



“...for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

Revelation 1:9b

FOREWORD

SIXTY YEARS NEARER

“Holding forth the word of life,” founding father Timothy Tow planted the first B-P tree in 1950. Others watered, God made us fruitful, a hundredfold.

The days fly by, hastening towards “...the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13). These are perilous times. Christians and churches everywhere are falling away – casualty to the end time apostasy, B-Ps are not excepted, sadly. The enemy claims victims of false followers everywhere.

But final victory is never in doubt: our Lord is ever victorious. Reader, stay faithful to the Lord! His Word promises: “When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him” (Isaiah 59:19). Come, rally to His standard! Stand with Him, and fight for Him!

For now is our salvation – final victory – nearer than when we began, nearer by sixty years. God raise up faithful and valiant men and women now! There may not be another sixty years.

Dr SH Tow
Senior Pastor
Calvary Pandan B-P Church

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TESTIMONIES of Pastors & Elders



*Ordination of Dr Tow Siang Hwa at Life BPC,
19 October 1980*

BEREAN BPC WAS ESTABLISHED ON...

...1 March 1992. In July 2001, God's faithful servant, Rev Tan Kian Sing took over to shepherd its flock in Berean BPC. In May 2005, Berean BPC shifted to 48A Foch Road in the Jalan Besar area, after having worshipped at two other places (St George's Chapel in Changi and Mount Emily Road in Little India.)

The Tamil Fellowship Ministry is one of the various ministries of Berean BPC. Started in February 2004 by a FEBC graduate from India and Elder Pillai, it was dissolved at the end of the same year due to doctrinal differences and a change of church premises. However, by the Lord's will and with only one member present, Elder Pillai re-started the Tamil Bible class for adults by the end of April 2005.

Although the class started with its one and only remnant who is a born-again Singaporean Indian, the Lord has blessed it with an increase to nine regular worshippers (including one Indian-Muslim). By the grace of God, one has been serving as a deacon and all of them are also worshipping in the Berean BPC English Service.

With the blessing of the Triune God, the Tamil Fellowship Ministry of Berean BPC is thankful to be part of the work of the Lord in the B-P Movement.

*Elder Koyil Pillai
Tamil Fellowship Ministry
Berean BPC
Singapore*

I WAS WORSHIPPING IN...

...an independent brethren church when I first heard of the B-P Movement. As often as I could, I would attend Life BPC and listen intently to Rev Tow's sermons, particularly those pertaining to the separatist movement, liberalism/biblical compromise and the ecumenical World Council of Churches. The messages provoked me to consider what the true biblical position of the churches of Jesus Christ should be.

Thank God for showing me clearly from His Word the need for Biblical Separation. At that time, I was a lay leader in the church. Unlike most brethren churches, we had a pastor working alongside the lay leaders. To his credit, my pastor was patient with me when I shared with him my views concerning the issues of Biblical Separation and ecumenical compromise. Matters came to a head when the ecumenical preacher Luis Palau held a nation-wide crusade in Singapore. It was difficult for me to go along with the church leadership which had mooted to fully support this evangelistic outreach. With a heavy heart, my whole family decided to leave the church to join the B-P Movement.

I thank our Almighty God for His gracious leading. The theological education I received in FEBC and my pastoral ministry have been a journey of grace and blessing. All praise and glory to our great God! Let us press on by His grace. May the Lord find us faithful till Jesus returns.

*Rev Wee Eng Moh
Pastor, Berith BPC
Singapore*

THE B-P MOVEMENT - TO ME A LIFELINE OF TRUTH LEARNED

That God is sovereign is not doubted or questioned. However, God also uses man to fulfil His purposes so that others may be blessed. God used men like Rev Timothy Tow and Dr Carl McIntire to found the B-P Movement for the defence of the testimony of Christ and His Word, and for the blessings of God's people. From America to the Far East, God gave us His eternal truths through the B-P Movement.

I came to Calvary Pandan from a church that was void of the doctrine of Biblical Separation and where many truths of God's Word were not taught at all. Through the Sunset Gospel Hour (now called the Sunset Gospel Bible Fellowship), I learned many truths, one of which the 16th Century Reformation and Protestantism. In FEBC, I embraced the truth of Calvinism. My salvation and the abundant life that flows from God's perfect and eternal Truth is now my assurance, according to Holy Scriptures. To enter into a covenant with God that can never be vitiated, not even by Satan or death, because it has been sealed by the love of Christ when He died for me on Calvary's cross, is another precious truth that was taught to me by God through the B-P Movement. My entire life of doctrines and the understanding of God's infallible, inerrant and divinely inspired and preserved Word of Life have been shaped and moulded through the teachings and testimonies of God's servants in the B-P Movement.

How can a mere “thank you” to God and to all of God’s servants be sufficient, compared with all that I have gained from the LORD through the B-P Movement? The least I can do is to give my life daily for the Master’s use. I thank God for the B-P Movement. May God grant me His grace and strength, that I may return this great debt I owe by serving Him faithfully among God’s people till the Lord returns. Amen.

*Rev Quek Suan Yew
Pastor, Calvary Pandan BPC
Singapore*

THANK GOD FOR THE B-P MOVEMENT

I thank God that through the B-P Movement, I was delivered out of the snares of Charismatic, and saved from its false teaching of “signs and wonders,” errors and fantasies of the “supernatural,” and from a shallow understanding of God’s Word. It was the uncompromising B-P stand on the truth and the courageous declaration exposing the errors of Charismatic that saved me from the Charismatic deception.

May Calvary Pandan BPC and other faithful B-P churches continue to “hold forth the Word of life” (Phil 2:16) and to speak the truth, without fear or favour, against all forms of error. May all true believers be as sheep that heed the Shepherd’s voice and follow only Him, separate from the “falling way” of the end times. Amen.

*Elder Chew Chong Kiat
Calvary Pandan BPC
Singapore*

“THAT I MAY DWELL IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD...

...all the days of my life.” Psalm 27:4

By God’s providential leading, two of my Christian friends, Yew Nam and James Chua, told me about the spiritual dangers of the Ecumenical Movement. My spiritual awakening occurred in 1980 when I was in Faith Methodist Church. Being persuaded by what they told me in the light of God’s Word, I decided to leave the Methodist movement, which was actively involved in the Ecumenical Movement. When I made known my decision to those two friends, they invited me to Calvary Pandan BPC.

In 1981, I started attending the Sunset Gospel Hour (now called Sunset Gospel Bible Fellowship). I also joined the Calvary Pandan Youth Fellowship. Until today, I have a clear memory of the fellowship and learning God’s Word which I tremendously enjoyed with other youths of the church. I was baptized in 1983 and was very thankful that I had found a church which fed me well with the Word of God. All glory be to God for the spiritual leadership of Dr SH Tow, the pastor of Calvary Pandan, and all other faithful preachers of the B-P Movement who had preached from the pulpit in those days. In my later years in Calvary Pandan (1990-1995), I was also blessed through the preaching of Rev Quek Suan Yew. By God’s grace, I have grown in the faith and knowledge of God’s Word through the faithful preaching of God’s Word in the B-P churches. I owe it all to God that I can serve Him and teach others the Word of God.

The B-P Movement, under the leadership of the late Rev Timothy Tow, has flourished beyond Singapore. In its global thrust for the propagation and defence of God’s Word, the Far Eastern Bible College (FEBC) has played a vital role. We praise God for Dr Jeffrey Khoo and the new generation of faithful men in the College. I also thank God for Rev Prabhudas Koshy, pastor of Gethsemane BPC, with whom I serve our Lord as an elder. May the Lord bless all the pastors and elders who have separated themselves for the preaching and defence of God’s perfect Word.

After 60 years of Bible-Presbyterianism, many in this movement have taken the dangerous slippery path of Neo-Evangelicalism. I pray that God will grant us faithful men to preach the truth of the Gospel to the ends of the earth until Jesus returns. May God help us.

*Elder Alan Choy
Gethsemane BPC
Singapore*

WHAT THE BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN MOVEMENT MEANS TO US

On this very special occasion of the 60th year of the founding of our Bible-Presbyterian Movement, we rejoice in remembering the goodness of the Lord our God.

We thank God for His servant the late Rev (Dr) Timothy Tow whom God used to start the Bible-Presbyterian Church and Movement in Singapore in 1950.

Philadelphia BPC was founded in obedience to God’s Word to separate from untruth and error.

We praise God for the spiritual legacy of the Reformed Faith based on the inerrant, infallible and authoritative Word of God passed down to us. Together, we stand four-square on the Word of God, holding fast to The King James Version Bible we believe is the closest to the original manuscripts and the most faithful of all English translations.

We thank God for His enabling power to raise the Banner of Truth in these last days by maintaining a Biblical Separation stand against untruth and error.

As we face the challenges in these perilous times, may we continue to fear God, obey His Word, do His will and be faithful and “strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim 2:1b), looking unto JESUS - The Author and Finisher of our faith.

*Rev Frank Low
Pastor, Philadelphia BPC
Singapore*

GREETINGS IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST

The Diamond Jubilee of the Bible-Presbyterian Movement did not arrive after a short period of time. It is a testimony of God’s goodness that provokes us to greater spiritual heights. Who would have imagined that from a small group 60 years ago, led by the late Rev Timothy Tow, such a Movement would grow to this day.

Today, there may be bigger churches and movements of various denominations but it is unlikely that another movement would have such an influence on spiritual lives like the B-P Movement has. The gathering of God’s people on 24 October 2010 will celebrate a rich heritage that has had in many ways impacted countless lives for the Kingdom of God. The B-P Movement as God’s “mouthpiece” has been a blessing through faithful men of faithful service.

It is the prayer of God’s people in Tabernacle BPC that while we await the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, the B-P Movement will continue to be a beacon of truth for God’s inspired and preserved Word for all generations.

*Session, Tabernacle BPC
Singapore*

I THANK GOD FOR...

...guiding me to a B-P church after I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour when I was in Secondary One. I have, since then, attended a few B-P churches for the past 30 years. It is in the B-P church, especially through her founding father the late Rev (Dr) Timothy Tow, that I can learn the full counsel of God's Word. The faithful preaching of God's Word and the earnest contending for the faith are true trademarks of the B-P Movement. God has blessed me much through the study of the Word of God. I have learned to make God's Word the only rule of my faith and actions for every situation in my life.

I pray that the B-P Church will continue to be faithful to God in preaching and defending the truth of God's Word.

*Elder John Leong
Tabernacle BPC
Singapore*

IN THIS LANDMARK 60TH ANNIVERSARY...

...of the Bible-Presbyterian Movement in Singapore, Truth BPC counts it a privilege to be part of this movement. It was from the founder of the Singapore B-P Movement, Rev Timothy Tow that we caught the spirit of "holding forth the word of life" (Phil 2:16) and of "earnestly contending for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

As one of the youngest B-P sons born out of this B-P Movement, I have benefited greatly from its strong stand on the unpopular doctrine of Biblical Separation and sound teaching of the infallible, inerrant and inspired Word.

Each generation has to fight its own spiritual battles. Will our B-P sons defend the faith to the end? Should the Lord tarry, may the next generation bring the B-P Movement to greater heights and be found faithful until the Lord Jesus Christ returns. Blessed 60th Anniversary to the B-P Movement! Amen.

*Rev Dennis Kwok
Pastor, Truth BPC
Singapore*

AS I REMEMBER THE LOVINGKINDNESS AND TENDER MERCIES...

...of the LORD these 60 years of the B-P Movement, I also praise Him for His grace and mercies in my life. He delivered me out of the depths of utter darkness into His marvellous light in 1954 at the age of 16. I was then with the Fishermen of Christ Fellowship. In 1981, He called me to full-time service when I was with The Bible Church, and I enrolled into FEBC, a school of prophets which faithfully teach the pure Word of God. I thank the LORD for its existence and for all my teachers who faithfully taught the Word. Indeed, I had a blessed and profitable time in FEBC, for my training has put me in good stead in the years of service unto the LORD.

In 1998, I was called to pastor Bethel BPC, Melbourne. By the Lord's appointment, the original term of three years has been extended until now! The privilege and opportunity to serve Him as a pastor within the B-P Movement is something I'm very thankful for. Through days of thick and thin, I thank the LORD with all my heart for giving me the privilege to serve Him. LORD, I love Thee. Amen.

*Rev Stephen Khoo
Pastor, Bethel BPC
Melbourne, Australia*

GOD'S BOUNTIFUL BLESSINGS THROUGH THE B-P MOVEMENT

In 2001, we started a children's hostel ministry under the name "Moses' Life Christian Students Center" (MLCSC) with support from a Hong Kong Baptist missionary, but the support was stopped after some time without any reason given. Thank God, we persisted in the ministry. Within the same year, two Korean missionaries came to learn the Lahu language from me. After teaching them for two years, they were moved and had a burden for the children's ministry. They offered us two buildings out of their love for the Lord to accommodate the increasing number of children at MLCSC.

By God's appointment, my niece, Warunee was called to study in FEBC in the year 2000 through the invitation of Joshua Jupio, a FEBC graduate. We did not know what the Bible-Presbyterian Movement was until Calvary Tengah BPC came in 2003, led by Elder Boaz Boon and Sister May Eng Pang. That was the first time that BDC had heard about the B-P Movement.

By God's provision, we were granted the licence to evangelize to the Lahu people in 2003. I decided to change the Center's name to "Bethel Development Center" after I prayed for this ministry to be the place where God dwells. The ministry grew, the number of children slowly increased and, most importantly, many of them decided to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and publicly confess their faith by receiving water baptism.

In the same year, then Preacher Dennis Kwok from Calvary Jurong BPC came to conduct a Bible Conference for the Lahu pastors,



*Elder Chalaw and his family
Front row (L-R): Mrs Lantom and Mrs Le-ab Harichaikul
Second row: Nattaya, Elder Chalaw, Nattha and Warunee
Back row: Paul and Billy*

evangelists and ministers. This "sparked off" the B-P Movement spreading to the Lahu people. Many of us were blessed by the Word of God faithfully and truthfully preached by Preacher Kwok. I personally was very happy and thankful to God for the Truth preached and expounded. I was challenged to learn more about His Word. I realized that there is a great need for us and the Lahu people to have a proper understanding of God's Word. I have learned more about God's Truth through the B-P Movement. I also realized that the foundation of the B-P Movement is the faithful and uncompromised preaching of the whole counsel of God. Moreover, the Word of God is highly regarded. I found my knowledge of God's Word very limited and am thankful to God

for allowing us to know His truth through the B-P Movement. Truly, the verse in John 8:32 applies, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free".

We thank God for many blessings that He has bestowed upon BDC through the B-P Movement. Rev Dennis Kwok has been teaching Systematic Theology for the past five years without fail to Lahu pastors, evangelists, ministers, and those who are interested in learning God's Word. The fundamentals of the Christian faith have been taught to many of us who are serving the Lord among the Lahu people. This is how the B-P Movement has directly impacted the Lahu people. We thank God that many of us are getting to know the Truth in the precious Word of God.

In 2005, BDC was adopted as one of the ministries of Calvary Pandan BPC and since then, she has been fully supported both financially and spiritually. Thank God for the faithful teaching and preaching of the Word of God from CPBPC at our annual VBS, Family Camp and Gospel Rally. We are also grateful to be invited to Calvary Pandan's annual church camps. It is through such activities and the fellowship that my faith and conviction in God's Word has been strengthened. I realize how important it is for the faithful and obedient believer to make a stand for the Lord. I thank God for the many biblical doctrines, in particular, the doctrine of Biblical Separation which is so important for Christian living in the end times. Moreover, I am reminded to be ready for the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ because in the past, I did not know the importance and impact of Christ's Second Coming.

God has given first-fruits to BDC: Warunee and Billy. They have completed their studies at FEBC, and Paul, their youngest brother, is in the third year of studies for the Diploma of Theology. I thank God that Warunee and Billy are back in BDC to impart the knowledge of God's Word to the Lahu people. If the Lord tarries, I pray that a B-P Bible College will be established in Northern Thailand in order to train the Lahu people, that they may know the Truth and will stand for the Lord in these last days against many false teachings which are luring our Lahu people to serve the gods of this world. Sad to say, many of my friends, pastors and ministers have been lured away by the false teachings. They have departed from the faith simply because their faith was

not founded upon the foundation of the Lord Jesus Christ and His infallible, inerrant, inspired and preserved Word. Therefore, it is my prayer that through BDC, God's Truth will be faithfully and truthfully taught to the Lahu people as well as to the other tribes in Northern Thailand.

I thank the Lord for His wonderful grace in my life, and that He has led me to know His truth through the B-P Movement. Thank God for Rev Timothy Tow, the father of the B-P Movement in Singapore whom the Lord had used mightily to preach His truth. Thank God also for faithful men and women of God in other parts of the world who stand, live and even die for the Truth of God. The B-P Movement is not a philosophy but a living movement, obedient and holding fast to the faithful Word. May the Lord preserve His remnant in the B-P Movement to be faithful unto Him until the Lord returns.

*Elder Chalaw Harichaikul
Bethel Development Center
Chiang Rai, Thailand*

THE COMMUNITY OF THE BIBLE COLLEGE OF EAST AFRICA (BCEA) REJOICES...

...with you at this commemoration. We take this opportunity to review and to carefully reflect on the B-P Movement.

This Movement has upheld, and must continue to uphold, principles that are difficult to maintain in this generation: the authority of Scripture as the final Word for our faith and practice, and separation unto holiness—both personal and corporate. BCEA is a witness to the powerful expression of this Movement. The uncompromising stance and scholarship of Rev Dr Timothy Tow and Dr S H Tow have stood as examples for BCEA to follow. The continued extension of fellowship and support of the B-P Movement churches in Singapore have enriched BCEA. The teaching visits of Drs Jeffrey Khoo, Quek Suan Yew and Prabhudas Koshy have reminded our student body of the doctrinal distinctives of the B-P Movement. Through scholarship endowments and other gifts from B-P churches, many students at BCEA have been able to continue their studies and preparation for ministry.

We join you in praise and prayer for God's continued wisdom and blessing in the sustenance of the B-P churches and the B-P Movement in Singapore and in other parts of the world.

*Rev (Dr) Mark Kim Kyung-soo
Principal, Bible College of East Africa
Nairobi, Kenya*



East Africa Christian Alliance World Congress at BCEA, 2010

I TRULY THANK GOD FOR HIS PROVIDENCE IN...

...leading me to meet the late Rev (Dr) Timothy Tow, founder of the B-P Movement, founding pastor of Life BPC and founding Principal of FEBC, in Singapore in August 1999. It is by God's grace and providence that I came to be trained at the FEBC in July 2000 and to worship at Life BPC. Thank God for the special privilege to attend the 50th Anniversary Thanksgiving of Life BPC in Calvary Pandan BPC in October 2000.

Despite the many changes due to man's sinful, corrupt, depraved, arrogant and rebellious nature, God is still the same, the Lord Jesus Christ is still the same and God's Word, the Holy Scriptures, the Truth, is still the same, yesterday, today and forever. Praise the Lord! I am really indebted to God for the B-P Movement and for sound training at FEBC that had prepared me to be the pastor of

Brisbane BPC. I treasure and teach the following truths:

1. the divinely inspired and divinely preserved Word of God in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek texts underlying the KJV;
2. the Reformed Faith;
3. the Presbyterian Church government;
4. Biblical Separation, especially in these last days of compromise, deception and apostasy; and
5. the glorious Second Coming of the Saviour Jesus Christ.

May God keep me faithful and true to Him and His Truth to the end of my days. All glory to God alone. Amen.

*Rev Hien Nguyen
Pastor, Brisbane BPC
Australia*

I THANK THE LORD FOR ...

...this blessed occasion of the 60th year of the founding of the Bible- Presbyterian Church (BPC) of Singapore. I wish to share with all who love the B-P Movement the blessings that He has bestowed upon me.

The BPC is also a movement. I remember that the late Rev Timothy Tow, the founding pastor of the BPC of Singapore, has always taught us that the church should be a movement, lest it becomes a monument. May we always be "on the move" to defend the pure doctrines and to extend the Lord's work in missions.

I am most grateful to the Lord that He engrafted me into the BPC. Converted in a Presbyterian church in my teenage years, I was trained in a B-P seminary, the Far Eastern Bible College, and ordained as a Christian minister for the BPC in Indonesia. The Lord has used the BPC to equip me and to give me a mission in life. It is with a sense of pride and honour that I serve in the Bible-Presbyterian Church.

I am most thankful to the Lord that my theological training was with FEBC. I learned the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith, and have imbibed the spirit of honouring Christ. God has given me the courage for Biblical Separation, and I have been convinced of the necessity of accelerated missions. If the Lord did not bring me to FEBC, or had I enrolled in another school, I might now be "carried about with divers and strange doctrines" and be in the ministry without any sense of urgency and militancy.

Lastly, I am very thankful to the Lord that He provided mentors in

the form of pastors and elders of the BPC to build me up. I was received and ordained into the ministry in March 1992 and October 1996 respectively. Dr Tow Siang Hwa encouraged the B-P churches to build a church so big and beautiful in August 1994 that we have no lack of space to expand the Lord's work. Rev James Chan spent his time to help me in the pastoral ministry and mission work. Elder Cheng Wei Nien has been guiding me and served with me in Batam. Elder Su Ching Chun helped out spiritedly in the first ten years of the church before he was assigned to support other outreaches.

I can do no less than give thanks to the Lord for using the BPC to bless my life, and to shape and support the work of the Lord.

*Rev Kiantoro Lie
Pastor, Calvary Batam BPC
Batam, Indonesia*

COUNTING GOD'S BLESSINGS

Ten years ago, after serving the Lord for 17 years in a para-church organization and CNEC Church, I felt I needed a revival. I planned to enrol in the cell group training of the charismatic movement but the Lord led me to FEBC for short term study. Proverbs 16:9 reminds us, "A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps." To join a B-P Church and to not go astray with the charismatic movement is not by accident but by God's mercy. May glory be to God forever.

After joining the B-P Church, I constantly remind myself to preach the truth, "to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." (Jude 3) We are "small", but we pray that we will be like a grain of mustard seed, growing to become a great tree.

Thank God for providing our needs for the ministries in Sibü and Kuching, whether they be mission trips from Singapore or help to conduct the VBS. Furthermore, when my wife Phoebe had to seek treatment in Singapore for radiotherapy, the kindness and love received from the brethren there was heartwarming. Thank God for your love in the Lord Jesus. Matthew 25:40 says, "...In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." May God bless you for all that you have done.

Revelation 22:20: "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly...". Yes, Jesus will come soon. Let us stand fast to hold on to the Truth, looking forward to the return of Jesus Christ.

*Preacher Ling Soon Ing
Pastor, Calvary BPC, Sibü
Sarawak, Malaysia*



Sunday Service at Calvary BPC, Sibü, 2010



*Calvary Hanura Permai BPC (GAPPI),
25 December 2009*

WE ARE BOUND TO THANK GOD ALWAYS

Calvary Hanura Permai BPC (GAPPI), the missions station of Calvary Pandan BPC is bound to thank God always for the B-P Movement in the Far East and beyond (2 Thess 1:3). We thank God for the forefathers of the B-P Movement whom God has been using for church planting and for starting of the Bible College. We pray that God will continue to raise younger generations to further this Movement for God's glory until our Lord Jesus comes again.

As far as GAPPI is concerned, we are indebted to God because through Rev (Dr) Timothy Tow's mission trips to Kalimantan in the early 80s, the B-P Movement was introduced to this third

largest island in the world then. Dr SH Tow continues the path through Borneo B-P Missions conferences and by the LORD's will we will hold the 9th conference in December 2010.

We thank the LORD that He has also been blessing the B-P Movement through FEBC. The training in FEBC has equipped us to continue the life-long learning of God's Word and of feeding God's flock. In 2005, three persons enrolled in FEBC: Ajin, my wife Pipit and me. The Lord Jesus gave us a complete team, which includes my father Rev Elyakin Phang. God has added to us two more members to serve Him full-time: Akhiong and Ango, his wife. Both of them completed four and a half years of training at our in-house Bible College using FEBC's material.

God had called them to the full-time ministry after two of their daughters went home to be with the LORD within six months of each other.

We believe that God will plant more churches. The church planting movement should go hand in hand with the Bible College movement. And our prayer is that God will use all of us to be His faithful vessels to share God's eternal blessing through the B-P Movement.

*Preacher Peter Yoksan
Pastor, Calvary Hanura Permai BPC
(GAPPI)
Pontianak, Indonesia*

A TESTIMONY THAT HONOURS GOD

God raises His witnesses in every age for His glory. He is the Maker, Sustainer, and the Saviour of the world. He would not leave Himself without a witness when His enemies seem to prevail. The Bible-Presbyterian Church in Singapore was raised by God 60 years ago as God's standard against the unbiblical movement of churches when He used the late Rev Timothy Tow to lead a group of Christians to begin a witness for His truth.

After I was saved and baptized, I attended "big churches" that cared little for biblical teachings. Church life consisted more of socialising than anything else. I was disappointed and frustrated.

In 1984, a relative introduced me to a B-P church in my hometown in Malaysia. I was given the daily Bible reading guide (RPG) and "The Banner." I gradually understood the struggle between truth and error, and the importance of Biblical Separation.

When the Lord led me to go into the full-time ministry, I had a choice of three Bible colleges: The first rather liberal; the second "neutral"; the third FEBC. I thank the Lord for guiding me to FEBC. The four years in Bible-Presbyterian churches in Singapore also enlightened me. Thank God for those pastors, teachers and leaders who stand for the Truth all these years. In one way or another, I was taught and convicted to teach the Bible as the very Word of God – "Thus saith the Lord" and not "Thus saith man". May our leaders and members remember this vital principle.

*Rev Lee Kim Shong
Pastor, Calvary Jaya B-P Fellowship
Selangor, Malaysia*



Preacher Harrison drives worshippers to church every Sunday

THANKS BE TO OUR LORD...

...Jesus Christ who has entrusted us His ministry. Calvary Miri BPC was established on the theological teachings I received during my training at FEBC. Before this training, I was in a charismatic church. I heard gibberish tongues, prophesying, holy laughter, claims of visions and saw people "slain by the spirit". Thank God that through FEBC, I recognize the unbiblical teachings and the half-truths of the ecumenical movement's doctrines.

The trumpet of truth of God's Word must be sounded today! Although it's a challenging stand to take, the truth of God's Word brings comfort! It says, "Narrow is the way,

which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Congratulations, as you celebrate the 60th B-P Movement Anniversary. Thank the Lord for His marvelous works!

*Preacher Harrison Kasip Wan
Calvary Miri BPC
Sarawak, Malaysia*

CHINESE CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF JORDAN

One of the seven roots of the Singapore B-P Movement is the Chinese Root. This stems from Dr John Sung of China, under whose ministry were the founding fathers of the B-P Movement converted.

From a little mustard seed in the Life Church English Service in October 1950, the B-P Movement had grown into a family tree of many churches and missions, including the Far Eastern Bible College.

Calvary Pandan BPC was founded in 1979, and in obedience to God's command in Matthew 28:18-20, the church was active in missions. The Lord honoured the faithful sowing of this work for over 30 years by raising up many B-P churches all over the world such as Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, Australia, Saipan, United Kingdom and Canada.

Among these outreaches is the Chinese Christian Church of Jordan in the Middle East, founded by Rev Pang Kok Hiong in 2001. As a result, a total of more than 2,000 Chinese from mainland China who worked here have come to know Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour in the last ten years.

Praise be unto God our Heavenly Father!

*Rev Clarence Chee Khuen Wab
Pastor, Chinese Christian Church of Jordan
Irbid, Jordan*

Rev & Mrs Jeffrey Khoo, Mrs Iry Tom, together with FEBC students in CCCJ during Friday worship service on 27 November 2009

WE PRAISE AND THANK THE LORD...

...for His grace, mercy and lovingkindness over the past 11 years, and for the B-P Movement, without which Ebenezer would not have been established.

Ebenezer owes its existence and progress to the blessings of our Lord and Master. We started as a very small group of people in a local Community Hall, often competing for space with secular activities which were deemed more prominent and important.

We thank God for the faithful men who fervently obeyed God's calling and planted B-P churches worldwide, standing firm in their faith and in their teaching and preaching of the truth.

May God shower His blessings upon B-P churches all over the world; to grow from strength to strength, not just in numbers but in spiritual stature. May they hold fast the truth that our

B-P founders fought for and we pray they may neither waver nor falter, but be strengthened in the Lord. May the Lord bless and protect all B-P churches, their leaders and members of the congregation, as we await the return of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

*Elder Edward Meyale
Ebenezer BPC
Melbourne, Australia*



60 YEARS OF THE B-P MOVEMENT IN SINGAPORE...

...have seen the faithful stand on the doctrinal truths which brought about its establishment, but the unfaithful, who have caused divisions, to depart from them. The Book of Proverbs warns about a lethal cocktail of deadly sins the Lord hates, with the seventh the most toxic, being “he that soweth discord among brethren” (Prov 6:19b).

By the grace of God, we celebrated our 11th Anniversary in September this year with our guest speaker Rev Quek Suan Yew speaking on “The Holiness of God”. Guest speakers throughout the years have all been faithful B-P ministers.

Based in Perth, we are a multi-national church which reaches out to both the community and overseas students, many of whom are from Singapore. These students have been a blessing during their time here as we serve the Lord together.

Having graduated from FEBC, Pastor Errol was ordained into the ministry by the late Rev Timothy Tow who was faithful until the Lord called him Home. Pastor Errol’s ties with alma mater are maintained through the annual DVBC and FEBC retreats. Attending annual camps of True-Life BPC has also become a yearly season of learning God’s Word and fellowshiping with like-minded brethren.

May the Lord continue to bless and protect the B-P Movement until He returns!

*Rev Errol Stone
Faith Presbyterian Church
Perth, Australia*

MY FIRST EXPOSURE TO THE B-P MOVEMENT...

...was in the 1990s. Then a seminary student in my country, I was exposed in sorts to B-P doctrines as Rev Timothy Tow had spoken a number of times at the seminary.

In 2005, the Lord gave me the opportunity to pursue further theological studies at FEBC. Those three years of study were blessed years indeed. It was during this period of study that I had the privilege to personally see, hear and learn from the faithful teaching and preaching of God’s Word from various B-P ministers. It was also during this time that I saw the B-P Movement’s zeal for souls, her courageous, militant and separatist stand for, and proclamation of, the Truth, as well as the tireless exposure of errors, and faithful defence of the forever perfect Word of God. I thank God for the Reformation spirit that is still alive in the B-P Movement, though some have sadly fallen by the wayside as the battle for the faith continues. Yes, the battle for the faith, even the defence of “the faith once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3) will not be over until the Lord comes.

I have a good friend in Lal Lian Uk, who also studied at FEBC and caught the same Reformation spirit. Touched and blessed by the B-P Movement, both of us sought God’s favour to bring reformation to our church and Bible College in Myanmar after our studies.

When we returned to Myanmar, we did all we could to reform the church and Bible College. However, when all attempts failed, we felt there was no other way but to separate and to start a new ministry in obedience to our Lord’s injunction. Thus, First BPC,

Insein, Yangon, was born on 28 June 2009.

Looking back, we thank God for raising the B-P Movement in the true spirit of the 16th Century Reformation. The good fruits of the B-P Movement, among other things, are the many souls that have been brought into God’s Kingdom, and the many Christians restored to the Truth of God’s Word. Our prayer is that the Lord may be pleased to continue to mightily use and bless the B-P Movement for His own glory. Amen.

*Rev Biak Lamm Thang
Pastor, First BPC
Yangon, Myanmar*



Gethsemane BPC (Cebu)

REMEMBERING THE LORD’S GOODNESS

Of the many things I am thankful to the Lord for because of the Bible-Presbyterian Movement, I want to mention a few for the glory of God:

1. The establishment of the FEBC, by our beloved Rev Timothy Tow, where many of us from third-world countries can study God’s Word and be trained for the full-time ministry.
2. The sound and strong theology which are distinct standards of Bible-Presbyterianism, like the Westminster Confession of Faith, Covenantal and Reformed Theology, Calvinism, Pre-millennialism, Biblical Separation and the Verbal Plenary Inspiration / Preservation (VPI/VPP) of the Scriptures.
3. The zeal for the work of missions and evangelism as exemplified by the life and labour of Rev Tow, as well as

others during the early days of the Movement.

4. The boldness and courage to stand for and defend the Truth, in the midst of the many false doctrines that are taught; “to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.” (Jude 3)
5. The many practical and pastoral lessons learned from Rev Tow, our beloved principal, spiritual father, mentor and friend.

I am thankful to the Lord for the great privilege to serve Him in the work of the Gospel here in my own country, bringing people out of the bondage of false religions, leading them to the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and nurturing them in the truth of God’s Word in a Bible-believing, Bible-defending, Bible-Presbyterian Church.

All Glory Be Unto God!

*Rev Reggor B Galarpe
Gethsemane BPC (Cebu)
Cebu City, Philippines*

THE BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN MOVEMENT IS GOD-CENTRED!

Praise God for the 60 years of work He has accomplished through the Bible-Presbyterian churches. I was introduced to the Movement when I came to FEBC for theological training (1999-2003). By God’s providence, I was welcomed into Gethsemane BPC which sponsored my studies. My fellowship in the Church and training in FEBC helped personalize the great spiritual assets of Bible-Presbyterianism.

The B-P Movement is Gospel-centred. There is great passion for lost souls and ardent labour to bring the Gospel to sinners. The Movement is marked by a deep faith in God’s Word and a firm commitment to live and preach the Truth. The doctrine of the Verbal and Plenary Preservation of the Bible made my faith firm and my preaching and teaching very sure. The wholesome theological training I received in FEBC inflamed my zeal as a Bible-believing Christian to faithfully preach and defend the Bible as a loyal servant of Jesus Christ.

Having completed my studies, together with my wife Gete, I returned to Ethiopia to bring the blessings of the B-P Movement with the full support of Gethsemane BPC. By God’s enabling grace, we have been preaching the Gospel among our people for the past five years. The Lord has blessed our labour with the establishment of Gethsemane BPC of Ethiopia that has two congregations at present. Moreover, with the support of our mother church and like-minded brethren in Singapore, we are in the process of establishing a Bible College to train and equip preachers



Rev Ephrem (1st from the right) with Rev & Mrs Timothy Tow among other graduates from FEBC

and teachers of the Word in the B-P faith. All glory and praise to God for the great impact the B-P Movement has brought to my life and ministry.

*Rev Ephrem Chiracho Ouchula
Pastor, Gethsemane BPC of Ethiopia
Ethiopia*

**BLESSED BY
THE B-P MOVEMENT:
A MISSIONARY TO THE
MAINLAND CHINESE**

Interestingly, it was a Charismatic Presbyterian friend who brought me to the Inaugural Mandarin Service at Calvary Pandan BPC on the first Lord's Day of October 1980. I was 17 then, and have since been "growing" and blessed by the B-P Movement for 30 years of my Christian life.

The first three years were at Calvary BPC (Mandarin) while studying at a Pre-U Centre. I was tenderly nurtured by Rev Peter Tong, Elder Cheng Wei Nien and the caring brethren at Calvary Jurong (Mandarin). The Lord called me to full-time service in 1985 but I did not really understand the B-P's separatist stand. It was only at a meeting in March 1986 with our dear senior pastor Dr SH Tow that I was thoroughly convinced and "converted" to become a B-P. And this led to my enrollment into the B-P's SAFTI, Far

Eastern Bible College, to be equipped for this holy ministry under the godly influence of the late Rev Timothy Tow as well as most of the B-P pastors who were my mentors and lecturers from July 1986 to November 1989. At FEBC, I was trained to be reformed and to hold fast to the supremacy of the Holy Bible which is forever inerrant and infallible.

The many examples of fulfilling Jesus' Great Commission in Rev Tow and other B-P pastors helped give me the desire and vision to go into the mission fields which are ripe and plenteous. Thank God for the opportunities to be a part of the ministry of Calvary Batam BPC and Northern Thailand Missions in the earlier years. Thank God also for the Saipan, China, Jordan, Guam and Cyprus Chinese Gospel outreaches where our B-P doctrines and practices continue to be taught over the last 20 years. I thank God for giving me a B-P wife in Guek Mui. She has been my "better half" in the mission fields these 20 years.

All praise to my LORD Jesus for the blessings He has bestowed upon the B-P Movement which has been a channel to bless my entire Christian life. May the Lord continue to bless all the faithful B-P churches, ministers and members in Singapore and beyond until Jesus returns.

*Rev Pang Kok Hiong
Pastor, CCCS
Saipan*



Rev and Mrs Pang with their sons

TESTIMONIES of Members & Friends



Easter Sunrise service at Woodlands, 1981

CREATION MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

Being part of a ministry defending Genesis authority makes us aware of increasing pressures to compromise on the foundational truths of the gospel. Our many years of intermittent contact with the B-P churches in Singapore have led us to commend and salute their unwavering resolve to “stand fast” on the Word of God (2 Thess 2:15).

*Dr Carl Wieland
Managing Director
Creation Ministries International
Australia*

*Dr Gary Bates
CEO
Creation Ministries International
USA*

I THANK THE LORD...

...for the many years of association with Bible-Presbyterian churches in Singapore, beginning in the early 1980s and ending in the mid 1990s. Dr and Mrs SH Tow were our sponsors and hosts during those years, including two lecture tours in Chinese churches in Australia in May 1993, and from May to June 1995.

To my knowledge, B-P churches have always stood firm on the Word of God, and therefore on God's revelation concerning the literal Creation Week, the Curse, and the universal Flood, in a day of great compromise on those vital issues. They have also stood for a literal kingdom on earth following the Second Coming of Christ. These are truths which our blessed Lord affirmed, and which we gladly reaffirm as the day of His glorious return draws near. He told us: “After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” (Matt 6:9-10).

From Singapore, the saving message of the Gospel has reached out to Africa, India, and much of Asia and the South Pacific. That is because the Word is being faithfully taught. For that we are thankful. Norma and I are now in our late eighties. We humbly ask the saints of Singapore to keep us in your prayers. Like all of you, we want to say, at the end of our time of service here, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith” (2 Tim 4:7).

Dr John C Whitcomb

PSALM 40:5,
“MANY, O LORD MY GOD,
ARE THY WONDERFUL
WORKS...”

...which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.”

As we here at Hilltop in the Philippines rejoice with the Bible-Presbyterians in Singapore on their 60th Anniversary, we are reminded of the Psalm that speaks of the many wonderful works that God has done. We are so appreciative of the involvement of the B-P Movement in the ministry here in the Philippines. It seems like only yesterday that the buildings were dedicated for the use of the Lord. Yet, it was in 1994 when the buildings were finished and dedicated, largely due to the faithfulness of Calvary and other B-P churches. The B-P Movement is truly a testimony founded for God's Glory. It has truly been behind the ministry in the Philippines both financially and with many prayers. The B-P churches have often sent ministers and brethren to have fellowship with and encourage the believers here. I know that God will continue to bless you all as you minister not only in Singapore but throughout the world. In 2007, the chapel building at Hilltop was named Calvary Pandan Hall as a testimony of how God has used the B-P brethren to help and encourage the work in the Philippines.

*Rev Bill Ebert
The Center for Biblical Studies
The Philippines*

B-P FAITH: THE CRITICAL FABRIC IN OUR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

The near-death incident of our only child and son in the year 2000 was the turning point in our lives. From being worldly, we have become spiritual, and are now constantly seeking God for His comfort and hope.

It was the start of our journey of faith in Christ, experiencing God's Hand in every moment of our lives, clinging onto Mark 5:36, "Do not be afraid, only believe". By His grace and mercy, not only did He lead us one day at a time through those very difficult times, in His perfect timing, He also brought us to a weekly Bible study conducted by Rev Quek Suan Yew from Calvary Pandan BPC some five years ago. It was a spiritual eye-opener for us because of the way God's Word was expounded. From the weekly Bible study, we have progressed, though irregularly, to attend Sunset Gospel Bible Fellowship. Then we attended our first church camp, before eventually becoming members of Calvary Pandan BPC on 4 July 2010.

Even though we are spiritual infants with limited knowledge on BP-ism, yet in this very short period of time, we have learnt many important doctrines and issues about the last days. We were not aware of the following issues, even though we were in our previous church for almost ten years:

1. VPI and VPP;
2. 16th Century Reformation;
3. Dangers of Ecumenical Movement, World Council of Churches and Charismatic Movement;
4. Perversions of the Bible with modern English versions;

5. False doctrines, false teachers and the falling away.

In addition, we have gained spiritual discernment through the various Bible classes from both CPBPC and FEBC. We thank God for faithful men who are earnestly contending for the faith, defending God's Word and faithfully helping the poor in spirit to grow. BP-ism is the critical fabric in our spiritual growth, to make us faithful witnesses and soldiers for Christ. We thank God for leading us to Calvary Pandan BPC.

Ab Sang and family

TESTIMONY OF BLESSINGS FROM THE B-P MOVEMENT

2 Corinthians 4:13, "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak."

I accepted Christ as my personal Lord and Saviour while studying in a Methodist school. Soon after, I became disillusioned with the Methodists due to their increasing emphasis on liberal theology and the social gospel. Christianity surely could not be so subjective: how could we be so guided by our own hearts and minds about what God's Word means? If Christians are meant to solve social problems like poverty and homosexuality, why then did Christ and the Apostles emphasize evangelism and Biblical Separation instead?

Then I was invited to Sunset Gospel Hour (now Sunset Gospel Bible Fellowship) at Calvary Pandan BPC in 1987. For the first time, I heard Christianity preached "according as it is written": practical instructions

for living a godly life based on the objective truth of God's Holy Word. No longer was Christianity subjective, dependent on fallible man's wishes and sentiments. B-P church leaders and laymen who studied the objective truth of the Bible and who believed in every jot and tittle, were thus able to unite in the "the same spirit of faith". How precious this unity was, and still is today!

Dn Milton Ang

MY TESTIMONY

I thank God for the privilege of being a part of the B-P family in Singapore, and more specifically in Calvary Pandan BPC. I am grateful for the many bountiful blessings over the years, including:

1. The defence of the Bible – If the pure Word of God had not been preserved for us, we cannot know that we have the "faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 1:3).
2. FEBC – Without the training of faithful shepherds, we would not have the pure Word of God preached from the pulpit, both now and to our next generation as the Lord tarries.
3. Faithful and solid preaching of God's Word from the pulpit – Without this, it would be a hard struggle for me to grow in my daily walk with the Lord.

May God protect and preserve the B-P Movement and Calvary Pandan BPC for the glory of His name until the Lord Jesus Christ returns.

Aw Choy Foong

MAY GOD KEEP B-Ps FAITHFUL

I thank God that I am one of the many recipients of His richest blessings through the B-P Movement. To specially mention just one blessing, I would say it is none other than the teachings of the inerrant, infallible, true Word of God.

I remember very clearly that it was in Calvary Pandan BPC where I heard the messages concerning Biblical Separation, the Ecumenical Movement and the One World order. Sadly, such messages and practices were never mentioned when I visited other "fundamental" churches.

During this year's church camp, which had the theme "Reinforcing Sound Doctrines In Perilous Times", God helped me to understand the whole truth in the Bible; that Separation means to divide Protestants from Catholics, Fundamental from Ecumenical, the True from the False, the Obedient from the Disobedient, and the Faithful from the Unfaithful.

Let us therefore not take God's blessings for granted, but let us continue to pray that He will keep our leaders and His churches faithful to the original B-P standards until we see our Lord Jesus face to face. Amen.

Jane Choong

THANK GOD FOR THE B-P WITNESS

My late husband, Pastor Peter Clements, was encouraged to keep fighting the Lord's battle while ever he drew breath, thanks to the steadfast witness, and living faith of the members of the B-P Church in

Singapore. During our early days in Cootamundra, he handed out articles from the B-P Banner, while I prayed at home. Ecumenism, Charismatic and Romanism were accepted forms of Christianity in Cootamundra. No one had ever challenged false teaching before, and a full front page of the local papers was taken up berating the one minister in town who was standing against ecumenism. Thank God for the B-P Movement and for the teaching of the Far Eastern Bible College, where we were both taught sound doctrine and shown, through love, the need to separate from false teachers and false doctrine.

Peter was humbled by the love extended to him and our family, and the overwhelming support we received. He had intended to come alone to say, "Thank you", when the B-P Church provided the means for us to purchase a van for our six children and church use. By the grace of God, all eight of us were able to come for camp in 2002. He had prayed "Lord, never let me doubt your faithfulness again". During that trip he realized he was unwell, but it was a full year before terminal carcinoid syndrome was diagnosed and death thwarted several times. He came three more times, rejoicing to be with you all, knowing each time could be his last, but wanting to exhort the brethren to keep up the good fight for the Faith once delivered unto the saints. We thank God for your living example of following Jesus.

May the Lord help us to continue to "earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3), "and having done all, to stand." (Eph 6:13)

*Anne Clements and family
Cootamundra, Australia*

AT THE AGE OF SEVEN...

...I came to know of the Lord. I did not know what it means to go to church. Most of the time, I went to church because I wanted to follow my mother, and to have fun and play with friends. But as I continued going to church, I learned that all sinners are bound for hell. Pastor said that if I do not believe in Jesus Christ I will be cast into hell. I learned more things about the Word of God as I continued to attend the church service.

I then joined the Sunday English service. To join the English service is one of the blessings because I also have the opportunity to learn and improve my English. I also thank God for other B-P churches, especially brethren from Calvary Pandan BPC and Calvary Jaya BPC, who teach the Word of God. Our church is small but their visits have encouraged me a lot and our knowledge of God has increased. I hope I will continue to grow in the Lord, to have a strong faith and that the Word of God which I have learnt will help me to be a fruitful Christian. Amen.

*Elwinna
Calvary Miri BPC*

I GREET YOU ALL IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST

I came to know of the Lord when I was 11 years old. However, going to church was only for fun, and to follow my mother and siblings. How I eventually came to know God in a personal way was when Pastor preached about the end times. After I heard that message, I became afraid that I would go to hell, and I accepted Him as my

Lord. If I believe in Christ, I will live with Him. I became more faithful when the Singapore team came to teach us about Jesus Christ. I truly thank Pastor and his wife who are always concerned about my faith. They never fail to teach us God's Word, though at times we disappoint them. In every circumstance they are always willing and available to help.

*Elvin (14 year old)
Calvary Miri BPC*

MY EARLY DAYS WITH REV (DR) TIMOTHY TOW

In 1958, I was brought to Life BPC, Prinsep Street by a classmate in ACS. At that time, Life Church produced a weekly newsletter, "Malaysia Christian". It so happened that the church typist had resigned and I was asked to take her place. I worked under the strict supervision of Pastor Tow. He would not allow me to make any mistakes as every word mattered.

During that same period, the World Council of Churches (WCC) was active worldwide, advocating that many roads lead to heaven and the ultimate formation of the "One World Church" which embraces all faiths. That was a departure from the biblical teaching, for Jesus says in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me." It was then that I realized that I had joined a church under a God-fearing man who was a defender of the great historic Christian faith. While Rev Tow was actively involved in defending the Word of God in Singapore and Malaysia, over in America, the International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC) under the

leadership of Dr Carl McIntire was also exposing the false teachings of the WCC.

Both Pastor Tow and Dr McIntire stood fast, "For the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." (Rev 1:9b)

*Eio Eng Hua
True Life BPC*

THE B-P MOVEMENT HAS BEEN A BLESSING...

...to me. I have been taught foundations of biblical truth which I never learned in my previous church. There, a week after my water baptism, I was "baptized with the Holy Spirit" and should have been able to speak in tongues but to my embarrassment, I could not! I felt very unworthy, but on hindsight, how foolish was I to have believed in something so very wrong. Through Calvary Miri BPC, I have come to know why correct doctrines are important. Unless we know the Word of God well, we will be tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine. My desire is to be truly grounded in God's Word.

I thank God for our pastor and his wife who are seriously and constantly teaching us, from whom I have learned many precious Bible lessons. In the past, I always felt hopeless and disappointed when faced with difficulties. But after knowing the truth, difficulties are but a test to nurture my faith.

I thank God for my children and that they have the privilege to learn the truth. When I was their age, my faith was zero because no one taught me the truth. I hope my children will continue to grow in the Lord and that

they would put on the whole armour of God to stand against evil influences and false doctrines (Eph 6:11).

*Evelyn Jan
Calvary Miri BPC*

I THANK GOD FOR...

...raising the B-P Movement of which I became a part in 1986. It was all of God's grace and mercy that He saved me and led me to a B-P church. As a new believer then, I thank God that my faith could be nurtured and strengthened in Calvary Pandan BPC from day one with the pure Word of God. Truly, I have been much blessed by being well taught and firmly grounded in the truth by faithful preachers.

Through the B-P Movement, the following distinctives have been deeply impressed upon me and have moulded my faith:

1. Bible-believing
Holding the Bible in the highest esteem because it is God's Word and the supreme and final authority in faith and life.
2. Bible-practising
Not just having knowledge, obedience is no less important. Especially prominent is the practice of Biblical Separation from all false "isms" and compromise. God's work must be done in God's way.
3. Bible-teaching
Teaching the whole counsel of God, preaching against sin and sounding the alarm against every form of compromise and apostasy.
4. Bible-defending
Unwavering defence of the

Bible against attacks on its inerrancy, infallibility, inspiration, preservation, sufficiency and authority.

Sadly, some B-P churches no longer exhibit all these distinctives today. Yet our Almighty God is never without His remnant in every age and land. May the Lord be pleased to preserve the B-P Movement, that it will still hold true to the principles upon which it was founded, "for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" till He comes (Rev 1:9b).

Foo Tee Jiam

BLESSINGS OF THE B-P MOVEMENT

I thank God for raising Bethel BPC in 1986 and for Dr Tow whom God used greatly to help me and my children during those traumatic days after our car accident in 1988.

With his encouragement, my three children started to have a closer walk with the Lord and are now actively serving Him in Bethel BPC. Thank God also for providing a son-in-law and daughter-in-law, who are serving Him in Bethel BPC as well.

God has provided Ebenezer BPC to help me grow in faith when I went through trying circumstances, which I now appreciate and understand (1 Thess 5:18).

God has strengthened my faith and helped me to appreciate prayer and God's Word, as well as to understand that He can do the impossible.

*Molly Gan
Ebenezer BPC*

THANK GOD FOR THE B-P MOVEMENT

As a tertiary student, I thank God for the Fundamental Christian Ministry (FCM) - a campus outreach to tertiary students set up by the B-P Church. It has truly been a great joy and refreshment to find comfort in God's Word through FCM.

Growing up in a B-P church, I am also thankful for how the Bible is held in highest regard, and for the many warnings against unscriptural practices. However, I sometimes feel that we B-Ps have a tendency to know doctrines intellectually, but do not practise them in our lives. It is therefore my prayer that God will give us grace to show forth in word and deed what we believe, and that He will continue to mercifully uphold the B-P Church till He returns!

James 2:26, "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

Joanne Khor

GOD'S LOVE LIFTED ME IN THE B-P CHURCH

Thank God for these five wonderful years in Calvary Tengah BPC since I first heard God's Word on the first Sunday of September 2005. How time flies. I am very grateful for the spiritual food which I have been receiving week after week since I came to know our gracious Lord.

Indeed, I was blessed to know the Lord in the B-P Church through my daughter, Jiahui. Being rather timid, I used to live in fear and frustration, but the Lord Jesus has set me free from

the fears I experienced for many years. He has given me peace, unspeakable joy, and hope in Him. God's love never fails to lift me from my fears and distresses.

By His amazing grace, I have learnt many precious lessons. God has taught me to forgive and to love others. God's precious Word helps me to control my temper and I have learned to be more patient and forbearing. God took away my tears and has showered me with His love. He has given me a new lease of life which I know I do not deserve. I cannot thank God enough for His assurance of our eternal salvation. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Counting God's blessings is a way of thanking God and remembering His goodness and mercy in my life. I find much comfort, strength and faith through prayer. Many things would have not been accomplished if not for prayer. I feel great joy when prayers are answered. I thank God that He is a prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God. I'm thankful for the privilege of prayer, that we can "come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb 4:16).

Finally, I thank God for raising many faithful leaders in the B-P Church, who faithfully preach and feed us with God's preserved Word. Our souls are blessed and we are always encouraged to press on for our Lord. Amen.

*Mrs Cindy Lau
Calvary Tengah BPC*

WE ARE GRATEFUL AND THANKFUL...

...to God for founding the Bible-Presbyterian Movement. "This is the LORD's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes" (Ps 118:23).

We were baptized two decades ago in Calvary Pandan BPC. Until this day, we are still richly blessed by:

1. The faithful pulpit ministry at the morning and evening services; the many uplifting hymns compiled in the Revival Hymns and Choruses; the ministry of Tabernacle and FEBC Bookrooms and the availability of night classes at Far Eastern Bible College.
2. The exemplary lives and work of God's chosen servants who minister faithfully and sacrificially for our benefit (Eph 4:12, 13). In particular, we remember:
 - The late Rev Timothy Tow who gave us a glimpse of the Apostle Paul's life in his preaching and writings. "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Cor 11:1).
 - The late Mrs Tow-Tan Cheng Im who encouraged us with her godly, quiet and composed demeanour. "She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness" (Pro 31:26).
3. The Church planting and watering of the gospel seed with the manifold increase by God (1 Cor 3:6), both locally and abroad, particularly in China through missionary work in Saipan, Guam and Jordan, which gladden our hearts.

Patrick & Jenny Law

A TESTIMONY FOUNDED FOR GOD'S GLORY

We live in a day of forgetfulness, yet God's Word is clear that His children are not to "forget the Lord thy God" (Deut 8:14) but to "remember the Lord thy God" (Deut 8:18). The result of forgetting God is ingratitude and we will rob God of His glory: "And thou say in thy heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth" (Deut 8:17).

It is by God's grace and mercy that we can have this joyous 60th Anniversary of the B-P Movement in Singapore. And I thank God for how He has used the B-P Church in Singapore to nurture my spiritual life, which is more than half my physical life!

Although I was saved in an AOG church, our merciful God plucked me (a two-week-old babe in Christ then) out of it and put me into the B-P Church where I could be fed with the sincere milk of the Word. Without the B-P Church, where would I be today? What sort of a "Christian" would I be today? What would my ministry be today? O, how I shudder at the thought of it!

I praise and thank God for the evangelistic and church-planting ministry of the B-P Movement. For right there, just a two-minute walk from my home was a B-P church, planted in the seventies in Singapore's "wild wild west." And there, God began to use the B-P Church to minister to my spiritual growth and health. How else can I respond but with gratitude that 60 years ago, God founded the B-P Church in Singapore and I am to be a beneficiary of it.

On this 60th Anniversary, I see the slippery spiritual slope that many churches have gotten onto and are fast sliding down it. I cry to my faithful God for His mercy to preserve the B-P Church which He has founded, and to keep it faithful to Him and His Word so that His Word may be magnified above His name, and that all glory may be given unto Him for the founding of the B-P Church in Singapore.

Carol Lee
Truth BPC

AS A BENEFICIARY OF THE B-P MOVEMENT ...

...for nearly 30 years now, it is sometimes easy to lose sight of the magnitude of this great work of God in the final stretch of church history. My faith has been bolstered these many years with nothing short of Sola Scriptura and I do not take it for granted. This truly is the "Old Faith", the faith of the Reformers, the faith of our fathers. To think that we have been counted among God's remnant fills me with profound awe and gratitude. We must realize that the B-P Movement ranks among the great revivals of church history and God has placed us in the midst of it. We must be ever thankful, and as we see the circle of God's remnant becoming smaller, let us be ever vigilant. May God find us faithful when He returns!

Lee Kong Sing

I THANK GOD FOR...

...leading my family and me to Calvary Pandan BPC five years ago

through my brother. Before we came to this church, my son was attending New Creation; my daughter was church-hopping with friends. My husband and I stayed put in a Baptist church where we were "stunted" Christians for over 30 years. Whenever I stepped into a Christian bookroom to buy a Bible, I would be very confused with the many different Bible versions. In the Baptist church, we had the liberty of using any version we fancied. In all those years there, we had never heard of the Reformation, and did not experience what it is like to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. God opened our eyes to behold wondrous things out of His law through the faithful preaching of God's Word by Dr Tow and Rev Quek. We have grown to be more spiritual, and knowledgeable of God's Word.

I do not wish to worship in any church other than Calvary Pandan BPC as we have received many blessings from God through the teaching and preaching of His Word by faithful and God-fearing preachers.

Grace Lim

PRAISE GOD HE LED US TO...

...Calvary Pandan BPC in 1999! How we have been much blessed and encouraged through the faithful preaching these past 11 years. Constantly, we remember both our Pastors, our Elders, Deacons and Preachers in our prayers, and that all of us will remain true to Him who is the same yesterday, today and forever. Glory to His name!

When my family settled in Calvary Pandan, we stopped "running

to and fro". Even in these days of spiritual "famine", our nourishment has been amply supplied by our beloved Pastors and other faithful men with like passions. Sinners have been saved by grace who have the fear of the LORD in their hearts. Simply and with childlike faith they preach "the salvation of which the prophets have inquired and searched diligently" (1 Pet 1:10a), and "things the angels desire to look into" (1 Pet 1:12b). Our generation of true believers is greatly privileged and blessed to be living in this most exciting and momentous period of history which will culminate in the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. May our heavenly Father continue to bless and prosper the good work of the many valiant and faithful under-shepherds in the B-P Movement. Amen.

Michael LB Lim

THANK GOD FOR FEBC AND THE B-P CHURCH

Until I came to FEBC and the B-P Church, I had no clear understanding of "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). I was under the influence of Charismatic, Neo-evangelicalism, Humanism, Neo-Orthodoxy, Ecumenism and Liberalism. I thought I was being a "missions-minded" Christian. I was completely ignorant of the truth of God's Word. In the seminary I studied in China, I had learnt to accept "higher criticism" and the other "isms."

Without a firm belief in the Word of God, I was fed Charismatic doctrines, and taught strange and dangerous "Christian living" teachings.

I was led by "feelings and voices" in finding God's will in my life.

During my first semester at FEBC, I learnt that the gift of tongues had ceased according to 1 Corinthians, and I stopped my practice of speaking "gibberish." In the past, I had been taught to belittle or ignore the importance of syntax and meaning of words in understanding language, and to pay more and more attention to subjective feeling. This was extremely harmful to my spiritual life.

I am now in my third semester, and I really appreciate the teachings of the FEBC which enable me to read and study the Word of God with understanding. I thank God for His guidance to come to FEBC. Thank God for the precious stand of this College.

I pray that the B-P Movement will stand fast in this generation until the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Lin Yang
True Life BPC

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER!

For close to half a century of my Christian life, I knew nothing about the B-P Movement. The only comments I had heard were not complimentary: B-P churches are legalistic, judgmental and self-righteous.

I thank God that in a miraculous way, I was led to Calvary Pandan and subsequently to FEBC where I experienced for myself what Bible-Presbyterianism is all about.

As I reflected on the last five to six years, I must say that God has been so gracious and has enabled me to enjoy the manifold blessings which I have received from the people, the

preaching and the practices of the B-P Movement.

People: I have been much challenged and edified in my faith through the lives of my pastors as well as the lecturers in FEBC. Their dedication and commitment, their passion and preparedness to be burnt out for the Lord are remarkable and exemplary.

Preaching: My entry into the B-P circle uncovered a wealth of knowledge about my faith. The Bible and its doctrines took on a wider and deeper meaning and opened my mind to understand issues which I had not grappled with before.

Practices: The sacredness and solemnity with which the Lord's Supper is observed, the doctrine of Baptism, especially Infant Baptism, the annual observance of the Reformation and the practice of Biblical Separation were all put into meaningful perspectives.

I can only thank God that though I was late in "admission", I was not left to remain in ignorance! All praise and glory to Him!

Irene Lim

I WAS A PRODIGAL SON OF THE B-P CHURCH

Saved as a 16 year old teenager in Calvary Jurong BPC, I had been a recipient of excellent and faithful biblical teachings of the Reformed faith through the ministry of her Youth Fellowship and regular Bible studies.

However, I was foolish to under-estimate the snare of ecumenism and neo-evangelicalism by leaving the church in the second half of 2005 (around the time that Truth BPC was established).

I thought, "Why fight so hard?"

Having spent five years in the "wilderness", I returned to the B-P fold this year, convicted and mindful of the great necessity to earnestly contend for the most holy and pure faith.

I would have been like the waves, tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine and sleight of man, if not for faithful teachers who had diligently schooled me in my formative years as a Christian, and if not for God's protection over me and my family.

There is a great spiritual battle to be fought today - the battle for the truth and purity of the faith according to Scriptures. I want to join arms for the battle, to be on the Lord's side.

The B-P Movement is surely a holy and noble endeavour. God fuelled and flamed a holy desire and vision in Rev Timothy Tow for such a time as this.

May God keep me faithful to Him for His glory.

Adrian Poh

I THANK AND PRAISE GOD FOR...

...the B-P Movement which has helped establish my faith firmly in the infallible Word of God.. I have derived much joy, nourishment, healing and direction from the Bible which many Christians miss, perhaps due to their lack of trust in the power of God's Word. Thank God also for raising up faithful leaders to preach and exalt the Word with all purity and boldness, and for being living testimonies of the Word itself, that they may indeed be an example for us to follow.

God bless their labour of love!

Sob Han Jie

I CAME TO KNOW GOD WHEN...

...I was 11 years old through my uncle Pastor Harrison, and his wife, aunty Charlene. I stayed with them for a few months in the church on Riam Road Jalan Spring in Morsjaya. I was taught how to read the Bible and also about the end times. Initially, I did not know why I needed to go to church, but after a while, I began to understand. One reason, among others, is to sing praises unto God with all my heart. My pastor taught that while worshipping God, I must not play around because God sees everything. He also taught that our body is the temple of the Holy Ghost and it is for us to worship God.

*Sylvester Simon (12 year old)
Calvary Miri BPC*

THE B-P CHURCH MOVEMENT HAS BLESSED ME

It is with great amazement and gratitude that I share the B-P influence in my life – may God's name be magnified and glorified!

I was literally brought up in the B-P Church even though I am a first generation believer. God marvellously saved me from a very young age through a school teacher who was worshipping in a B-P church.

The most important impact of the B-P Church in my life is her strong belief in God's Word, and her preaching and defence of it! The Word of God is regarded as precious and it is clearly and faithfully taught, not only from the pulpit on Sundays, but also in fellowship groups (from Junior all the way to Adult) and Bible

study classes. I remember the many Bible passages (not just verses but precious chapters and passages!) that were memorized when we were children and teenagers. The Holy Spirit has helped me to remember God's Word which is powerful, and guides me through this earthly journey.

I grew up in the church with many people and I have seen many new faces coming to church. To this day, by God's grace, many are still faithfully loving and serving God in various capacities. But sadly, many others have grown cold in their faith; some have lost their first love for God; some have fallen by the wayside to be very much part of the world.

I pray that this testimony, on the celebration of the 60th Anniversary, will challenge many of us, especially my dear friends everywhere, to remember and appreciate God and His unfailing love and goodness all these years. May we strive to grow closer to God and know Him more than ever before, because we must be prepared for His soon return, which is even at the doors!

Matthew 24:33, "So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors."

*Alice Tan
Truth BPC*

THE LATE REV TIMOTHY TOW WROTE...

...a detailed article in 1971 on the history of the B-P Church and why the B-P Movement was founded. It was very impressive, like embarking on an adventure as one reads of how the Movement developed.

And we know the prefix "Bible" was added to "Presbyterian" to distinguish ourselves from the Presbyterian Synod, and to counter the Ecumenical Movement, for the defence of the faith and because of Biblical Separation.

Rev Tow spearheaded the B-P Movement with vigour and faith, and so may we press on until the Lord returns.

*Tang Chan Ying
True Life BPC*

HOW WE HAVE BEEN BLESSED BY THE B-P MOVEMENT

The clarion call to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3) must be the most distinctive and blessed characteristic of the B-P Movement.

This was imparted to us in the earlier days of the B-P Movement, the result of which was the blessing of having been instructed in the truths of God's Word. By God's grace, this subsequently played a major role in our decision to join Calvary Pandan BPC in December 2009.

Sadly, today, many B-P churches have compromised God's Word and have also forgotten their B-P roots. One of them is the B-P church we worshipped in before 2009. If not for the initial solid grounding in God's truths, it would have been difficult to know the subtle wrong teachings in the churches we visited during our "church hunt" - many of which now embrace theistic evolution and ecumenism.

Thank God for keeping us and leading us to Calvary Pandan BPC where God's inerrant, infallible and preserved

Word continues to be upheld, defended, and faithfully taught. Because of the truth in God's Word, we know for sure that our salvation is assured.

Soo Cheng and Carrie Tob

IT WAS IN 1984 THAT...

...the Lord called. Looking back, I marvel at the faithfulness of God who never gave up on a stubborn one like me. As a newborn in Christ, I was weak and struggling. Through friends, I was led to a charismatic church. Clearly a misfit as I could not "speak in tongues" like the rest, I did not feel the "need" to try and do so. After two years of "wandering in the wilderness", my Good Shepherd led me to New Life BPC when I was in London. Henceforth, I was fed the true Word of God and gradually, my understanding and faith grew. How refreshing was the living water, and I thirsted for more.

Arriving back in Singapore, my family and I worshipped in New Life BPC in Marsiling, and then Calvary Pandan BPC. By the Lord's providence, we were led to Australia and today we are worshipping in Brisbane BPC. I am eternally grateful to the Lord for raising B-P churches around the world that remain faithful and steadfast in preaching the Word of God. As the world becomes a global village, B-P churches play an important role in reinvigorating weary travellers with the Word of God and shining brightly as a beacon of truth for the Lord. May the Lord continue to bless the B-P Movement.

*Linda Too
Brisbane BPC*

I WAS BAPTIZED IN A B-P CHURCH, BUT...

...did not know what Bible-Presbyterianism was until the LORD led me to Calvary Pandan BPC's Sunset Gospel Hour and to Life BPC under the pastorship of Rev Timothy Tow in 1997.

The first blessing I received from the Calvary and Life B-P churches was the King James Bible (KJB) which has become my most treasured Book in life. I was baptized and had been worshipping in a B-P church that used the NIV. When I came to know about the KJB, I did some verse comparisons between the NIV and KJB and discovered many significant differences. I also read Dr SH Tow's book called "Bible versions" and was more enlightened.

The next blessing I received was the doctrine of Verbal Plenary Inspiration (VPI). My first exposure to VPI was by observing the Dean Burgon Oath, recited by the FEBC faculty and board members at FEBC's Graduation Services. Before I understood what VPI was, my understanding was that the Bible is just a general revelation of God's truth, and not a word for word revelation of God's truth.

In 2002, when some Life BPC leaders promulgated that the KJB has scribal errors, my heart was naturally convinced of a perfect Bible without mistakes. It seemed so logical to me that the Bible should not have mistakes because it is God's Word and this truth is in the doctrine of Verbal Plenary Preservation (VPP).

So what is the Bible-Presbyterian Movement to me? It is really a movement about the Bible, about the KJB, about a perfect Bible without any mistakes, about VPI and

VPP. Without this Movement, I would not have been introduced to the KJB. I would not have known that every word in the Bible is God-breathed and I would have thought with many others that the Bible has mistakes. Lastly, without this Movement, I would not be treasuring every word and doctrine in the Bible which corrects, reproves and instructs me to walk the righteous paths of my Saviour, the LORD Jesus.

I thank the LORD Jesus for using the battle for the Bible to bless many. All praise and glory to God for using the B-P Movement to promote and protect His Holy Scripture. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt 4:4).

True Lifer

THE B-P CHURCH HAS BEEN A GREAT BLESSING TO MY FAMILY AND ME

First and foremost, the greatest gift which I have received is the faithful preaching of the Word of God. There is a uniqueness in the preaching, in that it does not seek to give what the hearers want to hear, as is the case in many churches today. The best way to bring confusion is to try to please everyone. A church that does not preach the Truth for fear of losing its members is bound to confuse its members. The many doubts which I had before I was brought to the B-P Church have all been cleared by the many faithful sermons preached over the years. The doctrine of VPP, especially, has cast out many fears and doubts, and has brought peace into my heart, knowing that God's Word is an unchanging

and perfect solid rock that I can build my faith upon.

Secondly, the B-P Church provided me with a new family in Christ Jesus, which is selfless in ministry and takes responsibility for the members' well being and spiritual health. The prayer meetings, where we pray for one another's special needs, are a great blessing, and thank God that many of our prayers are answered. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Lastly, I thank God for Rev Timothy Tow and Dr & Mrs Tow Siang Hwa. From them I have learnt kindness, selflessness, graciousness and godliness. "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

Wendy Danubrata

WHY AM I A B-P?

I love to read about the 16th Century Reformation and the reformers of the faith. Bible-Presbyterianism has its roots traced back to this phenomenal Reformation. I know that Dr John Sung, Dr Carl McIntire, and Rev Timothy Tow, among others, were our B-P "fathers" who have left an indelible impression on me. Calvary Pandan BPC continues to hold the fort to advance and commemorate this godly work, and rejoices in the Lord on the B-P Movement's 60th Anniversary.

Bible-Presbyterianism emphasizes Sola Scriptura, to love the Bible and to preach and practise it. We are constantly exhorted to be doers of the Word and to love our neighbours. I see it and feel it in Pandan. Thank God

for Christian love and fellowship. We continue to preach the living Word to a dying world.

When first taught in FEBC about God's remnant, I knew in my heart that B-Ps, among others from Bible-believing churches and institutions, are God's remnant, His beloved children, chosen and set apart, in these last days. "For many are called, but few are chosen." (Matt 22:14) I offer God my praise and thanksgiving for the B-P Movement on this special day.

Wong Keng Seong

HISTORY of the B-P Movement



Building site of Life BPC and FEBC at 9A Gilstead Road, 1961

RENEWING OUR B-P FAITH

In commemorating 60 years of the founding of the Bible-Presbyterian Church in Singapore, my thoughts turn to that afternoon in 1950 when Rev Timothy Tow presided at the historic inaugural gathering. I quote:

“The Life Church English Service was launched at 5.30 pm on October 20, 1950, at 144 Prinsep Street... The new pastor presented his credentials to an eager congregation from the text, “Holding forth the Word of Life” (Philippians 2:16).” (“The Singapore B-P Church Story, 1995, by T Tow, p 57).

From that lowly beginning with a congregation of barely a hundred, the B-P Church Movement has grown to over 100 individual “B-P Churches, related groups and institutions” worldwide in this year of grace 2010.

Big Brother Timothy testifies in his book “The Story of my Bible-Presbyterian Faith (1999)”: *“I grew up in the heavenly atmosphere of a Christian family of much Bible reading, prayer and hymn singing... We were members of the EP (English Presbyterian) Church.”*

He and I were revived under the fiery preaching of Dr John Sung during the “Singapore Pentecost” of 1935-38. It was during those meetings that our hearts were fired with Holy Spirit revival and we consecrated ourselves for lifelong service for the Lord.

Brother Timothy’s “Bible-Presbyterian faith” was built up during

his three years at Faith Theological Seminary in America. How did this happen? In his own words, *“One wintry morning in January 1948, there came... at the Chapel Hour of Faith Seminary... Dr Carl McIntire... President of Faith Seminary. He spoke of the Church and the crisis she was facing”* (ibid p 36). The Ecumenical Movement was trying to unite all churches into one great world Church, a denial of the 16th Century Reformation. This would overturn the work of Martin Luther and the Reformation martyrs who had resisted

He and I were revived under the fiery preaching of Dr John Sung.

the power of Rome and paved the way for the formation of the Protestant Church.

The urgent need of the day was for a 20th Century Reformation. Dr McIntire spoke with passion and the power of the Holy Spirit.

“His words touched a kindred spirit in me, and my heart was strangely warmed,” testified Brother Timothy, *“and my heart was immediately knit with his...”*. There and then, Brother Timothy committed his life to the cause of the 20th Century Reformation Movement. He became a disciple of Dr McIntire, to *“...earnestly contend for the faith*

which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3).

Thus was laid the foundation of the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Singapore yet to be founded with Rev Timothy Tow as the first pastor of “Life B-P Church, Prinsep Street,” a position he held for the next 53 years, until his resignation in 2003.

During the half century when he was at the helm of the “mother B-P ship” Brother Timothy steered a straight course for the “B-P Movement”, “earnestly contending for the faith..., fighting the good fight of faith” and blazing the trail of the “20th Century Reformation Movement” for loyal Bible-Presbyterians to follow. Alas, not all did!

Brother Timothy’s “Bible-Presbyterian faith” will now be candidly shared with fellow “B-Ps” and loyal readers, a faith which has blessed me these 60 years.

MY TESTIMONY AND TRIBUTE TO BROTHER TIMOTHY

1. A COMPLETE PASTOR

Brother Timothy was a model pastor to me (whose ordination he initiated in 1980), ever available for counseling and pastoral help; he was true to his open offer: “Call any time” published in “Life Church Weekly.” (Some pastors’ telephone numbers are kept secret!).

Brother Timothy set an example

of selfless service (“no retirement age”), ever reluctant to take a “pay rise”, always “on the go” to spearhead any gospel opportunity, to found a new church, or start a mission. Under his pastorate, new churches sprouted and the B-P Church became the “fastest growing Church in Singapore.”

He founded the “Malaysia Pioneer Mission” and I had the thrill of following him on many mission trips to the “New Villages” in Peninsular Malaysia during the days of the Communist insurgency in the 1950s.

2. A VIGILANT WATCHMAN

How needful it is for the Church of Jesus Christ to have vigilant and fearless watchmen, to detect and warn against “intruders, robbers and wolves,” which abound in these days of rampant apostasy – “falling away” and rampant denial of the faith.

Brother Timothy championed the cause of the King James Bible against “100 modern pernicious, counterfeit Bibles” which are deadly to the unwary.

3. HE WARNED AGAINST WESTCOTT AND HORT

Again I quote from his book “The Story of my Bible-Presbyterian Faith” (p 51): “Two Anglican churchmen and Greek scholars, Westcott and Hort, wormed their way against other scholars, to get the Text of the King James Bible revised. They were modernists, secret worshippers of Mary, evolutionists and blatant deniers of infallibility and inerrancy of the Bible. Besides, they were necromancers, delving into the dead and indulging in the study of ghosts.”

Calvary Pandan upholds the B-P stand on the KJV, the stand adopted by the original B-P Church, Life BPC. Today certain B-Ps have fallen away into the ecumenical trend to embrace MEVs (Modern English Versions) e.g. NIV (New International Version), NKJV (New King James Version).

...needful it is for the Church of Jesus Christ to have vigilant and fearless watchmen.

As regards Westcott and Hort, Calvary Pandan BPC agrees fully with our founding B-P Pastor, that the pair were “...false prophets, ravening wolves... deceitful workers, transforming themselves into.... ministers of righteousness...” and their NT Greek Text is to be rejected as pernicious poison, as well as the 100 new Bibles which have been contaminated with their corrupt text.

Rev Timothy Tow declares in his book (p 59): “*Holding to the King James Bible to be the most perfect, accurate translation of the Bible and rejecting all the over hundred new versions as perversions is another cardinal point of our Bible-Presbyterian Faith.*” With this we fully concur.

About the year 2002, the divine preservation of the source texts of the KJV became a bone of contention among B-P leaders. Dissenters at-

tacked the doctrine of “verbal plenary preservation” of the Masoretic Text (OT) and the Textus Receptus (NT) as “heresy.” This led to a sharp division of the B-Ps into two groups: a) one which holds to the doctrine of “Verbal Plenary Inspiration” (VPI) as in our B-P Constitution 4.2.1 and denies the doctrine of “Verbal Plenary Preservation” (VPP), and b) a second group which holds to this latter doctrine “VPP” as a logical supporting doctrine of “VPI.”

The group of dissenters have erroneously labeled “VPP” a “new” doctrine, and “heresy”. Such accusation has no factual support. On the contrary, the doctrine of divine textual preservation has been the stand and contention of the original B-P founding pastor Timothy Tow all along, for how could “VPI” stand without the undergirding support of “VPP”? Surely the “Inspired” words could not have survived the ravages of time but for the divine Hand of God perfectly preserving each and every word of the source texts of both the OT and NT.

The dissenters are in serious error to label the doctrine of “VPP” as new, just because they became aware of it only about the year 2002. But my book “Beyond Versions” (1998) had mentioned the divinely “preserved” text in six places, only without the initials “VPP.” For example, on page 109, I had written of the KJB in these words:

“It is... the authoritative and accurate translation into English of the plenary and verbally inspired, inerrant, preserved Hebrew and Greek Words of God.”

From this and other passages in “Beyond Versions”, the doctrine of “VPP” is clearly and unequivocally upheld.

With these texts supporting the doctrine “VPP”, Timothy Tow, (who wrote the Foreword to “Beyond Versions”) fully concurred.

...in July 2009, the Pope called for the formation of a new “Global Political Authority”

For these and other spiritual initiatives, we owe our late founder and mentor an irrepayable debt of gratitude.

TWENTIETH CENTURY IN MAJOR “FALLING AWAY”

On an occasion such as this, a commemoration “once in 60 years”, it is appropriate that a watchman communicate candidly and faithfully every significant happening.

Not too long ago, we had stepped from the 20th into the 21st Century, probably man’s last Century on Earth. I bring to your attention two developments which signal the days of Planet Earth are numbered! History has entered its Final Chapter.

DEVELOPMENT NUMBER ONE: BABYLON THE GREAT ON THE WAY

“Babel”, which God had frustrated by the “confusion of tongues” (Gen 11) not long after the Flood, is taking shape again as “Babylon the Great” (Rev 17), forerunner of “ONE WORLD” – Satan’s ecumenical “Brain Child.”

All Christendom is gravitating Rome-wards, led by the perpetrators of ECT 1994 & 1997, by the Evangelical “top brass” such as Billy Graham, and the Charismatics: This “Back to Rome” Movement is irresistible, unstoppable.

Meantime, in July 2009, the Pope called for the formation of a new “Global Political Authority” which Mr Obama will oblige in due course. A “New World Order” (clearly described in Rev 13) is on the way.

DEVELOPMENT NUMBER TWO: DAYS OF LOT ARE HERE!

What used to be an abomination, punishable under criminal law, will shortly receive global approval and acceptance: The days of Lot and Sodom foretold by our Lord (Lk 17:28-30) are back on earth!

When the moral climate and the stench of moral decay have exceeded the limits of divine tolerance, the Judge of all the earth will return.

This is what God’s Word says:

“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish,

but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?” (2 Pet 3:9-12).

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” (1 Cor 15:58).

CONCLUSION

We have reviewed the major significant happenings in the Bible-Presbyterian Church of the past 60 years, and offered some guidelines for the future.

QUESTION:
Will we have another 60 years?

Dr SH Tow
Senior Pastor, Calvary Pandan BPC

REMEMBERING OUR B-P HERITAGE

INTRODUCTION

History is of great importance to man. As the saying goes, “those who do not learn from history are bound to repeat it”. From the study of history, we know our roots and the reasons for calling ourselves Bible-Presbyterians. If we believe that Presbyterianism, as practised by our Bible-Presbyterian Church, is that ecclesiastical system which is most biblical, then we must embrace

In 1933,
Gresham Machen
exposed a number
of the liberal
missionaries...

it, protect it and defend it. It would be difficult to ask someone to defend, protect, and love something he has little knowledge of. Wolves in sheep's clothing will come in to undermine the church's teachings. They may think that they are doing God a favour by “opening the eyes of the blind Bible-Presbyterians”. Some might even try to convert B-Ps to a "Bible" church, without its Presbyterianism, or into a Presbyterian church without “Bible” attached.

If we know the following three important factors, we will remain

steadfast and be thankful to God for our heritage as Bible-Presbyterians. We will not only love it, we will also heartily promote it, and defend it unto the glory of God. The three factors are: the history of the B-P Church; the doctrines which are distinctly Bible-Presbyterian; and why we adopt Presbyterian distinctives rather than those of the Baptist, or Methodist, or Anglican, or Congregationalist.

THE HISTORY OF THE B-P CHURCH

The American Scene – The Split in the Presbyterian Church in USA (PCUSA)

In the year 1936, PCUSA split because of liberalism and ecumenism. This did not occur overnight. The events which led to this split began on 26 December 1923. In that year, a committee of 149 Presbyterian clergymen met in Auburn, New York to issue an “Affirmation”. The “Affirmation” asserts that:

- a. the General Assembly was wrong to require all ministerial candidates to hold to the five fundamentals which are the inerrancy of the original manuscripts of Scriptures, Christ's virgin birth, His vicarious atonement, His bodily resurrection, and the reality of miracles as recorded in the Scriptures;

b. neither the Bible nor the historic creeds taught inerrancy;

c. tenets such as Christ's virgin birth, vicarious atonement, bodily resurrection, and miracles were theories;

d. the General Assembly had unconstitutionally declared belief in these doctrines as essential for licensing, ordination, or good standing in the church.

Carl McIntire,
J Oliver Buswell and
Allan MacRae came
out of the OPC and
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Church and Faith
Theological Seminary.

e. the General Assembly had no right to bind Presbyterians to any “essential and necessary” doctrines unless the presbyteries themselves so voted.¹

By 1926, eight foreign missionaries had signed the Auburn Affirmation and five of the 15 ordained officials of the denomination's Board of Foreign Missions were Affirmationists. In 1932, William Hocking, Chairman of the Commission to look into Missions Work, wrote a book called “Re-Thinking Missions”. In it, he advocated uniting Christianity with Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism into a common front against the enemy of materialism.

This downward slide brought about a confrontation between the conservatives and the liberals. In 1933, Gresham Machen exposed a number of the liberal missionaries in his debate with Robert Speer, Chairman

1935, Dr John Sung's
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of a young man,
Timothy Tow...

of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions. No house cleansing was achieved, nor compromise allowed. That same year, Machen formed the Independent Board of Foreign Missions.

From 1934 to 1936, Machen, Carl McIntire and J Oliver Buswell, together with seven other Bible-believing pastors were placed on trial. They were de-frocked by the General Assembly in 1936.² In that same year, the pastors formed the Presbyterian Church of America, but had to rename it to Orthodox Presbyterian Church because the Presbyterian Church in USA wanted to sue them over the similarity of names.

The Split Within the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC)

In 1937, Machen, the founder of OPC died. That year, Carl McIntire, J Oliver Buswell and Allan MacRae came out of the OPC and founded the B-P Church and Faith Theological Seminary.

Three major issues caused the split in the OPC:

a. A Doctrinal Issue – The Bible-Presbyterians were exclusively pre-millennialists, whereas the OPC was made up of both a-millennialists and pre-millennialists.³

b. A Moral Issue – Should the denomination officially recommend total abstinence from intoxicating beverages to all members? The OPC said “No”; McIntire and company said “Yes”.

c. A Missions Issue – Should there be cooperation in Missions with non Presbyterians who are fundamental? The OPC was against it; McIntire and company were for cooperation in Missions with fundamental groups, Presbyterians or otherwise.

Thus, we see that two issues that gave rise to the birth of Bible-Presbyterianism included the doctrines of Biblical Separation (when we came out of PCUSA) and Pre-millennialism (when we came out of OPC).

The Singapore scene

In 1847, an English missionary named William Chalmers Burns left England for Hong Kong. He first set foot on Chinese soil in Amoy in 1851. Five years later, he went to Swatow with Hudson Taylor and that was how Christianity reached the Tow family.

Together with other emigrants, the Tow family came to the Straits Settlement which was then called

British Malaya. In 1881, Rev J A B Cook from the English Presbyterian Mission came to Singapore and Malaya. He founded many local churches, one of which was Life Church at Prinsep Street (1883). “All the founding members of Life Church and our B-P Church Movement have originated from Prinsep Street.”⁴

It was in the city
of John Calvin
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as the Moderator.

In 1935, Dr John Sung's revival meetings changed the heart of a young man, Timothy Tow, who yielded his life to the Lord for His service. In 1946, Timothy Tow obeyed God's call and left for China to study theology under Dr Chia Yu Ming in Nanking. He was there for one year. In 1947, Timothy Tow transferred to Faith Theological Seminary, USA. By the providence of God, Timothy Tow learned God's Word under Drs Carl McIntire, J Oliver Buswell and Allan MacRae.

In 1950, he completed his training and returned to Singapore to pastor Life Church at Prinsep Street in the English service. That same year, the International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC) held its 2nd Plenary Congress in Geneva, Switzerland. Timothy Tow went there with Quek Kiok Chiang. It was in

¹David O Beale, *In Pursuit of Purity*, (Greenville, South Carolina: Unusual Publications, 1986), 149, 155-156. For the complete text of the Auburn Affirmation see *The Presbyterian*, January 17, 1924, 6-7. Also appears in Edwin H Rian, *The Presbyterian Conflict*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing House, 1940), 291-7.

²“The same church, which in 1893 had suspended Charles A Briggs for denying the inerrancy of the Bible, now readily suspended seven conservative ministers for their insistence on obeying the same inerrant Word” (Beale, 319). In 1955, Chester Tulga, a Baptist, made this interesting observation in a paper entitled *The Theological Situation in the Conservative Baptist Movement*: “It is strong men who formed movements, weak men mould them, eventually pervert them and then purge the original founders who will not compromise their convictions” (Beale, 321, n. 9). We find that history has repeated itself within the B-P Movement in Singapore half a century later.

³Beale, 323-4.

⁴Quoting Timothy Tow from *The Bible Presbyterian Journal of Singapore and Malaysia*, 1950-1971, (Singapore: Acme Printers, 1971), 8.

the city of John Calvin that Timothy Tow was ordained by the Philadelphia Presbytery, with J Oliver Buswell as the Moderator. On their return to Singapore, having imbibed the spirit of the 20th Century Reformation and Bible-Presbyterianism, Rev Timothy Tow launched the Life Church English service at 5.30 pm in October 1950 at 144 Prinsep Street.

From December 1952 to February 1953, the English service of the Prinsep Street Presbyterian Church was de facto linked to the Chinese Presbyterian Synod, which in turn

The name “B-P Church of Singapore” was coined in January 1955.

was linked to the Malayan Christian Council (MCC). The MCC was linked to the World Council of Churches (WCC), the body opposed to the ICCC. A confrontation at Synod level took place and a charge was drafted by Rev Timothy Tow, Elder Quek Kiok Chiang (now Rev Quek Kiok Chiang), and Deacon C T Hsu against joining the MCC. In summary, the charge stated that the MCC was part of the larger Ecumenical Movement, WCC, which promotes modernist ecumenism.⁵

The final battle was fought in Muar, in the Trinity Presbyterian Church in 1955. “Of course the battle was lost against the usual phalanx of modernist missionaries and subservient national pastors. In

the same month, according to the Life Church Weekly Chronicler, ‘the interim committee decides to make our church fully constituted and to sever connections with the Synod on account of modernism’.”⁶

The name “B-P Church of Singapore” was coined in January 1955.

After returning from Faith Theological Seminary in May 1959 with a Master of Sacred Theology, Rev Tow on 6 September of the same year felt the burden to start a Bible College. “Theological training of our consecrated young people was our Church’s emphasis as a most effective means of extending God’s Kingdom.”⁷

A year later, on 19 September 1960, the Far Eastern Bible College (FEBC) was founded.⁸ In July 1961, the interest in the proposed FEBC was so strong that Rev Tow was asked to offer two hours of lectures every week. “This evening Bible Class, ... was carried on through one academic year until the College formally opened in Sept [17] 1962.”⁹

On 14 October 1962, Life BPC held its last service at Prinsep Street. It was a Farewell Service of sweet remembrance. On 16 February 1963, the new church building at 9A Gilstead Road was dedicated for God’s Service and unto His glory.¹⁰

This was the beginning of the B-P Church in Singapore. By the grace and mercy of the Almighty God, some B-P Churches have stood firm these

past 60 years. We are the fruits of the labour of our founding fathers. They have fought hard and true according to the convictions God has placed in their hearts.

We cannot afford NOT to know our roots. If we forget our roots, we do so at our own peril; not ours only but that of our children as well. We must cherish and uphold the principles upon which the B-P Church was founded.

Theological fundamentalism is inherent in the B-P Church.

Why are you a B-P? Why am I a B-P? Do we hold on to B-Pism because of history alone? We should not, for that would be sentimentalism. We firmly hold on to B-Pism because we believe unequivocally and without apology that it is Bible based.

DISTINCTIVES OF THE B-P CHURCH

Theological fundamentalism is inherent in the B-P Church. On the doctrine of the Bible, we believe in the divine, verbal, and plenary inspiration and preservation of the Holy Scriptures in the original languages. The Bible is God-breathed. It is the very word of God! We practise Biblical Separation and believe in the Pre-millennial visible return of our Lord Jesus Christ.¹¹ Our understanding of salvation is Reformed

and Calvinistic. To compromise on any of our doctrines would revert us back to Presbyterianism without the “Bible”.

The ecclesiology of the B-P Church is that the church is ruled by elders. The mode of baptism is by sprinkling, not immersion. We practise infant baptism, for we believe that it is taught in Holy Scriptures.

CONCLUSION

Why are we B-Ps? Every Bible-Presbyterian must answer this question today. The Lord has founded the B-P Church of Singapore for a purpose in the last days. God has sustained it these past 60 years. The Synod has been dissolved because of unbelief and compromise by some of the leaders. This day, every faithful B-P member must settle in his own heart and mind where he stands before God, because not all B-Ps are genuine B-Ps today.

The battle rages on. For effectiveness of service, and unity and harmony to exist in the church, oneness of heart and mind is required. For the sake of the purity of doctrine and guarding of the Truth, we must hold on to our heritage and the doctrinal principles upon which the B-P Church was founded.

We must, as sons and daughters of the B-P Movement, do our part in defending the Faith that was once delivered unto the saints. May God help us! Amen.

Rev Quek Suan Yew
Pastor, Calvary Pandan BPC

⁵For a detailed description of the charges, see *The Bible Presbyterian Journal of Singapore and Malaysia*, 1950-1971, 16-17.

⁶Quoting Rev Timothy Tow from *The Bible Presbyterian Journal of Singapore and Malaysia*, 1950-1971, 17.

⁷Quoting Rev Tow from *The Bible Presbyterian Journal of Singapore and Malaysia*, 1950-1971, 22. “Hitherto we have sent some of our young people to the West for theological training. But if the Lord will call another half dozen, how can we afford to send them all? The solution to training future ministers of the gospel, I believe, is the founding of a Bible College in Singapore. ... a Bible College that reverently teaches the Bible to be the infallible, inerrant Word of God, that seeks to obey all its commands, that will make no compromise whatsoever with the subtle forces of Satan that are so actively undermining theological institutions everywhere today.” Cf *the editorial of the Malaysia Christian*, vol VII, no 13, Sept 1959; “The Trend is Toward the Trained”, taken from *The Bible Presbyterian Journal of Singapore and Malaysia*, 1950-1971, 22.

⁸The name of Far Eastern Bible College was suggested by Dr Tow Siang Hwa, cf *The Bible Presbyterian Journal of Singapore and Malaysia*, 1950-1971, 27.

⁹*The Bible Presbyterian Journal of Singapore and Malaysia*, 1950-1971, 30-31.

¹⁰For a detailed account of the Act of Dedication see pages 33 and 34 of *The Bible Presbyterian Journal of Singapore and Malaysia*, 1950-1971.

¹¹See the Constitution of the Bible-Presbyterian Church, “Article 4 Doctrine” and Westminster Confession Question XXXIII modified by the B-Ps of America.

DOCTRINAL Distinctives

Different B-P pastors and preachers
contributed articles in this section



OVERVIEW - DOCTRINAL DISTINCTIVES OF THE B-P MOVEMENT

BIBLE-BASED

The word “Bible” precedes the word “Presbyterian”, denoting the church’s firm stance on the Word of God. The Bible alone is our supreme standard for all matters of faith and practice. It is from the Bible alone that we know who God is, and how we can serve Him and discern His will. Thus, we endeavour to ensure that everything the church does is thoroughly Bible-based. This will extend to all points of doctrine and teachings, including our practices and lifestyles.

As such, we uphold the Word of God as divinely inspired and perfectly preserved by God, down to every last jot and tittle as taught in holy writ, such that what we have in our hands today is the BIBLE, the Word of God, infallible and inerrant. We believe the Bible preserved by God is the Hebrew Masoretic Texts of the Old Testament and the Greek Textus Receptus of the New Testament underlying the King James Bible.

Therefore, we uphold the King James Bible to be the Word of God – the best, most faithful, most accurate, most beautiful translation of the Bible in the English language, and do employ it alone as our primary scriptural text, whether for public or private use.

FUNDAMENTAL

The B-P Movement arose out of the modernist-fundamental controversies in the 1930s. Its founders took a stand against the liberal theologies in the mainline Presbyterian Church, and thus separated to form the B-P Church. To this day, we continue to earnestly contend for the faith, maintaining a firm stance on the fundamentals of the faith, which we will defend strongly against those who would preach or teach otherwise.

BIBLICAL SEPARATION

Every church has been given the divine mandate by God not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers. We are to be a people called out and set apart from the world. Thus, we see biblical separation to be a defining distinctive of the B-P Church. Separation involves two main aspects:

1. Personal: We have been called as Christians to lead a holy life, consecrated unto God; to love not the world and the things of the world. Personal separation, thus, involves abstaining from all evil and all appearance of evil. We are to maintain a pure testimony, and to be transformed by the Word of God. This principle applies to our personal lives, and extends to our business and marriage.

2. Ecclesiastical: As a church, we must also be careful to maintain our effectiveness as a witness and testimony to the world. This is our defence in ensuring the purity and faith of the church. Therefore, we will associate ourselves, and have ecclesiastical relationships only, with like-minded brethren. We must separate ourselves from all forms of apostasy, unbelief, disobedience and compromise. More specifically, we must be wary of unbiblical movements rampant in Christendom today: the ecumenical, charismatic, neo-evangelical movements, and other false movements that contradict the Holy Scriptures and the historic Christian Faith.

PRESBYTERIAN FORM OF GOVERNMENT

The B-P Church holds on to a Presbyterian system of church government, whereby the church is ruled by the plurality of elders. These are to be the most spiritual men in the church who are chosen by the church and voted into office, thus forming the Board of Elders. This board would include the pastor(s), who is the moderator of the board, and a group of elders from the congregation. They have the duty of leading the church, tasked with spiritual responsibilities of protecting, feeding and nurturing the flock of God.

Forming the Session of the church together with the Board of Elders would be deacons; elected office-bearers who have a more administrative role in the church. Deacons

ensure all things are run smoothly and in order. Ideally, at a higher level of church government, there should be a synod overseeing B-P churches. Sadly, since the dissolution of the B-P Synod in 1988, most B-P churches are now completely autonomous.

REFORMED

As Protestants and Presbyterians, we hold firmly to that which is known as the “Reformed Faith” – teachings that arose out of the 16th Century Reformation. The documents that we adhere to are the Westminster Standards that include the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the Westminster Larger and Shorter Catechisms. What we therefore promote is a very God-focused, Christ-centred and Bible-based theology, where it is by grace alone, through faith alone, that man can be saved. Thus, we are covenantal in our understanding of the Bible, not dispensational; we are Calvinistic in understanding salvation, not Arminian.

PRO-ISRAEL PRE-MILLENNIALISM

A simple, consistent, literal interpretation of the Bible would naturally lead one to a pro-Israel, Pre-millennial view of prophecy, as opposed to views of the Historic Pre-millennialists, Post-millennialists and A-millennialists. What this means is that we believe that the promises given to Israel in the Old Testament hold today. These promises belong to Israel and have not been reassigned to the church. God has not entirely cast away His chosen nation of Israel, but has a specific plan for them at Jesus’ Second Coming.

At the Second Coming of Christ, all the dead in Christ and the believers who are alive will be raptured. That will trigger a period of seven years commonly called The Great Tribulation. During this period, many Jews will come to believe in Christ, as denoted by the 144,000 witnesses mentioned in Revelation. At the end of the seven years, the Lord Jesus Christ will descend with the saints for the final Battle of Armageddon, where Satan will be defeated and cast into the bottomless pit. The world will then enter into a literal 1,000 year period of the Millennium, with Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords. He will restore Israel to greatness, rule the whole world from His throne in Jerusalem, and bring peace to all nations.

CONSERVATIVE WORSHIP

Our style of worship can be described as traditional or conventional, emphasizing the need for reverence and respect, worshipping the Lord in the beauty of holiness. We reject modern practices of introducing contemporary music with drums and bands into our worship as a means to “attract the crowd” or liven the worship, which is often sensual, fleshly and panders to the wants of man. Instead, worship ought to be reverential and orderly, maintaining the sanctity of worship before our thrice holy God. The focus must not be man but God alone!

WHY BIBLICAL SEPARATION

One of the pillars of the Bible-Presbyterian Church (BPC) is the doctrine of Biblical Separation.

God has truly blessed the BPC throughout these 60 years because of her courageous separatist stand.

This year 2010 marks the 60th year of the BPC. God has truly blessed the BPC throughout these 60 years because of her courageous separatist stand for the sake of Christ and His Gospel. This is in line with the observation of Dr Keith Hinton in his book – *Growing Churches, Singapore Style* – published in Singapore, 1985. Hinton is not a separatist, but he nevertheless could not deny that the BPC grew much faster than most other churches because of Biblical Separation. According to him, between 1971 and 1983, the BPC enjoyed the third fastest growth rate among Protestant denominations in Singapore.

It is important that we be reminded of this vital biblical doctrine of separation. We are so prone to forget God’s commands, so easily led astray by the world, so gullible to accept false Christs and false prophets. We need to be constantly reminded God knows our forgetfulness, and that was why in the Old Testament (OT), He kept telling Israel over and over again, “Be ye separate!”

God commanded the nation of Israel in Leviticus 20:26, “And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine.” God told Israel, “I have severed you from other people.” That is separation. God told Israel to be separate because they were His evangelists in the OT. In Isaiah 43:10-12, God told Israel twice, “Ye are my witnesses.” Witnesses of what? Witnesses of this fact, “I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no Saviour” (v11). Separation is part of evangelism. The Israelites were to bear witness that there is but one living and true God, and He is Jehovah – the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God required Israel to make a clear statement against all the falsity of all the pagan gods of the heathen nations at that time. This is so that the Gentiles might see the Light shining out of Israel and be drawn to Jehovah for salvation.

The Church, likewise, must practise Biblical Separation in evangelism. God gave the same command to His Church in Acts 1:8, “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” To be His witnesses, we must live a separated life. We do not live like the world, behave like the world, think like the world, talk like the world, do business like the world. Separation is a means to evangelism. We separate in order to evangelize. The Gospel is declared through our lives. Jesus said,

“You are the light of the world.” We are to be His lighthouse, and if we have seen lighthouses, we will know they stand quite alone and quite apart from their surroundings so that when the beacon shines its light, it will be clear and distinct.

Separation is a means to evangelism.

We need to be reminded again and again about our duty to live holy and separated lives. God made sure Israel kept this in mind all the time. How? In Deuteronomy 22:10-11, we read of God telling the Israelites, “Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together. Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together.” Why? Some commentators say that the ox and ass should not be yoked together because they are incompatible. The ox is strong but the ass is weak, or the ox is industrious but the ass is lazy. Another interesting reason is given by Jamieson, Fausset and Brown who commented on why the ox and ass should be kept separate. They wrote, “the ass, from feeding on coarse and poisonous weeds, has a fetid (foul smelling) breath, which its yoke-fellow seeks to avoid, not only as poisonous and offensive, but producing leanness, or, if long continued, death.” Do not yoke them together because the donkey has bad breath that is lethal! I asked my students from agrarian countries whether they ploughed their fields by yoking together an ox and ass. One

student from Kenya said, “Yes!” and added that both animals worked very well together!

If you look at the back cover of the book on Songs & Verses from the Holy Land by the Rev Timothy Tow, you will find a very interesting photo of an ox and an ass ploughing the field together. Does this not contradict this text on separation? What is going on here? The Lord also told the Israelites not to make clothes with mixed materials. How many of us here wear 100% cotton? Many of our clothes are synthetic, e.g. 50% cotton, 50% polyester. So have we broken this command of separation? Do not worry! Do not throw your clothes away! Why did God tell them to do this? Let me say that God gave these agricultural and social laws for pedagogical reasons. God used such laws as practical visual aids to teach the doctrine of Separation to the Israelites. These laws must be read in the light of Deuteronomy 6 and 7 where God commanded them to be separate from the Canaanite nations. Day in day out they were reminded to practise Separation – when they plough their fields, plant their crops, make their clothes.

On the basis of the OT command of Separation, the Apostle Paul ordered the Corinthians four times to keep themselves separate from unbelievers and unbelief. The first injunction is in 2 Corinthians 6:14, “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.” His second is in verse 17a, “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate.” The third in verse 17b, “touch not the unclean thing.” And the fourth in chapter 7:1, “let us cleanse ourselves

from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” The command of Separation is stated four times to be applied by the Church world-wide, and not just Bible-Presbyterians.

Why is separation so important to the health and life of the church? It is because this is God’s way of purifying and preserving the church.

However, 2 Corinthians 6:14 is one of the most misinterpreted texts of Scripture. Many say that this passage is only about marriage. Note that there is no mention of marriage in this chapter. Paul talked a lot about marriage in 1 Corinthians 7, but not here. 2 Corinthians 6:14 certainly applies to marriage but the passage is not on marriage. There is a difference between meaning and application. Scripture has one meaning, but many applications. Not marrying an unbeliever is but one application of the meaning of this text.

So what is the meaning of 2 Corinthians 6:14? Context is the key to ascertaining the meaning of any passage. If you are familiar with the Corinthian Church, you will know that it was a most problematic Church. Paul wrote 1 Corinthians to correct the faults of the Corinthian Church, but many problems continued to persist. So he paid them a visit, but it was a painful one. When he got there, they

treated him badly, and rejected him. Paul was heartbroken and left Corinth in tears. What was the root problem of the Corinthian Church?

2 Corinthians tells us that false teachers had infiltrated the church and were discrediting Paul’s character and undermining his teachings. These false teachers called themselves super-apostles. That was why Paul defended his apostleship so forcefully in that epistle. Paul was the founding pastor of the Church in Corinth. He painstakingly taught them for one and a half years before departing to plant other churches. That was why Paul was so heartbroken by their defection. He bared his soul in 2 Corinthians 6:11, “O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged.” In other words, Paul was telling them, “You know how I spared no effort to teach you all the counsel of God. You know how I love you with all my heart. I have given myself totally to you, why are you shutting yourselves out from me. Why, instead of listening to me your spiritual father, are you listening to these false teachers in the church who boast of their dubious credentials, who attack me, and who teach you wrong doctrines?”

So what was the solution to the problems of the Corinthian Church? Paul commanded them, “Be ye separate!” “Don’t be unequally yoked together with false teachers!” False teachers had entered the church introducing heretical doctrines which led to many sinful practices. Paul’s solution was surgery; get them out of the church. That was not all. There was a need for the believers to repent and get right with God. Be holy as God is holy. Holy in doctrine, holy in

life. “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Cor 7:1).

In many churches today, we will not hear such a message preached. What we will hear is love and unity, but it is love and unity at the expense of Truth. Love and unity are good and necessary, but they must be within the boundaries of Truth. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 13, “Love rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth.”

Why is Separation so important to the health and life of the church? It is because this is God’s way of purifying and preserving the church. The doctrine of Separation is the immune system of the church body. The fundamental doctrines of the Christian Faith – the inerrancy of Scripture, the virgin birth of Christ, the miracles of Christ, the substitutionary atonement of Christ, the resurrection of Christ, etc – are just like the red blood cells which supply oxygen to support life in our body. The fundamental doctrine of Separation is like our white blood cells which defend and protect our body from all the harmful bacteria and viruses that invade us. If a man has red blood cells in his system but no white blood cells, will he live for long? He is like a person suffering from AIDS! Likewise, a church may believe in all the life-giving doctrines of the Christian Faith, but if it rejects the protective doctrine of Separation, that church is committing ecclesiastical suicide.

The Bible tells us that as Christians, we are not children of darkness but of light. The light

comes from God’s Word. Know the Truth, and the Truth shall make us free. What should we do? Do the work of the Cross. The Cross is a Salve that saves. Preach the gospel to everyone that they might know Christ as their Saviour. That is the only way by which man can escape from the judgement to come. The Cross is also a Sword that divides. We must separate ourselves from all forms of unbelief and compromise. There are many Christians out there who do not know the doctrine of Separation. It was never taught to them. There is a need to reach out to them. How? Gently and patiently share with them this vital truth through Bible study. Dr Arthur Steele advised us to be armed with these two things: Not guns and grenades, but Scripture and evidence. If we do a detailed study on Biblical Separation, we will find this doctrine taught from Genesis to Revelation. Separation is not a minor doctrine, but truly a major bulwark of the Christian Faith, in the same standing as the virgin birth, substitutionary atonement, and resurrection of Christ, and other fundamental doctrines of the Christian Faith.

One of the pillars of the BPC is the pillar of Biblical Separation. May we never despise it! May we not be ashamed of it! May we never take it lightly! There needs to be a 21st Century Reformation Movement. I quote the late Rev Timothy Tow, “In the words of Sun Yat Sen, the Father of the Chinese Republic to his comrades, ‘The Revolution is not finished. Let us struggle on,’ we who are sons of both the 16th and 20th Century Reformations must carry on the fight into the 21st Century.” May the Lord keep us faithful!

THE MILLENNIUM ISSUE

“Millennium” is a word made up of two others: “Mille” meaning “one thousand”, and “annum” meaning “year”. To Christians, “Millennium” means the one-thousand year reign of Jesus Christ on earth.

The views on the millennium issue listed below are to be understood with reference to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. The key passage on this doctrine is Revelation 20:1-10.

THREE MAIN VIEWS

Post-millennium -- Jesus Christ will return AFTER the 1,000 years.

A-millennium -- There is no literal 1,000 years during which Jesus will reign on earth. It simply refers to a long period of time. Jesus will return after this period has passed. Eternity will begin after His Second Coming.

Pre-millennium – As the prefix indicates, Jesus will return BEFORE the literal 1,000 years begin. He will then rule on earth for 1,000 years.

Under the Pre-millennium view, there are two branches:

- a. The Dispensational Pre-millennial position;
- b. The Historic Pre-millennial position

The main difference between (a) and (b) is the Historic Pre-millennial position believes that the Church has replaced the nation of Israel, a view also held by A-millennialists. This

means that now, the Church receives all the blessings and the promises which God had made in the Bible, especially in the Old Testament, to Israel.

The issue at stake is interpretation, and it is not a minor one at that. There is a difference in the interpretation of some 4,200 verses between the pre-mill and a-mill positions. This totals about 10.2 % of the whole Bible, or 52.7 % of the whole New Testament, or more than all the New Testament books added together, if we exclude the four gospels. [Note: All the books of the NT, excluding the four gospels, number 4,190 verses.]

One B-P doctrinal distinctive is that we hold to the Dispensational Pre-millennial position.

UNDERSTANDING THE THREE VIEWS

POST-MILLENNIUM

1. The world gets better and better. The millennium is ushered in through the preaching of the believers. There will not be the absence of evil but it will be reduced to the barest minimum. This is achieved due to the moral and spiritual influence of the Christians, the influence of which is expected to increase in the last days. The millennial world is not too different from the world in which we live in today.

2. The start of the millennium is unknown because like the a-millennialists, they, too, believe that the 1,000 years is figurative.
3. The millennium closes with the Second Coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead and the last judgement. The Rapture and the Second Coming are seen as one similar event. Then eternity begins.

A-MILLENNIUM

1. The world gets worse and worse. All, believers and unbelievers alike, will have to go through the Tribulation in the last days of human history. This will finally culminate in the Second Coming of Christ, and then eternity begins.
2. The beginning of the millennium is unknown because it is a spiritual one. Christ is said to be reigning on earth now in our hearts and in the Church. It is more of a spiritual reign than a literal one.
3. The Rapture and Second Coming of Christ will be seen as one similar event. Eternity will begin with the new heaven and new earth.

PRE-MILLENNIUM

[<http://www.dashhouse.com/sermons/1999/Classes/990124.htm>]

There are two major pre-millennial views:

- **Historic Pre-millennialism**
Otherwise known as simple pre-mill, one-stage pre-mill, classic pre-mill, or post-tribulational pre-mill. This position teaches that Jesus Christ will return after a period called the Great Tribulation. This was the majority view of the early church (up to about 250 AD).
- **Dispensational Pre-millennialism**
Otherwise known as dispensationalism; two-stage pre-mill; or pre-tribulational pre-mill. This position teaches that the church will be raptured before the Great Tribulation. This view has become popular since the 1830s, and is closely associated with American fundamentalism.

While it appears that the only difference between these two views is the timing of the Rapture, these two views differ greatly in their understanding of redemptive history. They are two very separate views; there must be no confusion here.

WHAT HISTORIC AND DISPENSATIONAL PRE-MILLENNIALISM HAVE IN COMMON

Both positions believe:

- There will be an earthly reign of Jesus Christ for 1,000

years. Some understand the 1,000 years to represent a substantial but indefinite period of time. This reign will be personal and bodily. Believers will reign with Christ for this period.

- Prior to the millennium, there will be a period of turmoil, persecution, and suffering called the Great Tribulation. The world will be at its worst.
- The millennium will not begin gradually. It will begin with a cataclysmic event.
- The millennium will be a time of world peace and harmony. Nature will be freed from its curse.
- There will be two literal physical resurrections.
- Israel will have some special significance in the millennium.

HISTORIC PRE-MILLENNIALISM

Great Tribulation	• Period of great apostasy and rebellion
↓ Second Coming	• Rapture • The resurrection and judgment of believers • Satan bound
↓ Millennium	• Earthly reign of Christ for substantial period of time (possibly a literal 1,000years) • The resurrection and judgment of unbelievers
↓ Eternal State	

WHAT HISTORIC PRE-MILLENNIALISM TEACHES

- The present church age will

continue until a time of Great Tribulation comes on the earth.

- After the Tribulation, Christ will return to earth to establish a millennial kingdom. When he comes back, believers will be raised from the dead. Their bodies will be reunited with their spirits. Believers who are alive will receive their resurrection bodies.
- Christ will be physically present on earth during the millennium, and will reign as King over the entire earth, along with the glorified believers. This reign will take place for 1,000 years.
- Many, but not all, unbelievers will be saved. There will be peace on the earth, as Satan will be bound during the millennium.
- Israel will find its place within the Church. Large numbers from Israel will be converted.
- At the end of the 1,000 years, Satan will be loosed and will join forces with many unbelievers who will appear to believe, but remain inwardly hostile to Christ. Satan and these unbelievers will rise against Christ, but will be decisively defeated.
- At this point, unbelievers who have died throughout history will be raised and judged.

- After the final judgment, believers will enter into the eternal state.

DISPENSATIONAL
PRE-MILLENNIALISM

Rapture	• Rapture before Tribulation
Great Tribulation	• Period of great apostasy and rebellion • Widespread Jewish salvation
Second Coming	• Resurrection of saints who died in Tribulation
Millenium	• Satan bound • Resurrection of the lost; judgment
Eternal State	

WHAT DISPENSATIONAL
PRE-MILLENNIALISM TEACHES

- The present church age will continue until, suddenly, Christ returns to the earth to take believers out of the world to heaven.
- After Christ returns to heaven with the believers, a seven-year Tribulation will begin. Many signs that will precede Christ's Second Coming will take place. Many Jews will return to Christ.
- At the end of the Great Tribulation, Christ will return to earth with his saints to reign on the earth for 1,000 years.
- At the end of this millennial period, Satan will be loosed and will lead a rebellion. Satan will be finally defeated; unbelievers will be resurrected and judged; the eternal state will begin.
- There is a clear distinction between the Church and Israel. The Jewish people remain distinct from the Church. All

of God's promises to Israel remain in force and are not transferred to the Church.

- Biblical prophecies are to be interpreted literally where possible.

[http://www.dashhouse.com/sermons/1999/Classes/990124.htm]

EXPLANATION OF
DISPENSATIONAL
PRE-MILLENNIALISM
FROM THE B-P PERSPECTIVE

1. The world gets worse and worse and Christ will return. The world will usher in the reign of the Antichrist (1 Jn 2:18) who will reign on earth for seven years (Dan 9:25-27; 2 Thess 2; Rev 13). He takes over the world through peaceful means (Rev 6). In the middle of the seven years, he will break his covenant with Israel and will install the abomination of desolation into the Temple of God (which will be rebuilt before the seven years begin). This will be a time of great turmoil. The earth will be severely devastated by the wrath of God. (Rev 6, 7, 8, 9, 11). At the end of the seven-year period, the Antichrist and his mighty armies will gather at the Valley of Megiddo to fight against the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ will ride on a white horse, and with a myriad of His raptured saints, will descend from heaven and defeat all His enemies with His spoken Word which is the sword of His Spirit.

2. Satan, The Antichrist and the False Prophet will be punished. After the Battle of Armageddon, the Antichrist and False Prophet will be cast into the Lake of Fire alive. Satan will be cast into the bottomless pit where he will remain for 1,000 years.

At the end of this
millennial period,
Satan will be loosed
and will lead a
rebellion.

3. The millennium begins immediately after 75 days of re-creation and cleansing of the Temple. See Daniel 12:11-13. The world has been so badly devastated that re-creation is most necessary. Firstly, there will be the cleansing of the Temple, and the millennium Temple will descend from heaven onto the earth. Then, the Dead Sea will split and join with the Mediterranean Sea. Secondly, there will be the separation of the sheep and the goats (Matt 25:31-34). The sheep, ie. the earthly Christians who will come to believe during the Great Tribulation, will enter the millennium with the earthly body which still allows them to marry and be given in marriage. This is finally followed by the re-creation of the heavens and the earth where occupants who die at the age of 100 will be considered as young children.

4. The millennium is a time of peace on earth where Jesus Christ will reign for 1,000 years. (See Isa 65:17-25; Rev 5:10; 20:1-7). During this time, the Antichrist and the False Prophet would have been cast into the Lake of Fire. Satan has been thrown into the bottomless pit where he will remain throughout the millennium. At the end of the millennium, Satan will be released and will gather the rebellious people throughout the four corners of the earth, and then the Great White Throne Judgment begins. Although only the sheep (believers with earthly bodies) enter the millennium, their children will be the ones whom Satan will gather at the end of the millennium.

Revelation 20:11-15 speak of the second resurrection which involves only unbelievers, and Hell will be emptied of all the dead. They will be judged according to their works which results in only one conclusion – condemnation and eternal death, which is the second death! They will join the Antichrist and False Prophet and Satan to spend eternity in the Lake of Fire. With the new heaven and new earth, eternity will begin immediately. This is when all believers will possess glorified bodies, and sin will exist no more. Since there is no more sin, then death is not needed. And if death is nonexistent, then Hell will also not be

needed. Death and Hell are said to be cast into the Lake of Fire (Rev 20:14).

The hope of believers
is the Rapture...

5. Occupants of the millennium will only be Christians. The first group will be those who have already been raptured BEFORE the Great Tribulation. They will enter the millennium in their glorified bodies. After Christ returns with His raptured saints to battle the Antichrist at the Battle of Armageddon, there will be the separation of the sheep and the goats. The goats will be cast into Hell whereas the sheep will enter the millennium, also called the new heaven and new earth. The sheep are the believers who will still possess the earthly bodies. They will enter the millennium with this earthly body. This means there will be two types of Christians who will enter the millennium – those with glorified bodies (never to sin or experience death); and those with the earthly bodies who can still sin. Believers with earthly bodies will be able to procreate and will still possess the sinful nature. Their children are the ones who will fill the earth during the millennium, and some of them will be unbelievers.
6. At the end of the millennium, Satan will be released from

the bottomless pit to deceive the world one last time. Satan will gather his followers to fight against God and will be soundly destroyed and cast into the Lake of Fire to join the Antichrist and the False Prophet. Those who have been deceived will be the sons and daughters born in the millennium. They will still have the sinful nature. There will be no Satan and his demons to blame when sinful man sins against God in the millennium.

7. Pre-Trib and Mid-Trib rapture are the only two possible positions held by those who subscribe to the dispensational understanding of the millennial doctrine. The reason is that the ones who enter in the millennium must not only be believers, but also believers with this earthly mortal body. If the rapture takes place at the end of the Great Tribulation, then all who enter the millennium will possess the glorified body, and hence cannot procreate and have the children who will, at the end of the 1,000 years, join Satan for one final confrontation with Jesus Christ. Furthermore, believers will return with Jesus Christ to fight at the Battle of Armageddon. How can they come (Jude 14; 2 Thess 1:7-10; Matt 25:31-32) if they had not gone (been raptured) yet? It makes little or no sense to go up and then come down again within the blink of an eye!

CONCLUSION

1. The hope of believers is the Rapture, when we will be spared the wrath of God because of what Jesus Christ has done for us (Rev 3:10; 1 Thess 1:10). The wrath of God is reserved for unbelievers only (Col 3:6; Eph 5:6; Rev 14:10,19; 15:1,7; 16:1).
2. Dispensational Pre-millennialism repudiates those who claim that it is the sin and immoral environment we live in that makes us sinful. In the millennium, the earth will be perfect, as it was before the global Flood, but man will remain just as wicked and sinful. It is not the environment but the sinful nature in man that makes us what we are. We cannot blame anyone but must examine ourselves, and grow and mature by the blood of Christ and His Word on a daily basis.
3. Trust in God's Word is emphasized. All of God's promises to Israel will be fulfilled in the millennium. The Jews looked forward to that blessed day when they will reign on earth with their Messiah. The problem is that they mistook the First Coming of Christ for His Second. Nonetheless, they understood the promises of God to mean the reign of Israel on earth by the Greater Son of David, Jesus Christ. If we cannot trust God to fulfil His promises to Israel and the covenant He

made with them, how can we also trust God to fulfil His promises and His covenant which He has made with us in Jesus Christ?

4. The unity and distinctive of the B-P Church are at stake. We concede there are many details regarding the millennium which we cannot explain, for we are mere mortals. Yet, differences between our view and the a-mill, historic pre-mill and post-mill views are not a minor issue. It is minor if we use salvation as the basis of our gauge. But this is not the only measure of truth and fellowship. The unity of the brethren in every church is dependent upon the understanding of all the doctrines of God, of which the millennial issue is one of them.

THE KING JAMES VERSION BIBLE

GOOD FRUIT vs EVIL FRUIT



“Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit... Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”

Matthew 7: 17, 18, 20

REVELATION OF GOD



“The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, Thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.”

Psalms 12: 6, 7



THEOLOGICAL Issues

Different B-P pastors and preachers
contributed articles in this section

JESUS' VIEW OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

AN EXPOSITION OF MATTHEW 5:17-19

INTRODUCTION

No Christian should hold on to any view that contradicts what Jesus has taught. Today, there is much confusion and contention among “Christian” teachers and leaders on the subject of the infallibility and preservation of the Scriptures. However, as committed Christians, we cannot afford to be confused or misled by false views concerning the Scriptures, especially when Christ has unequivocally stated His view for us. Jesus affirmed the infallibility and preservation of the Scriptures by saying, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled...” (Matt 5:17-19). To understand Jesus’ teaching on the infallibility and preservation of the Scriptures, we shall study His words found in Matthew 5:17-19.

Matthew records these words of Christ as part of the Sermon on the Mount. In verse 18, for the first time in His sermon, Jesus used the authoritative and dogmatic formula “I say unto you”; and He repeats it in verse 20: “For I say unto you.” This suggests to us that Jesus really expects our total attention on the words that follow so that we may study them and observe them as cardinal doctrine and practice.

There should be no contention about these explicit words of Jesus on the Scriptures. His view about the Scriptures, expressed in Matthew 5:17-19, should be our view always.

It would be very helpful if we can recollect the historical and scriptural background of the passage under our consideration to get the real feel of its emphasis.

Jesus introduces the key to a righteous life - nothing else but the keeping of God’s Law.

HISTORICAL AND SCRIPTURAL CONTEXT

Historical context: Since Christ was introduced to the world by John the Baptist, the eyes of everyone in Israel were upon Him. Jesus Christ was very different from the scribes and Pharisees. He did not follow the prevailing “theology” of His day and refused to identify Himself with any of the sects of His time. He disregarded their traditions, as well as their extraneous and legalistic rules. Instead, as a friend of publicans and sinners, He proclaimed love and grace. His meekness and humility made Him distinguishable from all other religious

teachers who were proud, boastful and hypocritical. He preached forgiveness and dispensed mercy. Consequently, the people and the Jewish leaders wondered if He was destroying all the absolutes of the Old Testament Scriptures for some new teachings. Many were inclined to think that He intended to subvert the authority of God's Word.

So Jesus came forward to remove their doubts and said, in effect, “What you see and hear is nothing new at all. I did not come to remove the Old Testament law but to reiterate and fulfil it.” So His amazing manifesto is in direct harmony with the Old Testament, though it was in direct confrontation with the thinking of the Pharisees and scribes. While the scribes and Pharisees were making the traditions binding upon the people, Jesus was talking about grace and mercy. Jesus taught that the scribes and Pharisees had drastically lowered the divine standard and that it was necessary to raise it again. Having a greater commitment to the law than the most scrupulous scribe or Pharisee, Jesus proceeded to support the unfailing and lasting authority of the Scriptures.

Scriptural context: In Matthew 5:3-12, Jesus gives a list of the characteristics of a true Christian. Then, in verses 13 to 16, He emphasises what a true believer ought to be and how he should act. From verses 17 to 20, Jesus shows how it is possible to be what He teaches us to be. Here He shows us how to live out the Beatitudes and to be the salt and light in a decaying and darkened world; not by lowering God's written standard, but by striving to live in complete obedience to all that God

has revealed, even to the jot and tittle. This was, obviously, a shocking appeal to the society of Jesus' day, which obeyed only what it wanted to.

Jesus introduces the key to a righteous life - nothing else but the keeping of God's Law. The only way to have true righteousness is to go beyond the phoney externalism of the scribes and Pharisees, to the inward righteousness that is only wrought by the power and authority of God's Word. Therefore, when Jesus came, He did not abolish the Old Testament but He reinforced it.

JESUS ADHERES HIMSELF TO ALL OF THE SCRIPTURES

To understand how extensive and emphatic Jesus' declaration of His view of the Scriptures is, the words He used must be carefully considered. First of all, what did Jesus mean when He referred to the law or the prophets? The term "law" can be a reference to the Ten Commandments, or the first five books of Moses, or to the whole Old Testament. But usually, the Jews used this word when they were talking about the oral scribal traditions that they had been receiving from various rabbis.

Now when Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law," He was not talking about the traditions of men. Hearing the definite article "the", the multitude should have understood that Jesus was talking about the Law of God. But how do we know whether Jesus was referring to the Ten Commandments or the Pentateuch or the whole Old Testament? Verse 17 settles it when it says: "the law, or the prophets". In the Gospel of Matthew, the words "the law" and "the prophets"

are used four times (Matt 5:17; 7:12; 11:13; 22:40) with reference to the entire Old Testament. Therefore, we can confidently say that "the law" in this passage in Matthew 5 refers to the entire Old Testament.

Jesus then tells us how long the Scriptures will continue to be unerring and authoritative - "till heaven and earth pass".

Another term that stresses His total adherence to the Scriptures is "fulfil" in Matthew 5:17, in which He says, "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." Now the question before us is - In what way did Christ fulfil "the law" and "the prophets"? Many commentators argue that Christ fulfilled the law and the prophets in two different ways. The prophets are fulfilled in a predictive fashion: what they predict comes to pass and is thereby fulfilled. The law, some say, is fulfilled by confirming the law in its deeper meaning, while others say Jesus fulfilled the law by dying on the cross, thus satisfying the demands of the law against all who would believe in Him. Though these ideas are established elsewhere in the New Testament, the emphasis that Matthew conveys is more extensive. Elsewhere, Matthew records Jesus as saying, "For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John" (Matt 11:13). Not only did the prophets prophesy, but the law also prophesied. In other words, the

entire Old Testament has a prophetic function and Jesus came to fulfil the Old Testament. In Matthew 5:17, therefore, we must rid ourselves of conceptions of fulfilment that are too narrow. Jesus fulfilled the entire Old Testament - the law and the prophets, in many ways. Because they point towards Him, He had certainly not come to abolish them, but rather, to fulfil them in a rich diversity of ways. In summary, we can say that Jesus' life and ministry were not in opposition to the Old Testament, but in fulfilment of all that it says.

JESUS AFFIRMS THAT EVERY LETTER OF THE SCRIPTURES WILL BE PRESERVED

Thus, after declaring His total adherence to the Scriptures, He states His view of the Scriptures: "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (v 18). As we noticed earlier, "the law" in this verse also refers to the entire Old Testament in its written form. Otherwise, the mention of "jot and tittle" would not be applicable. It would be unwarranted if we say "the law" refers only to the legal requirements, especially when we study verse 18 in the light of verse 17. Thus, referring to the entire Old Testament, He wanted to make a strong assertion when He says, "For verily I say unto you." The word "verily" is a translation of the Greek term "amen", which is a transliteration of the Hebrew word for "truth". Therefore, it generally identifies something true, faithful or absolute. This expression, thus, explains to us how highly Jesus regards the Scriptures, and how important the following statement is of His view of the Scriptures - "Till

heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

Jesus then tells us how long the Scriptures will continue to be unerring and authoritative - "till heaven and earth pass". In other words, Jesus was emphasizing the relative imperishability of God's written Word, by saying that it would be here even when the universe passes out of its present existence.

Then He continues to express His view in the most exhaustive way by saying, "one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled". A "jot" (or yodh) refers to the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet. A "tittle" is an appendage or portion of the letter, a mark by which one letter is distinguished from another. What Jesus is saying is that not even the tiniest Hebrew letter, including the tiniest part of a Hebrew letter, shall pass from this law until all would be fulfilled.

If God does not preserve every tiny part of every alphabet of the Scriptures, then the completeness of the truth of God's Word would be lost. The purity and authority of the whole Scriptures are dependent on every section of the Scriptures, every book, every chapter, every word and every letter. Even the smallest letter or a portion of a letter cannot be lost if the authority and infallibility of the Scriptures are to remain unaffected all through the ages. The Lord Jesus assures us that His Word will be preserved true to every letter. We do not know HOW God does it, but we know that God did it because He says He did. It is a matter of faith, as always, in every act of God in Holy Scriptures,

for without faith it is impossible to please Him.

JESUS WARNS US NOT TO DISREGARD EVEN THE LEAST COMMANDMENT OF THE SCRIPTURES

Because every letter of the Scriptures has been preserved to the end of days, Jesus warns us about setting aside or disannulling any portion of the Scriptures: "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (v 19). The word "therefore" takes our attention backward, and gives us one reason why we should not disregard the Scriptures. The reason is, as we found earlier, that God's Word is imperishable.

Then Jesus forewarns us about the consequences if we disregard even a smallest portion of His Word - "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." The word "break" (Greek *luo*) means "to loose, release, nullify or destroy". Therefore, the idea conveyed is: if anyone releases himself from an obligation to obey or to teach exactly what it says, even the least of it, he will be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. This suggests that such men will face the Lord's judgment for unbelief, and loss of reward as a result.

Another significant phrase that should be noticed is "these commandments". This phrase must

be understood within the context since any expressed antecedent for the term "these" is absent. In the previous verses, Jesus referred to the entire Old Testament and claimed that He came not to destroy but to fulfil them. Since Jesus is the fulfilment of "the law" and "the prophets" (or the whole Old Testament points to Him), our responsibility is not only to obey the commandments of the Old Testament but also His teachings as found in the New Testament. We must also take heed of the words of the New Testament writers, for they were written as inspired by His Spirit.

CONCLUSION

In this passage, we have seen how our Lord promises to preserve all the letters of His Word that His people may have an infallible, everlasting Scripture. As disciples of Jesus, we must also hold the same view of the Scriptures, which Jesus proclaimed. To doubt the perfect preservation of the Bible, as many have done, is to simply deny Jesus' promise. That would also mean to drift away from the perfect standard of righteousness. The message the Lord gives in Matthew 5:17-19 is: fulfil God's law, and do not break even the least of His commandments, because His Word is pre-eminent, permanent and pertinent till the end of days. All Christians must affirm their allegiance to the Word of God. If anyone, therefore, questions its perfect preservation, infallibility and authority, he cannot be considered a faithful Christian, let alone a faithful Bible teacher. Dear reader, it is time for us to take heed of our Saviour's words more than ever before, and uphold His perfect Word by believing, obeying and proclaiming all of its words.

VPP - THE DOCTRINE OF THE B-P MOVEMENT FROM THE BEGINNING

I. VPI AND VPP EXPLAINED

1. VPI and VPP are about the BIBLE and NOT a translation.
2. The BIBLE refers to the Word of God in the original languages – Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.
3. KJV is an English language translation of the BIBLE, like all the other translations from the Chinese or Korean or Japanese languages. VPI and VPP are not about the KJV or any translation.
4. VPI means verbal plenary inspiration of the BIBLE. All the words of the BIBLE are inspired by God and are perfect.
5. VPP means verbal plenary preservation of the BIBLE. All the inspired words of the BIBLE are preserved by God and are perfect.
6. The BIBLE teaches VPI and VPP.
7. 2 Timothy 3:16, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” – teaches VPI.

8. Psalm 12:6-7, “The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.”

Matthew 5:18, “For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”

These are just two verses from the BIBLE that teach VPP. There are many more verses in the BIBLE that teach VPP.

9. Without VPP there is no VPI. The fact that we know there was a perfect BIBLE in the past (VPI) is because there is still a perfect BIBLE today (VPP). Those who reject or attack the doctrine of VPP are really attacking VPI of the BIBLE.
10. FEBC and the B-P Movement from the very beginning defend and teach both VPP and VPI and have never replaced VPI with VPP.
11. FEBC and the B-P Movement believe in VPP in order to hold on to VPI.
12. VPP is NOT a new doctrine.

It is taught in the BIBLE. Therefore, it is as old as the BIBLE itself.

13. FEBC and some B-P churches in the B-P Movement coined the term VPP to defend VPI that is under attack. It is a new attack on an OLD doctrine.

14. VPP complements VPI. One cannot exist without the other.

II. VPP IS NOT A DIVISIVE DOCTRINE

1. VPP simply means that every Christian holds in his hand a perfect BIBLE without mistakes.
2. How, then, can VPP be a divisive doctrine?
3. Why would born-again Christians be upset when they are taught that all the doctrines that they believe in come from, and stand on a BIBLE without mistakes? VPP strengthens faith and encourages. It is a blessed doctrine.
4. On the other hand, a rejection of VPP means that the BIBLE the Christian holds in his hand has mistakes. ALL the doctrines he believes in would be doubted, especially when not all alleged mistakes are told to Christians.
5. The distortions of the doctrine of VPP cause division. These distortions, both verbal and in writing, include – “VPP is about the KJV”; “those who

believe in and read only the CUV are not born again”.

6. The Christian’s faith is based upon the perfect BIBLE in the original languages and not on a translation. Translations like the KJV and CUV are what Christians can read because many Christians cannot read Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. For example, when the first English or Chinese speaking Christian was converted, there was no BIBLE translated into their languages yet. However, they still became Christians because the Word of God was preached to them and they believed. In time, the BIBLE was translated into their languages. Usually, the Four Gospels would be translated and published first for believers to read, and so they would hold in their hands a translation of the BIBLE of only four out of the 66 books. The faith of the believer is not shaken even though his translation is incomplete because his faith is not based upon the four gospels only but in the same BIBLE which is in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.
7. Those who reject VPP attack every translation because they attack the BIBLE in the original languages.
8. Those who reject VPP cannot really believe in VPI because VPI cannot exist without VPP.
9. Those who reject VPP attack all the doctrines of the BIBLE. It is not true that no doctrines are

affected. They do not tell the believers where all the mistakes in the BIBLE are. Some say that 1% of the BIBLE may contain discrepancies or mistakes. 1% of 783,137 words (in the KJV) is equal to 7,831 mistakes. 1% of 31,101 verses (in the KJV) is equal to 311 verses with mistakes. That is equivalent to the books of Revelation, Jude, 1, 2, and 3 John, 1 and 2 Peter combined, for they have a total of 330 verses.

III. FEBC AND THE B-P MOVEMENT HAVE NOT CHANGED BUT ARE HOLDING ON TO THE ORIGINAL DOCTRINES OF VPI AND VPP

1. Both VPI and VPP are taught in the Westminster Confession of Faith.

WCF Chapter 1 – Of the Holy Scripture, section 8 states – “The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which, at the time of the writing of it, was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God, and, by His singular care and providence kept pure in all ages are therefore authentic”; so as in all controversies of religion, the Church is finally to appeal unto them. But, because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God, who have right unto and interest in the Scriptures, and are commanded, in the fear of God, to read and search

them, therefore they are to be translated into the vulgar language of every nation unto which they come, that the Word of God dwelling plentifully in all, they may worship Him in an acceptable manner; and, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, may have hope.” [emphasis added]

Captured in the phrases – “being immediately inspired by God” is the doctrine of VPI and, “by His singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic” the doctrine of VPP.

2. FEBC and the B-P Movement have in the past always taught VPI explicitly and VPP implicitly. Because of the new attack on God’s perfect Word, FEBC and some of the B-P Churches now teach and defend BOTH VPI and VPP explicitly. Therefore, it is not correct to call VPP a new doctrine.
3. FEBC and the B-P Movement have not deviated and will not deviate from the original doctrinal position of both VPI and VPP found in the WCF mentioned in the 1962 Constitution of FEBC and in all the Constitutions of the B-P Churches.
4. A doctrine might be new to a Christian because he has just learned it. He is not omniscient, and he continues to learn new doctrines in his life. VPP may seem like a new doctrine because of its term, but it is not a new truth; it is as old as the BIBLE.

IF WE REJECT THE DOCTRINE OF THE PERFECT PRESERVATION OF THE BIBLE

Rejecting the doctrine of the perfect preservation of the Bible (which refers to God's Word in the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, and not a translation) will lead to many severe spiritual dangers. It will undermine the very foundation of the Christian faith. The following would be what we concede if we do not believe in the perfect preservation of the Bible:

1. We don't have the inspired Word of God intact, as the words of the originals were not kept pure (2 Tim 3:16).
2. We don't have an absolutely infallible, inerrant Word of God, even though the Lord promises a perfect Word of God forever (Ps 19:7-9).
3. God is unfaithful in keeping His repeated promises that He will preserve His Word forever (Ps 12:6-7; 111:7-8; 119:89, 152, 160).
4. Jesus' promises such as "my words shall not pass away" are unreliable (Matt 24:35; Mk 13:31; Lk 21:33).
5. Jesus did not mean what He said, because the Bible is not

preserved as He uttered - "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt 5:18; Lk 16:17).

6. God was so incapacitated by the errors of man and the dark events of history that He failed to keep His promises concerning the preservation of His Word. (It also casts doubt on God's sovereignty, providence, omnipotence, omniscience, etc.)
7. The faith of the Old Testament prophets and saints that God's Word will be kept intact forever is a false faith. "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever" (Isa 40:8). "The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether" (Ps 19:9).
8. The affirmation of the Apostles of Christ and the New Testament writers that God's Word will be kept intact forever is false. Matthew, Mark and Luke quoted Jesus' affirmation of the preservation of God's Word. (1 Pet 1:25).

9. Our forefathers' faith that the Word of God "by His singular care and providence, kept pure in all ages" is not acceptable (Westminster Confession of Faith I, 8).

10. Anyone can question the authenticity and authority of the words in the Bible (Jn 17:17).

11. Some parts of the Bible can be subject to the "scholarly opinion" of certain individuals. When those intellectuals point to us where the Bible is allegedly wrong, we should believe them more than the Bible itself (Matt 5:17-19).

12. It is wrong to have the presupposition that believers have an absolutely trustworthy and perfect Bible (Ps 18:30; 111:7-8; 119:128).

Denying the perfect preservation of the Bible will harm and hurt the church. It will open the door for anyone to criticize the text of the Bible according to his personal thinking or opinion. This will lead to doubting the absolute accuracy and authority of the Bible. Every doctrine comes under doubt and attack. Thus, the very foundation of the church, the absolute sufficiency, trustworthiness and authority of the Bible will be weakened and destroyed. If we preachers do not have a perfectly preserved Bible, what assurance can hearers have in our preaching of the Word? If we do not have a perfectly preserved Bible, our preaching is in vain.

WHY WE BELIEVE THAT THERE IS A PERFECTLY PRESERVED BIBLE IN THE ORIGINAL LANGUAGES

The following are some arguments that may help clear up the matter of inspiration and preservation.

- a. To say that we believe that the KJB is the Word of God, and in the same breath say that we do not have the perfect Bible is self-contradictory, regardless of whether the errors are inconsequential or not.
- b. When we say that we believe in inspiration but that God failed to preserve His inspired Word, we make God to be a foolish God. For then, the purpose of His inspiration has become a meaningless exercise.
- c. To say that we have the Word of God, but it is not a perfect Bible and that the differences are very inconsequential, makes man the judge of God and His Holy Word. This is deadly pride and is likened to the evil words of the serpent in the Garden, "Yea hath God said?"
- d. The Bible says that without faith it is impossible to please Him. Hebrews 11:6, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

Faith must be first and foremost in what we believe. We must begin, continue and end in faith. Is this not what the Bible says about the Christian, that the just shall live by faith? Romans 1:17, "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." There is no other way to please God but to believe in every word of God. Everything else, including the words of the most brilliant men, must come second.

We must begin with God's Word and end with God's Word.

- e. Faith is defined in Hebrews 11:1 as, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It is simply taking God at His Word. When God says it once, we must hear it twice, and three times and more! On the doctrine of preservation, God has spoken more than once! Psalm 12:6-7, "The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt

preserve them from this generation for ever." And in Matthew 5:18, "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." The issue is whether we believe God's Word more than the words of men! If we say we do, then the implication is that all of the works and words of men must be secondary to the Word of God - they must be interpreted in light of God's Word and not the other way round.

- f. Is our belief based upon complete knowledge, whereby we can answer every question man poses to us, or is it a matter of faith? God's Word says it! That settles it once and for all! We must believe it! Can we ever be able to fully comprehend the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man? Or the doctrine of only One God but Three Persons in the Godhead, all of them distinct, yet equal in power, glory, and essence? Can man ever have all the answers on the creation, the global flood, how the sun stood still, the healing of the blind, the raising of the dead, the parting of the Red Sea, and all the miracles in the Bible?

Obviously, we cannot. We must begin with God's Word and end with God's Word. We believe because God's perfect Word says so! We humbly admit and submit to the Word of God, and believe. Why do we not do the same with the doctrine of preservation? All the doctrines of the Bible are accepted by faith, and that should include the doctrine of preservation!

g. We tread on very thin ice when we elevate the words and works of men above the Word of God. This belief means that man's word is above God's Word. Man sits in judgement of God's Word. The fact remains that when we conclude we do not have a perfectly preserved Bible in the original languages, we have elevated the works and words of men above the Word of God. By taking this position, we have, without putting it into so many words, declared the Bible as one of imperfection, have we not? One B-P minister even swore that the Bible has 1% mistakes or errors. This is the subtle trap of the evil one to deceive and make us think that we can be cleverer than God. This is man's ego and pride.

h. An example of the consequence of elevating the works and word of men above the Word of God is the theory of Evolution. Evolutionists say that based upon "evidence and facts", the earth must be billions of years old. Hence the conclusion that evolution must have taken place. Some

apply the same principle to the Bible. "Evidence" proves that the Bible has mistakes. So some Christians, without the child-like faith Jesus requires of us, believe there is no preservation.

i. Faith in what God says is logic in faith, not faith in logic, because faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. The words and works of men are fallible at best and untruthful at worst. What audacity and pride must fill our hearts, for us to even contemplate that God did not care to preserve His perfectly inspired Word! Romans 3:4, "God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged."

j. The danger of double talk is very real in neo-evangelical circles. There was this theologian who taught that he believes that God created ex nihilo but it cannot be proven from the Bible. He removed the biblical foundation of his belief! To say that we believe in the Word of God but we do not have a perfect Bible today is double talk. Matthew 5:37, "But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."

k. It grieves the heart that God's people are either silent or fence-sitting when God's perfect Word is under attack.

Why is this so? Are the men of God not men of conviction and courage and truth? Joshua 1:7-9, "Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

l. John the Baptist reminds us in John 3:30-33, "He must increase, but I must decrease. He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all. And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony. He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true."

May God help us to humble ourselves before Him that we might submit to His holy, inerrant, infallible and divinely inspired Word which He has preserved forever for His people. Amen.

WHAT IS NEO-EVANGELICALISM

Neo (or New) Evangelicalism is essentially a term which describes the mindset of churches and believers who claim to be evangelical but refuse to agree with the principle of Separation. Previously, the term "evangelical" generally referred to those who preach the fundamentals of the faith, of the deity and virgin birth of Christ, inspiration, inerrancy and infallibility of the Bible, justification by faith etc., in contradistinction to the liberals. In other words, they were Bible-believing, conservative Christians. Back then, the lines of distinction were clearly drawn. You were either an evangelical/ a fundamentalist who believed in the Bible and separated from apostasy, or you were a liberal/modernist who denied the inspiration of the Bible, and many of the truths therein.

However, in the early 1940s, after the dust of the fundamental-modernist controversies had settled, a new generation of evangelicals and so-called fundamentalists arose. They were put off by the stance of their forefathers, thought to be militant, which often resulted in church splits, fragmented denominations and were often looked down upon by the mainline churches. They desired recognition, unity and peace. Thus arose the mindset of what is termed "Neo-Evangelicalism".

HISTORY

The term Neo-Evangelicalism was first coined by Harold Ockenga in

1948. He held various prominent positions: founder-president of the National Association of Evangelicals, president of Fuller Theological Seminary, president of the World Evangelical Fellowship, a director of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, and chairman and editor of Christianity Today. In his own words,

Neo-Evangelicalism was born in 1948 in connection with a convocation address which I gave in the Civic Auditorium in Pasadena. While reaffirming the theological view of fundamentalism, the address repudiated its ecclesiology and its social theory. The ringing call for a *repudiation of separatism* and the *summons to social involvement* received a hearty response from many evangelicals... It differed from fundamentalism in its repudiation of separatism and its determination to engage itself in the theological dialogue of the day. It had a new emphasis upon the application of the gospel to the sociological, political, and economic areas of life.¹

Ockenga contended that evangelicals should practise infiltration rather than separation, meaning they should stay in the apostate denominations and organizations and try to change them from within rather

than separate from them and serve God in pure churches and organizations. He encouraged evangelicals to practise dialogue rather than preach against error, that they should not be negative in their message by rebuking and warning false teachers publicly, but should attempt to change false teachers through dialogue. He taught that evangelicals should re-examine their idea of worldliness and not be as strict about separating from worldly evils as Bible-believing Christians had been in earlier days.

While his motives might seem to have been good, his methods were in direct disobedience to Scripture. For in so doing, he had gone in the way of men like Asa and Jehoshaphat, who had tried to cooperate with unbelievers, and were strongly chastised for it. They were good kings, who did much to reform their nation. However, their problem was their propensity to cooperate with unbelievers: Asa with the Syrians, and Jehoshaphat

Numerous churches, Bible colleges and seminaries all around the world have fallen to the deception of Neo-Evangelicalism.

with the wicked king Ahab. The warning given to Jehoshaphat was clear: 2 Chronicles 19:2b "Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD." Likewise, Paul commands in 2 Corinthians 6:14-17, "Be ye

¹Harold Ockenga, "Forward" in Harold Lindsell, *The Battle for the Bible*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976).

not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.”

RESULT

The result of this new thinking has been dramatic. Within a mere 50 years, Neo-Evangelicalism has lost all semblance of its past purity and spiritual power and glory. While it started out conservative, but willing to cooperate with the Liberals, the lines today have blurred greatly. Within Neo-Evangelicalism today, there is a whole broad spectrum, ranging from those who are still generally quite conservative, to the other extreme who are evangelicals in name but fully liberal and modernist. In doing away with Biblical Separation, what these churches have done is to drop their defences and allow the deception of Satan to rush in, with all his fiery darts in rapid fire.

Numerous churches, Bible colleges and seminaries all around the world have fallen to the deception of Neo-Evangelicalism. One does not have to be in any particular denomination or association to be part of this movement. In fact, one can worship in the most fundamental

of churches, but still maintain a neo-evangelical mindset. All it takes is for someone to repudiate the necessity of Biblical Separation, to have a desire to embrace the methods of the world, and he can be termed a neo-evangelical. Thus, all of us have to be very careful, and heed the warning in Jude 3 that all Christians are to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”

Some of their doctrinal standards today are so flimsy and brief that even Roman Catholics would agree with them.

It is true that by the standards of the world, evangelicals today do seem to enjoy a large measure of success. Their numbers are flourishing, their seminaries, world conferences, publications, radio and TV stations, and mission organizations are all burgeoning. They have strength in numbers and finances, and exercise a notable influence in Christendom today. However, in the area of true gospel work and a call to historic Christianity, they have failed. Some of their doctrinal standards today are so flimsy and brief that even Roman Catholics would agree with them. Their love for compromise has led many of them to be part of the worldwide Ecumenical Movement: in joining hands with Roman Catholics, the WCC, and even some interfaith religious organizations. Their clarion call is that “love unites, doctrine divides”. They claim that we ought to

come together in unity based on what we affirm together, rather than the “inconsequential doctrines” that would drive wedges among them.

LATEST

Ecumenism on an unprecedented basis is happening before our eyes.

Just last month, on 17 Sep 2010, something historic happened. Pope Benedict XVI became the first pope to visit the official residence of the Archbishop of the Anglican Church. Never has the symbol of global ecumenism been so prominent.

Archbishop Rowan Williams, in his welcoming address, said, “Your Holiness, brother bishops, brothers and sisters in Christ: It is a particular pleasure that on this historic occasion we are able to come together as bishops of the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches in this country to greet you, Your Holiness, during a visit which we all hope will be of significance both to the Church of Christ and to British society.”

His closing words again affirmed the depth of the ecumenical chaos, “May this historic visit be for all of us a special time of grace and of growth in our shared calling, as you, Your Holiness, bring us the word of the Gospel afresh.” Read more for yourself at <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/acns/news.cfm/2010/9/17/ACNS4733>.

NEO-EVANGELICALISM IN THE SINGAPORE B-P CHURCH

In Singapore, B-P churches

have not been spared from the neo-evangelical mindset. While each B-P church may continue to affirm a need for Biblical Separation, possibly in Article 6 of their Constitution, and declares it boldly on her website, yet we realize that not all B-P churches are the same.

All B-Ps who know some of their history would readily affirm that the B-P Church was born out of obedience to the biblical directive of Separation. When the Presbyterian Synod, of which the late Rev Timothy Tow and Life Church Prinsep Street English Service were part of, decided to enter into the Malayan Council of Churches (MCC) which was in turn part of the World Council of Churches (WCC), they decided that separation was the only solution. Thus in 1955, they came out to form Life BPC. Since then, the motto of “Holding Forth the Word of Life” (Phil 2:16) became their battle cry. Throughout the early years, under the steady leadership of Rev Tow, the church blossomed into a fast growing denomination. As a non-B-P church historian in Singapore described,

...the B-P Church developed at a rapid pace but largely in isolation from other churches. Its strong call to all Protestant Christians to separate themselves from churches that had liberal leadership struck a responsive chord in some but antagonized the leaders of the larger churches. Its consistent emphases on solid biblical teaching and evangelistic efforts led to its expansion throughout Singapore, Malaya and Indonesia².

However, it was not always to be the case. Even from the late 1960s, there had already been rumblings of a neo-evangelical mindset evidenced even in some of the leaders of Life BPC. As the late Rev Tow reported in his autobiography,

A true B-P is opposed to all efforts to obscure or wipe out the clear line of separation between B-Ps and New Evangelicals, Charismatics...

Hitherto, the witness of separation from modernistic unbelief and ecumenical apostasy had received full support of the Church. However, when “evangelical” leaders like Dr Billy Graham began to fraternise with the apostate ecclesiastical powers for the sake of “cooperative evangelism” and the pastor pointed out the unscripturalness of such a relationship (2 Cor 6:14-18), one or two Session members who differed with the pastor introduced a dissentious spirit in the Church, the first time in eighteen years... The opposition in Life Church Session against the pastor increased from one or two dissenters to several when the pastor published two news reports in the Far Eastern Beacon, November and December 1968³.

The climax of dissension was reached when the Assistant Pastor was invited to preach at a Methodist Church in July 1969, for which campaign he appended his name to a letter cyclostyled on paper bearing the letterhead of the said Methodist Church. This gave the impression that he was in close fellowship with a church in the Ecumenical Movement. Controversy over this matter flared up at Presbytery. There the question of whether a Bible-Presbyterian minister, when invited to preach by a church in the modernist ecumenical fold, had a duty to warn against the dangers of Ecumenism, was discussed. The opinion of the Presbyters was about equally divided, resulting in a contention so sharp that they left in bitterness of spirit⁴.

This situation of having mixed opinions regarding separation and compromise finally came to a head in the late 1980s, when the “dissentious spirit” in the denomination could no longer be contained. While the B-P Church continued to grow, and numerous churches were planted, it seemed that not every church was headed in the same direction with unity of spirit. Dr Tow Siang Hwa, writing in the Annual Record of Calvary Bible-Presbyterian Church (1994) described the situation as such:

A true B-P is opposed to all efforts to obscure or wipe out the clear line of separation between B-Ps and New Evangelicals, Charismatics, promoters of ecumenical cooperative

²Bobby E K Sng, *In His Good Time: The story of the church in Singapore 1819-2002, 3rd Ed.*, (Singapore: Bible Society of Singapore, 2003), 232.

³Timothy Tow, *Son of a Mother's Vow*, (Singapore: FEBC Bookroom, 2001), 237

⁴Ibid, 239-240.

evangelism, promoters of the liberal-modernist social gospel, and all links with the Ecumenical movement.

As the B-P Movement grew, and younger men went overseas and imbibed liberal and New Evangelical theology, a deviant spirit began to creep into the B-P Church. While wearing the B-P name these were playing the New Evangelical game⁵.

The neo-evangelical mindset had sunk its roots deep, and it seemed dissolution of the synod would be the only solution. As Dr Bobby Sng wrote,

However, with growth, internal differences also arose. Its relentless call for believers to separate themselves from what it considered to be non-fundamental churches and neo-evangelicals, brought a mixed response. Not all agreed on the rigid, narrow definition of 'separation'. In a statement issued on October 30, 1988 describing its voluntary dissolution, the B-P Church declared:

"The decision was arrived at after much prayerful consideration and discussion over certain protracted issues. These issues centred mainly on strong differences in interpreting the Doctrine of Biblical Separation, Fundamentalism, and Neo-Evangelicalism. Concerted attempts were made during the past two years at reconciliation through personal discussions and formal meetings. Even a

moratorium failed to resolve these differences and break the impasse. Dissolution is accepted as the last resort."⁶

As a result, each individual B-P church became an independent organization, free to do as she pleases, to seek her own alliances and establish her own doctrinal convictions. It has been 22 years since the split in the synod, and it is evident that many of the B-P churches today are B-P only in name, and have far removed themselves from the original mission and purpose of the B-P Church. In many of these churches, modern translations of the Bible are promoted, replacing the KJB; contemporary worship styles have come in, with guitars, and for some, even drums replacing or complementing the traditional piano and organ. Many have also joined hands with other compromising churches, inviting modernist preachers to speak at their pulpits and camps, and now encourage their members to join ecumenical para-church organizations such as the Campus Crusade, Youth for Christ, Navigators and the Bible Study Fellowship (BSF).

Indeed, the dangers of Neo-Evangelicalism are real and very lethal. It is the little leaven of compromise, that leaveneth the whole lump. As we commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the B-P Movement, true B-Ps today must do well to learn from the past, to realize that even the slightest compromise should not be tolerated, and more so affirm a clear biblical stand for separation. Each generation will have its own battles to fight, for the devil will come in his multiple guises, seeking to do harm to every church

that does the work of the Lord. May we all pray that we will never fall prey to the wiles of Neo-Evangelicalism.

CESSATION OF THE APOSTOLIC AND PROPHETIC MINISTRIES

Two of the most influential offsprings of the Charismatic Movement, which ultimately led to the formation of the Third Wave Movement, are the "Prophets, Prophecy, and the Prophetic Movement" and the "Twentieth Century Apostolic Ministry". Hamon prophesied,

The Prophets are Coming – Prepare! I believe that this is an age in which God is raising up a multitude of prophets who are anointed and appointed – honest, true, trained, and experientially mature... Jesus is thrilled at the thought that His prophets will soon be fully recognized and accepted by His Church. When this happens it will escalate the approach of the consummation of the ages. It will accelerate the 'making ready a people for the Lord' so that He can return. It is the prophesying of the prophets that brings the Church from a disorganized Valley of dry bones to a unified coming together with growth and maturity until the Church arises as an exceeding great and mighty army of the Lord (Eze 37:1-14).¹

In his declaration, Hamon claims that modern prophets, like himself, will prepare the way for the Second Coming of Christ! In his own words, Hamon, who is reputed to be one of the most widely recognized

prophetic ministers in the Charismatic Movement, declared that he has functioned in the office of prophet for over 36 years and has personally prophesied to more than 20,000 believers and hundreds of prominent leaders.²

Hamon declares that a new age is coming whereby God will commission "His Spirit to bring enlightenment on the Scriptures and revelation knowledge concerning the reality and application of that truth."³

These Charismatics claim that modern prophets are indispensable to the modern church. The new Charismatics believe that these prophets will, with incisive clarity of vision, cut through the clutter, to search out the motives and intentions of the members of the church like a probing laser beam!⁴ Like biblical Jeremiah who burst the balloon of false trust in religious ritualism, the modern prophets will bring to the church revelation and clarity concerning God's purpose for their time. "The modern prophets will cause leaders to re-examine their church's activities in light of the new truths the prophets bring. They will execute prophetic surgery on many churches to awaken them to God's present truth. Without the vision and fresh revelation of modern prophets, the church has no hope of ever being restored."⁵

The vision and purpose of Hamon's School of the Prophets is

fourfold: (1) defining and determining 20th Century prophets within the church; (2) teaching and portraying different levels of the prophetic ministry – spirit of prophecy, gift of prophecy, office of the prophet, laying on of the hands and prophecy of the presbytery; (3) the blessings and dangers of personal prophecy – wise and experientially proved criteria and guidelines; and (4) determining the true and mature prophet by evaluating the man, his manners, his message, and his ministry.⁶

There will be false prophets today, as there were false prophets in the past.

The apostolic ministry is just as vital as that of the prophets. The new Charismatics believe they have found the secret of church building and advancing God's kingdom. It is the restoration of the apostolic ministry. The modern apostle, and in some cases, a company of apostles will be based in a local church. Their ministry is to establish new churches or to oversee the rebuilding and ongoing development of existing churches. God has, as it were, re-activated them to fulfill His great plan of establishing His kingdom on earth for Jesus' return.

⁵Tow Siang Hwa, *Annual Record of Calvary Pandan Bible-Presbyterian Church* (1994), quoted in Timothy Tow, *The Singapore B-P Church Story*, (Singapore: Life Book Centre, 1995), 226.

⁶Bobby Sng, *In His Good Time*, 312-313.

¹Bill Hamon, *Prophets and Personal Prophecy: God's Prophetic Voice Today*, (Shippensburg: Destiny Image, 1987), 15, 28.

²Hamon, *Prophets and the Prophetic Movement*, 76.

³Ibid.

⁴Terry Virgo, *Restoration of the Church*, (Columbia: Cityhill Publishing, 1985), 106.

⁵Moriarty, 97.

⁶Taken from Bill Hamon, "Brochure for the School of the Holy Spirit and Prophets Seminar," Christian International Ministries, nd.

The ministry of the modern-day apostle is to travel from church to church to assess the church's situation and rectify any problem immediately. He has no qualms about bringing in hard-hitting messages from the Lord to the local congregation who do not see their own faults. This he does with fierce prophetic insights. He corrects spiritual coldness, doctrinal instability, faulty practices, etc. and any problems that can unobtrusively become part of a church's life. He believes that his duty is to safeguard the churches under his care. He protects them from impending dangers of legalism, false doctrines, and many other problems of the present day church.

Restoration "apostle" Terry Virgo, who is in charge of an apostolic team overseeing 60 churches in Great Britain, India, South Africa, Switzerland, Holland, and Mexico, has this to say concerning the need for the apostolic ministry,

The elders often feel trapped within the framework and long for an outside voice to authoritatively proclaim the way forward. Indeed, it is very often the elders who feel the need for the apostolic ministry. ...Traditional churches are feeling the pressures of new life. Charismatic gifts are emerging; a desire for freer worship is being expressed. How are leaders to proceed? Many are facing such issues and do not know which way to turn. Conferences for like-minded pastors will not provide the full answer, nor will charismatic organizations. God's way is to give apostles

and prophets. He has simply appointed men with different gifts to do different jobs.⁷

They claim that it is up to the churches today if they wish to grow or die a slow death. Churches that accept these modern apostles will mature into bastions of God's power and glory. Those who resist will fall by the wayside. The new Charismatics believe that, "just as the ministry of

The principal leaders and originators of the movement... Bob Mumford, Charles Simpson, Derek Prince, Don Basham and Ern Baxter.

the apostle and prophet founded the Church, so shall the ministry of the apostle and prophet put the finishing touches on the Church."⁸

Are these claims of God? If they are, then every local church must restore into their leadership the offices of prophets and apostles or else they would be charged with disobeying the Word of God. However, if these claims are false, then they must be rejected and exposed as false in order not to deceive and be deceived.

MEANING OF TERMS

A "Prophet" is defined as a person who foretells and forth-tells. To foretell means to reveal future events from God. To forth-tell means

to preach against sin, and to preach what the Lord lays in the prophet's heart. The example in the Bible that succinctly defines the ministry of the prophet is in 1Samuel 3:18, "And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, It is the LORD: let him do what seemeth him good." The catch phrase of every prophet is "Thus saith the LORD."

In the general sense, when a pastor or a believer preaches God's Word, he is forth-telling; when he preaches future events, like those taught in the book of Revelation, he is foretelling. In the general usage of the word "prophet", he can be called a prophet of God. However, in the strict sense of the word as used in the Bible, the prophetic ministries have ceased. These were the prophets whom God had chosen to write the Scriptures. There were others who did not write the Scriptures but they performed miracles, like Elijah and Elisha.

There will be false prophets today, as there were false prophets in the past. For example, in Jeremiah 28:1-4, "And it came to pass the same year, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fourth year, and in the fifth month, that Hananiah the son of Azur the prophet, which was of Gibeon, spake unto me in the house of the LORD, in the presence of the priests and of all the people, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon. Within two full years will I bring again into this place all the vessels of the LORD'S house, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place, and carried them to Babylon: And I

will bring again to this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, with all the captives of Judah, that went into Babylon, saith the LORD: for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon." False prophets imitate genuine prophets by using similar terminologies.

Charismatics interpret the phrase, "until the times of the restitution of all things" as the Restoration Movement.

The term "Apostle" simply means "one who is sent." In the general usage of the word, it includes anyone who has been sent. For example, in Acts 14:14, "Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out," Barnabas was also called an apostle as the church in Jerusalem sent both of them. In the case of the Apostles of Christ like Peter and Paul, Christ sent them; in the case of Barnabas the church sent him. Therefore, in the general usage of the word, our church's missionaries can be called apostles as they are sent by the church. However, this is not how the Charismatics use the term "apostle" to be restored in their churches.

The Apostles, like Peter and Paul, must fulfill the requirements described by Peter in Acts 1:15-23, "And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were

about an hundred and twenty,) Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood. For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take. Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection. And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias."

The capital "A" Apostles were called by Jesus Christ personally for the writing of the NT Scriptures, just as the capital "P" Prophets were used by God to write the OT Scriptures. Upon the completion of the Bible, their offices ceased. The Bible attests to this truth in 1 Corinthians 13:8-10, "Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." The word "perfect" used here

refers to the Bible, and not the Second Coming of Christ.

DEFINING A POWERFUL CHURCH TODAY

The Charismatic View of a present day power-filled church:

The principal leaders and originators of the movement came out of Fort Lauderdale, Florida. They are: Bob Mumford, Charles Simpson, Derek Prince, Don Basham and Ern Baxter. To achieve their goal of complete and total discipleship, they teach a pyramid form of church government. Different levels will shepherd one another for the purpose of discipleship.



The proof text used to support the restoration theology is Acts 3:19-21, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

The Charismatics interpret the phrase, "until the times of the restitution of all things" as the

⁹The congregation makes up the base of the pyramid. Above them on the pyramid are the house group leaders whose job is to oversee the church members to ensure that each is disciplined properly. Next in line, above the house group leaders are the elders who hold the house group leaders accountable for their own lives and the lives of those under their authority. This is followed by the pastors who hold the elders accountable. Finally, on the top of the pyramid are the apostles who are accountable to one another.

Restoration Movement. They believe that for the Second Coming of Christ to become a reality, the restoration must occur. To them, the restoration refers to the bringing back of the apostolic and prophetic ministries into the local churches.

The critique of this view:

Firstly, there is no mention of the restoration of the ministries of the prophets and apostles at all in this context. The apostles were still alive when this message was preached by the Apostle Peter at the Temple precinct in Jerusalem (Acts 10-11). Secondly, the “restitution” will not be done by man. It will be the work of God. God Himself will restore all things, not some things, before the return of Christ. This restoration refers to the Rapture and the First Resurrection and the Millennial kingdom period (Rom 8).

CONCLUSION

The apostolic and prophetic ministries in the New and Old Testaments were very special ministries. God raised the Apostles just as He raised the Prophets of the Old Testament for a specific purpose. They were the people whom God used, not only to preach His Word but also to write them in order that future generations

The apostolic and prophetic ministries in the New and Old Testaments were very special ministries.

might know who God is and what He has done. The Bible says in Hebrews 1:1-2, “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.” 1 Thessalonians 2:13 adds, “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.” 2 Timothy 2:2 confirms, “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”

Furthermore, a revival of the prophetic and apostolic ministries dilutes the Word of God over and above what the many modernistic translations have already done. The authority of the Word of God is being diminished by the minute. Today, it is not uncommon to find many Charismatic pastors preaching Sunday after Sunday from their pulpits “a word from God”, which they claim to have been given to them by God in the morning or the night before.¹⁰ The shocking thing is that there are thousands of people who readily accept what these pastors proclaim to be the Word of God week after week. The lack of discernment in these churches is overwhelming. Even the well-educated and well-informed would attend these meetings and lap up everything that comes forth from these pastors’ mouths, like a hart that pants after a cool water brook! This is truly a spiritual warfare, in which a person’s IQ has absolutely no influence.

Sadly, this phenomenon is growing all over the world. The readiness to replace God’s Word with man’s word has bred a generation of professing Christians whose foundation is experiences and the words of sinful men. The restoration of the prophetic and apostolic ministries sounds nice and biblical, but it is just another ploy by the evil one to deceive the naïve and gullible. Believing a lie to be the truth is a very potent deception. The greatest sadness is that this deception has an eternal consequence -- to be rejected by Jesus Christ on the day of Judgement and be cast into the Lake of Fire. Amen.

CESSATION OF MIRACLES

Miracles are common claims in the books and rallies of the Charismatics. These include healings from the common backache and headache, to the more spectacular like the lame and the blind, and at times even raising the dead. This desire to see miracles was greatly popularized by John Wimber whose ministry is called the Vineyard Ministries. Wimber believed that the proclamation of the gospel must be accompanied by signs and wonders, as it was in the days of Jesus.

Today, seeing miracles has become a common, even expected phenomenon in Charismatic churches. Thousands of their church members see this as a norm in their Christian experience. They talk about them and sing praises to God, believing that those who do not believe in what they believe are missing a key ingredient in their Christian walk.

The Christian community outside of this fraternity is confused. Are the claims of the Charismatics for real? Have they monopolized all the miracles and are we losing out? Or can the Devil perform miracles?

THE GIFT OF MIRACLES

A. “Miracle” defined – The word “miracle” comes from the Latin for “miraculum”. Literally it means “a marvelous event” or “an event which causes wonder.” This general meaning is insufficient for our understanding of its usage in the Bible.

This desire to see miracles was greatly popularized by John Wimber...

In Christian theology, the word “miracle” means more than just something that causes amazement in the minds of man. A miracle is: (1) an extraordinary event, inexplicable in terms of ordinary natural forces; (2) an event which causes the observer to postulate a super human personal cause; and (3) an event which constitutes evidence (a sign) of implications much wider than the event itself. All three aspects must be present before it is called a biblical miracle.

Wayne Grudem defines miracles as “a less common kind of God’s activity in which he arouses people’s awe and wonder and bears witness to Himself.” This was the definition accepted by Jack Deere, which allowed him to argue for a continuation of the miraculous today: that there are no “epochs” of the miraculous as taught by Benjamin Warfield, that the miracles of the Apostles should not be compared with that of the spiritual gift of miracles, etc.

This definition by Grudem is

not acceptable. The reason is that it is too subjective. What is “awe” to one person may not be very awesome to another. For example, the glorious sunset may cause someone to be filled with wonder because he saw it for the first time; to someone else who sees it every day, it is just another sunset. The former calls it a miracle but the latter calls it another day! In light of this, Grudem’s definition of the miraculous cannot be accepted. The biblical definition of the miracles of the Bible is crucial in order to understand any claim of the miraculous of our time.

B. Distinction between biblical miracles and other works – God’s miracles must be distinct from the following:

1. Works of providence (general and not special providence) are not to be regarded as miracles. The broad usage of the word “miracle” has a metaphorical or hyperbolic meaning. Every sunrise, every tree, every blade of grass is a “miracle” in that sense. But in the strict biblical definition of the word, it is not to be understood as “the providence of God”. Works of general providence are the ordinary works of God through secondary sources. When a miracle is performed by God, even unbelievers must acknowledge it when they see it. Consider the following biblical instances: Exodus 8:18-19, “And the

¹⁰In the past ten years of ministry, I have listened to more than 300 messages of Charismatic preachers. They carry the Bible in their hands but hardly read it. Those who do, often take the Bible out of its context. They would make the Bible say what they want the Bible to say. More often than not, these pastors would not turn to a single page of the Bible, but begin their message by saying, “This morning the LORD asked me to tell you...”. With these words they would preach boldly, as if it was the voice of God the people were hearing.

magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not: so there were lice upon man, and upon beast. Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said."

Acts 4:16, (the unbelievers said), "What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it."

Acts 14:11, (we hear them say), "And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men."

2. Answers to prayer do not constitute a "sign" and should not be considered a miracle. The Christian may experience many events that demonstrate the Hand of God in his life. However, if there is no evidence that it is a demonstrative "sign", then it should not be called a miracle. It is important to realize that "God gives us abundant evidence of His love and care without any exaggeration on our part."

3. Works of magic are not miracles. In magic, the magician possesses a formula that produces the

alleged result. The alleged supernatural power is controlled by the performer (Exo 7:11; 8:7). In the miracles of God, the results depend entirely on God. The "miracle worker" is merely God's instrument.

4. Mere exotic occurrences are not miracles. Such are events in nature which excite wonder. Oddities do not equal the miraculous. These belong to the "believe it or not category." Genuine miracles are always a sign that teaches a spiritual truth. Every miracle of God is a part of God's great integrated system of revealed truth.

5. Works of Satan are not miracles of God. Matthew 24:24 says, "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." These are the words of the Lord Jesus Christ which warn of Satanic miracles in the last days. The Apostle Paul concurred when he wrote in 2 Thessalonians 2:9, "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders" (Rev 13:14; 16:14; 19:20). We do not deny the existence of Satanic miracles, but these must be distinguished from God's.

Therefore, it is interesting

to note that in Matthew 24:24 Jesus predicted that in the last days, false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders. The miracles in the Bible originated from God; He is their Source. The false miracles were from Satan and his followers. The purpose of God's miracles is to reveal; the purpose of Satan's miracles is to deceive.

C. The Purpose of Miracles – Miracles were performed by Jesus and the Apostles for the purpose of revelation and edification. After calling attention to the many unrecorded miracles of the Lord Jesus Christ, John adds, "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (Jn 20:31). Jesus' miracles were evidences of the genuineness of His message (Mk 2:1-13). Jesus says, "But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me." (Jn 5:36)

To the generation who were with Christ at His first coming, although Jesus preferred that they should accept His message for its intrinsic worth, to believe Him because of His miracles was not wrong. Jesus says, "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the

Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn 10:37-38). Today, every true believer must believe by faith, for without faith in God's Word it is impossible to please Him.

The Apostles (and apostolic men like Stephen and Philip) performed signs and wonders (Acts 6:8; 8:13) in order to attest to the fact that they were sent by the Lord Jesus Christ. The Apostles had a unique ministry to establish the early church as commanded by Jesus in Mark 16:14-18,

"Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

The church today does not need such authentication because the church has already been established by the Apostles. They had completed

the writings of the New Testament. The Church now has the fullness of the Old Testament and New Testament Scriptures that serve as her authoritative foundation. There is thus no need for these sign miracles today to authenticate the unique ministry of the Apostles. Those who believe in Jesus Christ need no signs to believe. Those who preach the gospel of Jesus Christ need no miracles to preach.

The only objective guide for what is truth... is God's inerrant and infallible Word.

The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 1:19-25, "For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ

the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

The Apostle Paul confirms this truth when he wrote in Romans 1:16-17, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."

D. The Nature of Miracles – Are miracles a violation of the natural laws? Miracles are not violations of natural laws. They are intelligent acts of a personal God. They are not erratic or exotic occurrences. Miracles are part of God's cosmic programme of revelation and redemption. There is no greater logical problem in the act of God in raising the dead than there is in the act of a man in lifting his hand. We speak or signal to our children by raising our hands with appropriate gestures. God in turn reveals Himself and His plan to us with "signs" or by other means in accordance to His will.

Christianity is a supernatural faith. For the biblical writers and all true believers of the God of the Bible, it was perfectly natural for God to perform the supernatural acts of the Bible like parting the Red Sea and

the raising of people from the dead. These biblical miracles came to an end when the Bible was completed. All Christians need today is God's Word.

E. The Issue of True Spirituality – The Charismatics claim that their brand of worship has caused lives to be changed, which proves that their spirituality is true. They conclude that the laughing, barking, meowing, shaking and rolling are all legitimate because many lives have been changed for the better by these practices. They claim that people are reading the Bible more and praying more because of such experiences.

It must be understood in the light of Scripture that the worship of God is not something subjective and arbitrary as espoused by some Charismatics. The Bible gives clear guidelines on what is acceptable worship. The worship of God is one of the most important aspects of the Christian's life. It must be pointed out that the ultimate and final yardstick to determine what is right and wrong is not the person's changed life.

The only objective guide for what is truth and what is erroneous, and what is true spirituality is God's inerrant and infallible Word. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 say, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." See also 2 Peter 1:16-21 and Deuteronomy 13:1-18.

Many on the outward may display a changed life but it is the changed heart that God looks at. This is only possible when the person has believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. Galatians 2:20 confirms this truth, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." This truth is also taught in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

A changed life is not the measure of truth or error. Rather, it is the assimilation of and obedience to God's truth. The Bible does tell us that if a person says he has faith, then he should show his faith by his works (Jas 2:14-26). We recognize that a new life is the result of the new creation that God has produced in his life. However, this new creation cannot be used as a measure of truth and error. A transformed life is proof of the heart application and assimilation of the truth, but it is not the measure of truth. Truth (the Bible) is objective, not subjective.

The final word must be from God's holy, infallible and inerrant Word:

Deuteronomy 13:1-5, "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him. And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn you away from the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee."

CESSATION OF TONGUES – PART 1

Tongues as used in Acts

The word for "tongues" in Greek is "glossa." It occurs 47 times in the New Testament. Out of these 47 occurrences, 9 are used literally and 38 figuratively.

Gifts of the Holy Spirit are not to be understood as "Christianized" secular talents. Talents are given to all, believers and unbelievers alike, by the general grace of God to function in this world. But the gifts of the Holy Spirit are spiritual. That a person is a talented teacher does not mean he will be a good Bible teacher. The Holy Spirit's work in the life of the believer is a most important factor that must be carefully considered if one is to be a good Bible teacher. It is not the man but the Spirit of God that enables the Christian to use any spiritual gift effectively to bless hearts. Since God is the One who enables, the glory must therefore be given to God alone and no one should rob God of His glory.

The gift of tongues in the Acts of the Apostles must be carefully understood because the description of tongues-speaking in this book has been used by many Charismatics as the basis for their practice of "tongues-speaking" today. To speak in tongues, according to Scriptures, means to speak a language with understanding without ever going to school to learn it. It is given supernaturally by God. The gift of tongues in Acts occurred four times, all under extraordinary circumstances:

1. Acts 2:1-12 is the event of the Pentecost when the Apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit in mighty fashion. They spoke in tongues in the presence of the Jews who were in Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of Pentecost (Feast of Harvest). 15 different dialect-speaking Jews heard the Apostles speak in tongues which caused them to be amazed and to say to one another, "Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?" (Acts 2:7-8). There is absolutely no doubt that what the disciples spoke were tongues, as the people who heard it testified that they heard "every man in our own tongue." The word "tongues" means "languages" here.

It must not be construed here that the Holy Spirit was not given or working in the OT period until after the glorification of Christ.

2. Acts 8:1-18 is the account of the Samaritans who, under the preaching of Philip, believed

and were baptized with water, but the Holy Spirit had not fallen upon them until Peter and John came and laid hands on them. Then they received the Holy Ghost. Acts 8:14-17, "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost."

The passage in Acts 8 is not correctly taught by the Charismatics. Charismatics claim that the Samaritans, under the preaching of Philip, were already believers but did not have the Holy Spirit. So when the Apostles came and laid hands on them, they then received the Holy Ghost. This, they say, is proof of a second baptism of the Holy Spirit subsequent to conversion. They teach that this ought to be the norm; that this is what every Christian must also experience today: hence the laying on of hands for the gift of "tongues-speaking" which is evidence of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. They further conclude that before this "experience", the person is saved but does not have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Can a person be considered a believer if he does not have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit? Although Moriarty rejects the explanation and conclusion of the Charismatics, he is inclined to agree that the Samaritans were already believers before the Apostles came to lay hands on them. The argument he gives is:

The crucial thing to keep in mind is that these converts were Samaritans. To the purebred Jew, the half breed Samaritans were dogs, a rotten stench in the nostrils of God. The age old religious controversy between the Jews and Samaritans still existed at that time, for the Jews had “no dealings with Samaritans” (Jn 4:9). In the first century it was remarkable that Philip (a Jew) preached the good news of the kingdom of God to the Samaritans and they received the message wholeheartedly! But would the Jewish believers accept the fact that the Samaritans embraced the Gospel, considering the bitter rivalry that had gone on for centuries between the two groups? In order to avoid the development of even greater schism, the Lord deliberately withheld the gift of his Spirit from the Samaritan believers (or at least the outward evidence of the gift) until Apostles Peter and John had travelled to Samaria and laid their hands on them to acknowledge and authenticate the genuineness of the Samaritan conversion.¹

Based upon Romans 8:7-9, we cannot accept Moriarty’s explanation.

Romans 8:7-9 say, “Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are

If the Samaritans had received the Holy Spirit in the absence of the Apostles, then the age-old animosity between Jews and Samaritans would have persisted and perpetuated...

not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” Here, God tells us that a person who does not have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is still “in the flesh.” Anyone who is “in the flesh” cannot please God, for he still possesses a carnal mind and remains at enmity with God, ie. God’s enemy, one who is not born again. This means that the Charismatic teaching of a “two-stage” salvation experience is unbiblical. A person cannot be a Christian if he does not have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

How, then, do we explain the incident in Acts 8? The Samaritans believed and were baptized by water after hearing the message of Philip. Among them was Simon the sorcerer. But from the incident in Acts 8:19-25, we know he was not a believer. The outward evidence was present

in the Samaritan “believers” in that they accepted the teachings of Philip. It must be noted that there was no shortcoming in Philip’s preaching. The issue is whether the Samaritans believed and were converted. The word “receive” in Acts 8:15 and 17 tells us that it was in the presence of the Apostles that the Samaritans received the Holy Spirit. It appears that they did not receive the Spirit at the time of their belief and baptism by Philip. As such, we may say that God “deliberately” held back the giving of the Spirit at that point in time because of the age-old problem that existed between the Jews and the Samaritans. This was done in fulfillment of John 7:39, “(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)”

What John 7:39 teaches is a chronological emphasis rather than a theological one. It must not be construed here that the Holy Spirit was not given or working in the Old Testament period until after the glorification of Christ. The Spirit of God is omnipresent. He does not come and go like man does. He was working from the beginning when God first created the heaven and the earth (Gen 1:1-2). All the Old Testament saints had the indwelling of the Holy Spirit when they became believers. Men like Jeremiah, Daniel, Moses and King David were all saved and had the indwelling of the Holy Spirit; they would not be able to understand spiritual things otherwise. The Bible says spiritual things are spiritually discerned (1 Cor 2:14). The “delay” here was for the purpose of uniting the church as one, and for the

Samaritans to accept the Apostles, all Jews, to be the God-appointed men through whom the visible local church was to be founded and taught.

If the Samaritans had received the Holy Spirit in the absence of the Apostles, then the age-old animosity between Jews and Samaritans would have persisted and perpetuated into the early Christian church. That would have been disastrous. Furthermore, whenever Samaritan Christians encountered church problems, to whom would they go for divine and inspired instruction? The Samaritans would not have gone to the Jewish Apostles, whom God had anointed to be the writers of the New Testament, because they despised Jews. They would probably have continued to worship in their Mount Gerizim and have nothing to do with the Jews. To eradicate this unthinkable segregation and possible schism at the founding of the early church, the first Samaritan had to be saved AFTER the glorification of Christ, and it must be through, and in the presence of, Christ’s appointed apostles. That is why the Holy Spirit was not given to the Samaritans who had believed and were baptized by water. They were not believers yet until Peter and John affirmed their salvation and laid hands on them, and the Holy Spirit came upon them to indwell them. Only then were they actually saved. Subsequently, other Samaritans who believed in Jesus did not need the presence of the Apostles for a genuine salvation experience; the Samaritans had to submit to the counsel and authority of the Jewish Apostles.

When the Samaritans received the Holy Spirit, the Bible does not say

explicitly that they spoke in tongues. However, the Bible does say that Simon the sorcerer “saw that through

Like the Samaritans, Gentiles who subsequently believed in the Lord Jesus Christ did not need to be saved through the Apostles.

laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money” (Acts 8:18). In order for Simon to have seen something, it had to be external. It was also spectacular enough for him to want to buy this ability from the Apostles. In light of Acts 2 (the incident on the day of Pentecost), Acts 10:44-48 (Cornelius’ salvation) and Acts 19:6-7 (John the Baptizer’s disciples), where speaking in tongues was the external manifestation of the baptism and filling of the Holy Spirit, it is probable that what Simon saw in Acts 8 was also a baptism and filling of the Holy Spirit, evidenced by the speaking in tongues.

3. Acts 10:1-18 is the account of the supernatural conversion of the first Gentile convert, Cornelius, and his family. Though a Gentile, he was a devout man who feared God (Acts 10:2). God not only prepared his heart to receive the gospel but also prepared the heart of the chief Apostle Peter, a Jew, to go to Cornelius’ home to give the word and to see for himself

the baptism and filling of the Holy Spirit. This detailed and careful preparation is similar to the Samaritan experience of Acts 8.

A God-fearing Jew was not allowed to enter the home of Gentiles, for that would contaminate him spiritually and ceremonially. In order to persuade Peter to enter a Gentile’s home, God performed a miracle. God spoke to Peter through a vision. Acts 10:11-16, “And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.” Three times, Peter was told to eat the “unclean” animals which he had never eaten in his entire life. To have been given permission to eat “unclean” food by God three times in succession meant that Peter was given permission to enter a Gentile’s home.

At the same time, God also prepared Cornelius to go to the house where Peter dwelt, to invite him to his home. Precisely after the trance experience, Cornelius’ servants arrived. God, in a vision, told Peter to go with them to Cornelius’ house. Acts 10:34-35, “Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

¹Michael G. Moriarty, *The New Charismatics*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 145.

But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.” Peter realized that the gospel must be given to the Gentiles in the same manner it went to the Samaritans, according to God’s command in Acts 1:8.

Peter was not the only one who witnessed Cornelius’ conversion. The Bible says that some Jewish believers saw it too. Acts 10:44-48, “While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.” The tongues that the Jews heard were languages because they understood them as magnifying God. What Peter saw and heard was what he saw in Acts 2, as seen from the phrase “which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we.” The Jews who had come with Peter were the additional witnesses, who would testify that what the Gentiles experienced was complete salvation evidenced by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, as also seen in Cornelius’ baptism with the Holy Spirit. Like the Samaritans, Gentiles who subsequently believed in the Lord Jesus Christ did not need to be saved through the Apostles.

If there was animosity between the Jews and the Samaritans who were

half-Jews, there was greater resentment between the Jews and the Gentiles. Consider one example: A woman of Canaan (Matt 21-22) called “a Greek and a Syrophenician by nation” in Mark 7:26, came to Jesus for help because her daughter was grievously vexed with a devil. Mark 7:27-28, “But

It was used as an outward sign to show that Samaritans and Gentiles could be saved thoroughly like the Jews without going through circumcision and other OT rituals.

Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children’s bread, and to cast it unto the dogs. And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children’s crumbs.” (Matt 15:26-27). Jesus gave reference to her as a dog not in a derogatory way but because that was the Jews’ perception of the Gentiles. Notice that the Gentile woman did not deny the term given by Jesus. In fact, she accepted it in humility and replied that even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the master’s table.

Therefore, with the demonstration of the sign of tongues-speaking as an evidence that the salvation given to the Jews was the same as that given to the Samaritans and the Gentiles, the racial animosity among Jews and Gentiles and Samaritans was re-

moved immediately in the early church. Both Jews and Gentiles had received the same salvation from God through the hand of the God-appointed Jewish Apostles. Ephesians 4:4-6 affirms this: “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”

4. Acts 19:6-7 describe the Apostle Paul’s encounter with the disciples of John the baptizer. They were not believers yet for they had knowledge only of John the baptizer’s teachings. Their knowledge came from Apollos who was corrected by Aquila and Priscilla. Acts 18:24-26 say, “And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.”

So when Paul asked the disciples about their knowledge of Jesus, they said they had only the baptism of John. After they were taught that “John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus” (Acts 19:4),

John’s disciples were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul laid hands on them, they spoke in tongues and prophesied (Acts 19:5-6). In this incident, the disciples of John the baptizer were baptized and then filled with the Holy Spirit as evidenced in their speaking in tongues. They needed to be disciples of Jesus Christ and not the disciples of John the baptizer. Again, the tongues spoken by the disciples were languages and what they uttered concerned prophecies.

In conclusion, we see that tongues are languages. They are neither ecstatic utterances nor angelic languages nor gibberish. They are languages with syntactical and grammatical considerations. The Holy Spirit is not the giver of nonsensical speech. The gift of tongues was used by God to unify the early local church. The local church would replace the nation of Israel as the new visible witness of the grace and mercy of God on earth. Wherever a biblical local church is found, the witness of God would be present. This witness must be united and truthful in accordance with Holy Scripture. The Old Testament witness of salvation has now become a reality in Christ Jesus and has been passed over to the local churches. The salvation preached by John the Baptist has also been fulfilled by the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ as seen in Acts 19. The gift of tongues was used to bring about this united purpose and the doctrine of only one gospel and one way of salvation.

The speaking of tongues was the external evidence of one who had been endowed with the Holy Spirit for the purpose of uniting the early church under One God, one Lord, one Faith

and Baptism so that God would be the Father of them all without distinction or animosity. This was the special God-given function of the gift of tongues. It was used as an outward sign to show that Samaritans and Gentiles could be saved thoroughly like the Jews without going through circumcision and other Old Testament rituals. Subsequently, all believers of the Lord Jesus Christ regardless of race, language, or nationality, would be indwelt by the Holy Spirit immediately when they believe. This is the invisible act of God which the Bible describes as the baptism with the Holy Spirit and not of the Holy Spirit, as the Charismatics erroneously assert. Amen.

CESSATION OF TONGUES – PART 2

Tongues as used in 1 Corinthians

Other than the book of Acts, the gift of tongues is also mentioned in 1 Corinthians. Before we look into 1 Corinthians 14, we need to understand the context, purpose and motive behind tongues-speaking in this book.

the Christian who has a gift must realize the need for humility...

News had come to the Apostle Paul that there was abuse in the use of gifts in the church in Corinth. His common approach in dealing with all church problems was to first teach the right doctrine.

1 Corinthians 12 teaches the use and purpose of gifts. 1 Corinthians 13 teaches the motive behind the use of gifts. 1 Corinthians 14 deals with the problem of the abuse of gifts.

1 CORINTHIANS 12: THE PURPOSE OF GOD GIVING GIFTS TO MEN

From 1 Corinthians 12, we observe the following points concerning spiritual gifts:

1. Different gifts but the same Holy Spirit (v 4)
 - a. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit participate in the granting of gifts. The Christian cannot pit

one against another. There is blessed and perfect unity in the Godhead in all things, including the impartation of a gift or gifts to the believer. Verses 4 to 6 reveal to the believer that all three persons of the Godhead are involved in the giving.

- b. The unity within the Godhead is the obvious emphasis. Paul also highlights a contrast, between “diversities of gifts” (v 4), “differences of administration” (v 5), “diversities of operation” (v 6) and the “same Spirit,” “same Lord,” “same God.”
- c. The variety of gifts that God has given to His church must not be construed as disharmony within the Godhead. The Godhead is one in all things. There is no disharmony; there is always perfect unity in operation, motivation and action.

2. All gifts of the Holy Spirit are for the blessing of others (v 7)
 - a. The exercise of every gift means “the manifestation of the Holy Spirit.” When a Christian uses his gift, he is manifesting the work of the Holy Spirit in his life. That is why the gifts of the Holy Spirit must not be seen as a

“Christianized” secular talent which is given to all by way of the general grace of God.

- b. Gifts of God are given to all believers. This means that every Christian is given at least one gift. There is no Christian who does not possess a spiritual gift from God. The significance is that every Christian must serve and has no excuse not to. His duty is to find out from God what his gift is, and use it for the glory of God.
- c. The purpose of gifts is not for personal benefit. It is for the “profit withal.” Literally, it means “to carry with” or “bear up with”. Barnes explained it well: “they are bestowed not on all equally, but in such a manner as shall best subserve the interests of piety and the church, and as shall tend harmoniously to carry on the great interests of religion, and further the welfare of the whole Christian body.” For example, a Christian who is gifted in teaching must use his gift to teach and bless others.
3. The Holy Spirit is sovereign in who receives which gift or gifts (v 11)

a. The list of gifts here is not meant to be exhaustive. The focus is not on the many different types of gifts but on the word “same”. The Holy Spirit is the One who gives gifts to every Christian. The gifts are very different but they all come from the same Holy Spirit. In other words, gifts are not to be used to war or compete with one another.

b. The Christian may ask and pray for a particular gift. But he must understand that it is our sovereign God who determines and dictates who receives which gifts. This truth should eradicate all jealousy from those who might covet gifts others have. For example, a person who loves the limelight wants to sing, and may be envious of another who has this gift. If he realizes that it is God who gives and determines who receives what gifts, then as a child of God he must submit to God’s sovereign will.

c. On the other hand, the Christian who has a gift must realize the need for humility, as he has been gifted by God’s sovereign will. He must not boast, or think that the gift is his because he is more blessed than others. God does not practise favouritism. A gift is simply something given to a Christian who does not deserve it. Do not boast; be humble.

4. All gifts are of equal importance and necessity (vv 12-26)

- a. All Christians need one another in the body of Christ; there must be no jealousy which will cause schisms. The oneness of the Body of Christ is signified here in very clear terms. This oneness is crucial in the exercise of every gift. The example par excellence of this oneness is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Christ baptized us into His Body with only One Spirit. Jews or Gentiles, bond or free, all of us, without exception, were made to drink into One Spirit, ie. to be baptized with the same Spirit of God who indwells all believers. (vv 12-13)
- b. It is oneness in diversity. The physical body, with its multifaceted functions, is a very apt illustration to explain and depict the invisible Body of Jesus Christ. No part of the body will ever say to another, “I do not need you”, or “since you are not me, then you are dispensable”. The foot, hand, ear and eye are mentioned to drive home this important point (vv 14-16). Each of them has a different function to perform. The foot is used for walking and cannot say to the hand “I do not need you”, because the hand is needed for other functions. The ear is for listening and cannot say to the eye “you are useless because you are not like me”,

because only the eye has the function of sight.

Imagine a body with only eyes or ears or just the nose - what would happen to the rest of the bodily functions?

c. Every part of the body has a purpose as it pleases God. No part has been placed that is not according to God’s sovereign will. Each part depends on other parts to function in unison. There is unity rather than conflict. There is diversity of function but unity of purpose. The purpose is to edify and help the body as one. (vv 17-21)

d. The bodily parts which appear to be more sickly (ie. feeble) are most necessary. This probably refers to the heart, lungs and other internal organs of the body. They are weak, compared with the other parts as they need to be protected by our external physical structure but they are indispensable to keeping the body alive. (v 22) Then there are the other parts of the body which may appear less honourable but are given greater honour. This might refer to parts of our body which need to be covered up for the sake of decency. Our feet require shoes due to their “uncomeliness” and for practical reasons. The comely parts which require no covering would be our hands and face. They have their distinctive functions

and purposes. God has tempered (ie. harmoniously blended) the body together, giving different parts of the body different functions and comeliness as He wills. (vv 23-24)

e. Every part of the body needs, and must care and look after other parts. The wound in one part of the body is felt by the whole body. The rest of the parts will come to the aid of the wounded part. This must be the case in the body of Christ. (vv 25-26)

f. The believer should have a strong desire for the best gift. There is no contradiction here. It is true the Bible teaches that it is God's sovereign will that determines who receives what gift. No one is to be jealous of the other. Having said that, God also tells the believer to desire the best gift. To desire the best gift means to desire the gift that will benefit others best. Remember that the purpose of gifts is for the benefit of others and not self. A believer may desire a particular gift but this does not mean that God will give it to him. He must pray and seek and submit to God's will for his life even as he cries out to God in prayer for a particular gift. Having said this, the Apostle then reveals "a more excellent way" than a desire for the best gift to benefit other believers. It is to have the right motive

behind the exercise of all gifts - the motive of love. With this Paul begins the next chapter. (vv 27-31)

1 CORINTHIANS 13: THE MOTIVE BEHIND THE USE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

From 1 Corinthians 13, we note the following points:

1. The love of Christ, which is an unconditional love, must be the motive behind the exercise of our gifts (vv 1-3). Three hyperboles are used to drive home this point.

a. The first hyperbole - Paul says that even if he speaks the tongues of men, ie. all the languages of the world and including that of angels, but he does not have love, he would be like a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. (v 1) Tinkling cymbal and sounding brass are empty noises that may be jarringly piercing to the ears. One may assume that if a person can speak all languages, he would be highly revered as a great genius. But Paul says that all the languages spoken by such a person, whose motive is not love, would be like the empty piercing noise of a cymbal or a sounding brass.

The word "tongue" used here is "languages." Paul does not say that he can speak the language of angels, for this is a hyperbole. Thus far in all the appearances

of angelic beings, whether they spoke to the servants of God or praised God in Heaven, they spoke either Hebrew or Greek or Aramaic, the languages of the Bible. There is no justification here for ecstatic utterances.

b. In the second hyperbole, Paul says that even if he has the gift of prophecy and is able to understand all mysteries and knowledge, including all faith, so that he could remove mountains, but he has no love, he would be nothing, ie. he would be an absolute nobody. (v 2)

One would assume that if a believer has all the knowledge in the world, including the gift of telling future events, and has the faith to move mountains, he would be highly regarded as a mature and even supreme believer. But in Paul's estimation, if the motive behind the exercise of his gift is not love, then he is a nobody.

c. The third hyperbole touches on the extremity of external acts of the believer. Paul says that even if he sells all his worldly possessions, gives all to the poor, and gives his body to be burned, without the motive of love in his heart, all his good deeds would benefit him absolutely nothing. (v 3)

d. The word "love" in this entire chapter is "agape".

This is the unconditional, sacrificial and highest form of love given only to God's children. This takes place at the time of the person's conversion (Rom 5:5). In other words, every believer is given this special divine love from God. He has no

Of the three gifts, the gift of tongues would be the first to cease.

excuse not to exercise this love. This love is defined for us from verses 4 to 6.

2. Love will last whereas the gifts will cease (vv 7-12)

a. The gift of knowledge and prophecy would cease when the Bible has been completed. The word "perfect" refers to the completion of the Bible. The reasons to support this understanding include:

i. The immediate context - All the three gifts cited here in the context have to do with the Word of God. The gift of tongues refers to the ability to share the Word of God in another language. This would cease long before the "perfect" comes. As more and more Christians are converted, there is no need for God to give this gift to man. Take the example of a Christian

who desires to evangelize to his grandmother who speaks only Teochew. However, he has not been blessed with facility in Teochew. God does not need to give him the gift of speaking in tongues - in the Teochew dialect. He could simply invite a Teochew-speaking church member to share Christ with his grandmother. The gift of tongues has ceased. That is why missionaries today have to spend years learning the languages of the people they are ministering to, and then translate the Word of God into that language. It could take their entire lives to accomplish this. Of the three gifts, the gift of tongues would be the first to cease.

The gift of prophecies refers to the ability to declare the Word of God in the language of the hearers. The word "knowledge" refers to the Word of God that had yet to be completely revealed; more than half of the New Testament Scripture had yet to be written at the time of Paul penning 1 Corinthians. Thus, much of the knowledge and prophecies of the last things had not been revealed when 1 Corinthians was written. Hence, Paul says in verse 9, "For we know in part and we prophesy in part."

At that point in time, the disciples knew only in part, through the continual use of the gifts of knowledge and prophecy which were needed until the New Testament was completed. But the moment the Bible has been completed, these two gifts would be done away with. They would not be needed. (v 8)

ii. The grammar used for the three gifts argue for cessation - "prophecies" and "knowledge" are in the "passive voice." This means that they will be caused to cease by something outside of themselves (use of the passive voice in "shall fail" and "shall vanish away" v 8). However, the gift of tongues is in the middle voice. That means tongues will cease by itself, ie. cease on its own. This is the significance of the use of the middle voice in verse 8. That is why tongues-speaking was not even mentioned in verse 9.

iii. The word "perfect" in Greek is "teleios" - This word is also used in James 1:25 and refers to the perfect Word of God. James 1:25, "But whoso looketh into the perfect (teleios) law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." The

Greek word for “second coming” is “telos”. If Paul had wanted to refer to the second coming, he would have used “telos”, and not “teleios” given how careful a man he was. “Telos” is used in 1 Corinthians 15:24 and is translated as “the end”. (v 10)

b. The Christian would gain maturity through the study of the completed Bible. He had partial knowledge like a child, before the completion of the Bible, but he will know even as also he is known (v 12). Who is the one who knows him? It is God who knows the Christian’s end and eternity, which the Christian will also know when the books of the New Testament have been completed. For example, in the book of Revelation, the Christian will know the final end of sin, Satan, death, Hell, present-day earth and heaven, the eternal destination of believers and unbelievers, the new heaven and new earth, the wrath of God, etc.

c. Of the other three gifts from God, love is greater than faith and hope (v 13). Faith and hope will not be needed in heaven but love will remain. When the Christian finally arrives in heaven, faith and hope will turn to sight - they will not be needed anymore. But love (agape love, which is unconditional and sacrificial)

will remain in his heart for all eternity. The thrust of Paul’s argument is that the earlier three gifts (tongues, prophecies, and knowledge) concerning the Word of God are important but they are temporal. The greater gift of love, which includes

“Unknown tongue” refers to an unknown language which no one in the church then understood.

the motivation behind the exercise of the gift, will last forever. Pursue after this gift called love. Have it as the driving force behind the exercise of all gifts. With love as the motivation, the believer can never go wrong in using his gift, whatever the gift might be.

1 CORINTHIANS 14: GIFTS MUST NOT BE ABUSED IN THE CHURCH

Having explained the theology behind the giving and purpose of gifts in chapter 12, and the motivation behind the use of gifts in chapter 13, Paul then deals with the problem in the Corinthian church. There must be no schism in the use of gifts. Points to note include:

1. All gifts are for the edification of the church, including the gift of tongues. Gifts are

never given to show off (vv 1-11). Edification is defined as “promoting the spiritual growth and development of the character of believers, by teaching or by example.” [Vine’s Expository Dictionary, page 18]. In short, edification means to build up the faith of believers. The mind has to be involved in faith, which is not a warm feeling or sensation as the Charismatics have intimated.

a. The gift of tongues was abused by the church in Corinth. People spoke in tongues without any interpretation and nobody in the church of Corinth knew what they were talking about. They were essentially showing off their “gift” and telling others that only they had this gift. They were categorically castigated by the Apostle Paul. (v 2)

The “unknown tongue” mentioned in verse 2 does not refer to ecstatic utterances. It is not that no one “in the whole world” understood what the person was saying. “Unknown tongue” refers to an unknown language which no one in the church then understood. Remember that the context is within the local church worship service in Corinth. The only one who understands this “unknown tongue” is God. Therefore, the person was speaking only to God and not to any man at all. As far as the people were concerned, he was

uttering mysterious things. For example, when I heard the students of the Bible College of East Africa in Nairobi, Kenya sing or share their testimonies in Swahili, it was a mystery to me. To those who understood, they were edified. I was not edified because I did not understand a word.

The person who speaks the language understands it himself. But if there is none present who also understands that language, why would he want to speak it?

b. Prophecy is better than tongues if the latter has no interpretation. The Apostle Paul then uses the gift of prophecy to demonstrate why the gift of tongues is not to be abused. Paul points out that it is important that the congregation understands the revelation that is given in tongues (vv 3-6). The person who prophesies speaks the Word of God and everyone understands because he speaks in a language the congregation understands. They would be edified, exhorted and comforted (v 3). Edification always embraces understanding. The word “edifies” in Greek literally means “to build up.”

On the other hand, the person who speaks in a tongue (ie. speaks the Word of God in a different language) which no one understands, edifies

only himself. He is the only one who understands. In this sense, the gift of prophecy is better than the gift of tongues-speaking. The Apostle Paul is not contradicting what he had asserted very clearly earlier, in chapters 12 and 13, that all gifts are of equal value and are useful for everyone. Believers need each other as the body of Christ; no part of the body can say that he does not need the other members of the body. There is no elevation of one gift above another. Therefore, what Paul is saying in Chapter 14 is that the gift of tongues was being abused in the church, in that it was used only for personal edification, and not for the edification of others which is the primary goal of the spiritual gift. (vv 3-5)

c. Speak in tongues for the benefit of others. The use of tongues is for the benefit of others. To benefit others, Paul says he would speak by revelation (ie. to speak intelligibly), by knowledge (ie. to make it understandable), by prophesying (ie. to communicate through interpretation), and by doctrine (ie. by teaching). Barnes summed up this verse as, “The sense of this passage, therefore, is clear. Though Paul should utter among them, as he had abundant ability to do, the most weighty and important truths, yet, unless he interpreted what he said in a

manner clear from obscurity, like revelation; or intelligibly, and so as to constitute knowledge; or in the manner that the prophets spoke, in a plain and intelligible manner; or in the manner usual in simple and plain instruction, it would be useless to them.”

Paul then illustrates this verse very clearly by way of two musical instruments: “things without life-giving sound”, like the pipe and harp. Each gives a distinctive sound, otherwise no one will know the difference between a pipe and a harp (v 7). In battlefields then, the sound of the trumpet is a matter of life and death. If the trumpet sound is unclear, soldiers would not know whether to retreat or to charge forward; how would they prepare themselves for battle? (v 8)

d. All languages have significance. Therefore, if the tongue (language) spoken is not known, no one would understand its significance. The one who spoke it would be akin to one speaking into the air! There are so many voices (languages) in the world and none of them is without signification (“without no meaning”). The conclusion is that the person who spoke in that unknown language would be regarded as a barbarian. (vv 9-11)

2. Gifts can be abused, as seen in the abuse of the gift of

tongues in the Corinthian church. Tongues-speaking was a popular gift because it was prominent. The problem was that many of the Corinthians were speaking in languages that no one else could understand. That is why Paul says that it is better to speak five words with understanding than 10,000 words without understanding (vv 12-19).

a. In verse 12, he qualifies what he said in 1 Corinthians 12:31, that even as one desires spiritual gifts, seek to super-abound in the edification of the church. Paul draws their attention back to the fundamental and original purpose of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The one who speaks in an unknown tongue must pray that there is one who can interpret. The question is: “why must he pray for someone to interpret when he himself can understand?” The problem is that he probably does not speak the language of the people. Let us assume that person is bilingual in both the unknown tongue and the tongue of the people present. There is then no need for him to speak in the unknown tongue for he could simply speak in the language of the people. On the other hand, if he were monolingual, when he speaks in an unknown tongue, he would need an interpreter. There is no point for him to speak the Word of God in a language that no one

in the church understands unless there is an interpreter present.

Some years ago, I had the privilege of preaching in the Swahili Church in Kenya, in English. I needed my message interpreted into Swahili. If there was no one to do that, my preaching would have been in vain. Therefore, the one who desires to edify should pray that there will be an interpreter, or that he may interpret his message himself. (vv 12-13)

b. In the realm of praying in the church, and not speaking the Word of God in an unknown tongue – In verse 14, Paul says that if he prays in a tongue that no one understands (except he himself), then only his own spirit is praying, and himself edified. Others may hear but not understand, and will not be edified. Hence the phrase “but my understanding is unfruitful”, which means “my ability to understand produces no fruit in others”. This would defeat the purpose of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which is to edify others. The conclusion is that,

“What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that

occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified.”

Tongues as a gift from God is for the blessing of others. If no one present understands that language, why speak the Word of God, or pray to God, or even give thanks (v 17) in that language? It would be fruitless! (vv 14-17)

c. Five words to teach others than 10,000 words in an unknown tongue – Paul affirms that he speaks more tongues (ie. languages) than all of them, and yet he would rather speak five words in an understandable language than 10,000 words in an unknown tongue. (vv 18-19) Do not lose sight of the purpose of the gifts of the Holy Spirit; they are given for the edification of others.

3. Be mature in the use of the gifts. When it comes to understanding the Word of God, do not be like children, but be like men. When it comes to evil deeds, be like children. The Christian does not need to experience evil to know that evil is wrong and sinful.

Tongues were given in the Old Testament days as a sign to the rebellious children of Israel when they did not believe God’s prophecies. Therefore, tongues

became a sign to the Israelites who rejected the Word of God in their own language. They were thrust into exile and had to learn God’s Word in another language - the language of the Chaldeans! That is why the verses in chapters 2:4b to 7:28 of the book of Daniel were written in Aramaic.

Imagine this scenario: a Japanese-speaking congregation is listening to a man preaching in Swahili, without interpretation. A Japanese-speaking visitor walks into the church. He would say that the church is “mad.” But if all were to prophesy, ie. speak the Word of God in the same known language, then there would be no confusion; everyone would understand the word of prophecy spoken in a common language. Any visitor to the church would be able to understand what the speaker is saying. And when he is convicted of his sins and believes in God, he would say that, indeed, God is with the church. (vv 20-25)

4. All gifts must be carefully regulated in the church (vv 26-33). The usage of gifts must be carefully controlled. In the case of tongues-speaking, no more than three different languages may be used sequentially in the service. After each language is spoken, there must be interpretation. If there is no one to interpret, then there should be no tongues-speaking. I would not be asked to speak to the Mandarin congregation

if there is no interpreter, because I can preach only in English. It would be a waste of time for everybody. In most churches today, not more than two languages are used during worship service.

The practice of prophecies and tongues was not forbidden by the Apostle at that time because such gifts had not ceased; canon of Scripture was not complete yet. But these gifts ceased upon the completion of the Holy Scriptures.

Today, if anyone claims that he receives prophecies or new knowledge from God, he is a false prophet. He would be charged with adding to Scriptures. The warning is very clear in Revelation 22:18-19, “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”

CONCLUSION

1. Tongues in New Testament times were proper languages with syntax and grammar. They were not the ecstatic babbling found in the Charismatic churches today, utterances no one understands. A “warm

feeling all over” is not to be equated with edification. Edification means that the faith and life of the believers are built up.

- All gifts, including the gift of tongues-speaking, are given by God for the edification of other believers and not the possessor of the gift.
- God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit all participate in the giving of gifts. There is no conflict.
- The Holy Spirit is the One who determines who receives which gift. Every believer is given at least one gift.
- All gifts are of equal importance; no one gift is better than another.
- The motive behind the use of all gifts must be Agape Love, the unconditional and sacrificial love that God gives to all believers at the time of their conversion. The believer has no excuse not to have love as his motivation.
- The gift of tongues ceased on its own, even before the completion of Scriptures. Prophecies and knowledge ceased at the completion of the Scriptures. All the knowledge that is necessary for the believer’s well being, and to live a victorious Christian life is found in the Holy Bible.
- The use of all gifts must be carefully regulated and used in an orderly manner. Their usage must not bring about confusion, jealousy, resentment and schism. It must be for the edification of the saints and God’s glory.

CESSATION OF VISIONS & DREAMS

I. DEFINITION

a. Visions and dreams were vehicles through which God revealed His Holy Word.

b. Some Bible verses to support this truth include:

Numbers 12:6-8, “And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?” Hebrews 1:1-2, “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds”.

c. These biblical visions and dreams are not to be confused with our visions and dreams. Our use of the word “vision” means “to have foresight and plans and a goal for the future.”

Our “dreams” are defined as “a series of pictures or events” in the mind of one who is sleeping. They are for private consumption, unlike the visions and dreams in the Bible that are recorded for our learning and study.

d. What is recorded in the Bible as visions and dreams are in fact the very Word of God.

The Christian’s walk with God is always the measure of spirituality.

II. IMPLICATIONS

a. Today, in some Charismatic circles, it is portrayed that a person who receives visions and dreams is one who is close to God, and who has been divinely endowed with a great privilege. Thus, he is honoured and placed on a pedestal.

b. At times we, who are outside of the Charismatic circles, are confused and do not know how to react. Should we be intimidated? Dare we say categorically that these are false? And even if these are true, do they indicate anything special or spiritual about that person?

c. What does the Bible teach concerning the recipient of such visions and dreams?

d. An example for study and consideration – Genesis 20:1-7, “And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar. And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah. But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man’s wife. But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? Said he not unto me, She is my sister? and she, even she herself said, He is my brother: in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this. And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her. Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine.” [emphasis added]

e. Abimelech was a Philistine king. He took Abraham’s wife in ignorance. If he had slept with Sarah, then God’s plan

for the salvation of mankind would have been jeopardized.

f. The dream Abimelech received from God was real. It was given to him by God to stop him from sinning. Abimelech’s dream from God is recorded for our learning and understanding.

g. Was Abimelech born again since he received a real dream from God? Does it mean that he was a spiritual person? Does it mean that he had a special relationship with God? The answer to all these questions is an emphatic “no!” God did not reveal Himself to Abimelech again, and He would not. Abimelech could not call God “Jehovah” the way Abraham did. If Abimelech had been given a special relationship with God, then he would not have had to offer his offerings to God through Abraham. What Abraham received from him were not gifts for telling a lie. Abimelech’s offerings to God were given through the hands of God’s prophet, Abraham.

h. There are many other examples in the Bible, such as the chief baker and butler (Gen 40), Pharaoh (Gen 41), Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 2), of those who received dreams and visions from God, but did not enjoy any special relationship with God. They were all unbelievers when God spoke to them through the dreams and visions. Even an ass (Num 22) can receive a revelation from God.

i. We should not be intimidated by the claims of Charismatics today that they have received dreams and visions, as if they are more spiritual than those who do not. The measure of true spirituality is never by experiences. The true measure is by one’s obedience to God’s Holy Word.

j. The Christian’s walk with God is always the measure of spirituality. The nature and the exercise of the believer’s gifts is not a measure. Neither is it measured by his wealth or how successful he is in the world.

III. PROOF TEXT EXPLAINED

a. The proof text used by many Charismatics to support their claim of present day visions and dreams is Acts 2:16-21.

b. Acts 2:16-21, “But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord

come: And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

When Peter quoted from Joel, he deliberately omitted the word “afterward” in Joel 2:28.

This is significant.

c. Peter’s quotation is taken from Joel 2:28-32, “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.”

d. When Peter quoted from Joel, he deliberately omitted the word “afterward” in Joel 2:28. This is significant. From Joel’s

perspective, it was “afterward” because it was in the future. From Peter’s perspective it was the present, his present. What happened in Jerusalem at the time of the Pentecost was a fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy.

- e. Based upon Peter’s message, we see that Pentecost was already part of “the last days.”

In biblical prophesy, there are no multiple fulfillments.

The fulfillment of these signs mentioned in Acts 2:17-18, when Israelites will receive visions and dreams, ushered in the period known as “the last days.” This was precisely what the apostles received from God when they wrote the New Testament. His prophesy was fulfilled in the lives of the apostles. The last days began with the First Coming of Christ (Heb 1:1-2).

- f. In biblical prophesy, there are no multiple fulfillments. There is only one fulfillment. To teach that there are multiple fulfillments in biblical prophesies is wrong, for we do not find it in the Bible. To teach that there are multiple fulfillments is to open a Pandora box that can never be closed. The Bible will become a book with no authority. Imagine various fulfillments of the virgin birth of Christ or the resurrection and

death of Christ! All the biblical prophesies in the Bible have been fulfilled once and once only without repetition.

- g. The emphasis in prophesies is the certainty of the fulfillment of these prophetic events. This calls for faith. Therefore, in some cases there are long lapses between fulfillment of relevant verses. Daniel 2, for example, describes the kingdoms of Babylon (gold), Medes and Persians (silver), Greeks (bronze), Romans (iron), antichrist (clay and iron), and Millennium (stone not cut with the hands of man). The first four impact the First Coming of Christ and they occurred consecutively, one after the other. However, there is a gap of more than 2,000 years between the Roman Empire and the empire of the antichrist which is to come. The Kingdom of Christ, the Millennium, will replace the antichrist empire.

- h. This gap is also found in Acts 2:17-20. Verses 17-18 describe the early period of the last days. The end of the last days is in verses 19-20. This interpretation is affirmed by the use of the singular “day” in the phrase, “before the great and notable day of the Lord come” (v 20b).
- i. The end of the period of the last days describes the Second Coming of Christ. This is confirmed in Matthew 24:29-31, “Immediately after the

tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” The similarity of the description of the last few moments before the last day, described in Acts 2:19-20 and Matthew 24:29-

There is, therefore, no basis for the Charismatics to claim that Acts 2:17-20 apply today.

30, is startling. The detailed description is revealed in the book of Revelation in the seven Trumpet Judgments and the Seven Vial Judgments.

- j. During this period of the last days, anyone who calls on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ will definitely be saved. The entire local church scene is in the last days. We are living in the last of the last days. Many of the signs mentioned in the

Bible preceding the Second Coming of our Lord have already been fulfilled. One of these signs is that of Matthew 24:24, “For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” It says here that great signs and wonders will be done before the end comes. The alternate name of the Charismatic Movement, given by their leaders, is “The Sign and Wonders Movement”.

- k. There is, therefore, no basis for the Charismatics to claim that Acts 2:17-20 apply today and what they are experiencing is a continuation of Acts 2. The inaugural beginning of the “last days” period was the once-off Pentecostal event which will never be repeated.

IV. VISIONS & DREAMS TODAY?

- a. Does God still use visions and dreams today to speak to someone?
- b. Dr John Sung, in his book, did testify to receiving visions and dreams in his personal life. The dreams revealed to him his life’s ministry. He said that in his vision, God told him that he would serve God within a period of 15 years, which is divided into five equal periods of three years each. All these came to pass in Dr John Sung’s life.
- c. There is no reason to believe

that a man of God like John Sung would lie. What Dr Sung received was for him, and him alone. His vision was not added to the Bible as the Word of God.

- d. In this sense, the difference between a personal experience today and that of Bible times is very clear. The visions and dreams in the Bible were personal but they are recorded also for our learning and application. But not that of Dr Sung’s.
- e. God can still choose to use visions and dreams to call one of His children to do a great work for Him, like Dr Sung. However, it is very rarely so. Even when these visions and dreams are true, they must be evaluated very carefully against God’s Holy Word.

- f. They are for the person’s own consumption and benefit and must be attested by the leaders of the church, using the Word of God. If a person’s “calling” or claim based upon the dream is against the teaching in the Word of God, then that person would be called a false dreamer or prophet. The Bible text to support this action is Deuteronomy 13.

CONCLUSION

The warning from God’s Holy Word is that there must be no addition to, and no subtraction from, God’s Holy Word. Revelation 22:18-19 warn us, “For I testify unto every man that

heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”

Claims of visions and dreams are on the increase, particularly within the Charismatic Movement. They will not stop. With the restoration of the “prophetic and apostolic ministries” in the Charismatic churches, claims of visions and dreams will only increase. May God give to His people the discernment and courage to not only know what is right and truthful according to Scriptures, but also to speak wisely and for the glory of God to help some loved ones out of this global Charismatic deception. Amen.

THE “HEALTH AND WEALTH GOSPEL” EVALUATED

In the Old Testament, the Bible teaches that the physical blessings Israel, as a nation, received from God were intrinsically tied to the spiritual life of the people.

The “health and wealth gospel” is a figment of man’s sinful imagination, concocted to deceive the naive and unsuspecting. It appeals to man’s greed and is very anthropocentric in emphasis.

In the Old Testament, the Bible teaches that the physical blessings Israel, as a nation, received from God were intrinsically tied to the spiritual life of the people (Deut 27 and 28). To be blessed spiritually was to be blessed materially, but not necessarily vice versa. Why was it so? The reason is that in the OT, the visible manifestation of God’s grace and mercies was national (as a nation), and not ecclesiastical (local churches worldwide). A nation is made up of three elements: the people; a civil government and her laws, and a land the people can call their own. When these three elements come together, a nation is formed. Israel, as a nation, was therefore married to her

land. When God blessed Israel spiritually, she was blessed physically and materially as well. However, when Israel sinned against God, she was also cursed accordingly, both physically and materially.

This truth is attested in God’s Word. Deuteronomy 28:1-6, “And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out.”

When Israel sins against God, she will be cursed. Deuteronomy 28:15-19, “But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee: Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field. Cursed shall be thy basket

and thy store. Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out.”

However, in the New Testament period, God’s new covenant was with the local churches. There is a great distinction between Israel (national) and the local Church (ecclesiastical). In the NT, a person who was spiritually blessed was not necessarily materially rich. The Apostle Paul and the Lord Jesus Christ are cases in point. That a believer is poor does not mean he is cursed. Neither does it mean he is blessed. Material blessings are thus not linked to spiritual blessings. Material blessings may be from God (based upon honest hard work), but they must never be the measure of one’s spirituality. Paul had no home of his own, no bank account and no worldly possession to his name. Yet, he was the richest of all, spiritually speaking. This is true for the local Church as well. In fact, the love of wealth is a most deceitful thing and has led many astray (Matt 13:22). Note the wise warning of Solomon against the rich who do not

In fact, the love of wealth is a most deceitful thing and has led many astray.

know God. Ecclesiastes 6:1-5,

“There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is common among men: A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this is vanity, and it is an evil disease. If a man beget an hundred children, and live many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good, and also that he have no burial; I say, that an untimely birth is better than he. For he cometh in with vanity, and departeth in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness. Moreover he hath not seen the sun, nor known any thing: this hath more rest than the other.”

Jesus says in Matthew 19:24, “And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God”. There is only one gospel, and that is: “Repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved.” Any truly born-again believer must never pursue or love materialism, for that is sin. It is the root of all evil. 1 Timothy 6:10 warns, “For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

SUMMARY

The Bible is a spiritual Book. It

is never a book on materialism, to be read in order to satisfy fleshly desires. This sin-sick world is not heaven. Jesus Christ came to die for our sins; Jesus did not come to fatten our wallets or to heal our coughs and colds.

However, in these end-times, this ecumenism will succeed according to God’s sovereign plan, for even the wrath of man will praise God.

The Charismatic Movement appeared in the 20th century. Its influence in the world fulfills the end-time prophecies of God. Christians today are indeed living in the last days. The Charismatic Movement, in less than a century, has united the major denominations within Protestantism, and the Roman Catholic Church with the Protestant Church. There is worldwide unification in the economic, political, and religious realms. This false ecumenism has not been seen since the tower of Babel, when God dispersed mankind to all parts of the world.

However, in these end-times, this ecumenism will succeed according to God’s sovereign plan, for even the wrath of man will praise God.¹ Sinful man calls on God but rejects his Holy Word. Man says he obeys the Bible, and yet he adds to and subtracts from it by his so-called “visions and dreams.” We can see this sort of double talk and life in the days

of the divided kingdom. The northern kingdom of Israel “worshipped” God through the golden calves. They called on the name of Jehovah with their lips, but loved and worshipped Baal in their hearts.

The Signs and Wonders Movement was already foreseen and foretold by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself when He warned His disciples in Matthew 24:23-24, “Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” Christians are instructed to take note that, in the last days, false prophets and false Christs will appear to deceive many with their “potent” but false miracles. Many would be deceived by them, but not so discerning Christians. To be forewarned is to be forearmed! These false prophets and false Christs are before us today. God is not taken by surprise. Christians must open their spiritual eyes to discern. They have to know the difference between error and truth, between false groups that deceive and truthful groups that are raised of God to warn.

Let the very words of Christ in Matthew 7:21-23 sum up this issue, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”

¹Psalms 76:10, “Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.”

FAR EASTERN Bible College



THIS STONE WAS LAID
ON THE 28TH DAY OF APRIL
IN THE 1962ND YEAR OF OUR LORD
FOR A WITNESS
THAT THE MEMBERS OF THIS CHURCH
AS LIVELY STONES
ARE BUILT UP A SPIRITUAL HOUSE
TO OFFER UP SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES
ACCEPTABLE TO GOD BY CHRIST JESUS

本堂會眾願為
生命活石被建
成靈宮頌耶蘇
基督獻奉上帝
所悅納之聖祭
爰立基石為證
主一九六二年
四月廿八日立

*Laying of the foundation stone by Rev Paul Contento
for Life B-P Church and FEBC, 1962*

HISTORY, PURPOSE & SET-UP

“Without the Bible College, the Church would die,” said the Rev Dr Paul Contento who laid the foundation stone of the Far Eastern Bible College. Why? There is a two-fold reason: The Bible College is needed to (1) promote the Church by feeding and equipping her members with the Truth of God’s Word, and (2) protect the Church from false teachings that seek to destroy the Truth of God’s Word. Now nearly 50 years later, his words continue to ring true, perhaps even more so in the current circumstances that we face. It is indeed vital that the ministry of the FEBC continue to prevail and stand strong. It is imperative that the Church continues to have a Bible College that holds strongly to the fundamentals of the faith, with sound biblical teachers who would “be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus”, to fulfil the divine mandate: “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Tim 2:1-2).

Why the need for FEBC? The following initial statement on the FEBC drawn up by the three-man committee comprising Rev Timothy Tow, Rev Quek Kiok Chiang and Dr Tow Siang Hwa illumines:

DEFENDING THE BIBLE

The need of a bilingual Bible College, as far as the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Singapore and Malaya is concerned, is becoming more acute as our churches increase within these multi-lingual communities.

This need is further aggravated by the counter forces of liberal and neo-orthodox teachings from modernist theological schools which are increasingly undermining the foundations laid by our fathers. In such perilous times as these, the aim of any Bible college should not only be to prepare labourers for the harvest fields (Jn 4:35) but also to train hardy soldiers (2 Tim 2:3) for the battle front who are imbued with a holy zeal to “contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). A Bible College that is to be called a Bible College is called to defend the Bible! May the proposed Far Eastern Bible College neglect not this part of the holy ministry that is committed to her charge.

THE DECISION

The decision to found a Far Eastern Bible College was unanimously made by the joint sessions of Life, Zion, Faith and Galilee Bible-Presbyterian Churches at the meeting on 19 Sep 1960. This decision was no sudden undertaking, but the result of prior discussions with Rev Philip Clark, General Secretary of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, USA, who visited our churches from 13 to 15 Sep 1960. The General Secretary had promised to send two experienced couples, one of them probably the Rev John ML Young, M.A., B.D., S.T.M., hitherto principal of the Japan Christian Theological Seminary, Tokyo.

CHURCH-COLLEGE COMBINATION

Such a church-and-college combination is in the good tradition pioneered by no less a man of God than Pastor CH Spurgeon. In view of the College’s strategic location in this metropolis of Southeast Asia, so that it is easily accessible to prospective students from all parts of the Far East, the name, “Far Eastern Bible College” was unanimously chosen.

HISTORY

1960 – 19 September: At a Presbytery meeting held at Zion Kindergarten, at which all deacons and deaconesses of Life, Zion, Faith and Galilee Churches were also invited, the lot for the launching of Far Eastern Bible College (the name was suggested by Dr Tow Siang Hwa) was cast. The college was purposely constituted an independent institution within the fellowship of our B-P Churches. The location was also found – the spacious, sylvan site of the new Life Bible-Presbyterian Church at Gilstead Road. An interim three-man committee (Rev Timothy Tow, Rev Quek Kiok Chiang, Dr Tow Siang Hwa) was elected to draft a constitution and prospectus for the College.

1961 – Evening school offering courses in OT History and

Christian Doctrine was launched in Life Church at Prinsep Street.

1962 – 28 April: Rev Paul Contento laid the foundation stone for FEBC. He exhorted the church to send her sons to the school for training, and hoped that a Moody or a Wesley might someday come forth from the halls of the College. 17 September: Formal opening of the FEBC with 3 students and 1 lecturer.

“At 8am on 17 Sep the College opened its halls of majestic emptiness to a first class of three students with the lone principal delivering the chapel message. Seated on three picnic chairs and a kitchen stool which the principal had brought from his house, that first student body learnt a first spiritual lesson – to trust God solely for the supply of their material needs. How earnestly we recited to the heart throbs of David (Ps 34:1), ‘The young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.’”

1966 – July: Rev Timothy Tow composed the FEBC anthem while on a train journey from Singapore to Kuala Lumpur on the eve of the First Graduation Service. 10 July: First graduation service of FEBC with two graduates, Mrs Jeanette Packer with a Certificate of Religious Knowledge, and Miss Ivy Tan (now Mrs Tow) with a Bachelor of Theology.

1968 – Rev Quek Kiok Chiang takes over as President from Rev Timothy Tow. 1969 – New three-storey extension to the FEBC annex built. 1977 – Dr Tow Siang Hwa replaces Rev Quek Kiok Chiang as President. 1979 – 29 July: Members of the Board and Faculty publicly affirm their allegiance to the Word of God by taking the Dean Burgon Oath at the 11th Graduation Service. This practice is repeated at every annual convocation till this day.

“I swear in the Name of the Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, that I believe the Bible is none other than the voice of Him that sitteth upon the throne. Every book of it, every chapter of it, every verse of it, every word of it, every syllable of it, every letter of it, is the direct utterance of the Most High. The Bible is none other than the Word of God, not some part of it more, some part of it less, but all alike the utterance of Him that sitteth upon the throne, faultless, unerring, supreme. So help me God. Amen.”

1987 – FEBC celebrates its 25th Anniversary. By then it has yielded 130 graduates serving in all parts of the world. 1989 – Dr Tow Siang Yeow takes over as President from Dr Tow Siang Hwa. 1991 – Master of Divinity (MDiv) and Master of Religious Education (MRE) graduate

programmes offered. 1995 – Off-campus certificate and Bachelor of Religious Education (BRE) programmes added. 1997 – Master of Theology (ThM) programme added. 2001 – In cooperation with the Bible College of East Africa, the Bachelor of Ministry (BMin) degree is introduced. 2002 – Doctor of Theology (ThD) programme added. FEBC commemorates its 40th Anniversary with the publication of a special edition Burning Bush entitled “Truth Unfailing: A Tribute to Alma Mater”. Up till 2002, more than 400 from over 25 countries have graduated from FEBC, with over 65 ordained as B-P ministers. 2005 – FEBC awarded accreditation by Case Trust for Education. This recognition by an external, secular agency proves FEBC’s commitment to basic educational standards comparable to other accredited institutions without compromising its Biblical-fundamentalist faith and ethos. Bachelor of Ministry (BMin), Master of Ministry (MMin) and Doctor of Education (EdD) degree programmes offered to alumni. 2009 – 20 April: Founding Principal, Rev Timothy Tow, called home to be with the Lord. 1 May: Dr Jeffrey Khoo appointed the new Principal by Board of Directors. Online distance learning programme replaces off-campus certificate programme.

PURPOSE

FEBC endeavours to provide a comprehensive biblical-theological education that is based solely on the forever infallible and inerrant Scriptures so as to equip both Christian men and women for effective spiritual leadership and service in the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and in the defence of the Reformed faith.

“Holding forth the Word of Life” (Phil 2:16) and “Holding fast the Faithful Word” (Tit 1:9) are two biblical watchwords of Far Eastern Bible College. Why? Because the orthodox teaching of the Sacred Scriptures to nurture a new generation of “evangelists, pastors and teachers” is being assailed more and more by the counterforces of liberalism, neo-orthodoxy, neo-evangelicalism, charismaticism, postmodernism, open theism, neo-fundamentalism, and neo-deism.

In such perilous times as these, the mandate of Far Eastern Bible College is not only to prepare labourers for the harvest fields, but also as a Spiritual SAFI (Singapore Armed Forces Training Institute), to train hardy soldiers to “earnestly contend for the faith” (Jude 3). A college that is called a Bible College is called to defend the Bible! May Far Eastern Bible College keep every vigilance even to the safe-guarding of herself. How many a citadel of truth have fallen to the enemy through treachery from within.

In order to attain this dual purpose, it is of paramount importance that the Bible be received by both faculty and students as the Source from which all divine wisdom is derived (2 Tim 3:16).

The Bible is to be reverently taught and devoutly studied, with due application to one’s personal life. All related subjects, whether they be theology, church history, biblical languages, etc, are to be taught and studied under the searchlight of the Sacred Word.

SET-UP

Students in FEBC are put through a gruelling 3-4 year course, depending on their programme of study. Every semester, they can expect to take about 16 credit hours of academic study, with subjects ranging from Biblical Languages, Systematic Theology, Church History, OT and NT surveys, book studies, Homiletics, Contemporary Theology, and a variety of other elective courses. The academic standards are tough, and the expectations high. Throughout the duration of the semester, the student would have to complete numerous assignments, sit for quizzes, and also prepare for the final examinations. This disciplined training of the mind and spirit goes a long way towards arming and equipping the student for his ministries ahead.

Aside from a strong academic focus, there is a great emphasis on the spiritual development of the student as well. Every morning before classes begin, students are required to have a time of prayer and morning devotion together, followed by the chapel service. Wednesday afternoons are set aside for Practical Evangelism, where students will go out to nearby MRT stations and housing estates armed with tracts, fulfilling the great commission. Every Thursday night, students will gather in their dormitories for corporate prayer sessions.

Life in FEBC also provides for good character moulding. Students are given the wonderful opportunity of fellowship with brothers and sisters in Christ of all ages and from diverse backgrounds and cultures. The daily duties assigned for the maintenance and upkeep of the college grounds also teach responsibility and humility. Students are also expected to be active in a local church. No service in the house of the Lord is too lowly for a true servant of Jesus Christ! All these help in the training of each student to become an effective witness and ambassador for Christ!



PICTORIAL

Montage of the Past and Present



Sembawang BPC, 1957



Founder of Mount Carmel Sunday School with the first class, 1960



Session of Faith BPC, 1960



Jurong BPC, 1961



Sunday School, Jurong BPC

A testimony founded for God's glory



Life BPC building site, 1962



FEBC building site, 1962



Life BPC building site, 1962



FEBC, 1963



Rawang Church, 1966



Galilee BPC



Calvary BPC, 1971



Calvary BPC, 1971



Toa Payoh BPC, 1971



Session of Zion BPC, 1971



Session of Life BPC, 1971



Faith BPC & Zion BPC, 1971



1st YF meeting of Calvary BPC, 1973



Junior Choir of Calvary BPC, 1974



Rev Heng speaking at Easter Sunrise Service, 1974



AF of Calvary BPC, 1975



Calvary Family Camp at Fraser's Hill, 1982



B-P Synod



Session of Calvary BPC, 1976



30th B-P Conference, 1980



Students of FEBC



10th Assembly of the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches, 1981



Assembly of the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches in Korea, 1984



Rev and Mrs Timothy Tow, BPCWA, 1986



Bethel BPC, Australia, 1990



Construction of Choa Chu Kang Bible Centre, 1994



Session of Calvary Pandan BPC, 1999



BPC of Collingswood, New Jersey - first BPC in America



Overseas missions in Saipan



DVBS at Calvary Miri BPC, 2005



Worship service at CCCS, 2007



Calvary BPC, Sibiu



Calvary Miri BPC, 2006



Inauguration of Brisbane BPC, 2007



Herald BPC, 2009



Ebenezer BPC, 2009



1st Session of Truth BPC, 2007



Baraka BPC in Shepherd's Field, Israel



Philadelphia BPC, 2009



BCEA

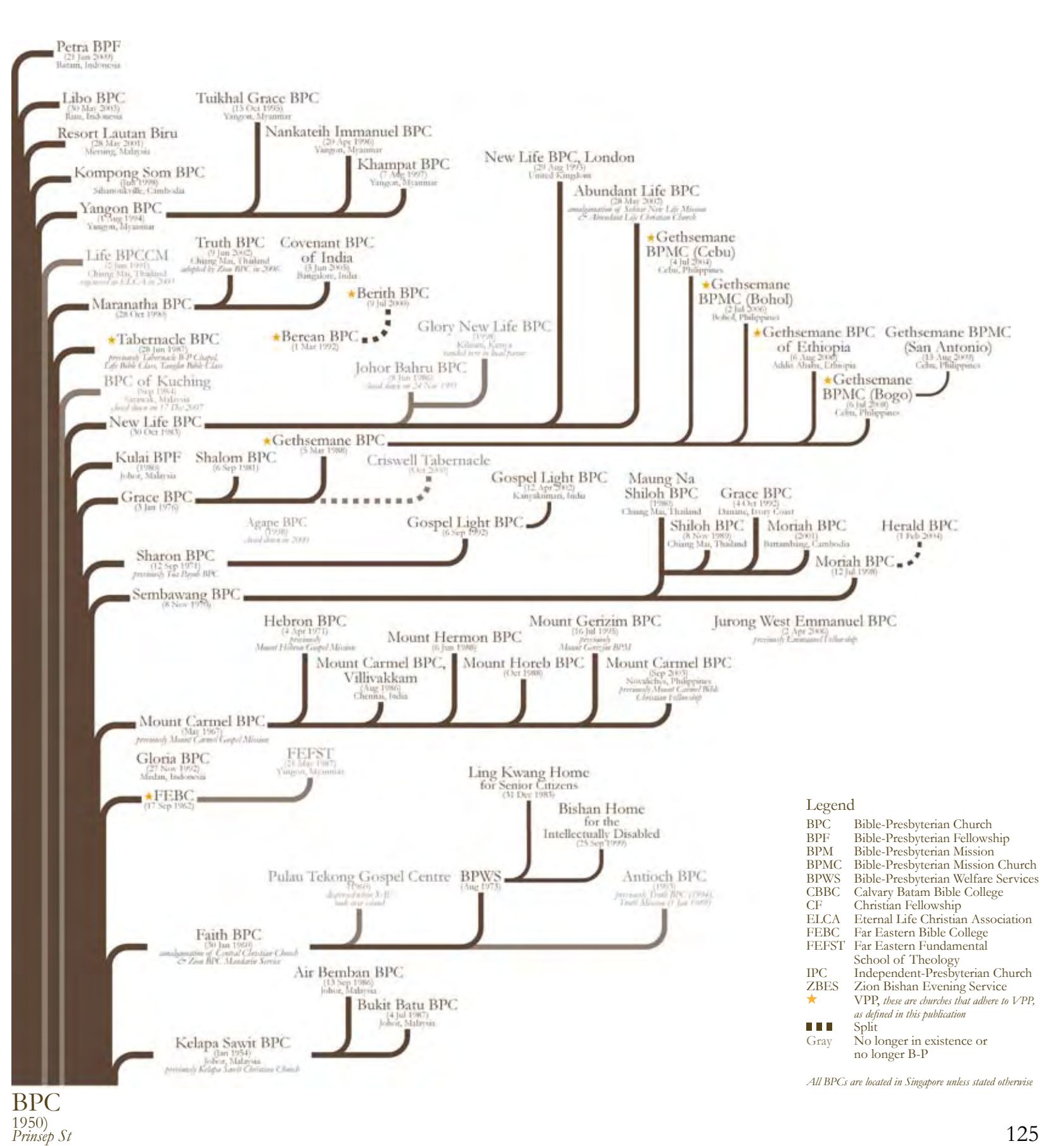
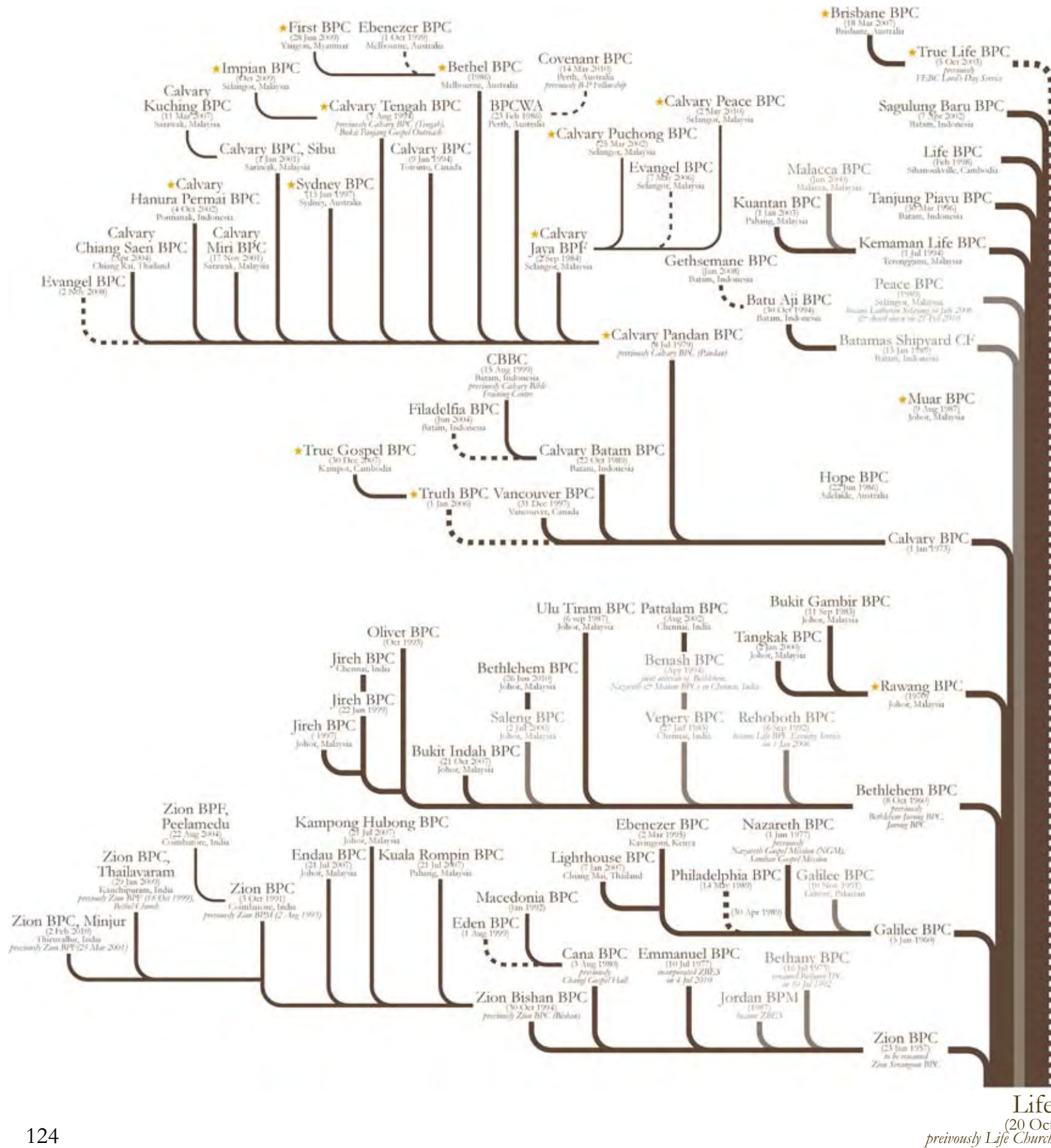


39th BCEA Graduation Ceremony, 2009



BPCWA, 2010

B-P Family Tree



B-P & Affiliated Ministries

1. Brisbane BPC, Australia
2. Sydney BPC, Australia
3. Ebenezer BPC, Australia
4. Bethel BPC, Australia
5. Hope BPC, Australia
6. Covenant BPC, Australia
7. BPC of Western Australia (BPCWA)
8. Faith Presbyterian Church, Australia
9. Chinese Christian Church of Guam
10. Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
11. Mount Carmel BPC, Novaliches, Philippines
12. The Center for Biblical Studies, Philippines
13. Emmanuel Christian Church, Philippines
14. Gethsemane BPMC (Bogo), Philippines
15. Gethsemane BPMC (San Antonio), Philippines
16. Gethsemane BPMC (Cebu), Philippines
17. Gethsemane BPMC (Bohol), Philippines
18. Calvary Miri BPC, Sarawak, Malaysia
19. Calvary BPC, Sibu, Sarawak, Malaysia
20. Calvary Kuching BPC, Sarawak, Malaysia
21. Calvary Hanura Permai BPC, Pontianak, Indonesia
22. Calvary Batam BPC, Indonesia
23. Calvary Batam Bible College, Indonesia
24. Gethsemane BPC, Batam, Indonesia
25. Petra BPF, Batam, Indonesia
26. Batu Aji BPC, Batam, Indonesia
27. Sagulung Baru BPC, Batam, Indonesia
28. Tanjung Piayu BPC, Batam, Indonesia
29. Libo BPC, Riau, Indonesia
30. Gloria BPC, Medan, Indonesia
31. Grace Medan BPC, Indonesia
32. Galilee BPC, Balawan, Indonesia
33. Kulai BPF, Johor, Malaysia
34. Kelapa Sawit BPC, Johor, Malaysia
35. Air Bemban BPC, Johor, Malaysia
36. Bukit Batu BPC, Johor, Malaysia
37. Jireh BPC, Johor, Malaysia
38. Resort Lautan Biru, Mersing, Malaysia
39. Endau BPC, Johor, Malaysia
40. Muar BPC, Johor, Malaysia
41. Rawang BPC, Johor, Malaysia
42. Bukit Gambir BPC, Johor, Malaysia
43. Tangkak BPC, Johor, Malaysia
44. Kuala Rompin BPC, Pahang, Malaysia
45. Calvary Puchong BPC, Selangor, Malaysia
46. Impian BPC, Selangor, Malaysia
47. Calvary Jaya BPF, Selangor, Malaysia
48. Evangel BPC, Selangor, Malaysia
49. Calvary Peace BPC, Selangor, Malaysia
50. Kuantan BPC, Pahang, Malaysia
51. Kemaman Life BPC, Terengganu, Malaysia
52. True Gospel BPC, Kampot, Cambodia
53. Kompong Som BPC, Sihanoukville, Cambodia
54. Life BPC, Sihanoukville, Cambodia
55. Moriah BPC, Battambang, Cambodia
56. Calvary Chiang Saen BPC, Chiang Rai, Thailand
57. Bethel Development Center, Chiang Rai, Thailand
58. Truth BPC, Chiang Mai, Thailand
59. Maung Na Shiloh BPC, Chiang Mai, Thailand
60. Life BPC, Chiang Mai, Thailand
61. Shiloh BPC, Chiang Mai, Thailand
62. First BPC, Yangon, Myanmar
63. Geneva Institute, Sri Lanka
64. Trinity Reformed Presbyterian Church, Sri Lanka
65. Zion BPC, Coimbatore, India
66. Covenant BPC of India, Bangalore, India
67. Zion BPC, Thailavaram, India
68. Mount Carmel BPC, Villivakkam, India
69. Zion BPC, Minjur, India
70. Bible College of East Africa, Tanzania
71. Bomet Bible Institute, Kenya
72. Ebenezer BPC, Kenya
73. Bible College of East Africa, Kenya
74. Faith College of the Bible, Eldoret, Kenya
75. Gethsemane BPC of Ethiopia, Ethiopia
76. Chinese Christian Church of Jordan, Karak, Jordan
77. Baraka BPC, Israel
78. Chinese Christian Church of Jordan, Sahab, Jordan
79. Chinese Christian Church of Jordan, Irbid, Jordan
80. Chinese Christian Church of Cyprus
81. New Life BPC, London, United Kingdom
82. Grace BPC, Danane, Ivory Coast
83. Calvary BPC, Toronto, Canada
84. Vancouver BPC, Canada





THE B-P EMBLEM

God's time had come to call the man of His choosing to lead His people Israel. Moses, among men most meek, saw the amazing sight, a bush in the wilderness, burning but not consumed: no sight was more awesome and arresting.

Then the Almighty called from out of the fire:

"...Moses, Moses... draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."
(Exodus 3:4-5)

Our God is a consuming fire. Whenever we come into His presence, remember, we tread on holy ground. Whether in worship, in prayer, or in the handling of holy things, we are in the presence of the thrice holy God. Let our approach before Him be ever reverent with *"clean hands and pure heart."*

The B-P Emblem serves as our constant reminder.

Dr SH Tow