

SCOTTISH PROTESTANT VIEW

FREE

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PAPAL VISIT ADDS INSULT TO INJURY

No one should be surprised that Evangelical Protestants across the United Kingdom are completely opposed to the planned papal visit for next year.

The visit will be the first state visit since the Reformation and we are in no doubt that our Prime Minister will be pleased that the invitation has been accepted.

No doubt some will accuse us of denying the Pope civil and religious liberty, but his visit is in a category all by itself. Let us not forget the spiritual and temporal claims he makes for himself and his church.

My main objection to the visit is the claims he makes to be the Holy Father, King of Kings and Vicar of Christ. The Word of God clearly recognises that these titles belong to the Godhead, with Christ the supreme head of His Church and not the Pope.

I see his visit as adding insult to injury considering the arrogant claim of Rome that the description of church should not be applied to reformed churches.

In 1982, the then Pope John Paul II made

his famous call for all to walk 'hand in hand.' It all seemed so nice at the time, but thank God for the remnant of Protestant Evangelicals who were never duped back then and certainly not now.

Let us fervently pray that the visit will be cancelled, a mighty revival to take place instead and a celebration of the 450th anniversary of the Reformation in Scotland next year D.V.

This is the time to stand up and be counted !

By Mr Jack Bell, editor

In view of the proposed visit of the Pope, we print again the following statements

THE BILL OF RIGHTS AND ACT OF SETTLEMENT

lays it down that:-

"Whereas it has been found by experience that it is inconsistent with the safety and welfare of this Protestant Kingdom to be Governed by a popish Prince or by any King or Queen marrying a Papist . . .

Every person who is or shall be reconciled to, or shall have communion with, the See or Church of Rome, or shall marry a Papist, shall be excluded and be forever incapable to inherit, possess, or enjoy the Crown or

Government of this Realm and Ireland; and in every case the people of these Realms shall be and are hereby released of their allegiance."

(Act. 1, William and Mary, cap 2 sec. i. 1689.)

THE CORONATION OATH

"Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the Laws of God and the true profession of the Gospel?

Will you to the utmost of your power maintain in the United Kingdom the

Protestant Reformed Religion established by law? And will you maintain and preserve inviolably the settlement of the Church of England and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, as by law established in England? And will you preserve unto the Bishops and Clergy of England, and to the Churches there committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges as by law do or shall appertain to them, or any of them?"

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Protestants urged to organise against proposed papal visits

After the recent announcement that next year the Pope is planning an historic state visit to the United Kingdom, there was the inevitable speculation on the local airwaves whether or not it would include Ulster. Most commentators now think that scenario unlikely, and that a planned papal tour of the Republic in 2012 would be the more favoured time for the former 'Vatican Rottweiler' to attempt a 'border crossing'. Would Rome want to give any political recognition to Northern Ireland as part of the UK by including it in next year's 'British itinerary'?

Protestant opposition

According to an article in Saturday's Newsletter (3rd October), DUP MLA Ian McCrea, the son of MP and Free Presbyterian minister, the Rev William McCrea, has posted a strongly worded statement on his website saying that a papal visit to the Province would "face the vent of Protestant opposition". The statement goes on to say that the majority of people in Ulster belonged to "denominations

that hold to the belief that the Pope is the Antichrist and by his titles and claims he blasphemes Almighty God".

Evangelical Protestant Society

His comments were quickly taken up by SDLP Assemblyman Patsy McGlone who demanded a retraction, citing the comments as sectarian and abusive. However the Evangelical Protestant Society has come out strongly in support of Ian McCrea, calling his stand 'courageous and principled'. They reject the accusations against the DUP man that his comments were sectarian, and point out from the days of the Reformation onwards the Pope has been identified by Protestants as the Antichrist. They are urging other Protestant politicians to follow Mr McCrea's lead saying that "whether the Pope comes to Ulster next year, or the visit is deferred to 2012, now is the time to galvanise opposition to any such visit, and it is incumbent upon all Protestant leaders, in church and state, to nail their colours to the mast".

Papal claims

Their statement continues, "As Evangelical Protestants, we believe in civil and religious liberty for all, and we accept that a religious leader has the right to pay a pastoral visit to his flock. But the Pope is no ordinary religious leader, and his visit cannot be merely pastoral. Indeed the planned visit to Great Britain will be the first state visit by a pope since the Reformation. The Pope makes very significant spiritual and temporal claims about himself and his church. The Pope of Rome arrogates to himself power over princes and kings and claims to be Vicar (or substitute) of the Lord Jesus Christ."

The EPS also revealed that they will be working with Protestants right across the UK in a bid to coordinate opposition to any visit by Pope Benedict XVI.

Believers need to pray fervently against the wiles and wicked devices of Rome.

Belfast correspondent of the British Church Newspaper

WE STAND WITH THE SCOTTISH COVENANTERS—Jack Greenald

Having previously examined the views of the Continental and English Reformers, and the Puritans regarding the antichrist, in this article we will look at the views of the Scottish Covenanters.

In the National Covenant, sworn and subscribed in Greyfriar's Church, Edinburgh on 1 March 1638, which set out the views of the Covenanters and gave them their name, it stated that: 'in special we detest and refuse the usurped authority of that Roman Antichrist upon the Scriptures of God, upon the Kirk, the civil magistrate, and consciences of men;' and went on to describe in great detail the unscriptural errors of the Roman Catholic system.

James Durham, was a Covenanter minister in Glasgow. He was called to the ministry after Rev David Dickson, the minister at Irvine, heard him leading the prayers of his company when he was a young captain in the Covenanting Army. He wrote a commentary on the Book of Revelation of which CH Spurgeon wrote:

'After all that has been written, it would not be easy to find a more sensible and instructive work than this old-fashioned exposition...the mystery of the gospel fills it with sweet savour.' Durham wrote in his commentary: 'It remaineth therefore, as was formerly concluded, that the Pope is the very Antichrist, and the papacy the very antichristian kingdom here described'.

In the Sanquhar Declaration, drawn up by Rev Donald Cargill and Rev Richard Cameron, the 'Lion of the Covenant', and posted at the cross at Sanquhar on 22 June 1680, the declaration spoke 'far more against such as would betray or deliver up our free reformed mother Kirk unto the bondage of Antichrist the Pope of Rome'.

Robert Traill (1642-1716) was the son of the Greyfriars Church manse where the 1638 Covenant was signed. He was a Covenanter minister and a friend of William Guthrie of Fenwick. He stood beside the Covenanter martyr James Guthrie of Stirling when he was on the scaffold. For a time he

was a prisoner on the Bass Rock and his friendship with the field preacher Rev John Welsh caused him to be denounced by the authorities as a 'Pentland Rebel' and led to him moving to Holland. He wrote: The Papists will tell you, that Christ saveth sinners indeed by his death; but that all the application of the virtue of his death he hath left with the church; that he left Peter to be the head of the church; and that Peter left his power with his successors, the bishops of Rome. And, by those delusions, Antichrist hath usurped Christ's throne of salvation, and hath deceived the world, and damned it; and, instead of saving sinners, hath been destroying the saints of the most high God. Nothing but the wrath of God on despisers of Christ and his gospel, would have brought in, and kept up so long this abomination of desolation'.

The views of the Scottish Covenanters were the same as those of the Protestant Reformers and the English Puritans. They all viewed the Papacy as the Antichrist.

Ulster Bulwark 2009

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PRESENTATION OF THE BIBLE TO THE MONARCH

This is one of the most important features of the Coronation. It is distinctly Protestant.

At this presentation the Archbishop of Canterbury said these words: "Our most gracious Queen, to keep your Majesty ever mindful of the Law and of the Gospel of God as the rule for the whole life and government of Christian Princes, we present you with this Book, the most valuable thing this world affords."

The Moderator of the Church of Scotland continued by saying: "Here is wisdom — This is the Royal Law. These are the lively oracles of God."

THE ACCESSION DECLARATION

The Accession declaration has to be taken by the Monarch when meeting the first Parliament of the reign or at the Coronation, whichever may be first.

"I do solemnly, in the presence of God, profess, testify, and declare that I am a faithful Protestant, and that I will, according to the true intent of the enactments which secure the Protestant Succession to the Throne of my Realm, uphold and maintain the said enactments to the best of my power, according to the law."

**ALL ARTICLES
IN THIS
MAGAZINE
REPRODUCED
AS EVIDENCE**

FLASHBACK TO PAPAL VISIT IN 1982 PASTOR JACK GLASS

Printed in the WEST END TIMES.

Friday, March 19, 1982

I am standing in this election as the "Protestant Crusade against the Papal Visit" candidate as I believe that this visit will be a political visit by the back door.

Originally we were told that this was to be a pastoral visit by the Pope to his own people, but now we hear of his invitation from Her Majesty the Queen to visit Buckingham Palace. This is illegal and contrary to the Bill of Rights and Act of Settlement which state that the Queen is to have no communion with the See of Rome and, if she does, we are absolved of our allegiance to her.

Remember also that the Church of England's 39 Articles are established by law and they state that the Pope has no jurisdiction in this land and that the Mass is a blasphemous fable and dangerous deceit.

However, the Queen's religious adviser, Dr. Runcie the Archbishop of Canterbury, says that his great regret is that he cannot say mass in the Roman Catholic Church. No wonder British Protestants feel that they are being betrayed.

My main objection to the papal visit is the claims the Pope makes to be Holy Father, King of Kings and Vicar of Christ. These titles surely belong to the Godhead. God is the Holy Father, Christ the King of Kings and the Holy Spirit the only Vicar of Christ on Earth. It is my love for Christ and the desire for His glory that makes me protest against the Pope.

I cannot accept this deification of the Pope or his idolatry as seen in his mariolatry and his claim to turn the Mass Wafer into Christ then holding it up for adoration. In Dublin the Catholic faithful sang, "He's got the whole world in his hand". Surely this should be a hymn of "praise to God alone.

The Pope will come here claiming that there can only be unity when the separated brethren return to the Roman Catholic Church and stating that children of a



Pastor Jack Glass, campaigning against visit to the United Kingdom of Pope John Paul II in 1982

mixed marriage must be brought up in his church. Why not the Christian church if he claims to be an ecumenist? Will the Pope say something about the religious apartheid in our schools?

The answer to that is NO, NO, NO, the same answer he gave when asked to excommunicate the I.R.A. killers of our British troops. Why does the man they call the man of peace not excommunicate these terrorists?

Finally, the Pope claims to be not only a man of peace but a champion of human rights, yet he does not practice these in his own church. I refer to the theologians he has castigated for disagreeing with his claims to infallibility etc., his enforced celibacy of the clergy, and his intrusion into the marriage relationship pontificating on the forms of contraception, these are not the marks of a human rights comapaigner. If the Pope is for peace then he would be advised to stay" well away from Scotland for his appearance here will only exacerbate the sectarian situation. There is already rising resentment against the preferential treatment the R.C. church is receiving in this city from the powers that be. (e.g. Bellahouston Park trees, etc.) The polarising pole should stay at home and let Glasgow flourish by the praising of Christ's name and not his.

Roman Relics Arrogance

It took a phone call from a friend for the penny to drop. We had of course already been upset, though not surprised to hear that the Anglican York Minster was to host some of the bones of a Roman Catholic "saint" Therese (See Canterbury Tales 7776). Her life appears to have been quite ordinary and that, ironically, seems to have been why she has been idolised.

However as our friend pointed out, the UK tour of the relics indicates a much worse reality. It is not merely that one Protestant congregation has apostatized toward popery but that Rome has brought her superstitions back to England, a land that wisely through the 16th Century Protestant Reformation rejected the debilitating and damning abuses of the Roman Catholic Church.

In response to an email to the Archbishop of York in which we suggested that the display of relics was a serious breach of the 39 Articles of Religion demanding firm discipline, The Venerable John Barton of the Archbishops Communication Office kindly replied, "I understand your concern about Article 22, the relics of St Therese and York Minster. As you know, the governance of a cathedral is primarily the responsibility of its Dean & Chapter, rather than the diocesan bishop. If you have a look at the Minster website you will see it carries messages about the relics, from the Dean and the local Roman Catholic priest. I cannot find there any suggestion that the relics should be venerated, but rather that they could be a reminder of Therese's life and a spur to prayer. Protestants might use different terminology and even avoid the word hagiography, but nevertheless have their own list of great Christians of the past who are recalled as examples and encouragements for us to emulate."

The bringing in of dead bones into a church and expecting visitors to come and be blessed is quite blasphemous. These things were totally rejected at the Protestant Reformation when the light of God's Word replaced Roman superstition.

The carrying around of dead bones for veneration or worship cannot be justified. One reads that some devotees claim the removal of Joseph's bones from Egypt as offering support but such would be preposterous and presumptuous. Some Romanists claim that the 'foolishness' of such things is justified by 1 Corinthians

chapter 1, but there Paul refers specifically to preaching and never to superstition. Like women's ordination, biblical warrant is not genuine but fabricated by distorting or ignoring the context of verses. So the angel's offering of incense with the prayers of all saints in Revelation 8:3 is assumed to justify prayers to the dead. The list of excuses for weird Roman rituals is endless and we could never finish refuting them. Romish relics have no genuine biblical warrant but are more akin to the ancestor worship of heathen peoples. In Luther's day the Reformer saw through the ludicrous claim that people could be spared thousands of years in purgatory by simply viewing the Elector of Saxony's collection of many thousands of relics.

Behind the facade of Rome's boast to be the only true church lies the reality of a cult religion that deceives otherwise intelligent people into the oppressive submission of blind obedience.

Here is a tragedy. Rome is taking advantage of the increased heathenism of the British. By British heathens we are not insulting immigrants, many of whom are as repulsed as ourselves by Romanist Paganism. We lay the blame for this apostasy with the British and especially our Church of England. That is why Rome is making such arrogant moves to further subvert biblical Protestant faith and common sense.

The tour, mainly to Roman churches, started in September and runs into October. We have not heard if any protests have been organised but we have been contacted for comment by the BBC.

The relics are due to visit Wormwood Scrubs Prison here in London. Apparently 300 of the 1100 prisoners are Roman Catholic, which itself tells us a lot about this religion. We are sure that, like the Gunpowder plotters, IRA bombers and so called Roman Martyrs, these Roman Catholics are not being persecuted for being Roman Catholics, but are being justly punished for real crimes.

We would value readers' prayers that a wider audience would hear that there is an all sufficient Saviour who is all in all. Yes, we give thanks for our forebears such as John Calvin who was born 500 years ago this year, but he wisely took an unmarked grave so that he could never become the object of pilgrimage. While we thank God for the example of godly men who have gone before us, they are only saved sinners like ourselves. Our interest is to compare the teaching of such fallible men as Calvin to the Word of God, the Bible. When such is done with the Popes and their saints, they are found wanting and we say, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:19. When a Roman Catholic is converted to put his trust not in popes but in Christ alone, his attitude towards relics and his own works of self righteousness becomes, "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ". Philippians 3:7,8

English Churchman, Oct 2009



UK tour: a casket containing the bones of St Thérèse of Lisieux, arriving in Folkestone,

The Pope: 'Most clerical paedophiles are homosexuals and child abuse is as bad or worse in other religions'

The Pope has provoked uproar in a statement issued after a UN conference of its 'Human Rights Council' in Geneva. Trying to deflect attention and responsibility for child sexual abuse scandals by the Roman Catholic Church, he first of all claimed that 'most Catholic priests who commit abusive acts against children are not paedophiles but homosexuals attracted to sex with adolescent males'. Such a claim is bitterly disputed by pro-sodomite campaign groups. The Pope's statement added: "Of all priests involved in the abuses, 80 to 90% belong to this sexual orientation minority which is sexually engaged with adolescent boys between the ages of 11 and 17".

The Pope then went on to claim that child sexual abuse was rife in other religions, claiming that the problems with clerical sex abuse in other churches were as big, if not bigger.

The Pope claimed that the Roman Catholic Church was 'busy cleaning up its own house' on the issue. The Pope's statement was read out by Archbishop Silvano Tomasi, the Vatican's Permanent Observer to the UN, who added: "Available research shows that only 1½% - 5% of Catholic clergy are involved in child sex abuse". He also quoted statistics from

the Christian Scientist Monitor newspaper to show that most US churches being hit by child sex abuse allegations were Protestant and that sexual abuse within Jewish communities was common.

The Vatican was responding to a bitter attack on it by an international representative of

the International Humanist and Ethical Union, Keith Porteous Wood. He said the Church had deliberately covered up child abuse and was in breach of several articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. He added: "The many thousands of victims of abuse deserve the international community to hold the Vatican to account, something it has been unwilling to do, so far. Both state and children's organisations must unite to pressurise the Vatican to open its files, change its procedures worldwide, and report suspected abusers to civil authorities".

The Pope's statement concluded: "It would be good if other institutions and authorities, where the major part of abuses are reported, could do the same as the Roman Catholic Church, clean up its own house and inform the media about it".

Compensation paid by the Roman Catholic Church to victims of child abuse by clerical perpetrators is estimated to have topped £3 billion in the past 20 years.

*Correspondent of the
British Church Newspaper 8.10.09*

Editorial Comment

One of the most misused verses in the Bible is, 'Judge not, that ye be not judged' (Matt 7:1) Every verse should be read in its context if we are to properly understand the true meaning. In vs 2-5 of the same chapter it is evident that vs1 is referring to hypocritical judgement. The Lord is stating a principal and then goes on to explain it.

A brother who has a beam in his own eye should not be judging the brother who has a mote in his eye. The lesson is plain, you cannot judge another for his sin if you are guilty of the same sin. Matt 7:1 has actually been used by some as an excuse for laxity in exercising church discipline or for not judging any situation, but in the light of the context and also other scriptures, Matt 18:15-18 plus John 20:23. Such use of the passage is without any justification. To sum up, to be discriminating and critical is sometimes necessary, to be hypocritical is wrong. In the above article where the Pope has been quoted in regards to the child sexual abuse scandals by the Roman Catholic church, one can see very clearly the blatant hypocrisy. Not only that, but one can see here and in other statements that no reference is made to the fact that God has been sinned against as well as humanity. True repentance commences with acknowledging ones sin against God, and then those sinned against.

Our Lord said, 'Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheeps clothing.. The child sex scandal timebombs that have rocked the RC Church in various parts of the world are set to explode again soon. So warned the Archbishop of Dublin who predicted that a new report resulting from a massive investigation of parishes in Dublin will shock us all. The coming report is expected to reveal that the toll of sexually abused child victims may run into thousands. Let us pray that the light of the gospel may shine into the hearts of those who have been hurt and disillusioned.

Knox preaching



WHEN brought face to face with Mary, Queen of Scots, in whose presence the zeal of many a leader of the Protestants had abated, John Knox bore unswerving witness for the truth. He was not to be won by favours or tears. The queen charged him with heresy. He had taught the people to receive a religion prohibited by the State, she declared, and had thus transgressed God's command enjoining subjects to obey their princes. Knox answered firmly:

"As right religion took neither original strength nor authority from worldly princes but from the eternal God alone, so are not subjects bound to frame their religion according to the appetites of their princes. For oft it is that princes are the most ignorant of all others in God's true religion. . . If all the seed of Abraham had been of the religion of Pharaoh, whose subjects they long were, I pray you. Madam, what religion would there have been in the

world? Or, if all men in the days of the apostles had been of the religion of the Roman emperors, what religion would there have been upon the face of the earth? . . . And so, Madam, ye perceive that subjects are not bound to the religion of their princes, albeit they are commanded to give them obedience."

Said Mary, "Ye interpret the Scriptures in one manner, and they interpret in another; whom shall I believe, and who shall be judge?" "Ye shall believe God, That plainly speaketh in His Word," replied Knox. "Farther than the Word teaches you, ye neither shall believe the one nor the other. The Word of God is plain in itself; and if there appear any obscurity in one place, the Holy Ghost, Which is never contrary to Himself, explains the same more clearly in other places, so that there can remain no doubt but unto such as obstinately remain ignorant."

Such were the truths that the fearless Reformer, at the peril of his life, spoke in the ear of Royalty. With the same undaunted courage he kept to his purpose, praying and fighting the battles of the Lord, until Scotland was free from Mary's religio-political system.

Protestant Challenge, April 1980

What the Bible REALLY says about homosexuality

As Bible-believing Christians, it is important that we are fully aware of what the Bible says about important issues. Today, Gay Christian groups, for example the Metropolitan Community Church are freely distributing leaflets which claim the Bible does not class homosexuality as a sin. It is important that in this, we are “as wise as serpents and harmless as doves”. The Bible actually says very little about homosexuality, but what it does say (and what it fails to say), is very powerful indeed.

Starting “in the beginning...” many homosexual theologians claim that God created Adam and Eve (not Adam and Steve) for the sole purpose of procreation. When we read carefully in Genesis 1-3, this is not the case. He created Man and Woman so they could have a relationship together and together would have a relationship with God. The primary function of this sexual union was not to produce children because the command to “go forth and multiply” is only given after they are banished from the garden; it is to share a unique closeness that would mimic the closeness of the trinity. Eve was not an afterthought of God, produced to keep the human race going, she was equally made in the image of God (Gen 1:27 “God created man in his own image... male and female created he them” - God therefore, encompasses male and female in his divine absoluteness, although he is revealed as a man - Father, Son, and so on). It is not just procreation that prompted God to put Adam and Eve in his most perfect setting. When Adam and Eve sinned, they plunged mankind into sin, and God had to set about another plan to find a people that he could share a close relationship with.

Most homosexual theologians do not believe that Sodom and Gomorrah was destroyed because of the sin of homosexuality. Having read the account of the destruction of the city closely, and all related verses in the Bible, I have to say that I agree with them. This is a very controversial thing to say, and it goes against the grain of hundreds of years’ worth of evangelical tradition, but truth is more important than tradition. I urge every reader of this article to read plainly Genesis 18 and 19 again. Jude 1:7 says that

Andrene Bamford

Sodomites were guilty of “fornication” and “going after strange flesh”. Fornication may encompass homosexuality, but it is a term that definitely includes heterosexual sin. The incident that has been referred to is when the men of Sodom want to have sex with the angels who visit Lot. Homosexual theologians point out that the men wanted to rape the angels. Rape is universally acknowledged as a sin, regardless of whether it’s male or female rape. There are simply no other verses in the Bible that link Sodom and Gomorrah with homosexuality. It’s the godlessness in Sodom that God objected to - homosexuality is not isolated as the reason for the city’s destruction in other verses of the Bible. It is hard to reject centuries of tradition, but we must focus on truth.

The verses we are all familiar with in Leviticus 18 are also explained away as being part of the old law that was only for a specific time. We must dig a bit deeper to understand why God specifically stipulates that homosexuality is to be shunned by the Israelites. Through Moses, God miraculously rescued the Israelites and for forty years they wandered in the desert until they reached Canaan - the Promised Land. In the desert, God provided on a pretty grand scale for their every need as they trekked through the wilderness - cloud and fire to provide direction, water produced from rocks, manna fresh each morning to eat, not to mention a path through the Red Sea. However, the Israelites grumble and appear to disobey God at every turn. They are impressed by the practices they had known in Egypt, and also by tribes that they meet on their travels, like idolatry and sexual relations outside the marriage bond. But God was keen to keep them under control - because ultimately Jesus would be born of this race. God gives ten short commands, but Israel continues to let God down. This is why God gives a comprehensive guide to living in the form of the Levitical Laws. These laws are designed to keep the Israelites safe, free from disease, free from interaction with other tribes, and to keep them in touch with Him. God wants people to love him freely,

but they wouldn’t, so he has to legislate for it. At this point Israel is at one of its lowest points, spiritually. That’s why they were given these laws. They cover food - clean/unclean foods, sex - and sexual relations are strictly kept between man and wife, clothing - certain fabrics weren’t to be mixed, and so on. In order to make sure they keep these laws, God’s penalties are extraordinarily severe! Many of these laws are irrelevant to us living in houses in the 21st century. The homosexuality that attracted the Israelites was pagan (or from a religious practice outside the Jewish faith). This is one reason why it angered God, but also, up to this point in the Bible, God has blessed the union between men and women - his ideal, as I pointed out at the beginning - and very much condemned anything that seeks to undermine it. God values women and wanted to elevate their position as men’s ideal partners. The marital union is highly prized by God. From that point of view, it’s worth noting that more is probably said in the Bible to condemn heterosexual adultery than homosexuality, as this also destroys the ideal partnership between husband and wife. The law is not for the born again believer, but we are called to holiness and to walk with God. Is homosexuality compatible with the heart of God?

Another argument is that Jesus does not actually condemn homosexuality. He says nothing about it, positive or negative, but it’s still possible to understand the heart of Jesus on the matter. When Jesus is born to Mary, he comes to fulfil the law. Jesus is sinless and so keeps the law - he refers to the Ten Commandments frequently, not just the letter, but the spirit of the law. Jesus talks a lot about sexual relations - but only sex between the two genders. He is silent on homosexuality, but it is perhaps misguided to think that this is because it is okay with him. Based on what has been said before, it is more likely because he doesn’t recognise homosexuality as a union that is endorsed by God. Also, we must remember Jesus is speaking to a largely religious Jewish audience - they already knew what God thought of gay sex. What Jesus brought to

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the people was new light on the spirit of the law. He wanted to challenge the religious pride of the Jews, so he rescues the woman about to be stoned for adultery (John 8), by questioning just how sinless her accusers are. When he lets the woman go, Jesus says, "Go and sin no more". Clearly, he sees adultery as a sin, because he supports the law, and by association we must deduce that he also saw homosexuality as a sin. A lot of Jesus' ministry focuses on women, and there are a number of women who are shamed in the eyes of Jews whom Jesus befriends and transforms. Again, this shows that God holds women in high regard and the Jews at this point are really trampling them underfoot.

After Jesus returned to heaven, the early church took the gospel of Jesus to the Gentiles in Europe and parts of Asia. God's people are those who accept Jesus as the Messiah. Most Jews rejected Jesus, and the way was now open for Gentiles to enter the "kingdom of God" - not through genetics, but through a change of heart. In the Roman and

Greek influenced societies, homosexuality was more common. Homosexual acts were connected with idolatory and temple worship and Paul makes a point of explaining how God views this to the Roman Christians in Romans 1:25-28. It is one sin among many, Paul does not just single out homosexuality. Homosexual theologians say the words used in other epistles which are translated in various Bible translations as "homosexuality" in I Corinthians 6 and I Timothy 1 are actually mistranslations and are referring to male rape or prostitution. I don't see this point as invalidating the general theme that God does not bless homosexual sex.

The biggest argument that homosexuality is viewed by God as a sin remains that there are no examples of loving homosexual unions that God prospers in the Bible. God created sex to be a sacred union between man and woman, and there are plenty of those unions described in the Bible - Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Rachel, Mary and Joseph, Priscilla and Aquilla, among others. The ultimate metaphor to describe

Jesus and the people God has sought since man's banishment from the Garden of Eden is Christ and the Bride (Revelation 21:2). God, therefore, views this union in the highest regard.

The bottom line is, we are all sinners. The Bible helps us understand what sin is in order to drive us to God - to Jesus who opened the way for us to know God by dying as the atonement for our sins. Christians who are nasty, repressive, violent etc to gay people are acting in an unchristian way by being unmerciful and unloving. Salvation is open to anyone - gay or straight, and God alone through his Bible guides the believer to live the ideal life God has for him/her. God is inclusive - "all have sinned" Romans 3:23, and therefore all can come to God through belief in the Saviour, the Messiah, Jesus Christ. As we take a stand for God in a day and age when the Bible is mocked, and political correctness takes centre stage, we need to know that the Bible is God's Truth - and we stand for his Word alone.

Gay Scots Ministry Candidate Withdraws

Dmitri Ross, an open homosexual accepted as a candidate for the ministry of the Church of Scotland, has withdrawn his application after opposition from evangelicals and conservatives within the Church.

Mr Ross, who is in a civil partnership with another man, commented: "I do not wish, and have never sought, to be a cause of

division within the Church I love so dearly. Therefore, after much heartfelt deliberation, and after much prayerful consideration, I have decided to withdraw as a full-time Candidate in Training for Ministry of Word and Sacrament in the Church of Scotland."

A special commission is currently investigating the issue of homosexual

ordination and will report to the 2011 General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

At time of writing, 46 congregations of the national Church had subscribed to the 'Confessing Churches Covenant' in support of a stand for Biblical orthodoxy.

British Church Newspaper

The Times for Messianic Jews

Prejudice against Messianic Jews in Israel is no longer going unnoticed in the Jewish community and wider world.

October 2nd saw an article in The Times profiling the persecution of Messianic Jewish Israeli citizens by the Yad L'Achim anti-missionary organisation. It noted that the Israeli daily Haaretz would also run an article on the plight of Messianic Jews. The secular press in Israel has pretty much ignored this in general and the Ami Ortiz bombing in particular.

Recently Harry's Place, a popular political blog frequented by many Jewish, readers featured a guest

post by the Rosh Pina Project calling on fair treatment for Messianic Jews. Various other secular Jewish blogs have been echoing this call, perhaps the time has come for the Israeli government to reign in the hate speech against its Messianic Jewish citizens.

Recently Yad U Achim complained on its web site about being compared to the KGB but offered no convincing evidence as to why that was a false comparison. However, the Caspari Review recently noted an article appearing in the regional Israeli newspaper HaTzvi which stated that residents of the Arad neighbourhood of Rotem are collaborating with Yad

L'Achim in order to prevent the spread of "missionary activity" into their area, noting in particular its "penetration" by Rivka Fry Panchard, a "Jewish apostate who was baptized into Christianity by the sect [of Messianic Jews]" who was forced to move when her "missionary activity" was exposed. The hysterical language of Yad L'Achim such as "penetration" that is used refers not to military action but to the fact that Rivka Fry Panchard just happens to live in the Rotem neighbourhood of Arad.

by **Richard Gibson**, Leeds
British Church Newspaper

PEACE :

THE LASTING LEGACY of JESUS

A certain urban myth has two men at a funeral, standing by the graveside of a mutual acquaintance. 'How much did he leave?' asked one. 'Everything!' replied the other. Joking apart, it is a reminder not to hold on too tightly to the temporal things of earth, for one day, we will have to leave everything behind. We brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world (1 Timothy 6:7).

Matthew Henry, the famous Bible commentator, says the following about the 'legacy' of the Lord Jesus Christ:

When Christ was about to leave the world He made His will; His soul He committed to His Father; His body He bequeathed to Joseph of Arimathea; His clothes fell to the soldiers; His mother He left to the care of John. But what should He leave to His disciples that had left all for Him? Silver and gold He had none; but He left them that which is infinitely better, His peace.

Peace of heart, soul and conscience is the lasting legacy of the Lord Jesus Christ to His followers. Among His final words to His disciples, Jesus said: Peace / leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid (John 14:27). And the wonder of wonders is that you and I can be the beneficiaries of this blessed legacy of the Lord Jesus even today. For Jesus alone gives peace with God, and Jesus alone can impart the peace of God to the human soul.

Peace with God

Jesus gives us peace with God. Romans 5:1 reads: Therefore, since we are justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Colossians 1:20 describes Jesus as making peace by the blood of His cross.

By nature, we are not at peace with God, for we are sinners both by nature and practice, and God is angry - even at war with sinners.

He cannot overlook the slightest infraction dealt with our sin problem, and on our behalf paid the penalty for our breaking

God's law. He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree (1 Peter 2:24). When we put our faith in Jesus, believing that He died in our place, our sins are forgiven and the anger of God against us is pacified. Christians are at peace with God. We need not fear the wrath of God, because Jesus, by His death on the cross, has averted it from us. He is the propitiation for our sins (1 John 2:2; 4:10).

Jesus' lasting legacy to His people then - wrought by His atoning death - is peace with God: complete pardon for our sins; a righteous standing with God when once we stood guilty before Him, and reconciliation to God when once we were alienated from Him. Jesus alone can give sinners peace with God. for He is our peace (Ephesians 2:14):

Peace, perfect peace,
in this dark world of sin?
The blood of Jesus whispers peace within.

The Peace of God

The Lord Jesus is also able to impart the peace of God to our souls. Whilst 'peace with God' refers to our standing - a standing which cannot be changed - 'the peace of God' refers to our actual experience and state. According to Philippians 4:7, when we take our anxieties, cares and concerns to God in prayer, the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Also, according to Galatians 5:22, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace ...

Jesus imparts the peace of God to us by His Holy Spirit. He promised His disciples that He would send His Holy Spirit to them, and in due course His promise was fulfilled. The Holy Spirit - also known as the Comforter - may be considered as the personal presence of the Lord Jesus with us day by day, through all the ups and downs and trials and tumults of our earthly pilgrimage. It is the Holy Spirit of God who caused the Scriptures to be written for our comfort, and the Holy Spirit is able to make the truth of God's Word real to us, and so

mind - irrespective of and unaffected by the most stormy of earthly circumstances.

He brings the comforting truths of God's Word to our minds - truths such as: the absolute sovereignty of God - He is on the throne, and has all things under His control; the love of God - demonstrated supremely and superlatively in the sending of His Own Son to be our Saviour; God's good and gracious providence - He is working out all the details of our lives for our eternal blessing; the eternal security of the soul united to Jesus - nothing in the present or the future will be able to separate us or sever us from the love of God and the God of love.

Jesus, by His Holy Spirit and through His Word, is able to impart the peace of God to the human soul. Here is our anchor in the storm. Here is all sufficient grace and help:

Peace, perfect peace,
with sorrows surging round?
On Jesus' bosom nought
but calm is found.

Peace, perfect peace
our future all unknown
Jesus we know and He is on the throne.

Peace, then - both peace with God and the peace of God - is the lasting legacy of the Lord Jesus. And you too can be a beneficiary of this blessed legacy. The riches of Christ are just a prayer breath away to all who call upon Him. Remember Jesus' words:

Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid' (John 14:27)

Peace in a troubled world
Jesus gives today
Peace in a troubled world.
peace that will not pass away:
Shadows may deepen,
and hopes grow dim
Calm is the soul that is trusting Him.
Peace in a troubled world.
Jesus gives today.

Continued from the September/October edition of Scottish Protestant View

The Holocaust of St. Bartholomew

Part 2

Encouragements to Huguenots

In September 1561 a conference was called in Poissy, a small town to the west of Paris. Leaders of the Catholic and Protestant churches were called together to discuss their differences in the presence of Charles IX. L'Hopital addressed the Catholic party with words that were aimed to encourage them to view the Protestants as fellow Christians. He encouraged them in their need to reform based upon the Bible. Initially the Protestant pastors were not admitted to the meeting that was dominated by the Catholic bishops and dignitaries. However, on their admission Beza, their leader, deputising for Calvin, humbly addressed the king and affirmed that the Protestants were his loyal subjects. He then clearly and graciously proceeded to outline the differences between the Catholic and Protestant doctrines. He presented a copy of the confession of faith of the French Protestant Church to Charles IX. One central doctrine he touched upon was that Christ's body is not in the elements because he is in heaven. This brought loud murmurings and cries of 'blasphemy' from some of the perturbed Catholic party. Catherine de Medici and Charles IX sat motionless without uttering a word, failing to respond to these cries of anger.

The Cardinal of Lorraine gave a scholarly reply followed by a request from Beza that he be allowed to answer the Cardinal's points there and then. Further discussion was squashed but the conference prompted the enquiry as to whether or not Catholicism were a corruption of Christianity. The conference, often called the Colloquy of Poissy, left the Protestant cause standing higher in public esteem than previously and the gospel was proclaimed more openly in France with a flood of preachers coming into the country from Switzerland. Beza's courtly manner had impressed Catherine and he continued to preach in the Paris area for some time. Protestant preachers were even allowed to preach in the presence of Catherine and her servants. The Protestants gained courage and sadly there was some ill-discipline manifested in churches being

ransacked of crucifixes, images and relics. This did nothing to help the cause of Reformation and merely stirred up anger among the Catholic party.

Meanwhile whole towns became Protestant. Wylie explained how this came about referring to the words of Palissy, a famous potter of the time. 'Some poor but honest citizen would learn the way of peace in the Bible; he would tell it to his next neighbour; that neighbour would tell it in his turn; and in a little while a small company of simple but fervent disciples would be formed, who would meet regularly at the midnight hour to pray and converse together. Ere their enemies were aware, half the town had embraced "the religion"; and then, taking courage they would avow their faith, and hold their worship in public. Magistrates came under the influence of the Christians and innkeepers were prohibited from allowing gambling and loose living in their premises so that men would be encouraged to spend time with their families.'

L'Hopital, "recognising the growth of Evangelicalism, pressed for more toleration and though the two creeds could not be reconciled, his plea was that citizens could hold different beliefs and yet live side by side without murdering each other. On 17th January an assembly of leading politicians passed an edict known as 'the Edict of January' which allowed the Huguenots the right to exercise their religion, meeting together to hear sermons as long as they were not armed. They were not allowed to meet in public inside walled towns and sometimes whole towns would go into the surrounding fields for services. Clearly this was not logical. This arrangement pleased neither party. The Pope exhorted Catherine to rekindle the persecution, but Catherine refused saying that the Protestants were too strong for this.

Bloodshed Followed by Warfare

The Triumvirate was stirred into action. The priests in Paris were also stung into denouncing the state of affairs in which 'the religion' was being tolerated. Priests describing their sad stories of visions of

souls in purgatory who no longer had masses said for them drove Parisians to anger. Parisians pleaded with the Duke of Guise to intervene. On his way to Paris he and his troops passing through the small town of Vassy massacred between 60 and 80 Protestants as they worshipped, wounding many others. This massacre was responsible for the first religious war in France.

Protestants realised that the Triumvirate and the mob was determined to exterminate them and this realisation was confirmed by similar events occurring elsewhere in France as word got around. Unspeakable barbarities were committed on believers. In the chaos the Queen Mother and Charles IX fled from Paris but were forced to return by the powerful Triumvirate. The summer of 1562 was particularly noteworthy for violent cruel behaviour perpetrated against those believing the gospel. All Protestants were forced to flee from Paris and anyone left was clubbed to death by the Paris mob. On the 8th June Parliament passed a law empowering anyone who met a Huguenot to kill him on the spot. Wylie reports how peasants went about the countryside with scythes, pikes, cutlasses, knives and other cruel weapons as though they were hunting wild beasts. The Edict of January was dead and buried.

Alarmed by the massacre at Vassy the Protestants took up their arms in self-defence. The further atrocities that followed caused more to follow their path. Acts of war took place between cities and towns across the land. Coligny was cautious about joining in, but was forced to do so because of hearing of the tales of butchery on such a large scale. His wife pressed upon his conscience the need to fight to protect their fellow believers. The Protestants fought under a banner of 'Liberty of Worship'. The enemy was the Triumvirate that had seized power with the aid of the mob. The Prince of Conde presided over the Protestant cause and wrote letters to the Reformed churches begging for men and money. As help came in the Protestant army partook of the Lord's

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Supper and pledged fidelity to God and to each other in addition to obedience to Conde as leader. The Protestant army was composed largely of men from the south of France and the Catholic army from towns to the north of the Loire. The war sucked in soldiers from different countries on the two sides.

The Protestants took possession of Orleans and Rouen which had the effect of isolating supplies to Paris. Conde and Coligny then led a march on Paris. The Triumvirate set off towards Orleans. The two armies met but Catherine tried intervention with the suggestion that the armies did not fight but that the leaders be exiled, the Protestants abroad and the Triumvirate having an internal exile. She hoped that this would leave her in power. Although the Protestants declined these terms for obvious reasons, the delay shielded Paris from their army. The Triumvirate army then attacked Rouen, which eventually fell, though the King of Navarre fighting on the side of the Triumvirate was killed in the process.

The Fall of the Triumvirate and the 'Absolute' Power of Catherine

Further battles followed in which the Marshal St. Andre was killed and Montmorency badly wounded. He was eventually killed in a later battle. The Prince of Conde was taken prisoner and this left the Duke of Guise on one side and Coligny on the other. The Duke of Guise was in the ascendancy and proceeded to attack Orleans. The town was on the point of falling into his hands when an assassin, John Poltrot, attacked him. Just before he died he was filled with remorse for his cruel deeds and infidelity to his wife and pleaded with Catherine de Medici to make peace with the Huguenots. Had he survived another day, all the powers of government would have been his as he was the sole survivor of the Triumvirate and the Huguenots were at his mercy. His death left Catherine as the one in charge of the government of the country.

The Huguenots wanted the Edict of January restored, but Catherine persuaded Conde to accept much weaker terms before Coligny could arrive at the Louvre. These terms only allowed the Protestant princes freedom of worship in their own castles. Only certain towns would be allowed to have a place where Protestants could worship. Charles IX signed the peace treaty known as the Pacification of Amboise in 1563. Wylie commented that as the Protestant army was the only one with a leader, it could have forced better terms had it had the required courage.

Neither side was happy with the arrangements of this peace and another short war was fought consisting of one battle outside the walls of Paris. The short battle left the Huguenots as victors. Catherine now only had one rival that stood in the way of her absolute power and that was the Huguenots. She was later to use all her cunning to lure their leaders into a trap. The short peace that existed for the next two or three years was characterised by continued persecution of the Huguenots by militant Catholic mobs, and Catherine touring the country learning of its mood and then having dark secret conversations with the powerful Duke of Alva, representing the then mighty Spanish government. It was perceived that the intrigues plotted between them concerned the utter destruction of the Protestants in France. Her next step was to bring an army of 6000 Swiss mercenaries into the country. This was unacceptable to the Huguenots and the short religious war, consisting of a further short battle outside Paris, ensued. This left the Huguenots in the ascendancy and they were later reinforced by troops from Germany.

The French court judged that the time had come to make peace with the Huguenots, but the peace left them relying on the word of Catherine. In the years after 1563 this Italian lady, who originated from Florence, employed her fellow countryman Albert Gondi to educate her young son Charles IX in the ways which would best suit her purposes. Wylie describes how this man was 'cunning, corrupt, a liar, a great dissembler, swearing and denying God like a sergeant'. It was in this way that Charles learnt the craft and cruelty of his mother.

Conde, who was now restored as leader of the Protestant army, allowed his army to 'melt away', and it was resolved by the French court to seize both him and Coligny, sending one to prison for life and the other to the scaffold. The plot came to their attention and they fled to the heavily fortified Huguenot base at La Rochelle. Their flight was made possible by their being able to cross the River Loire just before a torrential rainstorm. The resulting swollen river made it impossible for the larger army of Catherine to follow. Catherine now felt strong enough to repeal the Edict of January and make profession of Protestantism a capital offence. All Protestant ministers were commanded to leave France within a fortnight. This led to yet another war, which proved disastrous in that the Protestants were heavily defeated in the battle of Jarnac, Conde being mortally wounded.

The Bravery of the Queen of Navarre and Coligny

At this point the dispirited Huguenots were rallied by the sudden appearance of the Queen of Navarre and Coligny. They again rose to fight, but in the battle of Montcountour Coligny's German troops mutinied and his army of 25,000 men was reduced to a pitiable force of only 8000. Coligny himself was badly wounded. As he was carried from the battlefield, a fellow believer, one of his counsellors also badly wounded spoke to him of the sweetness of God. This proved a tonic to him and despite his reversals in battle and despite the confiscation of his goods, the destruction of his castle, his being pronounced an outlaw and having been bereaved of his wife two years earlier, he was able to write to his children, 'For the present, it suffices that I admonish and conjure you, in the name of God, to persevere courageously in the study of virtue.' In addressing his despondent army he said, 'All is not lost; nothing is lost; we have lost a battle, it is true; but the burial trenches of Montcountour do not contain all the Huguenots; the Protestants of France have not been conquered.' A new army was raised up from the Protestants living in the south of France. This army was more numerous and disciplined than the recently defeated one and was strong enough to march on Paris and in 1570 Catherine was forced to sign a peace treaty at St. Germain-en-Laye. Protestants were given much more liberty of worship, had their confiscated properties restored and positions in government were promised.

The Duplicity of Catherine Leading to the St. Bartholomew Massacres

However, Catherine was not trusted and the Protestants returned to their stronghold of La Rochelle. It was at this point that Catherine realised that she could never defeat them in battle and decided that her ends could only be achieved by luring them into a false sense of security and returning to Paris. The plan was that they could then be butchered by the Paris mob as they relaxed in a place where they would be vulnerable to unbridled violence. Catherine made use of two devices to lull the Protestant leaders into lowering their guard and entering the trap. Firstly she offered to give her daughter, Margaret de Valois, to be wife of Henry, son of the Queen of Navarre. Secondly she promised to send a small army to fight against the Catholic Duke of Alva in the Low Countries. On the face of things her offers were highly attractive as they would unite the nation and give support to the struggling Protestants elsewhere in Europe. Although the marriage took place,

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the Queen of Navarre was not to witness it. Some thought that she was poisoned, but the evidence for this was lacking. However, her body was treated with little respect. Meanwhile the king pretended to have very warm affections for the Protestant leaders. Many Catholics became alarmed because of his studied friendship with their enemies.

The military expedition to the Low Countries was a failure because the Duke of Alva was warned of its intention and the expeditionary force was cut to pieces. The first Protestant leader to be attacked was Coligny. He was shot, but not fatally. It was suggested that the plot was to make the Protestants think that the Guise family had been responsible. Their retaliation would remove the Guises, but would bring their supporters, the Parisian mob, to vent their fury on the Protestants in turn. Charles IX pretended to take care of the Protestants, and closed the city gates so that the attempted assassin of Coligny could not escape and then encouraged the Protestants to group together for their mutual protection by his own troops. In reality these moves trapped the Protestants into one part of the city and the troops introduced by Charles would be employed by him to start the carnage. On St. Bartholomew's night, upon a given signal, Coligny was the first of several thousand to be murdered. The king himself joined in the carnage by shooting Protestant fugitives as they tried to escape by jumping into the River Seine and swimming to safety.

Wylie pointed out that Pope Pius V supported the plot. This Pope died just before the plot was actually carried out. The massacre was not limited to Paris alone. Other mobs in the provincial centres

were encouraged to join in having been persuaded that it was the Protestants who had been planning treachery.

These dramatic years in the history of French Protestantism were years in which politicians rather than preachers were apparently central. Some of the politicians supporting the Reformation were full of duplicity and naivety. There was always the temptation to be swayed by soft appealing, to be enticed by empty promises of power or simply to be intimidated by raw power. The essentially spiritual nature of the Reformation was opposed by extreme craft, cruelty and wickedness. No-one can read the history of this period without being convicted of the evil that motivated the greedy and power-hungry people occupying high positions, such as Catherine, the Triumvirate, the Duke of Alva and Pope Pius V. Being highly esteemed by men and occupying high office in a religious organisation, does not guarantee a trustworthy character. The lesson to be learnt is that it is vain to place trust in princes.

The Outcome of the Treachery

The news of the St. Bartholomew massacres quickly spread throughout Europe. It was received with great sadness in countries such as England where Protestantism had taken root, but there was great joy in Rome and Spain. One aim of the plotters of the massacre was that of 'decapitation', the removal of the leaders of the Huguenots. The Catholic party rejoiced in the apparent success of this. Their jubilation seemed justified, but would Evangelicalism die in France because the great military genius of Coligny had been destroyed? Thousands of Protestants had been killed including so many who could be described as being the

flower of the movement. Was there a deeper principle embedded among the hundreds of thousands remaining? The unbridled joy of Catherine and her son Charles was to be shortlived and the latter was to be filled with remorse and misery for his dreadful crime.

The Valois dynasty ended seventeen years after the gruesome St. Bartholomew atrocity. The son of Jeanne d'Albret then ascended the throne as the first Bourbon monarch. Was he more worthy of the trust of the hard-pressed Huguenots? Events were to show that the reign of this valiant soldier king, brought up to embrace 'Protestantism' was to be a watershed in the religious and political history of France. Subsequent years were to witness the most gifted families of France fleeing on a large scale to enrich other nations. France unlike England did not benefit from the heritage of a great Puritan movement, or experience the 18th century Great Awakening, or second great evangelical revival resulting in the missionary movement of the early 19th century. France did not enjoy a third great revival to match that of 1859. Even today when Western Europe is dominated by post-modern secularism there are probably fifty times more Reformed churches in England than in France. There are no easy answers by which we can unravel the mystery as to why so much suffering of the saints in France led to such a disappointing outcome. Some clues are to be found embedded in the events following the treachery of Catherine and those supporting and encouraging her heartless butchery.

The source of information for this article is J A Wylie, The History of Protestantism, Vol. 2, Cassell, Fetter, Galpin & Co, pages 532 - 606.

CHILDREN'S CORNER

Hello Boys and girls,

From my bedroom window I can see the tree that is growing in my front garden. At this time of year the leaves are quite red and when the sun shines on it, as it has been the past week, it looks as if it is on fire.

The other day as I looked at it I was reminded of the burning bush that Moses had seen. Do you remember the story? Although the bush was on fire none of it was burning away. It was a very special bush. It was a supernatural bush. Moses was told that he had to take off his shoes because the ground all around the bush was holy ground and there at that place God spoke to Moses.

Now some Christians believe that supernatural things don't happen today but if our God is still a supernatural God would He hold supernatural things back from us? When a person becomes a Christian that is a supernatural thing, for he or she becomes born again. He is completely changed.

I myself was supernaturally healed many years ago. I am praying that we will see more supernatural healings in our church, not a false supernatural, but something that comes from God and will make us praise and bring glory to God.

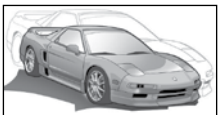
With love from Mrs. Glass

WOMEN'S VIEW

I recently was asked the question did I have a psychological need for certainty and purpose in my life because I was so sure that what I believed about the Bible and God was true.



I believe that everyone has a need in their life for God. St. Augustine said that our souls are restless until they find their rest in Thee. We are all made in the image of God, but not everyone believes this and although we are all on a journey of self discovery most will find a god at their own level. That's why teenagers and young people will have gods among the pop groups and football clubs etc.. Older people will have gods of materialism – their home, their car, their foreign holidays. Some even make a god of their family and seeing them do well in the world, but at the end of the day these false gods topple to the ground and those who trust in them are left with a big hole in their life and sadly, many go on to commit suicide.



I am glad that I do feel certain about what I believe, not because of any feelings that come from me, for my feelings like those of everyone else, go up and down, but because I believe the Bible is the Word of God and because of that I can trust what it says.



For example the Bible tells me that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. I trust in that because I believe God.

I also believe the Word of God when it says in Pro 16:25
There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

May God Bless you all.

M.Glass

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

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