

*GOODBYE, BELOVED BRETHREN* NORMAN ADAMS IMPULSE BOOKS ABERDEEN Today the Exclusive Brethren struggle to present a bold, new face to the outside world after the stormiest period in their.

On my principles, I receive them all; but on the principle of witnessing against evil, I should reject them all. But shortly before he died in , things started to fall apart. Some members had left a failing assembly in Ryde and Cronin travelled down to break bread with them. When he reported back to London, different assemblies took differing views of his action. Though Darby was sympathetic in private he attacked him fiercely in public. By an assembly in Ramsgate had itself split over the issue and the division, over an issue not of doctrine or principle but church governance, became irrevocable. A more serious split occurred in around the teaching of F. Once more assemblies had to decide which side to support and this included those as far away as Melbourne , Australia. Thus the Ravens and the Glantons were established. In the same year a festering disagreement in Tunbridge Wells led to a minor breakaway from the Lowe group by a number of assemblies. By this time, James Taylor, Jr. At a meeting in Aberdeen , Scotland, on 25 July, a clearly drunk Taylor publicly insulted members, calling them "bums", "bastards", and other such names. That weekend, he was allegedly found in bed with a married woman, both of them naked. His host published a long letter of protest which was sent to the New York assembly. Taylor immediately rejected both accusations as lies and the incident definitively divided the Brethren membership worldwide. Very few based near the scene of the events stayed in fellowship with Taylor " only two families in Aberdeen and out of 3, members in Scotland remained. Altogether, over such assemblies in England, Scotland and Ireland seceded from the Taylor group, according to a listing. This fellowship further fragmented in , and the party which broke away has since further sub-divided. However the history of Exclusive Brethren is not only one of division. Eventually several of the groups realised that the divisions caused by personalities clashes or ecclesiastical issues were no longer relevant and reunions occurred. The Kelly and Lowe groups reunited in to form the Lowe-Kelly group, in with most of Tunbridge Wells and in with the Glantons and are sometimes known as Reunited Brethren, though there was a further split in and their ageing congregations have often not been replenished and are dwindling. Most of the Grant party threw in their lot with the Open Brethren in Amongst such groups views concerning their way of life and relationships are frequently affected by the varying standards in the general community. This is expressed practically in different ways by the different groups, but matters of fellowship and church discipline used to be generally not merely questions of local responsibility; such decisions would have been accepted in all meetings. Exclusive Brethren were therefore sometimes described as Connexional Brethren, as they recognised an obligation to accept and adhere to the disciplinary actions of other associated assemblies. For example, where one of their branches had excluded a person from Christian fellowship, that person remained excluded from all other branches, who must then treat the excluded person as a leper according to the book of Leviticus Chapter This is still the practice amongst the Brethren and no doubt would be claimed by other independent assemblies. The adjective exclusive has been applied to the groups by others, partially due to their determination to separate from and exclude what they believe to be evil. Exclusive Brethren usually disown any name and simply refer to themselves as Christians, brethren, those with whom we walk, those in fellowship with us, or the saints. Beliefs and structure[ edit ] This notice indicates that the meeting room is a registered place of worship and gives contact details. With the exception of the hardline Plymouth Brethren Christian Church PBCC , Exclusive Brethren differ very little from the Open Brethren on theological issues, both holding the Bible as their sole authority in regard to matters of doctrine and practice. Like the Exclusives, Open Brethren have traditionally based much of their doctrine on the teachings of John Nelson Darby. With few exceptions, particularly in regards to whom to accept into fellowship, exclusive brethren have continued to hold the same beliefs that inspired the early Plymouth Brethren. The PBCC are generally regarded as having the most stringent and uncompromising views on this. Most Exclusive Brethren groups have no formal leadership structure. In many assemblies, matters up for debate may be discussed at special meetings attended solely by adult males called, in some groups, "Brothers Meetings". As a result, schisms can

occur in the Brethren over disagreements about church discipline and whether other sister groups in other locations have authority to intervene in these disagreements. There are often global family connections due to the emphasis among members to marry within the Exclusive Brethren, and family connections often influences which side of the issue members will take. The PBCC avoid this trend by having a structured leadership with a central authority figure which has maintained unity through the upholding of a universal standard. Some Exclusive Brethren assemblies "commend" men who are dedicated to the work of preaching. Although they usually do not receive a salary, gifts are often given to them by the separate assemblies where they preach and teach. Exclusive Brethren do not generally name their meeting rooms or Halls except by reference perhaps to the road, e. Unlike the Open Brethren, whose assemblies usually do not have an official membership, Exclusive Brethren are more particular about affiliation, as people who wish to break bread must be affiliated with a "home assembly" to which they are responsible in terms of lifestyle choices. Worship[ edit ] Hymns are a vital part of the worship of Exclusive Brethren. One of the unifying features in each of the different branches of the Brethren is a common hymnbook. The first collection used among the united assemblies was, "Hymns for the Poor of the Flock," from and again in Another such hymnbook, used by Exclusive Brethren Tunbridge-Wells and Ames dating back to is called, "Hymns and Spiritual Songs for the Little Flock," the first edition of which was compiled by G. A revision was made in by J. The Little Flock hymnbook has gone through many different editions in different languages. All editions come from the same source: Some Exclusive meetings seat accepted men men who are "in fellowship" in the front rows toward the table bearing the emblems, with accepted women behind the men, and unaccepted men and women toward the rear. Other Exclusive meetings seat accepted men and women together so spouses can be seated together , and unaccepted men and women towards the rear in the "Seat of the Unlearned" or "Seat of the Observer". It is a fairly common misconception that Exclusive women characteristically wear a shawl over their heads, though some women may have resorted to this. They do however always cover their heads when praying. Oscar is raised by a strict Plymouth Brethren father and rebels by becoming an Anglican priest. Criticism[ edit ] Some have suggested that the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church PBCC , the subgroup of the Exclusive Brethren that has attracted the most media coverage, can be categorized as a cult because of its policy of separating itself from other orthodox denominations and because it prohibits radio and television , limits the use of computers and discourages socializing with people outside the movement. To help with this problem, several websites have been set up[ by whom? Notable Exclusive Brethren[ edit ] N. This is a list of individuals associated with various branches of the Exclusive Brethren for at least a part of their lives. It includes, but is not limited to, members of the hardline Plymouth Brethren Christian Church.

**Chapter 2 : Exclusive Brethren (The University of Manchester Library)**

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Plymouth Brethren chapel in Broadbridge Heath , West Sussex , England The Plymouth Brethren are a conservative , low church , nonconformist , Evangelical Christian movement whose history can be traced to Dublin , Ireland in the late s, originating from Anglicanism. Brethren generally see themselves, not as a denomination, but as a network or even as a collection of overlapping networks of like-minded independent churches. The Brethren would generally prefer that their gatherings be referred to as "assemblies," rather than "churches" but, in the interests of simplicity, this article uses both terms interchangeably. The movement refused to take any denominational name to itself, a stance that some still maintain. The title "The Brethren," however, is one that many of their number are comfortable with, in that the Bible designates all believers as "brethren"â€"one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren" Matthew Open and Exclusive Brethren Main articles: Open Brethren and Exclusive Brethren "Brethren assemblies" as their gatherings are most often called are divided into two major branches: Both of these main branches are themselves divided into several smaller streams, with varying degrees of communication and overlap among them. The best-known and oldest distinction between Open and Exclusive assemblies is in the nature of relationships among their local churches. Open Brethren assemblies function as networks of like-minded independent local churches. Exclusive Brethren are generally " connexional " and so feel under obligation to recognise and adhere to the disciplinary actions of other associated assemblies. Exclusion from it is a major issue. Discipline may also involve formal social ostracism or "shunning" to varying degrees, dependent upon which kind of Brethren group it is. For instance, people placed "under discipline" may be asked not to attend any group functions which are purely social, and people may decline to eat with, or even shake hands with, members who are under discipline. One practical result of this among Open Brethren is that, should a member be "disciplined" in one assembly, other Open assemblies aware of that disciplining would not automatically feel any binding obligation to deny that person participation in their breaking of bread service as long as their leadership does not consider whatever caused the disciplinary action a serious issue. A numerically small movement known as the Needed Truth Brethren emerged from the Open Brethren around , partly in an attempt to address the problem of making discipline more effective. Reasons for being put "under discipline" by both the Open and Exclusive Brethren include refusing to recant and disseminating gross Scriptural or doctrinal error, in the eyes of the fellowship, or being involved in what is deemed sexual immorality including adulterous , homosexual , or premarital sex. Being accused of irregular or illegal financial dealings may also result in being put under discipline. In Exclusive meetings, a member "under discipline" in one assembly would not be accepted in another assembly allowed to "break bread" or play an active teaching and worshipping role , as the Assembly generally respects the decisions made by the other Assembly. Exclusive assemblies have developed into a number of different branches; when there is not universal agreement among the assemblies in a specific case of discipline, a particular act of discipline may not be recognised by all assemblies. Exclusive assemblies are also much more adherent to the shunning or "shutting up" of the offending party, using as guidance instructions given in Leviticus Another less clear difference between assemblies lies in their approaches to collaborating with other Christians. Many Open Brethren will hold Gospel meetings, youth events, or other activities in partnership with non-Brethren Evangelical Christian churches. More conservative Open Brethrenâ€"and perhaps the majority of Exclusive Brethrenâ€"tend not to support activities outside their own meetings. Since the formation of the Exclusives in , there have been a great number of subdivisions into separate groups, but most groups have since rejoined, with the exception of the separatist Plymouth Brethren Christian Church informally known as "Jimite" from their following of James Taylor, Jr at the division in , and also referred to historically as the Raven-Taylor-Hales Exclusive Brethren. This group practices extreme separation and other Brethren groups generally accuse it of being a

cult. Most other Exclusive groups Closed Brethren prefer not to be known by any name and are only given such designations by non-members. There are some movements with strong Brethren connections that are less easy to classify. The Assemblies Jehovah Shammah of India , for example, are usually regarded as Open Brethren because of their general willingness to work and worship together with other Evangelical Christians, and because their foreign connections tend to be with Open Brethren. The ecclesiology, however, has more in common with that of the Exclusive Brethren; founder Bakht Singh maintained tight control over the movement until his death in Both Open and Exclusive assemblies generally maintain relations within their respective groups through common support of missionaries , area conferences, and the travelling ministries of "Commended Workers", "Labouring Brothers", and itinerant evangelists. Exclusive Brethren Main article: Plymouth Brethren Christian Church The term "Exclusive" is most commonly used in the media to describe one separatist group known by other groups as "Taylor-Hales Brethren", who now call themselves the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church. However, the majority of Christians known as "Exclusive Brethren" are not connected with the Taylor-Hales group, who are known for their extreme interpretation of separation from evil and their belief of what constitutes fellowship. In their view, fellowship includes dining out, business and professional partnerships, membership of clubs, etc. What other groups refer to as the "Raven" Brethren named for prominent Exclusive leader F. Raven seceded from the Raven-Taylor-Hales group and are less strict and isolationist. Exclusive Brethren groups that are not in any way affiliated with or as isolationist as the PBCC the "Kelly-Lowe-Glanton" groups, for instance are happier being called "Closed" rather than "Exclusive" brethren, so as to avoid any connection with these more strident groups. Practices vary of reception among "Exclusive" assemblies, many tending to operate a cautious or "guarded" approach to reception, and others being more liberal. It is felt by many Exclusive Brethren and some of the more traditional Open Brethren that the mutual fellowship with bread and wine can be tainted by the inclusion of those whose hearts are not pure before God. A further verse that Brethren refer to is "shall two walk together except they be agreed? Open and Closed Brethren Terminology which sometimes confuses Brethren and non-Brethren alike is the distinction between the Open assemblies, usually called "Chapels," and the Closed assemblies non-Exclusive , called "Gospel Halls. The Gospel Halls regard reception to the assembly as a serious matter. Such assemblies are said to have an "open table" approach to strangers. Gospel Hall Brethren, on the other hand, generally believe that only those formally recognised as part of that or an equivalent assembly should break bread. Most Closed and some Open Brethren hold that association with evil defiles and that sharing the Communion meal can bring that association. Their support text is from 1 Corinthians The Gospel Halls tend to be more conservative in dress; women do not wear trousers in meetings and always have their heads covered, while in most Chapels women may wear whatever they wish, though modesty in dress serves as a guideline, and many may continue the tradition of wearing a head covering. Apart from a few mostly small exceptions, such as the Churches of God, Open Brethren churches are all independent, self-governing, local congregations with no central headquarters, although there are a number of seminaries, missions agencies, and publications that are widely supported by Brethren churches and which help to maintain a high degree of communication among them. Adding to the confusion over labels, many Exclusive Brethren have more recently sought to distinguish themselves from their most extreme sect, the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church, by rebranding themselves as "Closed" rather than "Exclusive". In some other parts of the world, however, such as Australia and New Zealand , most Open Brethren shun the "Plymouth" label. This is mostly because of widespread negative media coverage of the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church, the most hardline branch of the Exclusive Brethren and the only numerically significant Exclusive group in either country , which most Open Brethren consider to be a cult with which they do not wish to be misidentified. History The Bible is their roadmap. Their guide was to be the Bible alone. An important early stimulus was in the study of prophecy which was the subject of a number of annual meetings at Powerscourt House in County Wicklow starting in The two main but conflicting aspirations of the movement were to create a holy and pure fellowship on one hand, and to allow all Christians into fellowship on the other. Believers in the movement felt that the established Church of England had abandoned or distorted many of the ancient traditions of Christendom , following decades of dissent and the expansion of Methodism and political

revolutions in the United States and France. To get away from the sectarianism of dissenters, people in the movement wanted simply to meet together in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ without reference to denominational differences. Early meetings included Christians from a variety of denominations. The first meeting in England was held in December [5] in Plymouth. By , the assembly in Plymouth had more than 1, people in fellowship. The term "Darbyites" is also used, especially when describing the "Exclusive" branch where the influence of John Nelson Darby is more pronounced. Many within the movement refuse to accept any name other than "Christian". John Nelson Darby In , Darby returned from an extended visit to Switzerland where he had achieved considerable success in planting churches. Returning to Plymouth where Newton was firmly in control, he disagreed with some details in a book that Newton had published concerning the tribulation that was coming. But several attempts to settle the quarrel in the presence of other brethren failed to produce any clear result. A fierce exchange of tracts followed and, although Newton retracted some of his statements, he eventually left Plymouth and established another chapel in London. After investigation of the individual, Bethesda defended their decision, but Darby was not satisfied. He issued a circular on August 26, , cutting off not only Bethesda but all assemblies who received anyone who went there. This defined the essential characteristic of "exclusivism" that he pursued for the rest of his life. McDowell records at least six.

**Leadership** One of the most defining elements of the Brethren is the rejection of the concept of clergy. Their view is that all Christians are ordained by God to serve and therefore all are ministers, in keeping with the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. The Brethren embrace the most extensive form of that idea, in that there is no ordained or unordained person or group employed to function as ministers or pastors. In the words of Darby, these gifts in Ephesians 4: Men who become elders, or those who become deacons and overseers within the fellowship, have been recognized by others within the individual assemblies and have been given the blessing of performing leadership tasks by the elders. Brethren elders conduct many other duties that would typically be performed by "the clergy" in other Christian groups, including counselling those who have decided to be baptized, performing baptisms, visiting the sick, and giving spiritual counsel in general. Normally, sermons are given either by the elders or by men who regularly attend the Sunday meetings—but, again, only men whom the elders recognize as having the "call of God" on their lives for that particular ministry. Visiting speakers, however, are usually paid their travel costs and provided for with Sunday meals following the meetings. Open and Exclusive Brethren differ in how they interpret the concept of "no clergy", however. The Open Brethren believe in a plurality of elders Acts This position is also taken in some Baptist churches, especially Reformed Baptists, and by the Churches of Christ. It is understood that elders are appointed by the Holy Spirit Acts Generally, the elders themselves will look out for men who meet the biblical qualifications, and invite them to join them as elders. In some Open assemblies, elders are elected democratically, but this is a fairly recent development and is still relatively uncommon. Officially naming and recognizing "eldership" is common to Open Brethren cf. Traditionally, only men are allowed to speak and, in some cases, attend these decision-making meetings, although not all assemblies follow that rule today. The term "Elder" is based on the same Scriptures that are used to identify "Bishops" and "Overseers" in other Christian circles, [15] and some Exclusive Brethren claim that the system of recognition of elders by the assembly means that the Open Brethren cannot claim full adherence to the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. However, the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church, the most hardline of all the Exclusive Brethren groups, has developed into a de facto hierarchical body which operates under the headship of an Elect Vessel, currently Bruce Hales of Australia. Some defectors have accused him and his predecessors of having quasi-papal authority. This development is almost universally considered by other streams of the Plymouth Brethren movement, however, as a radical departure from Brethren principles. In place of an ordained ministry, an itinerant preacher often receives a "commendation" to the work of preaching and teaching that demonstrates the blessing and support of the assembly of origin. A given assembly may have any number of full-time workers, or none at all. In the last twenty years, many Open Assemblies in Australia and New Zealand, and some elsewhere, have begun calling their full-time workers "pastors", but this is not seen as ordaining clergy and does not connote a transfer of any special spiritual authority. In such assemblies, the pastor is simply one of several elders, and differs from his fellow-elders only in being salaried to serve

full-time. Depending on the assembly, he may or may not take a larger share of the responsibility for preaching than his fellow elders. Notable Brethren This list consists of mostly nineteenth-century figures who were associated with the Brethren movement before the schism. They are the leading historical figures common to both the Open and Exclusive Brethren. Two exceptions are H.

### Chapter 3 : Farewell, my dear brethren, beloved of the Lord | [blog.quintoapp.com](http://blog.quintoapp.com)

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A brief explanation of each is necessary. In Brethren jargon, church refers not to the building or the denomination, rather it refers to the universal body of Christians unified by their profession of faith in their salvation obtained through the grace and mercy of the resurrected Christ. Following said point, the congregation of believers rejects the concept of membership in the church and membership in any particular faction or congregation. Rather Brethren jargon prefers the word "fellowship. There is typically a weekly ceremony where the two emblems of bread and wine are sent throughout the body. This is where most congregations differ - some say that any professing salvation may take part in the ritual, others say that only those approved by the church body or a middle ground solution, bearing letters of recommendation from the congregation leaders which are styled as Elders and are typically selected by the congregation from the most learned and Christ centered men. Generally during this meeting an offering plate or box or bag is sent around, but only those in fellowship may contribute, and only to the amount they feel required of them; tithing is regarded as churchist and applying only to the dispensation existing between God and Israel. Men and women are separate in all matters. Women were created to help men, but this does not imply a relationship of inferiority, rather a differed relationship. Women are housewives, child bearers; women are noted for their quiet worship and subdued nature rather than men who are noted for risk taking and providing. Therefore, generally it is wished that a woman shall stay home and watch the children produced by a marriage. Generally speaking women do not speak during the meetings. Ministers in the Open Brethren are styled workers and are selected from the body of the men in any given congregation according to their gifts for learning and speaking. There is no formal school to produce or accredit them, there is no salary. Ministers live at the bequest of individual congregations which may support their work to the manner they choose. Generally Ministers live very well. Exclusive Brethren do not maintain a clergy and do not operate in a hierarchy like the Open division does. Finally, there are no charismatic gifts in the congregation. When the canon of scripture was completed with the Book of Revelation, the outpouring of Charismatic gifts ended. There are about , members in Britain. William Lane Craig said of the Brethren: When we were in England, we worshiped at a Plymouth Brethren church. In these churches there was no appointed minister who would preach every Sunday. Instead there were elders. Anyone could stand up during the service and share a song or a Scripture reading or give an exhortation. It sounded very much like the kind of worship service that you have in 1 Corinthians 12 to 14 where various prophets would get up and speak and the others would weigh what is said. That sort of worship service to me probably comes closest to what was going on in the New Testament in these local communities where there were no professional clergy and there were just local Christian groups that would meet together.

**Chapter 4 : My Brethren - Memorabilia - Church History**

*Are you sure you want to remove Goodbye, beloved Brethren from your list?*

The Open Brethren and the Exclusive Brethren, which emerged from the schism, dispute which party was responsible for it. The Exclusive Brethren are a subset of the Christian evangelical movement generally described as the Plymouth Brethren. They are distinguished from the Open Brethren from whom they separated in 1831. These brethren have one fellowship in some nineteen countries "including France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Denmark, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Sweden, and Argentina, but they are more numerous in Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and North America [3] [4] where they are referred to just as the Exclusive Brethren or Brethren. On my principles, I receive them all; but on the principle of witnessing against evil, I should reject them all. But shortly before he died in 1844, things started to fall apart. Some members had left a failing assembly in Ryde and Cronin travelled down to break bread with them. When he reported back to London, different assemblies took differing views of his action. Though Darby was sympathetic in private he attacked him fiercely in public. By an assembly in Ramsgate had itself split over the issue and the division, over an issue not of doctrine or principle but church governance, became irrevocable. A more serious split occurred in 1845 around the teaching of F. Not all of the people remaining in fellowship with Raven agreed with him and this led in to further splits, initiated by actions of the Glanton assembly in Northumberland over dissensions in the neighbouring Alnwick assembly. Once more assemblies had to decide which side to support and this included those as far away as Melbourne , Australia. Thus the Ravens and the Glantons were established. In the same year a festering disagreement in Tunbridge Wells led to a minor breakaway from the Lowe group by a number of assemblies. By this time, James Taylor, Jr. At a meeting in Aberdeen , Scotland, on 25 July, a clearly drunk Taylor publicly insulted members, calling them "bums", "bastards", and other such names. That weekend, he was allegedly found in bed with a married woman, both of them naked. His host published a long letter of protest which was sent to the New York assembly. Taylor immediately rejected both accusations as lies and the incident definitively divided the Brethren membership worldwide. Very few based near the scene of the events stayed in fellowship with Taylor "only two families in Aberdeen and out of 3, members in Scotland remained. Altogether, over such assemblies in England, Scotland and Ireland seceded from the Taylor group, according to a listing. This fellowship further fragmented in 1846, and the party which broke away has since further sub-divided. However the history of Exclusive Brethren is not only one of division. Eventually several of the groups realised that the divisions caused by personalities clashes or ecclesiastical issues were no longer relevant and reunions occurred. The Kelly and Lowe groups reunited in 1847 to form the Lowe-Kelly group, in with most of Tunbridge Wells and in with the Glantons and are sometimes known as Reunited Brethren, though there was a further split in 1850 and their ageing congregations have often not been replenished and are dwindling. Most of the Grant party threw in their lot with the Open Brethren in 1848. Amongst such groups views concerning their way of life and relationships are frequently affected by the varying standards in the general community. This is expressed practically in different ways by the different groups, but matters of fellowship and church discipline used to be generally not merely questions of local responsibility; such decisions would have been accepted in all meetings. Exclusive Brethren were therefore sometimes described as Connexional Brethren, as they recognised an obligation to accept and adhere to the disciplinary actions of other associated assemblies. For example, where one of their branches had excluded a person from Christian fellowship, that person remained excluded from all other branches, who must then treat the excluded person as a leper according to the book of Leviticus Chapter 13. This is still the practice amongst the Brethren and no doubt would be claimed by other independent assemblies. The adjective exclusive has been applied to the groups by others, partially due to their determination to separate from and exclude what they believe to be evil. Exclusive Brethren usually disown any name and simply refer to themselves as Christians, brethren, those with whom we walk, those in fellowship with us, or the saints. Beliefs and structure With the exception of the hardline Plymouth Brethren Christian Church PBCC , Exclusive Brethren differ very little from the Open Brethren on theological issues, both holding the Bible as their sole authority in regard to

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**Chapter 5 : Exclusive Brethren - Wikipedia**

*Note: Citations are based on reference standards. However, formatting rules can vary widely between applications and fields of interest or study. The specific requirements or preferences of your reviewing publisher, classroom teacher, institution or organization should be applied.*

Save A Plymouth Brethren church and congregation. The Plymouth Brethren are a conservative , low church , nonconformist , evangelical Christian movement whose history can be traced to Dublin , Ireland , in the late s, originating from Anglicanism. Plymouth Brethren generally see themselves as a network of like-minded independent churches, not as a denomination. They would generally prefer that their gatherings be referred to as "assemblies" rather than "churches" but, in the interests of simplicity, this article uses both terms interchangeably. The movement refused to take any denominational name to itself, a stance that some still maintain. The title "The Brethren," however, is one that many of their number are comfortable with, in that the Bible designates all believers as "brethren": Brethren assemblies as their gatherings are most often called are divided into two major branches: Both of these main branches are themselves divided into several smaller streams, with varying degrees of communication and overlap among them. The best-known and oldest distinction between Open and Exclusive assemblies is in the nature of relationships among their local churches. Open Brethren assemblies function as networks of like-minded independent local churches. Exclusive Brethren are generally connectional and so feel under obligation to recognize and adhere to the disciplinary actions of other associated assemblies. Generally, this is a Sunday morning service of prayer, singing, teaching, and taking communion, with important assembly-related announcements given at the end. Exclusion from it is a major issue. Discipline among Brethren may also involve formal social ostracism or "shunning" to varying degrees, dependent upon which kind of Brethren group it is. For instance, people placed "under discipline" may be asked not to attend any group functions which are purely social, and people may decline to eat or even shake hands with members who are under discipline. One practical result of this among Open Brethren is that, should a member be disciplined in one assembly, other Open assemblies aware of that disciplining would not automatically feel any binding obligation to deny that person participation in their breaking of bread service, as long as their leadership does not consider whatever caused the disciplinary action a serious issue. A numerically small movement known as the Needed Truth Brethren emerged from the Open Brethren around , partly in an attempt to address the problem of making discipline more effective. Reasons for being put under discipline by both the Open and Exclusive Brethren include disseminating gross Scriptural or doctrinal error, in the eyes of the fellowship, or being involved in what is deemed sexual immorality including adulterous , homosexual , or premarital sex. Being accused of irregular or illegal financial dealings may also result in being put under discipline. In Exclusive meetings, a member under discipline in one assembly would not be accepted in another assembly allowed to break bread or play an active teaching and worshipping role , as one assembly generally respects the decisions made by another assembly. Exclusive assemblies are also much more adherent to the shunning or shutting up of the offending party, using as guidance instructions given in Leviticus Another less clear difference between assemblies lies in their approaches to collaborating with other Christians. Many Open Brethren will hold gospel meetings, youth events, or other activities in partnership with non-Brethren Evangelical Christian churches. More conservative Open Brethren and perhaps the majority of Exclusive Brethren tend not to support activities outside their own meetings. Since the formation of the Exclusives in , there have been a great number of subdivisions into separate groups, but most groups have since rejoined, with the exception of the separatist Plymouth Brethren Christian Church. This group is informally known as "Jimite" from their following of James Taylor, Jr at the division in , and they are also referred to historically as the Raven-Taylor-Hales Exclusive Brethren. This group practices extreme separation, and other Brethren groups generally accuse it of being a cult. Most other Exclusive groups Closed Brethren prefer not to be known by any name and are only given such designations by non-members. There are some movements with strong Brethren connections that are less easy to classify. The Assemblies Jehovah Shammah of India , for example, are usually regarded as Open Brethren because of their general

willingness to work and worship together with other Evangelical Christians, and because their foreign connections tend to be with Open Brethren. The ecclesiology, however, has more in common with that of the Exclusive Brethren; founder Bakht Singh maintained tight control over the movement until his death in 1841. Both Open and Exclusive assemblies generally maintain relations within their respective groups through common support of missionaries, area conferences, and the travelling ministries of "commended workers", "laboring brothers", and itinerant evangelists. Some Exclusives hold to household Baptism as opposed to believers' Baptism, which is practiced by the Open Brethren. The majority of Christians known as Exclusive Brethren are not connected with the Taylor-Hales group, who are known for their extreme interpretation of separation from evil and their belief of what constitutes fellowship. In their view, fellowship includes dining out, business and professional partnerships, membership of clubs, etc. The group called the Raven Brethren named for prominent Exclusive leader F. Raven seceded from the Raven-Taylor-Hales group and are less strict and isolationist. Exclusive Brethren groups who are not affiliated with PBCC prefer being referred to as Closed rather than Exclusive brethren to avoid any connection with these more strident groups. Open and Closed Brethren Terminology which sometimes confuses Brethren and non-Brethren alike is the distinction between the Open assemblies, usually called "Chapels," and the Closed assemblies non-Exclusive, called "Gospel Halls. The Gospel Halls regard reception to the assembly as a serious matter. Such assemblies are said to have an "open table" approach to strangers. Gospel Hall Brethren, on the other hand, generally believe that only those formally recognised as part of that or an equivalent assembly should break bread. Most Closed and some Open Brethren hold that association with evil defiles and that sharing the Communion meal can bring that association. Their support text is from 1 Corinthians 15:33. The Gospel Halls tend to be more conservative in dress; women do not wear trousers in meetings and always have their heads covered, while in most Chapels women may wear whatever they wish, though modesty in dress serves as a guideline, and many may continue the tradition of wearing a head covering. Apart from a few mostly small exceptions, such as the Churches of God, Open Brethren churches are all independent, self-governing, local congregations with no central headquarters, although there are a number of seminaries, missions agencies, and publications that are widely supported by Brethren churches and which help to maintain a high degree of communication among them. Adding to the confusion over labels, many Exclusive Brethren have more recently sought to distinguish themselves from their most extreme sect, the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church, by rebranding themselves as "Closed" rather than "Exclusive". This is mostly because of widespread negative media coverage of the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church, the most hardline branch of the Exclusive Brethren and the only numerically significant Exclusive group in either country, which most Open Brethren consider to be a cult with which they do not wish to be misidentified. Their guide was to be the Bible alone. An important early stimulus was in the study of prophecy which was the subject of a number of annual meetings at Powerscourt House in County Wicklow starting in 1825. The two main but conflicting aspirations of the movement were to create a holy and pure fellowship on one hand, and to allow all Christians into fellowship on the other. Believers in the movement felt that the established Church of England had abandoned or distorted many of the ancient traditions of Christendom, following decades of dissent and the expansion of Methodism and political revolutions in the United States and France. To get away from the sectarianism of dissenters, people in the movement wanted simply to meet together in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ without reference to denominational differences. Early meetings included Christians from a variety of denominations. The first meeting in England was held in December [5] in Plymouth. By 1827, the assembly in Plymouth had more than 1,000 people in fellowship. The term "Darbyites" is also used, especially when describing the "Exclusive" branch where the influence of John Nelson Darby is more pronounced. Many within the movement refuse to accept any name other than "Christian". In 1828, Darby returned from an extended visit to Switzerland where he had achieved considerable success in planting churches. Returning to Plymouth where Newton was firmly in control, he disagreed with some details in a book that Newton had published concerning the tribulation that was coming. But several attempts to settle the quarrel in the presence of other brethren failed to produce any clear result. A fierce exchange of tracts followed and, although Newton retracted some of his statements, he eventually left Plymouth and established another chapel in London. After investigation of the individual, Bethesda defended

their decision, but Darby was not satisfied. He issued a circular on 26 August, cutting off not only Bethesda but all assemblies who received anyone who went there. This defined the essential characteristic of "exclusivism" that he pursued for the rest of his life. McDowell records at least six. Leadership One of the most defining elements of the Brethren is the rejection of the concept of clergy. Their view is that all Christians are ordained by God to serve and therefore all are ministers, in keeping with the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. The Brethren embrace the most extensive form of that idea, in that there is no ordained or unordained person or group employed to function as ministers or pastors. Brethren assemblies are led by the local church elders within any fellowship. In the words of Darby, these gifts in Ephesians 4: Men who become elders, or those who become deacons and overseers within the fellowship, have been recognized by others within the individual assemblies and have been given the blessing of performing leadership tasks by the elders. Brethren elders conduct many other duties that would typically be performed by "the clergy" in other Christian groups, including counselling those who have decided to be baptized, performing baptisms, visiting the sick, and giving spiritual counsel in general. Normally, sermons are given either by the elders or by men who regularly attend the Sunday meetings—but, again, only men whom the elders recognize as having the "call of God" on their lives for that particular ministry. Visiting speakers, however, are usually paid their travel costs and provided for with Sunday meals following the meetings. Open and Exclusive Brethren differ in how they interpret the concept of "no clergy". The Open Brethren believe in a plurality of elders Acts This position is also taken in some Baptist churches, especially Reformed Baptists, and by the Churches of Christ. It is understood that elders are appointed by the Holy Spirit Acts Generally, the elders themselves will look out for men who meet the biblical qualifications, and invite them to join them as elders. In some Open assemblies, elders are elected democratically, but this is a fairly recent development and is still relatively uncommon. Officially naming and recognizing "eldership" is common to Open Brethren cf. Traditionally, only men are allowed to speak and, in some cases, attend these decision-making meetings, although not all assemblies follow that rule today. The term "Elder" is based on the same Scriptures that are used to identify "Bishops" and "Overseers" in other Christian circles,[15] and some Exclusive Brethren claim that the system of recognition of elders by the assembly means that the Open Brethren cannot claim full adherence to the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. The Plymouth Brethren Christian Church, the most hardline of all the Exclusive Brethren groups, has developed into a de facto hierarchical body which operates under the headship of an Elect Vessel, currently Bruce Hales of Australia. Some defectors have accused him and his predecessors of having quasi-papal authority. This development is almost universally considered by other streams of the Plymouth Brethren movement, however, as a radical departure from Brethren principles. In place of an ordained ministry, an itinerant preacher often receives a "commendation" to the work of preaching and teaching that demonstrates the blessing and support of the assembly of origin. A given assembly may have any number of full-time workers, or none at all. In the last twenty years, many Open Assemblies in Australia and New Zealand, and some elsewhere, have begun calling their full-time workers "pastors", but this is not seen as ordaining clergy and does not connote a transfer of any special spiritual authority. In such assemblies, the pastor is simply one of several elders, and differs from his fellow-elders only in being salaried to serve full-time. Depending on the assembly, he may or may not take a larger share of the responsibility for preaching than his fellow elders. Notable Brethren This list consists of mostly nineteenth-century figures who were associated with the Brethren movement before the schism. They are the leading historical figures common to both the Open and Exclusive Brethren. Two exceptions are H. Ironside and Watchman Nee, twentieth-century preachers who spent time associated with both the Open and Exclusive Brethren. See the respective articles for other more recent figures who have functioned primarily or entirely in either the Open Brethren or Exclusive Brethren. Robert Anderson — senior officer of Scotland Yard and Christian author; was a member of the Plymouth Brethren, first with Darby then with the Open Brethren party, before returning to his Presbyterian roots Robert Mackenzie Beverley — one of the most influential figures to abandon the Quakers and join the Brethren during the Beaconite controversy Lancelot Brenton — translator of the Greek-English edition of the Septuagint [18] F. Bruce - British biblical scholar, author of 40 books and commentaries.

**Chapter 6 : Plymouth Brethren**

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Christian , Protestant , Evangelical , John Nelson Darby , Dispensationalism , Fundamentalism , Bruce Hales , UK , Australia Summary of movement The Plymouth Brethren Christian Church henceforth PBCC , also known as the Exclusive Brethren, is a branch of the wider Brethren movement, a group of evangelical Protestants whose origins can be traced to a series of interrelated groups of Christians who seceded from various mainline Christian denominations in the first half of the nineteenth century. They trace their roots to the work of John Nelson Darby, an itinerant evangelist and Biblical interpreter whose understanding of eschatology and ecclesiology form the basis of much modern dispensationalism and Christian fundamentalism. While the exclusive wing of the wider Brethren movement has been prone to frequent schism, the PBCC holds that Darby has been followed by an unbroken succession of recognised spiritual leaders including Frederick Edward Raven ; James Taylor Senior ; James Taylor Junior ; James Harvey Symington ; and John Stephen Hales The current recognised leader is Australian accountant and businessman Bruce David Hales While firmly situated within an evangelical Protestant milieu, the PBCC has attracted some negative attention since the late s, when the American-based leader James Taylor Junior sought to tighten communal boundaries in the wake of what Brethren viewed as an increasingly permissive society. Since that time the Brethren have been subject to frequent bouts of media attention. During the mids Darby was a curate in the small rural parish of Calary in County Wicklow where he quickly acquired a reputation for his devoted ministry and asceticism. In , Darby was seriously injured when his horse crushed him against a doorway while he was preparing to embark on his pastoral duties. He underwent what has been described as a second conversion whilst convalescing at the homes of his brother-in-law, the later Chief Justice of Ireland, Edward Pennefather , in Dublin and Delgany. This experience led him to a far more radical theological position than he had hitherto entertained, and sometime over the course of he resigned his curacy at Calary and progressively distanced himself from the Established Church. In the same year, Darby wrote his pamphlet *Considerations on the Nature of the Church*, in which he criticized the then Archbishop of Dublin, William Magee, and his supporters for their Erastianism, Magee having written in in favour of a tighter relationship between the Church of Ireland and the British state, and petitioned parliament on the same grounds in Magee had characterized the Irish Catholic population as potentially disloyal and subversive, and the Church of Ireland as a force for public order as well as religious edification. For Darby, this was a betrayal of the Gospel and the duty of the Christian to follow Christ steadfastly, even in the face of potential persecution and suffering; he also considered it to be detrimental to the itinerant preaching campaigns that were being undertaken by numerous Evangelical clergy in Ireland. This was not the first time Darby was to criticise the hierarchy of the Church of Ireland and, prior to his final break with the Established Church in the early s, he wrote a scathing attack on Archbishop Richard Whately and the Irish education board over a proposal to restrict the teaching of Scripture in Irish schools. Through this Oxford connection, Darby was introduced to a number of associated figures, including Benjamin Wills Newton and George Vicesimus Wigram , who would subsequently secede from the Established Church and become influential in Brethren history. After seceding from the Church of England around , Newton and a number of associates began meeting at a private chapel in his hometown of Plymouth, in the English county of Devon, with Darby becoming a frequent visitor and preacher. It was during these conferences that many of the distinct eschatological ideas of the Brethren first began to take shape under the imposing influence of Darby, who became a forceful presence at these proceedings. Newton, however, continued to maintain the importance of having a qualified leadership lest unedifying or theologically suspect positions be expressed through open ministry. From this point the two engaged in a protracted, but at this stage civil, written dispute through pamphlets and Brethren periodicals. In , after an extended period in Switzerland, Darby was forced to return to Britain by the revolution in the canton of Vaud. For several months prior to his return Darby had been kept abreast of developments in Britain. On returning, Darby accused Newton of clericalism over the way in which the latter exercised control over those

who were permitted to minister, and his decision to cancel the Friday meeting at which all male members of the assembly had met to discuss assembly business, oversight, and matters of discipline. A number of Brethren, most notably Wigram, followed Darby and broke bread in a separate meeting on October 26, Darby wrote opposing these views and Newton confessed his error and withdrew his earlier statements. However, Darby was not satisfied, and in 1828, when a series of Brethren from Plymouth sought and were received to communion by the assembly at the Bethesda Chapel in Bristol, Darby withdrew fellowship from this assembly. While further attempts were made to heal this rift over the ensuing months, from this point onwards the followers of Darby became known as Exclusive or Closed Brethren, whilst the numerically larger Brethren group became known as Open, Independent, or Christian Brethren. Darby continued as an active preacher, correspondent, and voluminous writer throughout the rest of his life, establishing assemblies as far afield as North America, Australia and New Zealand, and writing a series of tracts which eventually filled almost forty volumes. Each of these splits involved intricate divergences over matters of church discipline or Christology, resulting largely from the Brethren demand for a uniform judgment on various issues across all assemblies. These teachings on communal purity became increasingly controversial over the course of the 1800s and 1850s when the American James Taylor Junior progressively assumed leadership and insisted on a series of increasingly rigorous practices. Most of the negative memoirs published by former members regarding life in the Brethren cited below relate to this period. James Taylor Junior and Madeline Ker In 1828, James Taylor Junior visited Aberdeen, Scotland for a large fellowship meeting, and was allegedly found in a compromising position with the wife of another Brethren member. To this day PBCC members, including both the husband and wife involved, strongly deny these accusations. Taylor died soon after and was replaced by James H. Symington, a farmer from Nebraska. Under Symington, the refinement of the practice of separation continued, with Symington extending principles already in place relating to the wireless radio and the use of other technology such as fax machines and, later, computers, largely owing to their potential to bring moral corruption into the Brethren community. After a long battle with complications resulting from diabetes, Symington died on April 23, 1888. The Australian, John S. Hales, was recognized as the new leader. Hales, who was the leader from 1888 to 1918, the Brethren made a number of advances in business and education. Concerned about the declining moral standards in public schooling in Australia and abroad, Hales encouraged Brethren to engage increasingly in distance-education programmes and home-schooling. In the mid-1880s Hales was diagnosed with cancer, which he battled for his remaining years. However, he died on January 12, 1890, and was succeeded by his youngest son Bruce David Hales. Almost immediately on assuming leadership, Bruce D. Hales became involved in attempts to review individual assembly judgements, possible administrative failures, and miscarriages of justice that had occurred in some assemblies in previous years. Beginning in 1890, Hales ministered on the matter of computers, which have since been adopted in a highly-regulated way by Brethren members. In addition to this, Hales has introduced greater degree of international cooperation through an increasing number of regular meetings that Brethren will take turns at attending in an effort to maintain a single standard of testimony universally across assemblies. This political involvement, however, has been less apparent since the late 1800s. More recently, there has been concern over the funding and curriculum in Brethren schools, especially in Australia and Sweden. In Australia, Brethren schools have been targeted alongside Islamic schools for criticism. Sefton Park School, Buckinghamshire, England More recently the Brethren have also been singled-out with other groups in concerns over the charitable status of their churches, especially following charity law reform in the United Kingdom. Beliefs Theologically, Brethren can be described as holding to a soft or moderate form of Calvinism. The bedrock of their beliefs is scripture, which is held as the highest authority and that upon which their doctrines are based. For other aspects of the biblical canon, Brethren often interpret the Bible typologically and symbolically, with a futurist perspective on matters pertaining to prophecy. Despite Brethren having roots which can be regarded as anti-clerical, they recognise an unbroken lineâ€”from Darby to the present dayâ€”of leaders raised up by God to recover the truth for today. Changes to the application of doctrine and worship, and the impact this has on social practice are readily discernible and expected within the Brethren community. It is important to note that regardless of changes that may be discernible over time, great stress on the continuity of the ministry of Brethren leaders is reiterated. Along

with the Bible, printed ministry of Brethren leaders is a primary and authoritative source on matters pertaining to doctrine and practice, providing a discursive companion to scripture. Whilst the writings of Darby, Raven and Taylor Senior are regarded as setting out and determining doctrinal positions, as well as establishing the truth of the Bible under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the ministry of Taylor Junior, Symington, J. Hales is understood as providing instruction on its practical outworking. This delineation is a principal reason why Brethren ministry from Taylor Junior to the present day is not circulated outside the community. According to the Brethren, the practical outworking of doctrine, and the subsequent development of theology and practice have often been taken out of context and misinterpreted by those outside of their community, particularly by ex-members and journalists; hence there is currently a copyright embargo on printed ministry. Throughout the world, every Sunday at hrs local time, Brethren gather to participate in the most important meeting of the assembly. It is also symbolises the coming together of the assembly and the relationship between them and Christ " as the assembly of Christ " as well as demonstrating their radical distinction from other Christians. Separation was not only necessary from corrupt ecclesiological institutions, it became indispensable in order to maintain a pure and godly life. The American, James Taylor and his son, who became leader in , James Taylor Junior , developed the doctrine of separation to a new level. Indeed, his emergence as the next leader was very much based upon what he regarded as the truth of separation Shuff

Leading the Brethren through the tumultuous cultural and political changes of the s, through his ministry, Taylor Junior, pushed through an unprecedented number of additional directives that would help to ensure separation was entrenched in virtually every aspect of the lives of the Brethren community. Key biblical texts used to argue for separation are Mat The two Taylors ensured more than any of the previous leaders that the doctrine of separation was to be applied to every detail of Brethren lives. The doctrine of separation continues to be a non-negotiable core principle in contemporary Brethren life. Millennial Beliefs Brethren have strong millennial beliefs common among Adventist Christian evangelical groups. Their eschatology sits within a dispensational framework and is both premillennial and pretribulational in orientation. This form of millennialism is sometimes referred to as catastrophic millennialism Wessinger , due to its pessimistic view of society and human history. Adherence to dispensationalism is chiefly due to the influence of Darby who is recognised as a central figure regarding its development in its classical form Sweetnam , as well as being responsible for the popularity of the doctrine of the Secret Rapture. This sixth dispensation commenced with the resurrection of Christ and will close with the Rapture prior to the period of tribulation. However, because God does not fail to keep his promises, he will return to the question of the Jews, restoring them to their land after the period of tribulation. This futurist perspective is central to understanding dispensationalism, and is a central reason as to why Brethren keep a careful watch on geo-political events in the Middle East. The next event on the prophetic calendar is the Rapture of the saints. Brethren look forward to the imminent return of Christ, and chief among scriptural evidence for this doctrine is Thessalonians I 4: In their weekly meetings Brethren are regularly called upon to make sure their relationship with God is clear and that there is no moral impropriety which might hinder this. Unlike a number of contemporary proponents of Dispensationalism and Rapture theology, Brethren have resisted the temptation to set any dates for when any of these events may take place. This eschatological system with its futurist interpretation of prophecy ensures that Brethren maintain a close eye on world affairs and other developments which might signal the end of the current dispensation. From their beginnings in the early nineteenth century, Brethren have paid close attention to events happening in the world. The last years or so have proved to be particularly significant with the advance of information and communication technologies ICTs. Successive leaders have warned Brethren of the dangers of ICTs which not only undermine separation from the world but are purported to be tools of the Man of Sin who will use them to corrupt humanity and usher in the Great Tribulation. That is not to say that Brethren do not utilise the latest in digital and information technology; however, it is only used for business and education and not leisure. Practices Brethren assemblies can be found across many of the former British dominions with their most numerous centres in the United Kingdom, the United States, New Zealand and Australia. Brethren generally conduct their assemblies in meeting rooms often converted suburban houses where local zoning laws permit or larger assembly complexes, usually with minimal or no signage indicating the purpose of these

buildings. This typically takes place within eight days of the birth of the child and is considered an informal affair. Baptism is by full immersion, and infants will not attend the assembly until they have been baptised. This meeting involves all community members partaking in the emblems bread and wine , following principles set out in Scripture, as well as communal prayer and the singing of hymns from the Brethren hymnal Hymns and Spiritual Songs for the Little Flock. However, due to the tight-knit nature of the Brethren community, word of communal discipline often spreads quickly. Leviticus 13 , a process whereby a member is excluded from all communal fellowship. This continues until such a time as they show sufficient repentance and are deemed ready to be restored to fellowship. While the time-period is undefined, evidence suggests that nowadays it usually consists of a period of several weeks at most, however, in the past this period could last a number of years. Their homes and gardens tend to be well kept and will often feature limited decoration and little ostentation. However, group portraits of the various leaders, and bookshelves containing the collected writings of important leaders such as Darby are not uncommon. In order to avoid ostentation or internal jealousies, Brethren discourage the ownership of fancy cars, and due to their large family sizes, will often drive large people-movers, or, in the case of Brethren tradesmen, utility vehicles. Many Brethren own small manufacturing or warehousing businesses in which they employ both Brethren and non-Brethren staff.

*Authoritative information about the hymn text Farewell, my dear brethren, beloved of the Lord, with lyrics.*

And if ye shall believe in Christ ye will believe in these words, for they are the words of Christ, and he hath given them unto me; and they teach all men that they should do good. Nephi, for example, only refers to them once in his writings. In that single reference Nephi promises all, if they will repent and return to Christ, can be saved. Everyone may learn of Christ, find Him and be saved. The opportunity is open for all. There will be few who will accept. He assures us as readers that if we are willing to accept his writings we are, in fact, accepting the words of Christ. If you believe Christ, you will believe Nephi. For almost everything Nephi has written comes directly or indirectly from Christ. Think about that for a moment. Nephi does not leave you wondering if the message will save you or not, whether he has some special inside information or not, or whether he has seen the Lord or not. He is direct and does not require you to guess. He has not adopted any equivocal or carefully studied words or phrases to tell you about Christ. He is blunt, even plain. His words offend those who are unwilling to surrender their sins and repent. He openly invites the gentiles to repent. He does so repeatedly. He tells us that with the exception of only a few, we are condemned and will fail in our dispensation. As to those few, he warns us that we will be prone to err because of the things we are taught. He offers us a clear, light filled body of teachings that will clarify for us the body of doctrine that will save us. However, we must take his warnings seriously and study them with care. Imagine how much effort and thought went into preparing to carve into the metal plates. Imagine the amount of thought he employed before undertaking the final, permanent etchings to complete his ministry. His brother commented about how arduous the process was during his writing on the same plates. Nephi saw our day, and knew how difficult it would be for us. He wrote a message to be preserved and available no matter who would lead us, no matter what messages we would hear, no matter what confusion would develop. He gave us a message to announce the conditions of salvation over the heads of any foolish, vain or false teachings. They are a lifeline extended to the gentiles, as well as his beloved mixed blood descendants the remnant, and the Jews. We want to make ourselves justified by the words that warn, condemn and challenge us to do more. It does no good to argue with him. It does no good to juxtapose his words of counsel and warning with other words of comfort and reassurance. He is alarmed by our condition and warns us to flee from error. We want to read into these words other ideas Nephi never intended. When we began back with Alma, Chapter 13, it was with the idea we would let the words speak for themselves. We were going to try and see what was being said apart from our own desires or hopes. An inspired teacher will not offer their own words and pretend they come from Christ. They are not going to dare speak in the name of Christ if they offer only their suppositions, hopes, and understanding. It is often the case, however, that men will urge their own views hoping to make them more convincing, while using the name of Christ. Surely every such teacher will be held to account before Christ for every idle word spoken in His name without His authority or approval. Nephi knew this doctrine. Nephi writes in the full confidence that the Lord has approved his message, inspired his words, and will vindicate them to those who will believe them. Personally, I would hardly dare to teach doctrine if I did not know what I say to be true.

**Chapter 8 : Exclusive Brethren**

*Was surprised to find, 'Goodbye Beloved Brethren' online; I had managed to pick up a couple of copies of this book over the years, which is extremely hard to obtain!*

Brethren assemblies as their gatherings are most often called are divided into two major branches: Both of these main branches are themselves divided into several smaller streams, with varying degrees of communication and overlap among them. The best-known and oldest distinction between Open and Exclusive assemblies is in the nature of relationships among their local churches. Open Brethren assemblies function as networks of like-minded independent local churches. Exclusive Brethren are generally connectional and so feel under obligation to recognize and adhere to the disciplinary actions of other associated assemblies. Generally, this is a Sunday morning service of prayer, singing, teaching, and taking communion, with important assembly-related announcements given at the end. Exclusion from it is a major issue. Discipline among Brethren may also involve formal social ostracism or "shunning" to varying degrees, dependent upon which kind of Brethren group it is. For instance, people placed "under discipline" may be asked not to attend any group functions which are purely social, and people may decline to eat or even shake hands with members who are under discipline. One practical result of this among Open Brethren is that, should a member be disciplined in one assembly, other Open assemblies aware of that disciplining would not automatically feel any binding obligation to deny that person participation in their breaking of bread service, as long as their leadership does not consider whatever caused the disciplinary action a serious issue. A numerically small movement known as the Needed Truth Brethren emerged from the Open Brethren around , partly in an attempt to address the problem of making discipline more effective. Reasons for being put under discipline by both the Open and Exclusive Brethren include disseminating gross Scriptural or doctrinal error, in the eyes of the fellowship, or being involved in what is deemed sexual immorality including adulterous , homosexual , or premarital sex. Being accused of irregular or illegal financial dealings may also result in being put under discipline. In Exclusive meetings, a member under discipline in one assembly would not be accepted in another assembly allowed to break bread or play an active teaching and worshipping role , as one assembly generally respects the decisions made by another assembly. Exclusive assemblies are also much more adherent to the shunning or shutting up of the offending party, using as guidance instructions given in Leviticus . Another less clear difference between assemblies lies in their approaches to collaborating with other Christians. Many Open Brethren will hold gospel meetings, youth events, or other activities in partnership with non-Brethren Evangelical Christian churches. More conservative Open Brethren and perhaps the majority of Exclusive Brethren tend not to support activities outside their own meetings. Since the formation of the Exclusives in , there have been a great number of subdivisions into separate groups, but most groups have since rejoined, with the exception of the separatist Plymouth Brethren Christian Church. This group is informally known as "Jimite" from their following of James Taylor, Jr at the division in , and they are also referred to historically as the Raven-Taylor-Hales Exclusive Brethren. This group practices extreme separation, and other Brethren groups generally accuse it of being a cult. Most other Exclusive groups Closed Brethren prefer not to be known by any name and are only given such designations by non-members. There are some movements with strong Brethren connections that are less easy to classify. The Assemblies Jehovah Shammah of India , for example, are usually regarded as Open Brethren because of their general willingness to work and worship together with other Evangelical Christians, and because their foreign connections tend to be with Open Brethren. The ecclesiology, however, has more in common with that of the Exclusive Brethren; founder Bakht Singh maintained tight control over the movement until his death in . Both Open and Exclusive assemblies generally maintain relations within their respective groups through common support of missionaries , area conferences, and the travelling ministries of "commended workers", "laboring brothers", and itinerant evangelists. Some Exclusives hold to household Baptism as opposed to believers Baptism , which is practiced by the Open Brethren. Plymouth Brethren Christian Church[ edit ] Main article: The majority of Christians known as Exclusive Brethren are not connected with the Taylor-Hales group, who are

known for their extreme interpretation of separation from evil and their belief of what constitutes fellowship. In their view, fellowship includes dining out, business and professional partnerships, membership of clubs, etc. The group called the Raven Brethren named for prominent Exclusive leader F. Raven seceded from the Raven-Taylor-Hales group and are less strict and isolationist. Exclusive Brethren groups who are not affiliated with PBCC prefer being referred to as Closed rather than Exclusive brethren to avoid any connection with these more strident groups. Open and Closed Brethren[ edit ] Terminology which sometimes confuses Brethren and non-Brethren alike is the distinction between the Open assemblies, usually called "Chapels," and the Closed assemblies non-Exclusive , called "Gospel Halls. The Gospel Halls regard reception to the assembly as a serious matter. Such assemblies are said to have an "open table" approach to strangers. Gospel Hall Brethren, on the other hand, generally believe that only those formally recognised as part of that or an equivalent assembly should break bread. Most Closed and some Open Brethren hold that association with evil defiles and that sharing the Communion meal can bring that association. Their support text is from 1 Corinthians The Gospel Halls tend to be more conservative in dress; women do not wear trousers in meetings and always have their heads covered, while in most Chapels women may wear whatever they wish, though modesty in dress serves as a guideline, and many may continue the tradition of wearing a head covering. Apart from a few mostly small exceptions, such as the Churches of God, Open Brethren churches are all independent, self-governing, local congregations with no central headquarters, although there are a number of seminaries, missions agencies, and publications that are widely supported by Brethren churches and which help to maintain a high degree of communication among them. Adding to the confusion over labels, many Exclusive Brethren have more recently sought to distinguish themselves from their most extreme sect, the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church, by rebranding themselves as "Closed" rather than "Exclusive". This is mostly because of widespread negative media coverage of the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church, the most hardline branch of the Exclusive Brethren and the only numerically significant Exclusive group in either country , which most Open Brethren consider to be a cult with which they do not wish to be misidentified. History[ edit ] Matthew Their guide was to be the Bible alone. An important early stimulus was in the study of prophecy which was the subject of a number of annual meetings at Powerscourt House in County Wicklow starting in The two main but conflicting aspirations of the movement were to create a holy and pure fellowship on one hand, and to allow all Christians into fellowship on the other. Believers in the movement felt that the established Church of England had abandoned or distorted many of the ancient traditions of Christendom , following decades of dissent and the expansion of Methodism and political revolutions in the United States and France. To get away from the sectarianism of dissenters , people in the movement wanted simply to meet together in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ without reference to denominational differences. Early meetings included Christians from a variety of denominations. By , the assembly in Plymouth had more than 1, people in fellowship. The term " Darbyites " is also used, especially when describing the "Exclusive" branch where the influence of John Nelson Darby is more pronounced. Many within the movement refuse to accept any name other than "Christian". In , Darby returned from an extended visit to Switzerland where he had achieved considerable success in planting churches. Returning to Plymouth where Newton was firmly in control, he disagreed with some details in a book that Newton had published concerning the tribulation that was coming. But several attempts to settle the quarrel in the presence of other brethren failed to produce any clear result. A fierce exchange of tracts followed and, although Newton retracted some of his statements, he eventually left Plymouth and established another chapel in London. After investigation of the individual, Bethesda defended their decision, but Darby was not satisfied. He issued a circular on 26 August , cutting off not only Bethesda but all assemblies who received anyone who went there. This defined the essential characteristic of "exclusivism" that he pursued for the rest of his life. McDowell records at least six. Leadership[ edit ] One of the most defining elements of the Brethren is the rejection of the concept of clergy. Their view is that all Christians are ordained by God to serve and therefore all are ministers, in keeping with the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. The Brethren embrace the most extensive form of that idea, in that there is no ordained or unordained person or group employed to function as minister s or pastors. Brethren assemblies are led by the local church elders within any fellowship. In the words of Darby, these gifts in

Ephesians 4: Men who become elders, or those who become deacons and overseers within the fellowship, have been recognized by others within the individual assemblies and have been given the blessing of performing leadership tasks by the elders. Brethren elders conduct many other duties that would typically be performed by "the clergy" in other Christian groups, including counselling those who have decided to be baptized, performing baptisms, visiting the sick, and giving spiritual counsel in general. Normally, sermons are given either by the elders or by men who regularly attend the Sunday meetings—but, again, only men whom the elders recognize as having the "call of God" on their lives for that particular ministry. Visiting speakers, however, are usually paid their travel costs and provided for with Sunday meals following the meetings. Open and Exclusive Brethren differ in how they interpret the concept of "no clergy". The Open Brethren believe in a plurality of elders Acts This position is also taken in some Baptist churches, especially Reformed Baptists, and by the Churches of Christ. It is understood that elders are appointed by the Holy Spirit Acts Generally, the elders themselves will look out for men who meet the biblical qualifications, and invite them to join them as elders. In some Open assemblies, elders are elected democratically, but this is a fairly recent development and is still relatively uncommon. Officially naming and recognizing "eldership" is common to Open Brethren cf. Traditionally, only men are allowed to speak and, in some cases, attend these decision-making meetings, although not all assemblies follow that rule today. The term "Elder" is based on the same Scriptures that are used to identify "Bishops" and "Overseers" in other Christian circles, [15] and some Exclusive Brethren claim that the system of recognition of elders by the assembly means that the Open Brethren cannot claim full adherence to the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. The Plymouth Brethren Christian Church, the most hardline of all the Exclusive Brethren groups, has developed into a de facto hierarchical body which operates under the headship of an Elect Vessel, currently Bruce Hales of Australia. Some defectors have accused him and his predecessors of having quasi-papal authority. This development is almost universally considered by other streams of the Plymouth Brethren movement, however, as a radical departure from Brethren principles. In place of an ordained ministry, an itinerant preacher often receives a "commendation" to the work of preaching and teaching that demonstrates the blessing and support of the assembly of origin. A given assembly may have any number of full-time workers, or none at all. In the last twenty years, many Open Assemblies in Australia and New Zealand, and some elsewhere, have begun calling their full-time workers "pastors", but this is not seen as ordaining clergy and does not connote a transfer of any special spiritual authority. In such assemblies, the pastor is simply one of several elders, and differs from his fellow-elders only in being salaried to serve full-time. Depending on the assembly, he may or may not take a larger share of the responsibility for preaching than his fellow elders. Notable Brethren[ edit ] This list consists of mostly nineteenth-century figures who were associated with the Brethren movement before the schism. They are the leading historical figures common to both the Open and Exclusive Brethren. Two exceptions are H. Ironside and Watchman Nee, twentieth-century preachers who spent time associated with both the Open and Exclusive Brethren. See the respective articles for other more recent figures who have functioned primarily or entirely in either the Open Brethren or Exclusive Brethren. Robert Anderson — senior officer of Scotland Yard and Christian author; was a member of the Plymouth Brethren, first with Darby then with the Open Brethren party, before returning to his Presbyterian roots.

## Chapter 9 : My Brethren - Guests - Guest Book 15

*The Exclusive Brethren are a subset of the Christian evangelical movement generally described as the Plymouth Brethren. () Goodbye, Beloved Brethren.*