

# REDEEMING THE TIME

*"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:16).*

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 4



FALL 2009

## REDEEMING THE TIME

### *Kenya Famine Relief Offering*

All funds will go to the purchase, transportation and distribution of food. WE WILL NOT TAKE OUT ADMINISTRATIVE FEES, as some charities do which have a large overhead.

See details on page 12.



## Faith Presbytery, Bible Presbyterian Church

*"For the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 1:9)*

BY MARK W. EVANS

**O**n March 28, 2008, the South Atlantic Presbytery of the Bible Presbyterian Church (BPC) voted to disassociate from the Synod of the BPC, primarily because of an ecclesiastical association with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC). This event relates to the challenges facing God's remnant in a day of apostasy and compromise.

The Bible Presbyterian Church has stood solidly against what came

to be known as New Evangelicalism—a compromising belief that resorts to dialogue, outward ecumenism, and accommodation, rather than the Biblical practice of open rebuke, discipline, and public denunciation of false teaching. New Evangelicals give respect to false teachers, their institutions, and denominations. Unlike the BPC's Bibli-

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*Faith Presbytery 2009 Family Camp* – See photos on pages 5-7



# Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church: *Which Direction?*

BY BRAD K. GSELL

**T**he Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARP) has long held an interesting position in the “Reformed Community.” As one of the oldest denominations in the country, descending from the Scottish Covenants, the ARP slipped into deep declension, with men in its ranks who denied clear Biblical teaching. However, for many years we have heard that the ARP was becoming

more conservative, and returning to a more orthodox position.

Therefore, it was of special note that the 205th annual meeting of the ARP Synod, June 9-11, 2009, voted to sever its longstanding “fraternal correspondence” with the apostate Presbyterian Church (USA) (PCUSA), which is a member of the liberal World Council of Churches (WCC). This relationship included “fellowship at the table of the Lord.” Many

were quick to declare that the ARP was finally on the right path. We congratulate the ARP for its decision, but believe this denomination has a very long way to go to be on the path of Scriptural obedience.

One evidence of this is the tangled web of alliances still maintained by the ARP. The denomination continues “fraternal correspondence” with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America (members of the apostate World Alliance of Reformed Churches [WARC]). The WARC and the Reformed Ecumenical Council are on schedule for a major celebration next summer as they merge to become the World Communion of Reformed Churches. This organization is filled with a wide mixture of denominations. The members from the United States include at least five denominations in the World Council of Churches, along with the Christian Reformed Church (which was removed from the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council [NAPARC] several years ago due to its liberal direction) and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC).

The ARP maintains fraternal relations with the EPC and the two denominations together operate the EPC/ARP Joint Assessment Center, to deal with home missions. The EPC has women ministers and elders, allows charismatics, and has had no aversion to sending observers to the PCUSA’s assemblies to dialog with them.

Historically, the Bible Presbyterian Church has remained separate from all of this and has maintained its



**The Rev. Christian Spencer and Elder Keith McCoy (in choir robe) unveil a large cast bronze plaque commemorating the ministry of the late Dr. Carl McIntire. A number of family members, former associates and church members spoke at a special service held on Sunday, July 5, 2009, at the Collingswood, NJ, Bible Presbyterian Church. Dr. McIntire served as the church’s pastor for 65 years (1933-1998). The plaque is on permanent display in the narthex of the church.**

fellowship with those in the American Council of Christian Churches, a body of Bible-believing, Fundamental churches, with no associations with the WCC, NCC, WARC or NAE. The Bible Presbyterian Church has been willing to stand “without the camp” in order to maintain a clear testimony for Christ and His Word.

In addition to these ARP alliances, Erskine College and Erskine Seminary, official agencies of the ARP, engage in things which are very harmful to the cause of Christ. For whatever reason, this supposedly Reformed school caters to those in the Arminian/liberal United Methodist Church (UMC). In fact, more United Methodist students attend Erskine than do ARP students! The Lula Rouse Seminary Scholarship Fund is advertised on the Seminary website. It is described as “dedicated to support the theological education of women pursuing ordination in the United Methodist Church.... The scholarship shall be awarded to a female seminary student pursuing ordination in the United Methodist Church.”

Also, United Methodist leaders speak at the school. A visit to the seminary website will allow you to watch lectures by United Methodist Bishop William Willomon. Willomon is an editor-at-large of the liberal *Christian Century* magazine, which has fiercely attacked Bible-believers for most of the last century. At its 2004 commencement, Erskine Seminary awarded an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree to United Methodist Bishop James Lawrence McCleskey of Columbia, SC. Lest some should try to give Erskine a pass, there is no indication given that either of these men were brought for the purpose of exposing the students to contrary views (such as was stated when the late Senator Edward Kennedy spoke at Liberty University a number of years ago).

Concerning the matter of Biblical creation, such a stir was raised that the *Christian Observer* reported

in a “Presbyterian Week” item of June 17, 2009, that Dr. Randy Ruble, President of Erskine College and Seminary “said that he had instructed the biology department to go on record stating they affirmed biblical creation.” The *Christian Observer* continues: “The biology department did not comply directly with the request, but instead issued a separate statement, which said that Christianity and science were complementary and not enemies, and that Christianity was relegated to matters of ethics and values, and distinct from scientific inquiry. The statement further relayed that the biology department believed in ‘organic evolution.’ Dr. Ruble characterized the statement to be a ‘Christian position.’” It will be interesting to watch as this unfolds. The red lights should start flashing when someone has trouble answering directly whether or not they believe in a literal Biblical creation.

In the midst of all this confusion and compromise, such groups as the

Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) maintain fraternal relations with the ARP and sit with them on NAPARC and the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC). In August 2007 I was pointing out some of these things on the floor of the Bible Presbyterian Synod. At the break which followed, the Rev. Mark Bube, general secretary of the OPC’s Committee on Foreign Missions, came up to me and stated that I shouldn’t be too concerned about some of these relationships, specifically the one with the PCUSA. Rev. Bube commented, “It’s just like a little exchange of Christmas cards.” I must respectfully disagree. We can give no aid, comfort or respectability to apostasy. We should be ready to encourage and help those who desire to follow God’s Word, but we cannot be indifferent to or minimize the deadly consequences of compromise with those who are disobedient to God’s Word and have departed from the truth. •

## A Call for Faithful, Bible-Believing Churches

BY BRAD K. GSELL

**J**oel Osteen is the pastor of the largest church in America—the Lakewood Church in Houston, TX. With over 40,000 members and a burgeoning television ministry, one might wonder what draws so many at a time when many churches are struggling for their very existence.

Indeed the statistics are not good. The mainline Protestant denominations are losing tens of thousands of members every year. Catholicism is not faring well either, except for the influx of those coming from other countries. Most faithful, Fundamental, Bible-believing church-

es, are seeing harder times as well. More Americans are checking the box beside “None,” when asked to list their religious affiliation. Lance Dickie, of the *Seattle Times*, reports that “the idea of a personal God is losing ground to a vague, deist force” (*Charlotte Observer*, 3/24/09). “Across the South, as in the rest of the country, the dominance of Christian faith is slowly yielding to secularism, nonbelief or simple disinterest in traditional religion,” reported Adelle Banks of Religion

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## A CALL FOR FAITHFUL, BIBLE-BELIEVING CHURCHES

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News Service (*Charlotte Observer*, 3/14/09).

The August 24 & 31, 2009, issue of *Newsweek*, carried a full-page article by Lisa Miller entitled “We Are All Hindus Now.” Miller states: “...recent poll data show that conceptually, at least, we are slowly becoming more like Hindus and less like traditional Christians in the ways we think about God, our selves, and each other, and eternity.

“The Rig Veda, the most ancient Hindu scripture, says this: ‘Truth is One, but the sages speak of it by many names.’ A Hindu believes there are many paths to God. Jesus is one way, the Qur’an is another, yoga practice is a third. None is better than any other; all are equal. The most traditional, conservative Christians have not been taught to think like this. They learn in Sunday school that their religion is true, and others are false. Jesus said, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the father except through me.’

“Americans are no longer buying it. According to a 2008 Pew Forum survey, 65 percent of us believe that ‘many religions can lead to eternal life’—including 37 percent of white evangelicals, the group most likely to believe that salvation is theirs alone. Also, the number of people who seek spiritual truth outside church is growing. Thirty percent of Americans call themselves ‘spiritual, not religious,’ according to a 2009 *Newsweek* poll, up from 24 percent in 2005. Stephen Prothero, religion professor at Boston University, has long framed the American propensity for ‘the divine-deli-cafe-teria religion’ as ‘very much in the spirit of Hinduism. You’re not picking and choosing from different religions, because they’re all the same,’

he says. ‘It isn’t about orthodoxy. It’s about whatever works. If going to yoga works, great—and if going to Catholic mass works, great. And if going to Catholic mass plus the yoga plus the Buddhist retreat works, that’s great too.’

There are real signs of trouble even in evangelical churches. Rice University sociologist of religion Michael Lindsay says that Americans’ religious practices show “a sort of religion a la carte and how pervasive it is” (*Charlotte Observer*, 2/28/09). Pressure is great for churches to tailor their message to what people want, rather than what God’s Word emphasizes.

Kurt Selles, director of the Global Center at Samford University’s Beeson Divinity School, stated his surprise when he asked the pastors who

**“Pressure is great for churches to tailor their message to what people want, rather than what God’s Word emphasizes.”**

attended the July 2009 Beeson Pastors School if they had ever preached a sermon on hell. “Nobody had,” reported Greg Garrison of Religion News Service (*Charlotte Observer*, 8/8/09). Selles stated further: “There’s a big change that’s taken place as far as evangelicals not wanting to be as exclusive.” The article quotes the Rev. Fred Johns offering a reason why few preach on hell: “It’s out of fear we’ll not appear relevant.... It’s pressure from the culture to not speak anything negative. I think we’ve begun to deny hell. There’s an assumption that everybody’s going to make it to heaven somehow.” Returning to Selles, the article paraphrases him as saying that “The soft sell on hell reflects an increasing market-conscious approach.”

It is not just hell that is soft-pedaled. Few preach concerning sin anymore as well. The emphasis in mod-

ern America has turned to the desires and felt needs of sinful man, rather than the glory of God and faithfulness to His Word.

Getting back to Joel Osteen, an examination of his “ministry” may offer up a few clues. The *Charlotte Observer*, 9/12/09, carried front page coverage of what it describes as his “‘Night of Hope’ Show.” More than 10,000 people filled the arena to hear “promises that God can’t wait to bring blessings like promotions, restored health and rejuvenated marriages to those who are struggling.” The article further states that “Osteen rarely mentions sin,” and states that he has critics who say he is a preacher of “cotton candy Christianity,” and the “Prosperity Gospel.” Like Jim and Tammy Bakker, Jimmy Swaggart and others before him, the millions of dollars pour in and the crowds flock to hear this message.

The message of the Bible is that God sent His Son to die on the cross for the sins of His elect. We who are Christians are to glorify God, live a life of service and sacrifice to the Lord, and walk in obedience to God and His Word. The Lord does not promise us an easy life of prosperity. He does promise that He is sovereign over all things and that He will care for us. Suffering may come. Poverty may come. Persecution may come. But the true child of God is secure in knowing that “in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock” (Psalm 27:5). May Bible-believing churches and ministers do what is right. May they preach the Word of God “with boldness,” and be faithful at all costs. •



Mr. Brad Gsell is an elder and minister of music of the Bible Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, NC, and Vice President of The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions.

# Faith Presbytery, Bible Presbyterian Church 2009 Family Camp

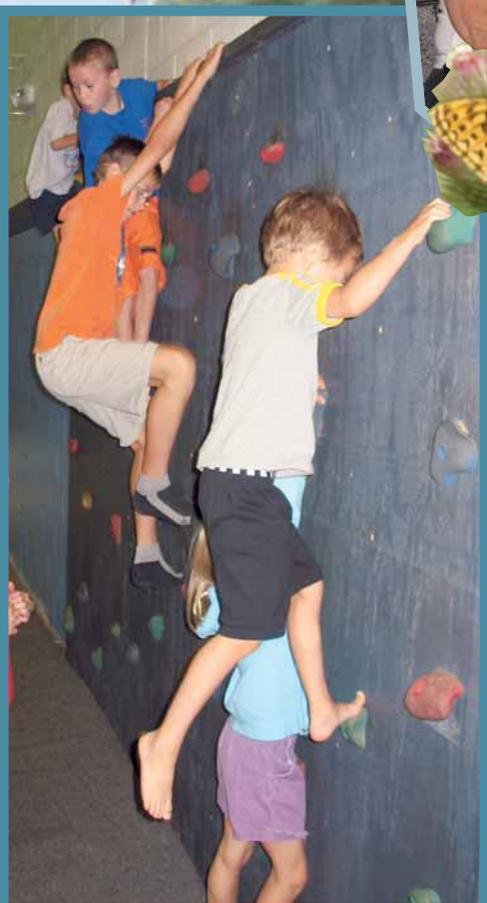
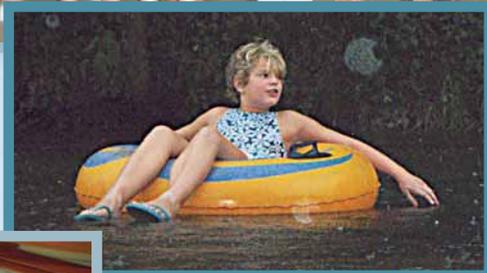
PHOTOS BY JAN COLEMAN AND BRAD GSELL



*Camp Theme Verse: "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or what"*



*"Whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31).*



## FAITH PRESBYTERY, BIBLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*Continued from page 1*

cal practice of avoiding alliances with such churches, the OPC maintains ecclesiastical ties with at least two churches in the National Association of Evangelicals, an organization that has led the New Evangelical movement. Also, the OPC maintains an ecclesiastical relationship with the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, whose seminary, Erskine Theological Seminary, has a working relationship with the apostate United Methodist Church (UMC), for the purpose of training ministers, including females, for that liberal denomination. The UMC supplies teachers for the program. Such an arrangement is disobedience to God's Word (2 John 9-11; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

In 1996, in keeping with its historic testimony, the Bible Presbyterian Synod voted by a sizeable majority to send an official communication to the OPC General Assembly, stating in part: "...there are major obstacles to our entering into this formal relationship [fraternal relations with the OPC], which are the OPC's fraternal relations with the Presbyterian Church in America and the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, which are members of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), and its [the OPC's] understanding of ecumenicity which allows it to enter into these relations."

This document was officially cited again by the Synod in 1998 when there was a move to establish "corresponding relations" with the OPC. Plainly and simply, these major obstacles have never been removed. The OPC does not have the same belief as the historic BPC in regard to separation from New Evangelical churches. The position of the founders and the continuing position of the Faith Presbytery

remains unchanged. In 2004, the BPC Synod set a new course for the BPC and attempted to force the entire denomination—presbyteries, churches, and individuals—into conformity. The courts of the presbyteries and sessions did not vote on this significant change which affects the testimony of all in the BPC. Individual consciences were violated. The South Atlantic Presbytery persevered for about three years, urging the brethren to terminate the OPC connection. The Southwest Presbytery and a number of individuals from other presbyteries also resisted the change. All efforts failed. It should be noted that the responsibility of restoring peace in the denomination rested upon the Synod's majority. The minority, because of conscience regarding an historic practice of the BPC, could not betray

**"...the great battle in  
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worldliness"**

(Bible Presbyterian  
"Articles of Association," 1937)

their convictions. The Synod no longer "constitute[d] the bond of union, peace, correspondence, and mutual confidence among all our churches," as the BP Form of Government X:3 says it is to do.

At the September 2007 meeting of the South Atlantic Presbytery, a veteran missionary stepped forward to present a motion that the presbytery disassociate from the Synod. That decision was postponed for six months to allow further study and prayer. The South Atlantic Presbytery, meeting at the Bible Presbyterian Church of Falls Church, VA, March 28, 2008, decided by a vote of 13 to five to adopt a motion, which

included the following words: "[Moved] that the South Atlantic Presbytery disassociate from the Bible Presbyterian Synod as long as the majority of the Synod continues on the new path we believe it has taken in departing from the practice of ecclesiastical separation as understood by our Synod and Presbytery in the past. We believe a manifestation of this new direction is the Synod's maintenance since 2004 of a relationship with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC). We cannot condone this relationship until such time as the OPC's doctrinal problems and compromising practices are resolved. We seek to disassociate amicably, like Abraham and Lot. It is our prayer that this will be a temporary situation...."

Because the BPC Synod responded by appointing officers for a replacement South Atlantic Presbytery, and because of the need for clarity, the disassociated presbytery renamed itself Faith Presbytery, Bible Presbyterian Church. We rejoice that the Lord has led a group of believers to continue a separated Presbyterian witness for the cause of our glorious Redeemer. We seek your prayers. Our spiritual forefathers formed the BPC in 1937 by separating from the Presbyterian Church of America (later named the OPC). These men of God wanted peace concerning their premillennial view of eschatology. They also were committed to supporting The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions and its testimony "against modernism and unbelief of all kinds" (BPC "Articles of Association"). They declared "that the great battle in the world today is the faith of our fathers versus modernism, compromise, indifferentism, and worldliness" (BPC "Articles of Association"). They also could not abide the OPC's refusal to take a stand against the use of alcoholic beverages and other worldly practices. Their belief that the OPC was

on a different path brought them to a decision to separate peacefully in order to maintain a testimony to the Biblical doctrines and practices of American Presbyterianism. We continue to believe that our forefathers were justified in their position.

Today there are additional problems that cause justifiable concern. One OPC leader, James W. Gidley, in an article appearing in the OPC's periodical, *New Horizons* (June 2004, p. 8), said: "The Orthodox Presbyterian Church is in danger of splintering apart. As we come to the Seventy-first Assembly, perhaps never before in the life of the Church have so many controversies been troubling us. Some of them are coming before this Assembly. We debate the days of creation, the law of God, and the doctrine of justification. We debate the merits and demerits of the public school, the Christian day school, and home schooling. We identify ourselves as theonomic, redemptive-historical, or 'truly reformed.' Because of such things, some of our members will not attend the worship services of certain other congregations of the OPC. Because of such things, a minister in good standing in one presbytery is prevented from receiving a call in another presbytery..."

## REDEEMING THE TIME

**Editor: Brad K. Gsell**

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**"It is my prayer that God will bring men together who will stand, without compromise, and 'earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints' (Jude 3)."**

In the past, such serious issues alone would have precluded the BPC from entering into a formal ecclesiastical relationship with the OPC. For years, the OPC, through individual members and Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia (WTS)\*, has blazed new trails in theology and hermeneutics. "Theonomy" arose within its borders, with an emphasis upon postmillennialism. Elements of this new approach blended with the teaching of N.T. Wright of the Church of England, and others, to spawn a deviant theology called the Federal Vision. As a result, numerous Reformed doctrines were corrupted, including the doctrines of baptism, election, reprobation, justification, Christ's active obedience, imputation, sanctification, assurance of salvation, the covenant of works, the covenant of grace, and the final judgment. OPC teacher Norman Shepherd, an acknowledged leader of the movement, taught theology to ministerial students at WTS for a period of some 18 years. Between 1975 and 1982, he was under investigation for teaching a false doctrine of justification. The Board and faculty of WTS failed to repudiate his teaching as heretical. His presbytery failed to convict him of heresy. Following an outcry from those outside of the OPC, he was dismissed from WTS. He transferred to the Christian Reformed Church, without censure, and continued his teaching and writing. His book, *Call of Grace* (©2000), continues to enunciate his views.

The impact of his teaching remains within the OPC today, as demonstrated by one of Shepherd's defenders, Elder John O. Kinnaird, a former moderator of the OPC General Assembly, who remains active in committee work within the OPC. His session conducted a trial and convicted him of "teaching a doctrine of justification by faith plus works, contrary to the Word of God and the Westminster Standards." His presbytery rejected his appeal. However, the General Assembly sustained his appeal and thus reversed the decision of two lower courts. Questions continue to abound concerning his orthodoxy. Brian Schwertly, author of *Auburn Avenue Theology*, said, "he [Kinnaird] has never repented of teaching the Shepherdite/FV (Federal Vision) doctrine of justification by faith and faithful obedience (or works)." Professor David Engelsma, editor of *The Standard Bearer* (publication of the Protestant Reformed Churches) said, "since Mr. Kinnaird refused to confess the error of his heretical statements, and his own sin in teaching them to the congregation, his profession of soundness means nothing." Dr. R. Scott Clark, Professor of Church History and Historical Theology, Westminster Seminary, California, said, "What was defended on the floor of the Philadelphia Presbytery [regarding Kinnaird], however, was quite outside the bounds of Reformed orthodoxy, namely a two-stage doctrine of justification." That Mr. Kinnaird and defenders of his theology remain within the OPC is sufficient reason for the BPC Synod to avoid church ties.

Out of the OPC has come a new hermeneutic (method of Bible interpretation) that militates against systematic theology and aids such strange theories as the Framework View of creation, which claims that

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# The Fruit of the Spirit

Galatians 5:22,23

## Peace

by Brad K. Gsell



*In Galatians 5, the Apostle Paul describes for us the fruit which is to be found in the life of every Christian. This is the fourth in a series of articles which will discuss these characteristics of the Christian life.*

**T**he third fruit of the Spirit mentioned by Paul is “peace.” This fruit is one which nearly every man who has ever lived has sought in his life, but so many have failed to achieve it. Charles Haddon Spurgeon preached: “We all desire to lead a peaceful and joyous life; the bright eye and the elastic foot are things which each of us desire; to carry about a contented mind is that to which most people are continually aspiring. Let us remember that the only way to keep our life peaceful and happy—is to keep the heart at rest—for come poverty, come wealth, come honor, come shame, come plenty, or come scarcity—if the heart is quiet, there will be peace and happiness manifested in the life!”

Peace is not something which can be willed into existence in one’s life, and it cannot truly be displayed until one has it in his possession. Peace is not obtained by an isolated pursuit of it, but rather is given to us by God when we become His children, and hunger and thirst after righteousness. Romans 5:1 says, “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” It comes when we are adopted into God’s family!

In the Old Testament, in proclaiming the promise of the coming Messiah, Isaiah writes: “For unto us a child is born ... and his name shall be called ... THE PRINCE OF PEACE.” In Luke 2:14, in announcing the birth of the Messiah, the angels said: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” Many love to use this at the Christmas season as just a kindly sentiment. However, the peace which these angels were proclaiming was a peace which can only take place when we who were “dead in trespasses and sin” are made alive by the saving grace of God. Indeed, the

*“...live peaceably  
with all men.”  
(Romans 12:18)*

only true peace comes through Jesus Christ—the great Prince of Peace!

Before Christ left this earth, He promised: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27). Any peace apart from Christ is counterfeit, and is doomed to pass quickly away.

The Christian who has this peace of God will display it in his life without having to say a word. It will be seen in his countenance, in his very being, and will be a witness to all around. In addition, he will be

peaceful with those around him. Paul tells us in Romans 12:18: “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.” The natural inclination of the possessor of true peace is not to be self-centered and self-promoting. Rather, he will be inclined to “Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others” (Philippians 2:4) and to be “kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” (Ephesians 4:32). And, we are told repeatedly throughout Scripture to “be at peace among yourselves” (e.g. 1 Thessalonians 5:13, 2 Corinthians 13:11, Mark 9:50, 2 Timothy 2:22, 1 Peter 3:11, Hebrews 12:14).

Even the requirements for elders and deacons given in 1 Timothy 3 state that men called to these offices are not to be “brawlers” or “strikers.” But, even though these are given as requirements for church officers, these things should apply to all believers. Have you ever known someone who just seemed to like a good fight? They are in their element when they are able to put someone down, or assert their authority or superiority. This is carnality, and Paul says we should not be this way.

However, some have wrongly interpreted this fruit of peace to mean the absence of all conflict, at all costs. They seem to ignore the fact that true peace is ALWAYS coupled with holiness in the Scriptures. Hebrews 12:14 says: “Follow peace with all men, and

holiness....” 1 Peter 3:11: “Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.” Proverbs 3:1,2 commands: “My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments: For [if you do these things] length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.”

God declares concerning the disobedience of Israel in Isaiah 48:18: “O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.” In line with this, J. Gresham Machen stated: “We can never be at peace with God unless God first be at peace with us.”

Spurgeon wrote concerning this truth: “Until you have humbled yourself before God and sought and found mercy, God is at war with you and you are at war with Him. There can be no peace where there is no purity. God has no peace with sin, and never can have.”

All through the Scriptures, those who possessed this great peace of God were often the strongest fighters and defenders of the faith. Who can forget the words of wicked King Ahab to God’s servant Elijah: “Art thou he that troubleth Israel?” (1 Kings 18:17). Yet, Elijah had the peace of God, and it served as the foundation which sustained him in serving the Lord. The Prophet Isaiah made few friends when he started his book by calling the people’s worship and offerings an “abomination” against God and wrote that they were to “put away the evil of your doings from before mine [God’s] eyes.” Yet, he could write in Isaiah 26:3: “Thou wilt keep him in perfect

peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.” Placing both of these things together, Isaiah further states in chapter 32:17: “And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.”

This point is made well when the Apostle Paul tells us in Romans 16:20 that Satan would be “bruise[d].” We might suspect that God would be described in this passage as “the righteous judge,” or “the Lord of hosts,” but there is significance that Paul rather says that this will be accomplished by “the God of peace.” Another example is our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, who threw the moneychangers out of the temple and boldly told the Pharisees that “Ye are of your father the devil...” (John 8:44). Nonetheless, this same Christ bore the name “Prince of Peace!” The Scriptures always present true peace as being at enmity with unrighteousness.

How many churches and denominations have departed from the faith due in part to the fact that those who did believe in the truth of God’s Word often have refused to stand under pressure, and entertain a mistaken idea concerning “peace”? Ministers and elders take a vow to uphold the “peace of the church,” and that is certainly a very serious Biblical command. However, that is never to be used to compromise the “purity of the church.” If you are involved in a struggle for truth in the church, you soon see many who quickly hide in the shadows and say that those on the side of right should just stand down in the name of “peace.”

This is not the peace of the Scriptures. Look at the Apostle Paul, who raised such opposition when he preached. He did not shrink from the face of adversity. I like how our King James Bible describes the effect of his preaching. It says in Acts 19:23 that there arose “no small stir.” And then, in verse 28 we are told that his

preaching caused the crowds to be “full of wrath” and the people cried “Great is Diana of the Ephesians” in opposition to his message. Nonetheless, Paul was a spiritual giant who had the great peace of God. J. Gresham Machen, in the last sermon he delivered at Princeton Seminary, just before leaving it in obedience to God, asked: “What was the secret of [the Apostle Paul’s] power in the mighty conflict; how did he learn to fight? The answer is paradoxical; but it is very simple. Paul was a great fighter because he was at peace. He who said, ‘Fight the good fight of faith,’ spoke also of ‘the peace of God which passeth all understanding’; and in that peace the sinews of his war were found. He fought against the enemies that were without because he was at peace within; there was an inner sanctuary in his life that no enemy could disturb. There, my friends, is the great central truth. You cannot fight successfully with beasts, as Paul did at Ephesus; you cannot fight successfully against evil men, or against the devil and his spiritual powers of wickedness in high places, unless when you fight against those enemies there is One with whom you are at peace.”

We are living in days of wickedness. We are seeing increasing persecution of God’s people. If you continue to stand for the Lord, there are going to be people who will not like it, and conflict will arise. Let the peace of God be a witness to others as your life is an epistle known among men, as Paul states it so well.

However, when you are talking about the teachings of Scripture, and the truths of God, don’t ever compromise in the name of “peace.” Be gracious and be kind. But, be bold in saying, “We ought to obey God rather than man.” And it is that “peace of God which passeth all understanding” which will give you the courage, the strength, the foundation, the ability to “stand in the evil day.” •

## The Good News...

“... I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.” (Jeremiah 31:3).

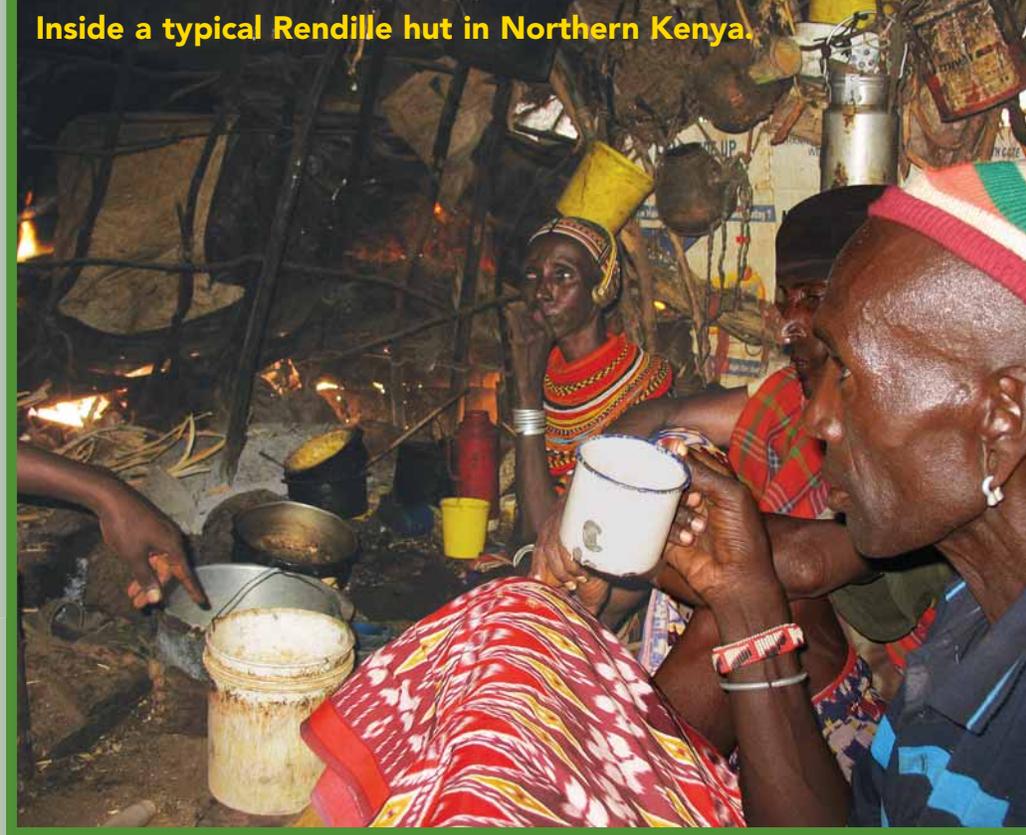
REDEEMING THE TIME

# Kenya Famine Relief Offering

A recent news story carried the headline: "World Food Programme (WFP) Seeks Urgent Assistance as Kenya Sinks Deeper Into Crisis." Our missionaries in Kenya have been sending us the same report. The WFP reports that **nearly four million Kenyans are going hungry**, and some figures are far higher.

**A**s the time of year approaches when we think on the birth of Christ, and many are planning what gifts to give to their friends and family, *Redeeming the Time* would like to encourage you to join us in giving to those in such desperate need.

Unlike many well-known relief organizations, which have to take a large percentage off the top for "administrative costs," it is our plan to give these funds directly to several of our missionaries: Dr. and Mrs. Howard Carlson, Rev. and Mrs. Gary Johnson and Miss Judith Collins. They will oversee the purchase, transportation and distribution of nutritious non-perishable



foods. These missionaries work in different areas of Kenya and already have contacts in place for this to be accomplished.

**Most of these funds will be used to aid Bible-believing Christians and pastors.** Other funds have already been donated which will be given to provide a special meal with meat and vegetables to the students at the Bible College of East Africa campuses in Kenya and Tanzania.

Please fill out the slip inserted with this issue of *Redeeming the Time* and mail it to us with your gift no later than December 1, 2009. Make checks out to "Redeeming the Time" and **be sure to designate "Kenya Famine Relief" on your check.**

**We will report in the next issue how much was raised to help these ones who are suffering from famine and hunger.** •

## FAITH PRESBYTERY, BIBLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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the creation account is some kind of metaphor. Other novel views have been hatched that cause alarm among God's faithful servants. Such innovations have left a trail of grief and disruption. Although many members of the OPC do not hold these views, those who do have been permitted to remain within its borders. Other issues could be mentioned, but the above concerns may give our readers an idea of why the South Atlantic

Presbytery (now Faith Presbytery) could not in good conscience follow the leadership of the Synod into a formal relationship with the OPC.

Years ago, when I was in the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod (RPCES), I read some words from Dr. Carl McIntire, appearing in the *Christian Beacon*: "You are on the wrong road, brethren." These words had a deep impact upon my decision to leave the RPCES (which is now part of the PCA). When I became part of the BPC, I felt that I had found a refuge. There may be others, like me, who are tired of the politics and constant pressure to go away from the

Reformation. It is my prayer that God will bring men together who will stand, without compromise, and "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). •

*\* Westminster Theological Seminary is an independent institution, but has been closely associated with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church since its inception.*



*The Rev. Mark Evans is pastor of Hope Presbyterian Church in Greenville, SC, and is vice moderator of the Bible Presbyterian Church, Faith Presbytery.*