



conneXions

...growing God's family...

Issue 50

Timor Leste Ministry

| Roger Bannister

From November 28th to December 7th 2009 Elder Roger Bannister travelled to East Timor (Timor Leste) with David Burke (pastor, Orchard Rd Presbyterian Church, Singapore) and Rob Duncanson (pastor, Darwin PC) for ministry with the Igreja Evangelica Presbyteriana Timor Leste (IEPTL) that is the Evangelical Presbyterian

Church of East Timor). During the visit a church conference adopted an interim constitution for the IEPTL establishing it as a Presbyterian church committed to the Westminster Confession of Faith.

Please pray for the developing partnership with the IEPTL.

Right: the church in Kiakasa



Above left: David Burke teaching at the IEPTL conference, Marcos translating.

Above right: Carlos has been heading up the translation work.

Above: Marcos Nicoli Napoli Filho, his wife Priscila and daughter Marianne, missionaries from the Presbyterian Church of Brazil.

Right: Arlindo, moderator of the IEPTL synod.



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THIS MONTH'S HIGHLIGHTS

- 10.00am Sunday 7th KRA (Sunday School) resumes
- Monday 9th 7:30pm Board of Management
- Sunday 8th 10.00am Lord's Supper
- Monday 23rd 7.30pm Elders' Meeting (Session)



From the Pastor's Desk

I can't think of anything I want to share more with you than these points, which are taken from a booklet called 'From Pride To Humility' by Stuart Scott.

"30 biblical indicators as to whether pride is resident in our hearts"

1. Complaining against or passing judgment on God (Num. 14:1-4, 9, 11; Rom. 9:20)
2. A lack of gratitude (2 Chr.32:25)
3. Anger (Prov.28:25; Matt. 20:1-16)
4. Seeing yourself as better than others (Luke 7:36-50)
5. Having an inflated view of your importance, gifts and abilities (Acts 12:21-23)
6. Being focused on the lack of your gifts and abilities (1 Cor. 12:14-25)
7. Perfectionism (Matt. 23:24-28)
8. Talking too much (Prov. 10:19)
9. Talking too much about yourself (Prov. 27:2; Gal. 6:3)
10. Seeking independence or control (1 Cor. 1:10-13; Eph. 5:21)
11. Being consumed with what others think (Gal. 1:10)
12. Being devastated or angered by criticism (Prov.13:1)
13. Being unteachable (Prov.19:20; John 9:13-34)
14. Being sarcastic, hurtful, degrading, talking down to them (Prov.12:18, 24)
15. A lack of service (Gal. 5:13, Eph. 2:10)
16. A lack of compassion (Matt. 5:7, 18:23-35)
17. Being defensive or blame-shifting

(Genesis 3:12-13; Prov.12:1)

18. A lack of admitting when you are wrong (Prov.10:17)
 19. A lack of asking forgiveness (Matt. 5:23-24)
 20. A lack of biblical prayer (Luke 18:10-14)
 21. Resisting authority or being disrespectful (1 Peter 2:13-17)
 22. Voicing preferences or opinions when not asked (Phil.2:1-4)
 23. Minimizing your own sin and shortcomings (Matt.7:3-5)
 24. Maximizing others' sin and shortcomings (Matt. 7:3-5; Luke 18:9-14)
 25. Being impatient or irritable with others (Eph. 4:31-32)
 26. Being jealous or envious (1 Cor.13:4)
 27. Using others (Matt. 7:12; Phil.2:3-4)
 28. Being deceitful by covering up sins, faults, and mistakes (Prov.11:3; 28:13)
 29. Using attention-getting tactics (1 Peter 3:3,4)
 30. Not having close relationships (Prov.18:1-2; Heb. 10:24-25)
- "24 manifestations of what Christ exalting humility should produce in your life".**
1. Recognizing and trusting God's character (Psalm 119:66)
 2. Seeing yourself as having no right to question or judge an Almighty and Perfect God (Psalm 145:17; Rom. 9:19-23)
 3. Focusing on Christ (Phil. 1:21; Heb.12:1-2)
 4. Biblical praying and a great deal of it (1 Thess. 5:17; 1 Tim.2:1-2)
 5. Being overwhelmed with God's undeserved grace and goodness (Psalm

116:12-19)

6. Thankfulness and gratitude in general towards others (1 Thess. 5:18)
7. Being gentle and patient (Col. 3:12-14)
8. Seeing yourself as no better than others (Rom. 12:16; Eph. 3:8)
9. Having an accurate view of your gifts and abilities (Rom. 12:3)
10. Being a good listener (James 1:19; Phil. 2:3-4)
11. Talking about others only if it is good or for their good (Proverbs 11:13)
12. Being gladly submissive and obedient to those in authority (Rom. 12:1-2, 13:1-2)
13. Preferring others over yourself (Rom. 12:10)
14. Being thankful for criticism or reproof (Prov. 9:8, 27:5-6)
15. Having a teachable spirit (Prov. 9:9)
16. Seeking always to build up others (Eph. 4:29)
17. Serving (Gal. 5:13)
18. A quickness in admitting when you are wrong (Prov. 29:23)
19. A quickness in granting and asking for forgiveness (Col. 3:12-14)
20. Repenting of sin as a way of life (Col.3:1-14; 1 Tim. 4:7-9)
21. Minimizing others' sins or shortcomings in comparison to one's own (Matt. 7:3-4)
22. Being genuinely glad for others (Rom. 12:15)
23. Being honest and open about who you are and the areas in which you need growth (Phil. 3:12-14; Gal.6:2)
24. Possessing close relationships (Acts 20:31-38)

From Church Matters:
<http://blog.9marks.org/>

Our Mission Statement

— why do we exist? —

**Glorifying God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit
by growing His family through
Biblical teaching, prayer and loving relationships
locally, nationally, and internationally.**

Our Vision Statement

— where are we heading? —

**As a Gospel driven church
we aspire to establish
15 self-replicating growth groups
across the church
by 2012.**

2010 Ladies Weekender

Friday 26th - 28th March

at Karnkendi, Nelson

Speaker: Shirley Benn

(former missionary and Queensland State Director of OMF)

Theme: Jesus Christ Glorified

Full-time cost (inc food and accommodation) -\$60
Part timers welcome. Bus available for Saturday visitors

Financial Update for November

Income:	\$15,086.27
Includes:	
Offerings:	\$11,701.98
weekly \$2,340.39(budget -\$2,115.00)	
Donations:	\$679.00
Interest:	\$34.75
Other income	\$175.91
Transfers in	\$2,494.63
Expenditure	\$17,499.56
Includes:	
Pastors' remuneration & superannuation	\$7,575.68
Utilities	\$111.73
Missions	\$3,978.72
Rates & taxes	\$745.02
Repairs & maintenance	\$505.64
Social event	\$339.14
Pitt Bequest expenses	nil
Deficit for month:	-\$2,413.29
Year to Date Summary:	
Budgetted Deficit	-\$38,098.50
Operating Deficit:	-\$10,854.99
Investment Interest:	\$29,903.07
Net Surplus to date	\$19,048.08

Christmas Giving



Gift Shop - \$1,500.00
Offering - \$362.50



Christmas Mercy Appeal -\$1,337.40

Check out our website

www.mgpc.org.au

Regular updates are posted including the Sunday notes and Connexions.

Gary Ware's blog:

mgpcpastor.wordpress.com

Presbyterian Church of SA website:

www.pcsa.org.au



Before the Throne of God Above

James Davidson;
Noel Cusack;
Pearl Hellyer, Hannah Thompson,

Frank Mitchell, Fred Nash, Margaret Ware, Ina Earl; Mary Jeffrey; Brian & Betty Clayfield; Albert & Perle Harvey, Gladys Jones, Elaine Harfull, Jayne Pritchard, Vi Fraser, Blake Vause, Emmie Thompson, Jonathan Murcott, Ned & Joan Morrison, Don Cooper. Rod Wilmot and Heather Touzel.

Continue to uphold our church mission partners:

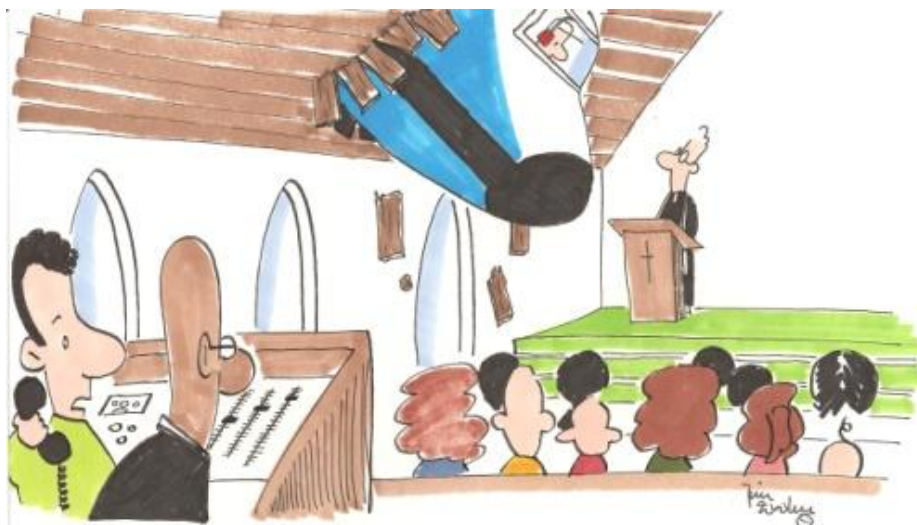
- Matthew, serving in west Asia..
- Cameron & Carmel Mackenzie, Flynn Patrol (SA), Presbyterian Inland Mission.

- School Christian Pastoral Support Workers: especially Matt Eudy (Yahl Primary School).

- Mission Partners/APWM national office: Bill & Jenny Lutton.

Also intercede for:

- Rory McEwen MLA (Member for Mount Gambier); Patrick Secker MHR (Member for Barker).
- Premier Mike Rann and the State Government, Leader of the Opposition Isabel Redman.
- Converge International chaplains: Heather Baker, John Deer and Ian Touzel.
- Liberty International Christian Centre (Pastor Rudy & Wendy Furlong).



"It's the airport....they've asked us to turn our transmitter down. I didn't think we had THAT much control!"



Church Camp

February 19-22

at Karnkendi, Nelson

Speaker: David Schulz

Pastor,

Hamilton Presbyterian Church (Vic.).

Theme: The Spirit's fullness in worship, family and work

Bookings by Sunday 14th February to the Registrar:

Steven Fox (T: 8723 6393; M: 0438 249 629)

CHURCH CALENDAR - February 2010

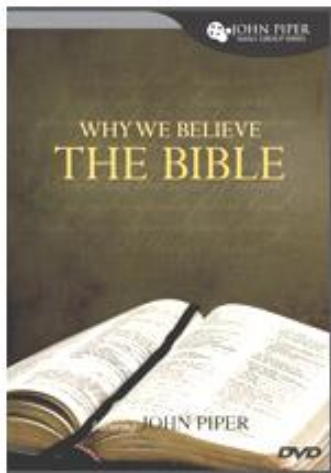
	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 Join a growth group this year - speak to a pastor or elder for more information		2 9am Womens Growth Group	3 10am Coffee & Craft	4 1pm PWA	5 10.30am Bible Study	6 7pm Youth Group
	7 KRA (Sunday School) resumes NE, AL: Ian Touzel	8 7.30pm Board of management	9 9am Womens Growth Group 1.30pm Care & Concern	10 10am Coffee & Craft	11	12 10.30am Bible Study	13 7pm Youth Group
	14 10am Lord's Supper	15	16 9am Womens Growth Group	17 10am Coffee & Craft 7.30pm Ladies Fellowship	18	19 10.30am Bible Study	20
	21 NE: David Schultz AL: Alan Fox	22	23 9am Womens Growth Group 1.30pm Pleasant Afternoon	24 10am Coffee & Craft	25	26 10.30am Bible Study	27
28	Church Camp	7.30pm Session					7pm Youth Group

4pm →
Church Camp.....

Recommended DVD Bible Study

Why We Believe the Bible | John Piper

Why We Believe the Bible is intended for a twelve week course of study, in manageable but thought-demanding portions, designed to spark careful reflection throughout the week, and not just during the times of formal study. Included in the package are two DVDs with ten half-hour lectures and a study guide (optional purchase), providing the leader with all the resources necessary to guide the group through twelve sessions (the video lectures plus an introductory and concluding session), and likewise providing the whole group with material conducive to thoughtful interaction – places to take notes on the lectures, poignant questions to spark further reflection for each day of the week, additional scriptures and quotations to mull over, etc. The whole approach is carefully and effectively designed to elicit real thought and interaction, and not just a passive reception of information.



The DVD lectures begin by unpacking the vast importance of knowing what the Bible is and why it is true, and go on to a sound, biblical defense for the canonicity of the sixty-six books in the Protestant canon – a segment priceless for anyone dealing with either Roman Catholic/Orthodox Christians, who believe in a different Hebrew canon, or modern atheist skeptics who scoff at the New Testament canon. Following is a brief but helpful defense of the careful preservation of the original Word of God in the multiplicity of preserved manuscript copies, and a stirring walk through Jesus' amazing attitude toward and teaching on the Old Testament scriptures.

But perhaps the most helpful portion of all is the second half of the series of lectures,

in which Piper keys off the Westminster Confession, and borrowing heavily from Calvin's *Institutes* defends the utter supremacy, inerrancy and infallibility of the Scriptures by reason of their majesty, purity, harmony in all their parts, and the purpose of the whole to give glory to God alone and reveal to man his only hope for eternal salvation. Leaning on the first chapter of Romans, Piper demonstrates how perfectly these doctrines are suited to commend themselves to what men may know of God from natural revelation; but in the final analysis, he demonstrates from the Scriptures themselves that only the Holy Spirit may bear certain testimony to their utterly divine and reliable character in the hearts of men. They are, in Calvin's phrase, finally "self-authenticating".

Throughout the DVDs, Piper carries on the teaching with lucidity and holy zeal. The most difficult topics are clearly explained and passionately proclaimed, and the material throughout is deeply devotional and intensely practical. This will be a rich and rewarding course of study for believers everywhere, from the youngest and most immature to the well-seasoned.

Why We Believe the Bible is...a tool I would eagerly recommend for small groups and any other Christians desirous of a more stable foundation or a more God-honoring approach to interacting with cynics and skeptics on the vital topic of the Word of God

Purchase from: www.desiringgod.org for US\$12.99 plus p+p.

— Review by Nathan Pitchford at <http://www.reformedbooks.net/>

Gossip + Flattery

Gossip involves saying behind a person's back what you would never say to his or her face. Flattery means saying to a person's face what you would never say behind his or her back.

— R. Kent Hughes, *Disciplines of a Godly Man*, page 139.

Church Directory

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ConneXions Editor:

Ian Touzel
Editorial deadline: 3rd Sunday of the preceding month.

This Church seeks to comply with the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000 at all times. A copy of the Church's Privacy Policy is available on request. If you do not wish to consent to being identified in this or any other Church publication please advise the church office accordingly.

Sunday Services

Mount Gambier, Allison St.
10am—including Sunday School and crèche during school term.
5:30pm—Evening worship
1st and 3rd Sundays:
9:30am (EST)—Nelson
11am —Allendale
5th Sunday
10am—Family Service and a 'bring & share' lunch at Mount Gambier



Mission News local | national | international

Yemen: Christians Vulnerable in a Failing State

Yemen has been a unified state only since 1990. Before that, North Yemen (on the Red Sea) was 60 percent Shi'ite and ruled by a conservative Shi'ite Imamate, while South Yemen (on the Gulf of Aden) was 99 percent Sunni and Communist. In 1962, Ali Abdallah Saleh, a northern socialist and nominal Sunni, seized power in North Yemen in a military coup. He was elected president of North Yemen in 1978 and retains power as president of the unitary Republic of Yemen, which today is on the verge of collapse. The Shi'ites, a 30 percent minority in the unitary state, are marginalised by the Sunnis, while the oil-rich south is marginalised by the ruling north. The Shi'ites want to restore the Imamate, while the south wants to secede.



Since at least 2005, President Saleh has been using al Qaeda jihadists (fundamentalist Sunnis) in his fight against the al Houthi rebels (Shi'ites) in the north and more secular (formerly Soviet-backed Communist) secessionists in the south. The conflict also has regional dimensions: Saudi Arabia is fighting advancing Iran-backed al Houthi Shi'ite rebels, while Somalis have joined the Sunnis and Lebanese Hezbollah have joined the Shi'ites.

Underneath this crumbling structure are vulnerable Jewish and Christian minorities amidst a population of 24 million. In 1949-50 Israel rescued 45,000 of Yemen's Jews from genocide through Operation Magic Carpet. A further 32,000 Jews have left Yemen since then and now less than 400 remain. As sectarian conflict escalated in the north in January 2007, the Shi'ite rebels forced the 45 remaining Jews in al Haid, Sa'ada, from their homes under threat of death. Most Christians in Yemen (est. 9000 in Operation World 2000) are expatriate workers or Ethiopian refugees. They are a source of light and hope for Yemen, one of the world's poorest and least evangelised nations. Participate! Intercede for the Church in Yemen

PLEASE PRAY SPECIFICALLY THAT, BY HIS WORD AND HOLY SPIRIT, GOD -

- will draw all Christians in Yemen into prayer and supply all their needs, increasing their faith and courage; may their lives witness to the faithfulness and supremacy of Jesus Christ.
- will awaken many Muslims in Yemen (local Arabs and foreign jihadists) to the truth that it is Jesus Christ who is the light of God.
- For the 'true light, which enlightens' has come into the world. And to all who receive him, who believe in his name, he gives the right to become children of God (See John 1:9-13).

— World Evangelical Alliance
Religious Liberty Prayer Bulletin 37
 6 January 2010

Pray for China

Praise God for the:

- Sacrificial service and commitment of multitudes of Chinese and non-Chinese Christians since the 6th century and climaxing in the 20th century, who lived, prayed and died to plant the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ among the Chinese people.

- Unparalleled growth in the numerical size of the Christian Church in China (from 1 million Protestant Christians in 1949 to as many as 50 million in 2009) and worldwide. The growth of the Church in China continues to accelerate!



Reformation Translation Fellowship.

Pray to God for:

- Those arrested and in prison because of their faith.
- The protection and strengthening of those who lead churches in China.
- The development of sound theological training for those who will lead Churches in China, making use of the reformed theological literature prepared by Reformation Translation Fellowship.
- The spiritual growth and maturity of Chinese believers and the strength to resist the "Christian" cults.
- The translators - that they will be able to do their work accurately and effectively so that the manuscripts they produce will faithfully convey the precious truths of the Christian faith.
- A change of attitude on the part of the Chinese government towards Christians.
- The new title *The Planting and Development of Missionary Churches* by John L Nevius that is being sponsored by Reformation Translation Fellowship Australia and for the translator, Lorna Chao.
- The Chinese House Churches that are being pressured to register with government authorities – that they would be protected from the hands of persecutors as pastors are imprisoned, materials are confiscated and meetings are closed.

— Reformation Translation Fellowship
www.rtfau.com.au

How to Benefit from Reading the Bible

| James MacDonald

I want us to think about how to benefit from the Bible by starting with my favorite verse from God's Word, Jeremiah 15:16 which says, "Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart." What food is to our bodies, Scripture is to our souls. Here are five things you need to do if you want to eat God's Word and feed your soul.

Read It

If you pick it up and size it up but don't read it, well, what a waste, right? So open it, and begin to read. You should say, "Dude, it has hundreds of pages. Where should I start?" I hear that so often that I decided to check the Bibles I own. They average around 1,400 pages. So think of the Bible as two big books or four to five regular-sized books. Studies indicate that the Bible takes about 70 hours to read out loud. Most people read a little faster than that, but the Bible is not a book you want to read quickly anyway. It's sort of like your favorite dessert—take a bite or two and put the spoon down—a good way to make sure you are comprehending the power of what you are reading. If you read it for 12 minutes per day, or one and a half hours per week, you would have no problem finishing the Bible in a year, and you'd be so incredibly blessed you would want to start all over again the next year. Reading the Bible is really not as intimidating as most people make it. As for *where* to start, I have always recommended that people begin in the gospel of John, which is the fourth book in the New Testament, the fourth eyewitness account of the life of Jesus. As you read slowly through this gospel, stop to underline the word believe every time you see it and ask yourself: Believe what? Or believe whom? Then go to 1, 2, and 3 John. Then look at another gospel. That'll keep you busy for a while. Have a brief word of prayer before you begin to read. Ask

the Lord to open your mind and heart to His truth and then believe that He will. Also, don't lie down when you read the Bible. It's not a magazine or a novel. Remember, it's God's Word, and if you give it the respect it deserves, it will "rock your world" in an incredible way. If you use serious posture, you'll get serious results. **Read it.** I suggest taking at least 15 minutes to go through two or three chapters at a time.

Here's a second thing. Don't *just* read it:

Question It

Because you're just starting out, I'll suggest some questions, and over time you can develop your own.

Also, don't lie down when you read the Bible. It's not a magazine or a novel. Remember, it's God's Word, and if you give it the respect it deserves, it will "rock your world" in an incredible way. If you use serious posture, you'll get serious results.

1. **"What portion of my reading stands out to me?"** You'll read two or three chapters, and you'll feel drawn to a certain part. Go back to that part and ask the following questions.
2. **"Why does this part have my attention?"** What is it about this that has caught my attention? To help you answer that question, use the remaining questions.
3. **"Is there an example for me to follow?"** I can't tell you how many times God's Word has impacted my life just from saying these simple words: "Is there an example for me to follow?" All of a sudden it's like—BOOM! It jumps right off the page: "James, you should be more like that!" I love it when God's Word speaks to

me in this way and calls me to be more of what the Lord requires.

4. **"Is there an error for me to avoid?"** It's very comforting to know that if I have unknowingly stepped in a wrong direction or made an unwise decision, God's Word can reveal that to me. It's easy to see the mistakes others make, but much harder to see our own mistakes. This is where the Word of God becomes that "mirror" we talked about earlier. Is there an error for me to avoid?

5. **"Is there a duty for me to perform?"** Is there an action that God's Word is calling me to take? Is there some matter of importance that I am neglecting in my home or office or in my personal life? If so, I want to know what it is so I can work on it. God's Word will often reveal a duty we need to perform.

6. **"Is there any promise for me to claim?"** So often God's Word brings strength and encouragement. As you study the Bible, you will hear the Lord committing Himself to certain things or to act in certain ways. As you come to those promises, you might just acknowledge, "Yes, God! You are like this, and You've promised to be this way for all my life, and I trust You." Your heart will be thrilled as you learn and review the promises of God.

7. **"Is there a sin for me to confess?"** This I suppose is obvious in some respects. You won't read the Bible long until you come across passages that reveal to you the "error of your ways." But one of the promises that helps with that is 1 John 1:9, which says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Now as you begin to question God's Word, you're ready to do this third thing.

Continued on page 8

Continued from page 7... **How to Benefit from Reading the Bible**

Plan It

This is absolutely essential if you are going to benefit from the Bible as much as you could for the rest of your life. **Make a plan of action** regarding how you will implement what you are learning. Have a journal open beside your Bible and write some notes. Write some thoughts in the margin of your Bible. When the Word convicts you about anger or deceit or selfishness, have a strategy to deal with those sins. Make your plan specific and measurable. The results you begin to see will amaze you. Read it. Question it. Plan it.

Pray It

So often people are unsure of what to say in personal prayer. When you are praying back the truths of God's own Word, you can be confident you are praying as God would have you do. You can also be confident that God will respond to what you are asking if the direction truly comes from His Word. That's what it means to pray according to God's will. How I wish I had read a book this specific and practical 20 years ago. It would have helped me so much. Instead, I

banged around for a long time before I figured all this stuff out. Anyway, at least you can learn from my mistakes. There is an incredible power when you pray God's Word back to Him. When you open the passage and say, "God, You're this way, and you've promised to always be this way." Wow! So read it. Question it. Plan it. Pray it.

Share It

When you've learned something from God's Word, **you have to share it** with somebody else. Take time to relay something about your study to your spouse or your roommate or to a friend at school. Maybe you could share with a co-worker or someone at your church. Hebrews 10:24 says that we are supposed to "consider how to stir up one another to love and good works." That is what happens when you share what you are getting out of God's Word. People who hear me preach and see my enthusiasm think, *Man, that guy really loves to preach.* But I don't. I hardly care about preaching at all—at least not as an end in itself. What fires me up is hearing about the difference that God's Word makes in people's lives. If I got up each Sunday and

preached knowing nobody would apply it, I wouldn't even show. That's the truth. The reason we share God's Word is not for ourselves; it's for others. Then, as a by-product, we get the incredible blessing of seeing Almighty God use it.

The Scripture says in Isaiah 40:8, "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever." Someday when your television and your car and your house are on the garbage heap, the truth in this Book will still be alive. Now let's invest ourselves in the one thing that lasts. I want to say it again: God wrote a Book. May God forgive us for not making better use of it in our lives.



James MacDonald is founding Pastor of Harvest Bible Chapel in Chicago, IL, USA. He holds a D.Min. from Phoenix Seminary and has written 10 books. He and his wife Kathy have three children. Read his blog at: <http://blog.harvestbiblefellowship.org>

Dwell where the cries of Calvary can be heard

| Charles Spurgeon

The best preaching is, 'We preach Christ crucified.'

The best living is, 'We are crucified with Christ.'

The best man is a crucified man.

The best style is a crucified style: may we drop into it!

The more we live beholding our Lord's unutterable griefs, and understanding how he has fully put away our sin, the more holiness shall we produce. The more we dwell where the cries of Calvary can be heard, where we can view heaven, and earth, and hell, all moved by his wondrous passion—the more noble will our lives become.

Nothing puts life into men like a dying Savior. Get you close to Christ, and carry the remembrance of him about you from day to day, and you will do right royal deeds. Come, let us slay sin, for Christ was slain. Come, let us bury all our pride, for Christ was buried. Come, let us rise to newness of life, for Christ has risen. Let us be united with our crucified Lord in his one great object — let us live and die with him, and then every action of our lives will be very beautiful.



From the sermon *To the Lovers of Jesus* (#1834) delivered by Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892) at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, UK, on 2nd November 1884.