



The Burning Bush

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MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, AND REMARRIAGE

Jeffrey Khoo

Introduction

In *The Straits Times* of January 20, 1997, it is reported that “divorce is too easy” for American couples. Married today divorced tomorrow. So the First Lady of USA—Mrs Hillary Clinton—advised, “No sex before 21.” Is this the solution? She should have said, “No sex before marriage!” Why the increasing divorce rate? Is it not due to the decadent lifestyle of modern society?

Divorce is not the disease; it is only a symptom of a deeper problem—the problem of sin. Today, the desecration of the sanctity of marriage is widespread. Even in Singapore, cohabitation and premarital sex are becoming common, and abortion is made convenient. Marriage and the family have lost their God-intended meaning and purpose.

So before we talk about divorce, we must seriously consider what marriage is all about. We need a theology of marriage.

The Biblical Doctrine of Marriage

Text: Gen 2:18-25

And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. . . . And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Marriage is a Divine Institution

God instituted marriage. In the Garden of Eden, God saw that it was not good for man to be alone. So He made for Adam a helper—a companion—a wife. He beautifully designed and carefully made a woman, and presented her to him. Together they would rule over God’s creation (Gen 1:27-28).

Marriage is thus not simply a bilateral but a trilateral relationship. God as the Divine Matchmaker must be figured in every marriage relationship. The problem today is that God is taken out of the picture. Divorce would never be an option for the Christian if God is placed first in a marriage relationship. A breakdown in our marriage is usually due to a breakdown in our personal walk with God.

Marriage is a Covenant Relationship

Mal 2:14 speaks of marriage as a covenant: “Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou has dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and *the wife of thy covenant*.” What is a marriage covenant? A marriage covenant is a solemn agreement before God between a man and woman to be each other’s loyal and loving companions for life. A covenant has rules. These rules are set by God. If we want a blissful and successful marriage we must play by God’s rules. A marriage breaks down when we break the covenant by violating God’s rules.

One fundamental rule is monogamy. When God made for man a woman, He took one rib from Adam to make one Eve; He did not take several to make many. Note the singular, “a woman” (v 23), and “his wife” (vv 24-25). More importantly is the thought of “one flesh” (v 24)—the physical and spiritual unity between one man and one woman. The “one flesh” concept rules out polygamy as an option. That is why in the New Testament, it is required of a leader in the church to be “the husband of one wife” (1 Tim 3:2). This fact is also attested by analogy of Jesus’ relationship to the Church—His Bride. There is but one Bride of Christ—the one true invisible universal Church comprising all of God’s elect. That is why when a married person has a sexual relationship with another person other than his lawful spouse, it is adultery. “Thou shalt not commit adultery” (the 7th commandment). Yes, in the Old Testament we have many instances of God’s people having many wives. We think of Abraham and his wives Sarah and Hagar, but look at the trouble Abraham

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brought upon himself and his descendants. The antagonism between the two brothers—Isaac and Ishmael—continues till this day. Having more than one wife at a time is against God’s will and Word.

Another important rule is heterosexuality. This special relationship is between two persons *of the opposite sex—not man with man, woman with woman, but man with woman*. As the saying goes, “God made Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve.” Lev 18:22, “Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.” In other words, “Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman.” Severe judgment befalls those who pervert what God has so ordained. “For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet” (Rom 1:26-27).

A fundamental rule being blurred today is the distinctive role or duty of the man, and of the woman as ordained by God. In terms of worth or value, we are all equal in God’s sight regardless of gender, language, race or colour; but in terms of function or role, there is a difference! In the traditional and biblical marriage vow we hear this exchange: the groom pledges to love and cherish his wife, while the bride promises to love, cherish, and *obey* her husband. In modern versions, the word “obey” is removed. What does God say about headship and authority? Let’s look at 1 Cor 11:3. Here, Paul is dealing with a problem of the women usurping the headship of men in the church. Paul tells them, “But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.” Note the very explicit teaching, “the head of the woman is the man.” What is the meaning of “head?” Obviously, it cannot mean that the woman has a man’s head. Here it means headship or rulership. It refers to authority. To prove this point, Paul cites the functional hierarchy that exists within the Godhead. Paul says “the head of Christ is God.” In other words, “the head (ie, the One who has authority over) of God the Son is God the Father. Now please understand that all three Persons of the Trinity are absolutely equal in essence, in their omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience; the Father is God, the Son is God, the Spirit is God. But in the area of function or role, there is subordination. God the Father has authority over God the Son. Christ occupies a subordinate position in the functional hierarchy of the

Godhead. That is why Jesus said, “My father is greater than I” (John 14:28). In other words, Jesus is saying, “I am an obedient Son to my Father, and am here to fulfil His will and pleasure.” And Jesus performed that role perfectly, the Father commending the Son, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Read John 17 on how Jesus was an obedient Son.) Likewise, God has set up this hierarchy for the family unit. The husband is head of the wife. The husband’s duty is to love his wife as Christ loved the Church and gave His life for her; the wife’s duty is to submit to her husband, as much as the Church is required to submit to Christ and do His will. It is when husbands fail to love their wives, and wives fail to obey their husbands in the Lord, that marriages break down.

Marriage is a Permanent Relationship

Gen 1:24 reads, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.” The word “cleave” here is significant. It is a very strong word of union. For example, it is used in Isa 41:7 of soldering together the metal plates of an armour. So a man leaves father and mother, and is “soldered” to his wife. It is a permanent joining together of the man and his wife. This verse is quoted by Jesus in Matt 19:5-6, “What therefore God hath joined (or soldered) together, let not man put asunder.” Marriage is a life-long commitment.

The Biblical Doctrine of Divorce and Remarriage

What does the Bible say about divorce and remarriage? If I am a divorcee, can I remarry? In the light of what God intended marriage to be, there should be no divorce after marriage (Mal 2:14-16, Mark 10:9, 11-12). But did not God allow for the annulment of a marriage covenant in Scripture? Yes, He did, but only on three grounds: (1) death, (2) desertion, and (3) adultery.

Can a Christian remarry? In order to answer these two important questions, we need to correctly understand the doctrine of marriage. Marriage as instituted by God involves a covenant relationship which is meant to be permanent or binding. With these things in mind, we now enter into our discussion on divorce and remarriage.

Should a Christian Divorce?

Should a Christian divorce? In light of what God had intended marriage to be, the answer would be no (read Mal 2:14-16, Mark 10:9,

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11-12). The Preceptive Will of God (God's commandments in the Scriptures) says no to divorce. However, due to sin, the Permissive Will of God allows for divorce but with certain restrictions.

Let's turn to Matt 19. Here Jesus responds to the question: "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" (Matt 19:3). This was a trick question by the Pharisees. In the days of Jesus, the Pharisees taught that a man could divorce his wife for the slightest reason: if after marriage, you discover that she can't cook well—divorce!; if someone more attractive comes along—divorce! The women in those days were bullied, and Jesus here defended the rights of the fairer sex. Jesus emphasised that marriage as a divine institution involves a covenant relationship that is meant to be permanent: "Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, "For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh, What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matt 19:4-6). In other words, no divorce!

If that is the case, then what about Moses' words in Deut 24? "Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement and to put her away?" (Matt 19:7). Jesus answered, "Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so." Jesus reminded them that marriage as a divine institution was meant to be permanent and a blessing to the married couple right from the start. This original intention was spoiled by sin. Divorce is thus not a divine but a human institution. Divorce is not something God wanted, but what man wanted—"the hardness of your hearts!" The people in those days insisted on the bill of divorcement. Divorce is therefore a product of sin. It is shameful to divorce even though God had granted permission for it.

Although divorce is allowed by God, certain regulations apply. Marriage must be taken seriously, and divorce should not be made easy. Note that Deut 24 does not provide a convenient escape from marriage. Consider the Mosaic regulations. Moses instructed that for a divorce to take effect: (1) It must go to the courts in the presence of witnesses where a legal bill for divorce must be drawn up, and signed. This of course requires time. There should be no such thing as getting married today, and divorced tomorrow. Neither can a person divorce his spouse verbally by simply saying "I divorce you" three times. Quick divorces are forbidden.

(2) A certificate of divorce must be served. The one who filed for divorce is required to put the bill into the other party's hand. (3) The person divorced must move out of the house; they are no longer to live together. There is a rupture in the family unit. (4) Once divorced and remarried, they can never be married to each other again. All these rules were imposed to discourage divorce, to encourage reconciliation, and to allow for time to heal relationships.

The Pharisees taught that a man can put away his wife for every cause. Against this Jesus said, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (Matt 19:9). There is but one reason for divorce and only one, namely, fornication (ie, marital infidelity or adultery and other sexual sins like homosexuality, bestiality and incest). Anyone who marries an adulterer or adulteress commits adultery as well. It is significant to note that the exception clause ("except it be for fornication") is found only in Matt 19. Mark 10:1-12 and Luke 16:18 are parallel passages on marriage and in those places the exception clause is absent. Why? It is to emphasise the rule that the marriage covenant is binding. Jesus was highlighting the rule, not the exception. Once married you should never divorce. The Lord hates divorce, and if you insist on divorce, it is only on the grounds of adultery. As the Lord will never break His redemptive covenant to save us till the very end, so must we not break our marital covenant; we need to be faithful to our respective spouses till the very end. Remember the marriage vow, "as long as you both shall live!"

Can a Christian Remarry?

The answer to this question in its various aspects is found in 1 Cor 7:10-39. The instructions concerning divorce and remarriage are found in these three places: (1) verse 11, (2) verse 14, and (3) verse 39.

Case #1: A Christian Couple.

In 1 Cor 7, Paul was answering questions on marriage and divorce posed to him by the Corinthian Church. This chapter is meant for Christians especially. Can a Christian couple divorce and remarry?

In verses 10-11, Paul gives an exposition of what Jesus had taught concerning divorce in Matt 19, Mark 10, and Luke 16. Here Paul repeats what Jesus had said, "Marriage is permanent." So Paul lays down these

injunctions: (1) verse 10: “Let not the wife depart from her husband; and (2) verse 11: “Let not the husband put away his wife.” But what if a divorce has already taken place? If that has already happened, then let both remain unmarried, ie, no remarriage! Why? To allow the third party to work. The third party refers not to an outside interest, but to the Lord (as stated earlier, a marriage relationship, especially a Christian one, is not just bilateral, but trilateral). If both husband and wife are Christians, regenerate, and Spirit-indwelt, the Lord can work in their lives to convict them of sin, and cause them to be reconciled. This may be impossible with men, but not with God.

The solution to a broken Christian marriage is not divorce and remarriage to another person, but reconciliation to the same person. Now, what if a remarriage to another person has taken place? Then this person has become an adulterer or adulteress. The hope of reconciliation is dashed; Deut 24 applies. You cannot remarry your former spouse under any circumstance; it is an abomination to the Lord. How about the so-called innocent party? Can he or she remarry? Paul does not say. He is silent. The Westminster Confession of Faith, however states, “In the case of adultery after marriage, it is lawful for the innocent party to sue out a divorce: and, after the divorce, to marry another, as if the offending party were dead” (XXIV:5).

Case #2: A Mixed Couple.

In verses 12-16, Paul deals with the question of a woman who was an unbeliever when she got married. Now she is a Christian, but her husband remains an unbeliever; what is she supposed to do? This case also applies to a man who has an unbelieving wife. Can or should the Christian divorce his or her non-believing spouse? Again the general principle that marriage is for life applies. The believer must not be quick to get a divorce. If the unbelieving husband loves his wife, is pleased to remain married, her conversion notwithstanding, he or she *must not* get a divorce. The reason is given in verse 14, “For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.”

In order to appreciate this, one needs to understand the implications of covenant theology. Covenant theology teaches that God is not only concerned for the individual, but also his family. When a person becomes a believer, the Lord is interested to see his family coming to salvation

also. That is why Paul said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” (Acts 16:31). This does not mean automatic salvation for our family members when we get saved. Our family members—husband or wife or children—too must personally believe in Christ in order to be saved. What it does mean is that because of one family member being saved, in this case the mother, the father and children though not yet a part of God’s family are sanctified for God’s holy purpose. The word “sanctified” here does not mean inward holiness or righteousness, but “being set apart” just like the vessels of the temple were “sanctified” or “set apart” for sacred use. In practical terms, because of the believing mother, the whole family comes under God’s special care and protection. When God blesses the believing mother, the blessing is also experienced by the unbelieving husband and children. God’s Word is now found in the home. There is now a sanctifying influence at home. The Bible is read by mother. She talks about Jesus Christ. She has answers to what life is all about. She bears a good Christian testimony. She prays, and God answers her prayers. God begins to work. With the Gospel found at home in word and in deed, the Spirit uses the Gospel which is powerful to change lives to bring the whole family to a saving knowledge of Christ in accordance to His will. Verse 16 says, “For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? Or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?”

However, what if the unbelieving husband would have nothing to do with Christianity and does not want to maintain the marriage? Verse 15 answers, “A brother or sister (ie, the Christian) is not under bondage in such cases.” In other words, if he insists on a divorce, let him have it. But “God hath called us to peace.” Before taking the step of divorce, try your level best with God’s help to maintain the marriage, and win him to Christ. But if the unbelieving spouse insists on a divorce, the Christian is under no obligation to keep the marriage. Divorce becomes a legitimate step when dissolution is the only solution.

The question arises: Can the Christian remarry in this instance? Again Paul is silent. I think there is a lot of wisdom here in Paul’s silence. What if after divorce, the unbelieving ex-husband gets converted, and wants to return (assuming he did not remarry)? If the Christian wife gets remarried, the opportunity to return to the original spouse is forfeited. It is always God’s intent and ideal that the original spouses be reconciled and remain together.

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At any rate, the Westminster Confession of Faith does not prohibit the Christian deserted by an unbelieving spouse from remarrying (XXIV:6). In making such decisions—to remarry or not—Prov 3:5-6 applies, “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”

Case #3: A Widow or Widower.

Can a Christian widow or widower remarry? This is the easiest question of all. Paul is very clear, and gives explicit instructions in verse 39, “The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.” Remarry if you want to when your husband or wife has passed away, but make sure you marry a Christian (“only in the Lord”). Paul says in verse 40 that it is better to remain single. So if you want to remarry—good; but if you choose to remain single—very good.

Conclusion

In summary, the Bible teaches the following concerning marriage, divorce, and remarriage:

- (1) Universal divine principle: The marriage covenant is permanent, and binding (“till death us do part”).
- (2) Sin enters and spoils God’s wonderful institution of marriage. Man wants divorce, God allows it only on the grounds of adultery (Matt 19). Other regulations on divorce and remarriage apply (Deut 24).
- (3) When a Christian couple wants a divorce, divorce is permitted but both are to remain unmarried. The solution is not remarriage to another person, but reconciliation to each other (1 Cor 7:11). If divorce is due to adultery, the WCF allows the innocent party to remarry.
- (4) In a mixed marriage, the Christian must not seek a divorce just because his or her spouse is an unbeliever. The believer must bear a Christlike testimony, and the Lord can save the family. But if the unbeliever insists on a divorce, the Christian is not obliged to maintain the marriage. In such a case, there is no wrong in divorce (1 Cor 7:15). However, no explicit permission is given for

remarriage. The WCF however allows the Christian who has been wilfully deserted by an unbelieving spouse to remarry.

- (5) An explicit permission to remarry is given only when one's spouse has passed away (1 Cor 7:39).

I just want to end with this note. A failed marriage often brings a lot of guilt and pain. If you feel that you have made a mistake, you have sinned, you are in a situation where things already done cannot be undone, and you are truly sorry, and you ask: "Can God forgive me?" The answer is: Of course He can and He will. 1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Jesus told the woman taken in adultery who was repentant: "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more" (John 8:10-11).

This article consists of two messages, "Can a Christian Divorce?" and "Can a Christian Remarry?," preached at the Sunset Gospel Hour of Jan 26, and Feb 2, '97, Calvary Bible-Presbyterian Church, Singapore.

HOMOSEXUALITY: WHAT DOES GOD SAY?

George W Zeller

Homosexuality is contrary to God's original plan for a man and woman. It is a serious deviation from what God originally designed and established for the good of mankind. As the Lord Jesus said, ". . . from the beginning it was not so" (Matt 19:8). Homosexuality is a violation of God's rule that the marriage partner must be the opposite sex. Throughout the Bible, in both the Old and New Testaments, homosexuality is strongly condemned by the living God.

Years ago society as a whole took God's position and condemned homosexuality. Many if not most states had laws against sodomy in the books. Today this has completely changed. Homosexuals have come out of the closet, as it were, and are demanding that their lifestyle be recognised as valid and legitimate. Homosexuality is today being defended as a normal, natural, healthy, legitimate, alternative lifestyle.

There are Gay Pride Days in all the major American cities as thousands of homosexuals march and chant slogans such as this: "SAY IT LOUD, GAY IS PROUD!" The idea is this: "We are proud of our homosexuality! We are proud to be gay!" Why don't we have "Pride Days" for adulterers or for thieves or for rapists or for drunkards? Why should only one group of sinners be allowed to parade and be proud of their sin? Perhaps other groups of sinners should demand equal rights! This calls to mind the verse in Isa 3:9, "they parade their sin like Sodom."

Biblical Support for Homosexuality?

As we would expect, there are homosexuals who go to the Bible to try to find support for their practices and for their unnatural lifestyle. One book was titled, *Jonathan Loved David: Homosexuals in Bible Times*. This book makes the groundless and erroneous claim that the relationship between David and Jonathan was a homosexual relationship. They twist such verses as 1 Sam 18:1 and 2 Sam 1:26, "And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit

with the soul of David, *and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. . . .* I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: *thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.*” Homosexuals who use such passages to support their sinful conduct are revealing their own lack of understanding as to what true love is all about. They cannot understand how a man can love another man in a non-physical, non-sinful way. This kind of love is utterly foreign to them.

The greatest blasphemy of all is when they accuse Christ Himself of being a homosexual, thus transferring their own sin upon the Person of the blessed, sinless Son of God. They refer to such passages as John chapter 11 where the Scripture refers to Jesus’ love for Lazarus and the people said, “Behold how He loved him! (v 36). Or they might go to John chapter 13 where it speaks about the disciple whom Jesus loved and how John was leaning on Jesus’ breast (v 23). The Apostle Peter warned about such people and their abuse of God’s Word,

As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest [twist], as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness (2 Pet 3:16-17).

What does the Lord Jesus really say about homosexuality? What has the living God said in His Word about this issue? Consider the following:

The Sin of the First Sodomites

And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because *their sin is very grievous. . . .* But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter: And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, *Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them [in a sexual way].* And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him, And said, I pray you, brethren, *do not so wickedly.* Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof. And they said, Stand back. And they said again, This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And

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they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door (Gen 18:20; 19:4-9).

Several observations need to be made: (1) God's evaluation of the enormity and weightiness of the sin of Sodom: "And the LORD said . . . their sin is very grievous [heavy]" (Gen 18:20). (2) The sodomites, thinking the two angels were men, lusted after them: "bring them out unto us, that we may know them [carnally]" (Gen 19:5). (3) Even Lot's offer of his own daughters could not satisfy their unnatural desires (Gen 19:8-9). (4) This terrible and dreadful sin was repeated in the land of Israel during the period of the judges (Judg 19:22-30). (5) The seriousness of the sin is seen by the severity of the judgment. The sodomite men were struck with blindness (Gen 19:11) and their city was destroyed by fire (Gen 19:28-29). (6) Their sin was forever memorialised by the terms "sodomite" and "sodomy." (7) The sin of the sodomites also involved pride, prosperity and abundance of idleness (Ezek 16:49), and such things most often lead to moral looseness and lewd immorality. (8) The sin of the sodomites is mentioned twice in the New Testament as warning to those who should live ungodly today (2 Pet 2:6, Jude 7).

We are sometimes told that the sin of the sodomites was not homosexuality, but it was homosexual rape. Those who justify homosexuality try to argue that it is not wrong for a man to engage in sex with a man, but it is wrong for a man to force himself upon another man who is not consenting. Is it permissible for a man to engage in sex with another man? What does God say?

The Strong Prohibition against Homosexuality

"Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination" (Lev 18:22). For a man to lie sexually with another man is here strongly forbidden. In the following verse (v 23) bestiality is forbidden because it is a perversion. These were the very sins being practised by the heathen in the land of Palestine (vv 24-25). In verse 22 we have the phrase, "*Thou shalt not.*" This is the strongest way in the Hebrew language to tell a person not to do something. This is the same formula found in many of the 10 Commandments. It is an absolute prohibition and it could be translated, "*Thou shalt never.*" Literally the verse says, "Thou shalt not [never] lie with a male as one lies with a female" (that is, in a sexual way).

What does God think about homosexuality? The verse says, “It is an *abomination!*” This means that it is detestable, loathsome, repulsive and heinous. It is one of the strongest words to describe God’s hatred of something. It is a stench in God’s nostrils like the smell of vomit! It is something that is disgusting, nauseating, revolting and sickening to God. The reason it is an abomination is that it is so contrary to what God has designed and established for the good of mankind.

To understand more fully the seriousness of this sin and others like it, read the remaining verses in Leviticus chapter 18 (vv 24-36). It is these very acts that *defile* the land (vv 24-25). Because of these abominable practices God removed (vomited out) certain nations from the land of Palestine (vv 27-28). God warns His people that if they should practise any of these abominations, they would be *cut off* from among the people (v 29).

Gentile nations of the past have been severely judged by God because of such practices: “And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants” (v 25). All nations would do well to heed this serious and sober warning.

The Penalty for Homosexuality under the Mosaic Law

“If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them” (Lev 20:13). The term “mankind” is the Hebrew term for “male.” If a man lies with a male as one lies with a female, both of them have committed an abomination. This repeats the teaching of Lev 18:22, only now the penalty is given: “they shall surely be put to death.” If you were living in the days of Moses, under the law of God, homosexuality was punishable by *death*. “What about ‘Gay Rights’?” The teaching of God was that it was *right* to put those who practised such things to death. The death penalty was demanded. The Hebrew construction “they shall surely be put to death” is very similar to that found in Gen 2:17, “. . . for in the day that thou eatest thereof *thou [Adam] shalt surely die.*” Under the Mosaic law, those caught in the act of homosexuality would surely, most certainly be put to death.

The expression, “their blood shall be upon them,” is highly significant. A similar phrase is found in Matt 27:25: “Then answered all the people, and said, *His blood be on us, and on our children.*” What did these words mean? The Jews who demanded Christ’s death by crucifixion

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were saying this: “We take full responsibility for Christ’s death. Pilate, His death and His blood will not be upon you, but upon us. We assume full responsibility for this death.”

In Lev 20:13 God tells us that those men who engaged in a homosexual act were fully responsible for this deed and had to bear the consequences of it, namely, the death penalty. These men were fully responsible for this sin that they committed. Homosexuality is not some inborn, innate tendency over which a man has no control. Rather it is something that a man chooses to do, and God holds him fully responsible for that action. A man can never legitimately say, “I could not help it. I was born this way. I have no control over my sexual conduct. I am not responsible for my actions and I should not be punished for something that I could not help. I cannot change what and who I am.” No, this man was fully responsible for his own death (“[his] blood shall be upon [him]”) because he chose to commit a crime worthy of death.

No Sodomites Allowed in the Land

“There shall be no *whore* of the daughters of Israel, nor a *sodomite* of the sons of Israel. Thou shalt not bring the hire of a *whore*, or the price of a *dog*, into the house of the LORD thy God for any vow: for even both these are abomination unto the LORD thy God” (Deut 23:17-18 *with emphasis*). This verse deals with what was a common practice in the heathen world, namely temple prostitution. The heathen temples were cesspools of immorality and fornication and prostitution. A man could enter such a temple and for a price could choose either a female or a male sexual partner. The term “whore” refers to a female prostitute, and the term “sodomite” refers to a male prostitute. The term “dog” of verse 18 refers to the sodomite of verse 17. The term “sodomite” comes from a Hebrew root which means “holy.” How could such an unholy prostitute be called “holy”? The answer is found in the fact that the basic meaning of the term “holy” is “set apart,” and this man was set apart, not for holy purposes, but for very *immoral* purposes.

The term “sodomite” is “employed in the Authorized Version (KJV) of the Old Testament for those who practised as a religious rite the abominable and unnatural vice from which the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah have derived their lasting infamy” (Smith’s *Bible Dictionary*). This term is used repeatedly in the books of 1 and 2 Kings. In the days of Rehoboam, Solomon’s son, we read this: “And there were also *sodomites*

in the land: and they did according to all the *abominations* of the nations which the LORD cast out before the children of Israel” (1 Kgs 14:24). In Deuteronomy God said that there must not be any sodomite among the sons of Israel. In the days of Rehoboam there were sodomites among the sons of Israel. It was a time of great spiritual decline: “And Judah did evil in the sight of the LORD, and they provoked Him to jealousy with their sins which they had committed, above all that their fathers had done” (1 Kgs 14:22).

Later, there were certain godly kings in Judah who rectified this problem of temple prostitution. Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord (1 Kgs 15:11), and the first recorded *right* act that he did was to banish the sodomites from the land (1 Kgs 15:12). Later this abominable practice again took root but in the days of Jehoshaphat the sodomites were again banished from the land (1 Kgs 22:46). In the days of Josiah these sodomites had brought their tents or huts or ritual booths right into the courtyard of God’s temple, but godly king Josiah got rid of them (2 Kgs 23:7). It is interesting that the godly kings of Judah drove the sodomites out of the land. Today in America we invite them into the White House!

Homosexuality is a Result of Rejecting the Creator

Wherefore *God* also *gave them up* to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause *God gave them up* unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet (Rom 1:24-27).

In the above passage, notice the words and phrases which are used to describe the sin of homosexuality: (1) It is *unclean*, filthy, morally foul, morally polluted. (2) It *dishonours the body*, it is degrading. (3) It involves *vile affections* (dishonourable, degrading and disgraceful passions). (4) It is *against nature*, contrary to the original intention of the Creator. (5) It is *unnatural* (“leaving the natural use”), contrary to God-ordained sex relations. (6) It involves *burning lust*, being sexually inflamed, boiling with unnatural lust. (7) It is *unseemly*, shameful. (8) It is *error*.

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According to this passage, why do people do such things? It all begins with a *rejection of the Creator*:

For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead [deity]; so that they are without excuse: Because that, *when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God*, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened (Rom 1:20-21).

The great error and sin of these people was twofold: (1) They did not honour God for *who He was*; (2) They did not thank God for *what He had done*. They rejected *His Person* and *His Work*. As a result God *gave them up* to their own hearts' lust. They *abandoned* God and therefore God *abandoned* them and gave them up to the horrible sins mentioned in verses 24-32. The result was not evolution and progress but degeneration and regression. They became *fools* (v 22). Homosexuality, according to Rom 1, is the predictable result of a society that fails to honour God and recognise His truth (vv 18, 21).

Homosexuality is Contrary to Sound Doctrine

Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for *them that defile themselves with mankind*, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine (1 Tim 1:9-10).

Sound doctrine is that *healthy teaching* of the truths of God's Word which results in *healthy living* (living God's way for God's glory). The term "them that defile themselves with mankind" is the same term that is found in 1 Cor 6:9 ("abusers of themselves with mankind"). This term refers to a male homosexual, a pederast, a sodomite.

Consider the list of sinners mentioned in 1 Tim 1:9-10. Notice that homosexuals are grouped together with the following: "the ungodly," "murderers of fathers," "murderers of mothers," "manslayers," "fornicators," "kidnappers," etc. If homosexuality were really a legitimate, alternate lifestyle in God's sight, then we would not expect homosexuals to be listed together with the worst kind of sinners imaginable. What is even more fascinating is that Paul groups *himself* with these sinners in verse 15. He says, of all the sinners, "*I am chief*

(*first*).” Picture, if you would, the sinners listed in verses 9-10 forming a parade and marching down the city street. Marching in this parade are murderers, kidnappers, homosexuals, liars, etc. In verse 15 Paul was saying, “I want you to know that I was at the head of that parade. I am the *chief* sinner, because I persecuted the church of God.” Why was Paul’s sin so great? Because he attacked the body of the Lord Jesus Christ (see Acts 9:4, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?”).

Thus in this passage we find great *hope* for homosexuals. Paul was saying that Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners*. Paul was saying, “If He could save me, the *chief* sinner, then He can certainly save a homosexual or a murderer or a kidnapper or an ungodly person.” “Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting (1 Tim 1:16). The *grace* of the Lord Jesus Christ is far *greater* than the *sin* of homosexuality. Has the grace of God conquered your heart?

The Cure For Homosexuality

Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor *effeminate*, nor *abusers of themselves with mankind*, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God (1 Cor 6:9-11).

In this passage two of the terms refer to homosexuals: (1) *Effeminate*—one who is soft (Greek *malakos*; compare the English term “sissy”), effeminate, especially a catamite (a man or a boy who allows himself to be used homosexually), a male who submits his body to a homosexual, taking the female or passive role. This is a *passive* homosexual. (2) *Abusers of themselves with mankind*—a male homosexual, one who practises anal intercourse, a sodomite. Literally this Greek word (*arsenokoitai*) is made up of two parts: (1) male, (2) bed (euphemism for sexual intercourse). Thus the term means one who goes to bed with a male. It carries with it the idea of a man lying with a man as one would with a woman (cf Lev 18:22 and 20:13). This is an *active* homosexual.

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Verse 9 teaches that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom. They will have no part in God's kingdom. They will be excluded. Compare Matt 25:34 which describes the blessed state of those who inherit the kingdom, and verse 41 which describes the cursed state of those who do not inherit the kingdom.

The term "unrighteous" in verse 9 is further defined by the list of life-dominating sins that are mentioned in verses 9-10. For example, adulterers will not inherit the kingdom. These are people whose lives are dominated by the sin of adultery. David committed an act of adultery, but his life was not dominated and characterised by this sin. He confessed this sin and turned from it (Ps 32 and 51). In verse 10 it mentions "drunkards." Noah got drunk on one occasion, but his life was not dominated and characterised by this sin.

Is there hope for those whose lives are dominated and characterised by the sin of homosexuality? There is *great hope* to be found in a *gracious God*: "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor 6:11). Notice that it says, "and such *were* some of you." It does not say, "and such *are* some of you." Some of the Corinthian believers *were* homosexual (and some of them were drunkards, adulterers, etc). But they had *changed*. They were homosexual in the past, but after they met the Saviour they were homosexual no longer. *Their salvation involved a change* in their lifestyle and an abandonment of sexual conduct which was contrary to God's Word. Some of these Corinthian believers were at one time homosexuals, but now they were *ex-homosexuals*. This gives *great hope* to every homosexual or lesbian because this means that such a person can change. By the grace of God such a person can be *justified* (declared righteous in Christ), *sanctified* (set apart for God's service) and *washed* (judicially cleansed of all sin)—see verse 11. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor 5:17).

Is Homosexuality a Sickness?

It used to be fashionable in our society to consider homosexuality as some kind of *sickness*. If homosexuality is a sickness, then there is no hope for the homosexual. There is no cure! There is no pill that the person can take. There is no operation which a doctor could perform to remedy

this problem. No hospital, no doctor and no medicine can provide help for such a person.

Today society has regressed to the point that it sees homosexuality as a *healthy*, alternative lifestyle, and not a sickness at all. It is seen as something good and healthy and right and beneficial for those who are so oriented. Our society once wrongly labeled it as a sickness, but at least it was recognised as a problem and as a disorder. Today it is often viewed as normal and healthy.

The homosexual must recognise that he has a problem and that problem is sin before a holy God. If homosexuality is a *sin*, then this means that there is great *hope* and great *help*! If it is really *sin*, then there is really a *solution*! There is really a *Saviour* who died for *sinner*s. The remedy and the cure is found in Christ.

Is Homosexuality Inborn and Genetic?

If we tell people that homosexuality is something that they are born with, then we are telling them that there is no hope for change. If I am born with it and if this is part of my physical make-up, then how could this possibly be changed? If you are born with green eyes, this is something that can't be changed. If you are born with genes that determine that you are going to be 5 feet 11 inches tall, then this is how tall you are going to be. There is no way to change it.

There are certain scientific studies which have gained much media attention which suggest that homosexuality is genetic and inborn. The author of one such study is Simon LeVay, a neurobiologist at the Salk Institute near San Diego. He himself is homosexual. In 1991 he published evidence of a structural difference between the brains of homosexual and heterosexual men. However, LeVay is quick to caution that his work does not prove that sexual preference is hard-wired into us before birth. Listen to LeVay's own words:

It is important to stress what I didn't find. I did not prove that homosexuality is genetic, or find a genetic cause for being gay. I didn't show that gay men are "born that way," the most common mistake people make in interpreting my work. Nor did I locate a gay center in the brain. [See *Discover Magazine* (March 1994): 66.]

Dr Martin Bobgan has given the following critique of LeVay's work: When LeVay's work was examined, flaws soon emerged. He had, in the course of post-mortem examinations, studied the brains of 19 homosexual

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men, 16 heterosexual men, and 6 women, looking at a particular part—the third interstitial nucleus of the anterior hypothalamus (INAH3). His findings were not clear-cut for some of the homosexual men. Worse still, the study was confused by major unknown factors, such as the fact that the 19 homosexual men had died of AIDS, and it is not known what effect AIDS may have on the dying brain.

As it happens, there is no clear-cut evidence that the INAH3 area of the brain is its “sex-centre.” We simply do not know that. Also we do not know what effect homosexual activity itself may have on that part of the brain.

Positron Emission Tomography (PET) is a brain scan technique which examines the metabolism of the brain. Studies have been made of patients who suffered from obsessive compulsive problems, and who were being treated by means of behaviour modification techniques which required them to carry out certain assignments, and to learn to think in certain ways. PET scans of these patients have yielded extremely interesting results, showing that patients undergoing behaviour modification therapy underwent a definite change in their brain metabolism.

The following question may well be asked: If behaviour modification directed by psychologists changes the metabolism of the brain, may it also be affected by the adoption of homosexual activities?

These matters are so complex that we dare not come to conclusions until there is much more information, and some of that information may not come for years. But it is possible that the people on whom Simon LeVay carried out post-mortem examinations had undergone some change in the INAH3 portion of the brain as a result of their homosexual activities. [“Is It Genes or Choice?” Article by Dr Martin Bobgan, East Gate Publishers, 4137 Primavera Rd, Santa Barbara, CA 93110, USA.]

The Bible clearly teaches that a person under the bondage of the life-dominating sin of homosexuality can *change* and be an *ex-homosexual* (1 Cor 6:9-11). This indicates that homosexuality is a conduct and behaviour that can be changed, not a birth defect that a person must ever live with. It is a sin which can be repented of and turned from.

We must never forget that people are homosexuals because of their own personal choice. They are fully responsible for the sin which they commit—“their blood shall be upon them” (Lev 20:13). At the same time, we recognise that there may be certain physical or environmental factors that may predispose a person towards homosexuality, but the choice to behave that way still rests with the individual.

For example, certain factors may predispose a person to the sin of drinking (drunkenness). Certain persons for a variety of reasons are strongly tempted by alcohol. Due to background, make-up and environmental influences, there are others who may never have the slightest temptation to drink. One man may be strongly tempted in the direction of pornography but the thought of shoplifting would never cross his mind. Another man might not be drawn to pornography, but the temptation to steal from a store might be very strong. We all have certain sins towards which we are more prone than others. One person might be prone to homosexuality; another man might be prone to the sin of adultery. In either case sin is sin and must be avoided. The adulterer commits adultery because he chooses to do so. The same must be said of the homosexual.

Homosexuality will never be conquered until the guilty person acknowledges that it is a sin against God and sees it as God sees it. Only then can victory be won through God's Son and the deliverance which He alone provides.

The Believer's Attitude Toward the Homosexual

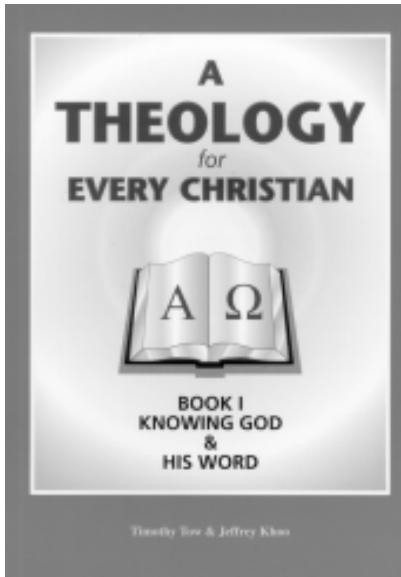
What should our attitude be towards homosexuals? It should be the same as our attitude towards any other kind of sinners. Homosexuals should be loved as people for whom Christ died. We should desire and seek their salvation. We must love the person with Christ's love, even though we must hate and detest the sin as Christ does. Remember, the Church of Jesus Christ is filled with *ex*-sinners of every kind! What a testimony to the grace of God that He can take a practising sodomite and transform him into a *new creature in Christ!*

God's standards have not been lowered. God's moral absolutes have not changed, in spite of the moral shifting of our godless society. To the homosexual: God has good news for you. You can come to know a great God and Saviour who can satisfy the deepest needs of your heart. You need to know that you are homosexual, not because you were born that way, but because you were born in sin which you inherited from your father Adam. It was the first Adam that got you into the trouble you are in (Ps 51:5; 58:3; Isa 53:6; Rom 5:12). It is the last Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ, that can get you out of trouble: "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of

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life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous" (Rom 5:18-19). "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name" (John 1:12).

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THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST: HUMAN OR DIVINE?

Robert Peh

John MacArthur made this statement concerning the blood of Jesus Christ:

*JESUS WAS 100% HUMAN; HE HAD HUMAN BLOOD and He shed HUMAN BLOOD. There was nothing in the chemicals of His blood that could save. This is the historic position.*¹

MacArthur believes that it is not the blood but the death of Christ that saves: “It was His death that was efficacious . . . not His blood. . . . It is not His bleeding that saved me, but His dying.”²

D A Waite, on the other hand, wrote, “Christ’s Blood is Divine, NOT HUMAN, because it was ‘PREPARED BY GOD’ the Father.”³

MacArthur says that Christ’s blood was merely human, but Waite says it was purely divine. The question is raised, “Was Christ’s blood human or divine?”

The Doctrine of the Person of Christ

When we speak of the blood of Christ, it certainly has to do with His redemptive work as the Mediator of God’s elect. The wonderful answer to question 21 of the Westminster Shorter Catechism, “Who is the Redeemer of God’s elect?” is this:

The only Redeemer of God’s elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was, and continueth to be, God and man in two distinct natures, and one person, forever.

As early as AD 451, the Council of Chalcedon had affirmed the doctrine of the two natures of Christ—His full divine and true human natures in one person, and these two natures are neither mixed nor confused, neither divided nor separated. Since then, the Church has accepted this biblical doctrine,

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. . . not because it had a complete understanding of the mystery, but because it clearly saw in it a mystery revealed by the Word of God. It was and remained ever since for the Church an article of faith, far beyond human comprehension.⁴

The Divine Nature of Christ

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father. As the second Person of the Holy Trinity He is fully God, “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Col 2:9). Jesus possessed all the attributes which are ascribed to God alone; He is all powerful (Matt 28:18), all knowing (John 16:30), and all present (Matt 18:20). Jesus Himself claimed to be equal with God. He said, “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30).

If Christ is God, then how could He die? God cannot die! 1 Cor 15:3-4 says, “Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.” God by nature cannot die, but Christ as the God-Man could. Christ was fully God and fully Man. It is a great mystery. Phil 2:6-8 declares,

. . . Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

It is therefore important that we not only stress the deity of Christ, but also His humanity.

The Human Nature of Christ

The Old Testament contains many prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah in the flesh. Gen 3:15 promises redemption through the seed of the woman, and Isa 7:14 predicts the extraordinary birth of the Immanuel. These prophecies were fulfilled in Christ who was born in Bethlehem as a perfect human being (Matt 1:22-23). The incarnation of Christ is best answered by question 36 of the Westminster Larger Catechism, “How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?” “Christ the Son of God became man, by taking to himself a true body, and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy

Ghost in the womb of the virgin Mary, of her substance, and born of her, yet without sin.”

Christ’s birth was unique because He was conceived of the Holy Spirit (Matt 1:20), and was born of a virgin (Luke 1:27, Matt 1:18, 25). When told that she as a virgin would give birth to Jesus, Mary asked,

How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. For with God nothing shall be impossible.

It is clear from the Scriptures that Christ as the Son of God (John 5:26) became the Son of Man (John 5:27). Jesus had to be fully human to die on man’s behalf. The substitutionary atonement cannot be accomplished by the divine nature alone. According to Berkhof, “The deity cannot share in human weaknesses; neither can man participate in any of the essential perfections of the Godhead.”⁵ It was most necessary for the Redeemer to be both God and man in order for Him to be Mediator between God and man. Without God becoming man, there can be no salvation for man.

Although we do not fully understand the relationship that exists between the two natures of Christ, yet we know that what He experienced in either nature, He experienced as a person, as the God-Man.⁶ This understanding of the two natures of Christ in one person is vital in our attempt to understand the nature of His blood.

The Doctrine of the God-Man Jesus and His Blood

The Whole Person of Christ

The Westminster Confession of Faith under the section, “Of Christ the Mediator,” states,

The Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance, and equal with the Father, did, when the fullness of time was come, take upon him man’s nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin; being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the virgin Mary, of her substance. So that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion. Which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and man (VIII:2).

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After His resurrection and ascension Christ “continueth to be God and man in two distinct natures and one person for ever” (Westminster Shorter Catechism Q 21).

The God-Man and His Blood

God being a Spirit cannot die. But Jesus Christ as the Son of Man could. Christ in flesh and blood was crucified on the cross. On the cross, He shed His precious blood for the remission of sin (Heb 9:22). Calvin explained, “God certainly has no blood, suffers not, cannot be touched with hands; but since that Christ, who was true God and true man, shed his blood on the cross for us, the acts which were performed in his human nature are transferred improperly, but not causelessly, to his divinity.”⁷ Berkhof likewise wrote,

. . . the redemptive work of Christ, and particularly the final result of that work, . . . bears a divine-human character. Analyzing this, we can say that it means: (1) that the efficient cause of the redemptive work of Christ is the one undivided personal subject in Christ; (2) that it is brought about by the cooperation of both natures; (3) that each of these natures works with its own special *energeia*; and (4) that, notwithstanding this, the result forms an undivided unity, because it is the work of a single person.⁸

It was thus most necessary for Christ to be perfectly human in order to die and shed His blood on the cross. For His blood to have eternal effect, Christ had to be perfectly divine too. Concerning this, Boettner rightly said, “His humanity made His suffering possible, while His deity gave it infinite value.”⁹

The Scripture References for Christ’s Blood

Now what does the Bible teach concerning the blood of Christ? The scriptural teaching of the blood of Christ is not found in a single or limited portion of Scripture. It is found in many clear and unequivocal statements which are found in every part of God’s Word. The following are passages relevant to this discussion on Christ and His blood:

- (1) “*Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus*” (Heb 10:19). According to the context of this verse, Christ has once-for-all offered Himself as the perfect Sacrifice. Believers today confidently enter into the very presence of God not through the blood of animals but through the blood of the God-Man—Jesus Christ.

- (2) *“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with His own blood” (Acts 20:28).* This verse speaks of the deity of Christ. It was God who had purchased His Church with His own blood. Matthew Henry has rightly commented that “the blood was his as man, yet so close is the union between the divine and human nature that it is here called the blood of God, for it was the blood of him who is God.”¹⁰
- (3) *“How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (Heb 9:14).* Matthew Henry commented that the efficacy of the blood of Christ was due to “his offering himself to God, the human nature upon the altar of his divine nature, . . . It was Christ’s offering up himself to God *through the eternal Spirit*, not only as the divine nature supported the human, but the Holy Ghost, which he had without measure, helping him in all, . . .”¹¹
- (4) The same thought of the eternal efficacy of Christ’s blood is expressed in *Heb 13:20*, “*the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant.*” Since the covenant is being described here as an everlasting one, the blood that procured it must surely be eternally valuable. For the blood to be eternally valuable, it must necessarily come from the eternal God who became man.

Since Jesus Christ was not just human or just divine, but both human and divine, it goes without saying that as one person, His blood was not the blood of God alone or of man alone, but of the God-Man.

Conclusion

Any discussion on the blood of Christ should take into consideration the person of Christ and His two natures. Boettner has correctly pointed out that Christ’s “human nature had no personality apart from the Divine nature, but came to consciousness and found its union with the Divine.”¹² In another place, he wrote, “In treating of the two natures of Christ we must ever keep in mind the unity of His person.”¹³ Buswell in summary wrote,

In general, then, when we speak of the thoughts, or feelings or acts of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are speaking of the acts of a Person. It is

THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST: HUMAN OR DIVINE?

incorrect to speak as though it were one of His natures which is acting in a specific case. Whatever He did, He did as the God-man.¹⁴

In regard to the death and the blood of Christ, Buswell said,

That Person who shed His blood and died on the cross of Calvary was none other than the Second Person of the Eternal Trinity. Truly, physiological death is a part of the ordinary human behavior pattern, but it was the Son of God, in the flesh, who literally went through that experience.¹⁵

Thus, with a proper knowledge of the whole Person and Work of Christ, it is only right to view the blood of Christ not only as human, but also as divine, for the blood that saves is that of the infinite and eternal God-Man, Jesus Christ.

Endnotes

¹ Cited in D A Waite, *John MacArthur's Heresy on the Blood of Christ* (Collingswood: Bible For Today, 1995), 19.

² John MacArthur, "Not His Bleeding But His Dying," *Grace Today* (May 1976), 10.

³ Waite, *John MacArthur's Heresy on the Blood of Christ*, 28.

⁴ Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Wm B Eerdmans, 1939), 315.

⁵ *Ibid*, 324.

⁶ Loraine Boettner, *Studies in Theology* (Grand Rapids: Wm B Eerdmans, 1953), 152.

⁷ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans Henry Beveridge (Grand Rapids: Wm B Eerdmans, 1995), 415.

⁸ Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 324.

⁹ Boettner, *Studies in Theology*, 199.

¹⁰ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1991), 2158.

¹¹ *Ibid*, 2394. See also Donald Guthrie, *Hebrews*, Tyndale New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Wm B Eerdmans, 1983), 189.

¹² Boettner, *Studies in Theology*, 199.

¹³ *Ibid*, 200.

¹⁴ J O Buswell, *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962), II:56.

¹⁵ *Ibid*.

Robert Peh is a BRE candidate of Far Eastern Bible College. The above paper was submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the course on the Epistle to the Hebrews by Dr Jeffrey Khoo in the July-November '97 semester.

College News

Our principal—Rev Dr **Timothy Tow**—preached a series of revival messages at Mokpo Cheil Presbyterian Church, pastored by Rev Lee Shin Hun. One of our Korean graduates—**Im Seong Ho** (BTh '92, MRE '98)—recently started an English service in this church.

The Jan '98 intake saw a total of 10 new students: From Argentina: **Michael Bai Bon Soo**; Australia: **Go Tek Hun**; Korea: **Su Jin Cheon**; Malaysia: **Tee Chung Seng**; Myanmar: **Luke Maung Tin Than, Paul Ban Hre**; Singapore: **Anne Chiam** (Ext CertRK), **Henry Tan Kiat Siong**; Thailand: **Suksit Theparee**; UK: **Jit Loi Chong** (Ext CertRK).

The **FEBC Gospel Rally** was held on Mar 14, '98, at Life Bible-Presbyterian Church. Rev Teo Kiak Hock was the Lord's messenger on the topic: "Who is Jesus?"

The **23rd FEBC Graduation Exercises** (May 10, '98) saw 29 receiving their awards and degrees. *Certificate of Religious Knowledge*: Ko Sek Bee, Julia Kwee Su Ling, Henry Leong Meng Soon, Park Seung Kyu, Crystal Ivy Sim Wen Ling, Tan Khai Nee, Tan Swee Hwa, George Jhoon Tang Fook Kee; *Certificate of Biblical Studies*: Ahn Young Hee, Ivan Vincent Toms; *Diploma in Theology*: Sim Poh Geok; *Bachelor of Religious Education*: Heo Woong, Koo Kyen Hoe, Moon Hyung Jin; *Bachelor of Theology*: Srithorn Cheepnirand, Jenny Chin Yien Khuen, Tram Epoi, Wiranto Gunawan, Han Jae Seog, Ho Heng Sau, Nancie Koo Hwee Keow, Lee Hong Hee, Errol Dale Stone, Wong Chin Woon, Hannah Yeo Tsy Ay; *Master of Religious Education*: Im Seong Ho, Siriwan Lalidaphanchai, Kiantoro Lie, Loi Huey Ching.

Dr Paul Lee Tan taught the Book of Daniel at FEBC's **Daily Vacation Bible College** from May 25-30, '98.

Continued on page 105

DECODING *THE BIBLE CODE* OF MICHAEL DROSNIN

Jack Sin

Recently Christians (and non-Christians) have been captivated by Michael Drosnin's book entitled *The Bible Code* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997). In this book, the author claimed that the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin (and other past events) has been predicted in the Hebrew Text of the Old Testament. The prediction is in encrypted form, and needs to be unravelled. Decoding the Bible allegedly leads to the discovery of secret truths. *The Bible Code* is selling like hot cakes in Times Bookshop. I was given the book and was asked to comment on it. Below is a summary of my findings after some study on the subject.

Michael Drosnin's *The Bible Code* is a type of divination, or bibliomancy related to the tradition of the cabala and numerology (ie, the notion that each letter, word, number, and accent of Scripture is a part of a secret code embedded in the text). Decoding texts numerologically is an ancient practice, but the use of computers has taken such a method of divination to new heights. Computers are used to determine equidistant letter sequences in Hebrew Scripture. David Thomas in the *Skeptical Inquirer* (Nov '97) explained,

Drosnin's technique is heavily based on that of Eliyahu Rips of Hebrew University in Israel, who published an article entitled 'Equidistant Letter Sequences in the Book of Genesis' in the journal Statistical Science (Witztum, Rips, and Rosenburg, 1994). Like Rips, Drosnin arranges the 304,805 Hebrew letters of the Bible into a large array. Spaces and punctuation marks are omitted, and words are run together one after another. A computer looks for matches to selected names or words . . .

It is claimed that by repeatedly skipping a specific number of letters, one finds that the Bible is the only text in which these encoded phrases are found in a statistically significant pattern, and that the chance of this being a random phenomenon is unlikely. (This is proven wrong by McKay who, by using the same method, found assassination

“predictions” in *Moby Dick* for Indira Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and J F Kennedy.)

Using the method called Equidistant Letter Sequences (ELS), Drosnin claims that the assassinations of Yitzhak Rabin, and those of Anwar Sadat and the Kennedy brothers were predicted in the Old Testament. Can a computer read the mind of God? According to Drosnin, yes. He equates the sealed book in Daniel 12:4 to the invention of the computer. Drosnin claims that there is a secret code in the Hebrew language of the Old Testament that can only be decoded by the use of a computer.

Drosnin’s book states that an independent corroboration of the work of Witztum and Rips was done by Harold Gans, a retired senior cryptologic mathematician of the US Department of Defence. This is partially true but totally misleading. The following published statement by Harold Gans himself makes clear:

The book by Drosnin states that the codes in the Torah can be used to predict future events. *This is absolutely unfounded. There is no scientific or mathematical basis for such a statement, and the reasoning used to come to such a conclusion in the book is logically flawed.* While it is true that some historical events have been shown to be encoded in the Book of Genesis in certain configurations, it is absolutely not true that every similar configuration of “encoded” words necessarily represents a potential historical event. In fact, quite the opposite is true: *most such configurations will be quite random and are expected to occur in any text of sufficient length.* Mr Drosnin states that his ‘prediction’ of the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin is ‘proof’ that the ‘Bible Code’ can be used to predict the future. A single success, regardless of how spectacular, or even several such ‘successful’ predictions proves absolutely nothing unless the predictions are made and evaluated under carefully controlled conditions. Any respectable scientist knows that *‘anecdotal’ evidence never proves anything.*

Even more revealing is the public statement of Dr Eliyahu Rips who was quoted by Drosnin in his book:

I do not support Mr Drosnin’s work on the Codes, nor the conclusions he derives All attempts *to extract messages from Torah codes, or to make predictions based on them, are futile and are of no value.* This is not only my own opinion, but the opinion of every scientist who has been involved in serious Codes research. In addition to Drosnin’s book, there are now

available numerous software packages which will allow you to do your own Bible Code analysis at home.

Dr Robert Todd Carroll says, “The Bible is not a mystery game or a computer puzzle to be deciphered and decoded but to be revered and read to know the very words of the living and true God and our need for Him.”

Reformers’ Response

Central to the Reformation cause is the doctrine of the sufficiency and perspicuity of the Scriptures. The clarion cry of the Reformers were *sola scriptura*, *sola fide* and *sola gratia*. The one decisive factor in the success of the 16th century Protestant Reformation was the Holy Scriptures being made available and given to the common people. Luther translated the New Testament into German in 1522, and William Tyndale the English New Testament in 1525. The commoner and the ploughman were reading it in the vernacular for the first time.

The doctrine of the perspicuity of Scripture teaches us that God intends His Word to be understood in a straightforward manner. Charles Hodge rightly said, “The Bible is a plain book . . . intelligible to the people.” The Westminster Confession of Faith, our Presbyterian Creed, articulates this doctrine:

All things in Scripture . . . which are necessary to be known, believed and observed for salvation, are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due sense of ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them.

The doctrine of perspicuity was articulated by the Reformers in denial of the Roman Catholic claim that “the Bible is obscure and is badly in need of interpretation by medieval priests and monks.” Today we are told that this mathematical code of equidistant letters in Hebrew, and a “20th century decoder” in the person of Michael Drosnin will help us interpret the Scripture rightly. An acceptance of Drosnin is as good as a return to the dark ages.

The Bible is no crystal ball. It is the very inspiration of God, and it is plainly profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness (2 Tim 3:16, 17).

I gave this illustration to a fellow brother who asked me on this matter. If you look at the cloud formation in the sky, someone may say that he sees a dinosaur, another a dragon and a third, an elephant and each

of them can tell you where the head, tail or body is and so on; and each can be quite insistent that he is right. In other words, you can literally believe what you have programmed yourself to see in the first place (selective perception). Using computers to decode Hebrew words does not diminish the fact that there is a whole lot of speculation and very little science in this method of Bible interpretation.

A Warning from Paul

Paul writing to the Ephesians exhorted them to be grounded or rooted in the Word and not to be tossed and carried about “with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Eph 4:14). Someone said to me, “This book by Drosnin even got non-Christians interested in the Bible, surely it must be from God.” This should not impress us at all. They are interested in Drosnin’s sensational findings of a so-called concealed code in the Bible. They are neither interested in the God of the Bible nor the gospel of Jesus Christ. Will anyone acknowledge his depravity and need of Christ after reading this book? This book is unhelpful to say the least, and deceptive and misleading at worst.

We need to pray and seek the Lord for discernment and vigilance in a world of increasing delusion. “*Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world*” (1 John 4:1).

*Rev Jack Sin is pastor of Maranatha Bible-Presbyterian Church,
and lecturer in Church History at the Far Eastern Bible College.*

A HISTORY OF MY DEFENCE OF THE KING JAMES VERSION

Edward F Hills

New Testament Textual Criticism at Westminster 1935-8

I have been interested in the problem of New Testament textual criticism since my high school days in the 1920's. At that time I began to read the commentaries of Charles Hodge, books that were part of my Presbyterian heritage. I noticed that Hodge would sometimes mention variant readings, most however, just to show that he was knowledgeable, for he rarely departed from "the common text" (*textus receptus*) and "our English version" (King James). Even so, my curiosity was aroused, so that in 1931, when I was a sophomore at Yale University I took down C R Gregory's *Canon and Text of the New Testament* from a library shelf and began to read. I was dismayed at the large number of verses that, according to Gregory and his teachers Westcott and Hort, must be rejected from the Word of God. Nor was I much comforted by Gregory's assurance that the necessary damage had been done and the rest of the text had been placed on an unassailable basis. How could I be sure of this? It seemed to me that the only way to gain assurance on this point was to go to Westminster Seminary and study the subject under the tutelage of Dr Machen, who preached in New Haven rather frequently in those days, talking to Yale students at least twice.

Dr B B Warfield and the Providential Preservation of the New Testament

When I began to study New Testament textual criticism at Westminster (under Dr Stonehouse) I found that the first day or so was mainly devoted to praising Dr B B Warfield. He was lauded for being among the first to recognise the "epoch making" importance of the theory of Westcott and Hort and for establishing the Westcott and Hort tradition at Princeton Seminary, a tradition which was now being faithfully

perpetuated at Westminster Seminary. To me, however, all this was very puzzling. Dr Warfield was a renowned defender of the Reformed faith and of the Westminster Confession, yet in the department of New Testament textual criticism he agreed entirely with liberals such as Westcott, Hort and C R Gregory. He professed to agree with the statement of the Westminster Confession that the Scriptures by God's "singular care and providence" had been "kept pure in all ages," but it was obvious that this providential preservation of the Scriptures was of no importance to Dr Warfield when he actually began to deal with the problems of the New Testament. When he engaged in New Testament textual criticism, Dr Warfield ignored the providential preservation of the Scriptures and treated the text of the New Testament as he would the text of any book or writing. "It matters not whether the writing before us be a letter from a friend, or an inscription from Carchemish, or a copy of a morning newspaper, or Shakespeare, or Homer, or the Bible."

I may be reading into my student days some of my later thinking, but it seems to me that even at that time I could see that the logic of Warfield's naturalistic New Testament textual criticism led steadily downward toward modernism and unbelief. For if the providential preservation of the Scriptures was not important for the study of the New Testament text, then it could not have been important for the history of the New Testament text. And if it had not been important for the history of the New Testament, then it must have been non-existent. It could not have been a fact. And if the providential preservation of the Scriptures was not a fact, why should the infallible inspiration of the Scriptures be regarded as a fact? Why would God infallibly inspire a book and then decline to preserve it providentially? For example, why would God infallibly inspire the Gospel of Mark and then permit (as Warfield thought possible) the ending of it (describing the resurrection appearances of Christ) to be lost?

Why Dr Warfield was so Inconsistent: His Scholastic Heritage

Why was Dr Warfield so inconsistent in the realm of New Testament textual criticism? Dr Van Til's course in apologetics enabled me to supply the answer to this question. Dr Warfield's inconsistency was part of his scholastic inheritance, an error which had been handed down to him from the middle-ages. Let me explain.

During the middle-ages the schoolmen tried to reconcile the philosophy of Aristotle with the dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church by separating faith from reason, and praying from thinking. While dealing with dogma, faith and prayer were appropriate, but the study of philosophy was reason's province. So the medieval schoolmen contended, and soon this doctrine of the separation of faith from reason became generally accepted throughout the medieval Roman Catholic Church.

The Protestant Reformers were fully occupied with other matters. Hence they spent but little time combating this medieval Roman Catholic error of the separation of faith and reason. Hence this false scholastic doctrine survived the Reformation and soon became embedded in the thinking of conservative Protestants everywhere. In the 18th century, Butler and Paley built their apologetic systems on this false principle of the separation of faith and reason, and in the 19th century, at Princeton and other conservative theological seminaries, this scholastic principle even governed the curriculum and the way in which several subjects were taught. Systematic theology, practical theology and homiletics were placed in one box labeled FAITH. All the other subjects, including New Testament textual criticism, biblical introduction, apologetics and philosophy, were placed in another box labeled REASON.

We see now why Dr Warfield was so inconsistent. We see why he felt himself at liberty to adopt the naturalistic theories of Westcott and Hort, and did not perceive that in so doing he was contradicting the Westminster Confession and even his own teaching in the realm of systematic theology. The reason was that Dr Warfield kept these subjects in separate boxes. Like an authentic, medieval scholastic, he kept his systematic theology and the Westminster Confession in his FAITH box and his New Testament textual criticism in his REASON box. Since he never tried to mingle the contents of these two boxes, he was never fully aware of the discrepancies in his thinking.

Dean Burgon: His Emphasis on the Providential Preservation of Scripture

When I began to study New Testament textual criticism at Westminster in 1935, I noticed another thing. Almost as much time was spent in disparaging Dean Burgon as in praising Dr Warfield. This again aroused my curiosity. Who was this Dean Burgon? Upon investigation, I found that he had been a British scholar that had not fitted into the usual

scholastic mold. He had not kept his theology and his New Testament textual criticism in two separate boxes, but had actually dared to make his theology the guiding principle of his New Testament textual criticism. For this he was pronounced “unscholarly.” Actually, he was merely following the logic of faith. He believed that the New Testament was the infallibly inspired Word of God. Hence it had been preserved down through the ages by God’s special providence, not secretly in holes and caves and on forgotten library shelves but publicly in the usage of God’s Church. Hence the text found in the vast majority of the New Testament manuscripts is the true text because this is the text that has been used by God’s Church. As soon as I began to read Burgon’s works, I was impressed by this logic of faith and also by the learned arguments by which Burgon refuted the contention of Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott, Hort, etc. Finally after some years of hesitation, I definitely committed myself to his view in 1952.

But there are problems connected with Burgon’s view. Burgon was a high Anglican who emphasised the role of bishops in the history of the Church. He believed that the New Testament text had been preserved mainly by the bishops of the ancient and medieval Church. Hence he defended the text found in the majority of the New Testament manuscripts, but he would not defend the printed *Textus Receptus* because it had not been produced by bishops. He would, however, defend the King James Version because this had been produced by bishops. Here he was inconsistent because the King James Version is a translation of the *Textus Receptus*.

We solve this problem by substituting the biblical doctrine of the universal priesthood of believers for Burgon’s high Anglicanism. Just as the Old Testament text was preserved by the Old Testament priests, so the New Testament text was preserved by the universal priesthood of believers, that is by true believers in every walk of life. And this providential preservation did not cease with the invention of printing. Hence the true text is found not only in the text of the majority of the New Testament manuscripts but more especially in the *Textus Receptus* and in faithful translations of the *Textus Receptus*, such as the King James Version. In short, the *Textus Receptus* represents the God-guided revision of the majority text.

Burgon mingled his faith with his New Testament textual criticism, urging the providential preservation of the Scriptures as the chief

argument in favour of the traditional (majority) New Testament text. It was for this breach of etiquette that he was regarded as not truly scholarly. But isn't it possible to escape this stigma and still do a good job of defending the majority text? Isn't it possible to drop Burgon's emphasis on the special, providential preservation of Scripture and rely solely on more accurate arguments? Hodges, Pickering and Van Bruggen seem to think this is possible, but in so thinking they are badly mistaken. The same thing must be said of them that has just been said of Dr Warfield. In spite of their good intentions, their thinking is pointed toward modernism and unbelief. For if the providential preservation of the holy Scriptures is unimportant for the defence of the New Testament text, then it must be unimportant for the history of the New Testament text and hence non-existent and not a fact. And if the providential preservation of the Scriptures is not a fact, why should we suppose that the infallible inspiration of the Scriptures is a fact? For inspiration and preservation go together.

Hodges and Pickering try to substitute their theory of statistical probability for Burgon's doctrine of the special providential preservation of the Scriptures. According to these two scholars, statistical probability shows that whenever the transmission of an ancient book has been normal, the best text is found in the majority of the manuscripts. The transmission of the New Testament text has been normal. Hence the text found in the majority of the New Testament manuscripts is the best New Testament text.

In advancing this argument, however, Hodges and Pickering contradict themselves. For they both claim to believe in the providential preservation of the Scriptures, and if this providential preservation is a fact, then something is true of the New Testament which is not true of the transmission of other ancient books. Hence the transmission of the New Testament cannot have been normal. And even from a naturalistic point of view their argument is faulty. For the New Testament is a religious book, and the transmission of a religious book is never normal because it is transmitted mainly by believers who do not regard it as a normal book.

Scholasticism Versus the Logic of Faith

Conservative theological seminaries organised on the scholastic model, separating faith and reason, inevitably become modernistic and unbelieving. The area allotted to reason is steadily enlarged and that

remaining for faith correspondingly decreased. The box labeled FAITH is emptied, while REASON'S box is crammed full. This process of deterioration cannot be avoided because as soon as we give reason an equal place with faith in our thinking we have no true faith at all. God is the Supreme Reality, the source of all things real, and therefore, we must believe on Him as such. We must allow nothing else to be as real as God. If we found even a part of our thinking on a set of rational principles which are independent of God, then we are no longer believing but doubting.

We see, therefore, that if Westminster Seminary is to preserve itself from modernism, it must purge itself from all remnants of scholasticism. It must rid itself completely from every tendency to separate reason from faith. And especially must it do this in the department of New Testament textual criticism. In this area particularly it must put away the naturalistic theories of Westcott and Hort and others like them and follow the logic of faith which runs like this: *Because the Gospel is true and necessary for the salvation of souls, the Bible which contains this Gospel was infallibly inspired and has been preserved by God's special providence, not secretly in holes and caves, but publicly in the usage of God's Church.*

Moreover, this special providence did not cease with the invention of printing. Therefore, the true New Testament text is found today in the majority of the Greek New Testament manuscripts, in the *Textus Receptus*, and in the King James Version and other faithful translations of the *Textus Receptus*. And therefore also this same preserving providence is operating today through the agency of all true believers, however humble, who retain and defend the King James Version.

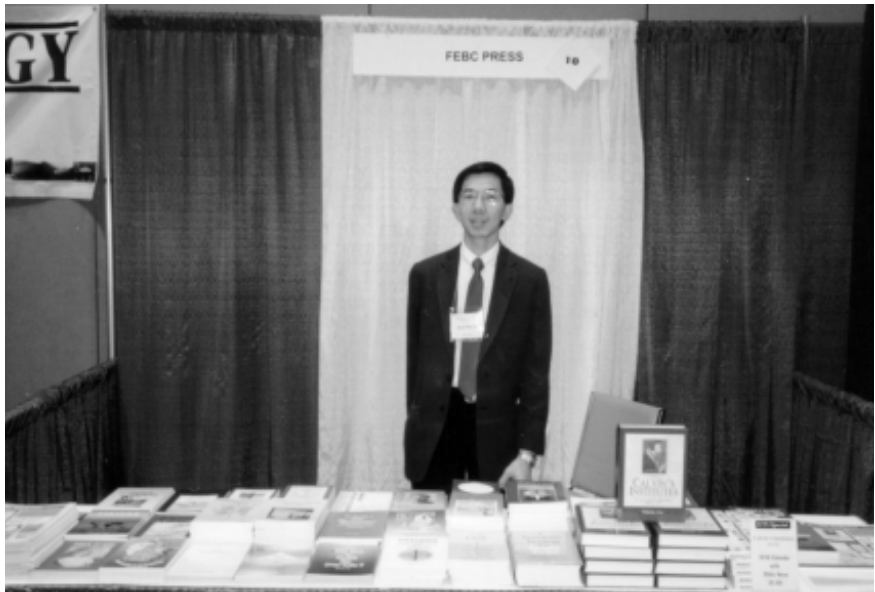
Dr Edward Freer Hills (1912-81) was a distinguished Latin and Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Yale University. He earned his theological degrees from Westminster Theological Seminary (BTh), Columbia Theological Seminary (ThM), and Harvard Divinity School (ThD). He also did doctoral work at the University of Chicago on New Testament textual criticism, and authored The King James Version Defended, and Believing Bible Study, both of which may be ordered from The Christian Research Press, P O Box 13023, Des Moines, Iowa 50310-0023, USA. The above article is printed by permission of Mrs Edward F Hills. She wrote in a kind letter (Oct 28 '97), "It is indeed very encouraging to learn that a

A HISTORY OF MY DEFENCE OF THE KING JAMES VERSION

Presbyterian College is a strong supporter of the KJV. Dr. Hills' book, The King James Version Defended, will furnish your students with the facts they will need for its defense. It may interest you to know that Dr. Hills and Dr. (Carl) McIntire were classmates at Westminster Seminary. For years we profited from the Christian Beacon and were saddened to see it out of print."

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The **FEBC Bookroom** was one of the publishers represented at the 49th Annual Evangelical Theological Society Meeting, Nov 20-22, '97, at the Santa Clara Convention Center, California, USA.



Mr Lok Kwok Wah—FEBC Bookroom manager—at our display table

HOLY HATRED

Timothy Tow

“Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies” (Ps 139:21–22). These are the words of king David, the sweet Psalmist of Israel and the “man after [God’s] own heart” (1 Sam 13:14). How does David qualify to be the sweet Psalmist of Israel and “a man after his own heart”? By not only carrying out every commandment that the Lord commanded him, but also rising to his Master’s Cause, when others fled.

When Goliath challenged Israel to a man-to-man contest, and “Israel . . . fled from him, and were sore afraid” (1 Sam 17:24), who was it that became God’s mouthpiece: “Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?” (1 Sam 17:26). And when David’s eldest brother Eliab chided him for his “pride . . . and naughtiness” to come and watch the battle, the “man after his own heart” retorted, “Is there not a cause?” How loudly the bells of heaven rang to salute such loyal devotion from the only one on earth! This holy hatred against those who hated the Lord was what gained the Almighty’s delight (Ps 139:21)! And what was that irresistible power that shot the smooth stone from David’s sling that hit the giant right into his forehead? Again, it was David’s holy hatred.

Throughout this century, fundamental and conservative seminaries in the West have been dominated by the Dubious Duo, namely, B F Westcott (1825–1901) and F J A Hort (1828–1892) who, like the Philistines, were entrenched in Israel until David’s appearance. “Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel: . . . But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, . . . and his axe . . .” (1 Sam 13:19-20), so were those scholars (Dr Scrivener¹) involved in the revision of the English Bible overwhelmed by Westcott and Hort and totally subdued.

HOLY HATRED

As Israel was under Philistine domination, fundamental and conservative seminaries, insofar as USA was concerned, came under their bewitching sway even from the days of B B Warfield (1851–1921). When I was a student in Faith Theological Seminary, Wilmington, Delaware, in 1948, the “Gospel truth” of Westcott and Hort in textual criticism was covertly imparted to us, knowingly or unknowingly, and we accepted all that was given from the mouth of the New Testament professor. What made an indelible impression upon my mind was that the passage of Jesus pardoning the woman taken in adultery (John 7:53-8:11), the last twelve verses of Mark (16:9-20) and the Johannine *Comma* (1 John 5:7-8) were not in the Bible, but later interpolations. Somehow I could not stomach this spurious “gospel,” because the Lord has promised those who love Him an unction and an anointing that teaches the truth, that no one can beguile them (1 John 2:20, 27).

Dr D A Waite, president of Dean Burgon Society and a leading defender of the King James Version today, gives the same testimony. When he was a student in Dallas Theological Seminary, 1948 to 1953, he also was taught to receive Westcott and Hort as angels from the Lord. Now he has discovered to his dismay how these were not angels from the Lord but from Satan (2 Cor 11:14-15). “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ” (2 Cor 11:13).

Peter says,

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. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of (2 Pet 2:1-2).

How can we know whether a “scholar” like Westcott and a “specialist” like Hort is true or false? By examining their credentials, their life, conduct and their beliefs.

As for the Apostle Paul he could challenge those who beguiled the Corinthians with his credentials, a standard for the test of others.

Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered

shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches (2 Cor 11:22-28).

The above declaration which gives Paul's credentials of apostleship, and of a true teacher, is a sharp contrast with the life, conduct and beliefs of Westcott and Hort.

Under a century of conspiracy of silence, the life, conduct and beliefs of Westcott and Hort have been surreptitiously veiled. Now that the conspiracy of silence is shattered, the veil of secrecy is rent by a host of witnesses, viz, Edward F Hills, D A Waite, David Otis Fuller, David W Cloud, G A Riplinger, S H Tow, let us hear them tell the inside story.²

*You can fool some of the people all the time
And all of the people some of the time,
But you can't fool Mom.*

Hort's mother was a devout Evangelical Christian. She had instructed her son in the most holy faith.

When Hort grew up he rebelled against his mother's teachings. His mother pleaded with him in one of her letters, that he would not be missing from "the mansions of our Heavenly Father's House. How happy it will be if we all met there: no one missing of all our household."

Hort was particularly antagonistic against the traditional position of the Church, holding to the infallibility and inerrancy of Scripture, which he called the "fanaticism of bibliolaters." His son wrote of him, "Hence he was led to seek firm foundation than he could find to the Evangelical position."

His shift from his mother's evangelical upbringing was enhanced by joining the Philosophical Society and by his grandfather, an Archbishop who wanted to interpret the Bible in a manner agreeable to the principle of Philosophy. "For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water" (Jer 2:13).

As for Westcott, who was Hort's Siamese twin, we need not go further. A friend wrote of him in regard to his Christian faith, "What a

HOLY HATRED

theology it was, how broad, anti-dogmatic and how ‘progressive’!” His true colours will be seen as we go on.

Now, when Westcott was an undergraduate at Cambridge University, he organised a club that he called Hermes. According to *Webster’s New 20th Century Dictionary* unabridged Second Edition, HERMES in Greek mythology is a god who served as herald and messenger of the other gods, identified by the Romans with Mercury and generally pictured with winged shoes and hat, carrying a caduceus (wand). He was also god of science, eloquence and cunning, the protector of boundaries and commerce, and guide of departed souls to Hades.

Why was the name Hermes chosen for Westcott’s club? Evidently for the part he played in communicating with the dead, for this was the beginning that led to further works of darkness.

The Hermes Club met weekly for three years, 1845–48. Hermes was also the origin of Hermaphrodite. According to the *Reader’s Digest Oxford Complete Word Finder*, Hermaphrodite is the name of the son of Hermes and Aphrodite in Greek mythology, who became joined in one body with the nymph Salmacis. Thus from Hermes came the fusion of sexes in one person. Hence priests of Hermes wore artificial breasts and female garments.

The question was asked, “Were these young classicists perhaps following Plato’s lead in his symposium where he describes homosexual love to be the highest kind?” One secular historian cites letters between members of Westcott’s club, and refers to the “intensity” of a homosexual relationship between members (ie, Arthur Sigdwick, Frederick Meyers); he comments, “I think the homosexuality was not rare among young classicists.”³

One evil led to another. “For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind” (Hos 8:7). Five years after the founding of the Hermes Club, Westcott was joined by Hort and Benson to start another, viz, the Ghost Club or “Bogey Club,” as scoffers called it. (“Bogey” means “devil.”)

Writing about his and Westcott’s parts in the formation of the Ghost Club, Hort says:

Westcott, Gorham, C B Scott, Benson, Bradshaw, Laud, etc. and I have started a society for the investigation of ghosts and all supernatural

appearances and effects, being disposed to believe that such things really exist.⁴

The fact of Benson the Archbishop of Canterbury being interested more in psychic phenomena, in the souls of the dead than of the living, shows what dead wood the Church of England had become. It shows up in sharp relief Westcott's and Hort's delving in evil spirits than in the seeking of the Holy Spirit. This is substantiated by Bishop J C Ryle (1816–1900), that the clergy of the Anglican Church, apart from naming the Name of Jesus, could hardly say anything more about Him. Thus while Westcott and Hort were Greek scholars, they knew little of the Old Testament. Did they ever read Moses' condemnation of the abominations listed in Deuteronomy 18?

There shall not be found among you . . . *a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer*. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee (Deut 18:10-12; emphasis added).

Westcott and Hort were friends of Charles Darwin, Sigmund Freud (called a "Fraud" in *The Straits Times*) and Carl Jung, all enemies of the Cause of Christ.

Westcott and Hort were also secret worshippers of Mary. Westcott wrote from France to his fiancée as early as 1847,

After leaving the monastery, we shaped our course to a little oratory which we discovered on the summit of a neighbouring hill Fortunately we found the door open. It was very small, with one kneeling place; and behind a screen was a "Pieta" the size of life [ie, a Virgin and dead Christ] Had I been alone I could have knelt there for hours (Westcott, *Life of Westcott*, I:81).⁵

Hort wrote to Westcott, October 17, 1865, "I have been persuaded of many years that Mary-worship and 'Jesus'-worship have very much in common and in their results" (Hort, *Life of Hort*, II:50).⁶

Finally, let us examine their beliefs, and disbeliefs. According to D A Waite in *Heresies of Westcott and Hort*, Westcott and Hort, whether jointly or individually, by their own pens have denied or attacked the following fundamental doctrines of "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

Westcott and Hort **denied**:

HOLY HATRED

- (1) the doctrine of the Inspiration of Scripture,
- (2) the Genesis record of the Creation and the Fall of man,
- (3) the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, His eternal pre-existence and Godhead, His Messiahship, and His sinlessness,
- (4) the substitutionary atonement of Christ and redemption by His blood,
- (5) the bodily resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ,
- (6) the Second Coming of Christ,
- (7) the doctrine of Eternal Life,
- (8) the reality of Heaven and Hell,
- (9) the personality of the Devil.

Westcott and Hort **believed in:**

- (1) the inherent goodness and perfectibility of man,
- (2) the Darwinian theory of Evolution,
- (3) the Universal Fatherhood of God,
- (4) the ultimate salvation of all men,
- (5) the efficacy of water baptism for Regeneration.

Westcott and Hort were false prophets, ravening wolves in sheep's clothing (Matt 7:15), "deceitful workers, transforming themselves into . . . ministers of righteousness" (2 Cor 11:13, 15). Their theories on textual criticism are false and must be rejected. Their NT Greek Text is therefore to be rejected as pernicious poison. And yet a hundred new "Bibles" have flowed from their corrupt source.

Did Westcott and Hort "receive the blessing from the Lord," in their attempt to ruin the Textus Receptus on which the KJV is founded? Was the English Revised Version (NT: 1881), the firstfruit of their labours, blessed indeed by the Lord of the Holy Scriptures? Though millions were sold of the New Testament, interest plummeted when the Old Testament was revised after a few years.

In my young days, we used the King James Bible, though I had also a copy of the English Revised Version (RV). But in a matter of a few decades, the RV died of a diseased death. The RV has long gone out of print. Why? Jesus says, "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Matt 7:19).

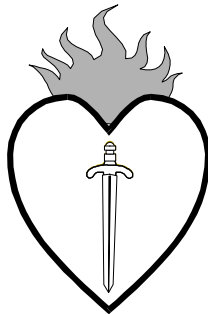
The New International Version (NIV), which is riding high today, is also founded on Westcott and Hort. The NIV has truncated the three most famous sections of Holy Writ, viz, *the pericope de adultera* (John 7:53-8:11), the last 12 verses of Mark and the Johannine *Comma* (1 John 5:7f), and declared them not found in the two oldest manuscripts (Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus), which Westcott and Hort aver give us the original. But why the hypocrisy of NIV's retaining them in their truncated form? Sharp businessmen, the NIV publishers know that if they are totally left out, God's children will not buy their product. The NIV would also go out of print like the RV.

Dear Reader, this chapter is written for you who love the Lord, like David, the sweet Psalmist of Israel, the man after God's own heart. Why did God so bless him and honour him? Because of his true-blue loyalty.

When Goliath blasphemed the name of God the Almighty; all Israel fled, including David's three elder brothers. But the young shepherd boy, roused by the holy indignation from above, cared not for his life, but rushed head on into battle. That holy hatred so galvanised him to action, and that action so upheld by His God, scored total victory that day! What is your attitude to the work of Westcott and Hort? With their unclean hands and impure hearts, they have assailed the text of the Holy Scriptures, even as the Serpent had hated God's Word and hissed, "Yea, hath God said . . .?" (Gen 3:1).

Can you say with David:

Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies. Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting (Ps 139:21-24).



Endnotes

¹ “The minority in the Committee was represented principally by Dr. Scrivener, probably the foremost scholar of the day in the manuscripts of the Greek new Testament and the history of the Text. If we may believe the words of Chairman Ellicott, the countless divisions in the Committee over the Greek Text ‘was often a kind of critical duel between Dr. Hort and Dr. Scrivener.’ Dr. Scrivener was continuously and systematically out-voted” (David Otis Fuller, ed, *Which Bible?*, 5th ed [Grand Rapids: Grand Rapids International Publications, 1975], 291).

² Edward F Hills, *Believing Bible Study* (Des Moines: The Christian Research Press, 1977), 89–112; Fuller, *Which Bible?*, 144–73, 277–82; D A Waite, *Heresies of Westcott and Hort* (Collingswood: The Bible For Today, 1979); G A Riplinger, *New Age Bible Versions* (Munroe Falls: AV Publications, 1993), 391–464; David W Cloud, *For Love of the Bible* (Oak Harbor: Way of Life Literature, 1995), 25–32, 113–215; D A Waite, *Foes of the King James Bible Refuted* (Collingswood: The Bible For Today, 1997), 50–4; S H Tow, “In Defence of the KJV” (See Chapter 14).

³ Riplinger, *New Age Bible Versions*, 401.

⁴ *Ibid*, 405.

⁵ Benjamin G Wilkinson, “Westcott and Hort,” in *Which Bible?*, ed Fuller, 278.

⁶ *Ibid*, 279.

Rev Dr Timothy Tow is principal of Far Eastern Bible College, and senior pastor of Life Bible-Presbyterian Church.

SCHOLAROLATRY

David Otis Fuller

Many who fancy themselves “intellectuals,” look down in their pride upon a man who does not have a list of letters after his name, implying that he is unlearned and ignorant because he does not fit the mold of what they think a scholar must be. Dr David Otis Fuller called this phenomenon “scholarolatry” (David W Cloud).

Learning is important, and I do not despise any effort a man can make to learn the Word of God more perfectly. Get all the degrees you can if your goal is the mastery of the Holy Bible. I will honour a man with the title of “Dr” if I feel that he deserves it. I refuse, though, to respect a man who is puffed up with his own conceit. I am not against seminary training in principle, but it is a fact that the bulk of seminary education today is the philosophical study of fallible man which results in uncertainty and foolish questionings instead of the practical study of God’s infallible Word which results in quiet confidence in the Bible and in holiness of life.

I see two problems with the broad use of credentialed titles among preachers. First, too often the title is meaningless. What sense is it to have “Dr” before your name if you can’t even write a proper paragraph of English? Second, too often the title is a matter of pride. The late Evangelist Lester Roloff said it well when some wanted to bestow upon him an honorary degree. He commented, “It would be like tying a pretty ribbon on a hog’s tail.” Brethren, if we will be honest, most of us are mere hog’s tails. God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty; let’s not act pretentious, not with our honorary degrees, nor with our earned degrees.

The wisdom commended by God is a practical wisdom, not a theoretical one. The late J Vernon McGee, who made it his life’s aim to take the Word of God and explain it and apply it, said the Bible had to get down to “where the rubber meets the road.” Sadly, Dr McGee was not a Fundamentalist nor a Baptist, but I like his saying. Godly wisdom is a

SCHOLAROLATRY

skill in understanding and applying the truth of God's Word to the needs of life and the work of God.

Was Jesus Christ a Scholar?

The Lord Jesus Christ did not submit Himself to the popular religious schools of His day, and He spoke in such a way that the common man could understand Him. His proud detractors stumbled at this Wisdom. They exclaimed, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" (John 7:15). Was Jesus Christ a scholar?

Were the Apostles Scholars?

For the most part the Apostles were common men who were called by Jesus Christ to write the last chapters in the eternal Word of God and to establish the first churches in the world. The Lord Jesus put these men through an intensive course in knowledge and wisdom, but it was not in a classroom; it was not theoretical. It was not "ivory tower" or "arm chair" theology! He taught them a practical, spiritual wisdom. Jesus Christ did not establish a seminary; He established a church. He did not grant them the PhD; He taught them how to do the work of God in this wicked, hell-bound world. The Apostle's proud detractors did not recognise nor understand the wisdom God had given them. In their enemies' estimation, they were "unlearned and ignorant men" (Acts 4:13). The Pharisees were consumed with "scholarolatry." My friends, I contend that the Apostles of Jesus Christ were the wisest men who have ever walked this earth, apart from Jesus Christ Himself. They were wiser even than the mighty prophets of Old, because they had greater Revelation. They were common men, but God gave them eternal wisdom. Were the Apostles scholars?

Were the Pastors of the Early Churches Scholars?

The qualifications for these men is given in 1 Timothy and Titus, and I don't find anything there about the necessity of having a DD or a ThD or even an MDiv. The qualifications have to do with spiritual living and practical application of the Scriptures to life and the work of God. Could the pastor, then, be ignorant? Indeed not. He has to be skillful in handling the Word of God—no small feat. The pastor has to be "apt to teach" (1 Tim 3:2). In Titus we see that the pastor must be a man who holds "fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" (Tit

1:9). Thus he must have a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures and of sound doctrine and he must have the ability to use this knowledge to edify the saints and to deal with false teachers. This is not a theoretical knowledge. This is “rubber-meets-the-road” knowledge. Were the pastors of the early churches scholars?

Consider the men who have been greatly used by God through the centuries. Were the mighty prophets of Israel raised up through the prophets’ schools, for the most part? No, God individually called and anointed them. What about Charles Haddon Spurgeon? He had no degree, yet he wielded vastly more influence for God in this old world than hundreds of his titled compatriots combined. He maintained a Pastor’s College, yet the goal of that college was not to award titles, but to grant men a knowledge of Jesus Christ and of His Eternal Word.

Please don’t misunderstand me. I am for education and learning. I have been a diligent student all my life. I fear there are a great many men in the ministry today who are disqualified because they are too lazy to study. The possession of a degree does not make one a student. I am not exalting ignorance; I am exalting God’s way of education over against the world’s way. And I am rebuking the pride of man which is behind the phenomenon of “scholarolatry.”

Dr David Otis Fuller is the editor of Which Bible? (Grand Rapids MI: Institute for Biblical Textual Studies, 1990) an excellent symposium in defence of the Textus Receptus and KJV.

A REPORT ON THE FEBC MISSION TRIP TO MYANMAR (JAN 29-FEB 2, 1998)

The new year season was meaningfully spent on an FEBC mission trip to Myanmar. This Golden Land of four million pagodas was first given the gospel by Adoniram Judson (1788–1850) who had his first convert only after six years of ministry. Led by Rev Timothy Tow, the team of 18 arrived in Yangon on January 29, and were transferred by air to Mandalay to attend the 14th General Assembly of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Myanmar (EPCM). Started in 1983, this group of fundamental churches grew to two synods, four presbyteries and 55 churches in 1997. The Far Eastern Fundamental School of Theology (FEFST), was founded in 1987 with the help of Life Bible-Presbyterian Church. Rev Robert Thawn Luai is the Principal of FEFST, and the General Secretary of the EPCM.

This trip was especially fruitful because we visited the new church in the mountains of Maymyo (Pyin Oo Lwin), 3,481 ft above sea level, a former British summer resort, 69 km from Mandalay. The church is pastored by John San Luai, a young 29-year-old graduate of FEFST. We witnessed his ordination on the Lord's day of February 1. The church was established in March 1996. It has since grown to 70 members with a potential for greater expansion in a community of 42,000 people comprising mainly general workers and gardeners. (Life Church had given \$2,000 in support of this work.)

Rev Tow ministered at the General Assembly night meetings at the Mandalay Evangelical Presbyterian Church to about 250 each night with riveting and animated practical messages for the conferees. We also visited a plot of land of more than half-acre in Mandalay bought by the Evangelical Presbyterian Church with help from Elder Dr Lee of the Pure Presbyterian Church (Korea) at a price of US\$50,000. A Bible Institute for indigenous preachers will be built in due time.

The night meetings were filled with very spirited singing by the members of the Maymyo Evangelical Presbyterian Church and other



A REPORT ON THE FEBC MISSION TRIP TO MYANMAR

groups. Rev Tow preached on all three nights. The Sunday Service meeting ended with a presentation of souvenirs by Rev Thawn Luai to the pastors from Singapore.

The climax of the whole trip was the ordination of Andrew Kam at FEFST in Yangon. Andrew Kam graduated from FEBC in 1994. After graduation, he returned to Myanmar to start an orphanage and a church. He has about 20 orphans under his care. He was ordained after an oral examination by the members of the Ordination Council comprising Rev Tow, Dr Jeffrey Khoo, Rev Das Koshy, Rev Colin Wong and Rev Jack Sin. It was heartening to hear the orphans sing praises to the Lord and the testimony of Andrew Kam's calling.

The Lord has used him in evangelistic work, and in caring for the orphans. Now with a church established, the gospel will be accelerated by his ordination. On the final night, Rev Tow initiated a van fund for Andrew Kam's ministry and a total of \$10,566 was collected from the team members. Who will support this worthy cause of missions in Myanmar? (A Townace van in Myanmar costs only US\$14,000.)

This report is made by Rev Jack Sin, pastor of Maranatha Bible-Presbyterian Church, and lecturer in Church History at the Far Eastern Bible College.

ORDAINED BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD

Andrew Kam

It is a wonderful day today. The Lord has blessed me with such a special privilege of being ordained by the Rev Dr Timothy Tow who is a faithful servant of God from Singapore. Now my heart is filled with happiness. I am now ordained. God is wonderful.

Indeed this evening's ordination service was not arranged this morning, nor yesterday. It was not even arranged last year, but by the Lord before the foundation of the world. I did know this when I was in Malaysia in 1990. I would like to tell you how I knew. I had applied for all kinds of jobs when I was in Malaysia. My applications were not totally rejected; all were nearly accepted. That means I could not get a job at all in Malaysia. I was very disappointed. Then I prayed to the Lord. I said, "O Lord, I have tried to get a job by myself. I have already done my best but could not succeed. So today I pray, please show me the way and your purpose for my life. Use me in whatever way you want. Send me wherever you want me to go. I surrender my life to you. I am ready to do anything for you." The Lord wonderfully accepted my prayer, and gave me a vision to see this evening's ordination service.

Dear brothers and sisters, since all of you are witnesses of my ordination into God's service, I would like to tell you my short story, and this story will tell you about my life.

A long time ago, there were two parrots. They were a happy couple, and lived together on the top of a big tree. The wife parrot laid eight eggs. Eight small parrots came out of those eggs. Now that they were parents to eight children, they worked harder and went farther than before to get enough food for their children. Unfortunately, one day there was a terrible storm. They were deep in the forest far away from their nest. The storm blew them away. Both of them fell into a place where very wicked people lived. The people caught the exhausted parrots, and killed the husband

ORDAINED BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD

parrot for their meal. They kept the wife parrot to be killed later for another meal. Stricken with much worry and grief, the wife parrot died.

Not knowing what had happened to their parents, the eight little parrots waited hopefully for their parents to return with food. The little parrots were so sad when their parents did not come home. They were in deep trouble, and without hope. In this difficult time, another trouble befell them. A farmer came and cut down the tree on which their nest was built. When the tree fell, the small parrots fled for their lives. One of them died on the spot. Some were caught by the people. But one was very fortunate. Humanly speaking, it was very lucky. This one ran far away, and reached a place where good and kind people lived. When the people saw this little parrot, they took pity on it. They gave good food and taught it their language. The people were so kind that the little parrot felt so happy to be with them. Day by day, the small poor parrot became bigger and bigger, cleverer and cleverer, happier and happier.

When this small parrot was big enough to fly, it asked permission from its master to return home so that it could help other poor little parrots. The master willingly allowed it to go. Back home, this successful parrot helped other small parrots that were poor and in difficulties.

Dear friends, the story of my life is quite similar to the above story I just told. I have six brothers and two sisters. When I was about 10 years old, my father was killed by my uncle who was a very wicked person. My mother also died in the same year. Since then we became poor children, helpless and hopeless. Darkness has come into our home. One of my brothers died a year after we lost our parents. Even though there was no hope for us, the Lord wonderfully blessed my way and sent me to the place where a faithful servant of God lives. That place is called Far Eastern Bible College (FEBC) in Singapore. When I got there, I was treated well. I ate good food. I slept on a good bed. I stayed in a good house. I learned the precious Word of God. The people there always showed me their love, and I was very happy to be with them. So today, I would like to give thanks to the Lord for Rev Timothy Tow. In Rev Tow, I have found once again the love of my parents. May the Lord bless Rev Tow and all the Lifers.

When I graduated from FEBC in 1994, I returned to Myanmar with the goal of helping the poor children. I started a Bible-Presbyterian

Church and an orphanage. Now, there are four Bible-Presbyterian churches, and one orphanage in Myanmar.

Today I am so glad, and so thankful to the Lord for my ordination. I am also thankful to all of you who have come to attend this ordination service. I want to thank also the Rev Thawm Luai for helping me arrange for this service. Please remember me in your prayers because I still have far to go in the way of faith. May the Lord bless all of you. Amen.



Andrew Kam (DipTh '94) was ordained a minister of the gospel by (L-R) Revs Thawm Luai, Das Koshy, Jack Sin, Jeffrey Khoo, Colin Wong, and Timothy Tow (moderator) on the Lord's Day, February 1, 1998, at the Far Eastern Fundamental School of Theology, Yangon, Myanmar.

Class Notes

Rev **Peter Clements** (BTh '83) left the ecumenical Australian Presbyterian Church to found the Cootamundra Bible Fellowship on Jun 29, '97. Peter and Anne (CertBS '87) have six children.

Miss **Setsuko Takashima** (DipTh '84) is God's special evangelist to the children of Japan. Her new address is: 209-8 Mune, Tamatsu-Tekkin, Akebono-Cho 1070, Nishi-Hu, Kobe 651-21, Japan.

Rev **Stephen Khoo** (BTh '85) is presently serving as pastor of Bethel Bible-Presbyterian Church in Melbourne. His address is: 10 Downing Street, Oakleigh, Victoria 3166, Australia.

Miss **Kimiko Goto** (BTh '85) is now serving at the Institut Theologia Aletheia in Indonesia. Her address: Jl Argopuro 28-34, Lawang 65211, Jatim, Indonesia.

Rev **Michael Koech** (BTh '87) continues to serve as principal of Bomet Bible Institute, and pastor of Africa Gospel Unity Church. He also runs the Bomet Christian Kindergarten and Primary School. He is assisted by his wife—Susan—who will soon graduate from a secretarial college. They have a daughter—Martha—eight years old. Their address is: P O Box 33, Bomet, Kenya.

We rejoice with our brother **Im Seong Ho** (BTh '92, MRE '98) who has been blessed with a beautiful wife. See wedding photo on the right.

Rev **Charles Seet** (BTh '90, MDiv '97) has completed his missionary stint as a lecturer of the Center of Biblical Studies Institute and Seminary, Philippines. He now joins the pastoral staff of Life Bible-Presbyterian Church, and teaches at the FEBC.

Rev **Kim Kah Teck** (BTh '94) is now principal of Selamat Kindergarten in Kuantan. He also oversees the Selamat Bible-Presbyterian Fellowship meeting on Saturdays.



Lee Hyo Chang (BTh '94) is a missionary of Dong-Bu Presbyterian Church. He is currently involved in an evangelistic outreach to university students. His address is: 1462-10, Guanyang-dong, Dongan-gu, Anyang-si, Kyunggi-do, Korea.

Lazum Lonewah (BTh '96) and **Kenneth Womeldorf** (BTh '96) were conferred the MA in Biblical Studies by Tennessee Temple Seminary, USA, on May 4, '98.

George Skariah (BTh '94, MDiv '96) has completed his ThM studies at Singapore Bible College and is now teaching at Jubilee Memorial Bible College. He wrote in a JMBC newsletter, "From FEBC I have learned the importance of earnestly contending for the faith (Jude 3). Having learned the whole counsel of God from such a theological institution, committed to the unchanging fundamentals of the Christian faith and the Scriptures, I desired much more to teach the truth in the same spirit to my fellow country-men in order to train up a new generation of young men and women to stand firm for the truth." His wife—**Bessy**—is also an FEBC graduate (MRE '96). Their address is: Jubilee Memorial Bible College, 21 Aerikkarai Street, Urappakkam PO, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 603202.

Manuela Fernandez (BRE '97) married Mr Johnny Heng on Oct 27, '97 at Life Bible-Presbyterian Church. Manuela serves as assistant to the matron in the FEBC kitchen.

Amos Go Za Sum (CertBS '97) founded the Khampat New Life Bible-Presbyterian Church on Aug 4, '97 in Chin State, Myanmar.

Park Seung Kyu (CertRK '98) was joined to Esther Ra in holy matrimony on May 2, '98 in Glory Bible-Presbyterian Church, Seoul, Korea.

Errol D Stone (BTh '98) is the director of the Second Coming Bible Conference Centre in Ballajura, Western Australia. The address is: "The Lakes Estate," 42 Promontory Parade, Ballajura, WA 6066, Australia. Phone: 61-8-92481438, Fax: 61-8-92481439, Email: edstone@space.net.au.

Wong Chin Woon (BTh '98) and his wife **Srithorn** (BTh '98) are now serving under China Ministry International (CMI) in Taiwan. Their address is: No. 49, Chung Ho Street, 4F-1, Peitou, Taipei 112, Taiwan, ROC.

23rd FEBC Graduation Exercises (May 10, 1998)



Clockwise from top left: Processional led by the principal; College anthem by students; Faculty; Oath of allegiance by Board of Directors; Ordination of Im Seong Ho; Elds Khoo Peng Kiat, Heng Yow Tong, & Sng Teck Leong; Oath of allegiance by faculty; Rev Koa Keng Woo directing the College choir.



Clockwise from top left: Julia Kwee Su Ling (CertRK), Henry Leong Meng Soon (CertRK), Tan Khai Nee (CertRK), George Jhoon Tang Fook Kee (CertRK), Sim Poh Geok (DipTh), Ivan Vincent Toms (CertBS), Tan Swee Hwa (CertRK), Crystal Ivy Sim Wen Ling (CertRK).

23rd FEBC Graduation Exercises (May 10, 1998)



Clockwise from top left: Heo Woong (BRE), Jenny Chin Yien Khuen (BTh), Wiranto Gunawan (BTh), Ho Heng Sau (BTh), Errol Dale Stone (BTh), Nancie Koo Hwee Keow (BTh), Han Jae Seog (BTh), Tram Epoi (BTh).

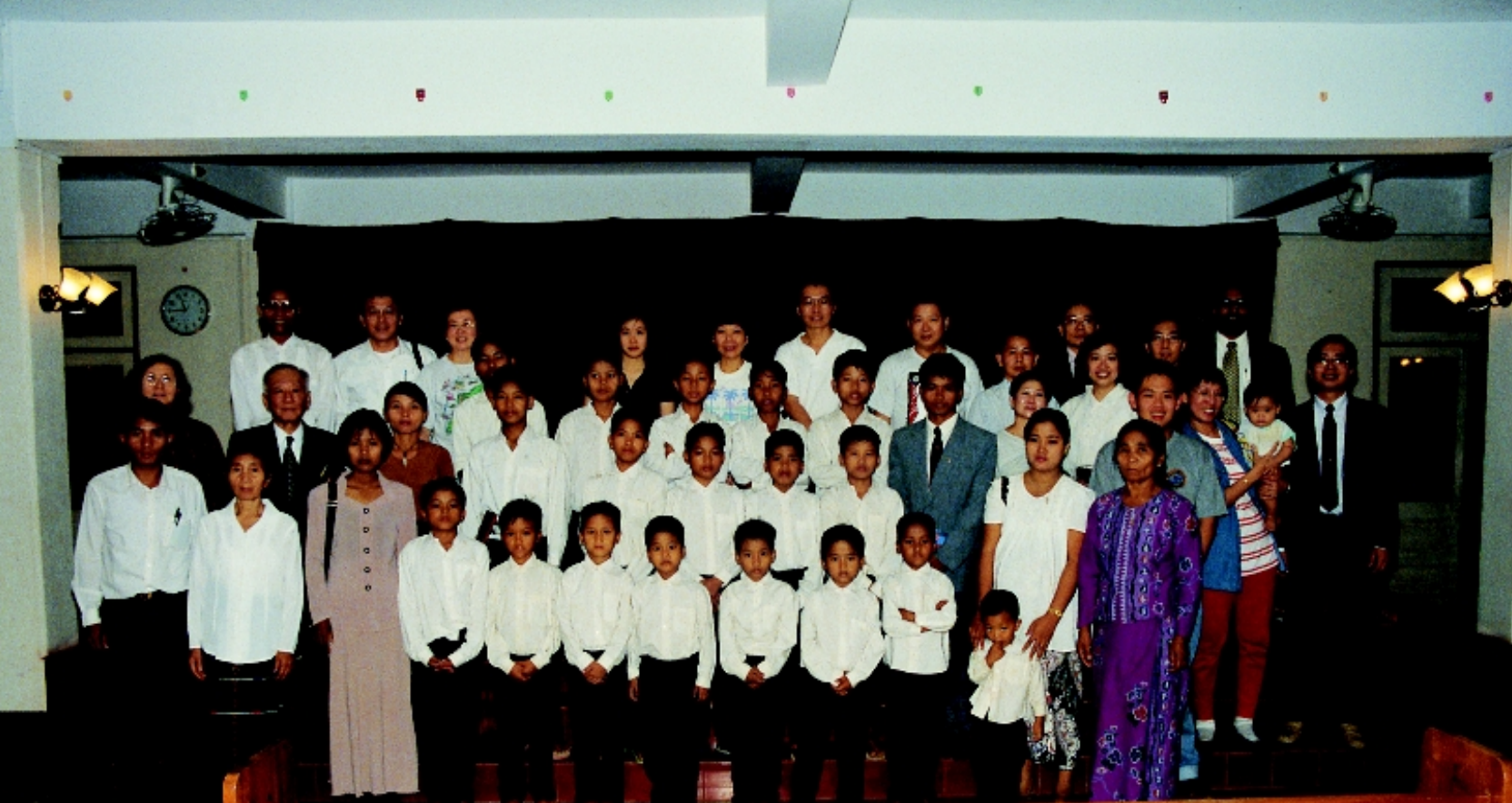


From L-R: BTh graduates—Hannah Yeo, Jenny Chin, Ho Heng Sau with Ling Ling (College librarian), Barnabas Yap, and Ng Keng Tiong.



Mr & Mrs Errol Dale Stone (BTh), and Ivan Toms (CertBS) with Rev & Mrs Jack Sin, and Australian friends.





Myanmar Visit '98
Singapore Contingent with Yangon B-P Church and Orphanage