

Feltham Evangelical Church *Newsletter: July 2008*

A Bible-based church making known the Christian Faith

Calendar

w/c 29th June

29th 9.30.a.m Lord's Supper
 29th 11.00.a.m. Morning Service (Philip Venables)
 29th 11.20.a.m. Sunday School (Daphne Henderson)
 1st 5.45.p.m. Lighthouse
 2nd 7.30.p.m. Prayer / Bible Study
 4th 9.30.a.m "Open House"
 5th 10.30.a.m. Open Air

w/c 6th July

6th 9.30.a.m Lord's Supper
 6th 11.00.a.m. Morning Service (Philip Venables)
 6th 11.20.a.m. Sunday School (Sheila Hume)
 8th 5.45.p.m. Lighthouse
 9th 7.30.p.m Prayer / Bible Study
 11th 9.30.a.m "Open House"
 12th 7.00.p.m. Feltham Bible Focus; John Ling (The Truth about abortion, cloning, euthanasia etc.)

w/c 13th July

13th 9.30.a.m Lord's Supper
 13th 11.00.a.m Morning Service (John Ling)
 13th 11.20.a.m. Sunday School (Trish Howard)

13th 1.p.m. Fellowship Lunch
 13th 2.p.m. Afternoon Service (John Ling)
 15th 5.45.p.m. Lighthouse
 16th 7.30.p.m Prayer / Bible Study
 18th 9.30.a.m "Open House"

w/c 20th July

20th 9.30.a.m Prayer and Praise
 20th 11.00.a.m. Morning Service (Philip Venables) with Lord's Supper
 20th 11.20.a.m. Sunday School (Daphne Henderson)
 22nd 5.45.p.m. Lighthouse
 23rd 7.30.p.m. Prayer / Bible Study
 25th 9.30.a.m "Open House"

w/c 27th July

27th 9.30.a.m Lord's Supper
 27th 11.00.a.m. Morning Service (Philip Venables)
 27th 11.20.a.m. Sunday School (Diana Asiedu-Jacobs)
 30th 7.30.p.m. Prayer / Bible Study
 1st (Aug) 9.30.a.m "Open House"
 2nd 10.30.a.m. Open Air

News

Michael Loosley has spent much of June in Hillingdon hospital. He has contracted MRSA through being in hospital .

Martin, Karolina and Aaron Curtis are now back in the country from the Far East. It is good to have them back after five months away.

Lillian Kerr continues to experience much weakness. She is presently being cared for at home.

May Lin Venables has an appointment on July 4th to further investigate her kidney problem.

Notes

Feltham Bible Focus On July 12th at 7.00.p.m. John Ling is due to be with us. He is an expert in the true understanding of matters relating to "life" issues such as abortion and euthanasia. These issues are very much being discussed in society nowadays. Accordingly, this evening gives us the opportunity to be biblically informed.

Fellowship Lunch. On July 13th Mr Ling will be with us for the day. We look forward to his ministry from God to us. Between the morning and afternoon services we plan to have a bring-and-share lunch. Please come and join in so that we might enjoy the things of our God together.

Bible Study On Wednesday evenings we seek to continue to study the Bible together. This month we are due to draw to a close on our studies in the life of Abraham and move on to looking at Isaac's life. It is good to be able to study God's Word together. Come along if you can.

Prayer Also as part of our Wednesday evenings we pray together. We were reminded by the LORD in Istvan Salanki's ministry to us recently about how important (and how effective) it is to pray together as a church. If you can only come once-in-a-while it would be a contribution to the prayer welfare of the church.

Offering / Collection From 1st July our arrangements for collecting our monetary offerings to the LORD and His cause are due to change. Instead of passing a bag around we will plan, on a Sunday morning, to have a box available on the right of the entrance to the main hall. Ask Philip if you need any information / clarification concerning these proposed changes.

The Lighthouse group reach the end of another school year this month. On July 8th the End-of-Year Parents' Evening is due to be held. Please pray God's working upon the children and the leaders.

Spiritual Notes Conscience

Our conscience is that which is inside us with the purpose of informing us about what is right and wrong. It is one of the great indications, in our beings, that we are created in the image of God. He perfectly knows right and wrong whilst we, through our consciences, are aware that there is right and wrong.

A working conscience The follow-on from this basic understanding is that through our consciences we have some knowledge of God's standards. Paul says concerning the Gentiles, who do not have the law of God, that **indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, since they show that the requirements of the law are written on**

their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them (Rom 2:14-15). Through our consciences there is some knowledge of what God requires of us. And this should lead to conviction of sin - a brokenness before God which then should lead us to faith in Christ.

A cleansed conscience As we think about this process by which our consciences lead us to Christ it is interesting to be aware of the experience of the people of God in the past. Through the achievements of Christ on the cross and the giving of the Holy Spirit we can now know cleansed consciences (see Heb. 9:14). Whereas the inadequacy of the Old Covenant regime is seen in the fact that **the gifts and sacrifices being offered were not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper** (Heb 9:9b). In the Old Testament a believer who had his offering accepted always had the question upon his conscience: will I be accepted next time I make my offering? But for the Christian today all such uncertainty is gone. Christ's offering is accepted once-and-for-all and thereby we are accepted by God eternally when we come to Christ by faith. How marvelously blessed we are!

A clear conscience As Christians, though, we should be very careful how we deal with our consciences. As those who have been made alive in Christ we are being renewed by the Holy Spirit who educates our conscience through the Word of God. By this means we have the basis for **keeping a clear conscience** (1 Pet. 3:16a). In Hebrews 13:18 the writer says: **Pray for us. We are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honorably in every way.**

A weak conscience However, let us be warned that the Christian does not automatically have a clear conscience. Scripture speaks of a weak conscience. This is a conscience which has not been sufficiently moulded around the Word of God by the Holy Spirit. Romans 14 picks up this theme when it focuses on a man who has a sensitive conscience about foods and days (see Rom 14:1-6). He might say for example that we must eat fish on a Friday or keep "All Saints Day" as a special day. Such a persons conscience has not been educated by the Word of God. Accordingly, he has got unimportant issues out of all proportion. In such circumstances those with strong consciences should not force the weak to go against their conscience and neither should the weak bind others to follow their petty rules and regulations.

A defiled conscience Closely related to a weak conscience is a defiled conscience. Going against your conscience to do what you deem to be wrong or not do what you deem to be right is dangerous because it leads to a defiled conscience. When our consciences start to be "dirtied" in this way they start to send out an uncertain signal. From this we end up with our wills being confused because unclear messages are received from the conscience.

A seared conscience Alas we also need to be warned that a malfunctioning conscience can also become a completely non-functioning conscience. Those who depart from the faith are said in 1 Tim. 4:2 to have been those **whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron**. Every action against the promptings of conscience has contributed to a deadening of the conscience until like flesh totally desensitized by burning there is no response at all. Such a phenomenon explains the actions, of a Hitler, a Stalin, a Fred West etc etc. We need to be warned by this. Whenever we go against our conscience we set ourselves on a terrible pathway.

So let us with Paul determine to **strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man** (Acts 24:16). To go against conscience is a serious and dangerous thing. However, we need to emphasize again in conclusion that our consciences need continually to be re-educated by the Word of God so that they are a truly accurate barometer of what is right and wrong. Without the Word of God they are like navigational instruments on an aeroplane which have not been serviced for many years. They may give a good guide, but not an accurate guide. And that lack of accuracy could be disastrous. It is the Word of God which services our consciences so that they approximate to being a perfect guide given by God to mark our way in this world.