

A young boy is climbing a rope on a climbing wall. He is wearing a green helmet, safety glasses, a blue t-shirt, and a harness. He is holding onto a thick yellow rope with both hands. The background is a clear blue sky. The climbing wall is made of dark wood and has several ropes and pulleys. The boy is looking up at the rope he is climbing.

"The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer." Psalm 18:2

The Presbyterian Banner

October 2025

This Issue

“And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.” Philippians 1:6

Table Of Contents

- 1 - *Cover* - Photo taken by Simeon Ashby at the 2025 PCEA Family Camp, held from the 22nd to the 25th of September at Camp Elim, in Forster, NSW.
- 2 - *This Issue*.
- 3-4 - *Church News* - Reports from Brisbane, Hunter, Hawkesbury Nepean, Manning, Melbourne, Northern Rivers, and St Georges.
- 5-9 - *Meditation* - “God’s Gift of Family,” Talk 1 given at the 2025 PCEA Family Camp, by the main speaker, Rev Robin Tso.
- 10 - *October Search Work*.
- 10-11 - *October Prayer Points*.
- 12 - *Back Cover* - More photos from the 2025 PCEA Family Camp, including a picture of Katherine Forbes and Lachlan Bosveld, who got engaged during the camp.

From the Editor



“Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.” God is good. When reflecting on the character of God, we can’t get more basic than that.

To be sure, some atheists will insist that God, at least as he is described in the Christian Bible, he is not good. Where they get their definition of ‘good’ from, and what makes them imagine that they can sit in judgement over God and determine whether or not he is good, well, we won’t bother getting into all that.

The question still remains, though: what exactly is it about God that is good?

Earlier this year, after ten years of post-cancer medical tests and treatments, my wife was released from the program. Over the course of those years, when tests showed she was healthy, we would be inclined to respond, “God is good.” And that’s not a bad thing to say when getting good news. But if the results from those tests were not to our liking, would that have changed our estimation of his goodness?

We have to realize that God being good is not first of all about Him being useful in doing what we want him to do. Remember, God does not first of all exist to suit our purposes. Rather, we exist to suit his. He is not here to serve us; we are here to serve him.

And besides, with God, good is not just about what he does. It’s about who He is. Good defines his being. God is the essence of good. Anything that is good comes from Him.

May we regularly reflect on this as we rejoice in the goodness of God.

Jim Klazinga

The Presbyterian Banner [ISSN 0729-3542] is the official magazine of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia.

The PCEA was founded in 1846 and adheres to the Westminster Confession of Faith (1647) as a correct summary of the teaching of the Holy Scriptures.

There are congregations in Kalinga in QLD; Maclean, Wauchope, Kindee, Taree, Cardiff, Raymond Terrace, Sydney CBD, and Mt Druitt in NSW; Narre Warren, Carrum Downs, and Geelong in VIC; Ulverstone in TAS.

Subscriptions: \$30 per year in bulk (5 or more) and \$35 for Australian individual subscriptions and \$50 overseas.

Bank details for Direct Credit: Bendigo Bank, BSB 633 000 Ac: 163 581 242 Please add your name in the details panel when making payment.

The opinions expressed in the articles and news reports are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the editor, his assistants, or of the PCEA itself.

Reproduction of articles is usually allowed but permission to do so must be sought first.

The magazine is available as a pdf file for free download on the Church website: www.pcea.org.au

Editor: Jim Klazinga, 3 Padua Place, Boondall, QLD 4034

Mobile: 0466 213 763 Email: editor@pcea.org.au

Assistant Editor: Julie Klazinga.

The editor is grateful for the assistance of an informal network of Banner liaisons from the various PCEA congregations.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Brisbane

[Report by Jim Klazinga]



We rejoice with Micah and Lauren on the birth of their son, Peter John Klazinga, on the 15th of September. His baptism is tentatively scheduled for the morning service on 26 October.

During the evening service that day, the pastor will be having the next in a regular set of exchanges with David Torlach, pastor of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Brisbane.

We hope to begin a seven week new members course on the 19th of October. Three young people who have recently started attending have expressed interest in participating.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Hunter

[Report by Ian Miller]

Hunter Congregants who attended the recent Family camp have commented favourably on the Biblical studies, discussions and fellowship. Our gratitude is

extended to the organising committee, Rev Tso, discussion leaders, devotion leaders and others who contributed.

Centenarian Mr Adriaan Salm, a beloved senior member of the congregation, has recently passed to glory. Our prayers and sympathy are extended to the family and friends.

After a short school holidays recess, our mid-week Bible study/prayer meeting and the Cardiff Sunday School are to resume. We look forward to continuing

an interesting and relevant study of the prophecy of Malachi.

The adults Sunday school study group, after an extensive study of Covenant Theology, are returning to the Westminster Confession of Faith chapter 8, 'Of Christ the Mediator'.

During October, pulpit supply is to be provided by Rev Nobin Shunmugam, Rev Dr Peter Barnes and Mr Andrew Bajema. We are thankful to the Lord for His provision of faithful preachers and teachers of His word during the period of ministerial vacancy.

Romans 8:32 "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Hawkesbury Nepean

[Report by Elizabeth Muldoon]

Dylan, our beloved brother in the Lord, was buried on 20th

September, 2025. This is the tribute that was printed on the brochure of the funeral service:

Dylan was a humble man. Growing up in Hebersham, Mt Druitt, he learned to appreciate life's blessings, even during challenging times. Raised with love by his parents, Mima and Shane, and as the eldest brother to Jasmin and Josh, Dylan developed a strong sense of responsibility and the desire to build a life he could be proud of.

A passionate perfectionist, Dylan gave his all to everything he did. He believed that every task, no matter how big or small, deserved his very best, and this pursuit of excellence carried on into adulthood. When Dylan came to know Jesus Christ, his life was transformed. From that moment he found new purpose. He lived to honour God, and had a heart postured to bring glory to Him.

Dylan was many things, a husband, a father, a son, a brother, and a friend. He was one of a kind, and he leaves behind an indelible mark on the lives of all who had the honour of knowing him.

Though Dylan is no longer with us on this earth, we take comfort in knowing that he is now in the presence of his loving Heavenly Father. His legacy lives on in the hearts of those who love him, a legacy that time will never erase.

Till we meet again.

Dylan leaves behind his lovely wife, Haylee, and beloved son, Levi. Remember them in your prayers.

Dennis and Elizabeth have returned from their 5 1/2 weeks trip to Africa. They are deeply

thankful to Arthur Adams for taking the services while they were away, and for taking Dylan's funeral service with grace and gentleness, and helping to care for the congregation at this sad time. They are also deeply thankful to Donald MacIntosh, the assessor elder, and Tom Reeve, our elder, for their compassion and helpfulness to all in the church at this time.

* * * * *

Manning

[Report by Joyce Bennett]

Another month has slipped away, how quickly the time is passing. Once again we are very thankful to the Lord for his blessing to us each day and for our pulpit supply with godly men who proclaim His Word faithfully. We are praying for our elders that the Lord will reveal to them the man of His choice to minister over us.

On a sad note Young & Eunice's daughter-in-law Hannah was in a serious car accident this past week, Hannah was pregnant at the time, unfortunately she lost the baby. Hannah has a fractured pelvis and had surgery on Monday to put it back together. Can we please pray earnestly for this family, including Hannah and her husband Kevin, as well as Young and Eunice.

Also Lyn Meredith had to be taken to Lake Macquarie Private Hospital to have stones removed from her bile duct, Lyn is now recovering in the Mayo Hospital in Taree, Lyn would value your prayers as well.

* * * * *

Melbourne

[Report by Heather Fiedler]

While our numbers at the Narre Warren branch of the Melbourne congregation have decreased in this past year, we remain encouraged with the Lord's hand upon us.

The congregation is grateful for the Lord's provision and answer to pray with a new minister, David Lachman beginning his first service here on the 12th of October. Please pray that David and his family will soon settle in to life in Melbourne, and that they would be encouraged in their work for the Lord here.

With a new minister arriving, we will shortly be saying farewell to George & Rhoda Ball. Again God has so graciously provided George to minister and pastor our congregation this past year. We are grateful for all the work that they have achieved on long overdue upgrades and maintenance around the church building and grounds. God has also blessed us with faithful and uplifting sermons and constant pastoral care. We thank God for their ministry amongst us, and pray that God will uphold and strengthen them as they return to their home and family.

We ask for continued pray for our congregation, particularly for a few of our folk who are struggling with various health issues at the moment.

* * * * *

Northern Rivers

[Report by Beth Sonter]

A small group from our

congregation attended the family camp at Forster recently. Mandy Kerridge gave me a glowing and positive report of the camp and its activities.

Northern Presbytery will be meeting in Maclean towards the end of October. Please pray for those attending and for the items that will be considered by presbytery.

David Kerridge and his daughter Grace will be travelling to Sri Lanka and India in November and December. David will be representing the PCEA at synod, lecturing and preaching while there. A very excited Grace is looking forward to this wonderful experience and is going to be a special representative of the young people of our denomination. During David's absence we will have Mr Ken Dawson from Wauchope taking the services.

During normal Sunday services, we have been looking at Romans in the mornings and James 2 in the afternoons. Wednesday studies have been in recess due to school holidays but will resume after the holidays.

* * * * *

St Georges

[Report by Alex Steel]

During September the construction of a hoarding and gantry over the footpath and cycleway was completed in the church restoration works. Erection of scaffolding to the top of the steeple is currently under way.

The congregation is in good spirits and appreciating the ministry of Rev Robin Tso.

God's Gift of Family

Talk 1 Given at the 2025 PCEA Family Camp, by Rev Robin Tso

Reading: Genesis 1:1-28

Imagine with me a beautiful and grand building.

Boys and girls, think of someplace you have been to, with solid walls, beautiful windows, as well as a roof that gleams in the sun. Say, the Queen Victoria building in Sydney, or somewhere else that you have seen.

From the outside, it looks so strong, so impressive. It looks as if it is going to stand forever, so permanent. But deep down below, underneath the surface, there is a problem with the foundation. It is being eroded with water damage. Slowly, and quietly, water is seeping in. Then after some time, you begin to see cracks, and the cracks are getting bigger and bigger. By that time the very base, the foundation, is so weakened. People walk past, admiring the outside, the structure, but completely unaware of the erosion. Then, one day, a big storm comes, and the whole building collapses into a pile of rubble.

Friends, this is how I would like you to consider the institution of the family today. I know, especially here, as we gather on this occasion in the family camp, I am thankful to say that many of you here are blessed with strong and joyful families. Not only that, as we gathered here, we are surrounded by like-minded believers. Therefore, it is so easy to assume that this is the norm. And we can easily live in this comfortable cocoon.

But the reality is that the

institution of the family is like that building that I talked about. It seems so permanent, so strong. But the picture in our 21st-century, is very different, the foundation is being eroded. There are many types of slow drip of bad ideas seeping in. There are many cracks of broken relationships, many dangers.

The two-parent husband-and-wife, in a loving marriage, along with the children in one single family unit, is not the norm anymore. Even in Christian families. There is this massive erosion in our land and culture. I want to share with you some of the statistics. These are not mere numbers, but these are really painful stories.

As of June 2024, nearly 16% of Australia's 7.6 million families are one parent families. That means there are well over a million homes where there is one single parent taking the majority of the responsibility of raising children.

Last year, nearly 50,000 marriages broke down in divorce, with fractured homes, and children being so confused asking questions, questions that they should never have to ask.

Not only that, there is that increasing violence within the home. And on top of that, there is this extremely low fertility rate, sitting at 1.5 children per woman, well below the 2.1 needed to sustain a society.

Why? Because the general narrative of our society today, is that children are not a blessing to

be welcomed, but a burden to be avoided.

Friends, the reason why I would bring out these statistics, is not because I want you to simply see that there is a sociological problem. It is far more than that, far greater than that. It is a spiritual problem. The crumbling of society, the crumbling foundation of the family, indicates to us the ever-increasing departure from the word of God. This is why, as Christian believers, our response to that must not be some mere cultural conservatism or activism. True, they have their place. But the most fundamental point, is that we must return to the word of God as our sure foundation.

Do you see how relevant this subject is? Not only for the existing Christian families, not only for married couples and children, it is important for singles and for those who are contemplating marriages.

Why? Because the attack on the family, is affecting the very fibre of our society.

It is affecting the church. The crumbling foundation of the family has that widespread implication. Think about it. Isn't it true that all of us here are affected, directly or indirectly, by the notion of broken family. For myself, a broken family was not just something I heard about, it was my experience from birth, and throughout much of my life.

Perhaps some of you here share similar experiences. Indeed, you may know someone in that situation, even the children and

young people here as well.

In other words, even within the church we are not exempt from the attack on the family. Those of us who are ministers, and office bearers here, would also agree that this can be one of the major areas in the pastoral ministry. Therefore, all of us need to be aware of this important matter, for it affects us.

So, going back to the illustration of a building, looking so grand on the outside, but with structural problems, problems with the foundation. What would the professionals, what would the builders do, if they see a building like that?

Boys and girls, do you know? It would be foolish for the builder to immediately begin with patching up the cracks on the outside. The builder would not be having a speech about buildings in general. No, the first and foremost response is to identify problems: the cracks, the water infiltration, the extent of the structural damage. So too, we need to be able to identify and to be aware of the attacks on the family.

This is what I hope to do with you, and that brings us to our first heading, “the breaking of the foundation.”

As we consider the threats and attacks on the family. It is easy for us to think that this must be something quite new, perhaps only since the last century. But the attack on the family has been going on for a long time.

Since when? Since the garden of Eden. Children and young people, do you remember the first attack? The first strategy from Satan was this, “hath God said?”

Friends, this is still the strategy,

this is still the kind of attack that we see today. And we need to understand, the attack on the family is far beyond human opponents with ungodly ideologies.

We need to see who is behind all of that. It is the evil one, Satan, the Prince of darkness. Therefore, the attack on the family is far greater than a cultural war, or an attack on the so-called, “traditional values.” It is a spiritual warfare.

The most fundamental attack is on the word of God. It begins with those seeds of doubts, questioning the authority, the validity, and the supremacy of the word of God.

The attack on the family is the attempt to invert God’s design. We need to grasp this. What we ought to appeal to is not tradition, or cultural norm. Those things change. Those things are not infallible or inerrant, only the word of God is.

Think of the fall into sin, in Adam, and we in him. The fall into sin immediately disordered the headship of Adam, bringing chaos into the original harmony, and threatening the home.

It was the first blame game in the first marriage. Adam should have led and protected his wife from the deceitfulness and lies of the evil one and cast the serpent out. Instead, Adam blamed, not only his wife, but God. Verse 12 of Genesis 3, “The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.”

Look at that marriage, look at that home. There was the pain, the shame and blame of sinful brokenness. What we see in our days may be different in names, but there are echoes of the first

rebellion.

There are 3 main areas we can see in the breaking of the foundation. The most fundamental of all is the denial of God as Creator.

It begins with the rejection of the existence of God, whether it be outright atheism, or, as the puritans say, practical atheism-denying the word of God. It ignores and rejects the one and only true God, as the Creator over all things, especially of our lives.

Human life is not precious, but the result of some accident, some evolutionary process, they say.

Do you know what this does?! This is far more than a so-called, “alternative thought.” This is a gross attack on God and his sovereign creatorship, especially over man.

Human beings are simply a collection of cells, with no dignity, with no inherent purpose. It gives the impression that humanity is left like a piece of driftwood at the beach in a meaningless universe, trying to invent purpose. You see, it is all stemmed out of the denial of God, “hath God said?” If God does not exist, we can ignore him.

The 2nd thing we see here as a result of this is the deconstruction of divine design. Once God’s authority and existence are ignored and rejected, His word is thrown out of the window.

Having no binding authority, there is a denial of God’s word regarding human life being created in the image of God. The unborn child, in the womb, is considered a choice, or a burden.

Abortion, rather than seen as a transgression of the 6th Commandment, thou shall not kill,

it is addressed with sanitised language, to cover up this violent reality, the act of murder, simply as the mother’s choice. They say it is not a baby, but a foetus.

I remember, when Vanessa had a miscarriage, as a first time father, I was beside myself. So I asked the doctor how old the baby was. He laughed at us and said, “not a baby, but a foetus.”

This is an attack on God’s design, on the dignity that God has placed on mankind, as image bearers.

Of course, the same can be said about euthanasia.

The other area we see of this deconstruction is the area of gender. Denying the biological reality that God created mankind male and female. Not only allowing, but indeed promoting gender confusion, not only in society in general, but in the minds of impressionable children. Bringing grief and destruction not only to their bodies, but also the family home. Indeed, there is this increasing confusion and chaos on gender, going above and beyond, and going against, what God has said in his word.

Of course, we also see that in marriage. Not only has our nation voted against the God-given definition of the marriage covenant being between a man and a woman, there is this insistence on love alone defining marriage, rather than God in his word. This reduces it to just another relationship, ignoring and rejecting God’s design.

This is why we see the increase of non-commitment, as well as infidelity. Marriage is simply a consumer product, something that

people keep as long as it makes them happy, but rejecting it if it doesn’t fulfil their needs or wants. Like a disposable glove.

We see that in sinful cohabitation, sexual promiscuity, as well as adultery.

These attacks are not simply affecting the outside world, the unbelieving world. These fiery darts of the evil one, are also firing at the church on earth. Yes, even reformed Christianity is not exempt from these assaults and attacks on the foundation, breaking the family, ruining many lives. Even leaders of the church, ministers and elders, are not exempt from these attacks and scandals.

Another form of deconstruction can be seen in this: as we live in a materialistic and selfish society, there is an increasing negative view on family and children. Family and children are considered obstacles to personal fulfilment.

Yes, especially during these days of high interest rates, high cost of living, it seems that whenever there is a news article about starting a family, or having children, the very first thing people go to is the cost.

There are cost of childrearing reports saying that it is estimated that to raise a child to the age of 18 will cost over \$500,000. Nothing about the blessings and benefits of having kids.

There are memes about the shackles of family, the bondage of having children, losing freedom. They see the notion of a family and the idea of children as liabilities.

There is another attack in this deconstruction driven by the political left movements, under the

banner of “green initiatives,” and “climate change.” There is a narrative being pushed that human beings are a burden not only to society but on the creation itself. Having a family, raising children, is an act of irresponsibility, being selfish, because you are increasing the so-called, “carbon footprint.”

They elevate “mother earth” as their god, rather than honouring the one and only true God.

Dear brothers and sisters, these are just symptoms of the destructive ideas, the breaking of the foundation.

You know, in the atheistic socialist idea, family is often considered as an instrument of private property and oppression. In fact, Karl Marx wrote about the abolition of the family, arguing that it was rooted in capital and private gain.

Not only that, we see that in our modern times, this gender confusion, with multiple pronouns, destabilising the very concepts of male and female, with gay marriage, distorting the family structure that God has given, according to his word. All of that gives the state the opportunity to present itself as the saviour. We know that, don’t we, in Australia. Our government encourages things like free or heavily subsidised childcare, not for the good of the child, but so that the two parents can work full-time. For the good of the economy, and not for the good of the family, the duties of the workplace are prioritised, more than the God-given duties in the home.

It sounds so great, it sounds so considerate of the government, but this encouragement to a

workaholic lifestyle, comes with a very heavy price tag. It breaks down the very family relationships and bonds God has designed for the good of his creation. And instead, the state has the greatest primary shaping influence.

Are we watchful of these dangers, living in a world and society that is not neutral, but hostile to God and his word?

The family is under threat. They tell us that families are a burden, marriage is just a contract, not a covenant, children cost too much, and the state is our ultimate provider and saviour.

These attempts to break the family are not simply anti-God and his Word, but Satanic and Antichrist. It is refusing to acknowledge the Lordship and creatorship of Christ.

Breaking the marriage bond, especially among Christians, means that it cannot reflect the relationship between Christ and his church. The broken home would bring so much grief and misery, not only to the unbelieving world, but indeed the family of God.

As we gather here at this time, realising the great spiritual battle before us, may we may join with the psalmist in Psalm 11:3, “If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?”

Yes, it is a grim picture, the crumbling foundation and the breaking of it. Indeed, as God’s remnant, we are called to rebuild.

We are not called to rebuild our culture, or national values, or even the sense of feeling nostalgic. Why not? Because none of that is a sure foundation. When we see the breaking of the foundation of the family, the rebuilding must be on

the sure foundation of the Word of God.

That is our second heading for the talk this evening: the rebuilding of the foundation.

It is important to note that there is no single word in the Hebrew or Greek that precisely corresponds to the English word we use for ‘family.’ The closest word, in both Hebrew and Greek, would be house or household.

Even in the promise to Abraham in Genesis 12, that families of the earth be blessed, the word refers to more than just one single family unit. It refers to kindred, race, or clans.

The word in Hebrew for household has the idea of family of descendants, as well as multiple generations.

In other words, what we have here is a picture of community and interdependence, very much different from the isolated nuclear family that we are so used to in the West.

So, when we think of household, we should think beyond simply the notion of family, but the household of faith, the household of God.

Some of you may know that our church building in Sydney is going through a process of renovation. There is much work to be done repairing the stonework, as well as replacing the roof. But the builders cannot just deal with the cracks. There has to be a blueprint of how things should be.

Much more, in the work of rebuilding the family, we must return to what God has said in his Word as our blueprint.

Therefore, it is important to go back to Genesis 1:26-28, “And God

said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.’”

There are three things we can see here. For one thing, we ought to see the creatorship of God. The very first verse of the Bible, “in the beginning God,” this must be our starting point. Creation didn’t start with a big bang and evolution, but with the God who has created all things in six 24-hour days. Without beholding God as the Creator, there is nothing but chaos.

So too, it is with rebuilding the foundation of the family. The Creator God of the Bible must be acknowledged first and foremost.

There are many cultures that celebrate the idea and the notion of family. They have strong family ties. But as wonderful as that may be, this is not our starting point, not the culture, but God the Creator.

That takes us to the second thing: we are created in his image. You may notice in verse 26, “let us make man in our image,” and then, in verse 27 we see, “in the image of God created he him.” The plurality is not pointing us to the creation of man being the work of God along

with the angels, but the work of the triune God. Man is created in his image.

The word for image there has the idea of a representative, with the idea of likeness, a pattern model. In other words, there is a call to be serving as God’s representatives on earth, reflecting God’s character, in holiness and righteousness.

True, ever since the fall into sin, that image is marred. However, the call is still there. So much more so is this call to glory in him, by faith alone, as Christian believers, through the one who is the very image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature, the Lord Jesus Christ, as Colossians 1:15 reminds us.

Indeed, do we see this about the family? This is where we spend the most time. Is this not our primary workshop where we are called to honour the Lord, and to glory in him, to have that image of God polished through daily friction, and by the grace of sanctification?

The third thing we see is the commission. We read in the second half Genesis 1:28, “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.”

Do you see the command of God to mankind, beginning with our first parents, “be fruitful and multiply”? This is the foundation for the family, by the divine blessing and command of God. Do you see how counterculture this truth of God’s Word is? There is the divine blessing, and the mandate, to have dominion, to

tread, over creation.

Rather than seeing the environment as god, and human beings like viruses and diseases, families and children are blessings from God. In other words, the family is part of the creation ordinance, part of God’s perfect creation.

Indeed, we see the importance of marriage, being the mortar the rebuilding of the family. The marriage covenant must be seen and lived out according to the word of God, not cultural understandings or expectations.

Think about it, how many homes, how many families are broken up, due to the breaking of the marriage bond? This is something that we hope to consider, as one of the building blocks for the family.

So, do you see the attack on the family is far beyond a culture war, but that spiritual warfare wherein Satan is actively seeking to attack the glory of God and the honour of Christ, as the King and Lord of his church, of his redeemed humanity. Therefore, we must return to the Scriptures, rather than our politicians, and activists, when we see the foundation of the family being threatened. We must submit our views of life, of marriage, of parenting, to the absolute authority of Scripture.

I know, it can be so very uncomfortable, because it is so counterculture. May the fear of God drive us away from the fear of man. That means there is a need to repent whenever we have absorbed the ideas and the influence of the culture in which we live and the influences that we have come under. We need to prayerfully

think through: do we share the same views as the unbelieving world does, of the family, of marriage, of relationships? And do we seek to rebuild the foundation of our own homes and family life according to the word of God? Also, do we disciple the next generation, not only the children in our own families, but others in the family of God, having that godly influence?

In all of that, do we seek to honour the Lord, seeking his grace on the primary work of personal holiness and discipleship in our homes and families?

I know, the work of activism, writing letters to MPs, and other channels, can be so appealing. And this indeed can be useful and beneficial, to a certain extent. Don’t get me wrong, they have their place. But we must not substitute that for personal holiness.

It is possible to be so active in promoting the biblical notion of the family, yet within our own homes our lives are so far from what we say and write.

How wonderful it is, the Lord Jesus, our elder brother, is so pleased to help his own, to not only grant grace to repentance, but strength for the rebuilding work. Because he is the one true bridegroom of his church, the one who gave himself for his people. The one who was cast out, so that you and I maybe welcomed in the family of God.

How shall we not glory in him, in our homes, in our marriages, in our relationships, especially in this dark and hostile evil age? Giving thanks to God for the gift of family.

Amen.

October Search Work

"Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, who seek him with their whole heart." Psalm 119:2

Senior and Intermediate
(Intermediate omit questions 2 and 7)

Junior

Acts 18

1. What did the Lord say to Paul in a vision when he was in Corinth? (2 verses)
2. What was Gallio's answer when the Jews brought an accusation against Paul? (2 verses)
3. What did Aquila and Priscilla do for Apollos?

Acts 19

4. How long did Paul stay in Ephesus disputing [reasoning] in the school of Tyrannus?
5. How did the evil spirit answer the seven sons of Sceva?
6. What did those who used curious arts [practised magic] do with their books?
7. How did Demetrius the silversmith describe what Paul had done at Ephesus and throughout all Asia? (2 verses)
8. Of what did the town [city] clerk tell the people they were in danger, as a result of the uproar?

John 11:1-15

1. What did Jesus say when he was told Lazarus was sick?
2. Why did Jesus say he was glad he was not there when Lazarus died?

John 11:25-46

3. Who is the resurrection and the life?
4. What happened when Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!"?

Find the verse(s) in the Bible that answer the questions, write/type them out, and send to:

Mrs Irene Steel

18/1-55 West Parade, West Ryde NSW 2114
or Email: iesteel@gmail.com

A book voucher is awarded at the end of each year to children who send in the answers.

October Prayer Points

"I thank God... as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day." 2 Timothy 1:3

Wednesday, 1st: At this year's meeting, it was resolved: "The Synod gives thanks to the Lord for the opportunity and privilege to be involved in the work of missions at home and abroad, both in giving, in praying and being directly involved during this past year." Pray for the ministry of Rev. Shanmugan Partheepan in the Reformed Protestant Mission in Sri Lanka.

Thursday, 2nd: Give thanks that the Southern Presbytery could agree to moderate in a call to Rev John Forbes to serve as pastor in the Geelong congregation.

Friday, 3rd: Pray for wisdom for John and Mary Forbes as they reflect on God's future purposes for

them and their family.

Saturday, 4th: Give thanks for the engagement of Katherine Forbes of the Hastings congregation and Lachlan Bosveld of the Southern Presbyterian Church in Hobart.

Sunday, 5th: Pray that the Lord may give wisdom and strength to those men leading the services in our congregations today.

Monday, 6th: Pray for the ministry of the Hawkesbury-Nepean congregation in West Sydney.

Tuesday, 7th: Pray for the Hawkesbury-Nepean office-bearers: for Rev Dennis Muldoon; for elder Tom Reeve; and for deacons Tevita Fihaki and Lopeti Latu.

Wednesday, 8th: Pray for the work of the Dumisani Theological Institute in South Africa.

Thursday, 9th: Give thanks for the birth of Peter John, infant son of Micah and Lauren Klazinga of the Brisbane congregation.

Friday, 10th: Continue to pray for those who mourn the death of Dylan Gale of the Hawkesbury Nepean congregation.

Saturday, 11th: Give thanks that David Lachman could begin his preaching ministry in Melbourne tomorrow.

Sunday, 12th: Give thanks for the freedom we have to be able to assemble together for worship

October Prayer Points

"I thank God... as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day." 2 Timothy 1:3

openly.

Monday, 13th: Pray for the ministry of the St Georges congregation in Sydney.

Tuesday, 14th: Pray for the online synod meeting scheduled to take place tonight.

Wednesday, 15th: Pray for the St Georges office-bearers: for Rev Robin Tso; for elders Donald McIntosh, and Alex Steel; and for deacons Chris Oakley, Ken Shaw, and Allan Steel.

Thursday, 16th: Pray for Young Lee and his work with Indigenous children in Taree.

Friday, 17th: At this year's meeting, it was affirmed that synod "gives thanks to God for the churches with whom we have formal fraternal relations and for those churches with whom we have contact and resolve to pray for the Lord's blessing upon their work and witness." Pray for churches in the ICRC with us, including the Free Church in Southern Africa, the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa, and the Reformed Churches in South Africa.

Saturday, 18th: Pray for the engaged couples in our congregations as they prepare for their weddings and for married life.

Sunday, 19th: WSC Q&A 59 states: "Which day of the seven hath God appointed to be the weekly Sabbath? From the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, God appointed the seventh day of the week to be the weekly Sabbath; and the first day of the week ever since, to continue to the end of the

world, which is the Christian Sabbath." Give thanks for the blessing of the Christian Sabbath.

Monday, 20th: Pray for the ongoing ministry of the Hunter congregation in Cardiff and Raymond Terrace.

Tuesday, 21st: Pray for the Hunter office-bearers: for elder Ian Miller; and for deacons Richard Alley, David Barnes, John Fluit, Ken George and Ian King.



Wednesday, 22nd: Pray for the work of Dr Dickson in Delhi, India.

Thursday, 23rd: Pray for the family and friends who mourn the death of Adriaan Salm of the Hunter congregation.

Friday, 24th: Pray for Young and Eunice of the Manning congregation and their son Kevin and daughter-law Hannah. Hannah was injured and her unborn baby died as a result of a serious car accident.

Saturday, 25th: Pray for the Northern Presbytery, which is

scheduled to meet today in Maclean.

Sunday, 26th: Stephen Charnock, in discussing the dominion of God, writes: "He hath as much of tenderness as he hath of authority, and is pleased with prayer, which is an acknowledgment of his dominion, an honouring of that which he delights to honour; for prayer, in the notion of it, imports thus much: that God is the rector of the world, that he takes notice of human affairs, that he is a careful, just, wise governor, a storehouse of blessing, a fountain of goodness to the indigent, and a relief to the oppressed. What have we reason to fear, when the Sovereign of the world gives us liberty to approach to him, and lay open our case?" Give thanks to God that today we can together approach God in prayer.

Monday, 27th: Pray for the continuing ministry of the Manning congregation in Taree.

Tuesday, 28th: Pray for the Manning office-bearers: for deacons Paul Dyson, Mark Hamilton, Marshall Reid, Alistair Weber, and David Wilson.

Wednesday, 29th: Pray for the work of the Middle East Reformed Fellowship.

Thursday, 30th: Pray for the St Georges congregation as restoration work on their church building continues.

Friday, 31st: Pray for David Kerridge and his daughter Grace as they prepare to travel to Sri Lanka and India.

