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THE SAVING POWER OF DOCTRINE

Jeffrey Khoo

Christianity is an intelligent religion. Our faith in Christ is not blind, it is definitely not superstitious. Our faith is based upon the truth. What is truth? God's Word is truth (John 17:17). If the Christian Faith is an intelligent faith, then it must be full of doctrine or teaching. We must pay attention to doctrine, to what the Bible teaches if we want to experience the fullness of salvation God has graciously given to us. That is why 1 Timothy 4:16 says, *“Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.”* Doctrine saves.

What the Church needs today is doctrine. Many churches are weak and dying, confused and divided because their members do not know what they believe and why they believe what they believe. The Church at large has neglected doctrine for far too long. We keep hearing people say, “doctrine divides, love unites”. “Love is important, not doctrine” they say. What is the result of this kind of thinking? They become so full of love for man that they start to hate God. They question, “How can a loving God send people to hell?” “How can a loving God allow so many people to die in natural disasters?” “If a loving God exists, why is there so much suffering in this world?” They blame God for everything and deny His existence: “There is no God, and Jesus is no Saviour”. They deny the virgin birth. They say Jesus' death on the cross has absolutely no saving power or value, and there was definitely no resurrection. They deny the Bible is God's Word. The Bible may be a good book, but it is not God's Book. They say the Bible is useful, we can get good moral teachings from it, but it cannot be completely trusted as the Word of God, infallible and inerrant, 100% perfect without any mistake. They say only fools believe the Bible is 100% perfect.

Many pastors and theologians in mainline Christian denominations and Christian universities think and speak like this today. They make themselves God. The world becomes their altar of sacrifice. So they do

all they can to save Gaia. They go all out to save the environment, feed the poor, build houses, schools and hospitals. They are very good at these things, at saving the body, but they do not care about saving the soul. As far as they are concerned, it is all about this life; there is no afterlife. But the truth is, there is a life hereafter. *“Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”* (Eccl 12:7). Jesus warned, *“For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”* (Mark 8:36). All such good works are in vain if the soul is hell-bound. Save the soul and you will save the body. The soul is saved not by meat but by doctrine.

The Doctrine

“Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine”. What is “the doctrine” here? It is the whole and complete truth of the Christian Faith. It speaks of the object of our faith which is the Word of God. It is the Living Word (ie, the Lord Jesus Christ) and the Written Word (ie, the Holy Scriptures). The Living Word and the Written Word are inseparable. The Living Word gave us the Written Word, and the Written Word reveals the Living Word. Without Christ there would be no Scripture, and without Scripture we would not know Christ.

Note that the word “doctrine” is in the singular. The doctrine that comes from the only living and true God is also only one. The singular emphasises the unity and harmony of the doctrine that comes from God. God does not change, and His doctrine does not change either. His truth is sure and certain, constant and consistent. God speaks with a straight tongue. His yes is yes, His no is no. But Satan speaks with a forked tongue. His yes is no and his no is yes, and sometimes he says yes and no at the same time in the same breath so that you get all confused by his deceit and lies. It is no wonder that in 1 Timothy 4:1 the word “doctrine” when used of false teachings is in the plural, *“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils”*. False doctrines are many and they come in a variety of forms to suit the lusts of sinful men. We are seeing this today. For instance, homosexuality is no longer considered a perversion but a “lifestyle”—an “alternative lifestyle” they say—not sinful at all but another way of life. Preaching against sin and warning against error is labelled as “hatemongering” and “unedifying.” Black is white and bad is good.

How can the Christian protect himself from such poison? The only antidote against such destructive philosophies and lifestyles is “the doctrine”—the truth of God’s Word. The doctrine that comes from God and His Word is powerful to save.

Save Thyself

First, the doctrine that God gives is able to save us from sin and death. We should thank God for the Gospel doctrine—the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ. That was why Paul said in Romans 1:16, “*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*”

Man thinks he can work for his salvation, but God says the work is already done. The work of salvation is done by God Himself when He became man and died on the cross for our sins and rose from the dead the third day. Jesus said, “*I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?*” (John 11:25-26). Salvation is free, all paid for by Christ and His blood and those who believe in Him shall live eternally and never die. “*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*” (Rom 6:23).

We have seen this power at work in the Bible and in Church History, “*Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.*” (Heb 11:33-38).

We see the power of this gospel at work in the life of John Newton—a cruel slave trader whom the Lord saved and used as a preacher and hymn writer. He wrote the famous hymn “Amazing

Grace”—“Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me.” Rosaria Champagne Butterfield, a lesbian, a PhD and tenured professor, was saved and transformed by the power of the Gospel. She repented of her wicked lifestyle and is now a full-time mother and a pastor’s wife. She tells her story in her book, *The Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert* (reviewed in *The Burning Bush*, January 2014). Gays are not without hope.

Second, the doctrine that God has given is powerful to save us from deception and heresies. “*Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils*” (1 Tim 4:1). 2 Peter 2:1 warns, “*But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.*” If we do not want to be seduced by evil spirits, and deceived by false teachers, we must know “the doctrine”. There are so many false isms today: liberalism, neo-liberalism, modernism, postmodernism, ecumenism, open theism, charismaticism, neo-evangelicalism, neo-fundamentalism, neo-Calvinism etc. We are defenseless against such isms if we are without doctrine. Know that it was doctrine that made us very sure that we have a 100% perfect Bible today without any mistake. It was the doctrine of the verbal and plenary preservation of the Holy Scriptures that prevented us from saying that the Bible *today* is imperfect and contains mistakes. It is doctrine that saved us from speaking against God and His Word.

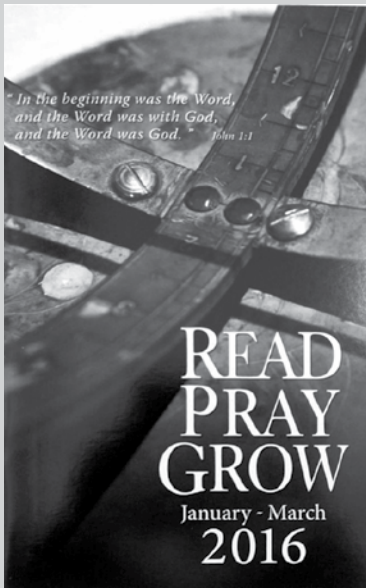
Take Heed ... Continue

For us to be saved we need to believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ—faith and faith alone saves, not works. Take hold of doctrine, ie trust what God tells you, and not yourself or your own thinking and deeds which will get you nowhere with God. Your trust in the Lord Jesus Christ does not end with the gospel. There is a vital need to continue knowing God’s Word. Know that the Bible is not just John 3:16. It is a library of 66 books with precious and powerful words that God has given to us to know and live by. Jesus tells us to live “*by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*” (Matt 4:4). Psalm 19:7-11 tells us why we must do this: “*The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of*

the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward."

The precious doctrine of God and His Word is truly powerful to save. The doctrine of the Bible saves us from foolishness and superstition. The doctrine of the Christ saves us from sin and Satan. The doctrine of the Trinity saves us from philosophies that destroy the family and society. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit saves us from biblical ignorance and spiritual weakness. The doctrine of Salvation saves us from doubts and depression. The doctrine of the Church saves us from deception and apostasy. The doctrine of the End saves us from worldliness and the fear of death. *"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."* (1 Tim 4:16).

The Rev Dr Jeffrey Khoo is Pastor of True Life Bible-Presbyterian Church and Principal of Far Eastern Bible College.



RPG (Read, Pray & Grow) Daily Bible Reading Guide is published quarterly by Tabernacle Books, Singapore. Since 1982, the RPG has been helping Christians around the world to read God's Word regularly and meaningfully. Its writers are conservative Bible-believing pastor-teachers of fundamental persuasion, with a "high view" of Holy Scripture. The RPG uses the King James Version of the Holy Bible, the Bible of the Reformation, most loved and trustworthy, and a bulwark in the path of unbiblical ecumenical union.

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BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Suan Yew Quek

Church discipline is clearly taught in the Bible. It simply means to deal with every known sin in the church. On numerous occasions the Bible charges every Christian to deal with those who have sinned and refuse to repent. If they repent and make the necessary restitution to demonstrate the sincerity of their repentance, they will be forgiven, and fellowship is restored, although the consequences of some sins committed may still be experienced by the repentant sinner for the rest of his life. Some Bible verses that teach church discipline are:

Matthew 18:15-20,

Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Romans 16:17-18,

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

1 Corinthians 5:9-13,

I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the

world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

2 Thessalonians 3:6-7,

Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; ...

1 Timothy 5:19-20,

Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

When a church does not exercise discipline it is a church that will soon die. This church condones sin and allows sin to breed and abound in the lives of her members. It will be like the church of Pergamos in the book of Revelation which was warned by the Lord not to allow sin to breed. The judgement of God will soon fall upon such a church.

Board of Elders and Church Discipline

The Bible-Presbyterian (BP) Church's disciplinary procedure is clearly laid out in the Church Constitution. Article 11.2 states, "The spiritual oversight of the Church in matters of doctrine, principles of government, church elections, admission and discipline of members and the administrative oversight of the Church shall be the specific responsibilities of the Board of Elders."

The Board of Elders (BOE) shall exercise discipline in the Church according to the Word of God and the Bible-Presbyterian Book of Discipline (Article 18.5). But the use of the Book of Discipline is according to the discretion of the BOE. Article 8.5 states,

If any member is found by the Board of Elders to have acted in a manner unbecoming of a member or by his act or omission is likely to hinder the witness of the Church or render it of ill repute, the Board of Elders shall request him to appear before the Board. The Board of Elders shall have the power to admonish, rebuke, suspend, depose or excommunicate the member either in accordance with the procedure laid down in the Bible-Presbyterian Book of Discipline or other procedure as modified or

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adapted by the Board.

Since the dissolution of the BP Synod in 1988, the BOE of every BP church becomes its own independent authority. An appeal to the local church congregation is a provision to be found in some of the latter Constitutions of BP churches that were founded over the past few years. This appeal is with reference to the excommunication of a member. Within two weeks upon the receipt of the letter of excommunication, he has the right to ask the BOE for an Extra Congregational Meeting (ECM) at which time his excommunication would be voted upon by a simple majority. He can have the congregation overturn the decision of the BOE so that his excommunication may be rescinded. Article 8.6 states,

The member being excommunicated shall be entitled to appeal to a Congregational Meeting against the decision of the Board of Elders made pursuant to Article 8.5 within two (2) weeks of the receipt of the decision of the Board. A Congregational Meeting shall be convened by the Pastor or Board of Elders within two (2) months from receiving the appeal. The decision of the Congregational Meeting shall be by way of a simple majority vote which shall be final and binding on the said member. If no such notice is given within the prescribed time period, the decision of the Board shall be final and binding on the said member.

The earlier BP churches do not have this clause in their Constitution. In such cases the BOE's excommunication order is final. There can be no appeal.

Nature and Purposes of Church Discipline

Church or ecclesiastical discipline is divided into two kinds: judicial and administrative. Ecclesiastical discipline is the exercise of that authority which the Lord Jesus Christ has committed to the visible church for the preservation of its purity and good order. It may be either judicial or administrative. Judicial discipline is concerned with the prevention and correction of offences. An offence is anything in the doctrine or practice of a communicant member of the church which is contrary to the perfect Word of God. The purpose of judicial discipline is to vindicate the honour of Christ, to promote the purity of the church, and to reclaim the offender and to reconcile him back to fellowship with God and His church.

Administrative discipline is concerned with the maintenance of good order in the government of the church in other than judicial cases. The purpose of its existence is that all rights may be preserved and all obligations faithfully discharged. All communicant members of the

church are under the care of the BOE, and subject to its discipline. In the case of administrative discipline the pastors and elders as well as the deacons are given the authority to make immediate decisions and judgements. For example, if a member misbehaves and disturbs the peace of the church, any of the Session members, especially the pastor, has the power to take the member to task and ask him to stop his bad behaviour. There is no need to go to a judicial court to decide on this matter. If the member refuses to behave, then an administrative judgement may become a judicial one.

Judicial discipline may be likened to a trial whereby the offending member is called to stand before the BOE to show cause why he should not be disciplined. The primary purpose of church discipline is to help the errant sinner repent of his sin and be restored to fellowship with God and his fellow believers.

There are basically five levels of church discipline. In the case of the administrative discipline only levels one and two apply. In the case of judicial discipline all five levels may be applied. These levels of censure are: Admonition, Rebuke, Suspension, Deposition, and Excommunication. Censures shall be pronounced by the moderator after a trial in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, the church's only Head and King.

1. **Admonition** involves tenderly and solemnly addressing the offender, placing his sin or sins before him, warning him of his danger, and exhorting him to repentance and greater fidelity to the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. **Rebuke** is a form of censure more severe than admonition. It consists of setting forth the serious character of the offense, reproving the offender, and exhorting him to repentance and more perfect fidelity to the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. **Suspension** is a form of censure whereby one is deprived of the privileges of communicant membership in the church, from office, or from both. It may be for a definite or an indefinite time. Suspension of an officer from the communion of the church shall always be accompanied with suspension from office, but the latter does not necessarily involve the former.
4. **An** office-bearer or communicant member of the church, while under suspension shall be the object of deep solicitude

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and earnest dealing to the end that he may be restored. When the BOE which pronounces the censure is satisfied with the penitence of the offender, or when the time of suspension has expired and no new offense has arisen, the censure shall be removed, and the offender shall be restored. This restoration shall be accompanied by solemn admonition. Restoration to privileges of communion may take place without restoration to office.

- 5. Deposition** of an officer consists of depriving him permanently of the exercise of his office, and may follow upon conviction of heresy or gross immorality. Deposition of a pastor or his suspension for an indefinite time involves the dissolution of the pastoral tie and his removal from the BOE and the Session. The sentence of deposition or suspension shall be read before the congregation, and the pulpit shall be declared vacant. In the case of suspension for a limited period the BOE shall decide whether the pastoral relation shall be dissolved. Such announcement shall be accompanied with an urgent request for prayer for the offender to the end that he may be restored.

Deposition of an elder or his suspension for an indefinite time involves his removal from the BOE and the Session. The sentence of deposition or suspension shall be read before the congregation. In the case of suspension for a limited period the BOE shall decide whether the elder may be allowed back into office. Such announcement shall be accompanied with an urgent request for prayer for the offender to the end that he may be restored.

Deposition of a deacon or his suspension for an indefinite time involves his removal from the Session. The sentence of deposition or suspension may or may not be read before the congregation as determined by the BOE. In the case of suspension for a limited period the BOE shall decide whether the deacon may be allowed back into office. Such announcement shall be accompanied with an urgent request for prayer for the offender to the end that he may be restored.

- 6. Excommunication** is the most severe of censure and is resorted to only in cases of peculiar aggravation and persistent impenitence. It consists in solemnly excluding the offender from

the communion of the visible church of Jesus Christ.

All censure including admonition, rebuke, suspension, deposition, or excommunication requires the sinner to show forth fruits of repentance. Suspension of the Lord's Supper will be determined by the BOE. Counseling sessions and prescribed acts of restitution may be demanded of the repentant sinner as determined by the BOE in order to assure herself that the restoration will not be attended by injury to the cause of the Gospel.

When, after the passing of the period of suspension/deposition, a suspended/deposed offender fails to repent, the BOE may impose further censure and proceed to deposition or excommunication or both after investigation of the current status of the offender is conducted and the effect of the action upon the church has been considered.

The censure set forth shall always be accompanied by prayer to God that He may graciously use the act of discipline for the restoration of the offender, the edification of the church, and His own glory. Restoration, which may be accomplished even after the extreme penalty of excommunication, shall always be accompanied by a prayer of thanksgiving to God for His redeeming grace.

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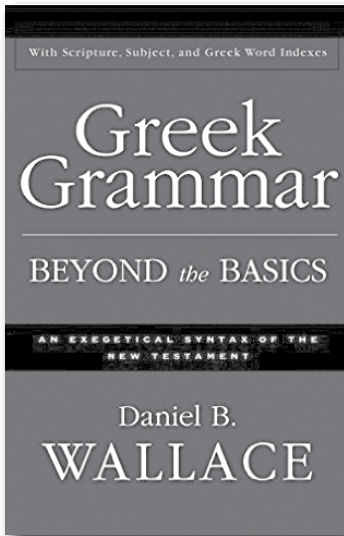


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GREEK GRAMMAR BEYOND THE BASICS: **A REVIEW**

Joshua Yong



Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996, 827 pp) is a monumental work, produced and refined over the course of many years. Designed initially in 1979 as a course syllabus for Greek students at Dallas Theological Seminary, this work has since become a standard textbook in Bible colleges and seminaries today. In view of the time, effort, and expertise put into the development of this work, it is perhaps not an exaggeration to say that this is one of the most important contributions to the study of Greek grammar in recent times.

The author of this work, Daniel Baird Wallace, has been serving as professor of Greek and New Testament at Dallas Theological Seminary since 1979. Besides *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, he has also authored *The Basics of New Testament Syntax An Intermediate Grammar* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), and about 20 other books. He has also contributed articles on topics relating to Greek grammar and exegesis which have been published in theological journals such as *Bulletin for Biblical Research*, *Westminster Theological Journal*, *Grace Theological Journal* etc. He was senior New Testament editor for the NET Bible and is the founder and executive director of the Center for the Study of New Testament Manuscripts. The fact that Wallace is so thoroughly acquainted with the study of New Testament Greek (NT Greek) makes him most qualified to produce such a work.

Motivation and Purpose

In the preface, Wallace expressed his motivation for this work as being “to encourage students to get beyond the grammatical categories and to see the relevance of syntax for exegesis.” Such a motivation can be found throughout this volume in the numerous exegetical notes and discussions.

The author’s purpose of this grammar textbook is two-fold: to ground NT Greek students properly in the idioms of the Greek language and to highlight the exegetical value of Greek syntax. Not only will this help students appreciate the relevance of syntax for exegesis, it will also prevent them from misusing syntax in their exegesis. In short, Wallace’s main goal in this book was to help bridge the gap that exists between syntax and exegesis.

A Brief Overview

In the preface, Wallace highlighted the features of this book, and gave practical recommendations on how to use this book in the classroom. He then went on, in the introduction, to explain the approach to syntax that he had taken in this book, and to examine eight key methodological considerations. Thereafter he went on to trace the roots and historical development of the Greek language in general by discussing how vernacular, literary, and conversational Koine Greek contributed to the development of NT Greek.

The main body of the book is divided into two main sections. The first section (on which greater emphasis is placed) deals with the syntax of words and phrases, while the second section covers the syntax of clauses. The first section is further divided into two parts. Part I covers the syntax of nouns and nominals, and Part II covers the syntax of verbs and verbals. Under the study of “Part I: Syntax of Nouns and Nominals,” Wallace explored the syntactical categories and usage of the noun cases, the article, adjectives, pronouns and prepositions. Under the study of “Part II: Syntax of Verbs and Verbals,” Wallace explored the usage of the person, number, voice, mood and tense of the verbs. The infinitive and participle were also examined under this part. In the second section of this book, special attention was given to the study of conditional and volitional clauses. For its conclusion, the book has 49 pages of syntax summaries (726-764), and 57 pages of indices (771-827).

Strengths

Proper Organisation and Layout

Even with a cursory reading of this book, one can easily see how this work has been systematically organised. The layout is neat and tidy, with clear and proper headers and sub headers. The extensive use of footnotes also helps to keep the work organised.

The sections and parts have been arranged in a logical order. For example, the study of words and phrases are placed before the study of the clauses. This reviewer agrees with this logical arrangement, for it is natural to progress from the study of the parts to the study of the whole. Yet while this arrangement has its benefits, perhaps the author could have also included a brief overview of the Greek sentence structure before entering into the study of the parts, so that, as the student studies the parts of Greek syntax, he will not miss the forest for the trees.

Wallace's use of charts and diagrams is also extremely useful in the organising of thoughts. It not only helps the students to see the bigger picture of Greek Syntax as a whole, but it also aids in identifying usages. The flow chart on the article on page 231, for example, is especially helpful in identifying the semantic force of the article when used in a particular context. The diagram illustrating the usage of prepositions on page 358 also helps in the recognition of the spatial functions of different prepositions.

Helpful Examples and Exegetical Notes

The proper use of examples coupled with the exegetical comments is another highlight of this work. Wallace would first use clearer examples to illustrate the semantic functions under discussion, before debatable but exegetically significant examples would be mentioned. In discussing debatable or ambiguous examples, Wallace would also state the reasons for his interpretation and views. While this would require more work on his part, it would be of great help to the student. Such examples may be found on pages 161 and 331.

However, this reviewer would like to point out that while it is beneficial for Wallace to point out how some examples may be "debatable," it may also become confusing to some students who are still learning the ropes of exegesis. It may leave students thinking that God's Word is uncertain or ambiguous. While it is true that some of these

examples are debated, i.e. there is a debate on the interpretation of the passage in question, but to call these examples “debatable” may give one the wrong impression that he could never be sure of the meaning of a passage in the Bible.

Together with these examples, Wallace also included his exegetical observations and notes, which are often very insightful and instructive. This is consistent with the purpose of this book, for it helps the student to see how syntax should be applied to exegesis. Highlighting one such example here would suffice: In discussing the relation of adjective to noun in anarthrous constructions, Wallace cited 2 Timothy 3:16 as an exegetically significant verse. He highlighted how some Bible versions have incorrectly translated this verse as “every inspired scripture is also profitable.” In his exegetical notes, he argued both contextually and grammatically why this rendering is incorrect and why the translation “every scripture is inspired and profitable ” better captures the meaning of the original (313). A few other examples may be found on pages 130, 196, 375, 630.

Capturing the Nuances of Greek Syntax

This reviewer enjoyed how Wallace highlighted some of the subtle nuances of Greek syntax. The importance of observing such nuances was highlighted when Wallace explained the difference between “Unaffected vs. Affected Meaning” in his introduction. The importance of this distinction is further brought to the fore when the usages of tenses are studied. Wallace explained that the unaffected meaning of a word or of the tense is the “basic idea” of a word that is detached from its context (514). The affected meanings are the “specific uses” which are examined in light of lexical, contextual, and grammatical considerations (515). It is observed that some preachers would describe the unaffected meaning of a word over the pulpit and sometimes incorrectly assume that the word in the context takes that same meaning. Wallace illustrated this clearly with the Aorist tense (557).

The nuances of the conditional clauses were also carefully pointed out. Take for example the first class conditional clause. Preachers would sometimes explain, in an oversimplified way, that the first class conditional clause may be translated with the gloss “since” as if to say that the first class condition indicates what is true in reality. Wallace pointed out that this is not very precise. The first class condition more accurately indicates “the assumption of truth for the sake of argument.”

The examples in Matthew 12:27-28, and 1 Corinthians 15:13 clearly show the danger of oversimplifying the first class condition (690, 691). For instance, in 1 Corinthians 15:13, the first class condition cannot be rendered “*Since there is no resurrection from the dead...*”. What the Apostle Paul was actually trying to convey through the conditional clause was this, “*if it is assumed to be true, for the sake of argument, that there is no resurrection from the dead, then is Christ not risen.*” Other important nuances that were highlighted include the semantics of commands and prohibitions (714-717).

Recognising the Limitations of Syntax

With so many factors that need to be taken into account in exegesis, Wallace was very honest to remind the student that exegesis does not hinge on grammar. He emphasised several times that syntax cannot solve all the issues surrounding the interpretation of a passage (116, 127, 531, 532). The interpretation of a passage does not depend solely on syntax, but also on other considerations such as the context and theology. As this is a textbook on Greek syntax, this caveat is most needful to dispel the incorrect notion that some students may have – that exegesis depends solely on Greek syntax.

The above are some of the reasons why this reviewer is of the opinion that Wallace’s work is most useful to the student of NT Greek. However, as with any work written by man, one must also exercise discernment and discretion in the use of it. This reviewer strongly disagrees with the underlying philosophy and theological stance of the author which, although bearing the appearance of scholastic, is in fact a cause for great concern, especially where the study of the Word of God is involved.

Weaknesses

Overemphasis on Human Authorship

One fundamental issue that this reviewer has with Wallace is that he gave no consideration to the divine authorship of Scriptures at all. This is very telling from the fact that, upon closer examination, none of the “eight methodological considerations” of the book were spiritual in nature (1-11). One would think that the most fundamental consideration when discussing the approach of the book is to remember that the study of Greek syntax really involves the study of the very Word of God.

This reviewer does not think that it is at all pedantic to highlight this point. The omission of a consideration of such fundamental importance is rather curious, given the amount of attention Wallace gave to tracing the history of the language of the New Testament. This neglect does highlight the underlying philosophy of Wallace's approach to the study of NT Greek. Wallace may or may not have verbally reminded his students in the classroom to see the spiritual nature of their study, but that does not detract from the fact that the tone throughout the book is neither spiritual nor devotional. It could also be that Wallace wanted to take a more academic and scholarly approach in his study. But is such an approach incompatible with an attitude of devotion and worship? For that matter, can a true study of God's Word, no matter how academic, be done without devotion and a spirit of prayer?

When Wallace was trying to answer the question of where NT Greek can fit into Koine, though he took into consideration the multiple authors who wrote the Bible that contributed to the multi-faceted nature of NT Greek (28), he failed to take into account the truth that the Bible is given by one Shepherd – God Himself (Eccl 12:11). The Bible may have been penned by many writers, but the Bible is still the very Word of God. This reviewer agrees with Wallace that NT Greek is not “Holy Ghost Greek” (26), in the sense that it is not some unknowable or mysterious language. This reviewer believes that the language of the Greek NT was a language that was used by the people in the time of Christ—it was not a strange and unused language. The Bible in 2 Peter 1:21 says, *“For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”* The Holy Spirit led the writers of Scripture to write inspired Scripture in such a way that their own personalities and style were neither hindered nor hampered. Having said that, this reviewer thinks that it is important to emphasise that the Bible is divinely inspired Scripture and must not be studied or approached in the same way as one would any book authored or produced by man.

At this juncture, it is appropriate to highlight what the Bible reminds us of in the study of God's Word. This applies even in the study of Greek syntax and exegesis. 1 Corinthians 2:14 says, *“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”* Also, John 16:13, *“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever*

he shall hear; that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.”

Textual Criticism

Wallace sees the need to apply textual criticism to the study of Greek text. This work is replete with comments on textual variants and readings (for examples, see the footnotes in pages 46, 54, 94, 99, 109, 126, 157, 180, 188, 201, 325, 336, 349, 441, 467, 517). It is not uncommon to see comments such as “a number of witness omit the article...” and “The more difficult reading (and therefore most likely original) is that which is printed as our text” (238).

On a very basic practical level, this reviewer questions the usefulness of textual criticism in the study of the Greek text. Does textual criticism really help students? At the end of the day, which textual variant should the students adopt for their exegesis? It bears noting that Wallace does not believe in the divine preservation of the Scriptures. He believes in the inspiration of the Bible, but rejects its perfect preservation. According to Wallace, the inspired autographs no longer exist. If that is the case, how can anyone be sure of what the “correct” reading of a text is and that the text he is studying is the correct text? And if this be the case, then what is the point of learning Greek syntax, when the student cannot know for sure if he is actually studying the very words of God?

One may argue that even if certain readings of God’s Word cannot be ascertained, one can still learn the proper principles of grammar from a purely academic level. But this is not the right kind of approach anyone should take in the study of God’s Word. There is one example that demonstrates the confusion textual criticism brings. In his discussion on the functions of the relative pronouns, Wallace used Ephesians 1:13-14 as a debatable example to illustrate the use of the relative pronoun (338). Yet in his exegetical notes, he questioned the authenticity of the pronoun under discussion. The pronoun which he questioned is the very pronoun under discussion. It seems the debate of the “debatable example” was not so much on how one should apply the rules of exegesis in passages like this, but on whether the reading is “doubtful.” This would give rise to a whole host of questions in the readers’ minds: If the reading is doubtful, why does he still use the reading? What is then the correct reading? How does he know that it is the correct reading? Yet this is not the only time when doubt is introduced into the student’s mind. Several times, the authenticity of the word used in the text to illustrate syntax is questioned

by the author himself (see examples in 349, 441). In discussing variants, Wallace tends to write in a way that causes the student to doubt the authenticity of the word or text he is studying. (see Tit 2:10 and Eph 1:13-14 in 188 and 338 respectively).

At times Wallace would make remarks that are unfounded, and this would highlight his bias against the Textus Receptus. For example, he dismissed without explanation the Textus Receptus reading of John 8:6 as “spurious” (636) and Mark 16:17-18 as “not original” (405). He wrote disparagingly of Dean Burgon who defended the Textus Receptus against Westcott and Hort and their new but corrupt Alexandrian-based Greek text (455).

The Bible is 100% inspired and preserved to the last word and letter. 2 Timothy 3:16 says, “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.*” Matthew 5:18 says, “*For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.*” Psalm 12:6, 7 says, “*The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.*” As such, rationalistic textual criticism as introduced by Wallace ought to be rejected. Textual reception is the biblical approach to identifying the inspired words of the text. It is an approach that is governed by the logic of faith – a faith that is founded upon God’s power and promise to keep His Word pure throughout the ages.

Biasness Against the KJV

Wallace holds a strong bias against the King James Version (KJV) and disdains those who use it. He makes several not-so-subtle jibes against the KJV and its advocates. When discussing Atticistic Greek, he commented in a parenthesis that “advocates of the KJV today argue for that version’s renderings because it represents English at the height of its glory, during the Shakespearean era” (23). This is both an inaccurate and a poor example. Advocates of the KJV do not speak in KJV English, which thus makes it different from those who want to review Atticistic Greek. Furthermore, to assume that advocates of the KJV prefer the version’s translations because of its Shakespearean English shows the deliberate ignorance on the part of Wallace.

Wallace also claimed that the translators of the KJV were “more

comfortable with the Latin than with the Greek.” His aim of saying this was to point out that the “KJV translators frequently missed the nuances of the Greek Article.” (208). A cursory examination of the qualifications of the KJV translators, however, presents a very different picture from what Wallace had painted. Sir Henry Savile, for example, was a translator of the KJV who was part of the Oxford team. He was the personal Greek tutor of Queen Elizabeth, and was responsible for the editing of the complete work of Chrysostom, the famous Greek Church Father. John Bois was another eminent translator who was part of the Cambridge team. As a Cambridge student, he would write letters to his Cambridge professors in Greek, and also composed his own essays in Greek. He was so proficient in Greek and became such an expert in the language that he became professor of Greek at Cambridge. While it is true that the KJV translators were comfortable with Latin, it is fallacious to make a claim that the KJV translators could not be equally proficient in Greek.

In discussing the absence of the article, Wallace quoted John 6:70 as an example (249). He then pointed out how the KJV translators did not regard “devil” in John 6:70 as a monadic noun because they did not translate John 6:70 as “one of you is the devil” but as “one of you is a devil.” He went on to point out how several other English versions have the same rendering. In light of this, he snidely remarked that “the legacy of the KJV still lives on, then, even in places where it ought not.” While Wallace had rightly pointed out that the word *diabolos* can be adjectival and has been used on several other occasions to refer to someone who is a slanderer (1 Tim 3:11), or a false accuser (2 Tim 3:3; Tit 2:3), the onus is on Wallace to show why *diabolos* is to be regarded as a monadic noun here. This reviewer believes that “a devil” in John 6:70 is a more precise translation, as this verse was contrasting the mercy of Christ in choosing His disciples with the slanderous betrayal of Judas Iscariot. Judas was thus named because he had such a devilish characteristic.

Faulty Exegesis

While Wallace’s exegetical notes are useful in helping Greek students to see the relationship between Greek syntax and exegesis, he sometimes overstated his case without giving reasons or explanations for his position. For example, when trying to identify the “perfect” of 1 Corinthians 13:10, he simply stated that “a more likely view is that ‘the perfect’ refers to the coming of Christ.” (295), without providing the basis for this view. He tried to argue that “the perfect” could not refer to the

Word of God, despite admitting that it was grammatically more consistent to take “the perfect” as referring to the completion of the canon. Wallace’s failure to identify it as referring to the canon can be attributed to his faulty exegesis of that text.

In Wallace’s discussion of Colwell’s construction, he tried to argue that the word *theos* in John 1:1 is qualitative and not definite (265-270). However his argument against *theos* being definite was not so much grammatical as it is theological. Grammatically, he had shown that it is statistically possible for *theos* to be definite (259); theologically, he explained that if one were to see *theos* as definite in this context, then one would fall into the error of Sabellianism (i.e. God the Son is the same person as God the Father). However, theologically, that is not the only way to understand a definite *theos*. It can be explained that the Lord Jesus Christ as God the Son is equal in essence, power and glory with God the Father, and thus a definite *theos* would mean that just as God the Father is God, the Lord Jesus Christ, though not God the Father, is God the Son and is the same living and true God. This is not Sabellianism at all.

Arbitrary Categorisation

There are some questionable decisions made with regard to the semantic categories.

Some new categories were unnecessarily formed while other categories were merged without convincing reasons. For example on page 151, Wallace wrote about the “dative of thing possessed”. Wallace had himself admitted that this is a debatable category and that “there are no clear instances in the NT with the simple dative...” On another occasion, while Wallace himself admitted “the difference between the customary and iterative present is mild”, he still decided to separate the “Iterative Present” and “Customary Present” as two distinct categories (520- 522).

It seems very inconsistent then that Wallace also decided to merge the “stative present” category with the “Customary Present”. Wallace commented that while other grammarians prefer to make such a distinction, he decided to merge them “for convenience’ sake” (521). Another instance where he merged categories was when he decided that there is no distinction between the “dative of place” and “dative of sphere”. He commented that the “...sphere and place are really the same thing. The distinction is lexical, not grammatical – and on such a subtle

level that it is not worth mentioning since exegesis is not materially affected by such a distinction” (153). If Wallace were to apply this principle consistently, could not the categories of “Iterative Present” and “Customary Present” be also merged as one? It appears that Wallace’s decisions regarding when to merge or separate categories are purely arbitrary.

Although this reviewer is somewhat puzzled by these decisions, it is granted that, as long as the distinctions are clearly explained, there is little cause for concern.

Conclusion

It is not difficult to see why this book has become the standard textbook in colleges and seminaries. The clear organisation of materials, the extensive research, the relevant examples and the interesting exegetical notes have proven to be very helpful and useful. In many ways this book has fulfilled its main objective and goal, which is to help students understand the relevance and relationship of syntax to exegesis. Of course, it is up to the students to apply the principles themselves.

However, the lack of emphasis on the divine inspiration and preservation of the Word of God is cause for great concern, while the promotion of textual criticism robs the student of the certainty he needs in the study of God’s Word. In the process of acquainting himself with Greek grammar and syntax, the student should become more and more certain of God’s Word, and not more and more uncertain. Textual criticism undermines this confidence and causes the student of God’s Word to be greatly discouraged. How will he henceforth be able to preach, “Thus saith the Lord”?

Despite the issues raised, this book remains a valuable resource in the study of Greek grammar. One should not throw out the baby with the bath water. This reviewer suggests that students could focus on learning the categories and semantic functions of Greek syntax from this book. As for the examples cited in this book, students would do well to refer to the *Textus Receptus*. The exegetical notes of this book should also be read with discernment.

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CHINESE KING JAMES VERSION: A REVIEW

Eileen Chee and Yijie Choong

The Chinese Union Version (CUV) has been the predominant Bible version in the mandarin-speaking Christian world since its first publication in 1919. Although its translation was based on the corrupt 1885 English Revised Version (ERV), it remains the best Mandarin translation that we have in our hands to date. The first revision made to the CUV in the past century, known as the Revised Chinese Version (RCUV), was published in 2010. It is most highly acclaimed and is gaining popularity amongst Protestants in countries like China, Taiwan and Hong Kong as an ‘improved’, ‘easier-to-understand’ version of the CUV. Sadly, the RCUV is no real improvement to the CUV. Instead, because its revision was based on other corrupted texts, it has only worsened the condition of the CUV in causing it to deviate even more from the preserved Text.¹

A lesser known revision to the CUV has also emerged, called the Chinese King James Version (CKJV). Work on this revision began in 2010, and newer changes continue to be made to it from time to time. Though it has yet to be printed and published, the CKJV is available online, for download, as well as in two Bible Applications for smartphones. Is the CKJV indeed an improvement to the CUV? An excellent fourfold criteria for evaluating Bible translations is provided by Dr D A Waite in his book *Defending the King James Bible*, which will be adopted in this review. The four criteria are: (1) Text (2) Translators (3) Technique (4) Theology.

Text

Dr Waite says, “The foundation of our Bible is the Old Testament Hebrew text and the New Testament Greek text from which it is translated. There must be a proper foundation for... any Bible that you translate. It must come from the proper Hebrew Old Testament text and the proper Greek New Testament text.”² The proper original language texts are of course, the Hebrew Masoretic Text and the Greek Textus

Receptus that underlie the King James Version. It would have been most ideal to revise the CUV by directly referring to these divinely preserved original language texts. Nonetheless, the choice made by the CKJV translators was not too far away. As the name of this translation suggests, the King James Version was chosen by them to be the blueprint of their revision work. Taking the existing CUV, they closely compared it against the KJV, searching for and rectifying mistakes found in the CUV that resulted from the corrupt text it was based upon. Since the KJV is the most faithful translation of the superior, perfectly preserved original language texts, it is logically the next best choice as a foundation text. Such was the excellent decision made by the CKJV translators.

Translators

The Word of everlasting life ought only to be translated by the best translators, to ensure that it is accurately and faithfully translated. The qualifications of a good Bible translator are: (1) He must be born again. (2) He must believe in the doctrine of VPI. (3) He must have a reverence for God's Word. (4) He must be intellectually honest. (5) He must be proficient in the original languages, as well as the language that he is translating the Bible into.³

Unfortunately, the information provided on the translators of the CKJV is very limited. In an email exchange, it was revealed to us that the CKJV translation work had begun with a core group of four translators, who are mainly from Hong Kong and Korea.⁴ They politely refused to reveal their identities, expressing their desire to "give glory only to God". However, they did reveal that some of them belong to Lutheran churches, while others come from small, non-denominational churches. Initially, these four main translators had set out only to correct some of the major translational errors of the CUV. After sharing these corrections on the internet, they received more input from the online community on other portions of the CUV that needed emending. As a result, more translators were added into the team. Their revision remains an ongoing work as they continue to garner suggestions from many online. These translators continue to search for portions of the CUV that requires emendations, and submit their suggested translations to the four main translators, who would review these suggestions, decide on the final translation and incorporate these changes into the CKJV. According to the CKJV website, the CKJV team of translators now comprises Chinese Christians

who come from all over the world, some of whom are Bible scholars, and others are believers who know the original languages.⁵

The meagre information on the translators does not allow us to evaluate if the CKJV translators are truly qualified for this important work of translation (or revision) based on the abovementioned criteria. Perhaps the only qualification that they can clearly be said to meet is that they have a reverence for God's Word, as reflected in their choice of the KJV to be the foundation text on which their revision is based. In our day and age where biblical scholarship often means criticising the Word of God and embracing the modern versions and their corrupted critical texts, these CKJV translators stand out because they recognise the errors in the CUV caused by the corrupt texts it is based upon, and regard the KJV and its underlying Hebrew and Greek texts as superior. Little can be said of them in other aspects, but it is certainly amazing that God has guided these CKJV translators to favour the Hebrew and Greek texts that He has providentially and perfectly preserved.

Technique

There are two known translational methods—the formal equivalence method and the dynamic equivalence method. The former seeks to have a word-for-word accuracy while the latter for a thought-for-thought equivalence. The CUV adopts the formal equivalence method, but because it uses the corrupted 1885 Revised Version (RV) as its source text, the RV's undue additions, subtractions and corruptions are also reflected in the popular Chinese Bible.

The method which the CKJV translators used is unique in that it relied on analysing both the CUV and KJV. The translators of the CKJV felt that improving upon the CUV is better than coming up with an all-new translation. The reason is because CUV is already the accepted Chinese Bible of the Mandarin-speaking church. To reinvent the wheel would result in great resistance from the Mandarin-speaking church, which is as good as rendering its labour vain.

The translators of the CKJV had to first identify the places in CUV where there are errors. They did this in three steps. The first step was to compare the KJV with other Modern English Versions for the differences. These differences were then noted down. Secondly, they marked out the various verses where the CUV would insert remarks such as “or could be translated as”, “or could be named as”, “source text reads”, or “older

manuscripts read". Such remarks give CUV readers the idea that the word of God has room for revision. Finally, they aligned and collated all these information from the CUV, KJV and other English Bible versions. This compilation became the compass for the CKJV translators to make the necessary corrections.

On the whole, they would retain the same words as the CUV. However, when it comes to the revision of whole sentences, they would refer to the 1872 Peking version and 1880 Shanghai version of the King James Bible. Italics used in the KJV were also translated accordingly. In passages where the CUV combined two or three verses into one, the CKJV translators would then divide them in line with the KJV. The translators went strictly by the formal equivalence method.

On one hand, while striving for accuracy, the CKJV translators were also interested in giving the CKJV a more contemporary complexion. This is because many of the terms found in the CUV came from a more classical era in the early 1900s and some of them could not even be found in modern dictionaries today. Hence, modern appellations of countries and people replace their archaic counterparts.⁶ Traditional vocabulary gave way to more up-to-date words which are also more fitting in the context.⁷ The translators were also consistent in differentiating synonyms in CKJV, for words such as "angel" and "messenger", "many" and "some" were interchangeably translated in the CUV. The CKJV editors came up with this technique because they desired for a more accurate and precise Chinese Bible—one that is closer to the faithful texts underlying the trusted King James Bible. This technique, which involves specific identification and confirmation of differences between the KJV and CUV, is basic yet crucial in improving upon the current CUV.

Theology

Theology guides and informs one's translation. Since the KJV is the standard in their translation work, readers of CKJV can be assured that the theology in this improved Chinese version is consistent with that of the KJV. The RV, on which the CUV relied on, heavily attacks the doctrine of Christ, the Trinity and the reality of hell. It uses gender-inclusive language, changing the original masculine pronouns to neutral, masculine and feminine. The CKJV is thus a safer Chinese Bible to use.

However, there are two areas in which there are slight variations in the more minor doctrines. One concerns the make-up of man and the

other is with regard to the method of baptism. In the former, the CKJV translators took care to distinguish “spirit” and “soul”, which two words were used interchangeably in the CUV. They reasoned that such an exact distinction should be made because 1 Thessalonians 5:23 teaches that man is a three-part being, rather than a two-part being. However, this interpretation is not tenable in light of the general teaching of the Bible that man just consists of two parts: the body and the soul.⁸

It is highly probable that the committee members come from a Baptist background. This is because for the English word “baptise”, they translated it as 浸 (which means “immerse”) instead of the more generic 洗 (which means “wash”). According to their understanding of baptism, the Greek word *baptizo* only means “to immerse”. This forms a weakness in the CKJV, for it unnecessarily restricts the meaning of the word *baptizo* to immersion. There are sound theological reasons for the mode of baptism to be other than immersion.

Conclusion

The primary purpose of the CKJV is to improve upon a widely-accepted but error-laden Chinese Bible version. It is high time that these corrections be made according to a faithful source text, so as to further benefit our Chinese-speaking brethren around the world. Till today, the translators of the CKJV are opened to receiving further suggestions from users on how to refine this version. We do recommend that an independent, third-party team do a more thorough analysis of the CKJV, in particular comparing the CKJV with the KJV, or even with the MT and the TR, line by line, precept upon precept. At the moment, it is easily accessible on its website <http://ckjv.asia> and is available as a Bible application on both Android and Apple platforms. It is our desire that the final product be made available in printed, bound form in the near future.

Notes

¹ According to the Logos website, the RCUV revision of the Old Testament is based on the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, and the revision of the New Testament is based on the 1993 Greek New Testament, 4th revised edition. (<https://www.logos.com/product/31446/revised-chinese-union-version-simplified>, as of 25 March 2015).

² D A Waite, *Defending the King James Bible* (Collingswood: The Bible for Today, 1996), 18.

³ Adapted from Suan Yew Quek, *Contemporary Theology I*, unpublished lecture notes, Far Eastern Bible College, 62-3.

⁴ Email from CKJV Scribe, 17 February 2015.

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⁵ <http://www.ckjv.asia/amendments.html>

⁶ The name “Cyrus” is changed from “波斯王” to “塞鲁士”; “Ethiopia” from “埃提阿伯” to “埃塞俄比亚”.

⁷ In Psalm 32:4, for the Chinese word “moisture”, it is changed from “精液” to “水份”; and in Psalm 12:8, “walk” becomes “行走” instead of “游行”.

⁸ Timothy Tow and Jeffrey Khoo, *Theology for Every Christian* (Singapore: FEBC Press, 2007),130.

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THE REFORMATION IN ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND: A PILGRIMAGE REPORT

Samuel Joseph

Introduction

Why do we remember history? For Christians, the record of history – particularly Church History – is the record of God’s goodness and gracious work among men, despite our fallen nature. It is the record of divine Providence and God’s sovereignty over all His creation. Through the study of history, we gain a greater knowledge of God and His work, and so are better equipped to glorify Him; we learn also about human nature: the mistakes of the past which we ought to take pains to avoid, as well as the faithfulness and zeal of our forebears, whom we are inspired to emulate.

It was with these thoughts in mind that we embarked on FEBC’s second Reformation pilgrimage, to England and Scotland, led by the Rev Dr and Mrs Jeffrey Khoo. Beginning in London and ending in Edinburgh, 42 pilgrims visited several sites and museums dealing with the history of the Reformation in England and Scotland, and certain individuals who carried the ideals of the Reformation into the subsequent centuries. The aim of this article is to provide a brief summary of the English and Scottish Reformations, highlighting the points of interest visited by the pilgrims and how these tie in with the overall scheme of Reformation history.

The Reformation in England

Background

The spread of Christianity to Britain occurred early, in the 1st or 2nd century: with trade routes linking it to Europe. The Roman province of Britannia (as it was then called) would have been exposed to the religion that was spreading through the rest of the Roman Empire. In 313 AD, the Roman Emperor Constantine legalised the Christian religion

and effectively ended the persecution of the early Christian Church. Constantine greatly favoured Christianity: he promoted Christians to high-ranking positions, and made significant gifts of land and money to the church. Many adopted the Christian religion only out of expediency and a desire for success; yet there would also have been many genuinely moved by the truth of the gospel. God's hand was at work, spreading His truth according to His purpose, yet the selfishness and greed of men were such that falsehood soon began to creep in. The Roman Catholic Church began to amass more and more wealth and power in its dealings with the state: for instance, marriages were prohibited among even distant relatives, meaning that almost all royal marriages required a papal dispensation. Furthermore, the Popes saw it as their right to decide all ecclesiastical appointments, requiring every ecclesiastical appointee to give his first year's salary to the Pope in recognition of this. The wielding of such authority naturally met with royal resistance, and attempts were made to restrict papal authority in England.



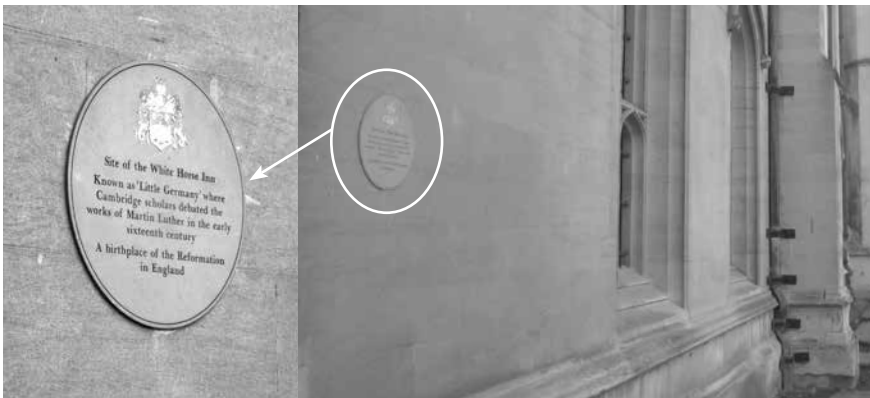
Statue of Erasmus on the School of Divinity, Cambridge.

There was resistance also from individuals among the English people. Most famous among these was John Wycliffe, known as the Morning Star of the Reformation, a scholar teaching at Oxford in the 14th century. Wycliffe spoke powerfully against the indolence and wealth of the church;

and against the established Catholic idea that the clergy, with their power to dispense the sacraments, were necessary for the people's salvation. These teachings he taught to his students at Oxford, and wrote in tracts for distribution. He also organised bands of "poor preachers" to disseminate Protestant doctrine, and translated the Bible from the Latin

Vulgate into English for the common people, leading to the oft-recorded cry of his opponents: “the jewel of the clergy has become the toy of the laity.” Wycliffe was not martyred; however, thirty years after his death the Council of Constance declared him a heretic. His bones were exhumed and burned.

By the 16th century, humanist philosophy had taken root and spread to England, emphasising human intellect and critical thinking, and producing among other things a desire to return to the source texts of various fields, including theology. Hence the Dutch humanist Desiderius Erasmus determined to return to the original Greek manuscripts of the New Testament. From 1510 to 1515 Erasmus resided in Queens’ College, Cambridge, where he worked on his Greek New Testament, first published in 1516. Later editions of his Greek Testament were used by Martin Luther and William Tyndale in their translations. Elsewhere in Cambridge, the works of Luther were first debated at the White Horse Inn, which is no longer standing. Cranmer, Latimer, and others including William Tyndale are said to have been involved in these debates, which had to be done in secret: reformed doctrines were still considered heretical, and Luther’s works could only be brought into the country by German merchants who smuggled them in. The groundwork was being laid; the fires of Reformation were present already in England – but as yet they smouldered in the background.



Plaque showing the site of the White Horse Inn, Cambridge.

Henry VIII

Early in the pilgrimage, we visited Westminster Abbey and Hampton Court, where we learned something of the complicated politics

of medieval England. It was against this backdrop that the Reformation drama was played out, and the opening act took place during the reign of Henry VIII (1509–1547). The new king’s religious opinions were complicated, and influenced by political considerations. Henry’s father had secured an alliance with Spain by marrying his eldest son, Arthur, to Catherine of Aragon, the daughter of the Spanish king. Arthur died early, however, and so Henry was to be married to Catherine, his brother’s widow, in order to maintain the alliance. To do this a papal dispensation was required. Thus the legitimacy of Henry’s marriage – and of his daughter by that marriage, Mary, who was later to be queen – depended on the authority of the Pope. Hence Henry VIII began his reign as a staunch supporter of the Pope and the Catholic Church. He even earned the title of “Defender of the Faith” by voicing his opposition to Martin Luther’s attacks on the Pope.

All this changed, however, when it became evident that Catherine could not give Henry the male heir he so desired. To make



Hampton Court, royal residence of Henry VIII.

matters worse, the Pope, unwilling to risk the ire of Catherine’s nephew, by now the king of Spain, refused to grant Henry a divorce. This changed Henry’s conciliatory attitude, and precipitated a series of events that brought England by stages out from the authority of Rome – we are reminded of Proverbs 21:1, “The king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.”

In 1531 Henry began enlarging his authority over the Church, and in 1532 the so-called “Submission of the Clergy” took place: Henry forced them to surrender their right to make ecclesiastical laws without his permission. He also insisted that the clergy pay to him their



"The Scavenger's Daughter," one of the instruments of torture in the Tower of London. The prisoner's body is folded in three, and cruelly compressed.

Henry began dissolving the monasteries and acquiring their wealth for himself.

It is important to note that these events did not yet constitute a Reformation of *religion*: the overall result was simply to replace the Pope with the King as the head of the Church. Doctrines remained largely the same; indeed, those who adopted Luther's ideas were burned as heretics. In 1539 the "Six Articles" were published, requiring all to affirm Catholic doctrines such as transubstantiation and clerical celibacy, on pain of imprisonment or death. The "Six Articles" were called "the whip with six strings." Famously, the Protestant Anne Askew was put on trial for denying transubstantiation. In her defence she reportedly said, "That which you call your God, it is a piece of bread." She was tortured in the Tower of London (which was illegal at the time), but when offered pardon she replied, "I came not hither to deny my Lord and Master." Evidently the "reforms" that had taken place were political rather than doctrinal: but God's plan was unfolding, and the Reformation proper was to begin under Henry's successor, his son Edward VI.

first year's salary, which they had previously been required to give to the Pope. In 1533 Thomas Cranmer was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury, and annulled Henry's marriage to Catherine of Aragon. Henry married Anne Boleyn, who gave birth to Elizabeth the same year; for this the Pope excommunicated both Henry and Cranmer. In 1534 the "Acts of Supremacy" were passed, replacing the Pope with Henry VIII as the supreme head of the Church. Soon after,

Edward VI

Edward's accession to the throne in 1547 marked a perilous time for the growth of true religion in England. Henry VIII had accomplished his own brand of "Reformation," which left everyone else unsatisfied: the Pope and his supporters were obviously unhappy with Henry's usurpation of supreme authority over the Church, while supporters of the European reformers repudiated the doctrinal stagnation of Henry's Church of England. The country was at a tipping point, and being pulled in opposing directions – some wanted a return to the old Catholicism, while others pushed forward to Protestantism. It was far from clear what the outcome would be.

Ten-year-old Edward VI, however, had little to do with this. Given his youth, a Council of Regency was appointed to reign in his stead, and it was they who had to deal with the situation. As it turned out, in the Providence of God, the Duke of Somerset, who was named Lord Protector of the Realm, favoured the advancement of the Reformation, and enacted a series of policies that brought the Church more firmly into the light of Protestantism. Images and relics, which had been part of the Roman Catholic Church for centuries, were ordered to be destroyed. The Six Articles were abolished, and the clergy were allowed to marry. In 1549 a "Book of Common Prayer" was produced by Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who had adopted many of Luther's reformed doctrines. This was further revised in 1552 to encompass more explicit Protestant, as opposed to Catholic, doctrine.

It appeared that the Reformation in England was proceeding apace – but the young king, Edward VI, was sickly, and would not long survive. After his death in 1553, his Catholic half-sister Mary became Queen.

Mary and Elizabeth

Though popularly labelled with the epithet "Bloody," Queen Mary I of England was in many ways a sad figure. Born to the King of England, Henry VIII, she had been raised as the future Queen of that great nation, only to be suddenly cast aside as "illegitimate" by both her father and her country. At the age of thirty-seven she finally did become Queen, but her short reign was marred by failures and disappointments; and she died, as the poet Tennyson puts it, "unhappiest of queens and wives and women."

In her early years as queen, however, all seemed to go well. To return England to Catholicism, Mary needed to regain the favour of the Pope. Somewhat ironically, the very insistence of Henry VIII on his headship over the Church of England, which had started the Reformation, now became the instrument by which Mary could undo all the reforms of her predecessor Edward VI. Mary abolished all the anti-Catholic changes Edward had made, and England was finally “absolved” by the Pope in 1554.

In order to ensure that England remained Catholic, however, Mary needed an heir. She married Philip, the prince of Spain, a move that proved highly unpopular with the English people. Furthermore, the Pope died, and his successor, Paul IV, was unhappy with the Spanish: and, because Mary had married Philip, he was unhappy with England. The new Pope also began to demand that Mary restore the lands which Henry VIII had taken from the church when he dissolved the monasteries. This was a problem, since most of this land had been sold to influential and wealthy men who would be loathe to simply return it. Mary eventually forced the issue via Parliament, making her even more unpopular.

Perhaps the greatest contributor to the people’s discontent, however, was her vicious persecution of Protestants, most famously Thomas Cranmer, Hugh Latimer, and Nicholas Ridley – the “Oxford Martyrs.” They were sent to the Tower of London in 1553 on charges of “seditious demeanour,” and Latimer and Ridley were burned at the stake in 1555. As the fires were lit, Latimer reportedly said to Ridley, “Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle, by God’s grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out.” Cranmer was martyred later, in 1556. He initially recanted, renouncing



The “Bloody Tower” of the Tower of London, where Hugh Latimer was imprisoned.

Protestant doctrine and acknowledging the Pope as head of the Church. Mary refused to pardon him, however, and on the day of his execution, Cranmer proclaimed his faith publicly, thrusting his own right hand into the flames to burn first as punishment for signing his earlier recantation.

The book of Hebrews tells us of those men of faith, who, like these persecuted reformers, “had trial of cruel mocking and scourging, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment... were slain with the sword... being destitute, afflicted, tormented” (Hebrews 11:36-37). Why did God allow His faithful servants to suffer so? The Psalmist proclaims, “Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee” (Psalm 76:10). God’s purpose was not thwarted by Mary’s persecutions, nor was it delayed – rather, it was fulfilled. The English people had been exposed to the Bible in their own language, thanks to the fervent work of Wycliffe, Tyndale, and others. During Edward VI’s reign they had been taught Reformation doctrines from these English Bibles; and now Mary’s persecutions showed the people that these truths were worth dying for. Latimer’s prayer was answered: the people’s hearts were aflame for the truths of the Scripture, and the faith of the reformers. On Mary’s death in 1558, Elizabeth I became queen unopposed.

There was still significant support for Catholicism, however, with many Catholics remaining in positions of power; and so Elizabeth, to maintain peace, compromised. The Act of Uniformity was passed in 1559, laying out rules for the religion of the nation. While the Act required everyone to attend their local parish church for Sunday services, the wording was vague enough to allow for both Catholic and Protestant interpretations of the sacraments. England was a Protestant nation, though somewhat anomalously so. The voices in favour of a return to Rome were stilled by a Papal bull in 1570 officially excommunicating Elizabeth, and requiring all loyal Catholics to rebel. This led to persecution against Catholics, although they were tried and executed for treason, rather than heresy. On the other hand, there were many who felt that further reforms were needed, to fully “purify” the Church of England from the remaining vestiges of Catholicism. These were the Puritans, and they rose to prominence in Elizabeth’s reign.

The Puritans

One group of Puritans, led in large part by Thomas Cartwright, were content to push for reform within the Church: to raise their voices

in opposition, argue their case biblically, and wait for the government to act in their support. After all, the face of the Church of England had been altered drastically in little more than a generation; and so they held out hope for further positive change. Another group, however, could not brook such lethargy, and wanted to establish the biblical patterns immediately, even if it meant a complete break from the Church.

Upon Elizabeth's death, James VI of Scotland became James I, King of England. His accession was welcomed by the Puritans, who hoped that he would favour their reforms, and they sent him a brief statement summarising their views. In response, in 1604 James I held his Hampton Court conference, where he famously commissioned the translation of the King James Bible. Apart from this, however, the conference was a severe disappointment for the Puritans. Their dispute with the Church of England was heard by James, who refused all their proposed changes and ordered them to conform to the present state of the Church. These proceedings strengthened the convictions of the separatists, and from this resolve, founded on a fervent grasp of the supreme authority of the Word of God, momentous events were to unfold.



The village church of Babworth, where Richard Clyfton was vicar

These events rose from the humblest of beginnings, in the little village church of Babworth, its idyllic rural setting belying its historical significance. In 1586, the vicar of Babworth was Richard Clyfton, a

separatist who preached against some of the liturgical practices of the Church. Clyfton's preaching attracted many others from the surrounding region, some of whom walked many miles to attend his services, among them William Bradford and William Brewster. Clyfton was suspended from the Church in 1605 for refusing to conform as ordered by James I, and he left Babworth to join a private congregation in nearby Scrooby, meeting in the home of Brewster. Another similar congregation had formed in Gainsborough, under the leadership of John Smyth. These two congregations faced mounting opposition from the ecclesiastical authorities, and after meeting in 1606 to consider the situation, they decided there was no recourse but to leave England.

It was not an easy decision. They left friends and established lives; they left the comfort and familiarity of their homeland: for an uncertain future in a distant country, which could only be reached after months of arduous travel. But they trusted in God, and were utterly convicted of the need to stay true to the divine ordinances prescribed in Scripture. Driven from their land by their refusal to compromise on any principle found in the Bible, these were the Pilgrim Fathers who crossed the Atlantic in the *Mayflower* in 1620, and founded colonies in America.

Concluding Thoughts

As pilgrims, we came to England at a time when much of this history has been forgotten. The professional guides in Westminster Abbey and Hampton Court were well-versed in the political history of the various monarchs who graced those halls, but the Reformation stories that took place within those very walls did not seem to concern them. Even if remembered, to the secular eye, the Reformation seems little more than a by-product of history: the incidental result of political manoeuvrings and a populace dissatisfied with the indolence and corruption of their ecclesiastical overseers. But to those with eyes to see, on closer examination the golden thread of divine Providence shines unmistakably: the refusal of the Pope to grant Henry VIII a divorce; the precarious state of the realm after the accession of Edward VI; even the Marian persecutions and their effect in crystallising the resolve of the people against the corrupt doctrines of the Catholic Church. God did not merely "take advantage" of these events – He shaped and moulded them; He controlled them; He ordained them! God has His hand *active* in history, not passive. In the course of our pilgrimage we saw how some individuals acted in ignorance of God, others acted in opposition to God,

and yet others in service to God; but all these ultimately fulfilled the will of God. Such is the greatness and almighty power of our God, in His dealings both with individual lives and with the destinies of nations. All praise and glory to Him!

Another lesson we must surely learn comes from the faith and zeal of the reformers, which stand out starkly against the widespread apathy that dulls the nation of England today; and, indeed, is found in our own country as well. These saints of old were uncompromising and unflinching in their work for the Lord, but now the light of former days has ceased to shine as brightly. Latimer's final prayer has indeed been answered – God will preserve His remnant – but that candle, though not put out, is very dim. We today need to learn from this history the necessity of holding fast, in order to preserve the light of God's truth in this dark world.

The Reformation in Scotland

One of the biggest surprises for me during this pilgrimage was discovering how different the Reformation in Scotland was to that in England. While they are now part of the United Kingdom, in the 16th century Scotland and England were quite separate nations. In England the Reformation was born out of political movements, and in its early days was largely sustained by members of the political elite who were sympathetic to reformed doctrines. In Scotland, by contrast, the Reformation took place as it were in the opposite direction: from the bottom up, by the efforts of common men who preached the truth. There are three key figures in the Scottish Reformation: Patrick Hamilton, George Wishart, and John Knox.

Hamilton and Wishart

By the 16th century, the church in Scotland had been thoroughly corrupted by greed and ambition. Much of the nation's wealth was controlled by the clergy, and that concentrated largely in the hands of a small number of influential leaders. Bishops were treated – and treated themselves – as nobility rather than as preachers, and vacant bishoprics were fought over and won by political manoeuvring. Thus corrupted by wealth and its attendant avarice, the clergy as a whole hardly lived up to the standards of Scripture. Priests were forbidden to marry, but openly kept mistresses and often awarded Church appointments and properties to their sons. Men on their deathbeds were coldly petitioned to bestow

their earthly fortunes to the Church. Yet the princes and nobles continued to support the religious institution, and their support only fuelled the greed and laziness of the clergy. It goes without saying that the Scripture itself was totally ignored, and kept from the common people by severe penalties. The merest sign of discontent was enough to attract a charge of heresy, with imprisonment or death following. For Reformation to occur, the true doctrine of Scripture was desperately needed: “The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple” (Psalm 119:130).

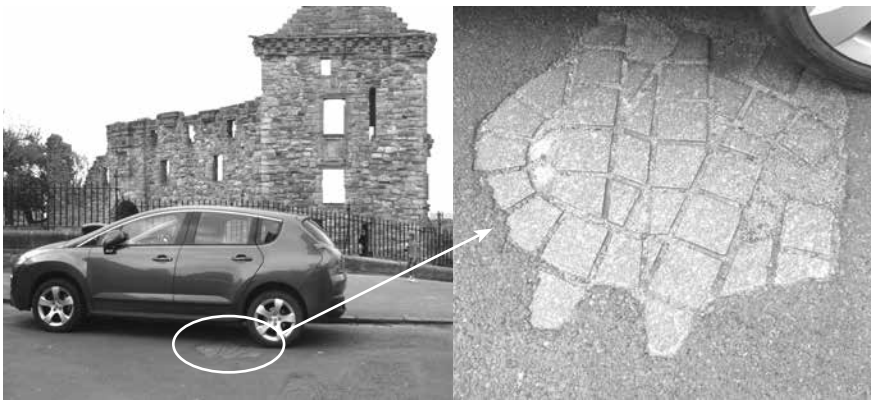
Scotland had received the first sparks of the Reformation light early, from Scottish students who travelled to Oxford to study under Wycliffe. These first embers were brought by God to illumine the mind of Patrick Hamilton, a youth of noble birth, while he was studying in Paris, where Luther’s works were already in circulation. Returning to Scotland in the 1520s, Hamilton began to preach the doctrine of grace. His exposure of their corruptions drew the ire of the religious elite: he was arrested, condemned as a heretic, and burned at the stake in 1528. Hamilton’s brave death, however, as is so often the case, only ignited interest in his teachings, which soon spread among the people. In the ensuing years, those who obeyed the truth were persecuted, and many killed or forced to flee. At the same time, others were smuggling into Scotland copies of Tyndale’s English translation of the Bible, along with other Protestant writings. Popular playwrights began to satirise the decadent superstitions of the Roman Church, and even the nobility came under the influence of Reformed doctrine. Again, God was preparing a nation for Reformation.

Next on the scene was George Wishart, who in 1544 began preaching the gospel as an itinerant, travelling throughout the land in constant danger from the authorities. Like Hamilton before him, Wishart’s teaching exposed and threatened the idle luxury of the Church. Cardinal David Beaton, Archbishop of St Andrews, determined to make



Entrance to the bottle dungeon. Shown above is the “neck” of the bottle; the chamber below is where Wishart was imprisoned.

an example of Wishart and so dissuade others from opposing the Church. In 1546, Wishart was imprisoned in the bottle dungeon, put on trial, and burned at the stake. Far from establishing his authority by this act, however, the Cardinal was in fact hastening his own death. In response to Wishart's martyrdom, a group of local nobles entered St Andrews Castle dressed as masons, and murdered Beaton, taking over the castle and hanging his body from the walls. While their act of vengeance cannot be condoned, it paved the way for one man whom God would use mightily, more than any other before him, to bring the light of His truth to the Scottish people.



The letters "GW" on the road outside St Andrews Castle mark the spot where George Wishart was burned.

John Knox

Born in the early 16th century, John Knox who was infected by the enthusiasm for Protestant teaching that flourished in the wake of Hamilton's death, attached himself to George Wishart, acting as his bodyguard. Following Wishart's death, Knox began to speak out openly against the Church, and in 1547 he joined the group that had earlier killed Cardinal Beaton and was holding St Andrews Castle, as their chaplain.

Knox apparently had an initial fear of public speaking: the story is told that, when asked to preach for the first time, he burst into tears and fled from the room. But God is particularly given to use such humble vessels, and it quickly became apparent that Knox had a fiery eloquence in his preaching which greatly moved his listeners. Whereas those who came before him had confined their indignation to the extravagance and external corruption of the Catholic Church, Knox went further, attacking

the erroneous doctrinal bedrock of Catholicism and the ecclesiastical structure of the Church, declaiming the Pope as the Antichrist. And while the castle remained in the hands of the rebels, the authorities could do little to stop him.

In June of 1547, however, a French fleet arrived to aid the local governor in subduing the rebels and recapturing the castle. Despite fierce resistance, the rebels were forced to surrender a month later. All were branded prisoners of war, and Knox, along with several others, was confined to the French galleys, fettered in chains, stricken with illness, and violently persuaded to recant his teachings: which he never did. Knox himself was to compare this period of “exile” to the biblical accounts of Joseph, Moses, and Daniel; acknowledging that God often uses great periods of adversity to prepare His servants for the work ahead of them. For Knox, this time of testing lasted nineteen months.

Upon his release from the galleys in 1549, Knox travelled to England, where he preached under the authority of Archbishop Cranmer, until he was forced to flee by the accession of Queen Mary. He left England in 1554, and travelled to Geneva, where he met, for the first time, John Calvin. An immediate and intimate friendship was formed between them, and Knox stayed in Geneva to pastor the English congregation of the church there. However, he never lost his concern for



St Andrews Castle (now in ruins), where John Knox first served as chaplain.

his native country where the recapture of St Andrews Castle had for a time frightened the Protestants into submission. Knox longed to return, but he knew that the time was not right: there was not enough unity among the Protestants in Scotland to organise a concerted effort against the Catholic Church. Finally, in 1557, a delegation of Knox's colleagues and nobles from Scotland arrived in Geneva, informing him that Scotland was now ready, and inviting him to return and lead them against the foe. In 1559, after due preparations, Knox left the church in Geneva for good, and journeyed to his homeland.

The situation in Scotland at this time was tense and complex. Scotland had always feared an English invasion and annexation of its territory, and its poverty and relative weakness had forced it into an alliance with France. In support of this alliance, King James V of Scotland had married Mary of Guise, a French Catholic noblewoman. The common people found this union distasteful: and so James V's daughter, who was to be Mary Queen of Scots, was sent to France for her protection. In 1554, after James V's death, Mary of Guise became regent of Scotland, causing further agitation among the people. The burgeoning Protestant faith had become to many a symbol of Scottish independence from France and its Catholicism. In 1557, a group of nobles favouring both Protestantism and independence from France, calling themselves the "Lords of the Congregation," signed a pledge to abolish Catholicism from the realm. It was these Lords who had sent the delegation to Knox calling for his return. And so, by 1559, when Knox arrived, the nation was ripe for revolution.

Nine days after his arrival, Knox preached in Perth, a city in central Scotland. Fired up by his preaching, a mob formed which began tearing down the monasteries in the town. This was viewed by the regent as an act of rebellion, and she sent her troops against the Protestant Lords. The conflict dragged on and escalated: French reinforcements came to the aid of the regent, while English troops rallied to help against the French. Finally, in 1560, Mary of Guise died; the French forces capitulated to the English and withdrew. The reformers were victorious, and a month later the Scots Confession, authored by Knox and others, was adopted by the Scottish Parliament as the official religious creed of the nation, and the Pope's jurisdiction abolished.

This was not to pass unopposed, however. In 1561 Mary Queen of Scots, raised from childhood in the Catholic French court, returned to

Scotland. Though forced publicly to acknowledge Protestantism as the official religion of the nation, she continued to observe mass in her own private chapel, and slowly began to win support to her side. Those in Scotland who had supported the Reformation out of nationalistic desire were satisfied that Mary was no longer Queen of France, and so were less inclined to continue their opposition. The Protestant nobles were no longer as united as they had been, swayed by the idleness of victory.

It was Knox who most vigorously opposed Mary, and the two had a series of heated encounters; after the first of which he proclaimed, "If there be not in her a proud mind, a crafty wit, and an indurate heart against God and His truth, my judgment faileth me." The continuing struggle for Reformation in Scotland became in large part a struggle between these two personalities. Mary had on her side a group of influential friends and political counsellors. Knox had on his side the Word of God, and his powerful preaching stirred the common people to embrace the truth. Public opinion was so firmly in his favour that the



The Palace of Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh, Scotland: residence of Mary Queen of Scots, where Knox and Mary debated.

queen and the nobles, who were greedily eyeing the wealth the Church had inherited from its Catholic ancestry, were as driftwood powerless against the tide.

In addition, Mary made several errors that were to hasten her downfall. She entered into a series of affairs and marriages which

deprived her of the favour of both Catholics and Protestants, who effectively united against her. In 1567 she was forced to abdicate in favour of her son, James VI, who would later become James I of England. With Mary's departure, Protestantism was finally and firmly established in Scotland, and in 1572 Knox died, a man singularly used by God, and to whom, more perhaps than to any other man, the countenance of the entire Scottish realm may be indebted. Here indeed was a man who, like the Psalmist, was willing to speak of the testimonies of the Lord before kings, without shame (Psalm 119:46); and "who through faith subdued kingdoms" (Hebrews 11:33). May the Lord enable us to follow his godly example!

Concluding Thoughts

Seeing the bottle dungeon was a stark reminder of how much the Reformation saints were willing to sacrifice for the sake of Christ, as was the sight of the initials "GW" on the road outside St Andrews Castle, marking the spot where George Wishart was burned at the stake. I am driven to examine myself: what value do I truly place on the Word of God – and the worship of God? Am I truly zealous that my God should be worshipped appropriately, in accordance to His precepts and ordinances? Do I consider my own worship, and hold it up to this high standard?

One of the pilgrims also made a good comment about St Andrews Cathedral: that unlike the cathedrals and churches in England, which have remained standing but fallen away spiritually, this one is in ruins. I suppose it can be said that St Andrews Cathedral is physically what many of these once-faithful



St Andrews Cathedral, now in ruins.

churches are spiritually – a reminder for us that the strength of the church is not in grand arches or stained-glass windows, but simply in people who fear God and love His word.

I was also particularly struck by how God used one man – John Knox – to change so much, and only by the preaching of His word! This is the power of the Word of God, as it is used by the Holy Spirit to convict hearts, change lives, and shake nations. These were turbulent times, but they were so because men of God were *fighting* against corruption and apostasy. May God grant us grace to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3)!

After the Reformation

John Bunyan

As part of our pilgrimage, we visited the John Bunyan museum in Bedford, England, where we learned about the author of *Pilgrim's Progress*, the famous allegory of the Christian life. Bunyan was born in 1628, and had surprisingly little education – another example of the humble vessels which God chooses to use for His great purpose! At the age of sixteen, Bunyan joined the Parliamentary army during the English Civil War, and here the process of his conversion began. He exchanged his guard duty with another soldier, and that soldier died while taking his place, prompting Bunyan to start thinking about life and death. After the war he married, and his first daughter was born blind – giving him yet more reasons to seek God. Then, one day in town, he met a group of women going to church, and joined them; the minister that day, John Gifford, preached the gospel and Bunyan was converted, eventually taking over the congregation when Gifford died. God can work in an instant, but even that instant comes at the end of a long train of Providence, with the divine purpose unfolding sometimes over years. All the more reason we must be prepared to praise and glorify God in every circumstance!

Bunyan soon clashed with the authorities, however, because he did not agree with some of the practices of the Church of England. He wanted to be able to preach wherever and whatever the Spirit led him to preach, rather than being forced to conform to a strict liturgy. For this he was imprisoned twice. Bunyan was a prisoner of conscience: he could have gained his freedom at any time, simply by agreeing to conform; but he refused. It was during the first of these imprisonments that *Pilgrim's Progress* was written.

The book became very popular with missionaries, as it proved helpful to foreign converts who now found themselves alienated from their native culture (the story of the book is the story of Pilgrim, who leaves his city, his family, and his old life behind to journey towards the Celestial City – something these alienated natives could readily identify with). It has been said that *Pilgrim's Progress* has been translated into more languages than any book apart from the Bible. Our guide here made an interesting point: Bunyan was imprisoned to prevent him preaching to a small handful of people – but through the books he wrote while in prison, he has been used by God to speak to millions!



Prison door from the jail where Bunyan was kept.

The Wesleys and Methodism

In London, the pilgrims visited the Wesley chapel and museum, commemorating the life and ministry of John Wesley, and located opposite the Bunhill Fields cemetery where Susanna Wesley, John's mother, is buried.

Born in 1703, John Wesley studied in Oxford, where he joined the "Holy Club" started by his brother Charles. The Club was formed to encourage the systematic, methodical pursuit of a holy Christian life. It was for this methodical approach, where the Club members tried to make spiritual use of every hour of the day, that they were ridiculed and labelled "Methodists." Both John and Charles threw themselves into these activities: studying the Bible devoutly, helping the poor, visiting inmates in the prisons, and so on - yet by their own later admission, they were at this point as yet unconverted, having known nothing of grace. They had been trying to earn their salvation by works. Hearing this was a stark reminder for me that even as faith without works is dead, so also works without faith are vain. It is necessary for us to give diligence to make our calling and election sure (2 Pet. 1:10), even if we are daily employed in "Christian" work!

After his conversion, influenced by the great evangelist George Whitefield, John Wesley began his ministry of open-air preaching, travelling widely throughout the country. In his travels, Wesley began to form small groups of believers and train them in the Methodist lifestyle, appointing itinerant evangelists to preach to these groups. In London, Wesley leased an old cannon factory which became his headquarters. It was here that he began to work out the structure of the Methodist movement: with “classes” of five to ten people, “societies” comprising classes in the local area, “circuits” served by itinerant preachers who travelled between groups of societies, “districts” made up of several circuits, and “conferences” which met annually to elect a president.

Our guide told us of the strict parish structure of the Anglican Church at the time. Church attendance was seen as a civic duty: those absent from Sunday services were likely to find themselves unemployed on Monday! Evangelism and preaching were confined to the local parish, whereas Wesley and Whitefield saw the need to take the gospel further afield. It is interesting in some ways to contrast the somewhat dead formalism of the Anglican Church with the lively spirituality of early Methodism, though the latter was in itself very strict with its rules. Yet throughout Wesley’s life, Methodism as a movement remained within the established Church. Methodist services were held early on Sundays, so that people would have time to attend



John Wesley’s grave.

their local parish services after. Wesley’s grandparents were dissenters, and were ejected from the Anglican Church, which may explain Wesley’s own reluctance to break with the Church completely.

During the course of our visit, one lesson in particular impressed itself upon me: that of Wesley's total commitment and dedication to the Lord's work. This is exemplified in one of his famous quotes: "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can." May the Lord help us to live our Christian lives with such zeal and fervour!

John Newton and William Cowper

In Olney, the pilgrims visited the Cowper and Newton museum, dedicated to the memory of the famous hymn writers John Newton and William Cowper (pronounced "Cooper"). Cowper and Newton were friends, although they led very different lives and had very different experiences. One lesson impressed upon me from our visit was the beauty of true Christian friendship and fellowship: no Christian is an island, and we all need, and benefit from, help and support from one another. With all our differences, "by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body" (1 Cor. 12:13), and though our God may lead us along different paths in life, when we come together we can say with the Psalmist, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (Psa. 133:1).

John Newton's conversion began in 1748, when his ship, the Greyhound, was caught in a severe storm. Hearing this, I was struck by how God deals with individuals in such a personal way - for all the others on board the ship, the storm was just a storm; yet for Newton it was the hand of God changing the course of his life. In fear and desperation, Newton prayed, and the storm died down. At the time, however, Newton was working in the slave trade, and despite his burgeoning faith he continued with his career, being promoted two years later to captain of his own slave ship. Over the years, he was responsible for transporting more than five hundred slaves from Africa to the Americas, many of them young children, in the most appalling and inhumane conditions.

It may seem shocking for a Christian to be involved in such an activity, but we must keep in mind that the practice of slavery was firmly entrenched in the society of the time. We are sinners living in a fallen world, and while we do not pretend to condone such practices, our Lord's injunction in Matthew 7:5 is most relevant: "Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."



Representation of a slave ship, showing the conditions experienced by the slaves. Their time onboard would have lasted months.

In 1754 Newton was forced by illness to give up his seafaring life, and three years later he received a call to the ministry. In 1764 he was ordained into the Church of England and took charge of the parish church of Olney. But it was not until 1780, when he moved to a church in London, that Newton began to publicly oppose the slave trade. Newton's gradual change of opinion is reflected in his diary entries: in 1753 he wrote of the "easy and creditable life" of a slaver; in 1754 he lamented the "distasteful climate and employment"; in 1756 he referred to the slave trade as "disagreeable to my temper and inconvenient to my profession [of Christianity]"; and finally in 1788 he published his *Thoughts Upon the African Slave Trade* to help his friend William Wilberforce in the latter's campaign against slavery, where he writes, "I hope it will always be a subject of humiliating reflection to me, that I was once an active instrument in a business at which my heart now shudders." In 1807, shortly before Newton's death, Parliament finally passed an act abolishing the slave trade in the whole of the British Empire.

While in Olney, Newton invited his friend William Cowper to join him. Cowper suffered from severe depression, and Newton perhaps felt it would be beneficial to have his friend nearby. Cowper stayed in the same building that now houses the museum which we visited, a short distance from the rectory where Newton stayed. In 1779 the two published the *Olney Hymns*, many of which are still sung by Christians today. Included

in these are Newton's *Amazing Grace* and Cowper's *God Moves in a Mysterious Way*. Our guide told us the story behind Cowper's hymn: in one of his bouts of depression he was determined to commit suicide by jumping off a bridge. He hired a cab to drive him to the bridge, but a sudden fog obscured the road, and after driving around for some time the fog cleared only to reveal that he was nowhere near the bridge, but instead had been driven in a circle and was now back outside his house!



Cowper's summer house, where he wrote most of his hymns.

Hearing the lives of these two men reminds me of 1 Cor. 1:27-29, "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought the things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence." Indeed, God chose to use a former slaver and one suffering from depression to pen such mighty hymns! I was encouraged also to consider the power and value of hymns, written by godly men often out of bitter experiences, to the edification of their fellow saints, and the praise and glory of God.

William Carey

Born in 1761, William Carey spent his childhood apprenticed to a cobbler and shoemaker. Despite these humble beginnings he showed a

natural gift for language, teaching himself Latin, Hebrew, Italian, Dutch, and French at an early age. Carey was raised in the Church of England, but became involved with a group of Baptists who invited him to preach in their church. At the same time, Carey was reading the accounts of the renowned explorer, Captain James Cook, and the latter's description of the barbarous practices of the South Sea islanders struck a chord with Carey. He felt that these distant foreigners were in great need of the gospel – yet the prevailing view at the time was that the Church should be concerned with local, not foreign, souls.



A depiction of Carey (on the far right) reading from his Enquiry.

Carey would not be daunted by this opposition, however, and in 1792 he published his famous article, *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*, in which he argued strongly in favour of missionary activity. Through his efforts, the Baptist Missionary Society was formed, and for this reason Carey is known as the father of modern missions. Yet he did not stop there: he travelled to India, where he farmed indigo plants to sustain himself while he worked on translating the Bible into eight Indian languages – and the New Testament into twenty-seven more, writing grammars for all these languages so that other missionaries could more easily learn them. He suffered many hardships as well: the death of his son, and the insane rages of his wife who had suffered a nervous breakdown, from which

she never recovered. Through all this, Carey worked tirelessly, his life exemplified by his most famous quote, “Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God.”

Hearing the story of William Carey causes me to ask myself: do I pray with such fervency and expectancy, that God will answer my prayers according to His will, and for His own glory? James 1:6-7 tells us, “But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.” How we need to have this same attitude as Carey, to attempt great things for God, trusting in Him!

Conclusion

This Reformation pilgrimage has truly been a blessed time of learning and reflection. Visiting the actual sites where these events took place, and where these men walked and worked, adds an extra dimension of reality to the study of Church History. It was saddening, however, to realise that the countries that once shone so brightly for the Lord are now again under the darkness of apathy and apostasy. Many of the sites we visited had a feeling of abandonment and disregard, or else, as in the case of Hampton Court and Westminster Abbey, their significance has become entirely political.

It is well for us to remember the past. “Set thee up waymarks, make thee high heaps: set thine heart toward the highway, even the way which thou wentest” (Jer. 31:21). As the patriarchs in the Bible set up altars to remind themselves of God’s dealings with them, so should we remember both our own individual journeys, and that of the Church as a whole. “If thou shalt say in thine heart, These nations are more than I; how can I dispossess them? Thou shalt not be afraid of them, but shalt well remember what the LORD thy God did unto Pharaoh and unto all Egypt” (Deut. 7:17-18). As Moses encouraged the people of Israel for their entrance into the Promised Land, let us likewise glorify God for His work in the past, and strengthen ourselves in the Lord for the trials and battles that lie ahead!

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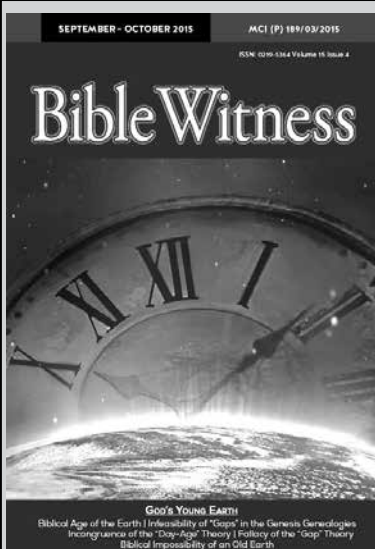
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Bible Witness is a magazine for the nurture of individual spiritual life, a magazine for every Christian home, and a magazine for Bible study groups. Visit the Bible Witness website for discussion questions based on the articles in the magazine. You may print out the questions and use them to facilitate discussion in family worship, Bible study groups, etc. You may also use them for individual study.

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TIMOTHY TOW MEMORIAL LIBRARY

The Far Eastern Bible College (FEBC) Library was originally located at three places: the second storey of the L-extension block beside the Greek/Hebrew classrooms (open library), the second storey of the church sanctuary at the rear balcony (reference library), and the mezzanine floor of the bell tower. The library rooms were small, shelf and study spaces were limited.



Provisionally, the High Court of Singapore on 27 November 2014 issued a scheme to regulate the use of the premises at 9, 9A and 10 Gilstead Road by Life Bible-Presbyterian Church (LBPC) and FEBC. Since then, the space allotted for FEBC's exclusive use has undergone extensive renovations. The library is now bigger and centralised, and located at the second storey of the L-block occupying the space of the former LBPC/FEBC office, Reformed Tape Library, open library, and the Greek/Hebrew classrooms. The men's dormitory is just next to it and the women's dormitory is just above it. Residential students thus enjoy easy and convenient access to the library.

TIMOTHY TOW MEMORIAL LIBRARY



The library has a highly specialised collection of 20,000 volumes on Biblical Studies, Systematic Theology, Church History, Christian Education, Pastoral Ministry, and the biblical languages (Hebrew and Greek) for fundamental scholarly research. The reference library houses the books of the founding principal, standard reference tools, Christian periodicals, theological journals, Bible-Presbyterian archives, MacKenzie files, and court documents pertaining to LBPC's lawsuits against FEBC (2008-2015).



FEBC is grateful to the many who had given books to the library. In the early years, the Rev CT Hsu, one of the “three musketeers” in the history of the Bible-Presbyterian Church, contributed many volumes, and recently, the Rev Stephen Khoo donated his personal library of 3000 books. The library has also acquired the files of the late Rev John MacKenzie, founding editor of Faith and Freedom magazine per kindness of the Rev Errol Stone of Faith Presbyterian Church (Perth, Australia). The MacKenzie files contain valuable documents on Dr Carl McIntire, the history of the Bible Presbyterian Church in the USA, and the International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC).

The library consists of two sections—the main library and the reference library. The main library has a seating capacity of 50 and the reference library eight. The library is fully air-conditioned and equipped with WiFi. Mrs Ruth Yap Ling Ling is the librarian and her office is in the main library.



The FEBC Board of Directors in a meeting on 14 April 2015 decided to dedicate the new library to the memory of FEBC’s founding principal—the Rev Dr Timothy Tow. The new library is henceforth called the “Timothy Tow Memorial Library”. The dedication was held on 13

TIMOTHY TOW MEMORIAL LIBRARY

November 2015 with a thanksgiving dinner and service. The Rev Dr Quek Suan Yew spoke on “Remembering Our Teachers” (Heb 13:7-8), and the Rev Stephen Khoo prayed the dedicatory prayer. Matron Ivy Tow cut the ceremonial ribbon to declare the Timothy Tow Memorial Library officially open.



“Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.” (Hebrews 13:7-8).

A Brief Biography of Timothy Tow

The Rev Dr Timothy Tow (1920–2009) was the founder of the Bible-Presbyterian Church and movement in Southeast Asia. In 1935, during the Singapore Pentecost, he was saved under the preaching of the great Chinese revivalist—Dr John Sung. In 1946, in submission to the Lord’s call to turn away from fame and fortune and the study of law, he entered the full-time ministry in fulfilment of his mother’s vow. For his theological training, the young Timothy Tow first went to Nanking, China to study at Spiritual Training



Theological Seminary under China’s first theologian—Dr Chia Yu Ming. The Lord later opened the door for him to study in the United States at Faith Theological Seminary where he studied Systematic Theology under Dr J Oliver Buswell. There he earned his Bachelor of Divinity (now Master of Divinity) and Master of Sacred Theology degrees.

In 1950, Timothy Tow returned to Singapore after his studies to found and pastor Life Bible-Presbyterian Church, which had parted ways with the ecumenical Presbyterian synod. Seeing the need for a biblically and theologically trained leadership in the Bible-Presbyterian Church movement, he founded the Far Eastern Bible College in 1962. In 1964, Shelton College honoured him with a Doctor of Divinity degree for his outstanding contribution to biblical missions and theological education in Singapore and Malaysia. The Rev Dr Timothy Tow is the author of more than 40 books on Biblical Studies, Theology, Church History, and Pastoral Ministry.

TIMOTHY TOW MEMORIAL LIBRARY

It was at Faith Seminary that Timothy Tow caught the spirit of the 20th Century Reformation movement started by the Rev Dr Carl McIntire. He became actively involved in the International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC) for many years, and served as President of the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches (FECCC).



In 2003, he founded and pastored True Life Bible-Presbyterian Church until the Lord called him home on 20 April 2009, a week after he conducted his last Easter baptism at the age of 88. He often reminded his students, “In the Lord’s service, there is no retirement.” Jesus promised, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” (Rev 2:10).

College News

The Board of Directors on 7 April 2015 appointed the Rev Dr Jeffrey Khoo as President of the Board. Elder John Leong Kit Hoong of Tabernacle Bible-Presbyterian Church became a Board member on 10 May 2015. The other Board members are Elder Dr Boaz Boon (Secretary), the Rev Stephen Khoo (Treasurer), the Rev Koa Keng Woo, the Rev Dr Quek Suan Yew, the Rev Dr Prabhudas Koshy, and Mr Wee Hian Kok.

The Far Eastern Bible College had a blessed opening day of prayer on Monday 20 July 2015. Faculty, Board, alumni, and students gathered together in the church sanctuary to seek the Lord's blessing upon the College at the start of a new academic term. We are thankful for our newly renovated campus at Gilstead Road with improved facilities especially the library. The Principal led in worship and spoke from Psalm 127:1, *"Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."* The Rev Dr Timothy Tow, our late founding Principal, had said, *"To build a Bible College, you must have God's mandate."* Without God's mandate, those who attempt to start a Bible College are doomed to fail, and their labour to build one would be in vain.

FEBC was founded with God's mandate in 1962. His good hand was upon His anointed servant, our founding Principal. It was not without hardships, but God was with him. Now into the second generation, the College by the grace of God has not departed from her original moorings on the infallible and inerrant Scriptures. In fact, we have strengthened our original position of faith by upholding and defending not just the Verbal Plenary Inspiration but also the Verbal Plenary Preservation of the Holy Scriptures (Ps 12:6-7, Matt 5:18). This good old conviction that God has preserved His words to the jot and tittle (literally) was held by the Reformation saints and our Reformed fathers. The Rev Isaac Watts, the father of Christian hymnody, believed this. In his hymn on Psalm 12 he wrote, *"Thy Word, like silver sev'n times tried, through ages shall endure; the men that in thy truth confide shall find the promise sure."* We

as a College have indeed found His promise sure. We believe it and have experienced it. Praise the Lord that the Lord not only preserves His saints but also His words.

FEBC as a Bible College is first and foremost called to defend the Bible. In our defence of Faith and Scripture, it is vital that God be with us and for us. Psalm 127:1b says, *“except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.”* Unless we defend the Faith according to God’s word, God’s will and God’s way, our efforts would be in vain, it would amount to nothing. Those who are too clever for their own good and seek to defend Christianity through their own human intellect and reasoning will find themselves powerless and ineffective in fulfilling the Great Commission. The Lord is not glorified and the people are not blessed. But if the glory of God fills our hearts and minds, and we are completely faithful and true to Him, then the Lord will be with us and He will be for us and will use us. The world will hate us, and the wicked will seek to destroy us. *“What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?”* (Rom 8:31). *“He must increase, but I must decrease.”* (John 3:30).

In the July-November 2015 semester, FEBC had a total enrolment of 565 students. 89 day students (fulltime: 48, part-time 41), 297 students in the “Basic Theology for Everyone” night classes, and 179 distance learning students. The students come from 10 countries: Australia, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, and Singapore. We had nine new students: (1) Raggi Pabiona Aungon (Philippines), (2) Jung Heenam (Korea), (3) Kim Ju Sung (Korea), (4) Benjamin Lim Seh Beng (Malaysia), (5) Aprilaiza Saldivar Sible (Philippines), (6) Shermaine Tan Pek Suan (Singapore), (7) Lukas Tram (Sarawak), (8) Van Sin Piang (Myanmar), and (9) Zhu Xinkai (China).

The courses offered in the July-November 2015 semester were Systematic Theology I (Theism), NT Introduction, Greek Exegesis I by the Rev Dr Jeffrey Khoo; Daniel, Contemporary Theology III, Hebrew Reading I by the Rev Dr Quek Suan Yew; Homiletics, Theology of Prayer by the Rev Dr Prabhudas Koshy; Greek Elementary I by Mrs Ivy Tow; Nehemiah by the Rev Stephen Khoo; Bible Geography II, Cults II by the Rev Dr Koa Keng Woo; Epistles of John by the Rev Tan Kian Sing; Introduction to Christian Education, Beginner Piano by Mrs Jemima Khoo; Jesus the Master Teacher, Sunday School Curriculum

Development by Miss Carol Lee; Hebrew Elementary I by Mr Clement Chew; Apostates and Apostasy by Dr Jose Lagapa; Greek Reading I by Mr Dennis Kabingue; English Intensive I by Mrs Anne Lim; English Intermediate I by Mrs Irene Lim; English Advanced I by Elder Han Soon Juan. The online courses are Life of Christ II, Ezekiel I, and Zechariah.

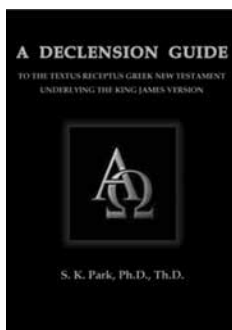
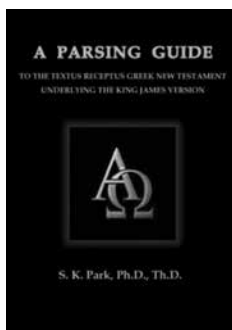
FEBC has terminated its Bachelor of Ministry (BMin) programme in cooperation with the Bible College of East Africa (Kenya) with effect from 31 May 2015 due to a new regulation which prohibits Kenyan colleges from collaborating with foreign ones in offering courses without the authority of the Commission for University Education.

FEBC's 2nd Reformation Pilgrimage was conducted from 15 to 26 May 2015. The 1st pilgrimage in 2014 was a trip to Europe to study the Protestant Reformation in Germany, France and Switzerland. The 2nd pilgrimage was to study the Protestant Reformation in Great Britain (England and Scotland). A total of 42 pilgrims from 10 churches took part: Berean BPC, Bethel BPC, Calvary Pandan BPC, Calvary Tengah BPC, Christ Methodist Church, Church of Our Saviour, Gospel Light BPC, Kemaman Life BPC, True Life BPC, and Truth BPC.

An FEBC Gospel Meeting was organised by the students last semester. It was held in the Life Bible-Presbyterian Church sanctuary on Thursday night, 24 September 2015. The Principal delivered the evangelistic message on "The Blood of Jesus Christ" from 1 Peter 1:19.



NEW PARSING AND DECLENSION GUIDES



Dr Park Seung Kyu's Parsing and Declension Guides to the Greek New Testament have been published by Old Paths Publications (<http://www.theoldpathspublications.com>). Dr Park holds a PhD from Kyung Hee University and a ThD from Far Eastern Bible College. Here is the Foreword by Dr Jeffrey Khoo:

“Dr Seung-Kyu Park’s verse-by-verse parsing and declension guides to the Greek New Testament underlying the Authorised Version (KJV) are invaluable tools for the student of biblical Greek.

“I wished I had such helps when I took Rapid Greek Reading under my beloved teacher Dr Homer A Kent at Grace Theological Seminary (Winona Lake, Indiana) in 1990. The tools recommended then were Sakae Kubo’s *A Reader’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and a Beginner’s Guide for the Translation of New Testament Greek* and Max Zerwick and Mary Grosvenor’s *A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament*, both of which are based on the corrupt Westcott and Hort text. Unfortunately, for those who use the divinely inspired and preserved Greek text as found in the Textus Receptus, no such tools were available.

“At the Far Eastern Bible College, students after completing Elementary Greek in their first year would proceed to read large portions of the Greek New Testament in their second year. Greek Reading is meant to familiarise students with the Greek New Testament before they are introduced to Greek Exegesis in their third year. For a rapid reading of the Greek text, a quick referencing guide such as this is time-saving. The student can just focus on reading and translating the Greek text rapidly without being bogged down by flipping the pages of a lexicon.

“I thank Dr H D Williams for seeing the value of these worthy volumes and undertaking their publication. We trust they will promote the reading and study of the Greek New Testament God has perfectly inspired and preserved to the last jot and tittle (Matt 5:18).”

The books are available at the FEBC Bookroom.

**"But now they desire a better country,
that is, an heavenly;
wherefore God is not ashamed
to be called their God:
for he hath prepared for them a city;"**

Hebrews 11:16

Far Eastern Bible College

2nd Reformation Pilgrimage (England & Scotland)

May 15 - 26, 2015

