of our ministers in Malawi, They would deeply appreciate it. Offerings received for Bibles for the ladies guild and bicycles have been sent recently to Samson. We thank those who so faithfully support the work in Malawi.

THE PHILIPPINES

As of this writing the Typhoon Haiyan has hit the Philippines, thousands are feared dead and the devastation is extreme. Rebecca Regina wrote to us to let us know that he and his wife are safe and busy serving. They have given out all of their supplies and are focusing on food, clothing and medical care for the many injured. We are thankful for the Hope EMC who immediately gave to help with this need. Pray for Pastor Rebecca and his wife as they minister to the many hurting people.



In Memoriam

GUY DUNCAN SMITH

I met Guy at Talbot Seminary in 1956. We became good friends. He invited me to his church in Culver City to preach. He was a sailor during the Korean War. He was connected to a Sailor's Refuge ministry in San Diego. He had me down for a weekend of special services with the sailors who were there. Later, I served as his assistant pastor.

When I went into evangelism he was responsible for getting me into churches all up and down the Big Valley- the San Joaquin Valley, of central California. I preached in churches in Alameda, Woodland, Modesto, Stockton, Fresno, San Jose, Ceres, Oakdale, and other places. So Guy had a big part in my evangelistic endeavors.

The last time I saw Guy he had retired and was traveling around the country with his wife speaking at Truck stops and trailer parks and giving out tracts. He came to our college and spoke a few times before traveling again.

A few years ago he gave a large donation to our ministry, which he had supported for many years. He had been in failing health for the past couple of years and went to be with the Lord a short time ago.

Our sympathy goes out to Alberta, his faithful and loving wife, of more than fifty years. To Gary and Cheryl and the grandchildren. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. As the old, faithful, warriors pass on to be with the Lord, we look at those who follow the popular religion of the times and wonder.

LEONARD HOPKINS

I met Len some years ago when we were both speaking at the same church. We corresponded and exchanged books. He had labored in Mexico for 35 years. He and his son had started several churches in Guadalajara, and Zacapu. He had also established a Bible Institute for training local pastors. He had 8 Mexicans working with him. I will let his dear wife Faye tell the rest of his story.

On Sept 30 I went to visit Wesley and his family for week (in Zacapu) I kept in contact with Len by phone. Wed. Oct. 2, I sent a message but he did not respond. I thought little about it, as it did not require an answer. Thursday and Friday Wesley and I repeatedly tried to make contact with him but to no avail. We knew there was something wrong. Wesley, Esther, Christiane and I immediately left for Guadalajara.

Upon arriving home, we found the door unlocked. The car, nor Len were there. Upstairs we found that it had been ransacked. The police were called and fingerprints were taken. Wesley went to look for his father. He went to the Bible Institute but he was not there. He then went to our first home where we lived for many years and now use as a guest home. Turning the corner, he found the road closed and police cars in front of the house. They would not let Wesley enter, but told him that his father had been found dead. His hands and feet had been bound. He was gagged and then beaten to death. He had been dead two days before his body was found on Oct.4.

The funeral service was held on Sat. Oct.5 in Guadalajara. The service was held in the funeral home. Wesley directed the service. Spanish songs and hymns were sung from the heart and Hermano Rodrigo gave the message. Eulogies were given by different brethren. He certainly will be missed by the Mexican brethren. He was buried in the cemetery Recinto de la Paz.

In closing I would like to assure each of you that we are all fine. I have moved out to Wesley's for protection and security. I will be working in the ministry at Wesley's church and the mission work will continue as it has been. Please pray for our protection and for the long legal process we have ahead of us. We wish to thank you for your faithful prayer and financial support. Sincerely in Christ, Faye and Wesley

(We are hoping to put out a third edition of the Noble Army. We plan D.V. to include Len in this edition. We only put in those who have finished their course.)



Recent Travels

We spoke on Saturday and Sunday October 5, 6 at the Missions Conference in the Bible Methodist Church of New Danville, PA. It was good to fellowship once again with pastor Jack Hilton and his people. Dr. Ralph Colas, the General Secretary of the ACCC, was also a speaker at this convention and we enjoyed his gracious fellowship.

Then we visited the Free Presbyterian Church, in Litchfield, NH, where we enjoyed the fellowship of Pastor Dave McClelland and his people. They are in the midst of a building program to keep up with the growth that is taking place there. The beautiful new sanctuary is almost completed. The Gauthier Family were our gracious hosts, which we appreciate.

Following that weekend, we returned home. The next weekend saw us in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, where we enjoyed the fellowship of Dr. Larry Saunders, his wife Dr. Jill Saunders, and the congregation. We also enjoyed our stay with pastor emeritus, Dr. Frank McClelland and his wife May. We spoke on Saturday and Sunday. All the books we brought with us were all taken. One of the few times in our ministry, where all the books we brought with us were taken.

Then we returned home to Breckbill's Homecoming Weekend with various activities including the Annual Turkey Bowl Soccer game between the Faculty and the Alumni against the students. The old geezers managed to win 5-3, due to the brilliant goalkeeping of one of the Faculty who shall remain nameless. We had a full house for the turkey dinner; Alumni representatives were present from 17 different graduating classes. Pastor Kern Wickware spoke on Saturday and Sunday. Pray that some of the young people who came may come back to study with us.

Then we were down in Spartanburg, S.C. speaking at Cleveland Park Bible Church, where the pastor is Ken Casillas. He was visiting missionary works in Europe but the leaders of the church looked after us very well.

All these churches have supported our ministry for years and we appreciate the fellowship, support, and prayers. We thank the Lord for traveling mercies and for His blessings upon our ministry in these churches, and for the support of God's people.

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