

## **SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY EDITION**

Christ's Wonderful Names	2
<b><i>Thanksgiving for 50 Years of Pastoral Ministry</i></b>	11
Fellowship News	24
Words of Thanks	25
Installation of Rev J Thackway as Minister at Emmanuel	26
Platinum Jubilee Commemorative Bibles	26
Oliver Cromwell	27
Christ the Sinner's Hiding-place	31
Gleanings from the Farwell Sermon of John Berridge	33
The Sanctification of the Sabbath	35
Epilogue	36

# CHRIST'S WONDERFUL NAMES

Malcolm Watts

Our Lord Jesus Christ is called by many names and titles in the Bible. William Goode, a minister of the last century, wrote six large volumes of sermons on 155 of these names. In his 'Self-Interpreting Bible', John Brown of Haddington listed 208 of them. More recently, T.C. Horton of the Bible Institute, Los Angeles, collected together as many as 365. No doubt there are even more to be found within the Bible's sacred pages.

It is possible to become so familiar with these names that we fail to recognise their great importance and significance. In this article we will take another look at just five of the most common.

## God

No truth of the Bible is more clearly revealed than that of the true and proper Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. In a number of places He is expressly called 'God'. Isaiah, the prophet, declares that the coming Saviour, miraculously born, would bear the name 'Emmanuel', '*God with us*' (Is 7:14; cf. Matt 1:21). Later, he predicts that this child-deliverer would be justly called '*the mighty God*', a title indicating ultimate deity (Is 9:6; cf. 10:21; Deut. 10:17; Jer. 32:18); and he further reveals that, one day, in the desert part of the land, someone (a reference to John the Baptist) will appear as an herald to announce the arrival of the Christ as 'the Lord' (Jehovah) and '*our God*' (Is 40:3; cf. Matt 3:1-3).

Divine names are also given to him in the New Testament. As 'the Word', God's self-revelation, He is authoritatively identified as '*God*' (Jn. 1:1; cf. 1:14). He Himself claimed, of course, to be '*equal with God*' (Jn. 5:18) and Thomas, one of his disciples, addressed Him with the words, 'My Lord and *my God*' (Jn. 20:28). As for the apostle Paul, he does not hesitate to assert Christ's essential deity, saying that 'Christ Jesus came, who is over all, *God blessed for ever*' (Rom 9:5) and '*God was manifest in the flesh*' (1 Tim. 3:16).

Other references to his deity include the following: '*God our Saviour*' (Titus 1:3), '*the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ*' (2:13), '*God and our Saviour*

Jesus Christ' (2 Pet. 1:1), '*the true God* and eternal life' (1 Jn. 5:20), and '*the only wise God* our Saviour' (Jude 25). Although some may deny it, this truth stands as the central doctrine of our Christian Faith.

Since Christ is God, there is about him an infinite dignity. Seeing 'the light of the knowledge of *the glory of God* in the face of Jesus Christ' (2 Cor. 4:6), men's hearts are profoundly affected and brought to a holy awe and reverence of him. When Isaiah saw him (in pre-incarnate form), worshipped and adored by exalted seraphim, it was more than he could endure, and he cried out, 'Woe is me! For I am undone...Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts' (Is. 6:5; cf. Jn. 12:41). Similarly, when the apostle John beheld Him, he received such impressions of his divine excellence that he fell prostrate and motionless before him. 'When I saw him', he writes, 'I fell at his feet as dead' (Rev 1:17). There can be no doubt that as God, Christ deserves this profound respect. He should be worshipped and adored. He should also be obeyed.

The fact that God, in the person of Christ, found it necessary to come into this world suggests that men and women were in some kind of trouble or danger. The fact is, they had broken the Moral Law (summed up in the Ten Commandments), and, as a result, were subject to its severe penalty of everlasting punishment; but God, in his great mercy, came to their rescue, prepared himself to take the place of sinners and to suffer their dreadful judgment. This is the Christian Gospel: 'God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us' (Rom. 5:8).

When he became man, the great thought of his heart was to bring his people to himself, that they might enjoy his grace in this world and his glory in the world to come. As for this world, he says, 'Lo, I am with you always...' (Matt 28:20); and as for the next, he says, 'thou shalt be with me in Paradise' (Lk. 23:43). What a glorious prospect for believers! 'So shall we ever be with the Lord' (1 Thess. 4:17).

## **Son**

The Lord Jesus is often referred to as the 'Son'. In Scripture, while others – angels and men - are called 'sons' (Job 38:6; Rom. 8:14-17), Christ is identified

as the Son in a sense far beyond that in which it is applicable to any other (Jn 8:36; Heb. 1:8; 1 Jn. 5:12).

Scripture speaks of him particularly as 'the Son of God', but it also speaks of him as 'the Son of Man' and 'the Son of David'.

He is *the Son of God*. He is described as God's own Son, his *only* Son, his *only begotten* Son (Rom. 8:32; 1 Jn. 4:9), names which imply that he has the same nature as the Father and that he is one with the Father in being, essence, and perfection. On one occasion, when our Lord used the expression 'My Father', even the Jews perceived that, in saying that he was God's Son in this unique sense, he was, in effect, claiming to be God as the Father is God. '*The Jews sought the more to kill him*', we read, because he had '*said that God was his Father, making himself equal with God*' (Jn 5:17,18). On another occasion, He actually asserted his essential unity with the Father, saying, '*I and my Father are one* (that is, one in nature)' (Jn. 10:30) and, again, incensed Jews tried to stone him on the ground of '*blasphemy*', because, they said, '*thou, being a man, makest thyself God*' (10:31-33).

The importance of this truth lies in the fact that God the Son alone could save us from perishing. Only God could make a sufficiently valuable sacrifice (Eph. 5:2; Heb. 10:5-7); only He could bear the terrible guilt and judgment for so many sins (Mk. 14:33,34; Lk. 22:44); and only He could triumph over death, the grave, and hell itself, so that we might be brought to everlasting life (1 Cor. 15:56,57; Col 2:15). Is it any wonder that Scripture describes him as '*the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*' (Titus 2:13)?

He is also, however, *the Son of Man*. This name occurs over 80 times in the Gospels and it is practically always found on the lips of Christ himself (the only exceptions being when others quote him, Jn. 12:34 (twice) and Lk. 24:7). Christ used this name more than he did any other. '*The Son of man* hath not where to lay his head' (Matt. 8:20); '*The Son of man* must suffer many things...and be killed' (Mk. 8:31); '*The Son of man* is come to seek and to save that which is lost' (Lk. 19:10). Now just as 'Son of God' denotes identity of nature with God, so 'Son of man' denotes *identity of nature with man*. Long promised as '*the seed of the woman*' (Gen 3:15), He was eventually '*conceived*' in the virgin

Mary and became '*the fruit of (her) womb*' (Lk. 1:31,42). He became a partner with us in '*flesh and blood*' (Heb. 2:14). He was 'found in fashion as a *man*' (Phil. 2:8).

This is undoubtedly true, but He was not just a man among men. He was '*the Son of man*', in the sense that he was a covenant Head and Representative. Adam had once been given this role, but he miserably failed and brought the whole race to ruin. 'In Adam all die' (1 Cor. 15:22). But he was the 'figure of him that was to come' (Rom 5:14). Adam was only 'the first man': '*the second man* is the Lord from heaven' (1 Cor. 15:45). 'Christ', observed Alexander Patterson, 'cannot be called *the second man* in any other sense than as he is the federal (covenant) head of his spiritual offspring, as Adam was of his natural posterity'. Jesus Christ was set apart on behalf of his people. He became legally one with us. He acted for us. 'Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of *one* the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life' (Rom 5:18).

So why did the Lord become the Son of man? It was in order that, as a Representative, He might discharge our responsibilities in life and in death. As Son of man, therefore, He appeared in a holy human nature (Lk. 1:35; Heb. 7:26), yielded a complete and perfect obedience (Rom 5:19; Phil 2:8), and suffered a cursed and agonising death (Gal. 3:13; 1 Pet 2:24). Only as 'the man' could he have done these things. And, remember, it was only as 'the man' that He could be a compassionate and sympathising Saviour, having experienced for Himself our human weakness, temptations, and sufferings (Heb. 2:17,18; 4:15,16). For these reasons, then, God's Son was '*made of a woman, made under the law*' – '*to redeem (or, save) them that are under the law...*' (Gal. 4:4,5).

One further name which deserves comment in this connection is *the Son of David*. Many Old Testament scriptures taught that the promised Saviour would be of Davidic descent (2 Sam. 7:12,13; Is. 9:7; Jer. 23:5) and those scriptures found wonderful fulfilment in Christ, whose genealogy could be traced back to David (Lk. 3) and who was therefore 'made of the seed of David according to the flesh' (Rom. 1:3). Hence, we find that during his public ministry our Lord

was often addressed in this way. At one point, two blind men followed Him, shouting out, '*Thou Son of David have mercy on us*' (Matt. 9:27); and, on entering Jerusalem at the end of his life, He was surrounded with cries of '*Hosanna (lit., save now) to the son of David*' (Matt. 21:9).

What did it signify? It meant that like David before Him, Christ was a great King with a great kingdom. If sinners would only receive him and become his subjects, he would welcome them into his present kingdom of grace (Matt 6:33) and promise them a place one day in his future kingdom of glory. 'Lord', said the dying thief, 'remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom'. Our Saviour replied, 'Verily, I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise' (Lk. 23:43). 'For so an entrance shalt be ministered unto you abundantly into *the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*' (2 Pet. 1:11).

## **Christ**

In the Old Testament, the official name for the coming Deliverer was 'Messiah'. It occurs over 40 times and, although generally translated in our Version, the actual name 'Messiah' occurs twice in the book of Daniel (9:25,26). The corresponding word in the New Testament is 'Christ', a word which can be found more than 560 times. Now both Messiah and Christ mean the same thing: 'the Anointed'. What does that signify?

Clearly, it refers to the fact that, in former times, certain persons were anointed to office with material oil, symbolising the influence and virtue of the Holy Spirit. The persons so anointed were prophets, priests, and kings. God spoke to Elijah, for example, and told him: 'Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou *anoint to be prophet* in thy room' (1 Kgs. 19:16). In a similar way, he spoke to Moses, saying, 'Thou shalt *anoint Aaron and his sons*, and consecrate them, that they may minister to me *in the priest's office* (Exod. 30:20). And He spoke to Samuel, in the presence of David, saying: "Arise, *anoint him (as King)*; for this is he" (1 Sam. 16:12 cf. 2 Sam. 2:4; 5:3).

Now, the Lord Jesus was anointed by the Spirit (Matt. 3:16,17; Lk. 4:18; Jn. 3:34; Acts 4:27;10:38) that he might minister in the three offices of *Prophet, Priest, and King*.

As *Prophet* (Jn. 6:14; Acts 3:22-24), He is able to speak for God with absolute authority. While in this world, He did this *immediately*, in His own person (Mk. 1:15; Heb. 2:3), but now he does it mediately, through His ministers (Matt. 28:19; Eph. 4:11,12). Furthermore, in addition to both these forms of *external* teaching, there is his *internal* teaching through the Holy Spirit. He is able to open men's understandings, so that we see the beauty and feel the power of divine truth (Lk. 24:45).

What then does Christ teach us? He teaches us the truth about man, that a sinful nature is within him, the source of all known corruption. 'Out of the heart', Jesus once said, 'proceed evil thoughts' (Matt. 15:19). He teaches us the truth about the Law, declaring that God, as Creator and Governor, has given to man a perfect, unalterable, and perpetually binding rule for obedience. In His words, 'It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail' (Lk. 16:17). And, in particular, he teaches the truth about the way of salvation. Even though all are sinners, condemned by the Law, God has not left us to perish in our misery but has sent His Son to lay down his life as a ransom for many, and 'he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life' (Jn. 3:36).

As *Priest* (Ps. 110:4; Heb. 4:14), he deals with an offended God on behalf of guilty sinners, in order to effect a real and lasting reconciliation. Since God is a righteous Governor and men are rebellious creatures, someone was required to meet all the legal claims standing out against them. Accordingly, '*Christ was once offered* to bear the sins of many' (Heb. 9:26). He gave up his body, to be spat at, struck with fists, crowned with thorns, nailed to the cross, and pierced with the spear (Heb. 10:10). He also gave up his soul, declaring that it was 'troubled' and 'exceeding sorrowful, even unto death' (cf. Is. 53:10,11). Thus, his whole person was offered up as an all-sufficient sacrifice; and only through him, and what he has done, can sinners draw near to God. We have 'boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus' (Heb. 10:19).

The other part of Christ's priestly office is to 'make *intercession* for us' (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25). This is not to be understood as supplication (which would be beneath His present dignity), but rather in terms of His appearing before God the Father, with all the merit of his sacrifice, in order to secure and bestow the benefits of His redemption (Heb. 9:24; 12:24; Rev 5:6). As long as Christ is in

the Glory, God will grant us all manner of blessings and receive our worship, praises, and prayers.

As *King* (Ps. 2:6; Lk. 1:32), He changes men's hearts by the power of His grace and constrains them to yield to Him. 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power' (Ps. 110:3). Once brought to faith in him, he rules them by his Word (Exod. 20:3-18; 1 Cor 9:21) and defends them from all evil (Ps. 89:18; Jn. 10:28) until, at last, they find a place in the eternal kingdom. 'The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom' (2 Tim. 4:18). So, in the King's care and keeping, believers are absolutely and eternally safe.

## Jesus

Our Lord's personal name was '*Jesus*'. Literally it means '*Jehovah* (is our *salvation*'. According to the Gospel of Matthew, it was an angel who announced that this was to be the name for the Son of God. 'Thou shalt call his name *Jesus*', the angel said to Joseph, 'for *he shall save* his people from their sins' (Matt. 1:21).

That name – '*Jehovah is our salvation*' – implies some kind of danger. Since all had sinned, the Law denounced a terrible sentence against us. Condemned to a state of separation from God and to dreadful suffering and sorrow, we were totally helpless and quite unable to rescue ourselves. That is what the Bible means when it speaks of us as being '*without strength*' (Rom. 5:6). Nor was it possible for a friend or relative to effect our deliverance. As sinners, they all had to face the same judgment. '*None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him*' (Ps. 49:7).

Although it appeared that we are facing a dark eternity, without a single ray of hope, the Gospel proclaims that *God* has become *our Saviour*. '*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners...*' (1Tim. 1:15).

Now, *Christ is able to save*. As the Mighty God, He was, in every respect, capable of performing the great work of redemption. 'I looked', he says, 'and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold:



therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me' (Is. 63:5; cf. 59:16). No mere man could have saved us. Only God could have done it. And 'God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself' (2 Cor. 5:19). Redemption being now accomplished, he is '*able to save*' and, furthermore, '*able to keep*' (Heb. 7:25; Jude 24).

He is also willing to save. Who can doubt his willingness? Think how He bore his cross up the steep ascent to Calvary, how He let them fix and suspend Him on it, and how He endured externally and internally all that sin deserved. Willing? Of course, He is willing! If sinners, awakened to a sense of their guilt and danger, turn to Him and trust in Him, He will receive them as His people and save them by His grace. We have his word for it. '*Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out*' (Jn. 6:37).

He is even ready to save. That is exactly what the Bible says: '*The Lord (is) ready to save*' (Is. 38:20; cf. Neh. 9:17). Perhaps you feel a complete failure; perhaps you are ashamed of what you have done; or perhaps you have become almost desperate in your search for rest and peace. Why don't you call upon Christ and entrust yourself to Him? Only He can meet the deepest need of the human heart. 'Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here am I' (Is 58:9). He is ready to save. The question is: Are you ready to call upon him?

## **Lord**

The term 'Lord' often occurs in the New Testament. Although it can simply denote an important person, like a Roman Emperor, (Acts 25:26), it is often used religiously as an equivalent for 'God' (as in the title 'Lord God Almighty', Rev 16:7). In this latter sense it is often used as a designation of Jesus Christ. Hence the apostle Paul's reference to '*the princes of this world*' who '*crucified the Lord of glory*' (1 Cor. 2:8).

The title 'Lord' implies infinite power and authority; and Jesus Christ declares of himself, '*the Son of Man is Lord*' (Mk. 2:28). This is not so much the lordship which belongs to him as God, but his mediatorial lordship, conferred upon him as the God-man and our Saviour. In this respect, he is '*Lord of all*' (Acts 10:36). Furthermore, this title is expressive of the honour and glory which are always

due to Him. We read that David, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, 'called him *Lord*' (Matt 22:43) and also that Isaiah, in a prophetic vision, saw the holy angels adoring Him, and saying, '*Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts*' (Jn. 12:39-41; cf. Is. 6:1,3,10).

It is most important to remember that Christ is Lord throughout the entirety of our Christian lives.

Christ is Lord when we begin the Christian life. What exactly happens in that experience of conversion? Well, the Gospel (or Christian message) is brought to us and, through the Gospel, we are confronted with the person of Christ who once died for sinners but who is now alive to bless us with His great salvation. To become real Christians, we must respond to Christ in faith, as the Scripture says: '*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved*' (Acts 16:31). Saving faith (or the faith which saves) receives and relies upon Christ as both Saviour *and* Lord. It enables us to look to Christ alone for forgiveness and acceptance; and it constrains us to surrender our hearts and lives to the lordship of Christ. In other words, we trust Him to save us and to rule us. As Paul wrote to some new believers, '*Ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord*' (Col. 2:6).

Christ is Lord when we live the Christian life. Christ expects His believing people, not only to be grateful for what He has done for them, but also to be obedient to what He has commanded them. It is right that we call him 'Master and Lord' in our praises, prayers, and in our professions of faith; but, as He says himself in the Gospels, '*Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?*' (Lk. 6:46).

My friend, are you a real Christian seeking to live in obedience to Christ, or are you a nominal Christian who pays mere lip-service to Christ and who only half-heartedly follows him? Do beware of a dead faith! The Bible says, '*What doth it profit, though a man say he hath faith?*' (James 2:14).

Genuine faith in the heart produces sincere obedience in the life. It is exactly as our Lord said, 'If ye continue in my word (i.e. in obedience to it), *then* are ye my disciples indeed' (Jn. 8:31). Knowing this, let us be much exercised to

evidence faith in such matters as strict observance of the Sabbath, spiritual separation from the world, and sacrificial service to our God. 'Then shall I not be ashamed when I have respect unto all thy commandments' (Ps. 119:6).

Christ is Lord when we end the Christian life. If we have trusted in Christ alone for salvation, and evidenced the reality of that faith in a life of consistent (although, sadly, not perfect) obedience, the Lord will be with us at the end to calm our fears and to give us hope. He will not fail us. He will open the kingdom to us, there to bless us for evermore. Let David speak for us here: 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, *I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me...* Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: *and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever*' (Ps 23:4,6).

In conclusion, we must say that the Lord Jesus Christ has these and many other wonderful names. Each sparkles like a rare and precious jewel in His crown. Yet as the Christian poet wrote,

Join all the glorious names  
Of wisdom, love, and power,  
That ever mortals knew,  
That angels ever bore;  
All are too mean to speak his worth,  
Too mean to set my Saviour forth.

## **THANKSGIVING FOR 50 YEARS OF PASTORAL MINISTRY**

**Ron Morris**

On the afternoon of Saturday 26th March 2022, a time of thanksgiving was held at Dinton Village Hall, some eight miles west of Salisbury. It was a lovely warm Spring afternoon and approximately 130 people gathered together, including over twenty ministers.

It was with great regret that Malcolm Watts could not attend due to contracting COVID some days prior to the arranged event. However, the afternoon was 'Live Streamed' so he could see and hear the speakers and proceedings.

One of our Elders, Paul T, welcomed everyone and explained the outline of the afternoon and then handed over to The Rev John Thackway from Holywell, North Wales, who chaired the meetings.

The first part commenced with the singing of the metrical Psalm 105, verses 1-6.

Dr David Allen from Suffolk then led the meeting in prayer.

Rev Thackway explained that Malcolm Watts has served the Lord in various spheres whilst also being the Pastor of Emmanuel Church, Salisbury. We give thanks to God for all things come of Him, and exceptional grace was given to shepherd a company of people and also to exercise a wider sphere of service. There would be a number of speakers representing his work in the church and outside the church.

Two guiding principles would help in the consideration of the thanks and tributes:

“Honour to whom honour is due” (Romans 13 v 7), and “Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory,” (Psalm 115 v 1).

### **The Bible League Trust**

Rev Neil Pfeiffer from Swansea, being the present Chairman of the Trust, outlined the service rendered by Malcolm Watts as Chairman from the late 1970's until his retirement a few years ago.

He had promoted faithfulness to the original purpose of the Trust as started after C.H.Spurgeon's faithful and noble stand for Truth during “the Downgrade Controversy”.

He also mentioned how faithful and friendly Malcolm Watts had been and how he was always willing to help with theological issues, giving advice on appropriate books and relevant scriptures.

Rev Thackway, who is also the Editor of the Bible League Magazine, commented that Malcolm Watts had encouraged a strength of fellowship and a 'standing together' for the truths maintained and defended by the Trust, especially during times of controversy.

### **The Trinitarian Bible Society**

The current Chairman, Pastor Gerald Buss of the Old Baptist Church, Chippenham, spoke of Malcolm Watts as the previous Chairman of the Society. He expressed the view that the TBS owed him a great debt of gratitude for his guidance at a difficult time and for setting the Committee on a solid foundation. Mr Buss particularly mentioned Malcolm Watts' unqualified adherence to and promotion of the Society's principles, which included the necessity of the Bible translation from the Hebrew Masoretic and the Greek Received Texts.

Mr Buss added that it had been a privilege to work with him, for he had been a wise counsellor and a faithful guide. He added that, on a personal basis, Malcolm had been such a good friend and a help.

### **Wessex Reformed Ministers' Fraternal**

Rev Geoff Marshall of Totton Evangelical Church spoke of the help and great blessing he had been to him when he commenced his ministry at Totton. The Fraternal, chaired by Malcolm Watts, had been a special blessing to many Ministers and Pastors. The numbers regularly attending has grown significantly, and the venue has therefore been moved to the church building at Totton. It has been so good to have this gathering within an hour or so of most of the Ministers' churches. Mr Watts' knowledge on any subject and his concern for the cause of Christ had given the meetings real strength of leadership.

Another member of the Fraternal, Rev Aaron Lewis of Crosslanes Chapel, Mockbeggar, expressed his appreciation of his friendship, guidance, and

support, both personally and as a Church Fellowship. He recalled his childhood years when he occasionally attended Emmanuel Church and heard his preaching which made a very strong impression upon him.

Mr Watts had been an example to him as a young minister and he was grateful for his guidance with respect to Reformed Worship and unaccompanied Psalm-singing. Aaron Lewis also mentioned Malcolm Watts' encouragement to believe that there is yet to be a better age for the Gospel based on Romans Chapter 11, with the conversion of the Jews and the consequent blessing of the Gentile world.

Mr Lewis also recalled a recent time (September 2021) in Scotland, at the Larbert School in Theology, when he gave a lecture on "the Felt Presence of God" and it was so much appreciated that, after the sermon, there was a very significant silence. The brethren present sensed that, in that address, they had known "the Felt Presence of God" and something of "heaven on earth."

Rev Peter Bruce of Chardsmead Baptist Church, Bridport, spoke movingly of the help Mr Watts had been to his Church as Moderator. He had encouraged him in his call to the Pastoral ministry which led to his becoming the Minister of the Church. His personal friendship and support had been invaluable and so much appreciated. He conducted the service for his Ordination; and he has remained a good friend and guide to the Church.

Peter Bruce also mentioned his deep appreciation for his teaching at the Salisbury Reformed Seminary and how his lectures had been both instructive and deeply moving.

### **Salisbury Reformed Seminary**

Mr Thackway declared how good it was that, after much prayer and consultation, the Seminary opened to students in January 2018. He asked Rev Richard Clarke, Pastor of Beacon Park Baptist Church, Plymouth, who was a Trustee and the Treasurer of the Seminary, to say something further about the Seminary.

Mr Clarke began by recalling his first meeting Malcolm Watts in 1984 when he lectured at the London Reformed Baptist Seminary at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. He recalled how he and other young men were moved as they heard him speak, for his style of delivery was that of a preacher rather than a lecturer.

Their friendship had grown over the years as Mr Watts encouraged the work at Beacon Park Baptist Church and preached at the service which marked the church's 10th Anniversary.

The idea of a Seminary in Salisbury had often been discussed and prayed over. So, when Emmanuel Church acquired Grove House and the grounds for a car-park, Mr Clarke had felt moved to 'phone Malcolm Watts and to say: "This is it! A building for the Seminary". So, in due time, the Seminary came into being, with much thanksgiving to the Lord for His wonderful provision.

Another of the Seminary's Trustees, Rev Chris Buss, spoke of being asked in the early days of the project to join a ministers' prayer-meeting in Salisbury regarding the possible founding of a Seminary. He recalled how affected he had been by the devotional address given by Malcolm Watts at that meeting. His input into the Seminary while maintaining his Pastoral ministry at Emmanuel Church, was both great and admirable.

The Churches at the present time have a great need for preaching that conveys what must be "known" and "felt". Pastor Buss was so grateful for his friendship and help, likening him to "a modern-day Puritan."

Mr Buss mentioned that, in recent days, he had preached at Emmanuel Church on a number of occasions, and he had found the congregation to be hungry for the Word of God. This appetite had been nurtured by the ministry of Mr Watts over many years, and it was still a blessing for both members and visitors.

Peter Beale, formerly of Bulford Congregational Church, spoke of his long friendship with Malcolm Watts over some 42 years. Peter Beale found Malcolm Watts to be a good friend, always providing encouragement and showing a

willingness to help. He too spoke of the blessing that the Ministers' Fraternal had provided.

John Thackway concluded these ministerial tributes with reference to his own long association with Malcolm Watts. Back in their mutual home county of Devon, he heard of the preaching of this young man from Barnstaple. After graduating from the London Bible College in 1970, Malcolm Watts preached in Ilfracombe and then became assistant to the Rev Arthur Gove of Brookdale Evangelical Church, Ilfracombe.

Later that year, Malcolm Watts was called to be the Minister of Emmanuel Church, Salisbury. At the Induction Service, Pastor Harris of London and Pastor Gove of Ilfracombe very helpfully preached God's Word. Then, in 1974, John Thackway was invited to assist at Emmanuel Church, Salisbury. When, later, John became Minister at Devizes, Malcolm Watts preached and gave the "the charge" to the new Minister. They have remained very good friends over the years and Mr Thackway expressed his great appreciation for Malcolm Watts' friendship, counsel, and example. At their weddings, each had been "best man" for the other, and many happy times were spent in the company with Jill and Margaret and their families. Even after the move to Holywell, North Wales, these precious times of fellowship were maintained and greatly enjoyed.

This first session of the afternoon was concluded with the singing of Psalm 84, verses 1-7. This was followed by prayer.

After a short break, the Thanksgiving Service followed, again led by John Thackway.

## **The Thanksgiving Service**

Psalm 105, verses 1-6, was sung and then Rev Hywel Roberts was invited to read from God's Word. Before doing so, he mentioned that he had known Malcolm Watts since 1970/71 and, as friends, they had been often in contact since that time. He then read the Scriptures from 1 Corinthians, chapter 1, verses 18 to 31.



Prayer was then offered by Rev Richard Turner of Hyde Street Chapel, Winchester, who had had known Malcolm Watts for many years as a fellow-minister and a valued friend. Mr Watts had been instrumental in Richard Turner's settlement at Hyde Street Chapel.

The sermon was preached by Rev Maurice Roberts of Inverness, who first met Malcolm Watts over 40 years ago, since when they had been close friends.

The text on this anniversary occasion was 1 Corinthians, chapter 1, verses 30 and 31: "*But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who is of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*"

After introducing the text, Mr Roberts stated his reasons for choosing it. First of all, he chose it because it concerns the Son of God our Lord Jesus Christ; secondly, he chose it because He is heaven's beloved One — the Father and the Holy Spirit looked on Him with delight as He undertook the great work of man's salvation; and thirdly, he chose it because, as the Saviour, He is the very centre of the Gospel and grand theme of the Christian ministry.

He continued by saying, two men have had a great influence upon men and women: the first was Adam, the Head and Representative of the world, the one who brought the whole of mankind into a state of sin and misery; the second was the God-man, our Lord Jesus Christ, called in Scripture "the second man", "the last Adam", the Head and Representative of the Church, who provided a salvation for God's elect who, by sovereign and free grace, are brought to faith in Him. Here is the truth: the first Adam put us all wrong; the last Adam can put us all right.

It was then pointed out that, according to the text, there were four aspects to our Lord's saving ministry: He became our wisdom, our righteousness, our sanctification, and our redemption.

Wisdom. He makes us wise, through the ministry of the Word and through the ministry of the Spirit. Naturally, we are not wise but foolish, loving the world, its pleasure, its wealth, and its conduct. Yet, really, only one thing matters: living

to the glory of God, recognizing that only the Bible, God's Word written, tells us how to do this, and, therefore, we need to turn from sin and turn to the Lord, experiencing, through Christ, the great change of conversion.

Righteousness. The great question is, How can guilty, corrupt and condemned sinners be forgiven and be reckoned and accepted as righteous in God's sight? The Bible says that the answer to that question is not the answer commonly heard in the world, which is, try to be good, avoid hurting others, don't swear, steal from others, or break the Sabbath. No, this kind of righteousness will not do at all. We need a far better than our own righteousness. We need the righteousness of Christ; and when we recognize that we are poor, wretched sinners, and turn to Him in faith and trust, His righteousness – His obedience to blood – is accounted ours, and we are saved on the basis of His work – saved through the merits of Christ - and Christ alone.

Sanctification. He is able to renew us through His indwelling Spirit, so that a wonderful change is wrought in the heart and in the life. The Lord can make us progressively holy, although, in this life, we are never perfectly holy. We cry in prayer to Him: "O Lord, make me holy!" and He answers that prayer, enabling us to die more and more to sin, and to live more and more to righteousness. The change effected in us is such a change that there appears a likeness to God – a conformity to Him who is "the image of the invisible God."

Redemption. This means deliverance from sin and its dreadful consequences. Christ, when here on earth, paid the price of our redemption; and this is applied to us at conversion, and carried on in sanctification, and perfected in the glory of heaven. Then it is that we shall be delivered from all the terrible effects of sin, and we shall enter into the full blessedness of everlasting life. Christ is coming again, returning to this world. When He appears, He will burn up this sin-marred world, making a new heaven and a new earth; and He will gather us, body and soul, into a new and far better world. Then it will be that we shall experience full and final redemption.

Mr Roberts was very much helped in his preaching, powerfully emphasizing these great and glorious truths of the Gospel. As a result, our hearts felt truly blessed with joy and with peace.

The service concluded with the singing of Psalm 27, verses 4-8 and 13-14, after which John Thackway pronounced the Benediction.

## **Emmanuel Church Tributes**

Emmanuel's Elder, Paul T, introduced Colin M, a Deacon of the Church, who came forward to speak. Colin said that we had heard from a number of how they came to know Malcolm Watts and he too recalled his first meeting. It was on 31st August 1981 in an area of Salisbury known as Hudson's Field. There was a charity event with lots of stalls etc. and Emmanuel Church had a stall with Bibles and Christian books. Mr Watts and Jill were there, along with a number of others, and Colin was introduced to him. The Lord was using others to guide Colin at that stage in his life and, before parting, Malcolm Watts had said, "We hope we shall see you on the Lord's Day." And so it was - and so it still is over forty years later! He and Jill were so welcoming; and he was often invited to the Manse on Lord's Days. Jill was ever the gracious and kind hostess. She was also very active in many and various aspects of the Church's work.

As a token of the Church's love, we presented a bouquet of flowers for Jill, and her daughter, Naomi, stepped up to receive this on her behalf.

A folder had also been compiled for both Malcolm and Jill Watts, containing messages and recollections from Members, including a number of the photographs. The folder also contained the names of the many that had been in membership over the years.

Colin went on to explain that the members had wished to make a gift to Pastor and Jill, hoping that it could perhaps be used towards a family event such as a family holiday. Their daughter Lydia stepped up to receive this gift.

Paul T then explained the arrangements for refreshments and thanked everyone for coming, especially those who had travelled a long distance. A video link had been set up on a laptop in the hall, making it possible for friends to speak to Pastor Watts.

A prayer of thanks was offered for the food, and for the Lord's blessing, as, later people would be travelling back to their homes.

The refreshments were presented and arranged in a safe way. The good weather enabled folk to eat in the grounds while others were free to eat and fellowship indoors.

It was a very precious and most memorable time. We left with a profound sense of gratitude to God for all His blessings over the last fifty years.

## **The Sabbath services**

The next day, it was our privilege to welcome to our church and pulpit Rev William Macleod of Glasgow and Rev Dewi Higham of Cardiff.

In the morning, Mr Macleod spoke warmly of Malcolm Watts and his Ministry over the last fifty years; and then, coming to the sermon, he took as his text 2 Timothy 4:6-8 – *“I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”*

Mr Macleod began by mentioning the circumstances in which Paul wrote this epistle. It was the last he wrote, written from a prison in Rome, as the apostle awaited a final appearance in court, followed by his execution. He observed that the text deals with the Present: *“I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand”*; the Past: *“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith”*; and the Future: *“Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge,*

*shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."*

The Present: Here, Paul refers to his whole life and ministry as something presented as a sacrifice to God and, recalling that as some of the ancient sacrifices were offered with a drink-offering or a libation of wine, he viewed his approaching death as the completion of his sacrifice - his final sacrificial act. He was ready to be "offered" – a word signifying the pouring out of a drink offering. Mr Macleod reminded us that long before this, on the Damascus road, Paul had been spiritually arrested and, humbled at the feet of Jesus Christ, he had said: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6). Thereafter he was – body and soul – at the Lord's disposal, serving Him in the preaching of the Gospel, right up to the present time, and he anticipated that his death would complete the sacrifice. The true Christian and the true Christian minister is the Lord's servant in life and in death.

The Past: Looking back, Paul can write: "I have fought a good fight", knowing that he has been in battle with the world, the flesh, and the devil, in which battle he has suffered opposition, even persecution; he has been exhausted in his care for the churches, in sorting out their problems; and he has contended for Truth, against the propagators of all kinds of false doctrine. Changing the figure, he adds: "I have finished my course", meaning that he has striven to persevere in the Christian life, keeping to the track, and aiming to fulfil the object his life. He concludes: "I have kept the faith", asserting, before God, that he has guarded and kept intact the great truths of God's Word which were entrusted to him.

The Future: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day..." For Paul – and for every believer, the prospect is wonderful. The crown of righteousness is the reward, the honour and the glory one day to be given us by the Lord. And it is most certain and sure. Our labour is not in vain in the Lord. The reward is, not for Paul only, but for all who love Christ, longing one day to see Him face to face. Mr Macleod concluded his sermon with the question: "Do you love the Lord?"

After the morning service, lunch was provided in the church hall for our guest preachers and their wives when a precious time of fellowship was enjoyed.

In the evening service, Dewi Higham spoke of Malcolm Watts as a preacher, one who encouraged other Pastors, and who always emphasized heart-religion, something, Mr Higham said, that he worked out in practice.

The text chosen was the apostle's prayer for the Ephesian Christians in Ephesians 3:14-19: in particular, one part of that prayer, "*that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith*" (verse 17).

It was noted that the preceding words refer to the Holy Spirit's ministry in preparing our hearts for this Special Guest. Mr Higham then spoke of two things: A Heart without Christ and A Heart with Christ.

1. A Heart without Christ. At the beginning, immediately after his creation, Adam knew God in a spiritual and intimate way, enabling him to enjoy the closest fellowship with God as he walked and talked with God in the Garden of Eden. But then Satan came to spoil that relationship by tempting Adam to sin, thus separating him from God. What a sad state Adam was now in! Mr Higham likened him to a ruined castle, outside of which was a notice for all to see, which read as follows: "Once upon a time a great King lived here." A missing King!

Adam's heart was empty, even as our hearts are by nature. We are, in the apostle's words, "without God." It is a tragedy without doubt. Yet we are distracted from this awful reality, and we try to fill the void left by God with anything and everything but God: hence, we try to fill our hearts with pleasure, family, work, social activities, position, success, and wealth. But it is all to no avail. There remains a God-shaped blank within, which nothing but God can fill. Some think religion – even evangelical religion – might be the answer; but it is no substitute for God. At best, it is a mere "form of godliness" which denies "the power", truth in the head, but nothing of God known and felt in the heart!

How dark is such a heart! How distressed! How desperate! The congregation was challenged. What is in your hearts?

2. A Heart with Christ. In almighty power, the Lord comes to our hearts. He makes Himself known to us. He makes us aware of our need. He then grants us “faith” – “saving faith” – enabling us to receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation. Such faith brings a sinner to Christ and brings Christ to a sinner. “O come to my heart, Lord Jesus: there is room in my heart for Thee.” How wonderful that He, who is beloved of the Father, beloved of the angels and glorified spirits, and beloved of all true believers, deigns to respond to faith, and dwell in our hearts!

The King of Kings and Lord of Lords comes to our hearts. He enters those hearts as Saviour, washing away our sins and granting us the beauty of His righteousness; and He enters as Lord, effecting an amazing change, reigning within, both to save and to keep. Henceforth, He is experimentally known by us, as He makes the heart His permanent abode. He will ever be gracious to us, restoring us when backslidden, quickening us when we are spiritually weak, blessing us at the point of every need; and never, ever leaving us.

How do we know that He is in our hearts? Where He is, there is true spiritual life. We were exhorted to examine ourselves, and “look of life.”

The sermon ended with a searching, challenging question: Is Christ in your heart? At the end of the day, it is this alone which matters.

Final emphasis was given to the words of the text, “that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.”

As the Sabbath drew to a close, we all felt richly blessed of God through the ministry of His precious Word. Our prayers had become our praises.

Please see the link below for the anniversary weekend meetings and services:  
[salisburyemmanuel.org.uk/anniversary](http://salisburyemmanuel.org.uk/anniversary)

# FELLOWSHIP NEWS

**Liz Storey**

It is approaching the time of the year when some of our young people are studying for exams and/or needing to make decisions about possible jobs or further education. We therefore pray that the Lord would help them and guide them in their future plans.

The 'Ladies' Bible and Craft' group and the 'Men's Prayer Breakfast' group continue on a monthly basis and, if any have not yet attended and would like to, they would be most welcome. As well as a precious time of Christian fellowship it is a good opportunity to get to know others in our Church a little better. In case any ladies are concerned, the 'Craft' element does not require any great skill, although some (myself not included) are very talented, but a piece of cake that is generally in ready supply helps things along nicely!

Please remember the Youth Work as it recommences after the holiday break and as the leaders plan the new term's lessons and activities. The Sunday School started a Friday Club recently, so we pray that this further Gospel opportunity would be used by the Lord for the saving of souls and that it would also be a means of encouraging more children to come along.

We are so thankful to the Lord to hear good reports from Pastor Thackway and Margaret following Margaret's recent surgery and her subsequent appointment with the Consultant. We continue to pray very much for them as they now move from Holywell to Salisbury, and especially that the Lord will provide a suitable property for them to buy here, now that their house is sold. We acknowledge the gracious dealings of our God in bringing them to us, and providing so wonderfully for us as a Church at this time.

We continue to be mindful of those in our fellowship who have been unwell in recent days and who are still recovering; those who are awaiting on-going treatment; or those who are still experiencing pain or poor health. It is good to pray for one another, but better still to know we have a God who is able to supply all that we need.



Our Open-Air Witness in the Guildhall Square started again last month and continues now each month on a Saturday at 11am, until October. If you are able to lend support, check out your Church Calendar for the dates, or listen to the weekly notices as to when they are on. We pray that as the Gospel is shared with those in our locality, they would be drawn to the Saviour.

We remember too those presently seeking employment and those who have started new jobs. Chloe S has submitted her CV for consideration in a variety of voluntary employment roles in the area, and she is also looking to the Lord for the provision of future accommodation.

## **WORDS OF THANKS**

We thank God for all the blessings of His grace over the last 50 years and we thank the officers and members for all that was done over the Anniversary Weekend, making it such a precious and memorable time. Our hearts are full of gratitude for friends, many of whom travelled great distances to be with us on this special occasion. Your friendship and fellowship are deeply appreciated and we were so pleased to see you that weekend.

The preaching of God's Word on the Saturday and on the Lord's Day was so profitable and helpful; and we particularly thank those who ministered so ably in the Lord's name: Maurice Roberts, William Macleod, and Dewi Higham. It was also a great joy to see their wives who accompanied them.

So many kind things were said at that time; and the love and support which were in evidence made us so thankful for our true and faithful friends.

Although neither Jill nor I could be physically present, we were able to watch the proceedings online; and we wish to thank the officers, members and friends for Jill's beautiful bouquet of flowers and also for the very generous monetary gift, intended for family occasions and, hopefully, for a family holiday together. Thank you, dear friends, for such a blessed and happy weekend.

*Malcolm & Jill Watts*

The church here in Salisbury is so grateful for the loving, prayerful, and very practical support of Christian friends and churches in fellowship with us. Through a very difficult time, this kindness has meant so much to us, far more than we can say; and we thank you from the depths of our hearts. The Lord richly bless you for all your concern and for all your very kind help.

*The members of Emmanuel Church, Salisbury*

## **THE INSTALLATION OF REV JOHN P. THACKWAY AS MINISTER OF EMMANUEL CHURCH, SALISBURY.**

This will take place, God willing, in the church building on Saturday, 18th June, at 3pm. At the request of Mr Thackway, Malcolm Watts will minister God's Word on this very special occasion.

Refreshments will be provided after the service.

We hope many will be able to join us in welcoming John Thackway as our new minister.

## **PLATINUM JUBILEE COMMEMORATIVE BIBLES**

We are all well aware that 2022 marks the truly unique 70th anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II's accession to the throne of Great Britain & Northern Ireland. At her coronation in 1953, the Queen was presented with an Authorized Version of the Bible, with these accompanying words:

*"Our gracious Queen: to keep your Majesty ever mindful of the Law and the Gospel of God as the Rule for the whole life and government of Christian Princes, we present you with this Bible, the most valuable thing that this world affords. Here is Wisdom; This is the royal Law; These are the lively Oracles of God."*

In response to the Anniversary occasion, the Trinitarian Bible Society has specially produced the Platinum Jubilee Commemorative Bible which it hopes will be widely distributed free of charge to schools across the land.

In this regard may we kindly draw your attention to the article in the January – March 2022 edition of the TBS Quarterly Record (pages 32 – 35) detailing the ways in which we as a church could be involved in this distribution opportunity. The Wessex Auxiliary is already fully involved in this great endeavour to put the Word of God into the hands of boys and girls in our schools as outlined in their latest Newsletter (issue no. 9) and has further details of how we can help, including that of the need of assistance in emailing the considerable numbers of schools in the Wessex region.

Although the main thrust of the Auxiliaries' Platinum Bible distribution is to Year 6 school leavers in Primary Schools, a church could decide to widen its offer of Bibles to children of other year groups within a particular school or schools if it so desired. Emmanuel Church has members' children in six primary schools in the area (please see Hazel M or Simon T for the schools' names). Perhaps the church would be interested in offering Platinum Jubilee Bibles to these schools in particular? If you would like to know more Simon T would be pleased to answer your questions.

## **OLIVER CROMWELL**

**Malcolm H. Watts**

### **Part 1**

Opinion about Oliver Cromwell has always been sharply divided. In a Royal Proclamation he was described as 'a certain base mechanic fellow'<sup>1</sup>. Edward, Earl of Clarendon, thought him 'a brave' but 'bad man'<sup>2</sup>. On the other hand, John Milton, a devoted admirer, wrote of him:

'Cromwell, our chief of men, who through a cloud  
Not of war only, but detractions rude,  
Guided by faith and matchless fortitude  
To peace and truth thy glorious way hast ploughed...'<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> John Thurloe, *State Papers* (London: Printed for the Executor of the late Mr Fletcher Gyles; Thomas Woodward and Charles Davis, 1742), vol. 2, p. 248

<sup>2</sup> G. D. Boyle (Editor), *Characters and Episodes of the Great Rebellion, Selected from The History and Autobiography of Edward, Earl of Clarendon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1889), p. 284

<sup>3</sup> John Milton, *Sonnet to the Lord General Cromwell*, May 1652, included in *The Poetical Works of John Milton* edited by David Masson, M.A., LL.D. (London: Macmillan and Co., 1874) vol. II, p.484

And Robert Baillie, the Scottish Commissioner at the Westminster Assembly, once called him ‘a very wise and active head, universallie well beloved, as religious as stout (or, courageous).’<sup>4</sup>

Even in more modern times there is controversy over his reputation. Sir Winston Churchill, in his *History of the English Speaking Peoples*, accuses him of ‘merciless wickedness’ and even says that he ‘debased the standard of human conduct and sensibly darkened the journey of mankind.’<sup>5</sup> But, on the other side, Maurice Ashley (who rather ironically was one-time research assistant to Churchill) wrote a book entitled *The Greatness of Oliver Cromwell* and he concludes that book with the words - ‘Oliver Cromwell was a Christian by practice as well as precept...we may salute the greatness of Oliver Cromwell.’<sup>6</sup>

I propose to give an account of Cromwell’s life and then some assessment of the man, who was ‘Protector and Puritan’.

## 1. Early Life

Oliver Cromwell was descended, on his father’s side, from Richard Morgan, son of Thomas Cromwell’s sister. Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, had been well-known, of course, as chief adviser to Henry VIII; and Richard Morgan took the surname of his powerful uncle and entered the service of King Henry.

Oliver’s father was Robert Cromwell, one of the ‘quiet Protestant gentry’, who was a conscientious Landlord, a Member of Parliament, and a Justice of the Peace. Robert married Elizabeth Steward in 1590. She came from Norfolk and belonged to a family of wealthy landowners. After the death of her first husband, she married Robert in the year 1590. And so, as Cromwell says of

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<sup>4</sup> Robert Baillie, *The Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie, A.M.*, edited by David Laing (Edinburgh: Printed for Robert Ogle, 1841), vol. 2, p. 229

<sup>5</sup> Winston Churchill, *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples* (London: Cassell and Company Ltd., 1936), vol. 2, p. 232. However it is true to say that elsewhere Churchill writes more favourably of him, as when he refers to him at the height of his power as “the champion of Protestantism, the arbiter of Europe, and patron of learning and the arts. We feel the dignity of his bearing to all men, and his tenderness towards young people. We feel his passion for England, as fervent as Chatham’s, and in some ways more intimate and emotional. No one can remain unconscious of his desire to find a moral basis for his power, or of his sense of responsibility to his country and his God ranging far beyond the horizon of his life” (ibid. p. 249)

<sup>6</sup> Maurice Ashley, *The Greatness of Oliver Cromwell* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1957), p.369

himself in one of his speeches, 'I was by birth a Gentleman; living neither in any considerable height, nor yet in obscurity.'<sup>7</sup>

Oliver Cromwell was born at Huntingdon, on April 25th, 1599, and was named after his uncle, Sir Oliver Cromwell of Hinchinbrook. He was the fifth child born to Robert and Elizabeth. They had ten children in all, but Oliver's two brothers dying young, he became their only surviving son. At the time when Oliver was born, Elizabeth I was on the throne and William Shakespeare was alive. Precious little is known of his younger years, but when aged four, it is thought that he may have witnessed the royal party arriving at Hinchinbrook. King James, son of Mary Stuart, coming from the North to take possession of the English Throne, stayed for a while at Sir Oliver's residence.

There can be no doubt that Oliver was blessed with a Godly upbringing, his father being, as Samuel Gardiner calls him, 'a man of sober Puritanism'<sup>8</sup> and his mother was clearly in sympathy with that Faith. In this home, therefore, there was in evidence 'a trustful faith in God'.

Oliver attended the Free School next to the Hospital of St. John at Huntingdon. The headmaster there was Dr Thomas Beard, a Cambridge Graduate and Clergyman (1565-1632), and 'a ferocious Puritan who believed the Pope was the Antichrist'<sup>9</sup>. Certainly Beard published, in 1597, a work entitled *The Theatre of God's Judgements*, a book which set out to show, by vivid examples, that wicked men - including Kings and Rulers! – are often punished by God in this life. Later, in 1616, he wrote *A Retractive of the Romish Religion*, dedicating this new book to Sir Oliver Cromwell, whom he warmly commended for his love of 'true religion' and his detestation of 'the Romish Synagogue'.

In 1616, when Oliver was just seventeen years old, he proceeded to the nearby University of Cambridge. His College was Sidney Sussex, which had a firm Protestant foundation and existed, primarily, to train men for the Christian Ministry. The Masters and Fellows of this College had to be those who abhorred Popery, and the students were forbidden to attend taverns or use dice and the cards. The Master of the College at this time was Dr Samuel

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<sup>7</sup> *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* (Third Edition, in Three Volumes), edited by Thomas Carlyle (London: Chapman and Hall, 1886), vol. 3, p.7

<sup>8</sup> Samuel Rawson Gardiner, M.A., *Oliver Cromwell* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1901), p.2

<sup>9</sup> C. V. Wedgwood, *Oliver Cromwell* (Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 1973), p.10

Ward, 'a true Protestant' as well as a strong Calvinist and Puritan. He was later invited by the King to be one of the English delegates at the Synod of Dort. Sadly, Oliver's time at University was cut short by the sudden death of his father in 1617. This made it necessary for him to return to Huntingdon and to act as head of the family, looking after his mother and his unmarried sisters.

## 2. Conversion to Christ

When twenty or twenty-one years old, Oliver was introduced at Felsted in Essex to Sir James Bouchier, a wealthy City of London merchant and landowner. It was while visiting Bouchier in London that he met this man's eldest daughter, Elizabeth. She was two years his senior, but he fell in love with her, and they married at St. Giles Cripplegate on 22nd August, 1620. Oliver loved her very much, as may be seen in one of his later letters in which he affectionately says to her, 'thou art dearer to me than any creature.'<sup>10</sup> They received the gift of a son, Robert, in 1621, Oliver in 1623, Bridget in 1624, Richard in 1626, Henry in 1628, and Elizabeth in 1629. In all they had five sons and four daughters. For Oliver, the years which followed were years of comparative seclusion, in which he busied himself in matters domestic and agricultural. 'It is...in these years', observes Thomas Carlyle, 'that we must place... what he (Oliver), with unspeakable joy, would name his Conversion; his deliverance from the jaws of Eternal Death.'<sup>11</sup>

About this time, Sir Theodore Mayerne, a leading physician, noticed that Oliver was 'exceedingly melancholy.' Often, in the middle of the night, Dr John Simcott, another physician, would be called for and he would seek to bring Oliver some relief. D'Aubigne puts this down, at least in part, to Oliver's experience of conviction of sin. His actual conversion to Christ is undated, but later, in 1638, he wrote to his cousin Mrs St. John, reflecting on the event as follows: 'Blessed be His name for shining upon so dark a heart as mine! You know what my manner of life hath been. Oh, I lived in and loved darkness, and hated light; I was a chief, the chief of sinners. This is true: I hated godliness, yet God had mercy on me. Oh the riches of His mercy! Praise him for me; - pray for me, that He who hath begun a good work would perfect it in the day of Jesus Christ.'<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> *Letters*, vol. 2, p. 124

<sup>11</sup> *Letters*, vol. 1, p.46

<sup>12</sup> *Letters.*, vol. 1, p 90

Now whatever the precise circumstances of his conversion, one thing is certainly true: the sinfulness of his heart and life led him to the Saviour. In one of his letters to Bridget Ireton, his daughter, he writes, in 1646, 'Who ever tasted that the Lord is gracious, without some sense of self, vanity and badness.'<sup>13</sup> And, furthermore, he was brought to exercise saving faith. Writing in 1652 to Charles Fleetwood, his son-in-law, he remarks, 'Acts of obedience are not perfect, and therefore yield not perfect Grace. Faith, as an act, yields it not; but 'only' as it carries us unto Him, who is our perfect rest and peace; in whom we are accounted of, and received by, the Father, - even as Christ Himself...Rest we here, and here only.'<sup>14</sup>

Was it Beard's influence, we wonder? Or was it through a process of self-examination? We just do not know. But as Carlyle says, 'Oliver was henceforth a Christian man, not on Sundays only, but on all days, in all places and in all cases.'<sup>15</sup> John Owen wrote to him in 1654, mentioning the 'communication of His (God's) love in Christ Jesus, and the merciful, gracious distributions of the unsearchable riches of grace, and the hid treasures thereof purchased by his blood' - and then he adds, most significantly, 'Of both these you have had full experience.'<sup>16</sup>

*To be continued*

## **CHRIST THE SINNER'S HIDING-PLACE. PS. 32:7**

1. Hail, sovereign love, that first began  
The scheme to rescue fallen man!  
Hail, matchless, free, eternal grace,  
That gave my soul a hiding-place!
2. [Against the God who rules the sky  
I fought with hand uplifted high;  
Despised the mention of his grace,  
Too proud to seek a hiding-place.

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<sup>13</sup> Letters, vol. 1, p.227

<sup>14</sup> Letters, vol. 2, p. 246

<sup>15</sup> Letters, vol. 1, p.46

<sup>16</sup> John Owen, *The Works of John Owen*, vol. 11, p.5

3. But thus the eternal counsel ran:  
"Almighty love, arrest that man!"  
I felt the arrows of distress,  
And found I had no hiding-place.
  
4. Indignant Justice stood in view;  
To Sinai's fiery mount I flew;  
But Justice cried, with frowning face,  
This mountain is no hiding-place!
  
5. Ere long a heavenly voice I heard,  
And Mercy's angel-form appeared;  
She led me on, with placid pace,  
To Jesus, as my Hiding-place.]
  
6. Should storms of seven-fold thunder roll,  
And shake the globe from pole to pole,  
No flaming bolt could daunt my face,  
For Jesus is my Hiding-place.
  
7. On Him almighty vengeance fell,  
That must have sunk a world to hell;  
He bore it for a chosen race,  
And thus became their Hiding-place.
  
8. A few more rolling suns, at most,  
Will land me on fair Canaan's coast,  
Where I shall sing the song of grace,  
And see my glorious Hiding-place.

*Jehoida Brewer (1751-1817)*



# GLEANINGS FROM THE FAREWELL SERMON OF JOHN BERRIDGE (1716-1793)

Source: The Gospel Pedlar, by Nigel R. Pibworth

*“Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us.” Psalm 62, verse 8*

This psalm is a very precious one, full of gospel manna; containing directions for the church how to walk with God. The psalmist says in verse 1, “Truly,” in good truth, “my soul waiteth upon God; from him cometh my salvation.” And does he not give a good reason why his soul waited upon God? It was because all his salvation came from Him. And where shall a sinner look but to Him that has purchased salvation for sinners, and brings it to them who find their need of it?

He then says in verse 5, “my soul wait thou only upon God”. “Only” is a very little word, but is very emphatical, for it is a common case with people to make Christ half a Saviour, relying upon Him and upon themselves, saying they are to be saved by faith and works. No, says David, that will not do for me: I must have all my salvation from the Lord. “He only is my rock”, the rock on which my heart shall rest - that is, on Jesus. And if not, your rock which you trust in will slip away from you. Jesus will not suffer His glory to be diminished, nor let any steal one jewel from His crown, for He is worthy of all the honour that we can give to Him, and He is jealous of His honour.

David then says, I shall not be greatly moved, while the Lord only is my rock and my salvation... He is my defence from time to time; I shall not be greatly moved. The word “greatly” is often of use to the children of God, who fall into doubts at times, ready to fear they shall fall from their confidence.

Now if David encourages himself in trusting in the Lord, we have also the same reason, for our hearts at times are ready to sink... Therefore, take David's words: “my soul, wait thou only upon God: for my expectation is from him.” But Satan may say: “where will you look and go?” What says Peter? “Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.” So, we may say to our souls, when they are beginning to doubt.

Then David adds, “The Lord only is my defence”. I find Him so while I am trusting in Him: though I am often afraid, yet He is better to me than either my fears or my hopes.

He adds, “I shall not be moved”. Then, by exhorting and waiting upon the Lord, he gets more strength... The Lord is my defence: he holds me up, carries me on, and at length He will bring me to Himself in glory.

Then David goes on, “Trust in the Lord at all times, ye people...” Make Him your confidence for all things- not only for all things, but for all times. When people are in peace and prosperity, they do not seem so much to see their need of trusting in the Lord as they did: but they are ready to drop their confidence when the Lord has given to them what they want of worldly things. Now this is a shameful practice and the Lord often takes away what he had given them, because they make a bad use of it. Has the Lord given you outward peace and prosperity? Trust in Him to preserve it; for none can preserve it but he who gave it.

There is nothing which the Lord delights in more than to hear His people, when they come to Him, plead His word, and hold it fast. Though Satan wants to take it away from you, never give it up. The Lord is never more glorified than when we go to him, relying upon his word, notwithstanding providences, and everything else against us. Yet, even then, says the poor soul, the Lord is for me; for Christ invites sinners to come, whoever they are.

“Pour out your hearts before him”. This is a precious command. Many times the children of God are so burdened with grief, with sin, and worldly cares, that they know not how to bear them... What does the Lord say to them? He gives good advice... The first thing he tells them to do is to “pour out your hearts before me”. The word “pour” plainly signifies that the heart is full of grief... The Lord is never weary with hearing the complaints of his people; therefore you should go, and keep nothing back... pour out all your complaints into his merciful bosom... make him your Counsellor and Friend.

“God is a refuge for us”. Can you find no refuge in your fellow creatures, and have you nowhere to fly? Go to the Lord...He tells His helpless creatures, “I am a refuge for you”. Remember the Lord will never suffer his promise to fail: “Faithful is he that promised”.

I do not know a more precious verse in the scriptures than my text "Trust in him at all times, ye people." In health and in sickness, in life and in death, this will apply to Jesus: He is a refuge for us. What could you wish for more? Go, then unto him; doubt no more; cast away your doubts and fears; trust in him. If you cannot with full assurance, do it with some assurance, with a little faith, and expect more. Remember, the Lord loves to increase what he has given, and to build you up in faith and holiness.

*Submitted by Caty O*

## THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE SABBATH

*An extract from a sermon delivered by Samuel Blatchford (1767-1828) on 27 November, 1825, not long before his passing from this life to the next. His words still speak to a truth of great importance to our own generation almost two centuries later.*

A very great part of the exercises of the Sabbath, duly sanctified on earth, bears a strong resemblance to the employments of the heavenly world. Heaven is an eternal Sabbath. There the spirits of just men made perfect approach with delight the seat of the infinite Jehovah. With adoring praise, they pour forth their lively gratitude. With exquisite pleasure, they contemplate the Author of all things, who governs and actuates the immensity of beings, which occupy the universe of life. The hallelujahs of praise break forth in uninterrupted harmony from every angel and every redeemed sinner.

And, my brethren, in the due sanctification of this holy day on earth; in a general consent to worship God; not to speak our own words, nor to think our own thoughts; to have our meditation of God; to crowd about his altars; to esteem a day spent in the courts of the Lord's house preferable to a thousand elsewhere: O! this is to congregate with the hosts of glory, and to constitute a heaven upon the earth.

Hereby we shall know Him who hath sanctified the Sabbath, and be maturing for those enjoyments, where there remaineth a rest, a *sabbatismos* (literally, a *sabbath-keeping*), for the people of God (Hebrews 4:9).

# EPILOGUE

## **Our All-seeing Lord and Saviour (John 1: 43-51)**

Philip called upon Nathanael and urged him to come and meet Jesus of Nazareth, the one whom Moses and the Prophets had foretold. Nathanael drew near and Jesus seeing him approaching, said: "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." He replied to this by asking how He knew him, and Jesus said: "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee."

Nathanael was amazed that Jesus had seen him in his private moments when he was quite alone. Some think that Nathanael had been praying or reading scripture but whatever he was doing it was worthy of the Lord's approval. In response Nathanael expressed his conviction that Jesus was the Son of God, the King of Israel.

It is a truth we need to grasp: that the Lord sees us all the time! Nathanael thought that no one had seen him, but he was wrong. We need to be aware of the Lord's knowledge of our thoughts, words, and deeds, and also where we are at any point in time.

We are reminded of Hebrews chapter 4 and verse 13: "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

Therefore let us live our lives in the knowledge that all things are seen and known by the Lord, whether outward actions or inwards thoughts.

We must practice the awareness of the presence of God! To always be aware of the Lord's all-seeing eyes! This is the theme of Psalm 139 and worthy of meditation ("O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me"). During each day and night let us recall that the Lord watches over us but be aware lest, by our inappropriate ways, this truth does not bring us the comfort that it should!

*Ron Morris*