



Summer 2012

Church Planting

Abraham Marshall: Church planter, Baptist pioneer

By Kurt Smith

On the afternoon of Aug. 15, 1819, Abraham Marshall, at the age of 72, breathed his last.

In the moments leading up to his passing, he stressed to those gathered around his bed, that “although he had for the space of 50 years endeavored faithfully to improve and preach the word, and live consistent therewith, yet during that time he had never lived one day, nor preached one sermon clear of some imperfections; so that he had no merit of his own, but rested on the merit of Jesus his Mediator.”

Thus, at the very end of his life, Abraham Marshall gave one final proof of what his son, Jabez, would attest five years later in the publication of his father’s memoirs: “...but those who perhaps were better acquainted with my father than

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The congregation in Grenoble, France, is looking for a pastor as church planter David Vaughn plans to move on to a new city.

God at work in Europe

*Gospel advances in Italy,
France and Switzerland*

By Gordon Taylor

The first trip I made as Coordinator in 2008 was to France, Switzerland and Italy. I was very encouraged to see the progress that was being made in all three

countries by Reformed Baptists. Now, after a trip in February 2012 to the same three countries, I am again encouraged to see continued progress.

France

After 13 years of labor by ARBCA Missionary David Vaughn, the Lord has been pleased to raise up a self-supporting

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Port Cities Reformed Baptist Church, Lewiston, ID

Providence Reformed Baptist Church, University Place, WA

Redeemer Baptist Church, Macon, GA

Redeeming Grace Baptist Church, Matthews, VA

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Commentary: Missionary zeal, doctrinal fidelity

By Steve Martin

Our Lord's final, great commission, in Matt. 28:19-20, to the apostles and to His churches was a command for missionary zeal and doctrinal fidelity.

As most readers of the ARBCA Update already know, the main verb of our Lord's commission is "go into all the world and make disciples." The three participles (words ending in "ing" which amplify what is meant by the command to "go into all the world" would be "making disciples," "baptizing" in the name of the Triune God, and "teaching" these baptized disciples to obey all things that Christ commanded. Having established that His own authority was the warrant for the apostles to go and make disciples (verse 18), our Lord promised them that He would be with them in this overwhelming task "to the end of the age" (verse 20).

Obedying the command to go into all the world, making disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Triune God and teaching these baptized disciples all things is a comprehensive undertaking.

It has been my observation that church history shows us that Christians approach and then carry out this most comprehensive commission all too often by identifying the part or parts they personally like or feel comfortable doing and leaving the rest for others. After all, they might argue, our Lord has given a diversity of gifts to Christians and a diversity of gifted men to His churches. We should not expect every man to do everything should we?

Some Christians are zealous for going out in evangelism and making disciples –and their evangelistic zeal is admirable. But those same people may not be as zealous for the right administration of the sacrament of baptism in a church context in the name of the Triune God and a comprehensive doctrinal foundation for the newly baptized disciples.

Others seem to have a zeal for baptized disciples to be grounded in the truths of Christ and the Christian faith and major on "teaching them to obey all things I have commanded you." But they expend fewer prayers and less effort to actually teach the baptized disciples to bring the gospel to sinners.

Few of us have such balanced temperaments and ministries that we are faithful generalists. We can readily become imbalanced specialists. We are too much like Luther's drunk who fell off a horse on one side only to have the Devil come along and help him back up on the horse...so that he could push him off the other side! We all err on one side or the other.

The ministry models we are given in Scripture of our Lord and His Apostle, Paul, display a zeal for missions and a zeal for doctrinal fidelity. In reading the four gospels, how often do we see our Lord move on from one town where a powerful ministry was taking place to yet another place untouched by His presence! How often do we see our Lord confronting and correcting the religious leaders of His day by taking them to a right understanding of the Scriptures!

In reading Acts and Paul's epistles, we see a commissioned man bristling with energy for gospel proclamation and doctrinal



fidelity to the Scriptures! In Acts we see Paul's prodigious labors for the spread of the gospel and church planting and we feel dwarfed in comparison. Paul's letters resound with warnings and corrections of the false teachings of first-century false teachers, false prophets and false apostles.

These two great biblical examples of ministry did not get stuck majoring in one aspect of ministry to the exclusion of the other parts – go and make disciples, baptizing in the name of the Triune God and teaching them all things. The two great biblical examples of ministry are not caught in what logicians call the binary trap – "either this or that."

Rather, both our Lord and Paul model for us a "both-and" ministry. Neither our Lord nor Paul were simply evangelists with no thought of church planting, Triune baptism and doctrinal grounding in the faith. Neither were they given over wholly to doctrinal precision and crossing swords with every matter of false thinking and teaching. They were men who went out to where the people were – they practiced the "go" command. In short, they were balanced models for ministry and we ignore their models at our peril.

Closer to home, 19th-century Presbyterian churches in the Middle Atlantic and northern states were led to found Princeton Seminary in 1812 for the training of men for the gospel ministry. Dr. David Calhoun's wonderful two-volume "Princeton Seminary" (Banner of Truth) is full of insightful encouragement on the comprehensive view of the ministry as perceived by 19th-century Presbyterians and "Old Princeton." The seminary was known as the bastion of Reformed orthodoxy in its time but it is less well

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Missions

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known that “Old Princeton” also promoted missions and church planting. Do the following quotations from Princeton Seminary square with your image of the school?

“Almost six hundred served for at least some time in ‘destitute places’ in America. Thirty-seven went to the American Indians. Seventeen became missionaries to the slaves. One hundred and twenty-seven men went to foreign mission fields—from Turkey to the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii), from Brazil to Afghanistan, from West Africa to Northern China.” (I; pp. 406-409)

Six Princeton graduates (two of them with their wives) were martyred for the gospel; some by rabid Chinese nationalists, others by Chinese pirates, one by a radical Sikh partisan, another by a man hired by Muslims, etc. (II; pp.239-240)

An emphasis on missions was not lacking from the churches that fed Old Princeton its students nor was it lacking from the professors themselves. As a result, students organized “Concerts of Prayer” and “The Society of Inquiry on Missions” as a reflection of what their hearts had assimilated from their home churches and their professors and guest preachers.

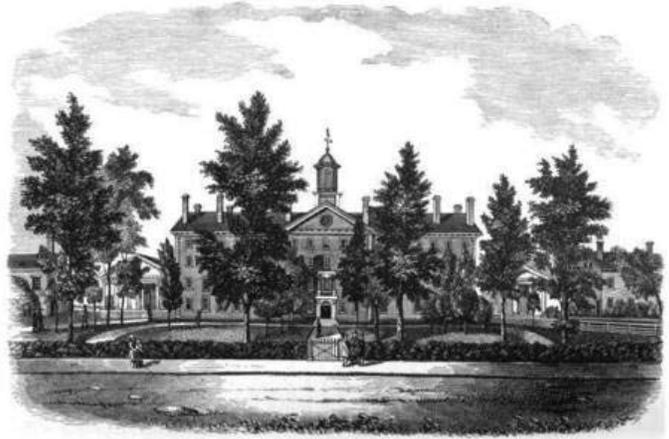
Alongside this vein, Dr. James Garretson has recently put us in his debt by editing “Princeton and the Work of Christian Ministry” (two volumes; Banner of Truth; 2012). Here we see the hearts and labors of the various professors on display.

In 1814, President Archibald Alexander is preaching in First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia on “A Missionary Sermon” from the Great Commission text in Mark 16:15 (I; pp. 288-307). In 1822, we find Professor Samuel Miller preaching in Middle Church of New Haven, Conn. on “The Work of Evangelists and Missionaries” at the ordination of three men as “evangelists and missionaries to the heathen” (I; pp. 422-445).

In 1834 we have Professor Miller preaching “A Plea for An Enlarged Ministry” (from John 4 and the fields white unto harvest) at Central Church in Philadelphia. This was done at the request of and before the Board of Education of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (I; pp. 587-602).

James W. Alexander, sometime Princeton professor and pastor in New York City, preached “Considerations on Foreign Missions to Candidates for the Holy Ministry,” which was printed and distributed at the behest of the Board of Education of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (II; pp. 66-70).

The great Charles Hodge was never a local minister and not known as a fervent preacher but he was known to melt hearts during his Sunday afternoon “conference sermons” to the Princeton students (“Princeton Sermons;” Banner of Truth) and



Old Princeton Theological Seminary

missions were not lacking from his careful preaching and tender applications on other occasions.

In Dr. Garretson’s collection, we have Hodge encouraging men to the gospel ministry in “Are There Too Many Ministers?” (II; pp. 242-253).

In “Preaching the Gospel to the Poor” (II; pp. 242-253) Hodge argues for greater funding of church planters among the poor who should not be expected to fund their own agents of gospel preaching and church planting. Garretson’s work, along with Calhoun’s, help us to see that the Princeton professors and the churches and denomination they served had a missionary zeal to go with their fidelity to the Westminster Standards.

Our Lord and His Apostle were models of missionary zeal and doctrinal fidelity. Nineteenth-century American Presbyterians and Princeton Seminary held missionary zeal and doctrinal fidelity together. We Reformed Baptists in 21st-century America must model the Master and the best of our Reformed brethren in holding together those things the Lord Himself has put together.

It is a mark of spiritual immaturity or spiritual imbalance to want to separate things the Lord has put together. Theological error and personal heartache follow when professing Christians divide Divine Sovereignty and human responsibility, the two natures of Christ, or any of the many “both-and” truths revealed in Holy Scripture.

When asked how he personally reconciled God’s sovereignty and man’s responsibility, the irrepressible Charles Spurgeon said: “I don’t reconcile friends!”

Brethren, I would like to make a call to all of us pastors, elders and men training men for the ministry. Could we not acknowledge our personal strengths (expressed in our passions and repeated activities) and yet acknowledge that we too often are not sufficiently balanced and thus whole in our ministry?

I believe there would be an exponential increase in our sanctification and in the impact of our ministries if we not only did what we like to do, felt comfortable doing and received kudos for

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Archibald Alexander

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doing, but also did those things we don't find comfortable doing or which don't flow as easy and which don't come so naturally.

Is your missionary zeal matched by your churchly concern for faithful baptism and comprehensive doctrinal training? Is your zeal for orthodox doctrine matched by a marked missionary zeal? Do you take your men witnessing? Do you share examples of your own witnessing from the pulpit to encourage your people to witness? Do you regularly pray for missionaries and church planters from the pulpit? Do you use Patrick Johnstone's "Operation World" with doctrinal discernment and give your people a view of the needs of a sinful world? If you are known for being zealous for evangelism and missions, then are you as well known for doctrinal preaching and

catechizing your converts? Are those you baptize well instructed?

Beloved brethren, I write to encourage us to reconsider our lives and ministries. I do not write as one who has arrived – hardly. (Just ask my wife or elders or congregation!) But I believe I and you could better apply the words we ministers often say at the end of a wedding ceremony: "What God has joined together, let no man pull asunder."

Let us pray for discernment as to our spiritual balance and faithfully work at the areas where we are weak. Let us listen to our critics in a prayerful way. Let us consider our ways.

One confessional minister I talked to several years ago by phone told me that he was so disgusted with his own branch of confessional churches that he wanted to leave because they had the world's greatest spiritual battleships (their churches) but they never left the port to take the battle to

the enemy. They were always checking and rechecking every nut and bolt, polishing this and adjusting that – akin to our propensity to want to nail down every aspect of the Christian life and Reformed churchmanship before we ever take the gospel to the lost.

In my friend's words and to mix my metaphors – they never got around to engaging the enemy and taking the gospel out of port. We have the Bible and church history on our side. But the truth must be held in such a way that we are not stumping along on one leg and denying the importance of the other.

James Packer has written that "a partial truth masquerading as the whole truth becomes an untruth." May we not be such unbalanced believers. May the Lord give us grace to be more like the Savior in doctrine and deed.

Steve Martin is a pastor at Heritage Church in Fayetteville, Ga.

Marshall

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I was, know, that so far from claiming self-merit, his chief excellency consisted in attempting to spoil the pride of human glory, and exalt the sufficiency of the adorable Redeemer."

Suffice it to say, making much of Christ and spreading His fame, was the driving passion of Abraham Marshall.

Marshall was born in Windsor, Conn. in 1748. He was the son of the famed Baptist pioneer Daniel Marshall (1706-1784), whose life and labors spread the Gospel from New York to Virginia to North and South Carolina, finally finishing his labors in Georgia, where he planted the first "continuing" Baptist church in that state. For Abraham Marshall, the self-denying and godly example of his venerable father, would certainly establish a path worthy to follow (Heb.13:7).

At age 19, Marshall came to faith in Christ. He was baptized and entered into the membership of the Baptist church his father pastored at Stephen's Creek, S.C. Eight years after his conversion, Marshall was ordained to the Gospel ministry, after

having demonstrated remarkable gifts and evident graces – proving to the church his fitness and obvious calling in the service of Christ. And from this time, to the end of his days, Abraham Marshall would bear out a life of Christian faithfulness, Gospel fidelity, doctrinal soundness, and biblical churchmanship, as he stood firmly in the principles of a Calvinistic Baptist.

The fleshing out of these distinctive features in his life, can be seen first, by the 35 years he gave as a devoted pastor to Kiokee Baptist Church in Appling, Ga. And for those 35 years Marshall was pastor of Kiokee, he was graced by God to see a bountiful harvest to his evangelizing labors in the rural wilderness of frontier Georgia. In fact, within a span of fifteen years (1793-1808), during the early period of Marshall's pastorate, Kiokee had to build twice to accommodate all the additions of souls the Lord was adding to the church.

Marshall was not only a faithful Baptist pastor, he was also an esteemed Baptist statesman who helped establish the first Baptist association in Georgia (1784), and served as its moderator 21 times over a period of 31 years. In 1790, Marshall was also responsible for co-

authoring his association's confession of faith, which was an abstract of The Philadelphia Confession (1742).

The initial purpose behind this document was to counteract the proselytism of Wesleyan Methodists and a fellow Baptist pastor, who were both engaged to sway the Baptist churches to Arminianism. Under Marshall's leadership, the Calvinistic faith of Georgia Baptist churches would hold firm.

But certainly Marshall's greatest undertaking was as a Baptist pioneer. For 20 years he labored as an itinerant evangelist and church planter. On one occasion, in 1786, he traveled from Georgia to New England, preaching the Gospel 197 times to nearly 57,000 people. Additionally, it has been estimated that he baptized 2,000 people during these years, and in Georgia alone, he was responsible for establishing 39 Baptist churches. By such figures, it is no wonder that William Cathcart would write: "It is not too much to say that for abundance of labors and general usefulness the first place among pioneer Baptists of Georgia belongs to Abraham Marshall."

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RBMS missions around the world

Joel Zartman will finish his ministry as “pastor in preparation” in August. He has come to the conclusion that he does not have all the gifts required to be a pastor, and therefore has not the call to be one. Now we are praying and searching for the man or men of God’s choice for us in the La Alborada congregation. Joel has been used of the Lord for much blessing these past 18 months, and we thank the Lord for him.

Bev and I now are not involved in administrative matters of the churches, but we understand that five people are to be baptized the end of June, some from La Alborada, some from San José de Bavaria. We’ve not seen as many visitors lately in the services, but some, yes.

The Christian school moves forward with financial stability, but also with the same requests for prayer as always – that is, a willingness on the part of the students, especially the high school students, to consider carefully the Bible’s overall message. We ask the Lord for conversions. We ask also for some of our newest teachers an increase in understanding of the Reformed faith. We ask the Lord for wisdom and resources in the reconstruction project.

Miami International Seminary now has

Chaplain James Galyon completed Squadron Officer School in May, and spent 10 days at home with his wife, Sharon, and their three children, Jenna, 17, Jameson, 15, and Jonathan, 12, before heading out on deployment.

His main responsibilities during the five-month deployment include overseeing the community relations projects for the base, leading worship services and weekly Bible studies, providing pastoral care, and troop visitation.

Several of the community relations projects are focused on helping local organizations, including ministries. Two of these organizations include Siloam, an orphanage for abused, abandoned children, many of whom are terminally ill

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two separate agreements in their ministry in Colombia, one for Presbyterians and one for Baptists. Julio Benítez, in Medellín, is the director of the Baptist MINTS. The Reformed Baptist Seminary of Easley, N.C., is now in the second year of repeating its three-year curriculum; Guillermo Gómez, pastor of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, is the director in Bogotá.

Some pastors studying in these institutions are being strengthened in their convictions and understanding of the Reformed faith, but we wish to see more men of God being called to the pastorate.

The Curití church is still not growing. Some members are now living in San Gil and are attending the church plant there. Services began recently in the city of Bucaramanga, two hours away on the road

to Cucutá on the Venezuelan border.

The Colombian government is putting forth new efforts to begin peace talks with the guerrilla movement, now over 50 years old; these efforts being made at a moment of increased subversive attacks in various parts of the country.

Economically, the country experiences continued high rates of poverty, promises of very expensive social programs, a peso-to-dollar exchange rate not favorable to exports, and decreases in the international prices of coffee and oil.

The Free Trade Agreement signed with the USA in May finds the country not sufficiently prepared to take full advantage immediately of the agreement’s possibilities. It remains to be seen if the treaty is equitably designed or not.

The Galyons

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(usually HIV/AIDS); and FUIK, an after-school program that provides educational assistance and food to the underprivileged children of a poor nation.

Chaplain Galyon plans on working with these two organizations on a regular basis. Both groups require help with manual

labor projects and desire help from those who simply want to spend time with the children. The FUIK director believes there is an especially important need for godly men to simply spend time with the children. In 14 years in leading the group, she has never once seen a father of even one child.

RBMS missions around the world



One of the highlights of our spring family calendar is the annual ARBCA General Assembly. It is a joy and a privilege to fellowship and interact with brothers and friends as we labor together and encourage and inspire greater works for Christ.

This year it was especially encouraging to see and hear how many new church plants have started in ARBCA over the past four years. It was a personal delight to see Brothers Greg Hostetler and Nathan Renfro represent the Asheville Church plant, now constituted as Crosspoint Church, as it became the 73rd member church in the association. It brought back fond memories of my first road trip to the ARBCA GA back in 2005 in Mansfield, Texas with John Miller, where we began discussing Asheville.

Our attitude was that we were going to attempt something trusting that God would bless it. From some perspectives it may have been naïve, but we preferred to fail than not try.

This is an attitude that I have sought to follow in our own church ministry here in Toronto. We have tried some things over the past four years that have not worked as well as others (at least as far as we can see). But, at the same time our God is faithful and He has blessed us in innumerable ways which many of you have read about over these past years – sometimes through the looking glass of an apparent failed effort.

We have tried many things evangelistically, but, the Lord has yielded the most fruit through friendship evangelism and discipleship. There have been some bumps in the road, but seeking to follow the Apostle Paul's advice to "press on," we started a new outreach Bible study on the campus of the University of Toronto this past Winter/Spring session.

We examined the Gospel of Mark together over a period of about 10 weeks. We had a number of visitors at various times during the course of the study,

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CANADA

including several regular non-Christian attendees. The group was small, but, we believe that we have established a beachhead that we hope to continue to improve upon in the months and years to come if the Lord allows. Please pray that God would bring conversion.

This outreach study is only the beginning of our ambitions for God's work in Toronto. As we look out at the landscape we see lots of need for more church plants in the greater Toronto area (5.5 million souls), southern Ontario, and even New York state. Please pray with us that the Lord would raise up godly men from our congregation or others to carry the Gospel forward in these areas, and that the Lord would build up our own congregation to be able to support them.

Another thing that I've been learning has to do with my limitations. Through a recent minor surgery that sidelined me for a bit this spring, I have been reminded of my limitations and dependency on God. The conclusion that I'm still processing is that I am beginning to realize what my father and fellow elder has counseled me over the years is that I need to do less and pray more.

As a pastor I know I can be deceived – it can be easier to put your faith in your efforts and not in the Holy Spirit's work of regeneration and sanctification. This can be true in sermon preparation, counseling, evangelism and, indeed, all facets of ministry. It is hard in the face of there being so much work to be done. May the God of mercy show forth His power

through weak and sinful vessels like me.

I am encouraged to report that one of our young men has begun to train to assist with some duties of giving the announcements and helping to lead the service when I am on holiday. Pray that the Lord will develop him further and build up and encourage others to serve in the church.

One of the interesting things is that we have been praying that the Lord would bring musicians to the church and it has been one of our ARBCA prayer requests over the past few years. God has answered this prayer in spades and we now have three concert pianists (two of whom are current Ph.D students at the University of Toronto) who are new member candidates. Praise God – He answers prayer!

We are very blessed to have quite a few new member candidates and we will begin conducting interviews with them beginning in July. Please pray that the Lord would build His church up further. We have made some changes to our discipleship program and while the Ladies Discipleship will continue to meet again beginning in September with Val, we are revamping the weekly men's discipleship now that we have finished going through the book "Manly Dominion" by Mark Chanski.

In May, we renamed the men's discipleship "Covenant Discipleship" and opened it up to all comers. The thinking behind this was that we had some new

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RBMS missions around the world

It can be said that any organization that does not produce positive results should be considered a failure.

Yes, that is so true and that is why so many churches in Jamaica have lowered their intake standards so as to gain and maintain a numerical standard to satisfy their members and those looking on. Grace Reformed has no intention of doing that, but does admit that growth is necessary to bring glory to God and encourage our members.

We are thirsty and hungry for that growth and we are working but maybe not hard enough.

We are praying, but maybe not sincerely enough so we do not get the pleasure of God, the One who gives a positive result.

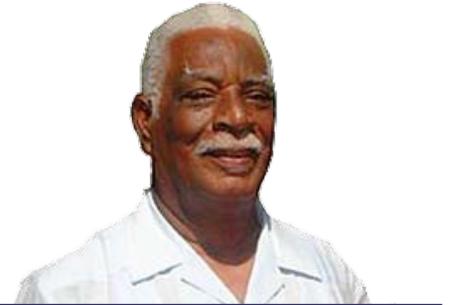
The method used in our country to gain

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JAMAICA



numerical growth is to hold evangelistic crusades, but right now we are too small a group to draw a crowd. Our doctrine is not well accepted to pull people away from other churches and we haven't got many of the young.

Oneil and Juvel, a seminary student, are now working on a group of youth which is 17 strong.

They meet every Friday evening from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. There is much interest shown on the part of the young people as they sing and listen to the Word of God explained.

We are planning to send two of them to the Youth Camp in August, praying that God will work in their hearts and bring about conviction.

Powells

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female members and converts and we wanted to give them the opportunity to participate in the teaching especially since we had finished a focused unit on the men in the church.

We have begun a broad ranging study in the distinctives of a Reformed Baptist Church looking at everything from ecclesiology to soteriology. The discussions have been lively and I pray helpful.

In the pulpit we have just finished an expository series in I Timothy in the evenings. Beginning last week we started a new expository preaching series in the Old Testament prophet of Isaiah entitled "The Lord is Salvation."

We are excited to explore this glorious Old Testament prophet and his role in redemptive history. Please pray as we are getting some non-Christians coming out to our evening services.

I continue in my morning expository

preaching series in the Gospel of Luke, "Following in the Footsteps of Jesus," which we have had the privilege of examining since last year. This week we will be finishing out chapter 11 as we continue studying Jesus' path to the cross.

As a family, like many families, things are busy. My father and fellow elder continues to heal from his car accident and recently we have been spending more time assisting them as my mother had surgery on her foot, which put her out of commission for a couple of months.

Dad continues to preach in the church once every couple of months and I especially continue to profit from his wisdom and experience. I continue to thank God for my father who is also one of my closest friends, coworkers and confidants.

Here at home things are moving quickly with Hannah, 6, Noah, 4, and Abigail, just turned 3.

Val completed her first year of homeschooling the children. Hannah has completed grade 1 and Noah moves on to

senior kindergarten after a summer break. Please pray for our children's salvation.

Hannah is an avid reader and she sometimes even has the privilege of reading the Scriptures at family worship. Noah also is starting to read simple books. Abigail is also sitting in on the sessions and shows a keen memory. On a recent trip to the local science centre she was pointing out the cranium, phalanges and other anatomical features of the skeletons.

But the biggest highlight for our family this year was that they all got to attend the General Assembly at Pioneer Valley Baptist Church this year. Not only did I benefit from the ministry, encouragement and fellowship, my wife and children delighted in the fellowship and friendship with other pastors' wives and children too.

It's a reminder and a privilege for us to serve Jesus Christ in His church and to have all of you praying for us and for us to pray for you all.

May we continue to expectantly pray and eagerly anticipate the work of the Holy Spirit in our midst.



RBMS missions around the world

God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. (1 John 5:11)

What a joy to be beneficiaries of the work of our Lord Jesus Christ. What reassurance, what a privilege.

The Church of Montreal is very encouraged by the pastoral internship of Andy, a brother who has been with us for a year and who has been studying theology at the Faculté de théologie évangélique de Montréal. Andy is an American who has always had a heart to work in the French-speaking world.

When I met him, about nine years ago, he had no Reformed convictions. Three years ago, Andy wrote to me asking me to consider giving him a pastoral internship at our church. I told him that I appreciated the confidence he showed in us, but we couldn't take a student who does not endorse the 1689 Confession of Faith. He understood very well.

About a year ago, Andy and his wife visited us and decided to join our church. Andy did not mention to me the pastoral internship at that time because I had already refused. A few months after their arrival, several brothers and sisters were edified by his Reformed convictions and his love for the Lord. I asked him if he had done an internship as he had desired. He said he had not. I thus offered one to him then. This training is

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CANADA



done in collaboration with the Faculté de théologie évangélique de Montréal and is required for graduation.

In recent months, Andy has been involved in preaching occasionally, teaching some Wednesday evenings and organizing some men's meetings. In addition, Andy participates in Bible studies that I lead for new contacts and members. We are very encouraged by their presence. His wife is truly a woman of God: a woman who loves her sisters, a woman of piety, a woman with a love for the Word of God. Thank you for praying for this couple and their 1-year-old son, Charles.

In May, we had the pleasure of welcoming to our home Rev. Régis Berdoulat (Église réformée baptiste de Lausanne, Switzerland) and his wife Myriam. Régis was the conference speaker for the General Assembly of our

Association. Régis and Myriam are asking the Lord to direct their steps. Thank you for keeping them in prayer.

We have two weddings this year in our church. We are aware of and encouraged by the fact that these marriages often become families. This is a great joy for us.

We would like to acknowledge the church plant at Aylmer, near Ottawa under the leadership of our brother André and his wife, Carole.

The conditions are not easy. André works full time, and he preaches three times a month in addition to preparing studies for Wednesday evenings. Pray that the Lord would encourage and support them in these efforts.

Finally, we want to thank the Lord for making us participants in His work, particularly in building his Church. Glory be to our God.

Europe

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church in Grenoble that is now looking for its own French-speaking pastor. The church is constituted with a very responsible elder in Pascal Grange and other men who are able to teach. There are also candidates for office bearers among those in the congregation.

The Eglise Réformée Baptiste dû Grésivaudan met on Saturday night for

a fellowship meal and then for a sermon on the subject of "Contentment." The fellowship was warm and there was good attention to the Word. On the Lord's Day morning the very cold weather kept one family from attending because the diesel in their car jelled. However, there was still an excellent attendance and an obvious desire to hear the Word of God on the subject of "Overcoming fear."

Now attending the church are a number of Chinese university students who are studying in Grenoble. This

church is made up of many former atheists, agnostics and nominal Catholics. It is evidence that there is nothing too hard for the Lord. Constant prayer needs to be made that the Lord will supply the Réformée Baptiste dû Grésivaudan with a pastor to replace their church-planting missionary pastor David Vaughn.

Not only is there a self-supporting church established, but also, through the Adopt-a-Pastor project, well over 100

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RBMS missions around the world

“The LORD’s lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fails. They are new every morning; Great is Thy faithfulness.” (Lam 3:22-23)

This is a verse that every Christian can use as his own testimony; indeed, our God is faithful to His covenant. Nevertheless, in some circumstances, this truth becomes more real, tangible, as it has been the case for us in the last couple of months.

In April, prior to the ARBCA General Assembly, we had a visit from Pastor Chris Marley, his wife Leah and their young son Micah. What a tremendous time we had together. Brother Chris preached for us and his message has been very well received by the congregation. We then went altogether to Chicopee for the GA.

Like all the people who attended the GA, I have been greatly blessed by the good preaching and fellowship. Our soul has been well fed and I would like to thank personally all those who brought the Word to us on that occasion.

In May our Lord provided us with another good occasion of fellowship as we had the joy of having Pastor Régis Berdoulat from Lauzanne, Switzerland with us for our Quebec GA. Pastor Berdoulat brought three good messages on Christ’s resurrection and every session was very well attended. Régis was able to spend time with us in Quebec and he also preached in our churches in St-Jérôme and Montreal.

The Perrons

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As you possibly know, this was my last AERBQ GA as a president. Indeed, it seemed to me that the time had come to pass the torch to someone else. At the same time I also resigned from the position of coordinator of the association.

That doesn’t mean I am leaving the association. I remain co-elder of our church in Quebec City and I will collaborate as close as I can with the new board. The new president is Pastor Jacques Pelletier from our Quebec City church and the two other members of the AC are pastors Daniel Durand and Pascal Denault.

I will continue to work in the radio station. This radio ministry is becoming more and more a blessing as more people contact us. Since we now have a repeater in St-Jérôme we also receive their collaboration.

I am also planning to invest efforts into the development of our training center. We are in need of pastors, and we pray to the Lord of the harvest to send laborers but at the same time we have a

responsibility to encourage and train the candidates to the ministry. We still have many church-planting projects but we cannot go forward without having people to help out in this capacity.

We are still amazed at the way the merger of our two congregations in Quebec City is going. Everything is going so smoothly and this is far beyond our expectations. Pastor Pelletier and I are taking care of the preaching and teaching, along with two other members who take the pulpit occasionally. Please continue to pray for this situation in which our Lord is certainly bringing glory to Himself in disposing so nicely the heart of His people.

In June I visited our church in St-Jérôme, where I preached the Sunday morning message and, God willing, I will do the same in August in Aylmer at our church plant.

Thank you for the privilege of this fellowship and may our God keep pouring His rich blessing upon you all.

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evangelical pastors are being reached with solid Reformed books. In addition to the books, there is a pastors’ fellowship called La Classe. Here pastors come for instruction, prayer and fellowship. Some of these men have come to the

Reformed faith, while others are still on that journey.

Now that the church in Grenoble is planted, David Vaughn, along with his family, plans to move to Aix en Provence in the South of France near Marseille. Aix (pronounced “X”) is a twin city with Marseille and these twin cities are about 764 kilometers (475 miles) from Paris. This metropolitan area is now the third

largest in France.

Aix itself has a population of 150,000 and the combined population is 1,618,369. Aix is a university town with some 41,000 students. There are also three universities in Marseille and the plan is to fuse all of these universities together. This will make a student population of about

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75,000 making it the largest university population in France. In addition, there is also a significant Muslim population.

In Aix there are only six Protestant churches. Some of these are fiercely opposed to the historic Protestant faith so there is a need for a strong reformed and protestant witness in the city. A few people have expressed the need for a church that would have a strong biblical and expositional ministry.

Although the group in Aix is small, David noted that it is larger than the initial group in Grenoble. There are, of course, some challenges to going to Aix that require prayer. Because there is a high-speed train that goes from Paris to Aix and because Aix has an excellent climate, the housing prices are higher than they are in Grenoble. Also, because the church in Grenoble does not yet have a pastor, David will need to make regular visits to Grenoble for preaching until a pastor is called.

But there are many positive points about the potential of a work in Aix. There are gifted men from Payerne and Lausanne who can help with the preaching in Grenoble. Because there is a seminary in Aix, there is also the opportunity to influence young ministerial students from many denominations. Other positive points include the opportunity for ministry on the university campus, Muslim ministry, opportunity to minister to the Reformed believers already in Aix, and to continue contact with Grenoble and Reformed Baptists in Switzerland as David will only be 4 1/2 hours from Geneva and 2 1/2 hours from Grenoble.

The Lord further confirmed this desire, as the Vaughns were able to sell their home in less than a week after putting it on the market. The plan is that the family will rent an apartment for a year before purchasing another home in Aix.

France needs the gospel. David Vaughn told me that 80 percent of the French people have never touched a Bible and only 5 percent of the population ever goes to Mass, even though about 58 percent profess to be Roman Catholic. Active evangelism by



The Vaughn Family, from left, Jonathan, Michelle, Nicky and David.

using Exploring Christianity, ladies Bible studies and specially advertised meetings like “Does it matter what I believe?” and the regular preaching of the Word has resulted in conversions and additions to the church.

The growth parallels the general increase in the numbers of evangelicals in France. “In 1960, evangelicals in France numbered 180,000; by 1990, they had reached nearly 400,000, and in 2010, they were 600,000. Evangelicals meet in over 2,500 fellowships with dozens more every year” (Operation World, Seventh Edition, p. 341).

Switzerland

My first stop in Switzerland was in Lausanne.

Régis Berdoulat pastors a Reformed Baptist Church in this city and his church hosts “La Classe.” This pastors fellowship and teaching class meets four times a year and lasts the entire day, from about 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

David Vaughn began the time on Feb. 7, with a devotional based on Acts 24:15, 16 showing that a minister must have a good conscience. He stressed the truth that the pastor must take care of his inner life and the danger of too much activity.

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These Chinese students are among those attending the church in Grenoble.



The congregation in Grenoble

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The pastor needs to be in front of God's face. It may be helpful, he said, to have a checklist: Does the Bible speak to me every day? Do I pray? Do I complain?

After the devotional the pastors gave a report on their works, gave prayer requests and then the group prayed for one another. There were reports of conversions, trails, and progress.

One pastor was attempting to bring his church to a Reformed position, but there was not universal acceptance of his teaching. At the meeting I spoke on the subject of the pastor and his prayer life. This was a blessed day of fellowship with these faithful pastors in France and Switzerland.

What a joy to visit Olivier and Denise Favre in Payerne.

The Lord has provided a new building for this church in a nearby town. An evangelical church that had to close its doors gave the church building. The owner of the land also sold them the land and so they now have an adequate meeting place.

The church kept its old storefront building in Payerne and uses it as a place for evangelistic outreach in the community. There are now three elders in the Payerne church.

Also, the Lord has raised up a young man, Tim Wenger, to take over the work in Neuchâtel. Olivier has been attempting to pastor the Payerne church and do a church plant in Neuchâtel. With Tim coming to Neuchâtel, Olivier will be able to give his full time in Payerne.

Tim plans to spend about three months this fall in Bremen, Ind., with the Grace Fellowship Church and Pastor Jon Hueni to help him get a good start in the ministry and to hone his English skills. Because Olivier was receiving some support from the Neuchâtel work the church in Payerne will need to increase their support for the Favres. We need to pray that the Lord will supply all their needs.

There is clearly Gospel advance in Switzerland among Reformed Baptists. A church is now self-supporting, a church



The congregation in Payerne



Olivier and Denise Favre

planter will be full time in Neuchâtel by January 2013 and the impact of La Classe continues among the faithful pastors. Praise the Lord for His gracious building of His church.

Italy

Leonardo De Chirico is a church planter sent out by an association of Reformed Baptist Churches in Italy.

When we visited in 2008 there were six churches in this association; now there are 10 and an 11th was in the process of joining back in February. The association is very active in planting churches, publishing, and promoting the general evangelical cause in Italy.

The pastors in the association challenge couples to accompany the church-planting pastor to assist in the forming a new church. One young couple from the northern part of Italy has done just that to help Leonardo. This couple moved to Rome, where the husband



Emile Dimitru, Matt Price and Olivier Favre, elders at the Reformed Baptist Church Payerne, Switzerland.

searched diligently for a job and all the while enthusiastically helped in every way they could with the new church. Could we encourage such sacrifice here in the States to help a church-planting pastor being a new work?

Leonardo accompanied us on a tour of the Vatican and especially St. Peter's Basilica. He explained that the elaborate architecture, luxurious furnishings and life-size statues promoting the unabashed idolatry of Rome was built in response to the Protestant Reformation. It was Rome's way of declaring "victory" over the Reformation.

My immediate response was, "Is this all they could do?" It grieved me to see the veneration of the saints, Mary and the apostles in such an idolatrous manner. Oh,

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The De Chirico family, from left: Akille, Valeria, Leonardo and Filippo in Rome.



Pietro Bolognesi teaching a Saturday afternoon class at the Padova IFED Training Center.

Europe

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how the gospel needs to come to Rome once again!

On Sunday evening I had the opportunity to preach the gospel in Rome. The church, named “Breccia di Roma” (meaning “a door opened in Rome”), meets in a most humble room with bare walls, hard chairs, an improvised pulpit and with the heat turned off when the Reformed Baptists enter to worship.

What a contrast to St. Peter’s! Yet here faithful Bible believing saints gather each Sunday afternoon to hear the Word preached. I was assigned the text, “Blessed are the meek ...”

It was easy to show the contrast between true Christianity and the splendor of Rome from that text. The church has a small group of faithful members and they labor on for the gospel. It is the vision of Leonardo to see the church become strong and have a training center in Rome similar to the one that already exists in Padova.

Every other month Saturday classes are offered at the IFED training center in Padova where Pietro Bolognesi is pastor. On the Saturday we were there, some snow fell in Rome (a rare occurrence) and significant snow further north. Due to this storm, the class we visited was down from the normal attendance of about 55 to about 37. The eager students, pastors, laymen and women, took in much instruction

during the four hours of lecture.

Pietro has been used of the Lord to build a strong church in this city and to see a very functional building used for worship, a research center with a large research library, classrooms, and even some dormitory rooms on the second floor for pastoral students.

One other ministry that the Lord gave Leonardo in Rome was the opportunity to help a refugee family from another country. Through this opportunity he has

become acquainted with many officials in Rome.

This has given Leonardo open doors that he otherwise would not have had. Also, this family is now attending the church in Rome and appreciates much the ministry of Breccia di Roma.

About 3 1/2 years ago Rayna and I were able, through some most providential circumstances, to become acquainted with

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Some of the members of the Breccia di Roma congregation.

Marshall

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Gleaning from this snapshot of Marshall's life and labors, I believe there are at least three principal lessons we could apply to our own ministries.

First, we must never lose confidence in the preaching of the Gospel as God's ordained means to bring sinners to salvation. This was the most striking characteristic of Marshall's 50-plus years as a pastor and preacher. He was convinced that the content and call of the Gospel was sufficient to bring sinners savingly to Christ.

Further, this conviction translated into an expectation that as the Gospel went forth sinners would be saved. Hence, Gospel proclamation, is God's way to save sinners (Rom. 10:13-17; I Cor.1:21). How much more then, should we give ourselves to preaching the Gospel, confident and certain God has ordained this very act as His means to convert sinners to Christ?

Second, the name of Jesus Christ should be more prominent in our ministries than the name of Calvinism.

While Marshall was a Calvinist, it was the name of Jesus Christ who dominated his ministry more than Calvinism. He was all about publishing the name of Christ. Exalting Christ was his chief passion. Marshall could say with the Apostle Paul, "Him [Christ] we preach" (Col.1:28).

But what about us? Is it Calvinism or Christ that features most noticeably in our own ministries? To raise this question, I am not advocating that we discard or deny or cover up the name of Calvinism from our confessional convictions. However, even when teaching "the doctrines of grace," we should point people to Christ, not Calvin. "Christ we proclaim" should be our badge of honor and the motto of our ministry.

Third, we must always be clear, honest, faithful, and unapologetic as to our confessional identity. Despite Marshall's strong Gospel-centeredness and evangelistic zeal, he did not undermine

nor overthrow the need for doctrinal distinctness in a confessional form.

Likewise, we too must never shy away from holding forth our own confessional identity with clarity and integrity. This means that, while we can fellowship with other believers who may not share all our doctrinal convictions, yet we should never compromise what we are as Reformed Baptists.

Hence, we should not be ashamed nor should we allow the pressure of an anti-doctrinal church culture to muzzle our biblical convictions. This doesn't mean we should be argumentative or rude as to what we believe the Bible teaches. We must speak the truth in love (Eph.4:15).

However, clarity, fidelity, sincerity to our confessional identity should be upheld to guard, guide, and disciple local churches - to increase their love for Christ, their commitment to His Word, and their witness to the world.

Kurt M. Smith is pastor of Sovereign Grace Baptist Church in Lenox, Ga.

Europe

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a young lady studying in Rome from a country closed to the gospel. Rayna has kept in contact with this girl and once again we were able to spend a brief time with her.

She accepted our invitation to come to the church on Sunday afternoon and we have learned that since we left she has attended at least one more time. Please pray with us that the Lord will open this young lady's heart to the gospel

As I reflect on this winter trip to Europe, I do so with much thanksgiving and praise to the Lord of the Church, Jesus Christ. I saw evidence that our King continues to build His church in Europe. The work is slow and small, but praise His Name, it is increasing.

Please pray that the light of the gospel will return to these countries.

Gordon A. Taylor is ARBCA coordinator.



St.. Peter's Basilica in Rome was built as a response to the Protestant Reformation.