



Newsletter

31st October to 10th November

Quotations from my diary

31st October Lord's Day and commemoration of 31st October 1517 in Wittenberg when Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the door of the Castle Church.

Attended three services today. Morning at Leeds Reformed Baptist Church. We continue to receive many more visitors than we can keep track of. Matthew Seymour hit the mark expounding the subject of the church being no spectator sport -- every member needs to be integrated and serving in the body --

Matthew probed the heart of Ephesians 4:12-- and the NIV rendering 'to prepare God's people for works of service'.

At 3.00 it was an inspiration to be at Heap Lane, Bradford. Joel (12) and Amy (9) came with me. They enjoy friends at this service. Mick Lockwood preached. We were blessed with a marked sense of the Lord's presence. The auditorium is small in size but was full.

This is a church plant that was meeting in the famous old church building of William Steadman in the heart of Manningham, Bradford an area with a predominant Pakistani population.

Heap lane building has been given to this church plant and the area is ideal for outreach. Church plants ought to be supported by larger churches of like-mind. The strong should support the weak. Spiritual gifts in the larger churches ought to be used in church plants rather than stagnate. There are four church of a reformed character underway which can be encouraged by the many larger churches: Bradford, Scarborough, Ilkley and Huddersfield.

For the evening service I attended Leeds City Evangelical Church with Joanne and Amrik who are members there.

This being the commemoration day the Reformation flag was raised high. The service was followed by a film of the life of Martin Luther. Imputed righteousness was powerfully and clearly preached by the new pastor Michael Leuhrmann - most refreshing!! We sang hymns specially selected which included imputed righteousness in them which so got my mind buzzing that I began to count how many times *dikaiousune* is used in the Greek Testament in the imputed (*logizomia* sense) -- *dikaiousune* appears about 95 times in the NT. Afterward I also had a telephone conversation with David Preston who

composes the Psalms in contemporary English to be sung with suitable tunes. *Tsedakah* (the Hebrew for righteousness) appears many times in the OT (33 times in the Psalms). Best known of the references in the OT is Genesis 15:6, 'Abram believed the LORD and he credited it to him as righteousness'.

3 November Took the train from Leeds to Dundee in Scotland. The trains are clean and comfortable. The four hour journey was ideal for reading. Was met by Dr Brian Talbot who is pastor of Broughton Ferry Baptist Church which has 130 members. Hospitality in the Talbot family was a most enjoyable experience. Helen (15), Benjamin (12) and Rachel (9) reminded me much of Neil and Leah and their four children.

4 November. Presented the subject of mission at the ministers' fraternal. There was time to share so I learned about some of the churches.

5 November. We drove to an ancient village called Landmark and enjoyed lunch and a walk around the village with Iain Murray. Iain is working on a biography of Archibald Brown who was the pastor of East London Tabernacle which in Spurgeon's time was the second largest church in the world, Spurgeon's tabernacle(5,500 members) being the largest. During the Second World War East London tabernacle was demolished in the blitz. The restored building is very different from the former structure. Today there are two pastors Dr Ken Brownell and Yuri a Russian who leads the Russian assembly that meets there.

I was invited to speak in the open air at a Guy Fawkes fireworks display at the home of the Conrad Pomeroy who is pastor of the Grace Baptist Church in Dundee. His home is adjacent to the park where a magnificent fireworks display was given by the Dundee City Council.

I explained the vital importance of remembering our history. If the Spanish Armada of 1588 had succeeded this Island would have been subject to the horrors and tortures of the Spanish Inquisition. Guy Fawkes and several accomplices hired rooms in the basement of the Houses of Parliament and filled them with barrels of gunpowder, enough to demolish a large area. In this way King James would be assassinated together with the political leaders and this would make way for a return to Roman Catholicism. However the plot was discovered. Guy Fawkes and his accomplices were tried and condemned to be hanged drawn and quartered. On the day of his execution Guy Fawkes managed to escape the horrors of hanging by leaping off the scaffolding and breaking his neck.

Why is this history important? Deprived of the Bible and subjected to the authority of tradition in lieu of the Word of God we would be lost indeed. The Bible assures us of the way of salvation, namely justification by faith alone. We must not only remember our history but be jealous to preserve our freedom.

While we enjoyed a meal in the open air and watched the spectacular fireworks display Conrad worked hard to get his own bonfire going which served to keep us warm. A rainy day had moistened the logs and it took at least half an hour of feeding the flames to get the whole to take fire - a good illustration of church planting. It takes patient input by stronger churches feeding and encouraging church plants over a period of time before the work takes fire and grows to become sufficient to function on its own.

6th November. We attended the opening of the CLC bookstore in Dundee. William Mackenzie who is the leader of Christian Focus Publishing was the speaker who emphasised the importance of reading. One of his sayings was, "Don't buy chocolates, buy books. Don't buy flowers, buy books." I told him about two books which are emerging from series of articles

in *Reformation Today*. The first is on the history of the Huguenots by Frederick Hodgson and the second is the history of Christianity in China by Bob Davey.

7th November. I preached on Exodus 32, the golden calf, in the morning and in the evening on 2 Peter 1 with the title, *How to absolutely sure of eternal life in the evening*. Just as we approached the church for the morning service a pipe band (bagpipes and kilts) came marching down the street. We never see that in Leeds! I was impressed!

8th November Read several books on the return train journey and in the process realised why some large chains of book-stores have gone bankrupt. The standard of so called Christian literature stocked is so low that ministers and serious readers cease to use them and turn to Amazon and postal ways of obtaining quality books. We must be ceaseless in our efforts to encourage reliable books with doctrinal content.

9th November Gary Morrison, Frederick Hodgson and Raymond Zulu met here at number 75 to plan the day by day itinerary for the African Pastors' Conferences this coming January in South Africa. If Lyn continues to be stable I hope to be in South Africa for two weeks during these APCs attending the first one in Soweto.

10th November Today was our annual *Reformation Today Trust* Trustees meeting here at number 75. We were joined for the first part by our treasurer Rachel Rothwell.

Our chairman John Rubens read 2 Cor 8:1-15.

The Reformation Today Trust has three branches which conform to the Charity Commissioners

1. Reformation Today publishing of magazine, books and booklets.
2. APCs. The turnover for the APCs this year is £23,000. We are still about £4000 short of what we need for January.
- 3 Carey Conferences.

11th November Much refreshed by visit today of Sharon and grandson Peter who has just started at Sheffield University. Sharon looks after all Lyn's clothes. It is a great help to have family support by way of regular visits to Lyn. Also the church has been exemplary in support by way of visits.

Reflection today. Does the Lord care for us day by day? Yes he does. 'During the forty years that I led you through the wilderness, your clothes did not wear out, nor did the sandals on your feet' (Deut 29:5).