

Clifton News

No 260 January - March 2013

Published since 1948





Children taking part in the Clifton Hall Carol Service



News

We would like to wish all our readers happy new year and the Lord's blessing for 2013.
(We apologise for the late publication of this month's magazine.)



CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE

Last year's Christmas season provided yet another wonderful opportunity to reach many with the gospel message. Good numbers attended the Carol Service to sing carols, watch the children sing three songs they practised and to the gospel preached by Richard Catchpole. There were 37 parents and children in total. Also on Christmas morning a short service was held where again several unsaved were present

(More details in report on Seekers on page 11).

Watchnight Service

This was another great opportunity for the gospel as around 18 outsiders came in before midnight who heard the gospel preached. We praise God for blessing all the efforts of the assembly to reach the lost in the past year.

Easter Holiday Club

We shall be holding another holiday club at Easter and prayers are valued for preparations, publicity in the area and for young lives to be touched with the power of the gospel.

2th - 5th April at 10 am to 12 noon.
Prize giving on Friday evening at 7 pm.

Published by Clifton Hall, 45 Whitehorse Lane, South Norwood, London SE25 6RD
Editor: Nitish Patel, Printing - Design JD
Website - www.cliftongospelhall.com. Email - cliftongospelhall@googlemail.com

Meetings

THE WEEK AT CLIFTON

Lord's Day

Breaking of Bread 11.00 am

Sunday School (Term time only for ages 5+)

Gospel Meeting 6:30 pm

Tuesday

First Tuesday of month - Bible Reading 8.00 pm

Wednesday

Seekers Club 6:30 pm (Term time only for under 10s)

Thursday

Prayer & Ministry 7:45 pm

Friday

Friday Club (Term time only for 10+) 7:30 pm

SUNDAY EVENING GOSPEL MEETING

January

6 Mike Surry (Family Service)

13 Alastair Rodger

20 Norman Gibbons

27 Nathan Taylor

February

3 Graham Cole (Family Service)

10 Nitish Patel

17 Richard Catchpole

24 Nitish Patel

March

- 3 Alf Taylor (Family Service)
- 10 Alastair Rodger
- 17 Alastair Rodger
- 24 Mark Beardall
- 31 Nathan Taylor

TUESDAY BIBLE READING

- 7 February Romans 4 (held on Thursday instead)
- 5 March Romans 5

THURSDAY PRAYER & MINISTRY

January

- 3 Richard Catchpole
- 10 Glyn Davies
- 17 Glyn Davies
- 24 Jonathan Black
- 31 Jonathan Black

February

- Tuesday 5 Tom Ledger
- 14 Nitish Patel
- 21 Nitish Patel
- 28 Martin Hayward

March

- 7 Archie Carew
- 14 Archie Carew
- 21 Norman Gibbons
- 28 Colin Sheldon (Report of work in Ireland)

Question Box

At the Friday Club, we have a question box into which the young people have put a number of questions that want us to answer from the Bible. The questions are answered and then prepared in a print out for them to take home to study. Here are some of the questions they have been asking ...

THE DEVIL

Q1 -What does his name mean?

The Devil – False accuser, slanderer

Satan - Opponent, adversary

Q2 -What are some of the other names that are used of him?

Father of lies – John 8:44,

“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”

The evil one – 2 Thessalonians 3:3, the god of this world – 2

Corinthians 4:4,

The prince of the power of the air – Ephesians 2:2 and the prince of this world (John 14:30)

He is called the prince of this world for the kingdoms of the world are given to him because man sinned (Luke 4:5-6)

He is called the god of this world for he wants to be worshipped instead of God. He causes men to worship him by deceiving them into worshipping false gods and false religions.

“But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.” (1 Corinthians 10:20)

Q3 - Is the Devil with you all the time?

No, the Devil is not omnipresent like God. He can only be in one place at once.

Job 1:6-7

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. The Lord said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it."

The Devil has to move around the world so he cannot be every where at once. He had many demons (fallen angels) who do his work for him.

Q4a - How can the Devil do these things?

Q4b - Is the Devil bigger than us?

He was created as a very powerful being, an angel. They are mighty (Psalm 103:20) and he was given a very high place in the hierarchy of angels (Ezekiel 28:14). He is far more powerful than us and opposes us (Ephesians 6:12)

Psalms 103:20

Bless the Lord, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word!

Ezekiel 28:14

You were an anointed guardian cherub. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked.

Ephesians 6:12

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

... to be continued

Bible Teaching

Thoughts and suggestions about worship

By the late Charles Wigg (Tasmania)

WORSHIP DOES NOT FLOW FROM SELF OCCUPATION

Worship does not come from occupation with ourselves, or with our sins. It flows from our hearts as we are occupied with God, whether it be the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit.

I have found so often in the time of worship, that believers are thinking of their sins, of the things that they have done, of all that they have been forgiven. They are remembering all that Christ suffered because of their sin and guilt. This can be a subtle form of self-occupation.

In true worship I am not occupied with myself or with my sins, but with my Lord and Savior, or with my Heavenly Father. In true worship I speak to Him about Himself. An example of this can be seen in Psalm 45. There David says "I will speak the things which I have made touching THE KING". As a result of his thoughts being occupied with THE KING, his heart was welling forth with a good matter.

By way of contrast, in Psalm 32, David is thinking of his sins and what he has confessed and been forgiven. But Psalm 45 is so much richer in response and worship than Psalm 32.

We are told to forget the things which are behind, Phil.3;13. We are told that God will remember our sins no more, Heb.8;12. Then let us not seek to remind God of the things He does not wish to remember. Let us go on to maturity, Heb.5;12 to 6;3.

INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

There are two aspects of worship, (a) Individual or personal worship. (b) Collective, when we worship as a company of God's saints, gathered to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(a) Individual or personal

Individual or personal worship is what I offer to God, when alone in His blessed presence. I offer to Him my personal appreciation of Himself, of His Person, of His worth, of His gifts, of His grace and of His work. This is a sweet and wonderful experience. It enriches our souls, changes our lives and sometimes like Moses, makes our faces to glow with happiness. This is to be encouraged. However when we are gathered together it is a little different.

(b) Collective worship

When in assembly, though the worship and response comes from my heart, yet when I worship and praise God audibly and publicly, I am expressing the feelings and adoration of the whole assembly. It is not just my own feelings and thoughts, but I am leading the assembly. By the Holy Spirit I become their voice.

So then in collective worship we should generally use the plural pronouns; we, and us, instead of I, and me. Our and ours, instead of my or mine. We see this in Rev.4;11, "O OUR God, and in chapter 5;9 & 10, "Thou hast redeemed US to God ... made US kings and priests". When we do this, and the saints respond with AMEN!, they are saying "it is so", "what he has said is just what we feel and would say".

THE USE OF HYMNS

The intelligent use of the hymn book is also important.

Hymns, wisely chosen and sung with joy and feeling, contribute so much to the richness of collective worship. We should get to know our hymn book better and learn to use it wisely.

It would not be intelligent or wise for one brother, (as is done in some places), to announce all the hymns. Neither is it desirable to sing all the hymns at the commencement of the meeting. We need to allow the Holy Spirit to prompt and to lead us.

When we gather to remember the Lord Jesus, it not the elders or the evangelist who are in charge, it is the Holy Spirit. We must give Him His place and allow Him to preside and to lead. This emphasizes the need for each of us to be in personal communion with the Lord

throughout the week. Then when we gather the Holy Spirit will be not be grieved, He will be in liberty and we will be in communion with Him and sensitive to His leading.

If this is not so, our sisters will feel frustrated, because the thoughts and feelings of their hearts, (which the Holy Spirit knows), will not be given expression to. (We will explain this more fully later).

Sometimes numbers of hymns are sung at the commencement of the meeting, to allow the late-comers to arrive. The lack of punctuality, shows a lack of interest & a lack of self-discipline and organization in our lives.

When the Lord and His disciples gathered to keep the passover we read, "When the hour was come He sat down". He is never late. Should we be late?. If we had an appointment with the Prime Minister, or the President or the Queen, would we dare to be late? How much more then should we be punctual when it is the King of Kings whom we come to meet?

The remembrance meeting is not a time for the singing of our favourite hymns, or Gospel hymns, but hymns should be chosen and sung, that are suited to the occasion. If we are in communion with the Lord, often a hymn may be brought to our minds even before coming to the meeting. We may even be singing it over to ourselves. The rich thoughts and lovely language moving my heart. Thus I come to the meeting prepared and there will not be a long pause when the meeting is to begin.

When a hymn is sung in the Spirit, He may use the thoughts that the hymn expresses to move another brother to worship. The thoughts that brother expresses, or the particular glory that fills the vision of his soul, may stimulate another brother to worship, or bring to his mind a hymn that expresses the same thought. This emphasizes the importance of our knowing the hymn book.

It is a profitable thing for us to gather in groups in each others homes, and to spend time, accompanied by a keyboard or some instrument, to learn the hymns, the tunes and how to sing them. Usually God places in an assembly a person who has a good voice and an understanding of singing and of music. Such should be encouraged to help the believers to sing better, and to sing to the glory of God. This will assist in enriching the time of worship, and indeed

all of the meetings. It will help in our outreach meetings also, because good singing attracts people. It will bring more glory to God and be profitable to His people.

Often there are rich and beautiful hymns in the book that are forgotten and never sung. They are sometimes replaced by short and repetitious chorusses, of little depth and little value.

to be continued ...

Report of Seekers Club

Since starting Seekers in April 2008 we have seen a gradual increase in children attending. For the first month just 4 came, by October there were 8 but attendance was very spasmodic. This continued into 2009 & 2010 with 4 more starting but again, very spasmodic in attendance.

2011 started in a similar vein but in February 2 more came, March 2 more and gradually through the year more joined till we had 19 on the register and at last the majority attending regularly.

Judith and Ellen ran the club for these years with Elizabeth stepping in for Ellen when unwell or heavy work commitments prevented her from coming. Due to the fact the children are now coming regularly there was a need for more helpers, so in January 2012 Elizabeth volunteered to step into the breach.

2012 saw more children joining us till by March we had 27 and most coming each week. As we commence 2013 we now have 35 on the register and during the year Mary stepped in on a number of weeks, eventually offering to come each week. Akash also has been a great help coming for the last few months (we need his muscles!).

As you can imagine with this amount of children, Seekers is quite hectic. Children are on the door by 6.15 and mostly like to stay beyond 7.30. Becky helped out the last few weeks so that the children could learn the songs for the Christmas Carol Service when 24 children and 13 parents/older siblings attended.

We have been encouraged by the keenness of the children. They earn points for sitting well during the Bible story, answering quiz questions and any take home sheets they bring back. Prayer is valued for this work, as it is a very exhausting evening and of course the most important thing is that they are introduced to our lovely Saviour through the Bible talks, but also through us as they see us week by week.

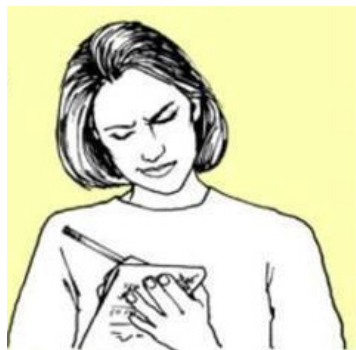
Judith, Ellen, Elizabeth, Mary & Akash

Good News

TOP TEN NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

Surveys each year come up with generally the same new year resolutions people make. These are as follows -

1. Spend more time with family and friends
2. Exercise more
3. Lose weight
4. Quit smoking
5. Enjoy life more
6. Quit drinking
7. Get out of debt
8. Learn something new
9. Help others and volunteer
10. Get organized



However, as most know, few keep to their resolutions. They try but then give up after a while. By the end of the year, there is more fat around the waist, more cigarettes smoked, more debt and more of a

mess in the house! There is always a struggle, there is something in everyone that hinders us from doing what is right. The Bible says it is the sin nature we are born with.

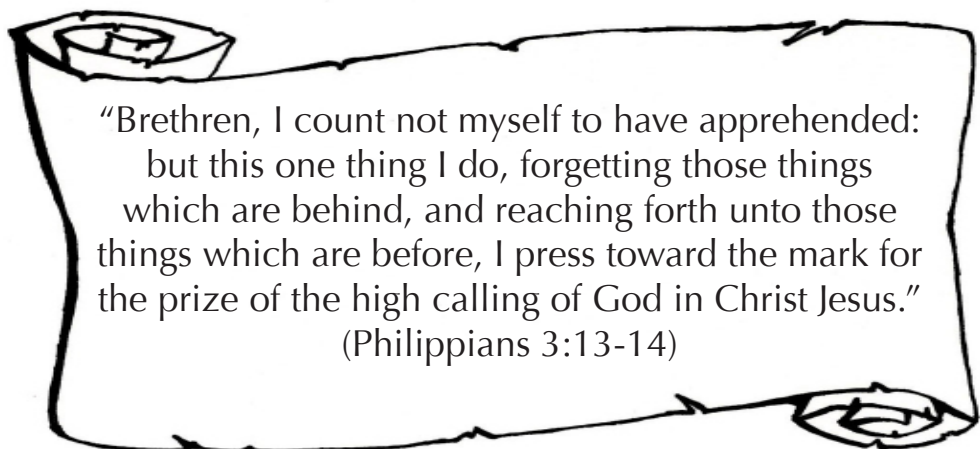
The apostle Paul spoke of the struggle within to do what is right but instead he did wrong ... "For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I." (Romans 7:15)

He give us the answer why ... "Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." (v. 17). In the matter of our eternal salvation, we must acknowledge defeat from the very start. We have sinned and no matter how hard we try we can never change ourselves or save ourselves from hell.

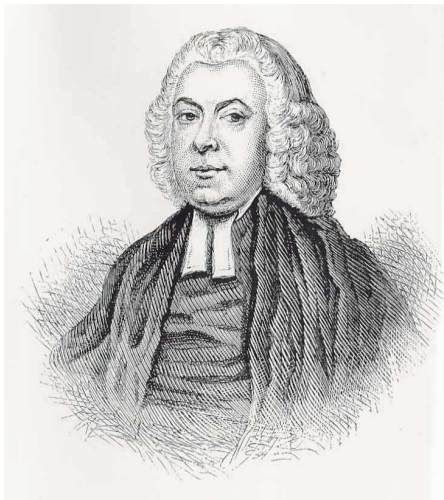
He gives the glorious answer to the problem ... "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus ..." (Romans 8:1)

God has provided a Saviour, Jesus, His only begotten Son who was born at Bethlehem and died at Calvary for our sins. Risen from the dead, He is alive and able to save. Those who have believed on Him as their Saviour, are IN HIM and no longer condemned.

The most important resolution for you to make is to be saved and say ... "As for me, I will call upon God; and the LORD shall save me." (Psalm 55:16)



"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended:
but this one thing I do, forgetting those things
which are behind, and reaching forth unto those
things which are before, I press toward the mark for
the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."
(Philippians 3:13-14)



Church History

William Grimshaw

By Mark Beardall

When William Grimshaw began his ministry, he spent most of his time hunting and fishing. He spent his days in pleasure and his evenings drinking and swearing and gambling. As long as he said prayers and read a sermon on the Lord's day he thought that he had done his duty. He was an unbeliever and he saw the ministry as a comfortable way of making a living but God changed him and when he was converted he saw great blessing and hundreds were brought to Christ.

William Grimshaw was born in Brindle, Lancashire on 14th September 1708. His parents, Henry and Ann Grimshaw attended Brindle Parish Church, where William was christened. His father, Henry who was a farm labourer was made a church warden at St James' Parish Church Brindle in 1728. His parents sent him to the local school in Brindle. William worked hard and was moved up to one of the top classes where he learned Latin and Greek. He went on to Blackburn Grammar School and Heskin Free School before entering Christ's College Cambridge as a sizar. A sizar or poor student had to perform errands for richer students in order to obtain a grant for board and lodgings and reduced university fees.

After a year of hard work he was awarded a scholarship and no longer had to work as a sizar. He took his studies seriously for the first two years but in his final year he fell into bad company and picked up a number of bad habits including drinking, swearing and what he called "what not" with the local girls. He left Cambridge with a Bachelor of Arts degree and a desire to enter the Anglican ministry.

Grimshaw had no real interest in the things of God and felt no special call to preach. He just saw it as a way of making a comfortable living. Samuel Dunster, vicar of Rochdale offered him a curacy at

Littleborough, which was under his charge. Grimshaw accepted and was ordained a deacon at a private chapel in Westminster by the Bishop of Chester on 4th April 1731. At the ordination service he was, "much affected with a sense of the importance of the ministerial office.

Grimshaw spent only five months at Littleborough and then moved to St Mary's Church, Todmorden. Grimshaw did not take his responsibilities seriously. He spent most of his time pursuing his leisure activities such as shooting and fishing. He was a man of the world and he spent many a night drinking and playing cards. He was sadly of little use to the congregation and was unable to counsel people who were in spiritual or emotional distress because he was not better himself. Grimshaw was somewhat of an eccentric. When a man refused to support his pregnant girlfriend Grimshaw dressed up as the devil and scared the man into supporting her.

On the 9th June 1735 William Grimshaw married Sarah Sutcliffe. She bore him two children John and Jane. Soon after his marriage William became concerned about his eternal destiny and sought to earn his salvation by good works. He hoped that God would accept him if his good works outweighed his bad works. He started to pray and tried to live a good life but none of his good works could commend him before a holy God.

Unfortunately Sarah suffered from consumption and died on 1st November 1739. William was devastated and he began to blame God for taking her away. He was in such a terrible state that he came close to insanity.

The turning point of his life came when he picked up a book from his friend's bookshelf and felt a flash of heat as he opened the book. He wondered if it was the reflection of the sun on metal objects that had caused the heat so he closed the book and opened it again and the same thing happened, so he asked his friend if he could borrow the book. The book was called, "The Doctrine of Justification by Faith," and was written by John Owen. When Grimshaw read it he realised that he could not earn his salvation by good works and he so he gave up trying and put his trust in Christ. He was overwhelmed

with a sense of “the pardoning love of God.” He was now a Christian he had been born again.

Grimshaw married Elizabeth Cockcroft in 1741. They left Todmorden the following year and William became the perpetual curate of Haworth on 16th May 1742. When Grimshaw arrived at Haworth there were only 12 communicants but God had brought such blessing that within a year the congregation increased to over 900 people. People travelled for miles to hear the preaching of Grimshaw. Unlike other ministers of his day Grimshaw did not try to impress his hearers with long words or put on airs and graces he spoke in the common language of the people. If people did not attend the services, he would turn up at their houses unannounced and preach the gospel to them. He often said a northern accent, “If yer determined to perish, yer’ll perish wi’t’ sound o’ t’ gospel in yer lugs.” He had unusual ways of persuading people to attend the services. It has been said that he would get the congregation to sing a long psalm and then leave the building and chase men out of the taverns with a horsewhip. People were often seen jumping out of pub windows to avoid being whipped in to the service. The services were so well attended that the building had to be enlarged and a window was removed so that people that were gathered outside could hear him.

William often visited local groups of believers who met in private houses. Many of these meetings had been set up by a lay preacher called William Darney or ‘Scotch Will.’ Grimshaw at first was opposed to Darney because he was not an ordained man but when he heard his preaching he was much impressed and began to support him. It was Darney who first encouraged Grimshaw to preach in the open air.

Although Grimshaw was saved he lacked assurance. On 2nd September 1744 Grimshaw fell into a trance during the Sunday morning service and saw a vision of the Lord Jesus pleading before God for his soul and showing his wounded hands and feet. William was filled with a great sense of assurance. He described this experience as a glorious vision from the third heaven.

Grimshaw was friends with some of the most famous preachers of his time and these men held him in high esteem. John and Charles Wesley were regular visitors to Howarth and so were John Newton

and George Whitfield. He gave much support to the Methodists but considered himself a loyal member of the Church of England and he did not want to cause a split. At this time John Wesley's policy was for converts to take communion in the Church of England and be taught at the Methodist Society meetings. There was no intention of starting a new denomination.

Grimshaw often faced violent opposition from mobs which had been stirred up by jealous vicars. He and the Wesley's were often beaten for the faith. Grimshaw also faced other forms of opposition. On 25th May 1748 he was brought before Archbishop Hutton charged with neglecting his parish and preaching in non-conformist churches. The Archbishop asked him how many communicants were there at Haworth when he started. William told him that there was twelve. Then the Archbishop asked him how many are there now. Grimshaw told him that there was 400 to 500 in winter and nearly 1200 in summer. The Archbishop dismissed the case and said, "We cannot find fault with Mr Grimshaw as he is instrumental in bringing such numbers to the Lord's Table." Grimshaw sometimes preached thirty times in a week. He wrote to Thomas Lee, a lay preacher who he had trained, "Tommy, let us preach four times a day or thirty times a week, whichever you please or can bear. Our Master well deserves it and infinitely more."

It was the custom in Haworth to have an illegal horse race once a year. Grimshaw told the organisers to cancel the race and when they refused he called on the name of the Lord to stop the races. After this there was a terrible storm that lasted three days and the races had to be cancelled. The organisers of the race were so frightened by the storm that they never held another race in Haworth.

In 1755 Grimshaw felt that he had to leave the Methodists. John Wesley wanted to ordain preachers and to hold communion services. The Methodists were beginning to turn into a denomination and Grimshaw was determined to live and die as a member of the Church of England.

Grimshaw preached his last sermon on 20th March 1763. He had typhus fever the next day. He died on 7th April 1763. His last words were, "Here goes an unprofitable servant!"

Visit to India over Christmas

Nitish & Ellen Patel

This visit to India was purely a holiday to spend Christmas with Ellen's family. However, we were able to meet with the believers there in Bombay and Pune. We list some points for prayer and thanksgiving.

We were told of a Moslem Koranic teacher who is seeking the Lord. He read the Bible to find errors in it but could not find any. He started to search the internet for a Christian to help him find salvation. He contacted an evangelist who has arranged for brethren to secretly meet him and teach him the Word of God. His identity and location in India are not published for his safety as when his fellow Moslems find out, his life will be in danger from a very fanatical religion. Do pray for his salvation.

When we first visited the city of Pune there were only 3 assemblies in 1990 but now number over 20. A testimony to the mighty power of the gospel of Christ. Each assembly continues to grow and the Lord is blessing His people. The Ramwadi assembly has no hall of their own and meet in a local school which is fine for Sunday morning but they are not able to have any midweek Bible study or prayer meeting which has to be held in the homes of various believers. Pray for them to have their own hall.

In Gujarat, Sanjay Parmar is labouring in a new village where there could commence a new Gujarati speaking assembly. A number of believers and unsaved gather for the Bible study each week. Do pray that a new testimony will light up soon in this dark state of India.

Christmas was all around in this Hindu dominated country with all the shopping malls extensively decorated and carol singers in the bigger hotels. They don't have the problem with a Christian festival that people in a so called Christian country have, especially in local councils where they bend over backwards to ban anything Christian with the excuse that Moslems and Hindus will be offended.



Ramwadi Christian Assembly - Pune. Sunday morning meeting in local school





Sunset in Pune City (above), The Gateway of India, Bombay (Below)

