



Ebenezer News

June 2009

George Whitefield on hearing sermons

George Whitefield was an extraordinary powerful preacher, but he felt it necessary to give some advice to his hearers on the way to listen to him and others. Here is a summary of his wise words.

1. Come to hear, not out of curiosity, but from a sincere desire to know and do your duty before God and man.
2. Give diligent heed to the things that are spoken from the Word of God. If an earthly king were to issue a royal proclamation, and the life or death of his subjects entirely depended on performing or not performing its conditions, how eager would you be to hear what those conditions were!
3. Do not entertain even the least prejudice against the preacher. That was the reason Jesus Christ Himself could not do many mighty works, nor preach to any great effect among those of His own country; for they were offended at Him. Take heed therefore, and beware of entertaining any dislike against those whom the Holy Ghost has made overseers over you.
4. Be careful not to depend too much on a preacher, or think more highly of him than you ought to think. Preferring one teacher over another has often been of ill consequence to the church of God. Are not all preachers sent forth to be ministering ambassadors to those who shall be heirs of salvation? And are they not all therefore greatly to be esteemed for their work's sake?
5. Make particular application to your own hearts of everything that is delivered. Oh, that people when preachers are dissuading from any sin or persuading to any duty, instead of crying, 'This was intended for such and such a one!' instead would turn their thoughts inwardly, and say, 'Lord, is it I?'
6. Pray to the Lord, before, during, and after every sermon, to endue the minister with power from the Holy Spirit to speak, and to grant you a will and ability to put into practice what he shall show from the Book of God to be your duty.

He ends, "If only all who hear me this day would seriously apply their hearts to practise what has now been told them! How we would see Satan, like lightning, fall from heaven, and people would find the Word preached sharper than a two-edged sword and mighty, through God, to the pulling down of the devil's strongholds!"

Take heed how you hear.

The Pastor

God works miracles in Romania

Although it began with very little hope of success, the Codlea Prison Magazine has now reached its 100th edition.

When God prompted Mihai Oprita to start the magazine in 2000, everyone said that it would not last beyond 3 or 4 issues. Reaching the 100th edition landmark has proved that God is a God who makes things happen and sustains them according to His will.

When the 100th edition was published there was much celebrating by the publishing team and much more celebrating took place in the prison itself. A great meeting was held with all the prisoners who had had articles in the magazine, with the prisoner governor and with the leaders responsible for the magazine.

Among the prisoners was one Taras Mircea, serving a life sentence, who received the Lord into his life right at the beginning. Taras has said that the magazine is very useful for him, helping him grow and strengthening him in his faith. Reading the magazine has given him and his fellow prisoners the chance to turn their life around and become God's children. He has said that he reads the articles with joy and sees God blessing it.

Another prisoner, Shami Hussein, has been in Codlea Prison since 2003. He is a Muslim. During his first year there, he realised that his life was a mess. He met other prisoners who had committed similar offences to him but who had repented and received the Lord Jesus into their heart. He started to read the magazine and found good articles written by prisoners who had found meaning in life. In time he began to believe in God and has now committed his life to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The prison governor has been quoted as saying that it is almost impossible to understand the effect the magazine has had on the prison as a whole. Many prisoners are asking about it and the things contained in it and many souls have been touched by it.

Let us remember the ongoing work of the Codlea Prison Magazine and these Christian inmates as they continue to follow the Lord and witness to their fellow prisoners.

Francine Loose

A personal view of the Ladies Conference

I have never attended a ladies day conference before and only put my name down for this one because the Book of Ruth is one of my favourites and I wanted to see what the speaker, Ann Benton, would do with it. To be honest the thought of spending five hours solely in the company of women, most of whom I didn't know, was not all that appealing to me. So, off I went with an arms-folded attitude, not really expecting to enjoy myself. What a surprise I had, and a pleasant one too. The day was thoroughly enjoyable and the speaker informative and entertaining as she went through the book and linked its lessons to the 21 century. The testimony of a lady who had been suddenly widowed was very moving but also encouraging as she shared how the Lord had upheld her through her sorrow, much the same as He did with Naomi and Ruth all those years ago. Would I want to go again? Definitely. If it was the same speaker I'm sure that I would enjoy it, but I would also like to give someone else a try. Unfortunately, there were not many young women attending, which was a shame really, because they missed a good day. Perhaps they were like me, a little unwilling to try something new. All I can say to girls of any age is, give it a try, if you don't like it you can just chalk it up to experience and not go again, but you may end up having an enjoyable day and learning something beneficial too.

Lynne Mann

Notice in the porch of St David's Church at Rulen

On your way to the Lord's House be thoughtful, be Silent, or say but little and that little good. Speak not of other men's faults. Think of yours for you are going to ask for forgiveness.

When you reach the Church: never stay outside, go in at once. Time spent within is so precious.

In Church: Kneel down. Humbly pray. Spends the time that remains in holy thought. In prayer remember the awful presence into which you have come. Never look about you to see who is coming in, or for any cause whatever. It matters nothing to you what others may be doing.

Attend to yourself. Fasten your thoughts on the Holy Service. The blessed Spirit will strengthen you if you persevere.

When the service is over: Remain kneeling and pray. Be silent and speak to no-one until you are outside. Do not cover your head until you have left the porch. The Church is God's House even when prayer is over.

On your way home: Be careful of your talk. The world will soon slip back into your mind. Love prayer and praise best.

Preaching is but the help to that holy work.

Spotted by Dave Davies

South East Wales Ladies Conference: Ann Benton on the relevance today of the Book of Ruth
God's sovereignty in an uncertain world

Life is full of trouble and sorrow (Ruth 1:1-5);

To try to run from the judgement of God will lead to greater failure – both of Naomi's sons married outside the Jewish nation; all three men die

Human beings are capable of immense kindness (1:5-2:18);

- Orpah and Ruth –willing to give up own people and gods to follow Naomi
- Ruth – happy to work to support herself and Naomi
- Boaz – takes a personal interest in his workers and wants to protect Ruth

Human beings are capable of great kindness because they are made in God's image

The Sovereign God is a kind God (2:19-22);

- In creation and provision – the famine ended and the land flourished again
- In common grace – it rains on the just and unjust
- In His laws – provides for the poor to glean.
- In His providence –Naomi returns just at the beginning of the barley harvest and Ruth arrives at Boaz's field
- In His welcome – God's wings spread wide to welcome all

God has a purpose and plan for our lives – there are no accidents or coincidences!

God's Sovereign purposes never preclude responsible action (3:1-14)

- The pursuit of an honourable agenda – nothing wrong in wanting a home
- The submission to loving advice – we should seek the advice of older Godly people when making decisions
- The following of God-given guidelines – Naomi 's aim is for Ruth to marry
- The joy of normal human desires (Ruth 3:10-11) We should take pleasure in what we are given
- The respect for proper procedures – Boaz gives the closer relative the opportunity to marry Ruth
- The concern for reputation – Boaz protects Ruth's reputation

God's sovereign purposes are so surprising (3:15-4:15)

- Surprising in their lavishness – Ruth carries home a shawl full of barley
- Surprising in their route – Boaz has to trust that the other kinsman would not redeem Ruth
- Surprising in their inclusion
- Surprising in their conclusion – Naomi returns to the land and gains a son

God's sovereign purposes encompass all of history (4:16-21)

- A son for Naomi A king for Israel A redeemer for the world

The book of Ruth begins with three deaths, sorrow and sadness but ends with a new birth and great joy. For us it is part of the great plan in the provision of a kinsmen redeemer for sinners.

Summary by Carole Jarrett

Meetings and dates

Sunday services

	10.30	18.00
07 June	Pastor	Pastor
14 June	Pastor	Pastor
21 June	Pastor	Pastor
28 June	Pastor	Pastor

Tuesday prayer meetings

	19.30
02 June	Pete Sheldon
09 June	Peter Wilson WEC missionary in Japan
16 June	Pete Sheldon
23 June	Pastor
30 June	Joint AECW prayer meeting at Ebenezer

Every week

Saturday morning prayer meeting at 8.00
Men's Fellowship - every Wednesday at 10.00
Sunday School - every week at 14.30
16+ Youth Group – every Saturday 19.30

Every week in term time

Mothers and Toddlers - every Tuesday and Friday at 9.30
Wednesday - The Ark (4-7) 17.45 to 19.00 // The Rock (8-12) 19.00 to 20.15
BYY Youth Group – Fridays at 19.30

Every month

Fellowship Lunch - Fourth Sunday after the morning service (28 June)
Senior Citizens' tea - 2nd Saturday 15.30 (13 June - speaker Phill Godwin)
Service at Thistle Court - Third Sunday at 15.00 (21 June)

Tea rota for the month: Phill & Chris, Edward & Tracy, Dianne

Cleaning rota

06 June Phill, Chris, Dianne
13 June Steve & Fay
20 June Dave & Carole
27 June Andrew & Francine

Other dates:

03 June at 20.00 - Special Church Meeting
06 June - Ladies' Meeting - Bernice Tucker
10 June at 19.30 Officers' meeting

Sunday School minibus drivers

07 June Ken Mitchell
14 June Dave Jarrett
21 June Phil Godwin
28 June Bob Metcalfe

Please Note

If you are unable to drive on your Sunday please make arrangements with one of the other drivers to ensure children are not abandoned

Thanks