

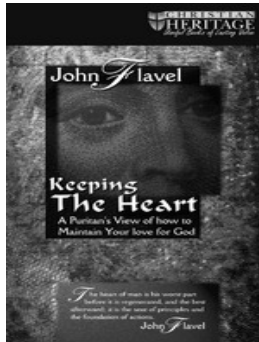
## Take and Read

### From our Library

#### Keeping the Heart

##### A Puritan's View of how to maintain Your love for God

"The greatest difficulty is to keep the heart with God", so writes Flavel in his classic work on union and fellowship with God. In his comprehensive and helpful book Flavel looks at what 'Keeping the Heart' means, why we should take commission seriously and particular times when we need to be especially wary of being distracted from our goal. He then shows how we can develop a greater ability in keeping our hearts in tune with God. His advice is timeless, sensitive and profound... His writings are known for their practical nature.



#### Review

Using Proverbs 4:23 ("Keep your heart with all vigilance for from it flow the springs of life."); Flavel creates a treatise designed for all professing Christians. The aim is that the contents of the heart be laid bare, so that sin which is present is seen as sin and dealt with as a believer should and that the heart be guided to be pure in its devotion and affection for God. He does this, not with law, but by constantly pointing the believer to God's grace as the grounds and means for his sanctification. Flavel is not content to merely convey information, rather, with each point he carefully takes aim at your very soul and deftly fires shot after gospel-saturated, God-glorifying shot. Make sure you read this book slowly and prayerfully, allowing each purifying blow to have its full affect on your heart. **Jacob Hantla**

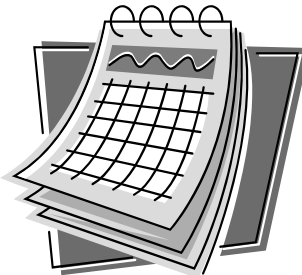
## Quote of the Month

*"Spiritual declension and backsliding are the result of neglecting to feed the soul. Little by little prayer and Bible reading/meditation are put off and other "more important" things are taken up to busy the mind, or fill up a given day." - Dr. C. Matthew McMahon*

## Calendar of Events

### October 2008

- Sunday's Church Services — 5th,12th,19th,26th
- Tuesday's Women's Bible Study — 7th,21st
- Wednesday's Church Bible Study — 1st,8th,15th,22th,29th
- Thursday's Prayer Meeting — 2nd,16th,30th
- Friday's Youth Activity — 17th **NOTE: - The venue is River of Love, Rue d'Argens Gzira.**
- Friday 31st — Reformation Day meeting



## "More than conquerors"

Issue 2

October 2008

*"...in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us" - Romans 8:37.*

## The Pastor's Letter

Dear Brethren,

The evangelist's work is to bring people to understanding of the gospel of salvation, to lead them to receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. The pastor-teacher's subsequent work, then, is to provide the leadership and spiritual resources to cause believers to be taking on the likeness of their Master. That is how I consider myself, as God's gift to you, 'for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ' (Ephesians 4:12).

The first and most important tool to accomplish this equipping is God's inspired and infallible Word (2 Tim.3:16,17). My purpose is to feed myself, studying and meditating on Scripture, so that I may also feed you, and lead you to feed yourselves on the Word.

The second essential tool is prayer, with intercession and thanksgiving. A good description of God's minister in this respect is one who is 'always labouring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect, and fully assured in all the will of God,' having a deep spiritual concern for his brethren (Col.4:12,13).

The surest road to a church's spiritual stagnation, to the pastor's burnout, or to both is for the pastor to become so engulfed in activities and programs that he has too little time to draw near to God's throne of grace and to take heed of the doctrine. So exercise your God-given gifts too: in this way we, as the body of Christ, will function properly, to God's glory and honour.

Shalom

## Contact Details

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## Catechism Corner

### Question 6 How many persons are there in the Godhead?

There are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one God, the same in essence, equal in power and glory. (1John 5:7; Matthew 28:19)

### Question 7 What are the decrees of God?

The decrees of God are his eternal purpose according to the counsel of his own will, whereby for his own glory he has foreordained whatever comes to pass. (Ephesians 1:11,12)

### Question 8 How does God execute his decrees?

God executes his decrees in the works of creation, (Revelation 4:11) and providence. (Daniel 4:35)

### Question 9 What is the work of creation?

The work of creation is God's making all things (Genesis 1:1) of nothing, by the Word of his power, (Hebrews 11:3) in six normal consecutive days, (Exodus 20:11) and all very good. (Genesis 1:31)

### Question 10 How did God create man?

God created man, male and female, after his own image, (Genesis 1:27) in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness (Colossians 3:10; Ephesians 4:24) with dominion over the creatures. (Genesis 1:28)

## Remember and Learn

**REMEMBER** the large statue in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the top of which was made of pure gold and the bottom made partly of baked clay, (Dan. 2:31-33) and **LEARN** that even among the best Christians one is prone to end in the flesh that which was once started in the Spirit. (Gal. 3:3)



## Sayings of: - R.M. M'Cheyne (1813 – 1843)

- It is a sure mark of grace to 'desire more.
- We look 'out' for peace not 'in'.
- A broken heart alone can receive a crucified Christ.
- For every look at yourself take ten looks at Christ.
- Live so as to be missed when you die.
- The man who loves you the most is the man who tells you the most truth about yourself.



## Experimental Christianity

### Signs of Spiritual declension.

(Adapted from 'Personal Declension' by Octavius Winslow.)

One of the saddest realities to a spiritually minded believer is that after all that God has done for him, after all the rich displays of his grace, the patience and tenderness of his instructions, the tokens of love received, and the lessons of experience learned, he still departs from Him. This is what is commonly known as backsliding, the decay of spiritual life and grace in the believer. No one is free from this reality. It always happens by slow and gradual steps. Many times it is hidden from the person himself, it may be happening and the believer never even notices or is aware of it.

We must here, however, guard a precious and important truth; that is, the indestructible nature of true grace. Divine grace in the soul can never really die; true faith can never utterly and finally fail. We are speaking now but of their decay. A flower may droop, and yet live: a plant may be sickly, and yet not die. In the lowest stage of spiritual declension, in the feeblest state of grace, there is a life in the true believer that never dies.

Let us mention twelve of the most prominent characteristics of this state of declension. One can suspect that his soul is in a state of backsliding and departure from God if he can see some of the following.

1. The loss of spiritual enjoyment of the loveliness and harmony of Divine Truth.
2. The heart loses much of its fervour in all things spiritual.
3. The Doctrines of grace shall occupy the same prominent position as to their value and beauty, and yet the influence of these truths may be scarcely felt.
4. The Word of God is assented to, but the believer may be a total stranger to it as an instrument of sanctification, abasement and nourishment.
5. There may not be a lowering of the standard of holiness, yet there shall be no reaching forth of the 'whole man' towards a practical conformity to that standard.
6. The judgment shall acknowledge the Divine law, to be the rule of the believer's walk – yet there is no panting after conformity to Christ, no breathing after holiness, no 'resistance unto blood striving against sins'. It is a sure evidence that the soul is making a retrograde movement.
7. When a professing Christian can proceed with his religious duties, strictly, regularly, formally and yet experiences no enjoyment of God in them, no filial nearness, and no consciousness of any profit.
8. When one can read his Bible with no spiritual taste, or when he searches it, not with a sincere desire to know the mind of the Spirit in order to a holy and obedient walk, but with a merely curious or literary taste and aim.
9. When the believer can pray, and yet acknowledge that he has no nearness to the throne and no fellowship with God.
10. When he can find no sweetness in a spiritual ministry, when he is restless and dissatisfied under a searching and practical unfolding of the truth...when the doctrines are preferred to the precepts, the promises to the commands, the consolations to the admonitions of the gospel.
11. When the believer has few dealings with Christ, his love and glory seldom mentioned.
12. When a professing Christian has an uncharitable walk towards other Christians.

We must also mention that one can be sure of backsliding from God when there is declension in love and in faith. Finally, were we to select a single characteristic of personal declension more marked than any other, we should feel no hesitation in adopting the 'decay of the spirit of prayer' (in its daily exercise, spirit, and enjoyment) as that feature.

Dear Christian, is this your state? If it is, despair not but repent of any known sin, and remember God's promises; 'Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the LORD our God.' (Jer 3:22) and "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely' (Hos.14:4). Turn to Him in daily and fervent prayer and wait for His restoration (Ps.23:3).