



conneXions

...growing God's family...

Issue 47

Tears and the Table

| Kevin DeYoung

A few days ago I talked about the Heidelberg Catechism's assessment of the Mass. Not surprisingly, Heidelberg's words (and mine!) generated a lot of heat...and hopefully some light. But there's a lot more Heidelberg has to say about the Lord's Supper. For example, Question 75 asks, "How does the Lord's Supper remind you and assure you that you share in Christ's one sacrifice on the cross and in all his gifts?" Here's the answer:

In this way: Christ has commanded me and all believers to eat this broken bread and to drink this cup. With this command he gave this promise: First, as surely as I see with my eyes the



bread of the Lord broken for me and the cup given to me, so surely his body was offered and broken for me and his blood poured out for me on the cross. Second, as surely as I receive from the hand of the one who serves, and taste with my mouth the bread and cup of the Lord, given me as sure signs of Christ's body and blood, so surely he nourishes and refreshes my soul for eternal life with his crucified body and poured-out blood.

I am not a prolific crier. I can only think of three or four times I've gotten visibly choked up in front of my congregation. But one of those times came while read-

ing this Lord's Day in preparation for communion. After the service, I had others tell me they had teared up too. The truth here is that precious. It should stir our affections. I love good music in church and rejoice to see God's people emotionally engaged in worship. But if our emotion is to be truth driven and not just melody driven, we ought to have profound experiences with responsive readings, creeds, and confessions too. Every time we read the Nicene Creed I want to raise my hands in the air (and sometime do). And whenever I read through this Lord's Day before communion it makes me want to cry with joy.

What good news God proclaims to us at the Table! I fear that in most churches the Lord's Supper is either celebrated so infrequently as to be forgotten or celebrated with such thoughtless monotony that churchgoers endure it rather than enjoy it. But the Lord's Supper is meant to nourish and strengthen our weak faith. Have you ever come to church feeling dirty and rotten? Have you ever sat through an entire sermon thinking about how you blew it with your wife that morning or how prayerless you've been for the

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THIS MONTH'S HIGHLIGHTS

- Thursday 1st 1.30pm PWA Musical Afternoon
- Monday 5th 7:30pm Board of Management
- Sunday 13th 10.00am Lord's Supper
- Wednesday 14th 1.30pm Fashion Parade
- Sunday 18th 10.00pm Preacher: Rod Duncanson and information meeting on East Timor
- Monday 26th 7.30pm Elders' Meeting (Session)

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.



From the Pastor's Desk

Worship at mgpc

It is helpful to remember that when we gather Sunday by Sunday for worship that our Services are carefully structured and ordered.

This is not done out of an unthinking adherence to tradition, but through careful consideration of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching of the Bible. We gather in obedience to the Scriptures, but we also recall the covenantal nature of our relationship with God. He calls and we respond.

Because we gather at God's initiative, when we assemble for corporate worship we seek to include those actions which God in His Word has told us to do. Where the Word gives us freedom about how to do things we use that freedom wisely and constructively.

For instance, the Bible is silent about whether we read from book or screen. (The Bible writers knew of neither.) The Bible is silent about organ, piano, guitar or drums; pulpits or lecterns; pews or chairs; who takes up the offering. (Or whether it is collected as a formal part of the Service.)

God is the initiator and we are the respondents. This pattern is repeated throughout our worship.

past month? Have you ever got to the end of a church service only to think, "I'm so distracted. I was worried about how I look. I can't even sit through church right"? Have you ever wondered if God can really love you? If so, you need this gospel table.

The Lord knows our faith is weak. That's why he's given us sacraments to see, taste, and touch. As surely as you can see the bread and cup, so surely does God love you through Christ. As surely as you chew the food and drain the drink, so surely has Christ died for you. Here at the Table the faith becomes sight. The simple bread and cup give assurance that Christ came for you, Christ died for you, Christ is

God's presence is recognized as we hear the call to worship. We respond in praise. We are also led by what can be called a 'Gospel Logic', which is to say that we are only able to gather acceptably before God because of the merit of the Lord Jesus.

Acknowledging the purity of His presence, we make a confession of sin in our prayers. We read from the Bible verses which grant us explicit assurance that we are forgiven and accepted because of Christ's atoning work. Each of our services affirms the Gospel, even as it commences.

Because we are saved as His people, we have opportunity to nurture and encourage one another as His household, His family. We do this in the common affirmation of a creed and in our songs. On occasion baptisms remind us of our being united with Christ by grace through faith.

We seek to nurture the covenant people, children and adults, not with 'special times' set apart for them, but with expressions that are appropriate for differing levels of maturity. A significant prayer is offered which gives thanks and brings our needs before God's throne of grace.

Each of our songs has been chosen with careful thought about its content. We seek to use songs with tunes that can be learnt and sung with enthusiasm, but

coming again for you.

Of course, this eating and drinking must be undertaken in faith. The elements themselves do not save us. But when we eat and drink them in faith we can be assured that we receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life. More than that, we get a picture of our union with Christ. As we eat his flesh and drink his blood, we literally have communion with him, not by dragging Christ down from heaven, but by experiencing his presence through his Spirit.

So shame on parishioners for coming to the Lord's Supper with nothing but drudgery and low expectations. And

not so simple as to become trite and distracting. Not every song will be everyone's favourite, but every song is a fit praise for God.

Each week our songs are rehearsed before the service, anyone who wants to grow in their familiarity with our praise would be welcome. To assist us in tunefulness and tempo our singing is led by people who lead singing under the authority of the elder who is leading the Service.

Remembering week by week God's nature, His triune presence amongst us and His saving work, we turn to His Word.

Significant portions of it are read, that we may honor it in its wholeness and not pick and choose through various small sections.

The Bible is preached. One of the passages that is read is carefully explained, so that people may understand the sense of it, and have some idea of how to respond with their heart, soul, mind and strength.

We then respond to God's grace in prayer, by giving our offerings and by the observance of the Lord's Table before going on our way.

We do this week by week, because God calls us to do, He knows our needs and provides the merciful blessing of corporate worship to help us grow in our appreciation of the Gospel and in our knowledge of His Word.

shame on pastors for not instructing their people in the gospel joy available to us in communion. If you shed a tear at the Table, let it not be out of boredom but out of gratitude and sheer delight.



Kevin DeYoung is senior pastor of University Reformed Church, Lansing, Michigan, USA. He is the author of three books. He is married to

Trisha. They have two boys, Ian and Jacob and a daughter, Elizabeth. His blog:

<http://www.revkevindeyoung.com/>

Board of Management News

Income - July: \$10,255.83

Includes:

Allison St per week \$2,288.93
(budget -\$1,960.00)
Allendale \$210.00 (\$416.00)
Nelson \$112.30 (\$250.00)
Literature sales \$350.00

Expenditure - July: \$19,599.08

Includes:

Pastors' remuneration & Superannuation \$7,858.37
Allendale tree removal \$7,350.00
Drum kit \$2,166.40
Workcover \$1,121.36
Pitt Bequest expenses \$2,264.30

Income - August: \$32,172.80

Includes:

Allison St per week: \$2,249.66
(budget -\$1,960.00)
Allendale: \$395.00 (\$416.00)
Nelson: \$110.00 (\$250.00)
Transfer from reserves \$20,000.00

Expenditure - August: \$14,130.36

Includes:

Pastors' remuneration & superannuation \$7,896.16
Insurance premiums \$8,531.71
PIM 2009 allocation \$1,000.00
Pitt Bequest expenses \$377.27

The Board has set up 2 subcommittees: one for finance and one for property. The subcommittees will both bring forward longer term plans as well as deal with current and/or immediate issues, also allowing the Board to increase its focus on the overall management of the charge's affairs.

The Board approved work to be performed on the church's back door ramp, including rail and adjustment of gutters, to allow wheelchair access.

Board members have been scheduled on door duty rosters. Further volunteers are always welcome.

Some funds have been reinvested for an interim period of time (late January 2010) to streamline maturity of the existing term deposits. Also, the Board had an introduction into investments through a presentation delivered by the Commonwealth Bank.



Before the Throne of God Above

Please pray for:
James Davidson;
Noel Cusack; Jim
Stafford; Pearl Hel-

lyer, 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.

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:

- State Government: Premier Mike Rann; Leader of the Opposition Isobel Redman.
- City of Mount Gambier (Mayor Steve Perryman; District Council of Grant (Mayor Don Pegler).
- Converge International chaplains: Heather Baker, John Deer and Ian Touzel.
- Jubilee Christian Centre (AOG): Pastor Errol & Gwen Carson, Pastor Mark & Tara Hann.

Operation Christmas Child

On Sunday 13th September our pastor Gary Ware dedicated the *Operation Christmas Child* boxes.

103 boxes were received and prepared this year: 78 from the congregation and 25 from the Presbyterian Women's Association.

The boxes will go to Cambodia and other countries to be distributed by Samaritan's Purse.

This was once again a heartwarming response. And our thanks go to everyone who made such a caring contribution to our ministry of mercy.

– Care & Concern Committee



Above: Jean Brown and Yvonne Cherryman checking boxes.

Below: Some of the 103 boxes received this year.



Above: The Christmas Child boxes packed up and ready to go! Thanks to Jean and Doug Brown for the transport.



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 1.30pm PWA Musical Afternoon	2	3
4 NE,AL - R. Bannister	5 7pm - Young Adults Growth Group	6	7	8	9	10
11 10am Lord's Supper	12 7.30pm Board of Management	13 9am Women's Growth Group 1.30pm Care & Concern	14 10am Coffee & Craft 1.30pm Fashion Parade	15	16 10.30 Bible Study	17 7pm Youth Group
18 Preacher: Rod Duncanson, Darwin PCA Sunday School resumes NE,AL - I. Touzel	19 7pm - Young Adults Growth Group	20 9am Women's Growth Group	21 10am Coffee & Craft 7.30pm Ladies Fellowship	22	23 10.30 Bible Study	24 7pm Youth Group
25	26 7.30pm Session	27 9am Women's Growth Group 1.30pm Pleasant Tuesday Afternoon	28 10am Coffee & Craft	29	30 10.30 Bible Study	31 7pm Youth Group

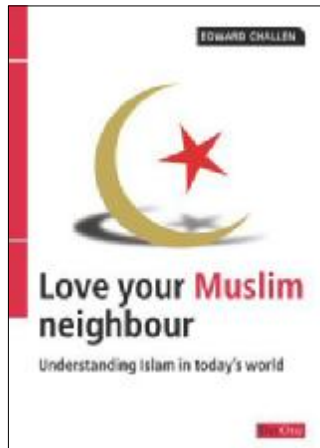
Book of the Month

Love Your Muslim Neighbour | Edward Challen

Edward Challen challenges his readers who desire to be a neighbour to Muslims, to be respectful of their beliefs and their customs and to understand their faith. His book is divided into four parts.

Part One is an introduction to Islam, its history and beliefs, the demonstration of community and the importance of folk Islam. Part Two is a survey of the history of the British Muslim scene. Part Three is an assessment of the impact of Islam on women, followed by an application of the Christian Gospel to the Muslim.

He says that we have to overcome any negative feelings or ideas with respect to Islam, to deal with our own culturally-dictated sense of despair of being able to reach out to Muslims, and to face all the



sensitive issues with a rich biblical understanding together with spiritual strength. Part Four gives practical pointers to understanding Islam and its sense of community, and Bible texts are suggested to explain the Christian faith. The book finishes with a number of helpful tables including those on the Qur'an, the names of Allah, a comparison of Muslim and Christian world views and religious terminology.

This is an excellent book. It is a very challenging book. It is a book of hope: Muslims can be reached – through prayer and true friendship. *Love Your Muslim Neighbour* is a book worth owning; it is a challenge to mission.

– Glenys McBride

Available from Reformers' Bookshop (www.reformers.com.au) for \$29.00 plus postage.

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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 at Mount Gambier

Congratulations!



Congratulations and God's blessings to **Ben Loef** and **Kathryn Ware** on their recently announced engagement. We look forward to sharing in the joy of their wedding on Saturday 20th March 2010.



For Your Diary

Rod Duncanson, pastor of Darwin Presbyterian Church will be visiting on **Sunday 18th October**. He will preach at 10.00am worship and then afterwards speak on East Timor.

Cameron, Carmel and Jacinta McKenzie, Flynn Patrol, Presbyterian Inland Mission (PIM), will be visiting the weekend of **7th-8th November**. More details soon.



Mission News local | national | international

THANKS FROM PRESBYTERIAN INLAND MISSION

Christian greetings in the name of our Saviour and Lord.

Please thank the congregation of Mount Gambier Presbyterian Charge for their generous donation of \$1200.00 towards the work of Cameron and Carmel McKenzie (Flynn Patrol...

The Inland Mission Padres are always reassured in their mission by the practical and prayerful support of people from people all around Australia.

LAOS: PERSECUTION OF 'IMPORTED RELIGION'

Since around 1950 Laos has been torn between pro- and anti-Communist forces. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, ethnic minorities in both Vietnam and Laos sided with US troops in the fight against Communist forces across Indo-China. After the Communist victory, some two-thirds of Laos' Christian population fled the country. Since 1975 Laos has been ruled by the communist Lao People's Revolutionary Party. During the early 1990s Laos moved towards a more market-based economy, necessitating greater openness and global engagement. However, by 1996 it was applying the brakes, fearing that the regime's hold on power was being threatened. Increased openness had led to a rise in social unrest, with Laotians protesting government repression and corruption. Human rights abuses soared as the authorities cracked down, reining in dissent.

In October 1998, the US Government passed its International Freedom from Religious Persecution (IFRP) Act that tied religious freedom to foreign policy. At that time, religious persecution in Laos was severe and torture routine. However, as a desperately poor country without wealthy powerful friends, Laos could not ignore the US IFRP Act. So the regime began tentatively reforming its

religious policy to avoid sanctions and secure trade agreements. By 2005 the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) was able to drop Laos from its Watch List. However, the situation has swung back again. Laos now has strong ties to other developing but totalitarian states including the ascendant, economic powerhouse, China. Furthermore the financial situation in America has greatly diluted its leverage, which was the power behind the IFRP Act. Over the past year, persecution has escalated so much that in May 2009 the USCIRF returned Laos to its Watch List.

USCIRF reports that over 500 Christians around the country were pressured to renounce their faith in July 2008 alone. Christians are threatened with eviction from their villages, confiscation of livestock, denial of government identity cards, denial of education and the withholding of food from prisoners. Ethnic minority Protestants are being specifically targeted. The Communist regime abhors Protestant Christianity as an 'American import' that threatens the communist political system. Government suspicion and hostility is only heightened because it is being embraced with such joy and dedicated commitment by the ethnic minorities who have long struggled against communist repression.

The Boukham Church has endured sustained persecution over the past year. Human Rights Watch for Lao Religious Freedom (HRWLRF) reports that on 3 September 2009 Lao officials arrested church elder Thao Oun, taking him from his home in Lainsai village at gunpoint. He was then detained, interrogated and terrorised for over five hours. HRWLRF writes: 'Thao Oun was charged with bringing destruction to the Lao nation and government due to his embracing of the Christian faith.' The police chief demanded that Thao Oun denounce Christianity or face eviction from his village. He also threatened Thao Oun that if word of his arrest and interroga-

tion got out to the international community he would be put to death, adding that he wished for the death of all believers in Boukham Church. HRWLRF has gone public with the report believing that shining a global spotlight on Thao Oun's case is actually the only way now to guarantee his safety. Furthermore, the authorities are pressuring the church by denying schooling to ten of its children and denying believing families access to water, medical care and the protection of the law. Then on 5 September, the authorities arrested Thao Aom, 'a new believer of 10 months'. After three hours of police 'interrogation' Thao Aom was still refusing to renounce his faith and so was evicted from his village. On Sunday 6 September, authorities surrounded the Boukham Church and stopped believers entering for worship.

PLEASE PRAY SPECIFICALLY THAT GOD WILL:

- stir up and then bless international prayer and advocacy for Thao Oun and the Boukham Church; may police illegal abuse of authority be reined in, and may the church be encouraged, strengthened and built up as a result of God's merciful intervention.
- stir up a sense of injustice and indignation within the Lao Buddhist majority (who are spared persecution for pragmatic reasons); may voices for peace, liberty and justice arise from the most surprising places. (This would create far more pressure than anything external!)
- bless the persecuted and imprisoned Laotian believers with everything they need at this time, in particular water, health and security; may the ever-present Holy Spirit comfort and sustain them as they wait upon the Lord for justice.

*World Evangelical Alliance
Religious Liberty Prayer Bulletin
| 16 September 2009*

The Language of Sin | Martin Downes

Here are some honest, blunt, and strangely refreshing words from the sports journalist Matthew Syed about the "bloodgate" scandal that has stained the sport of rugby union [in the United Kingdom]:

There comes a time when an institution is so deep in the mire, so steeped in scandal and immorality, so corrupted by greed and cynicism, that those on

the inside are no longer able to perceive, still less comprehend, the extent of their own depravity....

Ever since the Fall, when our first parents sought to re-write the constitution of the universe, human beings have both been on the run from God and incapable of escaping the reality of being God's creatures living in



God's universe.

This tension is felt everywhere, and no more so than in the realm of moral corruption. It is here that we are confronted by our creatureliness, that ineradicable sense of righteousness and justice, and by our hopeless self-contradictory suppression of the very categories of truth and goodness, of honesty and transparency.

Banish God, as we will, to the very margins of life, try as we might to squeeze him into areas that we can control and access on our terms, yet we cannot silence his speech about sin. God's vocabulary survives all our attempts to drop it from our language.

Of course we are repulsed by

cheating, by organised deceit. Of course we reach for God's grammar to describe it. What ought to be admitted is that it is God's truth about human corruption, his descriptions about how we lie, steal, and cover over our deceptions, that rings true. After all, Romans 1-3 describes us and our condition, internally and externally, individually and collectively, pervasively, and perfectly.

The big problem of sin comes to the surface in sport, in politics, in education, in commerce, in the home. Every time that it does so it is a signal reminder of the reality of God and the truth of his word.

Martin Downes is minister of Christ Church Deeside (North Wales), UK. He is a writer, blogger (www.against-heresies.blogspot.com) and Welsh rugby fanatic.

The Reformation – Has the Holy Spirit Moved On?

| John Samson

In five simple slogans known as the Five Solas, I believe the Reformers brought us back to the heart of the Gospel. The Bible has not changed one iota since the 16th Century, and neither has the Gospel that the Bible proclaims. When we move beyond the Bible, we move away from the Holy Spirit who inspired it. Some people would say that the Holy Spirit has moved on. With all that is in me, I must humbly but strongly disagree. It is indeed sad that most Christians think these things to be irrelevant, when in all reality there could be nothing more relevant to the Church and our world.

Briefly then, let me enumerate these five solas of the Reformation. Luther and his reformers had 5 main slogans, all using the word "SOLA," which is the Latin word for "ALONE." It was this word "ALONE" that designated the true biblical Gospel and set it apart from all other pretenders. The cry of these

Reformers was not simply FAITH!, GRACE!, CHRIST!, THE SCRIPTURE!, or THE GLORY OF GOD! (All embracing a false Gospel could do that.)

Instead, the cry was FAITH ALONE!, GRACE ALONE!, CHRIST ALONE!, SCRIPTURE ALONE!, THE GLORY OF GOD ALONE! With Scripture alone as the sure foundation, the Reformers affirmed that justification is by grace alone, received through faith alone because of Christ alone for the glory of God alone...

The five solas are relevant in all ages, because they are truths that can be clearly demonstrated from sacred Scripture. To many, these doctrines are mere historical novelties - interesting milestones and beliefs of a former era. Yet, as far as I can see, it is very much apparent that we need these same biblical, Holy Spirit inspired correctives in our own day.

The 16th Century is one very different

to our own. We may strongly disagree with the burning of heretics at that time, and perhaps even be shocked by the very hostile rhetoric that flowed freely between those who disagreed on these issues. Yet at the same time, we must try to understand a culture so removed from ours where people believed the Bible was the Word of God; that heaven and hell were real places; and that doctrine actually mattered...

I don't believe the Holy Spirit has moved on from the central truths of the Reformation. In fact, I believe He is calling His Church back to the proclamation of these doctrines that once shook the world

John Samson is the founder and President of Reformation Study Center (www.reformationstudycenter.com) and serves as pastor of Kings Church, Phoenix, Arizona, USA.

It's Not Your Church!

| R. Scott Clark

We often speak of "my church." That's a colloquial way of saying, "the congregation of which I'm a member." We often act, however, as if the church actually belongs to us. One doubts that many people would be willing to admit that they think of the church as "theirs," but I'm convinced that too many people do think thus because they manifest their thinking by the way they treat the church. Such a way of thinking is unbiblical.

Scripture repeatedly attributes ownership of the visible church to Christ. In 1 Corinthians 1:2 Paul greets the "church of God" that is in Corinth. He spoke the same way in 2 Corinthians 1:1. In Ephesians 5:23 Paul explicitly calls Christ "the head of the church." Christ is he who loved the church and gave himself for the church (v. 25). It's clearly taught in Scripture repeatedly that the church is a divine institution (Matthew 16) established by Christ. He founded it. He rules it. He owns it. We work for him. He gave the visible church, his church, several mandates: love one another, preach the gospel, administer discipline.

We sometimes act, however, as if the church exists primarily for our comfort or for our pleasure or for our satisfaction. One way in which this confusion over the ownership of the church manifests itself is the way congregations and their leadership think about the mission of the church. The word "mission" comes from the Latin verb *mitto*, to send or to throw. Christ's church has been sent by her

Lord "to make disciples of all nations" and to baptize the same in the triune name of God (Matthew 28:18-20). Recently I became aware of a situation where a congregation, with the necessary resources, refused an opportunity to extend Christ's kingdom through planting a church. Why did they refuse? Because they were afraid of losing members to the church plant. They seem to conceive of the church as a zero sum game, as if somehow, if members left "their" congregation that

We sometimes act, however, as if the church exists primarily for our comfort or for our pleasure or for our satisfaction.

"their" church would be diminished. Their stance toward the church proposal seems to have been: let the outsiders come to us. I've seen this phenomenon more than once. The underlying assumption seems to be, "the church exists for us."

This is fundamentally a confusion of Christ and culture. In such a case, the "family" culture of the church has triumphed over the "kingdom" culture of the church. Yes, the church is a family and it is a body, it is a bread (1 Corinthians 10:17), but it is also kingdom. Yes, it is painful to say goodbye to friends and loved ones or to see them leave one's own congregation to plant a new one in another place, but this is

why I say that the church does not exist for our comfort. One thinks of Matthew 10:37-39, "Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." The kingdom of God, as it is represented by the visible church, has a claim on our loyalties that transcends even basic natural relationships.

Yes, church is a place where we gather but it's also a place where we send. We must do both. It's not an either/or proposition. The church is not *for* us. The church is *for* Christ's glory. The fields are white unto harvest. The church is the divinely institution for that harvest. How can we refuse our Lord? How can we refuse to extend his kingdom? Have we talked so much about "this kingdom work" and "that kingdom work" that we've forgotten that the church is the ONLY institution to which Christ gave the keys of the kingdom? Wouldn't it ironic if we were obsessed with extending his kingdom through every institution except the one institution to which he gave the gospel and the sacraments? It would be more than ironic, it would be tragic.



R. Scott Clark is Professor of Church History and Historical Theology at Westminster Seminary California, Escondido, California, USA. He is also Associate Pastor of the Oceanside United Reformed Church, where he preaches and teaches regularly.

We don't just belong to God on our own. It's not just about "me and Jesus." The church is about we and us, gathered by God to be His people, together, in community, not in isolation. The teaching of the Bible is that relationship implies responsibility. We are to live in vital relationship and to deny that relationship, to ignore one's responsible involvement among the people of God is not a sign of the strength of one's character or how mature and spiritually independent one has become. It is a sign of a rebellious and foolish heart.

– J. Scott Lindsay
Senior Pastor, South Baton Rouge Presbyterian Church,
Baton Rouge, Louisiana, USA.