

MINISTER'S LETTER



Dear friends,

From A Dis-Figured To A To Re-Figured Body

If you did read last month's letter you will recall that we are dissecting the Corinthian church story in order to find lessons as we engage in our interesting venture to fashion and implement a vision for mission in this church. The key theme then was that the body is normally dis-membered if the glue that holds it together melts through severance from the Head (Jesus) and following other gurus. All that is required for the parts in that body to come together (re-membered) is to refill this glue and to stick to the Head, Jesus who is the true guru.

I did promise then to continue by looking at another but similar topic. Once the body is re-membered and is functioning properly what is the next step? Using the transfiguration of Jesus story we look at how this seemingly normal body now reveals the inherent beauty and glory. God's presence dwells within a body that is in harmony.

2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2

Since, then, we have such a hope, we act with great boldness, not like Moses, who put a veil over his face to keep the people of Israel from gazing at the end of the glory that was being set aside. But their minds were hardened. Indeed, to this very day, when they hear the reading of the old covenant, that same veil is still there, since only in Christ is it set aside. Indeed, to this very day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their minds; but when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit. Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart. We have renounced the shameful things that one hides; we refuse to practice cunning to falsify God's word; but by the open

statement of the truth we commend ourselves to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God.

The Glory that Straitjackets, Blinds and Kills

At stake in all this is how the various parts in the body interact with each other. Is it through some dos and don'ts (Law) or without boundaries (grace)? Which kind makes the body aglow and which makes it gloomy? Paul admits the Law did arrive in a blaze of glory. It did "reflect" God. But its glory was so blinding, so harsh, so deadly, that Moses was forced to put a veil over his face (3:7)! Relationships that are set on law may look perfect and glorious but they are bound to hit the rocks sooner or later. To be a recipient of such glory is much like being a misbehaving child whose parent glares (glowers) at her from across the room. The child immediately understands the end (as in "purpose") of the glower and stops in her tracks. She crumbles, loses heart (4:1), shrivels up; her activities come to "an end." The glower strikes her down. In effect, the parent could just as easily have straitjacketed the child--giving her no room to wiggle or escape.

Such a child ends up with a dis-figured body. The Law works the same way. Its truth (about us) is piercing criticism, it puts us "in our place," it straitjackets us. When people set themselves laws it leads to the who is in and who is out attitude. Soon they perfect the "ministry of condemnation" (3:9). It is blinding glory in that it obscures human perception, and deceives people into believing that the Law gives the life that counts. Paul notes that the fake glory of the law has lost it because of the greater glory, that is, the arrival of Jesus (3:10). The purpose of the Law is nothing less than to kill us! Just as the parent's glower is intended to stop the child, so is God's glower intended to stop us cold.

The Glory that Saves

With Jesus, a different kind of glory arrives which Paul describes as a "greater glory" (3:10). This glory is "permanent" (3:11) and it "gives life" (3:6). It signals "the end" of the first glory. It is crucial to note that the former glory does not end simply because it is discarded. God does not just flip the switch on the first glory and apologize for having turned it on

in the first place. No, its power blazes on--beaming directly at us. It ends only because Jesus positions himself between it and us. He takes the Law's deadly heat. That's what Jesus did on the cross. He allowed the glower of the Law to destroy him. He suffered both the end (as in "the purpose") of the Law and the end (as in "the consequences") of the Law in his body, leaving us (our bodies) unscathed. Thus Good Friday signalled the day when the Law's time was up, and when its deadly consequence and its intended purpose were accomplished. In short, in Jesus the Law met its ends. Furthermore, and this is what makes that news so good, because of Jesus' glorious triumph over the Law, a new and bright future shines on us called eternal life.

Thus our bodies can bask in this glory. When we look at Jesus we see God's greater glory beaming not only at us but also in us; that is why Paul calls Christ's glory a reflected glory: "the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror" (3:18). This reflection transforms the way we see the world and each other. Once the veil is removed Seeing Christ with unveiled faces, we go from one degree of glory (the Law) to another (the Gospel). In Jesus we see, for the first time, the glory of the Law unveiled; we see the "death" and "condemnation" which would have been ours had Jesus not intervened. Simultaneously, we see the greater glory: the life and justification in Christ that replaces the Law. Thus, when we see God's glory in Jesus, we see a merciful God. We feel the glow of his pleasure, and reflect it back. It's like the flashes of pride a parent beams across the room at the child. "Atta girl! You're really something! You just tickle me pink!" Again, the child instantly understands. But this time the parent "lights up her life," and she is aglow with joy; she snaps into action, she sings, she dances, she radiates the love she has received. So we glow with God's love for us in Jesus.

The glow of our faith is reflected (as in a mirror) in many directions, both to God and to the people around us. And it results in what Paul called the "ministry of justification" (3:9, the opposite of the Law's ministry of condemnation). In short, the ministry of justification "gives life" (v. 6).

So we return to the question, how do we ensure harmony in the body church? If we choose laws and boundaries we set ourselves on the path of destruction. If we choose openness to each other it is a path that leads to a

glorious reflection of Christ's image on each other. We treat each of God's image honourably and respectfully and rejoice or mourn with it since so we also are. No one is excluded, everyone is included. That is a re-figured body in which Christ himself is pleased to dwell. May we be so at Martin Way.



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Presents
THE HIDING PLACE...

1937. A gentle family of watchmakers provided support and a secret room to hide Jews. The watch shop was full of laughter until the alarm sounded when everyone's life depended on the Jews getting to the secret room. Finally the family were betrayed but even in a concentration camp they knew God's love:

"We must tell people that there is no pit so deep that he is not deeper still. They will listen to us, because we have been here."

Share in the joys and sorrows, struggles and victory of this inspiring true story.

Don't forget to bring your friends!

Thursday 29th March 7:30pm (doors open 7:00pm)
Friday 30th March 7:30pm (doors open 7.00pm)
Saturday 31st March 3:00pm (doors open 2.30pm)
Saturday 31st March 7:30pm (doors open 7.00pm)

Adults £9, concessions £6

FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT 2007

CHANGE
TODAY
CHOOSE
FAIRTRADE

26th FEBRUARY - 11th MARCH

THE FAIRTRADE FOUNDATION QUIZ

1. The FAIRTRADE Mark is the UK's independent consumer label guaranteeing that a product is giving producers in developing countries a better deal. It is black, white and which other 2 colours?
2. Which television newsreader is the patron of the Fairtrade Foundation, the UK's independent Fairtrade certification body?
3. The idea of selling Fairtrade products originally came from an appeal from coffee farmers in which Latin American country?
4. The first product to carry the FAIRTRADE Mark was launched in 1994. Was it: (a) coffee (b) tea (c) chocolate?
5. What is the name of the leading brand of Fairtrade coffee?
6. Which two UK supermarkets were the first to sell Fairtrade bananas in the year 2000?
7. Most Fairtrade bananas sold in the UK come from the Windward Islands in the Caribbean. Name two of the islands.
8. What colour are coffee beans when they are ripe for harvesting?
9. In 2001, which place in the North West of England declared itself the world's first Fairtrade Town?
(a) Garstang (b) Bolton (c) Chester
10. Which national train company became the first to switch all its coffee, tea, hot chocolate to Fairtrade in March 2006?
11. Which was the first UK supermarket to switch all its own-label coffee to Fairtrade?
12. What Fairtrade product did TV presenter and comedian Harry Hill use to make false teeth in a Fairtrade photographic exhibition in 2006?
13. In the same Fairtrade photographic exhibition, which TV presenter made a wig out of Fairtrade cotton wool?
14. The international Fairtrade labelling network now unites 21 countries across the world. How many of these are in Europe?

15. Name two of the five countries now selling Fairtrade cotton into the UK market?
16. In Malawi, sugar farmers have literally been saving lives since they used premiums from Fairtrade to install clean water in three villages. Why had collecting water from the river been a matter of life and death?
17. Mexico, Chile and Zambia all produce which delicious Fairtrade product?
18. How many products are Fairtrade certified in the UK?
(a) less than 1,000 (b) between 1,000 and 2,000 (c) more than 2,000
19. From which three countries are Fairtrade wines sourced?
20. On average, how many Fairtrade bananas a day are eaten in the UK?
(a) less than 75,000 (b) around 500,000 (c) over 750,000
21. The Fairtrade Foundation has 14 member organisations. How many can you name?
22. Which Fairtrade product does TV gardener Charlie Dimmock wear in her top for her picture in the celebrity Photo Exhibition shot by Trevor Leighton?
23. Banana farmers on the Caribbean island of Dominica are now selling another fruit into some Sainsbury's stores. What is it?
24. In April 2007, the film Black Gold will be launched, following the trials and tribulations of Ethiopian farmers trying to get a fair price on world markets. What crop, dubbed black gold in the film, are they growing?

Answers on Page 15

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PUZZLE CORNER 2

FIND THIRTY BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

There are thirty books of the Bible in the below paragraph. Can you find them all? For hints and tips try asking Graham!!

This is a most remarkable puzzle. It was found by a gentleman in an aeroplane pocket, on a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu, keeping him occupied for hours. He enjoyed it so much, he passed it on to some friends. One

friend from Illinois worked on this while fishing from his johnboat. Another friend studied it while playing his banjo. Elaine Taylor, a columnist friend was intrigued by it and she mentioned it in her weekly newspaper column. Another friend judges the job of solving this puzzle so involving, she brews a cup of tea to help her nerves. There will be some names that are really easy to spot. That's a fact. Some people, however, will soon find themselves in a jam, especially since the book names are not necessarily capitalised. Truthfully from answers we get, we are forced to admit, it usually takes a minister or scholar to see some of them at the worst. Research has shown that something in our genes is responsible for the difficulty we have in seeing the books in this paragraph. During a recent fundraising event, which featured this puzzle, the Alpha Delta Phi lemonade booth set a new sales record. The local paper, the Chronicle, surveyed over 200 patrons who reported that this puzzle was one of the most difficult they had ever seen. As Daniel Hunana humbly puts it, the books are all right here in plain view hidden from sight. Those able to find them will hear great lamentations from those who have to be shown. One revelation that may help is that books like Timothy and Samuel occur without their numbers. Also keep in mind that punctuation and spaces in the middle are normal. A chipper attitude will help you compete really well against those who claim to know the answers. Remember, there is no need for a mad exodus; there really are 30 books of the Bible lurking somewhere in this paragraph waiting to be found.

John has been looking at the four distinct images of the Holy Spirit over a number of issues of our Newsletter, this is the third part of the series looking at the Holy Spirit as a Blowing Wind.

Andrew Fox

Holy Spirit as the Blowing Wind:

This brings to mind John 3:8:

The wind blows wherever it pleases spirit.

You hear its sound, but cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going.



So it is with everyone born of the **Spirit**.



The word **spirit** in both Hebrew and Greek means "breath" or "**wind**." Both a breath of air and a breeze are appropriate images for the **Holy Spirit**.

Maple trees depend on the **wind** to blow their seeds to new places where they can grow new trees.

Consider several properties of the **wind**.

Wind is moving air, and this fresh air is needed continually for life itself. Even seeds often require **wind** for their dispersal and subsequent growth. Similarly, the **Holy Spirit** is the presence of God, the source for all life.

Wind has no material shape or form. It is invisible; we cannot see the source or the destination of **wind**. It is a mysterious, unseen force. Nevertheless, its presence is known by its effects.

Likewise, the unseen **Holy Spirit** can be experienced in a refreshing way. His presence is displayed in the work he does in human lives by transforming, sanctifying, encouraging, and teaching.

Wind is a powerful force. It cannot be stopped or controlled by people. Likewise, the **Holy Spirit** is not subject to human control. The moving of the **Holy Spirit** is God at work.



There is great variety in the **wind**.

It may be a soft whisper gently rustling the leaves on the trees, or it may be a hurricane uprooting trees.



Hot air balloons go wherever the **wind** takes them.

Likewise, the **Holy Spirit** may gently bring a person to Christ, such as a little child raised in a Christian home, or he may work in some climactic, dramatic way to bring conviction and conversion to the hardened sinner. In Acts 16, contrast Lydia, whose heart the Lord opened (verse 14), and the jailer, who needed an earthquake to jar him to his spiritual sense (verse 30). In both cases, the **Holy Spirit** did the regenerating work.

A pastor friend of mine told his congregation a story of how one day as he was outside enjoying a breezy afternoon, the Lord reminded him of how sailors recognize the wind. He wrote, “Wind causes small ripples that darken the surface of the water compared to the areas where the wind is not blowing. When the sailor looks out across the water, he’ll see a “wind line” moving across the water with the leading edge of the wind.

When sailors see a wind line approaching, they know to prepare for the increased force on the sails and boat. They may have to shift weight to the windward side of the vessel to compensate or they may have to let the sails out a little to prevent being overpowered by the gust. If they’ve prepared well, the boat will accelerate when the gust hits the sails.



A wind line will give a general indication of where a gust is coming from, but often more precise information is needed to sail the boat at its ideal speed. Sailors use “telltales” to help them know the exact direction the wind is coming from. A telltale is simply a little piece of string tied to a mast support or to the sail. The telltale streams in the direction that the wind is blowing.

As I thought of how this might apply to living by the Holy Spirit, I thought of John 3:8 and Romans 8 (above). We are called to be controlled by the Holy Spirit, yet sometimes it may seem challenging to know where the Spirit is leading us. It’s during those times that I turn to spiritual wind lines and telltales for help. For example, I find that being in the word, praying, receiving Godly counsel from my pastor and other Christians, and keeping a watchful eye on the circumstances the Lord brings me into all help me discern where the Spirit is leading.

As with the wind, the Holy Spirit’s moves will produce telltale signs that we’ll be able to recognize as we walk with the Lord and become familiar with his character and ways. Jesus showed us how to do this. He only did what he saw the Father doing: *“I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does”* (John 5:19 NIV). We know from the Gospels that Jesus spent much time in prayer during his ministry years. During those times he was no doubt tuning in to the Father’s heart via the Holy Spirit and discerning where the Spirit was working. He was also sensitive to the people and circumstances that God put him in. For example, when he withdrew to a secluded place after hearing of John’s execution, a large crowd of people followed him there. When Jesus saw them, he *“felt compassion for them and healed their sick”* (Matthew 14:14 NIV).

By heeding the signs and following the Spirit where he is leading, we’ll begin to experience the life and peace that comes with living by the Spirit. When we correctly recognize the leading of the Spirit, we can properly prepare ourselves for the move of his power, just as the sailor prepares his boat for a coming gust. In doing so, we’ll be best positioned to be perfectly used by God for his purposes.

John Nyota

AN INSIGHT INTO A FINANCE & PROPERTY MEETING

I went along to the Finance and property meeting at church not as a member of it but because I wanted to see the presentation of the Phase 4 proposals from the Architect Martin Heijne. [More of that next month].

After the presentation I stayed for the business part of the meeting (even though I was not a voting member) I said nothing just listened and for me to say nothing is something. *I felt like a fly on the wall.* During this part of the meeting John Butland gave a report on the Church finances and O WHAT AN EYE OPENER IT WAS. Let me tell you why. We as a Church have to pay for things just as we do at home. i.e. Electricity, gas, water, etc. and on top of these bills we have to pay the Wimbledon Circuit for running costs of the Circuit, i.e. Pay for our Ministers upkeep of the manses and the circuit have to pay District and Connectional fee [they have to have money to do the work they do] etc.

Taking all that into account it costs this Church on average £1047.24 per week. Now this is **the eye opener** what we get in each week is on average [including donations for lettings etc] £647.62 that is a DEFICIT of virtually £400.00 per week or £20800.00 per year. So you would be right in thinking that the figurers don't add up and how can we continue in this way. Well the Church is able to continue because it has a bequest from the late Derek Masters, which is keeping us afloat *BUT IT WILL RUN OUT VERY SOON.*

What can we as a Church / individuals do. We must think about what we give. Yes I know it seems that the Church is always asking for money but remember that prices go up Gas, Electricity – they have been going up and up. At the meeting a discussion ensued about what could be done, John has ask on several occasions for people to [if they pay tax] Gift Aid their donations etc. there has been articles in the News Letter and Weekly Notices and on the Projector at the beginning of the morning services. BUT STILL WE DON'T do anything about our giving. (I include myself in not thinking about increasing my giving).

If you are still with me after all my waffle PLEASE, PLEASE think / pray about increasing your giving or our Church WILL CLOSE in the not to distant further.

Tony Loft

GARDENING DAY



We had such a good time on the last gardening day, I am sure that you are all eager to repeat it. The suggested day is **Saturday 17th March**.

It won't be as strenuous as the last one and with a good turn out we could finish in half a day.

Please try to keep Saturday 17th March free!

Pauline Riley

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THE HILL SINGERS



The Hill Singers have been performing in the London Borough of Merton for over 50 years, with many past and present members living in the Wimbledon/Raynes Park Area. This is a mixed Chamber choir of around 20 voices, and rehearses on Tuesday evenings at Raynes Park Methodist Church from 7.30-9.30pm. Under its new conductor, Iestyn Evans, the choir's next concert is at 8pm on Saturday 24th March at St. Matthew's Church, Durham Road, SW20, when it will perform "Music for Royal Occasions" by Handel, Haydn and Charpentier.

The Hill Singers are always keen to welcome new members, so why not come to the concert and, if you enjoy what you hear and feel that you would like to join us, then go to our website www.hillsingers.co.uk for further information and concert details. Alternatively, attend one of our Tuesday rehearsals.

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH - MARCH 2007



Sometimes something that is obvious suddenly strikes us as being significant and meaningful. The other day I was making some marmalade. I put the sugar into the pan, then covered it with water. As soon as the ingredients came together, they changed. The sugar began to melt and the water, absorbing the sugar, became sweeter. Eventually the marmalade, which had begun as liquid, ended up set firm when everything had bonded together and was cooked for the required length of time. Changes had taken place in all the ingredients before the marmalade was prepared for consumption.

As we read the Gospels, we see that people who came into contact with Jesus were changed. No one can have dealings with him and remain the same. Those who met him were not immediately made perfect. We only have to think about Peter to realise that. But the changes in Peter were obviously for the better, although he slipped back from time to time. Even people like Pilate were at least made to think when confronted by Jesus. We cannot know whether that meeting affected his later life, but it may well have done.

So where do we come in? Well, people of all sorts come into contact with us throughout our daily lives. Some contacts are fleeting, but many can develop as times go by. Contacts that start out seeming to be of no great importance may in due course turn out to result in firm and lasting friendships. Obviously contact with some people is best avoided, but our attitude to ALL other people is of great importance both for us and for them – and that included those we find it difficult to get on with. Turn again to the Gospels and you will find that much of the teaching of Jesus deals with our relationships with other people. Always treating others as we would like them to treat us is more easily said than done!

P.S. Last month I mentioned that the Men's Supper Club hopes to raise the money to build a house in the poorest part of Egypt as a response to an appeal by the Bible Lands. We have already raised over a hundred pounds so we only have just over nine hundred more to get.

Bill Cox

CHURCH DIARY



Fri	2	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	4	10.30 am	All Age Worship led by Valerie Ashcroft
		6.30 pm	Communion Service led by Rev Barrie Tabraham
Mon	5	2.45 pm	Fellowship
Tue	6	10-12noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Weds	7	7.45 pm	Midways Group - Pauline Riley - <i>Peru</i>
Sun	11	10.30am	Communion Service led by Rev John Nyota
Mon	12	3.45 pm	Fellowship
Tue	13	10-12noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	16	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sat	17		<i>Gardening Day</i>
Sun	18	10.30am	Praise Service led by Mrs Brenda Cannon and Mr Tony Loft
Mon	19	3.45 pm	Fellowship
Tue	20	10-12noon	Coffee and Chat
		7.30pm	Men's Supper Club - Valerie Felton – Bali
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Weds	21	7.45 pm	Midways Group - Homestart of Merton
Sat	24	10-1pm	BIG BRUNCH proceeds to the Rafiki Trust
Sun	25	10.30am	Morning Service led by Rev John Nyota
		6.30pm	Bible Study led by Rev Barrie Tabraham
Mon	26	3.45 pm	Fellowship
Tue	27	10-12noon	Coffee and Chat

Tue 27 8.00 pm Time for Prayer

*Please refer to the Website (www.martinway.org.uk)
or Weekly Notice Sheet for any additional information*

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We wish all of those who celebrate a
birthday

in March a very

Happy Birthday

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THE FAIRTRADE FOUNDATION QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Blue and Green
2. George Alagiah
3. Mexico
4. Answer = (c). Green & Black's Maya Gold Chocolate
5. Cafédirect – it is now the UK's sixth biggest coffee company
6. The Co-operative and Sainsbury's
7. Dominica, St Lucia, St Vincent & the Grenadines, Grenada
8. Red
9. Answer = (a) Garstang
10. Virgin Trains
11. The Co-operative in 2003
12. White chocolate
13. Gail Porter
14. Fifteen. The other six are USA, Canada, Mexico, Japan, Australia and New Zealand.
15. India, Peru, Mali, Cameroon, and Senegal.
16. It was crocodile-infested
17. Honey
18. Answer = (c) more than 2,000
19. Fairtrade certified wines come from Chile, Argentina and South Africa
18. Answer = (c) over 750,000
19. Banana Link, CAFOD, Christian Aid, The Methodist Relief & Development Fund, The National Federation of Women's Institutes (NFWI), Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign, Oxfam, People & Planet, Shared Interest Foundation, SCIAF (Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund), Tearfund, Traidcraft Exchange, United Reformed Church, The World Development Movement.
22. Mangoes
23. Coconuts
24. Coffee. The film follows the fortunes of Tadesse Meskela of the Oromia Co-operative Farmers Union in Ethiopia.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

We rejoice as welcome Lynn, Caroline and Lynn into the family of Martin Way. They were all received into the church on the 14th January 2007.

Caroline Budd has been coming to this church for a long time and has continuously offered her gifts in the music band and sigma. Caroline used to worship at Wimbledon Methodist church where she run the toddlers group. She is mum to Ellie who was received into membership last year and Katie, both of who are also involved in the band, sigma and YPF.

Lynn Donald comes to us from Fhoek Methodist Church in South Africa. She joined this church in 2005. She is the grandma to Matthew and Max both of who were baptised in this church.

Lynn Lawrence came to us through Alpha which we did last year. She has since been baptised at Merton Park Baptist church with her daughter Shannon.

May the Lord give you joy and peace during all your time at Martin Way church

John Nyota

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CORRECTION TO LAST MONTH

Last month I thanked you all for your donations to Christian Care and the NCH Action for Children this December, unfortunately a typing error crept into the report and so the correction is now shown below.

Total of £100.00 Donation to Christian Care

Collection at Carol Service	£ 52.00
Allocation from Benevolent Fund	£ 48.00

John Butland

Items for the **April Newsletter** should be with Andrew Fox, (email: roife@hotmail.co.uk) by **Sunday 18th March** at the latest