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Editor: Roy Coad

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"TASK OF THE CHURCH"  
The Local Church in Evangelism

# The Harvester

Inside : Exorcism in a Dead Sea Scroll







# He finally made it

The Scripture Reader followed up his contact at a restricted camp. The young man showed an increased understanding of the truth each time they talked together. He began by saying "I know I ought to be a Christian" and then progressed to saying "When I'm alone, thinking, I want to be" and then "I would like to be" until finally sitting in the Reader's car he exclaimed "I will be." That response made all the difference. He needs prayer for a deep assurance of God's work within him, especially as he has now moved to a new location. The Reader found encouragement in his parting remark. Having suggested that they might meet again in England the soldier replied "If not over there, then up there."

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by David Craig

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DAVID CRAIG was born in Lanarkshire, Scotland, in 1902 the son of a coal miner.

He went to Ireland in 1926 and after three years secular employment in a factory near Ahughill, Co. Antrim, he was commended to full time evangelistic work.

After the second world war invitations to preach the gospel and minister the Word of God came from other parts of Gt. Britain, Canada and the U.S.A. He also visited Europe.

During the 1960's he developed a complexity of illnesses and retired from his preaching ministry in 1973.

He published the COAT OF MANY COLOURS in 1975 and completed the manuscript for the present book a few months before he was called home in July 1977.

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# The Harvester

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## Editorial

### The End that is No End

With January 1979 we enter on another year, with a little more of the wistfulness that each reminder of the passage of time brings with it; and perhaps a little less of the sense of new purpose and new opportunity that normally greets New Year. How many of our readers share my odd feeling about the tenth year of a decade? In twelve months' time, if we remain, the nostalgia will be there as strongly as ever—but there will be that same uplift of spirits that comes each year with the first bright day of spring. Not only will we be turning a new page of the book of life, but starting a new chapter as well: a bright new clean chapter, with ten whole years of the 'eighties before us. But throughout the year now dawning we shall be reminded by the calendar and the daily newspaper that the seventies are closing; a decade is dying.

What foolishness the human psychology inflicts on itself! As though the day which died with night-fall on 31st December, and the day which was born when the sun rose on 1st January, were in themselves different from any other turning of the earth on its axis! There have been happy cultures, we are told, and for all we know there may still be today, where the clock is meaningless, and the calendar more so: where men do not count their ages, or pocket-diary their engagements.

Our God is a God without time: the same, yesterday, today and forever. It is a sobering, a strengthening, a warning understanding. As a poem in this issue reminds us, the Alpha and Omega is that in our individual life experience, as well as in cosmic terms.

Perhaps the most effective assurance and reminder of this truth of eternity is given us in our Lord's own institution of the Lord's Supper: the regularly repeated eucharist. It is true that it has its significance in time, when

that dark betrayal night

With His last advent we unite,

By one blest chain of loving rite

but it is also timeless and changeless, as His sacrifice is once-for-all and eternal. In remembering His death, we also testify that Death is vanquished; the very symbols of His broken body and shed blood are given us as food—and food by its nature is the antithesis of death, the bearer and the promise of life continuing. □

# Exorcism in a Dead Sea Scroll

Robert Gordon

*Dr. Gordon, of the Department of Hebrew and Semitic Languages, Glasgow University, finds some interesting NT echoes in a Jewish retelling of an OT story.*

Among the finds in Qumran Cave One in 1947 was a badly preserved scroll which, partly because of its poor condition and partly thanks to a display of gamesmanship by the Syrian Orthodox Metropolitan in Jerusalem, did not yield its secrets until several years after its discovery. At first it was thought that it preserved a text of the apocryphal book of Enoch or of the lost book of Lamech. Once unrolled, however, it revealed an Aramaic version of several chapters of Genesis, dealing mainly with the figures of Noah and Abraham. So its first editors gave it the name by which it is still generally known—*The Genesis Apocryphon*. The *Apocryphon* does not belong to any particular literary genre; at times it follows the Biblical text quite closely, at other points it becomes highly fanciful, often reproducing legendary accretions to Genesis which are found in other ancient Jewish writings.

The best preserved part of the scroll is that which tells the story of Abraham after his arrival in Canaan. We are reminded that after a time the land was in the grip of famine and Abraham had to head south to Egypt. And then the *Apocryphon* begins to part company with the Genesis narrative. On the night when Abraham and Sarah crossed the border into Egypt Abraham had a distressing dream which left him very apprehensive about his future. The dream seemed to indicate that the Egyptians would attempt to kill him because he was the husband of so beautiful a wife. Thus the stratagem of having Sarah pose as his sister was conceived. Sarah was also overtaken by a fit of nerves and for a long time did her utmost to avoid appearing in public. But after five years it was no longer possible to keep her good looks concealed. Three of Pharaoh Zoan's courtiers paid Abraham a visit and returned to their lord to report at length on the physical attractiveness of this extraordinary woman. The result was that the Pharaoh 'desired her greatly and at once gave orders that she be brought'. Abraham would have lost his life, but for Sarah's 'sisterly' intervention.

In great distress, the patriarch prayed that night that God would frustrate the designs of Pharaoh Zoan and would bring Sarah back unharmed. The prayer was answered, for although she was not sent back immediately—in fact the *Apocryphon* discloses that she remained in the royal house for two years—the Pharaoh was not able to approach her. In response to Abraham's prayer God sent an evil spirit to afflict Zoan and his house. Throughout those two years the king was troubled with loathsome plagues which grew more virulent as the end of the

period approached. Finally the wise men and the physicians of the realm were called in to see whether they could produce a remedy. As the story proceeds we find some interesting echoes of New Testament accounts of healings and exorcisms.

The experts who were called in proved unequal to the challenge. Not only that, they too came under the power of the evil spirit:

'But none of the physicians and magicians, nor any of the wise men, could heal him, for the spirit afflicted them all and they fled.'

A similar thing happened on a famous occasion during Paul's stay in Ephesus when some Jewish exorcists, sons of the priest Sceva, tried to exorcise evil spirits using 'the name of the Lord Jesus' (Acts 19: 13-16).

'And the man in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered them, and overpowered them, so they fled out of that house naked and wounded.'

After the failure of his own doctors and magicians Pharaoh Zoan had only one other course of action

The 'Apocryphon' is  
a literary fiction ...

available to him. He sent one of his courtiers who had earlier made the acquaintance of Abraham to ask a favour of him.

'Then Horqanosh came to me and begged me to come and pray for the king, and to lay my hands upon him that he might recover, because he had seen me in a dream.'

There are several points of interest here. The word represented in the translation by 'dream' is only partly preserved, but the restoration is highly probable. We are reminded of the conversion of Paul and of how he had a vision of the man who was to come and pray for his healing.

'Behold, he is praying and has seen a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight' (Acts 9: 11f.).

The *Apocryphon's* reference to prayer, it is true, is probably derived from Genesis 20, which tells of Abraham's contretemps while staying in Gerar. That was the second occasion on which Abraham had passed Sarah off as his sister, with the result that she was again taken into a king's palace. But Abimelech of Gerar was warned by God that there would be unpleasant consequences if Sarah was not promptly returned to her husband; on the other hand, if the king acted honourably he would 'live'



and not die (v. 7). The *Apocryphon* also uses the word 'live' in connection with the recovery of Pharaoh Zoan, even though death seems not to have been in immediate prospect in his case. Prayer does not normally figure in the New Testament accounts of exorcism, but we do have the words of Jesus to his disciples after they had failed to deal with an exceptionally difficult case of demon possession: 'This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer' (Mark 9: 29).

The reference to the laying on of hands is noteworthy for a couple of reasons. First, so far as can be ascertained, this is the only mention of the rite in a context of healing or exorcism in ancient Jewish writings. Laying on of hands was practised as a rite of ordination in Jewish circles, as also in the early church, but seldom as a healing or exorcistic rite. To this extent, therefore, the *Apocryphon* stands in a special relationship to the New Testament. But, by way of contrast, in the New Testament the laying on of hands is associated with the healing of diseases, and not with the exorcism of spirits (cf. Mark 5: 23, 6: 5, 7: 32. etc.). This is a distinction which is carefully maintained by the Evangelists (cf. Luke 4: 40f.).

### ... the writer was familiar with exorcism practised by the early Church

We find in the New Testament accounts of exorcisms that the spoken word was paramount. And here, alongside the *Apocryphon's* reference to the laying on of hands, we find a similar emphasis. First let us hear Abraham's report of what happened: 'And I prayed that he might be cured and I laid my hands upon his head and the plague was removed from him and the evil spirit was exorcised (literally, 'rebuked') from him and he recovered.'

The word meaning 'rebuke', 'exorcise', is the verb *gcr* and there need be no doubt that its use underlies the occurrences of the Greek *epitimaō* ('rebuke') in connection with exorcisms in the Gospels (cf. Matthew 17: 18; Mark 1: 25, 9: 25). (Only once does a New Testament writer use the word 'rebuke' when he is talking of the healing of diseases. Perhaps surprisingly, it is Luke the doctor who is responsible for the exception! But when Luke says that Jesus rebuked the fever from which Peter's mother-in-law was suffering (4: 39) he is probably making a theological point about the origin of all sickness and disease. The report of this healing is flanked by two references to exorcisms, in both of which the key term 'rebuke' appears. If Luke was making use of Mark's account, as seems likely, it at least would

not have predisposed him to deal with the fever in other than clinical terms (Mark 1: 29ff.).)

It is also interesting to see how the *Apocryphon* uses 'rebuke' as a technical term (literally 'rebuke from', whereas in both Aramaic and Hebrew 'rebuke' is normally accompanied by a different preposition). This could be taken as an indication that, to have become a technical term by the time the *Apocryphon* was composed, the word 'rebuke' had already formed a part of the vocabulary of exorcism for some time. Ultimately the usage may be traced to Zechariah 3: 2: 'And the LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, O Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you!"' When, five and a half centuries later, the Pharisees talked about 'Beelzebul the prince of demons' our Lord spoke plainly of Satan (Matthew 12: 24-28).

So far we have said nothing about the date of the *Apocryphon*, nor is it possible to be very precise in the matter. Most scholars are agreed, nevertheless, that the present document was written between 50 B.C. and A.D. 70. Even if the *Apocryphon* is not the autograph the original version cannot, for orthographical reasons, be dated much earlier than the first century B.C.

Do the New Testament exorcism accounts have any bearing on the dating of the *Apocryphon*? The story of Pharaoh Zoan's afflictions is, of course, a literary fiction; yet it gives the impression that it is based on observable phenomena within the experience of the writer. Now it has sometimes been suggested that, although there is no lack of references to evil spirits in ancient Jewish literature, the high incidence of demon possession in the New Testament is to be explained as a diabolical response to the power of the kingdom of God newly come in the person of Jesus. This is the view represented by two respected contributors to the *New Bible Dictionary* (see pp. 310 and 1011). But if we were to incline to a pre-Christian dating for the *Apocryphon* we should have illustration of the phenomenon of possession and exorcism from the period before the birth of Jesus. On the other hand, there are no compelling arguments against dating the scroll in the first century A.D., and this is a period for which we have particularly good evidence—in the New Testament—for the paranormal phenomena reflected in the *Apocryphon*. The late Sir Godfrey Driver went so far as to suggest that the writer of the *Apocryphon* was familiar with the rites of exorcism practised by the early church. 'That Jesus and His followers took them over from the Covenanters, who made so much of keeping their customs and doctrines to themselves, is in the highest degree improbable; the possibility must therefore be borne in mind that its appearance in a solitary passage in the Scrolls may be an echo of a Christian practice which must have become well known during the 1st century A.D.' (*The Judaean Scrolls*, Oxford, 1965, p. 461). □

# A View of the Problem of Pain

Eustace Cummings

*We are glad to publish this address given by a Bible teacher from Guyana, now well known in the London area.*

## A shattered harmony

*Genesis 1* shows us an ordered world in making, where all is complete and in harmony. In *Chapter 2* man is portrayed in an ideal setting, without a cloud on his horizon. But life now is not like that; there are problems in life which seem to defy logical analysis, and the extent to which we are able to come to terms with them rests on faith in God through Jesus Christ. The problem of pain seems to be one of them. The non-Christian may dismiss these problems by saying that they reflect the operation of the law of the survival of the fittest. To Christians the problem is more intractable, for are we not invited to believe unwaveringly in the love, mercy and goodness of God, Our Creator, Our Saviour, Our Father?

I believe that *Genesis 3* throws some light for us on how man's idyllic setting without a cloud, his harmonious relationship with God the Creator and with his environment, was shattered by the fall; that is by man's disobedience to the expressed will of God. It also shows some of the consequences directly flowing from the fall; loss of true knowledge righteousness and holiness; the loss of dominion over the environment; subjection to all that now buffets the body and cloyes the spirit.

## Reality of pain

I venture to suggest that in principle the whole panorama of the many faces of pain and suffering—physical, mental, emotional and spiritual—is reflected in some part of the passage which we have read.

(a) *To the Serpent*—an area of life—the representative of evil, it was said (v. 15 RSV) 'I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel'. Here we have the vivid picture of a man crushing the head of a serpent and the creature fixing its fangs in his heel. The Christian Church has long interpreted this as a prediction that Christ would trample Satan and all the forces of evil underfoot, and would Himself suffer as was accomplished on the Cross of Calvary. But, this metaphor is sometimes regarded as also relating to the struggle of everyman—his fight against sin, temptation and all forms of evil, and the spiritual pain which it involves (for man was made for God and he can find rest, peace and satisfaction only when he returns to God). A third interpretation—more literal—is occasionally given to this picture; that as a result of the fall the pristine peace which prevailed between man and beast is gone, and the undisguised destruction of animal life and the ex-

inction of certain species is but part of the conflict and the pain.

(b) *To The Woman*—another area of life—it was said (v. 16 RSV) 'I will greatly multiply your pain in child bearing, in pain you shall bring forth children yet your desire shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you'. The reality of pain in child-bearing is self-evident; despite the fact that children are a great blessing, child rearing can also be a accompanied by great pain—tremendous anxiety when they are ill, anxiety about the friendships they form, about their departure from standards which the parents cherish, anxieties long after they have left the parental fold. 'And he shall rule over you'. In this connection also, as a consequence of the tremendous social changes which have taken place in our modern world, conflicts have followed which have led to a phenomenal rise in the number of divorces, with accompanying pain and suffering.

(c) *To the Man*—a third area of life—(vv. 17-19) '... cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to you and you shall eat the plants of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground. . . . That which was once his joy becomes toil and pain. Here are the makings of the rat-race, all that makes for competitiveness as men seek to achieve power and wealth regardless of who gets hurt in the process. Here are the seeds of social, industrial, national and international conflict as men struggle to obtain what they believe to be necessary for their survival. Here are the acorns of cataclysmic power struggles, and the obscenity of war.

So real is this pain, and so widespread, that the writer in *Romans 8: 22 & 23 (AV)* adds 'For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they but ourselves also which have the firstfruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body'. Despite our many blessings and assurances, we too with all creation bear this burden until the redemption of the body—until paradise is fully regained.

## How do we cope?

(a) We must cling tenaciously to our belief in God's love because we have the evidence: 'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life' (*John 3: 16*). He loved the disobedient, self destructive world of men and women, so much that He sent His only begotten Son to be our Saviour. In *1 John 4: 9 & 10, (RSV)* we read 'In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent His only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In

this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent His Son to be the expiation for our sins'. Can we ask for greater certainty?

(b) Live again the stories of the Gospels. See Jesus Christ walking along the dusty streets of the ancient cities healing the leper, giving sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, strength to the lame. The tempest-tossed sailors experience great calm, and those who are troubled become clothed and in their right mind; witness how demonism, disease and death are overthrown at His approach. See how He weeps over Jerusalem's rejection of Him at his realisation of her approaching pain and suffering. 'Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings and ye would not' (Luke 13: 34 AV). Is this the attitude of a Christ who is indifferent to human pain and need? But, if perchance in the face of personal pain, or the pain of those you love, or as you contemplate the agonies of our twentieth century world, you are inclined to doubt, look at Christ on the Cross, with all the sin and agony of a fallen world heaped upon him, bearing there your sin, your problems and mine, and hear him saying of our doubt, 'Father forgive them they know not what they do' (Luke 23: 34). There was God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, providing for us a grander estate than that which we have lost.

## The Message of Genesis 3

(c) Be assured in the face of such love that 'all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are called according to his purpose'—the pleasant and unpleasant, the joy and the sorrow, the laughter and the tears.

My wife and I have a friend who during the political disturbances in Guyana in 1964 suffered the loss of her husband and seven of their nine children in one night when an incendiary device was thrown into their home. Never once has she displayed any bitterness; somehow, she has been able to interpret it in terms of God's love and mercy. So utterly assured is she of God's goodness.

Dr. David MacLennan, well known Christian writer, tells the story of a man in Canada who had a childhood friend (the girl next door) whom he had not seen for over 25 years. One day he received a note asking him to visit her in a Home for Incurables in an Ontario village. She had been there for several years as a result of a spinal injury, with hardly a conscious period free from pain. He asked her how she was able to cope, and she replied 'It only comes a day at a time, and God is good'. Believe then in the unfailing love and mercy of God, believe that all things work together for good to them that love God.

(d) Look at Christ truly as Saviour, but particularly

as Pattern and Example. Do so because He invites us in *Matthew 11: 29 (RSV)* 'Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart and you will find rest for your souls'. See Him in the agony recorded in *Luke 22: 42*; 'Father, if thou art willing remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will but thine be done'. The cup was not removed, but He was given strength; and so shall we as we learn from Him, and as we lean on Him.

## Will it ever go away? Will the problem of pain ever be resolved?

The answer is 'yes'. *Romans 8: 23* tells us that those who trust in Christ, and indeed the whole of creation, wait for the day of total liberation from suffering, pain and decay, from all that burdens the body and cloyes the spirit, when a grander and a more glorious paradise than that we have lost will be regained. *Isaiah 35: 5-10 (RSV)* gives us a glimpse prophetically of that future:

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;  
then shall the lame man leap like a hart,  
and the tongue of the dumb sing for joy.  
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness  
and streams in the desert;  
The burning sand shall become a pool,  
and the thirsty ground springs of water;  
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,  
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.  
And a highway shall be there,  
and it shall be called the Holy Way;  
the unclean shall not pass over it  
and fools shall not err therein.  
No lion shall be there,  
not any ravenous beast come up on it;  
they shall not be found there,  
but the redeemed shall walk there.  
And the ransomed of the Lord shall return  
and come to Zion with singing;  
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;  
they shall obtain joy and gladness,  
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

And again in *Revelation 21: 3 & 4 (RSV)* we read:  
And I heard a great voice from the throne  
saying 'Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away'.  
Paradise restored!

Till then we pray:

Thy kingdom come, Oh God,  
Thy rule, Oh Christ, begin,  
Break with Thine iron rod  
The tyranny of sin.

Even so, come Lord Jesus, Amen. □





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# The Trees . . . Rejoice

C. F. Fraser-Smith

*A noted agriculturist contributes a study that helps us understand the Bible's sensitivity to the natural environment.*

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# The Trees . . . Rejoice

C. F. Fraser-Smith

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and other treatment, it certainly is not what the Creator meant for us. The Old Testament speaks of 'living water'—water coming forth from rock and ground containing earth's natural minerals, and nutrients, free from pollution and medication.

Natural pure water is the most valuable thing on earth, yet the country is seemingly indifferent about it! We pour money into secondary things, but water, the first essential in life, is the last thing we want to spend money on, thus causing great loss to many aspects of life and deterioration to our health. Devon, for instance, has more springs, streams and rivers than any other county, yet very little is done about it. Many farms and gardens suffer each year from drought periods. Proper conservation and distribution of water could easily double production or more. No need then for the country to wail about our balance of payments and our continual impoverishing borrowing.

## Alpha and Omega

*A poem for the New Year*

Fear not,

I am the first and the last.

I was there at the beginning  
when you came to me,

I will be there at the end  
when you come to me.

The things that have happened in between  
will then seem unimportant,

the joys  
and what now seems to be loss  
will then be a parenthesis.

I will be there at the end,  
therefore  
Fear not.

Muriel Lowman

Returning to tree ecology and the Bible: it places the greatest importance on trees. More varieties of trees are mentioned than any other vegetation. For the citation of one vegetable or flower, seven different types of tree are listed. In fact nothing is said about flowers in the first garden. In Eden we read 'Out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food.' The shape of trees is superbly beautiful, even in winter. It is interesting to study the different trees in the Bible and their uses for food, shade, construction of buildings and ships, aromatic values, resistance to woodworm and dry-rot and

wet rot. Tree varieties are important not only for their different nutrient values for water but for their dependence on one another. For example, if conifers only are planted, without broad-leaf trees mixed with them, this is unhealthy, and storms easily wreak havoc in the plantations.

Let us break natural laws, starting with trees, and we flout God's provision for us, and at great loss. Instead of living as predatory beasts and selfishly causing barrenness and destruction, the climate of men's hearts needs changing so that the climates of the world's man-made arid areas and Saharas can be changed. New invasions are needed—not that of the axe and fire, but of the spade and trees. Man has restitution to make to the One who 'has pleasure in all He created'. Man must heal the scars he has made and restore the green mantle. We read 'the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations'. A united effort for the reclamation of our Saharas would mean the hungry fed, fear vanishing and the healing of international strife and hatred.

Space limits us to only a few more Biblical references to trees and water. The promise through Isaiah is 'The Lord will satisfy thee in drought and Thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring whose waters fail not.'

David commences his *Psalms* by using a tree to illustrate the state of true blessedness and fulfilment of a man who honours God: 'He is like a tree . . . planted by streams of water . . . that yields its fruit in its season . . . and its leaf does not wither.'

Moses uses trees to initiate a feast of harvest and thanksgiving. 'When ye have gathered in the fruit of the land ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord. Ye shall take the fruits of goodly trees, the branches of palm trees, the boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God.'

No wonder the prophet Isaiah says 'Let the heavens rejoice, the fields be joyful and the trees be glad . . . the trees shall clap their hands'. Do we truly rejoice in Nature—God's handiwork? We are in this world to participate in its physical and spiritual joys. The degree in which we will be capable to rule with Christ will be determined by our present preparation. It seems that the parable of the pounds, found in *Luke 19*, with other Scriptures, confirms this.

Are we realising our responsibilities at this present time?

May we rejoice in all the works of the Creator and His goodness to us, ever seeking to stir others to the same end.

As the Scriptures open with a river and trees for man's earthly habitation, so they close concerning our eternal and thrilling abode—'He showed me a PURE river of the water of life . . . the tree of life . . . the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it . . . His servants shall worship Him . . . and reign for ever and ever.' □



# TOMORROW'S WORLD

The United Nations has designated 1979 as International Year of the Child. In placing the child at the centre of World attention, the UN invites the world community to renew and re-affirm its concern for the present condition and future of its children by recognising 'The ten basic rights of the child':



The right  
to affection, love and understanding  
to adequate nutrition and medical care  
to free education  
to full opportunity for play and recreation  
to a name and nationality  
to special care, if handicapped  
to be among the first to receive relief in times of disaster  
to learn to be a useful member of society and to develop individual abilities  
to be brought up in a spirit of peace and universal brotherhood  
to enjoy these rights, regardless of race, colour, sex, religion, national or social origin.

Tear Fund recognises these rights. And an additional right. We believe that every child has the right to know the love of God in Jesus Christ.

Today's children are tomorrow's world. But without access to these basic rights and requirements they cannot achieve their god-given potential and participate fully in the development of their societies.

In response therefore to the International Year of the Child, Tear Fund is focusing on its ministry amongst children, particularly through the Childcare Sponsorship Scheme and its childcare development

projects throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America. And Tear Fund Sunday on March 4th will see the full thrust of this focus.

Various materials for use by individuals, churches and fellowships will be available for then and throughout the year. These include a 16mm film, a filmstrip, family service pack, information pack, leaflets and posters.

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- ☐ Please send me information on projects benefiting children, and the UN declaration on the 'Rights of the Child'.
- ☐ Please send me details of materials on children for Tear Fund Sunday and throughout the year.

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Edited by Kathleen White, 60 Bowood Road, Swindon, Wilts.

## Family Forum □

As January is the month when most secular magazines contain articles on summer holidays, let Family Forum highlight two with a difference for readers' consideration. If you haven't yet finalised your plans for the coming season, investigate the wide variety of Christian holidays available. Most would welcome a greater number of helpers and participants.

### Family Camp

Family Camp 1978 drew 134 people to Vicarage Farm, East Chaldon, and provided a self-catering holiday for campers and caravanners in a Christian atmosphere at minimum cost. For over twenty years Reg and Gladys Whittern have conducted youth camps on this site with the traditional boys and girls weeks; but six years ago they decided to remain for a *third* week and welcome families to make use of the site and facilities after the teenagers had gone home.

This year the daily pattern was much as usual, with the early morning prayer and devotional session led by different campers. Then followed the popular children's meeting in which Dr. Keith Linton kept the children happily and profitably occupied whilst the mums prepared food for the day, visited the mobile grocery shop and generally attended to domestic chores. At the same time dads could be seen fetching water, knocking in stray tent pegs—even holding theological discussions with next door neighbours. Then—off for the day to nearby seaside resorts, sometimes with other camp families, sometimes alone. One young man had his own boat this year and took groups of youngsters on rowing expeditions; others sampled the fun of a trip out to sea, fishing (successfully!) for mackerel. Back to camp for an evening meal, and then (with the little ones in bed) singing started up in the marquee, to be followed by the main Bible reading given by a speaker who had been invited specially for the week. This year the theme was 'A Faith for the World'. After drinks of hot soup, cocoa, etc., it was bed for most of us, though there was talk of midnight walks by some, and on one notable evening several car-loads went to Weymouth for their annual moonlight swim, with hot potatoes and soup served at the beach.

At the same time there is no compulsion for anyone to join in, and any family wishing to spend an entire day on an expedition of their own is quite free to do so. On one day coaches are hired for an outing to a lovely sandy beach; another afternoon is devoted to sports on the camp field with races and activities devised to cater for anyone from grandads to tiny tots? On both these occasions we all have tea together, and the same applies to the Sunday afternoon when we have a picnic and then join in open-air witness. This year we went to Lulworth Cove and sang to the accompaniment of an assortment of guitars, following this with some brief words of testimony from one and another. Several campers then went on to the Gospel Hall at Wareham to share in the evening service and give cheerful support to the local witness. Another feature is an evening of singing and testimony spent around a large bonfire, with a barbecue to follow.

This year our family unit included our own three children and three teenage friends and we very soon 'lost' all six as they found friends old and new and

played innumerable games of swingball, football, table tennis and exploring, only appearing hungrily at meal-times. We in turn enjoyed the company of fellow-Christians and the many opportunities to share experiences and ideas with them. However, not only have Christians benefitted from the fellowship and ministry at Family Camp, but some have brought unconverted relatives and friends, a number of whom have taken their first steps towards faith in Christ during Camp.

Yes, Family Camp is a great idea—and, of course, in no way copyright! Reg and Gladys Whittern of 30 Poynders Hill, Hemel Hempstead, Herts would be happy to share any further information with interested readers.

Elmira Masters

### Summer Canal Evangelism

Each year during the summer months, we arrange to take a narrow boat on one of the canals or inland waterways, with the object of combining pleasure with personal evangelism.

It is very difficult to decide which part of the 2,000 miles of water we would like to work, because they are so beautiful and have such a lot to offer. Having decided to use the Oxford canal this year, we then booked our 70 foot narrow boat for two weeks in July and in no time all the berths were filled. Eventually, the great day arrived and we made our way by car, mini bus or by means of hitching a lift, depending from which part of the country we came.

We made acquaintance with our travelling home, and then began to take aboard all the things we would need for our two week cruise, our personal belongings (as little as possible) Christian literature, food (most essential) and first aid equipment. After a check that all the crew were aboard we started our diesel engine and reversed the boat out into the river Thames. We never really feel 'at home' on the river with a narrow boat so we made our way at full speed until we found a cut that leads through to the canal.

By the time we had reached the canal, the crew had made themselves known to each other and it was obvious that God intended us to enjoy great happiness together which we could share with members of other crews which we would meet on our travels.

Although we had only been on the water for a few hours, it seemed that we had been together for a much longer time and everything came so easily, with the boat reacting to our commands. The handling of the tiller, the necessary equipment, all seemed to be in perfect order.

Now we were being treated to the familiar noises of the canal, the sound of water breaking on the bows, the gentle chug chug of our powerful diesel engine, the occasional call from the various species of wildfowl, the water rat or vole, wonderfully adapted for life in the water, racing across the bows of the boat at great speed. Ahead of us we saw the statuesque figure of a heron on the grassy bank, waiting to pounce on an unsuspecting bream in the murky canal water. Occasionally a flash of colour as a kingfisher passed, so fast that it was impossible to photograph it.

Night seems to fall quickly in this situation and we

decided to moor the boat in a quiet spot. The familiar sound of the mallet striking the mooring peg, a check that the tie is safe, to avoid drifting, and then a welcome meal prepared by our cook in the galley.

After the meal we sing our songs of gladness from the roof of the boat until darkness really falls and then we go inside for our Bible reading. It is here that we learn how to become real disciples of our Lord, with training on personal evangelism and methods of approach. Before going to our bunks for a well earned rest, we spend time in prayer.

By noon the following day we would have had our quiet time on board boat and the crew will have settled in to the routine which follows for the remainder of the time on board; checking oil levels, pumping out the bilges, operating locks and raising lift bridges, while at the same time checking the maps.

The object of the exercise, as I am sure you will appreciate, is to use as much of each day as we possibly can in sharing the Lord Jesus with as many people as we possibly can. No opportunities are lost as we make our way through the colourful countryside to Leamington Spa and back. Fishermen, workmen of British Waterways Board, sightseers, all are contacted in the name of our beloved Lord, given a Gospel or other suitable literature and remembered personally in prayer each evening.

We are prayerfully before the Lord for the provision of a boat of our own, which will enable us to spend many more happy and profitable hours plying the canals with and sharing God's love with others.

Ken Brighton

## Professor Bruce Asks

A friend of mine recently beguiled a period spent in hospital by making a comparative study of hymn-books, with special reference to the incidence of hymns referring to the Second Advent. He found that in the older Brethren collections still in use (such as *The Believer's Hymn Book*) the proportion of hymns which at least mention the Advent, even if they are not entirely devoted to that subject, is very high (about 40 per cent.), whereas the proportion in various recent collections used among Brethren is much lower. I have not checked his figures, and I suspect that in recent collections I could find references to the Advent which he overlooked. But if his findings are anywhere near the truth, do they reflect a decreasing emphasis on this subject in ministry and thought?

*Correspondence, please, to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX by 15 January*

## Way to Life Radio

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Dick Saunders wishes to thank all Harvester readers who have supported the WTL ministry by their prayers and gifts throughout 1978

Dick Saunders, 3a North Street, Hailsham, Sussex.



Correspondence for this page should be sent to Mr. Peter Cousins, M.A., B.D.,  
The Paternoster Press Ltd., 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW marked 'Harvester Question Page'

## Question and Answer, with Peter Cousins

### Honor Oak

#### Question 132

*What are the distinctive teachings associated with "Honor Oak"?*

The name of the movement is derived from an area in south-east London. Its teaching is found largely in the books of the Rev. T. Austin-Sparks. Its influence is difficult to gauge since it is contrary to the movement's principles for the work to bear a name.

The significance of the movement lies not so much in erroneous teaching as in the overemphasis of certain truths. The distinction drawn between the status of "children" and that of "sons" of God is not peculiar to Honor Oak, nor is the association of this distinction with belief in a "partial rapture" and a class of "overcomers" (Rev. 2 and 3) who are not obliged to go through the Great Tribulation.

It is Honor Oak's doctrine of the church that has led to the name being linked with stories of secession and disruption in missions and local churches. It sees the Body of Christ doctrine of the church as a secret first revealed to Paul and causing churches of his own time to separate from him. A high doctrine of the church's identification with Christ ("he is both Head and Body") is linked to a total view of the believer's absorption within the church and to an affirmation that the church is the sole channel of divine grace in this dispensation.

The visible local church must take its character from the mystical Body. "It cannot be natural . . . international . . . denominational . . . interdenominational . . . undenominational."

Once believers within such a group see the full light of this revelation, they must separate from it. Such an attitude will not be unfamiliar to many readers of the *Harvester* who will recognise the dangers inherent in it. It serves to explain why a movement which has helped many (present writer included) through its writings has been regarded with mixed feelings by fellow-evangelicals.

would be reserved for some Exclusive groups.

Certain Brethren have tended to see themselves in sectarian terms, witness the way in which some people refer to 'Christendom' as if the Brethren had no part in it and the use of terms such as 'the denominations' to refer to groups of fellow-believers. On the other hand, if we recognise other groups of believers as local expressions of the body of Christ, then we are not being sectarian. In many respects, it is apparent that the 'Brethren' do not constitute a denomination. They have no central organisation, no basis of faith or credal statement, 'their' local churches are not structurally linked. There is more diversity of practice than is sometimes realised. But against these considerations we must set others. There is a 'list of assemblies' on sale. There is a 'circuit' or 'network' within which certain preachers, magazines and even hymnbooks are current. Even the tendency to disclaim the title of denomination is a further distinctive. And there is certainly a tradition which is highly regarded although variously interpreted and which passes through (for example) Plymouth, Bristol and Dublin. In fact, of course, some local churches are so careful not to invite speakers from outside this 'non-denomination' that they make their own sectarian or denominational tendencies appallingly clear. The tendency is even more apparent when the proposal to invite a speaker is opposed on the grounds that although the local church with which he is associated seems to have all the characteristics which one might expect to be approved of, it is nevertheless regarded as 'not a real assembly'. In fact, just as a sectarian spirit is found here and there so a denominational spirit is also not far to seek. It is a moot point whether or not the Brethren movement may fairly be described as a denomination but the discussion is an academic one. What matters is whether a local church behaves in a sectarian or a denominational spirit or whether, by contrast, it displays the catholicity and breadth of fellowship enjoined in the New Testament.

### Are the "Brethren" a denomination?

#### Question 133

*Your answer to Question 131 (December 1978) about the definition of 'cult' leads naturally to the question whether you see the Brethren movement as a cult or a denomination or neither?*

It would be hard to deny that if we apply the criteria mentioned in Question 131 to some 'assemblies' (to use the sectarian term), then they would classify themselves as sectarian although none of them would demand 'unquestioning obedience to leaders' in the full cultic sense—that

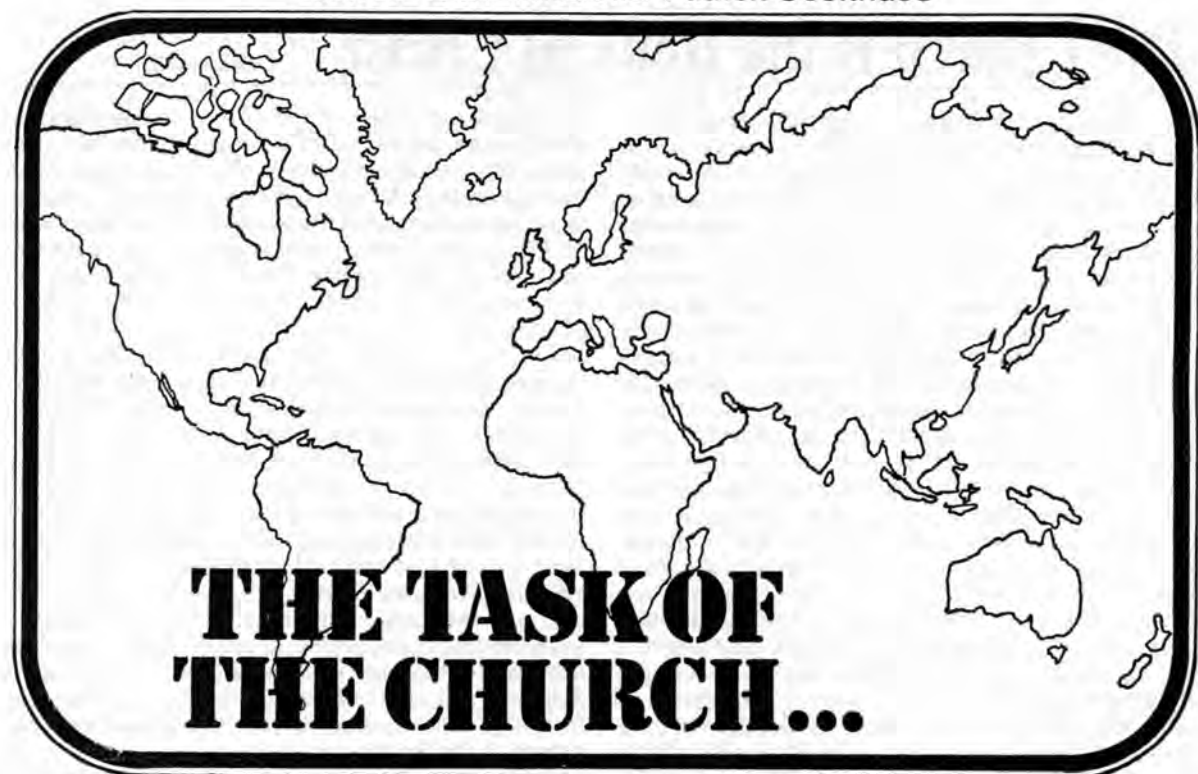
### "Grace and Truth"

#### Question 134

*I can see why in John 1: 17 'the Law' is contrasted with 'grace'. But why should it be contrasted with 'truth'? Surely the Law of Moses, coming from God, is both in accordance with reality and—on another interpretation—utterly trustworthy?*

I think that the most likely interpretation of 'truth' here is that the verse expresses a contrast between the partial and limited witness of the Law (cf *Hebrews 1: 12*) as compared with the full reality ('truth') displayed in Christ.

Editors: Brian Mills and Patrick Sookhdeo



## Local Church in Mission—Editorial

In the New Testament, we are faced with 'a missionary God and a missionary Church', so says Douglas Webster. The whole purpose of the Church on earth is bound up in one word—mission. 'The Church exists by mission as fire exists by burning' (Emil Brunner). Without the Church there is no mission. Yet we have relegated the missionary activity of the Church to special interest groups and enthusiasts.

Lesslie Newbigin comments,

In the thinking of the vast majority of Christians, the words 'church' and 'mission' connote two different kinds of society. The one is conceived to be a society devoted to worship and the spiritual care and nurture of its members. It is typically represented by a large and ancient building. The other is conceived to be a society devoted to the propagation of the gospel, passing on its converts to the safe keeping of 'the church'.

When we look at the scene familiar to us in Britain, we find that the majority of assemblies would come within Newbigin's definition. Mission is not seen as the Church's *raison d'être*, therefore it has lost its sense of dynamic, its concern for the lost, its deep love for God and it has failed therefore, to fulfil the Lord's compelling command to Go! 'But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a dedicated nation, and a people claimed by God for his own, to proclaim

the triumphs of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.' (1 Peter 2: 9 N.E.B.).

When we speak of 'the Church', we refer not only to its global existence but essentially its local expression, being composed of parts, mutually interdependent, yet individually having differing gifts and functions. As separate parts of the body of Christ, we are to grow up into Him who is the head, 'into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love'. That love is to be expressed not only for each other, but also for our wonderful Lord and for those whom He also loves.

The Church is a bride; as such she is beautiful before God, and should be before the world. Her attractiveness is meant to be a compelling magnetic force, drawing others to her wonderful invisible Lord who finds His visible expression by His Holy Spirit in her. The Church's beauty comes from her risen Lord incarnated in her by His Spirit. Her radiance, her warmth of love, her caring concern, and her selfless service is meant to be seen by all those who look on and be welcoming to all those who would be saved.

When the Church is like this in essence, then mission naturally and spontaneously takes place.



# The Church is the Body of Christ

Derek Copley

*Dr. Copley is Principal of Moorlands Bible College, and a church elder in Bournemouth.*

A proper understanding of the doctrine of the body of Christ will inevitably mean that the quality of our church life will alter so radically that our understanding and practice of Mission will be greatly enhanced. Indeed the aim of all Christian teaching is that it should result in a truly Biblical approach to thinking and action. The great burden of the author is that readers will not merely find it interesting, but will earnestly and prayerfully allow the Spirit of God to renew their thinking and practice so that what we do within the Church adheres to what God himself has taught. During the past five years, no doctrine has transformed congregations in other denominations more than this one. The doctrine of the body of Christ is part of our heritage in assemblies. What we need to do is to recapture the infectious excitement experienced by Darby and others when they rediscovered it in the nineteenth century.

We all probably recognize the difference between the church as a body of people (which it is) and a building (which it isn't). In spite of our seemingly adequate and orthodox head-knowledge of this important distinction, our attitudes and heart-response often indicate that we have not really understood the distinction. Even when we consciously replace the term 'going to church' with 'going to the meeting', we are usually thinking of something we attend as spectators rather than coming together with the intention of becoming deeply involved with each other in worship, praise and fellowship. How different things would be if we really appreciated the fundamental relationship of Christians with each other and with Christ. *Koinonia* (fellowship) is still thought of as sitting behind a familiar head or head plus hat, shaking hands and saying 'how are you' (in many cases we couldn't care less) and drifting home. Naturally, all this is done in nice suits without too much display of unbecoming emotion. Such superficiality is far removed from the quality of life which should exist in the local church. Individually we may be spiritual powerhouses but when we are together our involvement with each other is often shallow and hypocritical, and is a hindrance to worship and evangelism. Even when outreach is taking place the resultant young converts are introduced into a spiritual and emotional refrigerator rather than a haven of love, care, prayer, understanding and acceptance.

## **We are not just individuals**

In our presentation of the Gospel we rightly emphasize that becoming a Christian is an individual decision. Salvation is not the result of birth, denominational affiliation, nationality or good works. Unfortunately our message often goes no further. We rarely teach the doctrine of the body as part of

the Gospel message. Even those desiring church membership are not always taught about this vital truth. What each convert *needs* to know is that now he is a Christian he is not just an individual, because God has incorporated him into the universal body of Christ, the Church. He and all other believers share a common life. As Paul puts it 'For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body' (1 Cor. 12: 13).

God also desires that each Christian should become involved in the life of a local church. Unless each of us sees that the goal of Mission is the building up of New Testament communities (or churches), then we are going sadly to miss one of the primary purposes of God's salvation. The importance of the individual being part of a body was recognized by the New Testament epistle writers whose letters were directed towards churches rather than individuals. Yet most of our preaching, teaching and study of the epistles mistakenly assumes that they were written to *me*, not us. (They do have individual application but their main purpose is corporate.) A church full of Christian 'loners' is not a happy or fruitful church because its life-style denies the very nature of the church.

While we rejoice that Christ died for the individual 'the Son of God who loved *me* and gave Himself for *me*' (Gal. 2: 20), it is also true that He died for the church, 'Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her' (Eph. 5: 25). The goal of His death was that there should be a redeemed community on earth composed of localized, worshipping and witnessing fellowships of Christians. To approach fellowship or outreach on any other basis is only partially to fulfil God's desires. Christ purchased the Church by His own blood and by virtue of His resurrection and ascension He is the Head of the Church (1 Peter 1: 18 f and 1 Cor. 3: 16). But He is not just an organizational head, a kind of heavenly boss. Not only did He lay down His life historically for the Church 2000 years ago, but today He continually communicates His risen life to us through the Spirit. That life flows throughout His body, the Church, and without Him the Church would possess no life.

In many respects the local Church is the universal Church in miniature. (In 1 Corinthians 12 the picture of a body and its members obviously describes a local situation.) In each of our churches Christ is seeking to pulsate His abundant life into the body via its members through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is our responsibility to allow Him to do it without hindrance.

## **Christians are dependent on each other**

Today's 'I felt led' syndrome springs from ignorance of the relationship of each Christian to the local body of believers. There is a neglect of the

fact that we are 'members one of another' (Eph. 4: 25). We assume that because we are each responsible to Christ and answerable only to Him, then there is no need to make reference to other Christians. (The emphasis however in Romans 14: 1-12 is upon the need to avoid judging another Christian, not upon 'doing your own thing'.) The syndrome also springs from a deep fear of being corporately involved in a close community. We are just not used to deep fellowship and we find it safer and easier to 'go it alone.'

In 1 Corinthians 12 Paul uses vivid imagery to portray the truth of the interdependence of believers. Although the Corinthians could perhaps understand their individual spiritual relationships to Christ (1 Cor. 6: 17), 'united to the Lord'—literally 'glued'—they had not fully appreciated their real link to each other. Christians are as closely united to each other spiritually as the various organs of the human body are linked physically via the bloodstream and nervous system.

For good health a body needs all the organs working in harmony with each other. It would be absurd for the eye to say to the hand 'I have no need of you' (1 Cor. 12: 21), or the foot to say 'because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body' (1 Cor. 12: 15). 'Going it alone' is saying 'I do not need or want the local church, nor does it need me so I'll be a loner'. Such attitudes were rife in the Corinthian church and had disastrous consequences. They failed to recognize that individual immorality was having a bad influence on the whole church (Ch. 5). The communion service was being spoiled because of extreme selfishness in connection with the common meal (Ch. 11). In Acts there is the startling example of Ananias and Sapphira, acting independently of the body while pretending to be self-sacrificial (Ch. 5).

We are bound together by our common acceptance of the Bible, and our belief in the uniqueness of Jesus. But we are much more vitally linked than this. The church is a body and 'the essence of a body is that it consists of thousands of cells with one mutually shared life'.<sup>1</sup> Stedman has also written: 'An organization derives power from the association of individuals, but a body derives its power from the sharing of life'.<sup>2</sup>

It is God's will that there should be a healthy functioning of body-life resulting in Church growth, both in quality and quantity (Eph. 4: 13, 16). And growth is what Mission is all about.

#### **Mission is not just soul-saving**

If someone asked you 'what is the purpose of Mission?' you would probably answer 'to save souls of course'. That would be only partially correct. The Great Commission speaks not of 'soul saving' but of 'making disciples' and 'teaching them to observe all that Christ taught'. When Christ said 'I will build my Church', He intended that Christians should be identified and involved in

a local fellowship, learning to put into practice the truth that though 'being many, are one body' (1 Cor. 12: 12). Incorporation into the body of Christ is not a theological expression but 'an essential part of the Christian Gospel'.<sup>3</sup> The importance of new Christians being incorporated into the local church is exemplified by a church in the United States which refuses to record a conversion until the person becomes an actual church member. Griffiths has written: 'It is my conviction that a new discovery of the body-life of the new community will utterly transfigure the relationship between church and mission'.<sup>4</sup> While we must not try to crush all individual effort, Mission is a church activity. Individual people do the witnessing and preaching at home and abroad, but it should all be done with the prayerful and practical involvement of the church. For example, in Acts 11: 22 it was the church which sent Barnabas to Antioch to help cope with the converts. 'The Holy Spirit . . . emphasizes the objective calling and involvement of the body rather than the subjective call . . .'.<sup>5</sup>

#### **A healthy church life is essential for outreach**

One of the primary means of presenting the Gospel is through the preaching (*kerygma*) of the message of salvation. That is, Christ is presented verbally. Christ is also to be presented through the life of the body of Christ. The church is described by Paul as 'His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all' (Eph. 1: 23). As Stedman has put it: 'the great calling of the church is to make visible the invisible Christ'.<sup>6</sup> He further adds, 'The life of Jesus is still being manifest among men . . . through a complex body called the church'.<sup>7</sup> The unbeliever will examine both the message being preached and the life of the church to see if the two coincide. The existence of love, caring and sharing in a warm local fellowship will speak loudly. The Lord Jesus regarded a loving community as a hallmark of true Christianity when He said: 'that you also love one another. By this will all men know that you are my disciples' (John 13: 34 f). A combination of *kerygma* and *koinonia* (fellowship) is a strong message indeed, even to a sceptical outsider.

A vibrant church life also provides the environment in which Christians will be motivated for Mission. Where the body-life of the church is poor, Mission is undertaken grudgingly as a duty rather than being the inevitable overspilling of joy and enthusiasm. The early Christians found such joy in their fellowship and gatherings that they couldn't help witnessing once they got into the outside world. Their witness was not reduced to a biennial mission with an evangelist to do all the work. If honest answers were given to the questions 'Do you really look forward with eager longing to the breaking of bread, gospel service, ministry meeting and prayer time?' it would reveal the need for a real movement of the Spirit to revitalize our church

*continued on page 24*

# The Local Church and Evangelism

John Allan

*John Allan is a teacher and youth worker in Swindon, and an associate evangelist with British Youth for Christ.*

I suppose the twentieth century could go down in British church history as the Age of Evangelism. Never before, I suspect, has there been more discussion, argument and agonizing over it; never before have so many campaigns, crusades, missions, rallies and revival meetings been plotted, executed and prayed over; never before has there been such a welter of witness aids and training manuals, correspondence courses and cassette series, such a confusion of conferences, committees and consultations...

And yet... on its record so far, the twentieth century will not be likely to go down in the annals as an age of Evangelistic Achievement. Despite our many methodologies and missiologies, the great British public remains largely unimpressed. All over the country assemblies are in decline—or at best standing still—despite the fervour with which the subject of 'evangelism' is being discussed. It looks as if we have the disease of Haggai's people—earning wages only to put them into a bag with holes in it—witnessing very little return for a great deal of effort, care and even prayer.

What's *wrong* with us? If our churches are really built on the New Testament pattern—why aren't we experiencing New Testament growth?

Because of the situation we are in, largely experiencing decline and retreat and failure, it becomes a temptation to justify failure to ourselves. We can live with the situation much more comfortably if only we pitch our expectations low enough. And so as I travel around, I've begun to witness in many assemblies what I would call the 'shot-in-the-dark' mentality about evangelism—the kind of viewpoint which carries on evangelistic activities with the mild hope that eventually they will influence someone, somewhere, but without examining too closely whether or not they're actually achieving anything. It is this sort of thinking which allows hundreds of pounds to be spent annually on speakers for a 6.30 Gospel Service to which the unconverted never come. Never mind, they might do, some day—and until then we'll faithfully preach the Gospel to no-one in particular.

Closely associated with this point of view is the 'only-Eternity-will-reveal' mentality, which declines to examine whether or not its activities are actually influencing anybody or anything, considers 'success' a non-U word, and points out that the Lord did not say, 'Well done, thou good and *successful* servant'. Thinkers of this school will visit housing estates tirelessly and faithfully with tracts and magazines which are never read by the people behind the letter-boxes. The idea of a door-to-door survey to check if

anyone is reading seems almost blasphemous.

Others of us have the 'oh-well-this-is-a-hard-hard-place' mentality; because we have seen little response over the years, we become convinced that the people of our locality are unusually unreceptive to the Gospel, and the best we can do is to stand firm. This may of course be true; some communities are more receptive than others; but as any itinerant evangelist will tell you, in every town he visits he is greeted with the comment, 'Well, brother, you've come to the hardest place in Britain'. *Everybody* can't be right.

There are other points of view; the 'stand-for-the-Lord' concept, which carries on evangelism in an almost pugnacious way, not really expecting too much to happen as a result, but taking an almost perverse delight in parading before the heathen public ideas which the public considers out of date; and the 'brink-of-revival' mentality, oftener found amongst young people than the old, which naïvely and optimistically believes that the next service, the next tract, the next mission, could bring in a flood of converts which would reverse all of our previous expectations and change the entire state of play.

There is a great deal of faith and faithfulness, prayer and persistence bound up in some of these attitudes, and it is not my intention to poke fun at anyone. But it is my contention that they are wrong. The picture of the local church which I gather from the New Testament is that of a body experiencing continuous growth, and I believe that if we are not growing, there's something wrong. We should be. God *meant* it that way.

Where conversions are occurring in Britain today, it is often through the work of para-church organizations (Campus Crusade, the IVF, Navigators, Youth for Christ, MWE) or interdenominational mass crusades, rather than the local church. It is a rare assembly that sees consistent, steady growth through its regular activities—whether Gospel Services, Sunday School or visitation. And despite the large numbers of decisions reported after some evangelistic projects, how many of those statistics ever become solid church members? A year after Billy Graham's Seattle Crusade in 1976, only seven per cent of those registering decisions were known to be 'first-time' converts who had subsequently settled into a church. As many as 39 per cent of the decisions were 'first-timers' who may never have been integrated into the church.

Now the New Testament does envisage the co-existence of 'para-church' workers (the 'apostolic bands' in *Acts*, beginning with ch. 13: 1) alongside the local churches. But it does leave an important role in evangelism to the churches themselves. Why is it that so little is being achieved in evangelism today by the unaided efforts of the local assembly? What can we do to make our churches better equip-



ped to fulfil the Great Commission?

The answers are not simple, and there is much to be put right. But I believe the following four points are keys to the solution.

(1) *We need to know what we're aiming for.* We are stewards of all with which God has blessed us—time and energy as well as money and possessions. It makes no sense to carry on activities which are plainly unproductive, just because 'we've always had a Women's Meeting' or because 'everyone has a Sunday School'. If the Holy Spirit has moved on from the types of meetings which proved evangelistically useful a decade ago, and is no longer using them, then we need to move with Him. Too many churches have a 'sausage-machine complex'—merely churning out the same tired pattern of services week by week, without ever a thought as to whether God is still in it. All too often, when one of our activities is understaffed, we rush around frantically trying to find someone who can be squeezed into the position—rather than daring to ask, 'Has God taken away the leadership from this activity because it is no longer useful to Him?' )

Michael Griffiths comments in *Cinderella with Amnesia* that it is often easy to embarrass church leaders by simply asking, 'What is this meeting for?' And within British assembly circles, Dennis Pierce spelled out the point clearly at the 1977 Counties' Work meetings:

I guarantee that you can often go to a church member and say, 'What is the objective of your church life? What are you trying to achieve?' And I have discovered that asking that question folks will look blankly. They have been going from one Sunday to another without an objective. . .

If we are to have an objective, we will only discover it by looking hard at the Scripture (rather than our carefully-guarded traditions), the gifts we actually possess in the church (rather than the 'jobs' we think need doing), the real facts about our local area (rather than our preconceptions about it). It is all too easy to become locked in to a 'traditional' pattern of thinking about evangelism when we do not constantly return to the New Testament and see how varied, creative and pragmatic were the methods of the early disciples. It is all too easy to burden all the willing work-horses in the assembly with roles which God never intended for them, when we do not stop to ask, 'What are their spiritual gifts?' And it is all too easy to live with a wrong, stereotyped idea of what is actually going on in our community, when we do not bother to do some basic research—into how the community lives, what its social class is, how predominant different age-groups are. A trip to the local Community Development Council would benefit more assemblies, and stimulate more creative thinking about evangelism, than most of their leaders would ever believe.

This is the way Paul operated: using imaginatively

the political and social realities of his day. He planted churches in strategic centres—Athens and Corinth for Achaia, Salamis and Paphos for Cyprus—and his use of the Roman names for provinces rather than the local names ('Macedonia', 'Asia', etc.) demonstrates that he was planning and thinking along the lines of Rome itself. If the Romans had organized an effective network of communication and administration, why should not the Gospel take full advantage? And (to bring it up to date) if your local council has spent a lot of money on statistical surveys of the area, why should not your assembly use them to discover the real facts about its evangelistic task?

(2) *We need to want to grow.* Too many of our assemblies operate a sophisticated form of 'double-think'—praying earnestly and long for revival and conversions, yet showing by the way they behave that they expect nothing to happen. Where are the plans for dealing with an influx of new Christians? How will new believers be taught? Too many of us can believe for revival the day after tomorrow (because tomorrow never comes), but not today!

Dawson Trotman of the Navigators often commented that God does not entrust new babies to children who are not old enough to look after them properly. He has designed the reproductive system so that only adults can conceive. And in the spiritual realm, unless we are adult, mature and prepared, God will not entrust spiritual 'new births' to us either.

The sad fact is that all too many assemblies are (without realizing it) a cosy, tight 'in-group' which does not really *want* to be invaded from the outside. New babies in a household will cost time, trouble, and patience. The family has to adjust to the baby's routine (getting up in the night to soothe it, preparing its 'feeds' on time, and so on) rather than the baby adjusting to the family's. We need to ask ourselves whether our church structures are flexible enough to withstand the sudden inrush of upsetting, unschooled, unfamiliar 'new life' from outside.

(3) *We need to organize for growth.* The early apostles clearly believed in strategy. *Acts* (and the Epistles) is full of details of their projects, plans and schemes. Some did not come about—Paul could not return to Thessalonica, and was hindered from going to Rome and Bithynia—but that did not stop them planning. Nowadays many of us are scared to plan our activities too closely, in case we are infringing the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit. But the Spirit can work *through* planning, rather than *in the absence* of it; and God intends us to use our minds in His service. There is nothing unspiritual about planning an evangelistic strategy for our church. Or about setting goals in faith for the church to reach; for goals are simply a way of measuring whether or not the strategy is working.

If we do not have a clear, known strategy, there are two main dangers. The first is that, in having

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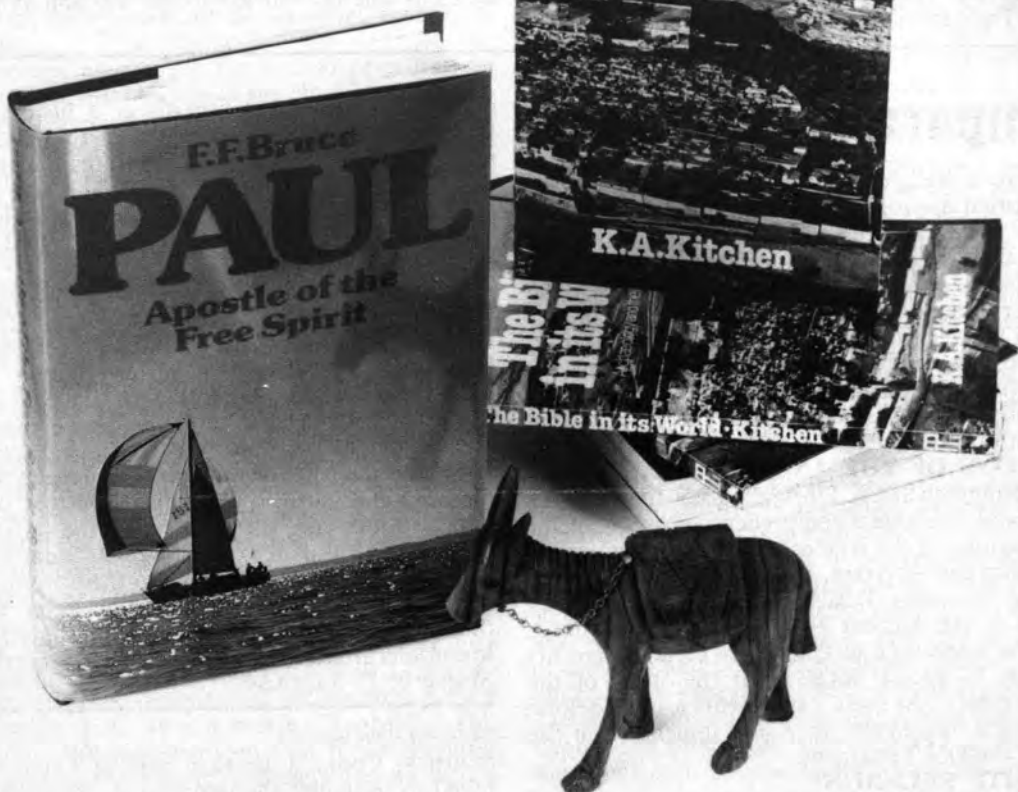
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no definite vision to work towards, no common target, the people of God become complacent and sluggish. The second is that the lack of purpose will lead to 'fixture congestion'. Every time someone 'feels led' to begin a new work, one more meeting is simply piled on top of all those already existing. The result: overwork for everyone, and a higgledy-piggledy pile of meetings that makes no real sense and wastes useful energy.

(4) *We need to think seriously about discipling.* I purposely avoid the words 'follow up'; it is not our calling to blast sinners with one broadside of the Gospel, then 'follow-it-up' with another blast about Christian living! Our task is to 'make disciples'. New Testament methods of evangelism which do not lead into a New Testament commitment to teach, guide and shepherd the new Christian will never result in very much.

A 'disciple' is by definition a learner. Someone who is following a different way of life, mediated by a teacher. And if we want to build disciples, it will not be enough to issue each new convert with a copy of Scripture Union notes, *The Way Ahead* and details of the services. It will require a self-giving commitment, a willingness to share—of the type which enabled Paul to establish a church at record speed in Thessalonica (*1 Thess. 1: 7-8*; remember that

Paul was in the town for only three weeks, and then left his young church to face persecution more daunting than any a new British Christian might have to face!).

New Christians need to be given continual challenges. Nothing takes the shine off a new commitment faster than being left to hang around the fringes of the assembly, picking up what scraps of teaching and information are accidentally released by the normal activities of the church. Once we develop a structure within which young Christians can grow, not merely in their theological knowledge, but also in their practical ability to live out the Christian lifestyle and accept responsibility within the church, then I believe we can expect to see the Holy Spirit entrusting new lives to our care.

Many movements in the evangelical world today—the Church Growth movement, the 'personal discipling' movement, the 'Gospel of the kingdom' movement—are beginning to re-emphasize the crucial importance of the local church as an agent in God's plan of evangelism. It looks as if the outstanding growth in this country may soon be coming, not through evangelistic agencies and para-church structures, but through renewed local churches. It is up to us whether our assemblies are among them.

## Comparative Religion

Comparative Religion is in vogue. The debate over the Christian approach and understanding of other religions is a very pressing issue today. In all the debates there is often one forgotten area—that of the Biblical approach to other religions. Has the Bible anything to say towards the religions of our day? To answer such a question one would have to go on to say what does the Bible say about the surrounding religions of their day?

Recently SPCK has brought out three books that touch on this area.

**RELIGIONS OF THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST:** Helmer Ringgren SPCK 176 pages. £3.50 (paperback).

This book presents a comprehensive survey of the main religions of the Ancient Near East: Sumerian, Babylonian and Assyrian, and West Semitic (Phoenician and Aramaic). It is intended 'to represent the religions of the Ancient Near East in their context, but at the same time to emphasize certain elements which are of special interest for the study of the Old Testament'. As such it represents a most helpful presentation and opens up a new dimension in the study of the Old Testament.

**ISRAELITE RELIGION:**

Helmer Ringgren SPCK 348 pages. £5.95.

This concentrates on the Israelite Religion from the patriarchal age to the beginning of the Christian era. It is not intended to be a book on the theology

of the Old Testament but rather a history of the Israelite faith. One special value of this book is its reference to the religions and cultures that surrounded Israel during that time period, and also helps to emphasize the uniqueness of the Israelite Religion.

**TRADITION AND THEOLOGY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT:**

Ed. Douglas A. Knight SPCK 326 pages. £10.50.

This is a symposium concerned with, 'the theological implications of the tradition process in ancient Israel'. Helmer Ringgren in his chapter entitled 'The Impact of the Ancient Near East on Israelite Tradition' emphasizes, as in the above two books, the interaction between the religions surrounding Israel and the Israelite religion. He suggests that God did not act exclusively through the history of Israel, but also through the history of the surrounding nations. And thus it is possible that parts of God's revelation to His people came to them from external and human influences. Not all may agree with this thinking but he does expose issues that should cause us to consider afresh the way God works in other religions.

*Review by P. Sookhdeo*

*continued from page 23*

ministry. Could it be that here at home we have failed to recognize the importance of pastoral care? We need the mind of the Good Shepherd who gave His life for the sheep. This is a key consolidating factor in the reaching of the community by the local church.

# Evangelism by the Local Church

Robert Scott-Cook

*Mr. Scott-Cook has been involved in local evangelism in Bristol for nearly nine years. There are now eight assembly evangelists in the city.*

It is interesting to follow Paul in his missionary journeys and to trace the God-given plan behind the places he visited. As he entered Pamphylia he went to the chief city, Perga; then on to Antioch the main city of Pisidia; next into Iconium, a centre of communications. Again, when he entered Achaia he visited Athens, the cultural centre; and Corinth, the commercial centre; and then on to Ephesus, the capital of Asia. Paul had an insight into God's strategy for reaching the world around him.

Since the industrial revolution our cities have become 'Achaia's' in themselves. With redevelopment after the 1940's, housing policy has been to build large council estates on the outskirts of our cities, or in new towns. There are at least nine such areas around Bristol. With this change in social structure, if Paul were to visit Bristol in 1978 I believe he would move from one estate to the next, reaching the community and establishing a local church in each. He would recognize these as the growing centres of population.

Look closer at *Acts 18. Verses 1 to 11* give us an account of the establishing of the church at Corinth. When Paul arrived there he was aware of God's strategy within the city. He settled in the home of Aquila and Priscilla (v. 2), shared in their trade as a tentmaker (v. 3) and visited the synagogue each sabbath (v. 4). He continued to preach to the Jews (v. 5) until they opposed and reviled him (v. 6). Then God directed him to a different community of people within the city, as he cried: 'From now on I will go to the Gentiles' (v. 6). How was he to reach that community?

## Identify with the community

Paul moved his centre to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a Gentile. To reach the Gentiles he moved to the house of a Gentile. He became identified with the community in which he was serving God. If we are to reach our housing estates effectively we too must become identified with that community. It is not sufficient for us to come in our cars and hold our meetings and then leave, using the assembly as an outpost.

There are two practical points of challenge here for all of us. First, if God has called us to witness in an area which is distant from us, we must prayerfully consider how we can best be involved in that community. We ourselves felt that it was essential to live among the people, although it was several months before we were able to get a house on the estate. Secondly, many Christians travel several miles to a large assembly, while on their doorstep is a struggling work on an estate. It is not easy socially, and it is not always convenient for our

secular work, to 'move to the house of Justus', but it may be necessary for the work of God. It was certainly not easy for Paul. Socially, he was very much at home with Aquila and Priscilla, particularly with their Jewish background. As for his secular work as a tentmaker, the new centre at the house of Justus was rather inconvenient. Despite all this, *for the sake of the work of God*, he identified himself with the community in which he was called to work.

## Influence among neighbours

One of the first converts to Christ was Crispus the ruler of the synagogue—which was next door to the house of Justus! We cannot emphasize enough the need to reach first our own neighbour. We initially lived in a little close of thirty-six houses with a few more on the corner. It was here that our ministry began. All of these homes were reached with the gospel and the first converts came from these families.

## Reaching for whole families

As soon as Crispus believed all his household was reached. This was a key factor in New Testament evangelism. It was Cornelius and his Kinsmen and close friends who were spoken to in *Acts 10*: Lydia and her household in *Acts 16*: 15; the Philippian jailer and all his family in *Acts 16*: 33. A housing estate is a concentration of families, and it is vital that we interest the whole family. When we have Sunday School or mid-week children's work, we must regularly visit the children in their homes and meet them with their parents as a family. We must see our youth or young wives' work in the context of reaching the family. If one of the women from the women's meeting comes to Christ, it is important that one of the brethren soon makes contact with the husband. It is sobering to note that with most of the families converted in Acts, first the husband believed and then the whole household followed. The family is a God-given unit, which it is essential to recognize.

## Instruction for young converts

These early converts at Corinth believed and were baptized. In the *Acts* almost every baptism we read of was within a few days of conversion. The multitude of three thousand souls added to the church in *Acts 2* under Peter's ministry, received his word and were baptized the same day. The men and women of Samaria and even the magician, Simon, in *Acts 8* under Philip's preaching, believed and were baptized. The Ethiopian eunuch in *Acts 8* believed and was baptized. The careful follow-up and instruction of the young converts was another vital principle in the growth of the local church. Note how Paul and Silas (*Acts 16*: 32) spent time with the Philippian jailer and his family speaking the Word of the Lord, although it was gone midnight.

On the housing estate we have held small neigh-



bourhood study groups for young believers, particularly instructing them concerning baptism and the first steps of their faith. The freshly transformed life of the young local convert is a most powerful message in a close-knit community. The public testimony of baptism openly identifies the convert with Christ and the local church. It is amazing how much time a caring mother spends with her newborn babe during the first days and weeks. Almost every hour she is washing, clothing and feeding the babe. She is willing to lose sleep and make all kinds of sacrifice for the welfare of the child. We too must not leave a young babe in Christ starving and naked and cold for the want of care; what mother would leave her baby to feed itself in those first few days? The birth of a child is a family occasion, when all rejoice together and the babe feels the warmth and love of a home. There was this circle of love and care in the family of the early Church, in which the young convert was nurtured and instructed.

#### **Integration of the work**

Paul continued for eighteen months with the young fellowship at Corinth. It is challenging to realize that Paul, in the midst of such a busy evangelistic programme, and at such a crucial stage in the early spread of the Gospel, should reside for one and a half years in one place, building and establishing the work. There is a great need in our day for this kind of pastoral evangelistic ministry, especially in the young growing fellowship. It was the study of Paul's stay at Corinth and his two years at Ephesus that finally convinced us personally of the value of spending two years living and serving on the housing estate in Bristol. We praise God for those for whom it was many months of consistent, continuous caring and praying that finally brought them to faith in Christ. Note, it was the teaching of the Word of God (v. 11) which strengthened and established those young believers. The consistent, consecutive teaching of the Word of God knits together the Work of God.

#### **Nurturing a sense of responsibility**

It is vital to encourage the whole fellowship to feel responsibility for reaching the surrounding district. This infectious interest should mark both times of prayer and the casual conversation and activity of the assembly.

A simple survey of the area involving most of the assembly can have enormous benefits. It can give an idea of the number of church-goers, or people interested in the Bible. It can be a good guide as to the number of younger families, and children for children's work or young people for youth work. It can help locate older folk and situations of need. Above all it can be a starter in bringing the assembly into contact with the community.

A large scale street map on display will be a constant reminder of our responsibility to the surrounding homes. We marked clearly on our map an inner and an outer area of outreach. It is impor-

tant to present to the fellowship the specific challenge to visit every home in the neighbourhood area and to make some contact (e.g. distributed literature) with the whole community during the first twelve months.

It is important to train the fellowship for the task of visitation. Such a programme must include on-the-job training, and must cover practical subjects such as 'Leading a conversation'.

#### **Making Contact**

We found it helpful to divide the work into 'pioneer visiting' and 'contact visiting' and to distinguish between these two types of work. Pioneer visiting involves the door-to-door, first encounter type of work which only a smaller nucleus of the fellowship may feel equipped to do after the initial survey. Contact visiting involves following-up openings and opportunities that have occurred and this should be the work of most of the fellowship. These openings will come from several sources. First, the regular activities of the assembly such as Children's work, Women's Meeting, Young Wives and Youth work, will mean getting to know other members of these families and regularly visiting these homes. Second, the pioneer visiting will provide some new contacts for follow-up. Third, there will be local friends and neighbours, and casual contacts, who can be reached with the gospel. Finally, local situations of crisis or change may provide an opportunity to show real love and concern, which is the foundation of any lasting relationship. These situations may include bereavement, sickness, or moving to a new house in the neighbourhood.

#### **Continuing to Care**

It is far better to have a few homes which you prayerfully and carefully continue to visit, than to touch many homes with a shallow contact that does not last. The early visits may be spent in breaking down barriers, inviting to a special service, and presenting the gospel. By the fourth or fifth visit we found it valuable in many cases to introduce the individual to personal Bible Study. This represented a critical stage in many contacts and a real gauge of the depth of interest. It is vital to discern the leading of the Holy Spirit at each stage in the developing contact.

#### **Finding Time**

One of the most difficult things to find in visitation work is not the opening words of conversation, nor the right attitude or the right answers, but *time*! There is no short cut for spending time with people. Visitation tends to be a spare-time extra activity which never gets done. A good time for pioneer visiting tends to be Saturday mornings between 10.30 a.m. and 12.30 a.m. Time is the raw material which the Lord requires in order to shape an effective visitation work.

#### **Home Film Evenings**

Britain has become a nation of viewers. The average person receives a major part of his infor-

mation concerning the world around him, through a screen in his sitting-room. It was this factor, together with the powerful attraction of a personal invitation to a neighbour's home that caused us to consider prayerfully an open-home programme of film evenings for the whole of the surrounding area. We began with the vision of opening two new homes each week over a period of three months. Beginning with the nearest road we moved out into all the immediate Roads, Streets, Closes, Crescents and Drives. For every twenty-five houses we held an open home. We used the homes of committed Christians, Sunday School parents, ladies from the ladies' Fellowship or anyone who was willing to allow us the use of their sitting-room. Often we found the home of an uncommitted person would draw more people, because there was less feeling of being 'got at'. Each of the immediately neighbouring homes (usually six either side of the open home and twelve across the road) received an overprinted Fact and Faith Film leaflet giving an outline of the film (important that no-one came under a false impression of the nature of the film) and a personal invitation. These went out a week or fortnight before, depending on the area, and enclosed was a return postcard or slip. Over 90 per cent (!) of these cards were returned and on average we had twelve to fifteen people at each of the evenings. The evenings normally began with a few words of welcome and introduction, and then the film, which was usually of twenty-eight minutes duration. It was followed by a brief, simple comment on the film, which would stimulate further conversation as the lights came back on. Then the quietness was broken by the question, 'Now, how many for tea and how many for coffee?' The rest of the evening was spent in informal conversation on the film. It literally crossed all boundaries, and we saw atheists, agnostics, a Jehovah's Witness, a Spiritualist, a Christian-Scientist, communists and every other shade of persuasion.

#### Home Book-Ins

During one month we held a concentrated local literature crusade on our housing estate which involved reaching over 5,000 homes with a copy of one of the Gospels (T.E.V.). Every public meeting point in the community was covered with Christian literature. All the Schools, Primary, Junior and Comprehensive had large exhibitions of relevant Christian books. Special book-stands with Christian paperbacks on sale were placed in a shop in each of the eight shopping-precincts of the area. Stands were also arranged for the youth club, old peoples' home, doctor's and dentist's waiting rooms, all the churches, the local public house and the new library. A mobile book-stall visited each neighbourhood.

The Book-Ins covered the whole area every weekday of the month, morning, afternoon and evening. A personal invitation card went out to each home. Neighbours were invited into local homes for coffee and to see a display of Christian books for all

the family, with a demonstrator emphasizing some of the titles. Over 2,000 Christian books were sold and a permanent witness left in so many homes on the estate.

#### Consolidating the Work

Paul in *Acts 18* felt it sufficiently important, even at this vital stage in his journeyings, to stay for one and a half years in the one place, resident among the young believers, consolidating the work. After Paul left Corinth, Apollos was led there to continue the work. A major part of our service on the estate was a caring ministry.

#### The Timotheus ministry

Paul's commendation of Timothy as he sends him to Philippi is that 'I have no man like-minded who will naturally care for your state'. We desperately need, in consolidating our outreach and in the life of the fellowship, those who will naturally care for the state of others.

Within the fellowship the natural care will involve us again in spending time sick-visiting, comforting bereaved and lonely (*James 1: 27*—'visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction'), counselling courting couples, helping young converts with 'teething troubles', understanding young people's problems and relationships, delicately discerning marriage difficulties and family frictions, winning rebellious children, giving direction on questions of vocation and career, and helping with problems of depression and personal complexes. These and many other areas of personal counselling require that close Timotheus ministry of naturally caring for the state of others. Such counselling requires deep relationships where one knows and understands the members of the fellowship, and these cannot be cultivated through a single visit or a series of meetings.

#### Developing the gift of Pastors

*Ephesians 4: 11* lists among the Church's ministries that of pastor or pastor-teacher, yet we have often failed to recognize fully this ministry within our assemblies. It is certainly true that the work of evangelism and pastoring and teaching is the responsibility of the whole church and of the elders in particular, and yet we have also seen the value of commending brethren to full-time ministries in evangelism and teaching—but not in pastoring. The increasing demands upon time have made it clear that some brethren should be made free to give themselves full-time or part-time to this vital ministry of pastors. Perhaps we have been particularly cautious not to encourage a 'one-man ministry', yet we have allowed a 'no-man ministry' to develop. Many of the great early Brethren were pastors and teachers. They had a wonderful grasp of the Word of God and were gifted in ministry, but also had a shepherd heart in the pastoral needs of a local work. It is interesting to note that in very many assemblies overseas the missionary's work is that of pastoring and teaching in a local area for some years. He has a church-planting and church-building

*continued on page 20*

## World News

### Brazil

Reports following a two year evangelism programme in two Brazilian coastal cities claim that there have been 6,000 decisions for Christ. This is an unprecedented breakthrough of the Gospel in the area. Half the conversions came in the last two weeks of the programme.

### Lebanon

In recent months, some form of partitioning of Beirut, and the whole country, between Muslim and Maronite Christian communities has taken place. The schools run by Evangelical Christians have reopened on both sides of the divided country and Middle East Christian Outreach's workers and national colleagues are reported safe. Uncertainty remains, particularly as to how long Christians can continue to work in the Muslim side of the country.

### Nigeria

From the Second National Congress on Evangelization held in August a nationwide outreach entitled 'Operation Good News' was launched. The aim of 'Operation Good News' is to present the gospel clearly to the whole population, some 65 million in number.

### Peru

At a time of rising inflation, unemployment and recurring strikes, 70 ministers, students and missionaries from 30 congregations met in Lima to discuss evangelism and church growth. After intensive study of Biblical principles and past trends the participants from seven denominations decided to trust God for 27 new churches and 1400 new members over the next 5 years. In addition they hope to involve 30 more churches by next July, leading to an

*continued from page 15*

life. In some churches and assemblies the people are so eager to spend time together that they arrive forty-five minutes early and stay for at least an hour after the service is over. They just want to be with each other. And they want to invite their non-Christian friends to observe the life and love in God's family.

The enabling of Christians to undertake the task of Mission is directly related to the body. Within the body the Holy Spirit distributes gifts for edification and service 'But grace is given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift' (Eph. 4: 7). 'To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good' (1 Cor. 12: 7).

The recognition, encouragement and use of the *charismata* (spiritual gifts) is to take place in the local church. Church leaders have a responsibility to help members of their flocks to discover what gifts God has given them, and to guide them as to how they may be used. The gifts are given so that together each group of believers might achieve its God-given goals of maturity and growth. Through

upward revision of these faith projections. 'Humanly speaking, the horizon is darkening, but God is breaking through this cloud', said Dr. W. Douglas Smith, church growth consultant with the Andes Evangelical Mission.

### U.S.A.

An international gathering of Christian leaders met in Springfield, Missouri in response to the appeal for prayer issued by President Sadat of Egypt, Premier Begin of Israel and President Carter of the United States of America.

Outreach to the Muslim world was the theme of a recent major conference at Colorado Springs sponsored by the North American Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization and World Vision International. The gathering brought together missionaries, theologians and experts from America and elsewhere. The conference findings are to be channelled to the 1980 consultation on World Evangelization to be held in Thailand as will the fruits of similar regional and specialist conferences.

### West Germany

The Second Conference of the Fellowship of European Evangelical Theologians met in Wolmersen in late August. Among world views examined were the eastern religions, marxism and modern philosophy. The conference concluded that dialogue with non-Christians is an area that should claim more attention from Evangelicals. The aim of dialogue being to appreciate the situation and outlook of those approached and involve them in the issues raised by the Gospel, not, they contended, that the Christian needs to enter into discussion to gain a fuller and better knowledge of the Gospel.

a vigorous, optimistic and persistent prayer life a fellowship will be able to draw on the supernatural power available from Christ through the Spirit, thus ensuring that Mission is God-centred.

It is generally true that in churches where there is genuine body-life and the recognition of spiritual gifts is warmly welcomed, there is growth both in worship and in the effectiveness of evangelism. Where we fail to recognize the value of body-life and *charismata*, we stagnate, because we fail to live according to the New Testament pattern. Some Christians from the mainline denominations are now rejoicing in their newly-discovered doctrines and practices relating to the truth of the body of Christ. Let us now be humble enough to learn from others who have taken the initiative.

### References:

- 1 Body Life. R. C. Stedman. Regal 1972. p. 25
- 2 *ibid* p. 25
- 3 Cinderella with Amnesia. Michael Griffiths. IVP 1975 p. 30
- 4 *ibid* p. 136
- 5 *ibid* p. 150
- 6 Stedman p. 15
- 7 *ibid* p. 37



## Looking at Books

### Marriage under the Microscope

Christine Wood reviews some recent books on Christian marriage

Statistical experts tell us that if the present trend continues, it will not be long before one out of two American marriages has ended in divorce. Britain is following the same trend with three thousand marriages breaking up every week. In the light of these alarming figures none of us can afford to sit back with the smug thought that 'it only happens to other people . . . it might possibly happen to another Christian couple, but not to us'. Many Christian marriages have foundered during the last few years. Breakdown could come to yours and it could come to mine.

Several Christian publishers have taken this grim situation seriously enough to go into print about it and five more books have recently arrived on bookshop shelves. None give a foolproof recipe for a fulfilling and successful marriage, but all offer valid and constructive aids towards attaining the ideal that God intended marriage to be.

*Maximum Marriage* by Tim Simmons is quick to point out that it is not marriage which fails, but people; and the book examines the reasons for failure and suggests some helpful remedies. Step by step the author leads the reader through the 'why' of marriage, the commitments that make it work, and practical steps towards implementing the divine blueprint outlined in the Bible. The author also asks some pertinent questions: What does the Bible really say about headship and submission? Does God's line of authority always place the husband in the role of dictator and the wife as the doormat?

This book is divided into four parts: Competition or Completion? Independence or Interdependence? Battle Scars or Blessings? and Disorder or Design? Under these headings *Maximum Marriage* has much to offer in the way of positive advice, which the author gives with balance, humour and realism.

*How Do You Say I Love You?* by Judson J. Swihart considers various ways of expressing love within the marriage relationship. The author contends that, although many husbands and wives genuinely love one another, they just cannot seem to get it across. He explores reasons for this lack of communication and devotes eight chapters to considering eight languages of love and illustrates how these are both used and abused.

Much of the guidance given appears so simple that its soundness tends to be underestimated on a first reading i.e. helping one another—well, don't all Christian couples do that—or do they? And what about the giving of gifts and seeking in every possible way to bring out the best in your partner? These are important aspects of the language of love and yet there are problems in that the language is often misunderstood by one or other partner.

Written in a positive, easy-to-read style, this book aims to encourage married couples to communicate in

new and more effective ways and to unravel the complexities of both saying and hearing those three little words 'I Love You'.

*A Growing Love* by Ulrich Schaffer is a series of meditations on commitment and marriage and, as the author says, 'has been written at a time when many people think of marriage as a thing of the past. Some even feel that commitment is a weakness, an outdated virtue. Yet is there another way to build meaningful relationships but by committing oneself to another person and to growth with that person?'

Ulrich Schaffer develops his theme with frankness and honesty and lifts love and sex to their rightful place, freeing them from the sludge with which many in our modern society have spattered them. The joy and sorrow, peace and conflict of love and marriage are explored

Although many husbands and wives genuinely love one another, they just cannot seem to get it across . . .

positively and this book seeks to show that disagreement between a man and his wife need not necessarily end in divorce, since conflict can lead to a deeper marital commitment.

The author hopes that his readers will translate what he has said into their own relationship. 'If you are able to do this,' he writes, 'and can gain new insight into yourself and into the important relationship in your life, then these reflections will have achieved their purpose.'

The book is illustrated by a selection of the author's own photographs.

Helen Lee, a vicar's wife, has already written two popular books: *The Growing Years* and *The Troubled Years* and the prospects are good that her most recent work will be equally well received. *Christian Marriage* is written in a down-to-earth style and covers a wide variety of subjects, including the problems and joys of becoming engaged, the sexual and spiritual relationship in marriage, and the possibility of a deepening relationship through the middle years. It is therefore a book that should prove of value to the 'Darbys and Joans' as well as to newly weds.

*Made in Heaven* by Carlo Carretto, although written by a Roman Catholic hermit who lives in the hills near Assisi, sees marriage as a source of holiness and much fruitfulness towards God. It powerfully affirms the intrinsic value of married love at a time when 'the streets have transformed love into eroticism'. The author does, nevertheless, point out that—in his view—there is the 'possibility of the great call to a more sublime and heroic life of total self-giving to God' by remaining celibate. □

#### Books mentioned:

*Maximum Marriage* Tim Simmons. Pickering and Inglis. 128 pp. £1.25 (paperback).

*How Do You Say I Love You?* Judson J. Swihart. Kingsway Publications. 94 pp. 95p (paperback).

*A Growing Love* Ulrich Schaffer. Lion Publishing. 96 pp. 95p (paperback).

*Christian Marriage* Helen Lee. Mowbrays. 126 pp. 75p (paperback).

*Made in Heaven* Carlo Carretto. Darton, Longman and Todd. 154pp. £1.75 (paperback).

## Teaching Books

*A survey from Kathleen White*

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Every year I review so many good books which would be a decided asset to day schools and youth groups. Unfortunately, quite a high proportion is not available in Christian or secular bookshops although mention has been made of them in various periodicals. I would very much like to see a national resource centre where teachers and leaders could browse through the whole selection instead of being restricted by the usual limited choice displayed.

**Stories of Great Lives**, edited by D. M. Prescott (Blandford Press £2.50) gives a useful collection of twenty short life histories which would be a profitable source of school assembly material. **Festivals and Saints Days** by Victor J. Green at £2.75 from the same Press is a concise history to the background of most of the important yearly festivals and makes a good reference book.

The National Christian Education Council offer two books at 85p. **Our Jewish Friends** and **Our Hindu Friends** provide a comprehensive survey of both religions for children. They are particularly useful for students from a multi-racial school, to help them understand one another's customs and culture. Also from NCEC two extremely helpful books at 75p, **Festivals and Roman Life and Customs in the Lands of the Bible**. Intended for Junior and Middle School children they would be an asset to any school library. All four are bright, well-illustrated and the information is well presented.

CIO Publishing have brought out a second volume of the new teaching course **Share The Word 2** in paperback at £2.50. It provides the nucleus of a children's lesson for every Sunday of the year and contains some exciting ideas and new material. Any teacher working with children, no matter what the age group, would be glad of some of the suggestions.

**A Life of Christ** from Darton, Longman and Todd combines the talents of William Barclay and Iain Reid in the script, with illustrations by Eric Fraser. A formidable combination, and all for the moderate price of £1.50. William Barclay deliberately chose the cartoon approach to appeal more to people of this generation and I think it has proved a successful experiment.

**That's a Good Question** by Roger Forster and Paul Marston (Coverdale 95p) contains, as the title suggests, a series of questions on the Christian faith to which the authors provide a short answer. In addition, though, they list helpful notes and also lists of further sources. My only grumble is that the print is too small and the paper of a very poor quality. Most readers would prefer to spend a little more on a better presentation.

A useful book to trigger off discussion between children of the middle years of schooling is **What do you Think** by David and Christine Milman (Blackie 85p). The well-chosen extracts should encourage even shy children to express their point of view. Also from Blackie, **The Nazareth File** at £1.30 by Ian Grey and Donald McFarlan: I heartily approve of this publication, which contains a collection of case-sheets of people who met Jesus, giving a good deal of information and demanding the participation of the reader when he fills out his report.

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**I Belong** by Christopher Frith (S.U. 75p), is a common-sense book for young Christians. Deliberately provocative at times, it will surely make them think and probe further than the limits of the model answers, and that, I think, is fulfilling the main intention of the author.

**S.U. Visuals** are excellent value at 75p + VAT for black and white and 95p for colour. They provide professional backgrounds, figures, timecharts, maps and games for a minimum expense and no worry at all. Every Sunday School should buy the whole range and keep them as a very necessary resource. Their **Holiday Club Resource Material** for children in two groups of five to seven, and seven plus, contains a wealth of ideas and can be adapted to fit in with most situations.

**The Jesus Story Packs** from the Bible Society provide a new approach on well-known stories in *The Good News Version* with check sheets and action sheets which suggest a whole range of activities. One whole pack costs £2.55. It would provide an interesting experiment for children whose appetites have been jaded by the conventional, straight approach.

**Life Change Studies 1** by Ron Smith (Fishers' Fellowship) is the first half of a four year series of personal Bible studies and is thoughtfully produced but it needs a more attractive and up-to-date cover if it is to sell in any quantity.

**The Children's Communion Book Series 1 and 2 and No. 3** (50p from Mowbrays) is attractively produced and should help children to follow an Anglican service more intelligently.

Physical exercise is essential for children but I wouldn't give **Yoga for Children** by Esther Martina Luchs (Search Press £2.25) as a present. I would if it were merely a series of invigorating bodily exercises, but I am wary of some of the philosophy of life expressed in the opening pages.

## From the London City Mission

### Voluntary Evangelism

This L.C.M. Evangelism scheme is designed for young people (18-30 years) who are able to offer between 6 months and a year in voluntary service alongside our full time missionaries in London. Accommodation will be provided in Bermondsey together with food and a small amount of weekly pocket money. Basic training will be given in personal evangelism with opportunities to become involved in a variety of projects in which we are already engaged—we have for instance a fully equipped mobile unit, a day centre for homeless men, an outreach in the West End, a programme of door to door visitation, open air meetings and all the activities associated with our many Mission Centres. In addition help will be needed in a practical way to decorate premises, share with play groups etc. In short we are looking for committed young people prepared to become involved in a very tough but exciting period of evangelism in one of the most important missionary situations in the world.

If you are interested, we invite you to complete the slip below and we shall be pleased to send further details. Write to George Hider at the London City Mission, 175 Tower Bridge Road, London SE1 2AH.

## An Interesting Medical Study

**LEPROSY IN ENGLAND YESTERDAY AND TODAY** Dr. Stanley Browne. The Leprosy Study Centre. 48 pp. (paperback).

Dr. Stanley Browne, the author of this pamphlet, will be well known to many medically connected people as well as to missionary minded Christians. He has recorded in a very readable almost chatty manner the known facts of leprosy with a particular slant on its occurrence in England and also the setting up of the Leprosy Associations, in particular the Hospital and Homes of St. Giles, East Hanningfield Essex. He does not go into any detail about the clinical aspects of leprosy, neither are there photographs to show the legendary deformities. Rather does he enlarge upon the historical aspect of leprosy in England suggesting that it first came to England via healthy Phoenician sailors trading with the tin miners of Cornwall, although as Dr. Browne points out leprosy itself was first described in India about six centuries before Christ.

The term leprosy is used throughout the Old Testament but Dr. Browne with some reason is not sure that this corresponds to the known clinical entity of leprosy as we understand it to-day, chiefly because the descriptions do not fit the clinical picture. Leprosy however had almost certainly arrived by the time of the New Testament.

The Christian Church has a good record with respect to its dealings with lepers. Around AD372 St. Basil is

reported to have built a hospital for lepers in Caesarea. Leprosy as such in England is definitely known to have existed as early as the Fourth Century AD. A skeleton unearthed from a burial mound in Gloucestershire at Poundbury camp bears marks of leprosy, and Robert the Bruce of Scotland also suffered from it. Institutions were created to cope with the problem. Dr. Browne describes the development of Mediaeval 'Lazar' houses and traces through the centuries the development of the Leprosy Hospital present today.

I enjoyed reading Dr. Browne's account. His style is akin to that of the well polished Readers Digest accounts of disease, enough of the medical terminology to keep the layman happy and insufficient clinical detail to shock anybody. It provides a readable account of the development and work of the Leper Hospital at St. Giles, although I am sure the description of Princess Alexandra's helicopter landing in a field opposite the hospital 'as a fairy Godmother' would bring tears to the eyes of even the most hardened cynic.

Review by Dr. Peter Webb

### A CORRECTION

With reference to our recent notice, the Norfolk Press ask us to point out that their edition of *Pilgrim's Progress* is now £6.95 and of Jacques Ellul's *Prayer and Modern Man* £2.75. Both are still excellent buys!



# Replies to Professor Bruce

## The November Question

A recent pamphlet by Dr. J. I. Packer prompts me to ask readers of *The Harvester* what they understand when someone is described as an evangelical, or what they themselves mean when they describe someone so? Apparently there are some people who

deny this designation to Dr. Packer, despite his long and publicly avowed commitment to justification by faith, the inerrancy of Scripture, and every 'evangelical' doctrine. (When this question has been answered, I may give my own answer to it.)

### Dr. A. G. Newell replies:-

There can be no doubt that different people understand different things when they use a common terminology, so that Humpty Dumpty was being very human when he told Alice that when he used a word 'it means just what I choose it to mean,—neither more nor less'. Is it extraordinarily difficult to define a word satisfactorily: there ought to be an opposite quotation declaring something to the effect that to

the epithet 'evangelical' to a fellow-believer for the trivial reason that he did not agree with me. Humpty Dumpty was right in that all of us invest the words we employ with a content that does not necessarily tally at all points with that understood by those with whom we are conversing.

### Mr. H. L. Ellison replies:-

One of the advantages of living in 'glorious Devon' is that some of sillier and more transient controversies are likely not to come to one's notice. What Dr. Packer's alleged shortcomings may be, I have no idea, but to deny him the name of Evangelical is to make nonsense of language. There are, however, not a few who use the term Evangelical to mean one who holds the same views as the speaker, while others equate it with Fundamentalism. In fact it means neither.

The term seems first to have come into common use to designate those who shared in the aims of the Methodist revival, but who refused to leave the Church of England. Though they attributed no saving power to infant baptism, they saw no reason for separating themselves from those whose sole claim to church membership was that they had been baptised as babies. Ever since they have remained, in spite of minor internal differences, an easily discernible group in

## Different people understand different things...

define is to kill. For 'evangelical' is a usefully current term with a broadly agreed yet helpfully imprecise meaning.

It has always been a well-founded Roman Catholic criticism that Protestantism is inherently fissiparous. Within Protestantism, evangelicals have tended to spend too much time fighting each other because of their whole-hearted commitment to their individual apprehension of Christian truth. A search for a definition of evangelicalism, therefore, can begin with these three characteristics: an intellectual conviction which is also both willed and emotional (not simply opinion); a profound sense of individual responsibility (not simply church membership); and a belief in and a commitment to Scripture as God's inspired revelation (rather than an acceptance of the voice of the 'Church' or of the consensus of current theological thinking).

To these we must add a belief in and a commitment to a package of Christian doctrines which emphasizes Easter rather than Christmas; a readiness to participate in interdenominational activities with other Christians; a support for an emphasis on evangelism at home and abroad, including work with children; a lifestyle that incorporates church attendance once or more per week, the practice of prayer and Bible study, and the general observance of certain taboos; and some resistance to both popular and highbrow culture.

Certain aspects of evangelicalism, history suggests, are not intrinsic to the concept, e.g., involvement in social welfare, revivalism, the use of banal songs and vulgar tunes, and commitment to a particular church fellowship or denomination.

I have not tried to arrange these marks of evangelical Christianity into any sort of order. To discriminate any further—indeed, even to go so far as I have, perhaps—would almost certainly lead me on to the slippery slope of denying

## The sillier and more transient controversies

contrast to sacramentarians and liberals in the Church of England. It would have been an advantage had the term been restricted to them.

Very soon, however, it became increasingly applied to those who stressed salvation by faith alone in the work of Christ and the authority of Scripture. That was because the term Protestant had been debased by the inroads of liberalism and humanism, and because it was felt that it was a positive term, where Protestant seemed to be mainly negative. Unfortunately it has increasingly become a term to express what the speaker considers to be true doctrine, and so non-Evangelicals are more and more using the term Fundamentalism.

*(Charity perhaps hindered our readers from quoting Bishop Stephen Neill's comment: 'It has always been the weakness of Evangelicals to quarrel over trifles, and to vilify one another for alleged adherence to tenets which have never been either precisely defined or adequately understood.' (Anglicanism, 1977 edn. p. 192)—Ed.)*

## THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE

Two activities sponsored by the Evangelical Alliance are recommended to the attention of our readers:-

**Worldwide Week of Prayer 1979 (7-14 January)** this year has as its topic *Life and Hope*. Planned by Christians in French-speaking Switzerland, the prayer programme provides an international focus for this week of special fellowship. To be sure of

not missing this annual event, why not ensure that your church is affiliated to the Alliance and receives its regular news and information releases?

**Church Growth**, the EA minister's conference from 5-8 February 1979 at Swanwick, will welcome representation from Brethren elders. These conferences are always stimulating.

*Details from The Evangelical Alliance, 19 Draycott Place, London SW3 2SJ (Tel. 01-581 0051).*

## Readers' Forum

### This month's Question

Question 63: submitted by Mr. I. M. Sutton

What form of set service is found most useful in conducting wedding services in 'Brethren' churches?

Mr. H. L. Ellison replies:-

In answering a question like this it must be repeatedly stressed that there is no 'most useful' or 'best'. Any reliance on the Holy Spirit's guidance rules out any such concept.

It is perfectly true that, in a larger, predominantly middle-class, well educated assembly, the majority will probably welcome the familiar words of the Church of England wedding service, even if it is adapted in some places. There are many settings and circumstances, however, where it is easy to see how inappropriate it would be. Since it is very common for the service to be conducted by one who is a good friend of the couple, it ought to be easy for him to discover what form of service would be most appropriate.

Mr. Tom H. Hill replies:-

Those of us in our church here at Fords Lane, Bramhall, Cheshire, who conduct wedding services from time to time are, of course, free to use the form of service we wish. My own

preference is for the ordinary Anglican form of Service found in the 1662 Prayer Book. I make some minor omissions from the opening words to the congregation, and, as required by law, incorporate the declarations by the couple that they know of no lawful impediment to their being joined in matrimony, at the appropriate point. Otherwise I use the whole service as given. After listening to several Nonconformist forms of Service, many very acceptable, I still feel that the Prayer Book version even today has a fitness for the occasion, a solemnity and simple dignity of language quite unsurpassed by any other. It is both 'down to earth' and reverent.

From March 1979 a new-style Readers' Forum will be open to contributions from readers: suggestions from practical experience related to church activities or Christian living; doctrinal or expository questions; useful experiences; what-you-will. Questions, to which other readers will be invited to submit replies, will also be published as they are received, as hitherto. It is hoped that readers will take full advantage of this feature.

## Correspondence

### London City Mission: a request

From The Youth Secretary, London City Mission

Dear Mr. Coad,

Your readers may be interested to know that we have recently begun compiling within the London City Mission an Information Library. Obviously our own missionaries are often needing answers to a variety of questions and we often receive enquiries from the general Christian public.

We are happy to make the Information Library as comprehensive as possible and are particularly anxious to have as much detail on matters such as accommodation in London, hostels for problem cases such as alcoholics, details of trusts, charities etc. as we can. Indeed if your readers have any information which they think would be of use we should be glad to receive details including brochures etc.

Naturally if we can assist by answering any queries we would do our best to help.

Any appropriate information should be sent to:

Information Library, London City Mission

175 Tower Bridge Road, London SE1 2AH

Tel: 407 7585 ext. 37

175 Tower Bridge Road  
London SE1 4TR

Yours sincerely  
George Hider

### Bible Reading

From Mr. Miles Christie

Dear Mr. Coad,

In the interesting report (October) of the UCCF National Vocation Conference at Harrogate, I note that Dr. Michael Griffiths 'challenged delegates to read the Bible through in every year as this was the only way to achieve a truly "Christian mind"'. While agreeing with this excellent ambition, I feel:

1. That it is doubtful if it is a practical possibility for most Christians since they cannot avoid business and household duties in addition to local church responsibilities;

2. That the quantity of Bible Reading is surely not so important as its quality. Is it not therefore more desirable to

read a shorter portion each day and have time to meditate upon it?

It would be helpful to have the opinions and experiences of others on this matter, and I would like to ask whether part of the time available should be reserved for commentaries and notes.

Sevenoaks,  
Kent

Sincerely,  
Miles Christie

### The form of services

From Mr. H. L. Ellison

Dear Mr. Coad,

I should like to supplement my answer to Question 61 in the November issue by giving an example of how circumstances can affect the form of meetings.

On a recent visit to Rumania I discovered that apparently all the Rumanian speaking assemblies, at least in the towns, have on Sunday morning at 9 or 9.30 a.m. a meeting lasting at least three hours—with one particular group it starts at 8 a.m. The first hour is devoted to the Breaking of Bread, which is introduced by a devotional address by one of the elders, and at which the sisters may pray, if the brothers have had their opportunity. This is followed immediately by an hour of exhortation and teaching, by one or more speakers. Finally there is an hour of evangelism.

There are probably few who would welcome such a form of spiritual exercise in Britain, but this is the logical reaction to the restrictions placed on them in the past by a Communist regime, restrictions which have been considerably relaxed.

Dawlish,  
Devon

Yours in Christ Jesus  
H. L. Ellison

### Group loyalty and tradition

From Mr. L. L. Fox

Dear Mr. Coad,

You invited comments on group loyalty and tradition in relation to individual 'completeness.'

A simple definition of 'loyal' is 'standing faithfully by your friends'. Let us think of loyalty in terms of a member of a group who has not missed a meeting for years. Suppose he is equally known as someone with a hard and ungracious manner. By how much would the encouragement he gives to others by his loyal attendance be vitiated by his unChristlike be-



haviour? Would it not be fair to conclude, bearing in mind 1 Cor. 13, that (in the absence of a loving spirit) one with 'all loyalty' will on balance profit neither himself nor his brothers and sisters?

In the NT, 'tradition' is used with two different connotations, which may be dubbed 'good' and 'bad'. The 'good' are in 1 Cor. 11: 2 (where the AV has 'ordinances'); 2 Thess 2: 15 and 3: 6. The 'bad' are in Matt. 15: 2, 3, 6; Mark 7: 3, 5, 8, 9, 13; Gal. 1: 14; Col. 2: 8; and 1 Peter 1: 18.

Scripture lays down little in the way of detail as to the activities of a local group of Christians. Often, today's patterns are still those adopted in bygone days. Although not necessarily bad in themselves, the patterns are by now inevitably traditional. Consequently there is a real danger of just 'going through the motions'; and of the things we do by tradition making the word of God of none effect by our refusing to consider 'things new' into which the Spirit may be wishing to lead us (Mark 7: 13; Matt. 13: 52; John 16: 12-13; Ex. 10: 26; Josh 3: 4). It is suggested that a group will be effectual in the spiritual 'completion' of one of its number only in the proportion that its members have fervent charity among themselves (1 Peter 4: 8; 1 Cor. 16: 14) and the Spirit is not quenched in their midst (1 Thess 5: 19; 2 Cor. 3: 17).

Oh that we were all constrained more by the love of Christ (2 Cor. 5: 14) than by a sense of loyalty—the greater would embrace the lesser; and that our worship and service were marked by more spontaneity, springing forth from newness of spirit (John 7: 38; Rom. 7: 6), and less marked by possibly deadening traditions.

9 Warden Close  
Maidstone  
Kent ME16 0JL

Yours sincerely,  
L. L. Fox

#### How should we vote?

From Mr. H. V. G. Morris

Dear Sir,

I may incur the wrath of those who consider that this question was settled quite firmly in the early days of the Brethren movement. Then it was decided that we should abstain from

voting because we were 'not of this World'. Many however in these days are less concerned with the facade, and are not prepared to allow others to do the thinking for them. Such folks, taking a different view, believe that responsibility and privilege, as British people, are not to be separated. They must however, be realistic, not swayed by tradition or sentiment, and certainly not influenced by the plausible, pie-crust promises so readily given by those who seek our support.

There are many problems for all of us to face, whether we vote or refrain from voting. Two such problems are here stated. Certain politicians, loosely speaking to be found on the 'Left', have risen to prominence in recent years, who shew by attitudes and statements made, a complete godlessness, and upon these we look with considerable apprehension.

On the other hand, Bible-taught Christians will be uneasy at the prospect of a woman Prime Minister. The principles of Scripture have not changed with these modern times. The authority of government has not been committed to women by God; a much greater responsibility is theirs, that of the training of the next generation.

Should I vote? How should I vote? I really don't know, for problems and policies may appear in the waiting time, of which we know nothing at present. If any one politician could be heard to confess with the humility of truth, that the task was beyond the ability of any man (or woman) but that he would do his best, with God's help, that man would deserve our support, but elections are not won with humility of this kind. I cannot remember any one ever so expressing himself.

I must confess, myself, to a perplexity: shall I run away from the problem? Perhaps it would be advisable for us to follow the example of the Established Churches, and to have regular prayer for the future good government of this land. I do not propose to treat the matter of voting as irrelevant to Christian faith and practice.

"Boma"

121 Birchwood Drive  
Ulverston, Cumbria  
LA12 9NY

Yours, with greetings,  
Hubert Morris

#### A Salute to A. J. Chilcott, Assembly Builder

From the fellowship at Treboeth Gospel Hall

Everybody who has lived in Swansea and district for any length of time knows A.J.

Did you say, you go to Treboeth Gospel Hall? Oh! we always know that place as Chilcott's Mission! (And with good cause, too.) For Mr. A. J. Chilcott was the preacher and evangelist with others who held tent missions in the Treboeth area between the first and second world wars, resulting in the planting of an assembly in the village of Treboeth over 50 years ago.

God has been pleased to bless the testimony of that assembly and today there are some 150 in fellowship, and a healthy children's and young peoples' work which many assemblies would covet at this present time. There is an activity most evenings of the week, but it would cheer your heart to see especially some 60/70 young and older folk gathering together for prayer on Monday evenings. It says much for A.J.'s zeal and enthusiasm, his leadership and pastoral care, but particularly his passion for souls that the assembly is in such a healthy condition today.

He is still very much in full time service for the Lord he loves and has served so faithfully for nearly 70 years. He reached his 90th birthday on 7th November, and many came together at the hall on that day to celebrate that milestone.

Very rarely does he miss a meeting, and that not without a valid reason. He is still capable of preaching and ministering the word, and takes an active part in the

oversight and care of the assembly.

He has a remarkable memory for names, faces, and events; it is quite an education when he is in a reminiscing mood to hear him speak about the relative of 'so and so' (a current member of the assembly) who he recalls was saved in the tent some 50 years previously.

A.J. is of course a son of Barnstaple (and proud of it), a student of Robert Chapman whose hymns he enjoys (and, speaking of hymns, he still leads the singing on a Lord's Day morning). But it says much for the strength of Christian character and sterling qualities of one of those 'foreigners' from across the Bristol Channel who migrated to Welsh Wales some 60 years ago that the folk of a parochial village called Treboeth took him to their heart. Yes, they love him dearly for his zeal, his bluntness, yet his winsome sense of humour; and above all his pastoral care of the assembly. He has too, a handshake which is still quite 'shattering'!

He has a great compassion for the sick and the dying, and is continually emphasising to the saints the need of personal prayer for those in need.

Hardly a Lord's Day goes by without he makes a personal reference to the coming again of His Lord, Whom he is longing to meet. Only recently he ministered on this heart warming subject.

What more can be said but: 'Whose faith follow'. We salute you, A.J., in His Name. We give praise and glory to God for what He has done through your devoted service, and pray His preserving mercies upon you, 'Until He come'.

# The News Page

Press Day, February 1979, Wednesday, Jan. 3rd, for Displayed Advertisements, Prayer List, Forthcoming Events and news items (Please send direct to Publisher at 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW)

## Out and About

### News from the Bible Society:

The Bible Society announces two important appointments. The post of director of finance and administration has been filled by Mr. Geoffrey Hill, until recently financial secretary of the Church Missionary Society and previously a missionary and accountant. The new programme director is Mr. Peter Brierley, a statistician formerly working with the Cabinet Office on Government research projects. Mr. Brierley has been responsible for compiling both volumes of the *UK Protestant Missions Handbook* and is at present working on a third volume—the religious organisations in the UK. He is keen to keep the Bible Society in the forefront of religious agencies in this country by making it a clearing house for information on the state of the church in the UK. "There is nowhere to go for the answers to intelligent questions on the state of the church at present", he explained. "We are in the process of setting up an information and research organisation able to answer many of the questions on religious life in Britain."

### Christian Booksellers Convention:

Because of increased demand from exhibitors, more space at the Wembley Centre has had to be booked for the 1979 exhibition which is to be held from Monday, March 5 to Thursday, March 8. The speakers at the Conventions will include the Reverend W. Freely of Duke Street Baptist Church, Richmond, Rev. Alex Motyer, Principal of Trinity College, Bristol and Sir David McNee, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police.

### News from the Evangelical Alliance:

**The Evangelical Missionary Alliance Annual Conference**—held at High Leigh, Hoddesdon, from 14 to 16 November, considered the political and leadership tensions affecting both churches and missions overseas, and recognised the need for consultation and guidance if missionaries were to respond adequately to the problems of conscience and Christian concern they faced in many countries today. It was recognised that silence and withdrawal were themselves a response, and that situations were sometimes extremely complex and had no simple solutions. One particular issue was the request of the Evangelical Fellowship of India for support from Christians worldwide in representations being made to the government of India regarding proposed state legislation in Arunachal Pradesh which would severely limit the evangelistic outreach of the church there. The conference noted that this legislation appeared to contravene the freedom of religion assured in the Constitution of India and assured the church in

Arunachal Pradesh of its prayer fellowship in this issue. The EMA is to consider how protest can best be made by missionary bodies in this and similar cases, recognising the need to act only with the full consent of the local churches immediately affected. The conference also noted the tensions produced between local church leaders and missions as a result of monetary grants creating an imbalance of resources and power in poor and economically deprived areas. Money was often given for the best of motives and of purposes, but created jealousy and suspicion within the local church and in the community as a whole.

**Jesus Christ the Only Way:** Practical help to Christians in Britain in witnessing to those of other faiths is given in the first book to come from the work of the Evangelical Alliance Commission on the Christian approach to those of other faiths, *Jesus Christ the Only Way*, published by Paternoster Press on 20th November.

As was set out in a resolution at the National Assembly of Evangelicals at Bristol in 1975, the Commission aimed to clarify the issues of inter-faith dialogue and to help local churches present the gospel unequivocally and yet with understanding to those of other cultures and beliefs. *Jesus Christ the Only Way*, a 160-page paperback priced £2.40, includes a section in which a Buddhist, a Hindu, a Muslim, a Jew and a Sikh living in Britain set out their respective views, while the major part of the book gives a Christian approach to these other faiths.

After setting out biblical guidelines, the book goes on to offer practical recommendations to the local churches in Britain regarding the witness of Christians to those of other faiths in both service, dialogue and proclamation of the gospel.

### Evangelism:

A. G. Blackburn reports a very encouraging crusade at Chagford with good numbers attending. R. W. Brighton reports calling in on 186 homes in the Wokingham area in connection with an autumn outreach. Many homes were welcoming and there were opportunities to witness. The five special services, over five weeks, one per week, preceded by a buffet supper, meant the possibility of prolonged contact. One evening, for example, there was a total of 135 people of whom 83 were not church members. Hedley Murphy has held crusades in Motherwell and Springburn (Glasgow). Most of his time is spent in Ulster where the Lord is working through many and varied agencies. He asks for prayer for a crusade at Kileen Evangelistic Centre, Armagh, in January.

### Gideons International:

Shortly after Sir Charles Forte, the Chief Executive of Trust Houses Forte Limited, had received a specially bound and inscribed Bible representing the 10 millionth copy of the Scriptures distributed by the Gideons International in the British Isles since the work of Bible distribution began in this country at the end of 1949, a comparable presentation was made in the USA. Here it was the 200 millionth copy which was offered to President Carter at the White House, Washington. Gideons International is currently

operating at a rate of one million copies every 18 days—one copy every other second night and day.

#### **International Fellowship of Evangelical Students:**

In a letter dated December 1978, the General Secretary, Chua Wee Hian, refers to the situation in various parts of the world: "... Let's begin with East Asia. Here we have to pause constantly to thank God for the fast growing groups. In the university of Singapore there is a committed membership of 1,000 students witnessing consistently in a campus of 6,000 students. Further north in Hongkong, the gospel is conveyed through the printed word to countless young people. Each month 40,000 copies of 'Breakthrough' are sold on the busy streets and much patronised bookstores. We certainly want to give thanks to God for raising up a splendid editorial team and also for the scores of graduates who spend several hours manning telephones in order to answer the questions of seeking readers. In Korea, Taiwan and Malaysia, many students are committing their lives to Christ through evangelistic Bible studies and camps. But there is also a tinge of sadness. What about the unreached student population in China? In faith we must commit our brothers and sisters in Vietnam to the care and protection of our heavenly Father. No news from them but yet He cares.

"In Latin America we empathise in prayer with the struggling groups. The volatile political atmosphere demands an authentic and bold presentation of the living Christ as man's true Liberator. A bright light of hope gleams and encourages our intercession when we discover that the 15-strong Christian Fellowship in the University of Guatemala together with their staffworker had the courage and vision to combine resources with a local evangelical seminary and the prayer backing of churches. They organised four public meetings at the university and the overall results were 40 conversions and 500 or more students enrolling for Bible correspondence courses.

"We cannot by-pass Brazil which forms a good half of the South American continent. As we stop to pray we thank God for the effective witness of the ABU in nearly 100 campuses. We praise him too for the new wave of missionary interest. Christian doctors are known to have sold lucrative medical practices in the cities in order to open hospitals in the neglected interiors. Then we remember Glacy and Tacito Pinto, the young Brazilian couple who have responded to an invitation from the GBU-Italy, to assist in the pioneering of a student group in Genova. Homesickness and discouragement can often unsettle new workers. And we claim God's grace and strength for them. "What of North Africa? The students in nearly all campuses are resistant to the gospel. When and how will the world of Islam open its heart to Jesus the Messiah?

"Finally, as our eyes rest on Europe, our hearts leap in praise to God for the faithful testimony of the British (this year the UCCF celebrate their 50th anniversary) and Norwegian movements. Their uncompromised stand for the biblical faith has inspired many. The generosity of the German and Swiss movements in contributing to the financial needs of the IFES is a course for thanksgiving. But there

are struggling movements, particularly in Catholic dominated parts of Europe. Still, we must not despise the days of small things. National movements have emerged in Spain and Austria. The work in Portugal and Belgium is getting off the ground."

#### **The Leprosy Mission:**

A nurse from Ireland, a Canadian doctor and his wife at present working in New Zealand, nurses from France, Germany and Holland, and two male nurses and their wives from Britain are among the twelve missionary candidates accepted by The Leprosy Mission in recent months—a higher number at any one time than ever before. The total is made up by another doctor and his wife, a nurse, two physiotherapists and an occupational therapist, all from the UK.

A training and language-study programme is worked out for each candidate, personally tailored to suit individual need, and the twelve are all at various stages in their preparation.

Although the great majority of The Leprosy Mission's staff is made up of nationals of the countries where the work is being done, expatriate helpers with professional skills are still welcomed in many lands. These 12 candidates will be joining a team of 50 other 'internationals' on active service with The Leprosy Mission, working in 11 countries in Africa and Asia, from Zaire to Papua New Guinea. Vacancies remain for at least three doctors, five nurses, two physiotherapists, and for skilled administrators.

#### **The London City Mission:**

As an extension to its already wide ministry of personal evangelism in the capital, the London City Mission has recently announced the formation of a Youth Department. Under the leadership of Mr. George Hider, it is envisaged that the new department will consolidate the existing work of 'Voluntary Evangelism' and 'Summer Evangelism' both schemes whereby young people may work alongside City Missionaries for a limited period. Since its introduction two years ago, 80 young people have served with 'Voluntary Evangelism' for periods ranging from six-18 months. Living together in the Mission's hostel in Bermondsey, they are involved in a daily training programme before dispersing to their various assignments within inner London. 'Summer Evangelists' are recruited during the July/August vacation and over 76 young people have given two-three weeks in this way over the last two years. An increased involvement with young people has been the concern of the Mission's committee for some time and it is felt that the Youth Department will develop such an involvement at two levels:- by encouraging young people to engage in evangelism themselves in the London area, and also by encouraging support for the missionary cause in general among young Christians. "Although we shall primarily have the L.C.M. in mind", says George Hider, "we are anxious to work as closely as possible with other organisations engaged in evangelism in the London area". He feels that there is little being done for young people in the



inner London situations, and that any duplication as a waste of valuable resources. "I am anxious to learn all that I can of what others are doing and to share our vision with them", he says. "The time may be short, the task urgent and many young Christians are ready to be involved, let's work together to reach London's youth!"

#### North India:

Since the "Needs of North India" project began in March 1976, a total of £2,005 has been donated, partly by two assemblies each of which gives £10 per month and partly by personal gifts of amounts ranging from £3 to £300. Help has been sent to students at the Bible School in Kota, Rajasthan; to a former Kota student, V.P. Poulse, who planted an assembly in Faridabad (he suffers ill health and cannot afford proper treatment); to P. Assi, another Kota student, who planted an assembly and started a school in Tonk, Rajasthan; to K. C. John, who went alone to Jaipur, a Hindu stronghold, to start an assembly there; and to Daniel Sechung, a Tibetan, who as a young boy fled from Tibet at the time of the Chinese Communist invasion and is now an evangelist in a Tibetan refugee camp. Three students who recently graduated from Kota Bible School have each gone to start a new work in a new district—M. A. Samuel in Sikar, P. G. Varghese in Pali, and Elmo Dan at Korba. The enthusiasm of these young men and their willingness to endure hardship would put most of us to shame.

#### Release Publications:

"Release Nationwide", a resource pack for local church communication produced by Release Publications of 142 Dantzic Street, Manchester, M4 4DN, went into its second edition early December.

It consists of a package of pre-edited articles and illustrations designed to help the local church use print to put over the Christian message. The material can be used either as "copy" or ready-made artwork. Each package also contains a section of "Say Something Simple", a complete handbook on communication in the local church which is being issued in part-work form. The articles are mainly by ordinary Christian people, but edited and presented in a professional journalistic manner.

New series beginning in the second issue, which is for use in church publications in January, February and March, include interviews with Christian soccer stars, and "Food for Thought"—a series of extracts from the book *The New Seasoning* by the former "galloping gourmet" Graham Kerr (by kind permission of Lion Publishing).

Already users of the first package have been able to present items on the Northern Ireland "troubles" and the Turin Shroud at the very time these were in the national news, and those who used the article by pop expert Tony Jasper on Christmas records will find they are right on target with his reference to "Mary's Boy Child", which "Boney M" are set to take to the top of the charts this year.

#### Simple Life Style:

An international Consultation on Simple Life Style is to be held in London, in 1980. Sponsored by the World Evangelical Fellowship and the Lausanne

Committee for World Evangelisation, the gathering, to be held from March 17 to March 21, will bring together 50 Christian leaders from all parts of the world.

The consultation will be preceded by deliberations in local study groups which are in process of formation. The sponsoring committee is supplying bibliographies, articles, and guides to assist in formation and programming. The local units will grapple with the relationship between the simpler life style, evangelism, relief, and justice.

Christians in the industrialized nations are giving more attention to the examination of their standards of living in contrast to the needs of deprived people everywhere. Evangelical leaders and others are calling for the adoption of biblical standards if there is to be any credibility in evangelisation outreach. The London consultation will focus on those issues.

The gathering reflects the concern of Christian leaders over the integral relationship between the spiritual and social dimensions of life. The Lausanne Covenant, adopted at the conclusion of the 1974 International Congress on World Evangelisation, came to grips with that relationship: "All of us are shocked by the poverty of millions and disturbed by the injustices which cause it," states the document. "Those of us who live in affluent circumstances accept our duty to develop a simple life style in order to contribute more generously both to relief and evangelism." Commenting on that part of the historic covenant, John Stott, (who is presiding over the Lausanne theology and education working group that is co-sponsoring the consultation) observes that any realistic approach to world evangelisation cannot overlook "the plight of the poor and duty of the affluent."

He states further, in his commentary on the Lausanne Covenant: "We may not all give an identical definition of justice or injustice, or share the same economic theories and remedies, or believe that God's will is an egalitarian society in which even the slightest differences of income and possessions are not tolerated. But we are all appalled by poverty, that is, by the immense numbers of people who do not have enough to eat, whose shelter and clothing are woefully inadequate, and whose opportunities for education, employment and medical care are minimal. Every sensitive Christian should be shocked by this situation and never grow so accustomed to it as to be unmoved by it."

That issue of a simpler life style will receive attention from many evangelical churches during 1979 as local study groups come to grips with it in anticipation of the 1980 consultation in London.

**Resource Materials:** Local groups may secure study data by writing to Ronald J. Sider, International Consultation on Simple Life Style, Box 12236, Philadelphia, PA 19144.

Copies of the *Lausanne Occasional Paper No. 3* (Exposition and Commentary on the Lausanne Covenant) by John Stott may be obtained from the Scripture Union.

#### Weston-Super-Mare Women's Conference:

Almost 100 women—including two from Australia and one from Canada—met from November 10-12 at Weston-Super-Mare. Mrs. May Laird spoke on the theme, "He has wrought for me His wonders". She

spoke on "the Mystery of the Death of Christ", and "the Cross—a matter of Death and Life"—death in Christ and a resurrection back into new life. Dr. Marion Ashton's ministry of discerning people's deep need in stress situations and her willingness to share conclusions based on years of experience in this field was as invaluable as it was unusual. Her sessions on stress in ourselves and in others blended practical with spiritual help; for instance in her comments on the meaning "walking in the light". Miss Norah Bloomberg provided an unexpected insight into the silent world of the deaf; what a joy it was to hear of Deaf Fellowship Groups meeting worldwide. In the "Preparation for Worship" session, Dr. Norah Sims gave us practical advice, which included the interesting suggestion that children might be encouraged to tithe their pocket money. Mrs. Mary Short rounded off the weekend by considering Mary's state of mind when she responded to the wonders God had wrought for her and accepted the role of "the handmaid of the Lord". In accepting this role for ourselves, perhaps our main task should be to show love to the loveless "that they might lovely be". (Next year's conference is being planned for November 9-11).

#### Fitzwilliam Chapel, Sheffield:

Will the brother who accepted the invitation by the late Mr. J. M. Darley to be one of the speakers at the Conference on April 28th 1979, please get in touch with the undersigned as soon as possible: H. R. Payne, 218 Carterknowle Road, Sheffield S7 2EB. Tel. Sheffield 52069.

## Homecalls

**Campbell Reid** on 8th October 1978, while preaching in Trinity Hall, Crowborough, Sussex. Converted at the age of 10, he joined the male voice choir in the Gospel Hall, New Stevenston, Lanarkshire at the age of 16 years. After their marriage, he and his wife, Eleanor, were in fellowship in Ebenezer Hall, Motherwell until 1949. In order to be fully available for preaching, he and his wife opened a guest house in Millport on the Isle of Cumbrae. While there he re-commenced the assembly and during the summer months each year conducted a ten weeks' mission on the beach for children. In the winter he was free to work on the mainland and during these years God richly blessed his ministry in the gospel, in places such as Kilmcolm, Kirkcaldy and Daily in Ayrshire; his ministry was greatly appreciated in assemblies in Glasgow and Lanarkshire. In 1962 he and his wife went south to work with Wycliffe Bible Translators, where he acted as office manager and later as British Secretary. In fellowship at Montpelier Hall, Purley, he was commended to full time service and spent four years at Wolsey Chapel, New Addington, where new premises had been built. About six years ago he suffered a severe heart attack and he and his wife moved from Croydon to Bexhill, where they made their spiritual home at Hamilton Evangelical Church. For some years he worked with Dick Saunders in counselling and preparation classes for crusades. His whole life was spent teaching and preaching and it was fitting that he should be called home whilst giving a message from Isaiah 53.



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# People and Places

## New addresses

**Stowmarket:** G. H. Greenaway has recently moved to the following address: Chapel Bungalow, Mickfield, Stowmarket, Suffolk.

## Stewardship

**Retired Missionary Aid Fund:** 12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies for the month of November amounted to £5604.01.

## Prayer List

Stamped letters addressed c/o The Paternoster Press, Paternoster House, 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter, EX2 4JW will be forwarded to any of those whose names appear below.

Workers are requested to include their names on their cards when returning them each month. We are still receiving anonymous contributions from time to time.

**Bathgate, T.:** London 2, 9; Margate 7; Welling 11; Bromley 14; Sturry 17, 24; Folkestone 20; Bearsted 21; Wigmore 25; Wainscott 28; Gravesend 30.

**Blackburn, A. G.:** Paignton 4; Sidmouth 21; Seaton 23; Beer 25; Seaton 28.

**Galyer, W. S.:** Walthamstow 2, 9; Wembley 3, 10, 17, 24; Ewell 4-11; 28; Watford 6-8; Dorking 14, 15; Enfield 18, 25; Liphook 21; Burnt Oak 23, 30; Enfield Highway 31.

**Gillham, S.:** Lancashire 1, 10; Stalbridge 11; Tricketts Cross 12, 19, 26; Martock 14; Child's Evangelism Conference 15-17; Winton, Wallisdown 21; Heatherlands, Parkstone 23; Hamworthy, Marnhill 24; East Dorset Adventure Time Club Prizegiving 27; Charnminster 28; Wyke Regis 30.

**Grimsey, A. W.:** Norwich 30, 31.

**Lowther, G. K.:** Grimsby and Humberside 1-10; Los Boliches, Malaga, Southern Spain 11-31.

**Meadows, D.:** Totton Reunion, Slavanka 5-7; Southbourne 7; Chardlers Ford 21; and the remainder of the time in the Bourne-mouth area.

**Phillips, C.:** Hildenborough 1; Kingston 2, 9, 16, 23; Chingford 7, 14; Walthamstow 10, 17, 24; Hampstead 11, 18, 25; Enfield 8, 15, 22; Aylesbury 21; Greenford 28.

**Short, S. S.:** Edinburgh 1-4; Leven 2; Bristol 7; Nailsea 9, 16, 23; Yeovil 11, 18, 25; Corsham 12; Taunton 13, 14; Shrewsbury 20; Oswestry 21; Lincoln 27-29; Peterborough 30.

**Stranger, D.:** N.W. London 1-3; Sudbury 4; Kenton 5; Belfast 6-21; Staffon Walden 22; Romford 23; Enfield 24; Bournemouth 25-30; Woodford Green 31.

**Tatford, F. A.:** The Bahamas—Spanish Wells 1; Nassau 2; UK—Portsmouth 4-7; Fareham 6; Glasgow 12-14; London 17; Croxley Green 27, 28.

**Thurston, A.:** Kingsbridge 2, 5, 12, 19, 26, 28; Chillingham 3, 4, 10-11, 18, 24-25, 31; Strete, 6, 7, 8, 15, 22, 29; Plymouth 14; Exeter 9, 16, 23, 30; Dawlish 21. Schools—Dawlish 15; Teignmouth 22; Plymouth 19; Kingsbridge 10, 17, 24, 31.

**Tryon, G. E. O.:** Dorking 7; Balham 8, 15, 22; East En 10, 17, 24, 31; Fetcham 14;

Tolworth 18; Leatherhead 21; Worthing 28, 29.

**Whitern, R. J.:** Welwyn Garden City 3; Enfield—Brigadier Camp Officers' Dinner 4; Wheatstone, Enfield Highway 7, 10; East Chaldon 8; Letchworth 9; Bourne Valley School, Hemel Hempstead 10; Kensington 13; Harlow (C.E.W. Deputation) 14; Clapton 17; Hemel Hempstead 18, 28; Fairlop 21; Kent (C.E.W. Deputation) 22-26; Walthamstow 27-28; Family Camp Preparation 29; Rainham 30; Milton Keynes (C.E.W. Deputation) 31.

**Willis, D.:** Central Wales 2-4; Runcorn 7, 14, 21, 28; Chorley 8; Culcheth 9, 16, 23, Oxtan, Birkenhead 10, 17, 24.

## Forthcoming Events

The Publishers regret that, owing to demands on space, it is not possible to insert an announcement in more than one issue. Correspondents should indicate clearly in which issue they wish their announcements to appear.

**Boscombe:** Conversational Bible Readings. Drummond Hall, Drummond Road, Feb. 3 at 7.00 p.m. Speaker: G. Davidson. Subject: Daniel 2.

**Brierfield:** Hebron Hall, Walter Street. Rallies at 7.00 p.m. Jan. 20 Speaker: R. Hill. Feb. 3 Speaker: T. Whittingham and Feb. 17 Speaker: K. Melling.

**Cardiff:** Rallies each Saturday at 7.00 p.m. as follows: Jan. 6 at Adamsdown—Cofee; Jan. 13 at Mackintosh—Speaker: B. Cirel; Jan. 20 at Canton—Speaker: Dr. A. Linton; Jan. 27 at Rhiwbina—Speaker: R. Anderson.

**Chesham:** Gospel Hall, Station Road, Jan. 27 at 6.30 p.m. Speaker: G. Brind. Subject: Acts 21: 1-19.

**Colyton:** Gospel Hall, The Butts, Jan. 27 at 7.00 p.m. Speaker: E. Parmenter. Subject: Galatians 4.

**Croxley Green:** Fuller Hall, Fuller Way, Jan. 27 at 7.00 p.m. Speaker: Dr. F. A. Tatford.

**Grimby:** Wellowgate Chapel, 67 Wellowgate, Feb. 17 at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: K. Andrewartha S.G.M. Illustrated lecture on Eastern Europe.

**Kirkintilloch, Glasgow:** Missy Meeting. Gospel Hall, 68 Townhead, Jan. 6 at 6.30 p.m. Speakers: J. Legge—Botswana; R. C. Allison—Rhodesia. Ann. Cfce. Jan. 27 at 3.15 p.m. Speakers: W. K. Morrison, A. Legge and another.

**London:** Bloomsbury Central Church, Shaftesbury Avenue at 7.00 p.m. Feb. 3, Psalms 42-43 "Depression", Speaker: H. Rowdon; Psalm 34 "Happiness", Speaker: J. Polkinghorne; Feb. 10, Psalm 73 "Disillusionment", Speaker: D. Clines; Psalm 116 "Gratitude", Speaker: J. Baigent; Feb. 17, Psalm 38 "Anguish", Speaker: H. L. Ellison; Psalm 32 "Peace", Speaker: C. Phillips; Feb. 24, Psalm 77 "Perplexity", Speaker: L. Allen; Psalm 16 "Delight in God", Speaker: G. Harpur.

**Luton:** Onslow Road Gospel Hall, Vincent Road, Leagrave, Jan. 20 at 4.00-5.00 p.m. (Ministry relevant to the portion) and 6.30-8.00 p.m. (Conversational Bible Reading). Speaker: A. Cundick. Subject: Colossians 2: 1-13.

**Maidenhead:** Monthly Cfce. Parkside Hall, St. Lukes Road, Feb. 3 at 6.30-7.30 p.m. and 8.15-9.00 p.m. Refreshments between sessions and discussion

afterwards. Speaker: Dr. A. Linton. Subject: Fellowship.

**Newcastle-upon-Tyne:** Tyneside S.S. Workers Cfce. Bethany Hall, Wingrove Road, Jan. 20 at 3.30 and 6.30 p.m. Speaker: J. Campbell.

**St. Albans:** Sunday School and Youth Leaders' Cfce. and Workshop. Thirlmere Christian Fellowship, Cell Barnes Lane, Feb. 3rd at 11.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m. Help will be given by C. More, D. Willcox and others.

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### COMING TO LONDON:

warmly welcomed at Parkhill Chapel, 17 Fleet Road, Hampstead, NW3. Sunday: 11.00, 6.30. Buses: 24, 26. Tube: Belsize Park, British Rail: Hampstead Heath, Gospel Oak. (12)

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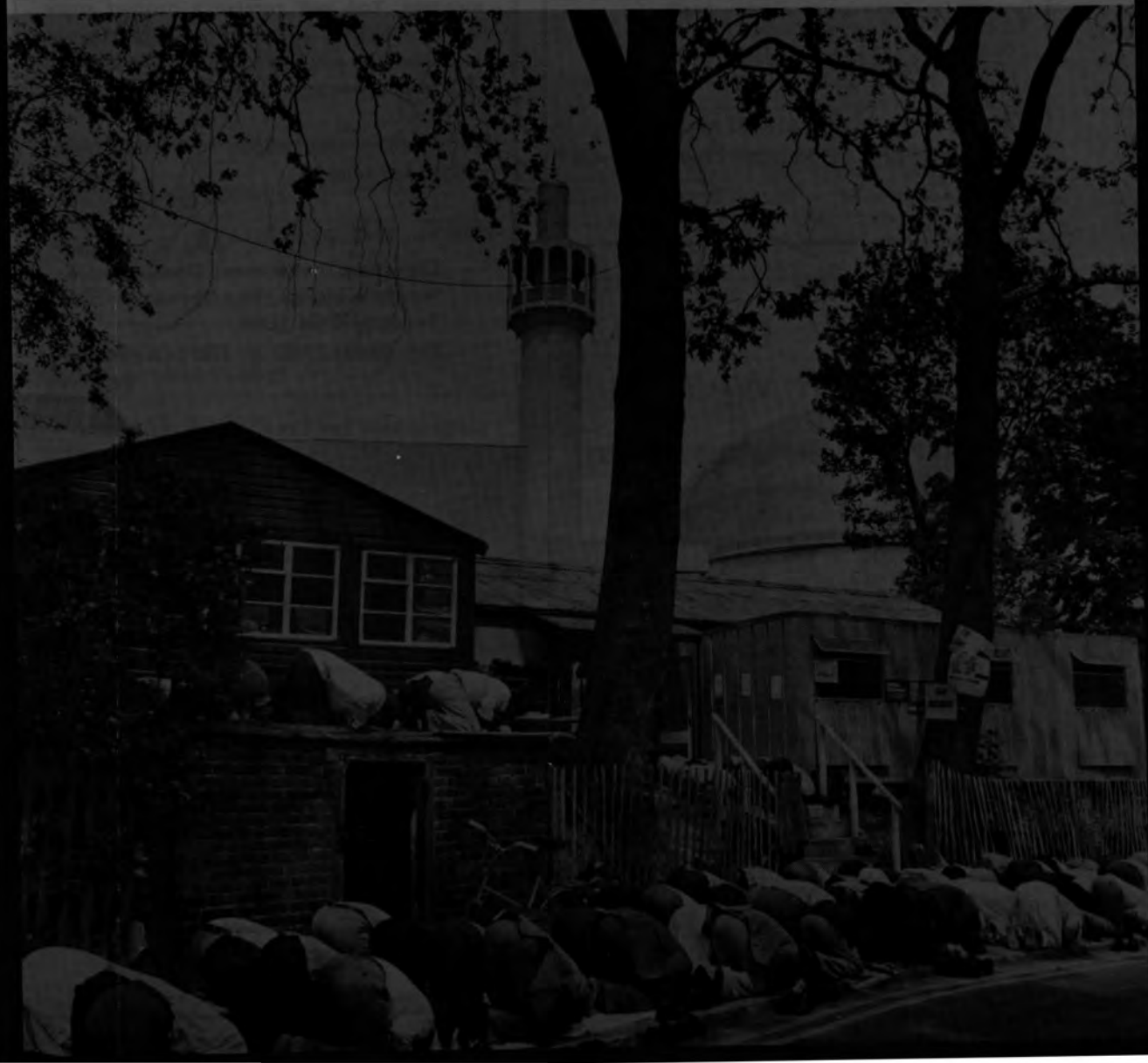
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Editor: Roy Coad

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The Four Altars of Abraham  
by H. V. G. Morris

# The Harvester

Inside : A Stranger Looks at Islam



# The Pit

A sign was fixed on a barrack room door. It said "The Pit". Entering the room the Scripture Reader engaged in friendly conversation with a soldier and told the story of the man whose experience took him from pit, to prison, to palace, and drew the analogy from the Psalm of having our feet set upon the rock and a new song in one's mouth. The young man expressed a real interest in the message of the Gospel and is at present being further followed up by the Reader.

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# The Harvester

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Cover picture: Camera Press

## The New International Version

As an announcement in this issue reminds us, February 1979 sees the publication of the *New International Version* of the whole Bible; yet another in the long procession of 'modern' translations that have followed in the not-quite a century since the *Revised Version* appeared. (The RV New Testament was first published in 1881, and the Old Testament in 1885.)

What is the justification for yet another version? There have been uneasy feelings that it might have had its origins in the fact that American conservative evangelicals have found it difficult to live with the long polemic conducted by extremist elements among them against the *Revised Standard Version* (a polemic, happily, not so noticeable in Europe, though it has reverberated here, the Editor remembers that two lady readers wrote indignantly to cancel their subscription to *The Harvester* after seeing the first issue for which he was responsible—the reason, that one article in it had dared to recommend the reading of the RSV!). It would be unworthy, however, to allow such feelings to affect one's judgment: many a noble enterprise has been founded on dissatisfaction with what already existed.

Certainly, the new version will be a strong candidate for the still vacant place of a generally accepted version for use in churches and for scholarly study. The NEB candidature for that position was, in the event, a sad disappointment: the RSV has come most nearly to filling it, but there will always be some unreconciled to its use. That evangelical scholarship should have been able to put forward this strong aspirant is itself a remarkable indication of what has happened to conservative scholarship in the last fifty years. Time alone will prove its durability: but we wish it well with all our heart.

In the meantime, the discussion concerning the use and authority of the Bible in the churches and in Christian living (to say nothing of its authority as the final court of doctrinal appeal) is likely in the next decades to move on to ground that lies on the far side of the debate over versions and translation. That ground is the ground of hermeneutic; of how to interpret the written word given. Even the pages of *The Harvester* have shown evidence of that concern, in recent months. It were well that evangelical scholars (and laymen) began to think long and hard over these new questions; and that forthwith. □

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# A Stranger Looks at Islam

Michael Miles

*M. Miles is developing facilities for the mentally handicapped at the Mission Hospital, Peshawar, Pakistan. He is author of the CBRF pamphlet Christianity and the Mentally Handicapped (Paternoster Press 65p.)*

An Arab-American oil company once ran an orientation course for men going to employment in Saudi Arabia. When questioned on 'What is Islam?' and 'Who was the prophet Mohammed', some remarkable answers were forthcoming from these educated Americans bound for the Muslim heart-land. One man thought Islam was 'a game of chance, similar to bridge', and others thought it an American organisation connected with the Ku Klux Klan. *The Arabian Nights* were attributed to the Prophet, and also the headship of a New York sect. One reply came a little closer: 'Mohammed had something to do with a mountain. He either went to the mountain, or it came to him'.

In aid of world community and understanding, there may be something to be said in favour of a little elementary comparative religion in schools, provided teachers make it clear that all the great religions have a spiritual core reaching beyond anything that can be put on the blackboard, or even on the latest whizz-bang overhead projector. Religious instruction in U.S. schools is reckoned to be unconstitutional, as it is in France, though any amount of human philosophy may permeate the teaching of science, history, literature and economics. (Some French teenagers are said to have asked if Jesus Christ was the name of a pop group; though for all I know it may in fact be so used somewhere. The name Jesus is common enough in some parts of the world, and Emile Zola had a notable character named Jesus-Christ in one of his earthier novels).

There are two standard methods by which facts about non-indigenous religions are taught. Most commonly a teacher tells his pupils 'They believe x, y, and z, and do this, that and the other.' An advance on this is where an exponent of the religion is invited to put his own case. Both have considerable drawbacks, and after learning a little about Islam by these methods it is illuminating to go to Pakistan and listen to Muslims addressing and exhorting one another on the subject of their religion. The tone is very different from that used in controversy with Christians. The window-dressing, triumphalism and crusading certitudes are muted or absent. There is an admission of failure and of wide diversity of opinion and interpretation. Doubts are publicly expressed as to how Islam is going to adapt its message to modern man who wishes to read and think for himself.

Much of the benefit of thus listening to Muslims lies not so much in learning anything new, since the

Church already embraces a very wide range of religious activity both good and bad; but rather in gaining insight into Christianity by seeing how closely it is paralleled by Muslim activity. On this business of propaganda, for example, we do exactly the same: in debate with Muslims we try to prove the superiority of our beliefs, that ours is the God of Love not Law, God both immanent and transcendent, a Book gladly translated into 2,000 languages instead of being confined to one, a world-wide church fellowship, etc. In private we admit our inability to love, our hankering for law, the exclusion of God from much of our lives, the lack of Bible-reading among Christians and the massive disunity of the Church.

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**'One man thought Islam was a game of chance, similar to bridge.'**

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A further benefit is that one realises some of the bias in one's mind when it comes to interpreting the Bible. A Muslim can read the O.T., Gospels and Acts, and find plenty of evidence that Jesus rejected any ascription of divinity and taught that a man's ultimate destiny would be decided purely on the basis of whether he did good works or bad. The Muslim is pleasantly surprised to find that this accords with his own beliefs and that although the Gospels seem to have been corrupted in some respects, they are fully worthy of their Quranic commendation. He finds nothing of the Trinity, and little to support his notion of Christians as pork-eating alcohol-swillers lacking modesty and destroying family life. Only in the Epistles he finds much objectionable doctrine, but he cannot take very seriously these obscure letters written between sect members 2,000 years ago, full of argument and peculiar logic. They hardly seem to be in the same category as the Holy Quran, uncreated speech of Allah, inscribed in Arabic upon gold tables etc. etc. After all, the Christians themselves no longer claim that the Bible was dictated by God or even by an angel, and they freely admit that there are thousands of variant readings in the texts!

On the theological front it is difficult to isolate really sharp contradictions between Christianity and Islam. Both are too big and amorphous. Certain parts of the Church conflict sharply in their doctrines with certain schools of Islamic teaching, while on the other hand some Christians have more in common with some Muslims than they have with other Christians. Plenty of Christians, particularly evangelicals, would be far more comfortable as Muslims: Islam would give them a Book immune from critical work (at least from within), a rule for every part of

life, plenty of opportunity to display their piety, and a stimulating whiff of the hellfire which has gone right out of fashion in the Church. On questions of women, sex, penal code and property, Islam offers teaching much more palatable to our more traditional-minded brethren than what they often receive at home.

On the individual level, one can meet a Muslim and recognise that 'this man shows more of the living God than I do; so how do I presume to teach him?' Or again, a serious Muslim may be awakened to Christianity by meeting one Christian who on the spiritual level is a *better Muslim* than himself: complete surrender to the will of God, no idols, charitable, constant in prayer. If a Muslim asks what is the essence of Christianity, one can choose between giving him something snappy that is accepted by only 60% of the Church, or admitting that there is no 'essence of Christianity' that may be so distilled. In Islam, the Word became Book; in Christ the Word became Flesh, and to learn to know and love God-in-Christ is a life-time venture on which the further one gets the less verbal baggage one carries.

'I feel that the question "How to be a Christian" or "How to be a Muslim" is ultimately a question of "How to be a Man", and religion if it is worth the name should answer this question.' (Prof. C. A. Qadir, *The Pakistan Times*, Independence Day 1978). The Christian can reply that 'How to be a Man' is exactly what the second Adam showed. But the enlightened Muslim may well agree, and still not see any reason from the teaching of Jesus why he should embrace a set of strange doctrines full of Greek and Hebrew philosophy which one missionary thrusts at him and another missionary may reject. The devout Muslim's veneration of Jesus as a real person may well exceed that of the Christian, for whom Jesus is often rather a magical-mystical figure tied up with Docetic notions.

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**'In Islam, the Word became Book;  
in Christ the Word became Flesh.'**

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The statement that Jesus was sent to show both who God is and what Man should be, will provoke reaction from most Muslims, but also from some Christians. The Sufi mystic is more likely to agree than the modern Protestant theologian! Many *Harvester* readers will feel that the person who cannot agree with such a statement is hardly a Christian at all; but that begs the whole question again. Peter perceived that 'in every nation any one who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to him' (*Ac. 10: 34*). We can easily shoot down Peter with a couple of old favourites wrenched out of context, 'For all have sinned . . .' and 'All our righteousness is filthy rags', but that does not alter the fact that

the scripture writers had no doubt of the existence of the good man who 'out of the good treasure of his heart produces good' (*Lk. 6: 45*).

'The progress that a man makes is steadily to identify the Divine Law that he is asked to obey as the law of his inner being: a law which in conformity brings relief and redemption to man. To begin with he accepted obedience to that law as warranting his true growth. But as he proceeds further he discovers that this law is also in keeping with his deepest urge: what at one time compelled obedience on his part is now replaced by love and longing to do the deed conformably to the law. The persistent practice of obedience to law has paved the way for a new disposition where obedience to law is done out of love.' From a commentary on *Romans 7*, *Jeremiah 31 and 32*, or *Galatians 4*? No, from a speech to a Muslim conference, by A. J. Brohi, Religious Affairs adviser to the Government of Pakistan. The majority of Christians have not yet realised this point. They are unaware that the law is still their *paidagōgos*, coaxing them into the school of Grace.

But, it may be argued, the good pagan's failure is precisely in this, that he does not live up to his own standard, which therefore condemns him, just as the Law spelt death for the Jews. Paul was not in fact himself convinced of this failure, since he allowed that the pagan's conscience may perhaps excuse him at the judgement (*Rom. 2: 15*). And what Christian is in a position to judge anyway? That is God's business (*1 Cor. 5: 12, 13*). Professor Qadir, in the same article, lays stress on the need for a man, whether Muslim, Christian or whatever, to be able to testify not only about his religion but also of the personal results in his life of practising it. 'Unfortunately nowadays a great many people sit in judgement on religion who have never made religion their dwelling and have never experienced it in their bones.' The Christian saints who have made God their dwelling place have seemed uniformly conscious of their own sinfulness, and most disinclined to pronounce upon other people's failures.

Is it 'Blessed Assurance' that really marks off the Christian from the rest? Or precisely the realisation of the costliness of sin and the wonder of Grace? It would be difficult to persuade a Muslim of either point. The bulk of Christians evidence little assurance of Heaven, but rather take out plenty of insurance for this earthly life. The Roman church regards assurance as presumptuous anyway, and plenty of Muslim, Hindu, Jewish and Buddhist holy men both claim and give evidence that they are periodically caught up indivisibly in the ocean of divinity. Islam measures the costliness of sin in drastic terms of punishment, while the compassion and mercy of Allah is commemorated millions of times a day in Muslim prayers.

Bishop David Brown in *A New Threshold* ('Guide-

lines for the Churches in their relations with Muslim Communities') claims that 'What is given to Christians alone is testimony to the unique acts of God in Christ: the incarnation of the divine Word, his life of love, his teaching, the unconditional giving of his whole self at Calvary, his glorious victory over death and evil, and his lordship over the world's destiny. These are the unique acts of the eternal God within time, and the community of Christ's disciples who live by them are commissioned to proclaim them to others.' But in fact an ecumenically-minded Muslim could agree with this (taking a fairly broad interpretation of certain Quranic passages, as suggested in some of G. Parrinder's work) and still see Mohammed and the Quran as the final word.

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**'Within Islam there is quite as wide a diversity of belief as in the Christian Church.'**

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Within Islam there is quite as wide a diversity of belief as in the Christian Church. The minimum credal statement simply affirms the Oneness of God and the prophethood of Mohammed, i.e. transcendence and mediation, and Professor Qadir points out that this involves less metaphysics than is required in all other religions. The Christian statement 'God is One and Jesus is His Son' is similarly stripped for action, but there is not much likelihood of it being adopted in place of the Nicene Creed, which makes heretics of most of us with its complexities. If one has a comprehensive Creed, problems of meaning and interpretation arise; if one strips it down to a faith-affirmation like 'Jesus is Lord', then everything depends on the state of the affirmer's heart as he says it.

Kenneth Cragg charges Muslims with too optimistic a view of man, underestimating the depth of depravity within the heart. The ideal Islamic State is based on the premise, strangely similar to that of the humanist and even Marxist utopian, that man will 'come good' if society is so arranged as to remove temptation and reinforce good. Against this, Cragg quotes from George Herbert:

Parents first season us: then schoolmasters  
Deliver us to laws: they send us bound  
To rules of reason, holy messengers . . .  
Without, our shame: within, our consciences  
Angels and grace, eternal hopes and fears.  
Yet all these fences and their whole array  
One cunning bosom-sin blows quite away.'

This was the 'risk' God took, seeing the end from the beginning and knowing that ultimately he would in Christ reconcile all things to Himself (Col. 1: 20). Having made the cows in the field, who have no choice but to be good, He made Man: subject to physical and spiritual laws yet having a certain ability to distinguish and to choose. To have a creature who

freely chooses good seems the more pleasing; I dare say God walks with the cattle on a thousand hills, but He walks in a different way with Man, as Jesus walked with his bunch of fishermen around Galilee. It also opens the door to the evil choice, the rejection of God, the denial of Life, a depth to which the cow, so far as we know, is incapable of sinking.

In the Incarnation, God showed that having taken the risk He would not take the easy way out by withdrawing man's freedom. He would use no compulsion other than love, but only employ judo techniques (the essence of which is that you allow your opponent to overthrow himself by placing him in an unstable position). Since God is bound to win any contest (even with a determined Jacob!) it follows that Man's freedom of choice has only an interim reality. Simone Weil said that Man was obliged to obey God: his only choice was to obey gladly or grudgingly. Islam and Christianity solve this paradox in different ways. Islam is purely monistic and so evil makes only a feeble showing and man is reckoned perfectible here and now. Christianity is ultimately monistic with an apparent interim dualism, so that evil bulks much larger and presents more of a problem to the theologian who wishes neither to minimise it nor to set it up as a real challenger to God. Barth struggled to express the 'shadow-side of Creation', while C. S. Lewis pictured the grass of heaven as so solidly real that it stapled the wraith-like feet of the newly arrived doubting-Lewis.

Having made this tentative distinction, one could doubtless find many Christian and Muslim writers to contradict it, and even more professional philosophers writhing before such ham-handling of their verbal stock-in-trade. Is it much use anyway to proclaim to Muslims that they should take evil more seriously by embracing an interim dualism and giving up the unequal struggle to erect the Kingdom of God on earth? About as much effect as on telling Constantine that Christianity was unsuitable to be the state religion of the Roman Empire, or informing Calvin that the Geneva experiment would end up as a black mark in Christian history!

What the Church in Pakistan actually proclaims, I cannot yet tell, because they issue the good news in Urdu. The unspoken proclamation is largely on the side of Constantine: vast church buildings, extensive land-holding, schools, hospitals, property, bought with dollars, marks, sterling and guilders, handed over to the local Christians to be their bane or blessing according to one's outlook. John Carden in *Empty Shoes* predicted that the Church Union then being discussed would be largely shaped by 'property, land, money, office, climate, food and livestock . . . the things which really motivated us in the Punjab.' The United Church of Pakistan which eventually emerged, while being a miracle of ecumenical endeavour and perhaps even of the grace of God, is nevertheless about as united as a



chance meeting of cats and dogs on a street corner.

Incidentally it is rather remarkable to see the Pakistan Ministry for Religious and Minority Affairs currently coughing up Rs. 50,000 towards the repairs for St. Paul's Rawalpindi. (That is about £2,500 straight exchange, but more equivalent to £12,000 in construction purchasing power). Out here one rapidly becomes cynical about such gestures, and it could either be window-dressing for the Embassies in nearby Islamabad or have something to do with the Geneva human rights conference being chaired by a Pakistani at the time the grant was announced. But it is more likely that the Minister for R. and M.A. simply thought it would be a good thing to do. I suppose it is roughly equivalent to the U.K. Redundant Churches Commission granting use of buildings to Eastern religions, except that in the one case Islam is helping prop up a tottering Christian edifice while in the other it is taking them over!

The witness of lifestyle in the Christian community of Pakistan reflects more of the Master's style, in that 'not many wise, wealthy or well-born' are found in the Church, and Jesus could come in with his carpenter's sweat and a strong smell of fish without being turned away by the deacons. But it is perhaps significant that the only growing denomination is the Union of Seventh Day Adventists, by attraction of sheep from other folds. Like most sects, the S.D.A. stand strongly for legalism and institutions, and the Union is run and financed by Americans. Definite doctrine and discipline make it easier for the S.D.A. member to stand in the Islamic milieu; the institutions make for jobs; Americans provide the modern, Western leadership for which, sadly, many Pakistanis yearn. The S.D.A. Union also produces quality literature in English at low cost, a considerable attraction to Christians from low-income homes who want to rise in the world, and to those who feel their own church does not give them enough teaching. 'Blessed are the poor' does not ring many bells out here.

### 'Is the still small Voice heard in Islam?'

One of the delights of the overseas mission field is the hilarious combination of contrasts and juxtaposition of opposite lifestyles and theologies one meets among the Christians. Some junior angels recently indulged their sense of humour by bringing a pentecostal American hotgospeller who lives in the style to which Americans are accustomed, to hold a revival at the church of a Pakistani vicar who is on the W.C.C. Faith and Order Commission and gets paid the equivalent of a quarter of the rate of Social Security in the U.K. or half what a single C.M.S. missionary gets in Pakistan. The American admitted to me that he did not know how anyone could live on so little; the Pakistani confided that he had seen more of the power of God in the revival

than in his many years of theological study. I believe this is known in the modern jargon as 'a learning situation'.

Another pleasure of being part of the small Christian minority here is the thought that the daily experience of kindness and services rendered to us by Muslims are all counted as though done to Christ. How God will take these things into account I have no idea, but Jesus was pretty explicit on the matter. The strangeness of this was brought home to me when sitting down to an agape with refugees from the coup in Kabul. The Communion elements were simply another piece of the bread and mug of the lemon squash we had been eating and drinking before, so the main focus for our eyes turned out to be the flowers on the table lovingly arranged and presented by our new Muslim gardener as an earnest of his intentions. Then as we prepared to pass the elements round, the chorus of mullahs started up their call to prayer, and for once it seemed not merely amplified cacophony but rather a sort of fellowship, that a whole city should be summoned to acknowledge God at the same time as us.

If we had the opportunity to rig up amplifiers on tall buildings all over our town in the U.K. and call people to prayer five times a day (as church bells used to) and broadcast the Gospel all through Sunday penetrating the walls of every dwelling, would we do so? And if not, would it be because we respect privacy or because we are British! In fact many keen Christians hanker after this approach, and would welcome a Constantine (or even a Jimmy Carter) to give them *carte blanche*. They would persuade men by all means, they would go out electronically into the highways and compel men to come in. They would invade every public and private place; their sound would go out into all the world. One cannot be very subtle at the top of one's voice, but Wesley and Whitefield did not seem unduly hindered by this in their field-preaching. Can the still, small voice be heard through the amplifier, or does the medium change the message into one of interference, intolerance, stridency, ranting bigotry? *The Gospel Blimp* shows how easily technique can replace love as the prime channel of communication and persuasion.

Is the still, small voice of God in fact heard in Islam, through the amplifiers, the ritual, the legal system? Does God reveal himself to those Muslims who have ears to hear? If He does, then it is most important that Christians too should listen in, to know how the Spirit of God interprets truth to the Muslim and thus to learn how to speak of God in the Islamic context. A ready 'listening post' seems to be provided by the writings and teachings of the Sufi movement within Islam, in which the Christian is unlikely to feel himself on foreign ground. 'The affinity of Christian and Moslem mystics, basing their lives and practices on the conception of the surrender to God, has excited the interest of a very large num-

ber of thinkers' (Idries Shah in a lecture to Geneva University).

Two such thinkers are Fr. Cyprian Rice ('Whatever one's preconceptions or reservations, it is difficult not to recognise a kinship between the Sufi spirit and vocabulary and those of the Christian saints and mystics') and Professor A. J. Arberry, notable Christian scholar of Islam, who saw 'no impertinence, no irrelevancy, for the Christian scholar to aim at rediscovering those vital truths which made the Sufi movement so powerful an influence for good'. Yet despite the efforts of scholars, the Church at large has preferred to ignore, despise or combat Islam unheard. Compared with the missionary efforts elsewhere there has been pitifully little contact with Islamic nations, and only a handful of pioneers going with Bible in one hand, scalpel in the other, to 'heal and convert the Muslim'. Such little success as their efforts have met with has tended only to deter them from seeking to know what God has already been doing in Muslim lands for thirteen hundred years.

While thinking about this I re-read C. A. Marsh's *Share Your Faith With a Muslim*, written out of many years experience in North Africa. Marsh's approach is characteristic of the old-time missionary, and very effective in reaching the average Arab, who in fact knows as little about Islam as the average Englishman knows of Christianity: a few facts wrongly interpreted and a confused mass of tradition, prejudice and cultural mores. But it does not come to grips with the Islam of the intellectual or the mystic, which between them probably cover the best of Islamic teaching. One gathers that Mr. Marsh would join with Roland Allen, who satirises those who believe 'The work of the Christian missionary is not to call men from the heathen temple into the Church of God but to trim the dimly glowing lamp of God in the heathen temple, and to pour into it a few drops of the oil of Christian doctrine till it shines with a new radiance' (*Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?*).

Yet it seems to me that there is a need for both old and new lines of approach by the Christian Church to Muslims. Bishop Jens Christensen, after a lifetime's work in Pakistan, charged the Church with having plenty of answers to questions Muslims were not asking, and precious few to ones they were. The great creeds of the Church were hammered out of controversy between Greek, Latin and Jewish thought-patterns a very long time ago, whereas the earnest Muslim enquirer wants to know the answer to a different set of theological problems, expressed in Arabic theological terms with a dash of modern European philosophy to confuse the issue. In discussion with Muslim friends in Peshawar, none of them very profound thinkers, I have been asked serious questions to which my immediate reaction would be 'That is not important, you can believe what you like about that', or 'That question does not

arise in the Christian way of looking at things'. Either answer is totally inadequate if one wants to give men good news that has some meaning in their already-existing thought patterns.

Men were made 'that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel after him and find him' (*Ac. 17: 27*); and God, who is not far from us, makes Himself accessible in our current situation and thought-patterns, leading us from the known to the unknown, starting perhaps with the invisible nature of God which is perfectly plain to see in the created order (*Rom. 1: 20*) (or at least was perfectly plain until the evolutionary hypothesis provided an alternative to Paley's Watchmaker). God's present accessibility is just as well, since stories about Jesus set in far off Palestine in long-gone times may not by themselves convey very much about God. 'It all seems so different. They didn't live like we do', said a harassed young mum to me, trying to learn how to please God while coping with noisy children and nasty neighbours atop a tower block Council slum. So it becomes the Church's business to tell her a story about Jesus and the Woman at the *Laundrette* (He asked her to wash his shirt, and when she demanded soap powder he offered her one that washed whiter not just once but permanently).

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### 'There is need for both old and new lines of approach to Muslims'

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The Western Church has been reluctant enough to translate elementary stories like this into relevant modern dress; all the greater difficulty arises when there is a need to speak of God with Arabs or Pakistanis, for whom the Biblical life-style is not so remote but the theological formulations of the church are alien. Consider the contacts there have been between the Christian West and the Muslim lands: colonial administrators, businessmen, scholars and missionaries. All have had some reason to acquaint themselves with aspects of Islam. But few, even of the scholars, have had any strong motivation to plumb the theological depths of Islamic teaching in order to perceive what God has been doing there, and to know how the Father desires to draw Muslims to the Son.

Perhaps the Orthodox and Coptic Churches should show their Catholic and Protestant brethren more of the way into the Oriental mind. But in view of the general decline in missionary recruitment among the traditional 'senders', the task will be on the agenda for the new generation of secular missionaries: Christians sent by aid agencies to do a technical job, who are therefore not answerable to a home church in terms of scalps taken, or Muslims converted. That may give more room to listen to the electronic mullah, to enter into dialogue and to speak the prophetic word by which God reveals Himself, Father Son and Holy Spirit. □

# The Sowing and the Reaping

H. F. Thompson

*Another short study from our regular contributor.*

Modern Man is doing his utmost to camouflage sin by covering it with highfalutin' scientific labels. We are now being told that sin no longer has any meaning, and that what 'unenlightened' people call sin is nothing more than a manifestation of primitive impulses, inherited tendencies, unreasoning fears, and so on which come to us from the lumber-room of the unconscious and can be satisfactorily dealt with clinically. But the idea that man can do away with sin by calling it by other names is nonsense. Sin is an affront against God, and a rejection of His order for creation.

Sin, which is common to all men, defaces the image of God in which man was created (*Gen. 1: 26, 27*). Man was created a spiritual being endowed with intellect and will, holding the supremacy among created things, and bearing in his conscience the moral law which God had given him to guide his conduct. Sin is at variance with the Divine Adoption—God decreed that we should become His adopted sons, through Jesus Christ (*Eph. 1: 5*). Sin is something

## 'Sin... defaces the image of God'

odious in its very nature, it stains man's character and disturbs his peace. Moreover, it is responsible for many of the ailments, physical and mental, that afflict mankind. 'In the 1930's', writes Dr. S. I. McMillen, 'specialists in psychosomatic medicine began to learn that a host of physical diseases were caused by envy, jealousy, self-centredness, resentment, fear and hatred' (*None of These Diseases*). Lives enfeebled by sinful indulgences gradually become indifferent to the precepts of God.

Not all sins are equal in gravity, but every sin indicates contempt for the authority of God, and a lack of love. The commandment is clear: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength... Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself' (*Mark 12: 30, 31*). God is the just ruler of the world, and he does not ignore sin: 'Be sure of it, a wicked man will not go unpunished' (*Prov. 11: 21*). Punishment is the just ordination of God, the natural 'fruit' of sin.

In the Old Testament and the New, there are numerous records of punishments falling on hardened sinners. A classic example from the Old Testament is the punishment that overtook the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah on account of their gross sins (*Gen. 19*). The Book of Revelation mainly deals with the fate that will overtake impenitent sinners, even though they appear to be extremely powerful.

God's punishments, however, are corrective. Through suffering and adversity, God opens the way for sinners to turn from their evil ways, since it is His will 'that all men should be saved' (*1 Tim. 2: 4*). People who recognise the disorder of their lives and turn to God with a deep desire in their heart to know Him, may well come to realise that He alone can satisfy the longings of the soul. Cleansing from past sins, and amendment of life in our relationships with God and with our neighbour are essential elements of true repentance.

No man, of course, is entirely innocent before God: 'Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me' (*Psalms 51: 5*). Sin came into the world through Adam's fault, and passed into all mankind through solidarity with him, and ever since there has been a sinister element in man—a propensity to evil. There are people who hold the view that all the sins which men commit are instigated by the devil, but Origen (185-254) does not believe this.

In the matter of eating and drinking, for instance, he says that it is possible for us to go astray without incitement from the devil, simply by indulging our natural appetite beyond what is proper, and so not resisting the first movements to intemperance: 'Then the hostile power, seizing the occasion of this first transgression, incites and presses hard in every way, seeking to extend our sins over a wider field...'. □

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## News of 'In Contact'

'In Contact' has grown very rapidly in the past three years to a total of some 19 full-time workers. The Lord has been gracious in raising up dedicated people to work in its inner-city mission field. He has provided accommodation for all the workers, buildings for worship and other activities, a bookshop and an Asian centre. Indeed we can say that He has supplied all of our needs, and provided for us all day by day. For this, His goodness to us, we can only give Him the praise and the glory.

Over this period of time we have been very conscious that we have been working in a pioneer situation. We have had to take 'risks' of faith, trusting alone in God, as we have pushed out into unknown and unexplored territory. We have the conviction that it was God who led us and who continues to lead us.

Our buildings here at Plaistow were provided for us in a most amazing and miraculous way. We now believe that we are to redevelop and refurbish them into a training and discipleship centre. They will function as a centre for the local community, a centre for outreach, a training centre for immigrant young people and for those wanting to work amongst immigrants. These are a few of the uses we envisage for it. The plans for this have been drawn up and we have just received a unanimous decision of approval from our local council. For this we praise the Lord and look to Him for the next step.

### Headquarters

The work of 'In Contact' is based at a redundant vicarage, church and schoolrooms. The vicarage houses a team of six workers as well as Patrick and Rosemary Sookhdeo who lead the work. The workers spend a good deal of time doing both evangelistic and pastoral visitation. The interested contacts are then brought into various groups and meetings, with the aim of their becoming disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ and members of the church in Plaistow.

A church has been planted here, which caters for the needs of the local multi-racial community. The church has a wide range of activities which consist of coffee mornings, fellowship and Bible Study evenings and childrens meetings. Special evangelistic events such as musical evenings, film evenings and other activities take place from time to time. Mr. and Mrs. Terry Diggins and their two girls have joined the team in Plaistow, with the specific ministry of leading the work of the church.

### Ilford

Jonathon Eden is working amongst the Tamil-speaking South Indians, which constitute the major minority-group in that area. The work is being carried out in conjunction with the local church and meetings and evangelistic events are being held there.

Over the past year Jonathon praises the Lord for the many Tamil families who treat him as a friend, and prays that these friendships will produce a harvest of people saved and living the Christian life.

### All things new: Christian bookshop & Asian centre

The Lord has recently provided us with premises for a Christian Bookshop/Counselling Centre/Asian Centre. The bookshop (which is now open) is situated in Green Street East London, in the middle of the Asian area. It carries extensive stocks of books and leaflets in the various Asian languages. The shop is staffed by Joseph and Claire Kough. Joseph is a Chinese believer born in Burma, and speaks many of the Asian languages. Claire (a former missionary in India) was with the Leprosy Mission. They have a daughter Rachel aged 7 years. Samuel Taskeen is from Pakistan and has worked as an evangelist amongst Muslims. Harpal Bal is a Sikh convert from Punjab in India.

The Asian Centre next door to the shop will accommodate Samuel Taskeen and his family and Harpal Bal. It is envisaged that the centre will be used for Bible Studies, meetings for Asian ladies and young people etc. etc. The centre will act as the focal point of our ministry amongst the Asian community in Newham and will seek to serve the community in both compassion and evangelism.

## More on this Inner-City Team

### Whitechapel

This is perhaps one of the greatest priority areas in Britain today. Increasing racial tensions and a rise in violence have become the order of the day. Whitechapel is now a place of frequent racial marches and is one of the target areas for the National Front. The work here is centred at a house and at the Tower Hamlets Mission. It is led by Stuart and Rachel Murray, with K. Christopher a graduate from India and Simon Browning a former Courtaulds engineer. These centres are in the middle of the 10,000 strong Bengali community.

Being so large in number the Bengali community is very strong and closeknit. It has its own cinemas, shops, factories, welfare associations and mosques. Any Christian activity designed to convert the Muslim is noted by religious leaders of the Muslim community who themselves are engaged in 'missionary' activity in the area. However, the team have many contacts with Muslim families, including leaders of the mosques, who have shown an interest in the Gospel.

A church was planted here six months ago and a steady stream of conversions has taken place. The team is involved in every level of the community.

seeking to meet social, spiritual and psychological needs. Many of these seem insurmountable because of the overwhelming pressures of life in the area.

#### Race and Education

Over the past few years 'In Contact' has been engaged in a ministry of encouraging and helping Christians to understand the immigrant community and the inner city. This has involved writing, lecturing, advising etc. As 'In Contact' has grown, so the need to continue and increase this important aspect of the ministry has become apparent. In response to much prayer the Lord has sent Mr. Malcolm Martin, a former graduate of Reading University and a surveyor, and Elizabeth Treglown, a former nursery nurse, to join 'In Contact' and to develop this aspect of the work. They plan to produce educational material, filmstrips etc. and to build up a resource library.

One of their first tasks is to organise a week of prayer for immigrants and the inner city titled 'Making Peace'. This will be a nationwide event for churches both in the inner city and the suburbs, and will seek to focus attention on those in need. The dates are 11-18 February 1979. □

(Details can be obtained from 'In Contact', St. Andrews Road, London E13-Tel. 01-474 0743)

## Professor Bruce Asks

H.M. Carson, in his book *Farewell to Anglicanism* (p. 125), makes this interesting remark: 'The weakness, as I see it, of the Brethren breaking of bread is the absence of a sustained exposition of the Word by a teaching elder who has been given gifts by the Spirit for this purpose. The ideal gathering for the worshipping community on the Lord's Day, and one that would approximate best to a Biblical pattern, would be one which combined both these features—the freedom of the breaking of bread and the strong emphasis . . . of a regular and sustained exposition of the Word of God.' There are places where an attempt is made to make this twofold provision. Do readers think that Mr. Carson has put his finger on a real weakness?

Correspondence, please, to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey, SM5 4NX by 15 February.

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# The Four Altars of Abraham

H. V. G. Morris

He was made of sterner stuff than we are, for when at an age when many retire permanently to an easy-chair, he started a great adventure for God. Very cautious, this man Abram: the call had come earlier, but the ties of family were strong. The migration from Ur to Canaan, could not be by the direct route, because of the great desert which lay between, inhabited by fierce nomadic tribesmen. The caravan of Abram and his family, with great herds of cattle, must first follow the winding course of the Euphrates, a distance of about a thousand miles, until it reached the N.W. of Mesopotamia. There an encampment was established by his brother, Nahor, and here the old father died.

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**He was made of sterner stuff . . . at an age when many retire, he started a great adventure for God**

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Now Abram was free to be more definitely guided by the Angel, in a south-westerly direction towards Canaan. In the wooded plain of Moreh, in the Shechem area, the caravan paused: here the Lord first appeared to Abram, renewing the promise and the covenant, and here he built the first altar, staking his claim to the land which lay before him. From thence, a short journey to Bethel, where he built his second altar. Now commenced a particular relationship with God, for we are told that he 'called upon the Name of the Lord'.

Modern Israel would do well to remember that the title deeds to Palestine are not secured by warfare with their neighbours, but by the sworn covenants made by God, and ratified by the chain of altars built by Abram.

From Bethel, in a southerly direction, he journeyed to Beersheba, the extreme border of the Promised Land, and now came the first test, in the form of a severe famine. Abram chose to go down into Egypt, in spite of the notorious evil of that land. Did he set a higher value on his possessions of flocks and herds, more than the honour of his wife? God intervened: as a result of the plagues upon Pharaoh, Abram was expelled with a scathing rebuke from the heathen King. He retraced the journey, back to Bethel, to the place of his second altar, where he was restored to fellowship with God, and thereby became better prepared spiritually, for the second test which faced him.

Separation from his nephew Lot must now come, for the pasturage was inadequate for their great flocks and herds, and fighting broke out between their herdsmen. Lot seems to have been attracted

to the opulence of Egypt, and when the choice was offered he decided for the rich lands of the Cities of the Plain, although he knew full well the wickedness of the inhabitants, and should have realised the moral danger to his wife and daughters.

Quickly followed God's blessings upon Abram: we observe that these became wider and more explicit as the faith of this man was tested and proved. The whole of the land, wherever his far-sighted gaze might rest, or his wandering feet might take him, was given to him and to his descendants for ever. These would be as numberless as the dust of the earth. Abram took God at His word, and journeyed southerly to the wooded country belonging to Mamre, at Hebron, and there he built his third altar. This place became the hub of his cycle of nomadic wanderings, made necessary by the requirements of his livestock. As soon as the pasturage became scarce, his herdsmen must move on to fresh fields: this was the manner of their life. Not for them the allurements of the city dwellers, with whom sin was gross and idolatry debased.

The stirring events of the fourteenth chapter of *Genesis* lead on to the strange sacrifices and to the terrible experience described in chapter fifteen. Abram had rejected enrichment by the Kings of Sodom and Gomorrah (to which he was rightfully entitled by the rules of warfare) and God shewed His approval by a further promise. He was brought out to observe the clear starlight of the Eastern night, and was told that, even as the stars could not be counted, so also his descendants. Abram asked for a sign by which he would be assured of the fulfilment of God's promise: an intensely solemn request for a man to ask God for a sign of a covenant given.

Perhaps it would be better for us, individually, to ask God what we are to learn from the five-fold sacrifice, the horror of a great darkness, and the smoking furnace of fire. These things were explained to Abram as symbolic of the great affliction through which the nation must pass, and from which they would be delivered after four hundred years. For ourselves, with the advantage of some understanding of the Levitical offerings, and with the help of *Hebrews 9*, we shall learn of the greater horror and darkness of Calvary. We may also discover that if we wish to have a particular and precise revelation of the Father's plan and purpose, it will only come after effective cleansing of every practice and association that defiles.

It was soon after this experience, that Sarai Abram's wife, persuaded him into an expedient by which he would secure an heir to his possessions. It was a failure of faith on Abram's part, and may have delayed God's plan; but we recognise that these men of ancient times thought little of numerous



concubines, whose status was not much above that of a slave, and whose sons 'were sent away with a gift'. Nevertheless, it is significant that thirteen years were to pass before a record is given of God's appearance to Abram, and a renewal of the covenant made. It was at this appearance that his name was changed to Abraham, and Sarai became Sarah. The rite of circumcision was initiated and became obligatory on all his descendants.

The events of chapter eighteen of *Genesis* make no mention of an altar; but the offering of a calf, with the meal which Abraham prepared for the three men who came to him, must surely (having regard to the identity of the One who remained behind) be considered as an offering and a sacrifice. The story of Abraham's further experiences, and the happenings which were to shape the future history of the peoples of the East, are told in chapters nineteen to twenty-one, and these must be borne in mind when seeking an explanation of the fourth and final altar, the culmination of Abraham's life and the witness to all who would seek after God in future millennia.

The household of Abraham had now become a tribe, and migrated to the most southerly part of Palestine, the Beersheba area. It was from this place

that Abraham was called for his greatest test, the offering up of his son Isaac upon Mt. Moriah. This chapter, twenty-two, towers above all others in OT history, the 'Everest peak' of human faith and experience. Can anything new be discovered and written? We think not, for every word and phrase have been the favoured subject of preaching and ministry ever since the spiritual meaning was made clear by NT writers. This however we would emphasise, that Abraham, in purpose and intent, offered his son, and that Isaac yielded himself to be placed on the altar. A substitute was provided, but the value of the sacrifice was not lessened thereby, and the measure of God's complete acceptance and response, was as though Isaac had been slain and restored to life.

There was no further altar in Abraham's life: none was necessary, even as there could be no further sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The beginning of this short study was with a contrast: we may not be like the one about whom we have been reading, but we can still recognise both the Abram and the Abraham in our own life and experience, and may we not also confess to quite a lot of Sarai, as well as of Sarah, in the secrets of the heart? □

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## Kathleen White's Column

### A Tale of Two Intruders, by Elaine Brown

#### Intruder Number One . . .

The cheek of it! The blatant audacity! Fancy loudly interrupting when I'm trying to speak. Not just once either, it's habitual. Such impertinence reaches its peak when we're entertaining. Can't make ourselves heard, so we give up. Lost the art of conversation? Well who's to blame.

Come to think of it, there's a subtle streak somewhere. Not only talking at us all the time, but telling us what to believe. The affrontery! Once upon a time I had all my beliefs nearly tied up. Not now. Sent me into a proper spin, all that magnanimous chat about other faiths and whatnot. Mind you, our family once made a habit of talking these things out together, nice and close-knit. 'Must tell you what he said!' our daughter burst out, as soon as she got in from YPF. Not now, there isn't a moment. Just think of everything we'd miss if we sat around chatting to each other. For one thing I'd get right out of sequence with all that colourful entertainment clamouring for attention.

Clamour's the word. Right past midnight too. Proper inconsiderate, I'd say. We never let the children chatter on that long, depriving everyone of sleep. 'Off to bed!' I say, (not that they obey). 'You can't shove me off upstairs *Now!*' one of them moans, 'not when I've been waiting all week for it!'

For what? Well, I'm not too sure. That's part of the problem. It's not just one intruder who's after us, but several at once. The pressure of it! No peace when a happy little family gets pulled in about four different channel directions each night. To be honest it's tearing us apart. Mind you, we haven't missed the boat altogether. Years back there was Ludo and Snap, then we progressed to Happy Families and Monopoly. I remember draughts too, and piles of puzzles. Still got that chequers board. It's taken on a new lease of life now as lap-table for 'eat while you watch' snacks.

What's that about books? You've got to be joking. No busy mum has time to sit down and *read*. A luxury for when you're ill or something. The Bible? Well, that *is* a bit different. It's something I always give special thought to when I'm off-colour or feeling low. Marvellous pick-you-up all those green pastures and still waters. Bliss! Think of it! No noise, no insistent interruptions telling me what I must do, and all the 'hows' and 'whens' and 'whys' of doing it. Just me on my own, with a Shepherd somewhere close at hand, protective-like. Someone to take the lead. . . Marvellous, those quiet pastures!

#### . . . and Friend

'What, give up the family's happiest feast of the week? Proper kill-joy you are. Imagine it, no succulent roast spluttering away in the oven when we return from church. I love that tempting smell as we open the front door—wouldn't miss it for anything! It's the one meal where I don't grudge a spot of over-spending, just for the joy of it. When else could we eat best beef or pork leg without a twinge of conscience? Sundays are different though. After all, God meant it as a *special* day, and He says a good bit in support of feasting as well. Try *Nehemiah 8: 10*. It's a super way of celebrating His Day!

Think of the family too. I couldn't deprive them now, could I? They wait all week for their Sunday lunch and I don't stint them either, second helpings for all if they want it. It's a time of special togetherness around an extra-good meal. Just what the Lord delights to see, don't you think?

What's that about a big dose of bicarb. and an afternoon nap? True, true, I'll grant you that. It's a part of the 'Day of Rest' you see. Everyone needs it after all that meal preparation, and greasy dish-washing. Yes, to be honest, Sundays *are* a rush, till after lunch anyway. What with late breakfast and spuds to peel, to say nothing of one kid dropping his offering money into the coal scuttle and another tying his tie throttle-style. All this while I'm beating the Yorkshire and doing calculations for our pre-set oven.

No wonder I sit out the sermon in a turmoil of doubt. 'Did I, or didn't I?' I say to myself, while our speaker goes on and on about 'peace' or something. Once my husband (bless him!) crept out and drove home to check. Yes, I *had* turned the oven on, but I could have sworn I didn't, if I were the swearing sort. I'm not, mind you. We don't go in for all that kind of thing. Good dutiful Christian folk we are, if you want a frank opinion.

Now, come off it! How can our weekly feast be doing others harm. Give it up, and give the cost equivalent away? That's *too* much to ask. Next thing you'll be suggesting is a *fast*!—and you won't catch me doing that. Like I said, feasting is Biblical, and fasting is . . . er well . . .

Two exaggerated intrusions? Of course. They riled me as I wrote them, and you might well be seeing red too if you've persevered thus far. But exaggeration is a super-effective way of putting over a point. Take beams versus splinters, or camels and

needles-eyes for instance. They get the message across with an extra thrust—right through to our most sensitive spot!

Of course TV has its advantages, educational-asset and entertainment-provider that it is. I'm not out to oust it altogether unless the intrusion has reached home rule proportions as it had in one friend's home. 'Must get out of the house for an hour!' she gasped, hurrying in through our front door, 'can't wait to escape that telly!' If she'd chucked it out, it wouldn't have chased her out.

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### Simmer up a pot of good home-brew on Saturday . . .

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And there are other equally good (sometimes better) means to home education and entertainment. A friend gave our twin sons ten heavy volumes of a children's encyclopaedia when they were only two weeks old. Odd way to greet a baby, I thought, but my! what a gift! Those books have given eleven years of educational pleasure, and are still going strong. As for entertainment, how about some ideas for starters:-

Has our family learnt the excitement of a chess combat?

Have we any un-done jigsaws in the cupboard?

Where's that ping pong/badminton set?

Who said marbles (or skittles etc.) aren't fun—they *are*, especially with dad!

How about a *Mastermind* contest with heats for each family member?

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If Elaine Brown's article only makes you laugh, it will have performed a useful service, but I hope it will do very much more than that. Many of us may become aware of a certain inflexibility in ourselves—we must see the whole of a television serial, whatever else happens on that particular evening. Again, parents of most families realise the necessity to create a rough timetable for the week to include basic essentials. When that timetable becomes so rigid that it over-rides commonsense and convenience, it is time to abandon such a restrictive plan. We have, of course, to take into account that some people are very much creatures of habit whereas others work more on impulse, but somewhere between the two a workable method can be evolved.

Years ago, I can remember a Christian woman who was never to be seen at the prayer meeting on Monday evening. 'It's impossible', she would explain, 'because by the time I've done my washing and ironing on the same day, I'm too tired to go out'.

There was really no reason why she couldn't occasionally postpone the ironing until Tuesday, as she didn't work outside the home, but to the bold soul who once suggested it, she replied indignantly, 'I've always done it that way'. (Of course, the elders could have fixed the meeting on another day so she had no excuse!)

More than all else, why not switch off the telly more often in order just to talk with one another—and Him?

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### If she'd chucked *it* out, it wouldn't have chased *her* out!

---

Sunday lunch? Well, it *is* a special way of celebrating Sunday. I love it! And pre-church busyness can be reduced, if you gear the menu to suit Saturday preparation. But how about a monthly 'So Sunday' just to right the balance? Simmer up a pot of good home-brew on Saturday. Serve with roast after church next day, and send the money saved to help feed someone who never has Sunday lunch. You can ask for His blessing on the cheque as you start lunch, and later the children might enjoy posting it off. A family-togetherness idea that *really* makes Sunday Lunch special! Granted, there might be tummy-rumbles that afternoon, and pleas of 'why can we have tea?' but no one can deny the benefit of a few hunger pangs to our often over-fed system.

---

### Why not switch off . . . to talk to others—and Him?

---

Two intruders that need to be put firmly back in their places, for some of us at least. Mind you, like all intrusions they're done with subtlety, a coup before you knew it. But that doesn't preclude a counter-coup which, if planned and implemented in line with God's purpose, will surely spell success. [

---

By way of complete contrast, a neighbour who never attends a place of worship complained to me about her sister-in-law. They are supposed to share the care of her very elderly mother between them but my neighbour is usually left with the complete responsibility because her sister-in-law is adamant that she must attend every church service possible in the week and consequently has no spare time for sick nursing.

As in everything, the life of Jesus provides the perfect pattern for us. In spite of a short life of 33 years, He could say to His Father in the end, 'I have finished the work that Thou gavest me to do.' He never wasted time and often drove Himself to the point of extreme physical weariness. Yet, He always had time for people. The disciples tried to drive away the mothers but Christ stopped to bless the children. Even on the way to a death chamber He waited to heal someone who urgently craved His attention. He held everything in the right balance.

So—why not take a long and searching look at some of the problems of your family organisation? If you're prepared to be flexible and honestly re-think your whole strategy of work and leisure, you may well evolve a system infinitely more beneficial to everyone concerned.

Kathleen White



Correspondence for this page should be sent to Mr. Peter Cousins, M.A., B.D.,  
The Paternoster Press Ltd., 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW marked 'Harvester Question Page'

## Question and Answer, with Peter Cousins

### 2 Thessalonians 2: 7

#### Question 135

In 2 Thessalonians 2: 7 occur the words *'ek mesou genētai'* usually translated as 'until he be taken out of the way'. This is frequently applied to the removal of the Holy Spirit. But may not the phrase be translated literally as 'out of the midst it comes' and would it not in this case make better sense as referring to the rise of the lawless one out of the midst of a lawless world?

I think that the passage is capable of bearing the sense you suggest. But I am not convinced that it is superior. The verb frequently implies a re-location and it is not always easy to see whether the sense implied is active or passive: for an example, we may cite the Septuagint of *Job 28: 2* where it would be equally reasonable to translate "gold comes out of the earth" or "gold is taken from the earth". In the passage you refer to, I think the context favours the traditional translation since the proposed alternative would involve two references to the appearance of the 'lawless one': at the end of verse 7 and at the beginning of verse 8.

In your letter I detect some reservation (which I share) about the identification of 'he who restrains' with the Holy Spirit. Other suggested interpretations, however, include the preaching of the gospel and the stabilising influence of the Roman Empire, both of which may more reasonably be viewed as 'taken away from the world' than the Holy Spirit.

### 'A Horn of Salvation'

#### Question 136

In Luke 1: 69, the Good News Bible has 'a mighty Saviour' instead of 'a horn of salvation'. Is this not going beyond the bounds of translation?

Certainly this is not a literal translation but I think that the Good News rendering reproduces the meaning of the original rather accurately. The phrase 'of salvation' means 'saving' or 'bringing deliverance' while the word 'horn' suggests the strength of a fighting animal in a way natural in Hebrew but not at all obvious to Western readers. Old Testament parallels to this verse such as *Psalms 132: 17* and *Psalms 18: 2* show that it would be quite appropriate to translate at greater length: 'a mighty one bringing deliverance' so that 'a mighty Saviour' seems a very happy translation, open to criticism only if we disapprove of the implied identification of the deliverer with the promised Messiah.

### 'Reflection' or 'Radiance'?

#### Question 137

In Hebrews 1: 3, the phrase, 'the effulgence of his glory' is translated by the Good News Bible as, 'he reflects the brightness of glory'. Does this not seem to imply a diminished view of the deity of the Son?

It is interesting to notice that *Good News For Modern Man* as originally published (i.e. up to the third edition of 1972) had, 'he shines with the brightness of God's glory', a form of words which would not I suppose have been considered worthy of comment in this context. In point of fact, the Greek word, *apaugasma*, used here may be translated either as effulgence/radiance or as reflection. Writing in the *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, Volume 2*, R. P. Martin decides that on balance, 'radiance' is preferable to 'reflection'. But there is no theological difference in the meaning. The underlying idea is the same: namely that the mystery of God's being and glory cannot be seen by human eyes but is nevertheless disclosed by the Son. It makes little difference whether the Son is regarded as the radiance of the divine light or as the mirror-image (reflection) of God. Neither statement subverts his deity although the 'radiance' concept does relate more closely to the Nicene Creed and its affirmation that the Son is: 'God from out of God, Light from out of light'.

### The Sparrow and The Swallow

#### Question 138

Is there any spiritual or theological significance in the reference (*Psalms 84: 3*) to the swallow and the sparrow living in the Temple?

In one sense, the answer is negative. As the writer of *Psalms 84* remembers the Temple, he recalls the birds he has seen in the courtyards and thinks how wonderful it must be to "dwell in thy house" (v. 4). Inevitable, however, the sensitive reader is led (as the Psalmist probably was) to think of the universal welcome offered in God's house to all who approach it and especially (perhaps) to the homeless and poor. This association, which does not amount to specific teaching, might naturally lead one to think of passages such as *Matthew 10: 29, 9: 10* and *11: 28-30*. But it would be going too far to suggest that the verse from the Psalm teaches the truths contained in these passages.

# Looking at Books

## A Happy Presentation

### IN GOD'S COMMUNITY: THE CHURCH AND ITS MINISTRY

Edited by David J. Ellis and W. Ward Gasque. Pickering & Inglis. xiii 186pp. £4.50.

Thirty years ago a book was published (by the same publishers) entitled *The Church: A Symposium* (edited by J. B. Watson) in which sixteen writers associated with assemblies of Open Brethren presented the biblical teaching (as they saw it) concerning the Church. There are those who would argue that nothing has changed and that we simply need a reissue of the original book or a restatement of its teaching. The editors of this symposium believe that each generation has the obligation to think through the teaching of Scripture for itself and see how it applies to the life of the Church today. They have therefore asked fifteen people associated with similar churches to reconsider the main aspects of church life in the light of Scripture.

What makes this volume different from its predecessor is that it is dedicated to a particular person: G. C. D. Howley. As the editors say, 'There has been no one, we believe, in the Brethren movement who has given more encouragement to our generation, and there have been few in any church fellowship who have made such a widespread impression for good on so many.' F. F. Bruce in an opening *Appreciation* outlines the debt that the churches owe to the work of Cecil Howley (not forgetting to mention the important role played by his wife Robina).

In a short review it is not possible to do justice to all the contributors; but the following notes should give some idea of the contents and approach of this book.

Ward Gasque opens the batting with a masterly summary of the N.T. teaching about the Church, bringing out the diversity of its images and teaching. After a useful chapter on *Baptism and the Lord's Supper* (by Murray Harris), Walter Liefeld deals with *Leadership and Authority in the Church*. His suggestions on how elders should be appointed are unusual but need to be carefully

considered. In another chapter Robert Lightbody considers *Pastoral Care and Church Discipline* and adds that Brethren assemblies need full-time pastors. It is good to see Alan Nute taking up the pen to provide with a clear and challenging treatment of *Worship* laying the ghost of the misuse of the phrase 'the leading of the Spirit.'

Olive Rogers grasps the nettle of *The Ministry of Women in the Church*, using her missionary experience in India to contrast the treatment of women in the Church with the teaching of Scripture.

Other contributors are John Watson (*The Church and the Family*), Arthur Ginnings and Donald T. Ginnings (*Christian Stewardship and Church Finance*), Paul M. Ginnings (*The Church and World Mission*), Roy Coad (*Church Unity*), H. L. Ellison (*The Church and Israel*), Peter J. J. Sins (*The Church and the World*) and Mary Bateson (*The Church's Educational Ministry to Youth*).

The volume is rounded off with a chapter on *Life from the Early Church* by F. F. Bruce in which he makes the observation that unity was not uniformity and development (in doctrine and practice) did not necessarily involve departure (from truth). Inevitably there are subjects which one would like to have seen included but which were not (e.g. spiritual gifts, Bible study, teaching ministry, local evangelism, house groups, deacons), but that would have meant a much larger book. What has been written should be pondered by elders; but it is also suitable for a wider readership because it is so clearly written. We hope that this tribute to the life and work of G. C. D. Howley will have a wide influence.

Review by John W. Baigent.

(We welcome this timely and attractive tribute to an esteemed brother and mentor, Mr. Howley; and more so for two features that themselves mark development in the Brethren movement since the predecessor work was published. This book is a much more international work (*The Church: A Symposium* had only one overseas contributor), and it is good to see two women contributors. Perhaps the eventual successor to this book will in turn see not only female participation, but contributions also from Brethren from the Third World and the Continent.)

### BROADCASTING THE WORD

**The Power of the Air** Peter and Pam Cousins. Hodder and Stoughton. £1.00.

It is almost trite to say that these are days when missionary work in general is receiving some heart-searching re-evaluation. Missionary radio is not escaping, and in many ways this is a good thing. Let the romantic and fanciful, and unreal and the wasteful, be cut down so that that which is born of God may stand revealed and unashamed. Some reputations may go to the wall: but who wants anything that cannot bear light? But who shall be the judge of such things—apart from God? I suggest this must be the praying and supporting Christian public.

In the realm of missionary radio there is much unreality. Specialising for many years in programming and building a fulltime radio fellowship, and serving on various boards and councils of radio organisations, I welcome this book

from Peter and Pam Cousins. The main organisation that is examined is that of FEBA, Seychelles. But, in the process, an objective review of various aspects of missionary radio in general is given. It is this kind of writing that gives the Christian supporter some idea of what the problems and issues are. He should be greatly helped in deciding where he puts his prayer and his pocketbook.

The book's objectivity and detail are at once its strength and its weakness. For some, it will not be easy reading, although I had to press on until I had finished it. I wonder how some of those early pioneers of FEBA really felt about battling against rock and ocean; felt the frustrations of hours and new kinds of spiritual battle? They have no opportunity of telling us. What are the problems of having to live alongside some three score non-Christian Seychellois because of Government requirements? The sample schedule of E

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programming is well out of date, seeing that the cut back has been very heavy. Chapter 7 (on the financing of missionary radio stations) is worthy of study. But it omits one big factor. A very big percentage of airtime (as high as 80% in some cases) is in fact paid for by the people who supply the programmes that are broadcast! Peter Cousins refers to this in passing later in the book—but only in passing.

The reader needs to remember that the theme of the book is missionary radio and not Christian radio. The latter would cover also the use of Government, commercial and local radio stations.

Two minor comments: page 38 refers to the Far Eastern Broadcasting Company (Associates); this is corrected everywhere else to Far East Broadcasting Associates; and I understand that it is more fashionable now to write Telugu than Telegu (there is often trouble over these anglicizations).

For me, the book was crowned by Peter's devastating comment: 'Christian Radio—the last stronghold of Western imperialism'. Tremendous! See 2 Tim. 2: 2—I really must do something about that.

Review by Philip A. Booth (Founder: Radio Worldwide).

**Capturing Voices** Phyllis Thompson. Hodder and Stoughton 95p.

190 pages packed with anecdotes of faith, endurance and incredible adventure—what an amazing bargain for a mere 95p!

Phyllis Thompson has already proved her skill and expertise in tackling missionary biography. The latest addition to her growing list is no exception. *Capturing Voices* makes compulsive reading. Joy Ridderhof, the founder of Gospel Recordings, possesses an indomitable courage and an unquenchable spirit in the face of most daunting obstacles.

Invalidated home from the mission field, her seeming failure was translated into positive action when she began to produce, very painstakingly, the first few gospel records in Spanish to reach the people of Honduras she had been compelled to leave behind.

Now, 42 years later, her organisation has branches in six continents and can supply recordings in more than 4000 languages. These could never have been obtained without the dedication and devotion of this frail but resourceful small woman.

At times perhaps even a little exasperating and unpredictable to her colleagues, she nevertheless commands their loyalty and affection because of her utter selflessness. A catalogue of her adventures would read somewhat like Paul's in 2 Cor. 11.

It seems churlish to find any fault at all with such a thrilling narrative but a slightly better quality paper and a more arresting title would do even greater justice to an enthralling theme.

Review by Kathleen White

## New International Version Bible

The New International Version Bible is published by Hodder and Stoughton this month. More than one hundred evangelical scholars, representing many denominations, have laboured for fifteen years to complete this distinctive translation. The result is a scholarly, eminently readable Bible providing the most exact, illuminating rendering of the original languages into English.

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contd.



continued

A leading evangelical Anglican, the Reverend John Stott, Rector Emeritus of All Souls Church, in London's West End, says 'What does one hope for in translators of the Bible? First, a humble reverence before the sacred text; secondly, scholarly familiarity with the theology, background and language of the Bible; and thirdly, cultural sensitivity in the search for a 'dynamic equivalent' which is both faithful and appropriate. The N.I.V. seems to me to reflect an outstanding combination of these three qualities, and I warmly commend it'.

'Publication of the N.I.V. Bible next February,' says Hodder's Chairman, Mr. Philip Attenborough, 'will certainly be the biggest event in our publishing history since the launch of *The Ascent of Everest* by Sir John Hunt in 1952.'

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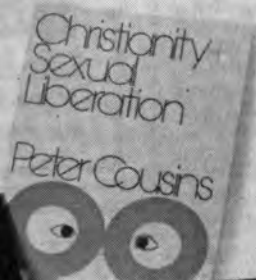
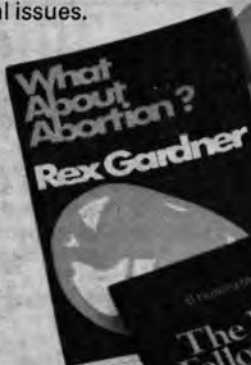
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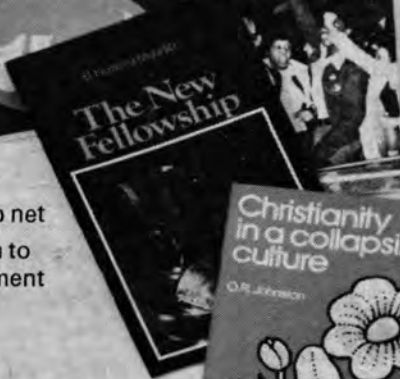
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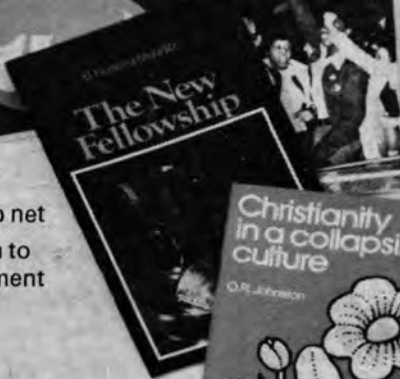
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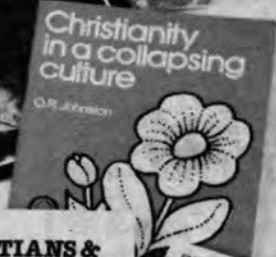
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## Replies to Professor Bruce

### The December question

In an old Bible which was bequeathed to me I find a sheet of paper with what I think must be notes of a conference address on *I Corinthians II*, but there is no indication of the speaker's identity (whether male or female). On the expression 'because of the angels' in *I Cor. 11: 10* there is this note: 'Adam was not deceived (*I Tim. 2: 14*), but Eve was, because she failed to give Adam his headship when she was tempted. She did not consult him before yielding. *Gen. 3: 16* does not impose subjection on the

woman as a punishment, but restores the original order. Had the fall never taken place, it would remain true that Adam was head, for he was first formed, then Eve. This is all known to angels, who now learn from the covered and silent woman as she sits beside man in the assembly what God has done in re-establishing the primal subjection of the woman to man.'

This does not accord with my own understanding of the scriptures mentioned, but it would be interesting to have readers' comments on it.

### Mr. G. K. Lowther replies:

My immediate reaction to the unknown speaker's address on *I Cor. 11: 10* was—is it so simple?

The Scripture indicates that—

- (1) Adam had primacy because of the order of creation (though modern thought and attitudes make him merely *primus inter pares*),
- (2) Adam was not deceived by the serpent (therefore must have sinned deliberately) but Eve was. The result of thus taking the initiative into her own hands was disastrous.
- (3) Adam is not said to have been intended as a help for Eve, but vice versa. '... woman was created for the sake of man. That is the argument for women's covering their heads with a symbol of the authority over them, out of respect for the angels.' (*Jerusalem Bible*)

However there seems to be no explanation given (not even the one in F.F.B.'s bequest) why angels are suddenly introduced here. It is to be noted that they are omitted from the two other relevant passages, viz. *I Cor. 14: 33-38* and *I Tim. 2: 9-15*. Neither is there a reason given for Eve's subjection. *Gen. 3: 16* does not state that it was the restoration of the original order. It is merely what the law says; compare *I Cor. 14: 34*.

May I ask a further question?

'What should the elders do in regard to a sister who persists in wearing the symbol, while refusing to submit to the authority which it is intended to symbolise?'

### Mr. D. Conway replies:

While mention of the angels in *I Cor. 11: 10* seems to underline the importance of the covering of the head, it is difficult to see authority in the scriptures for assuming that they were occupied with matters in the Garden of Eden, though they may well have been.

One point not mentioned in the note quoted by Prof. Bruce is that *Genesis 2: 16 and 17* indicate that it was before the creation of Eve that God made known to Adam the command concerning the trees of the Garden. As there is no indication that God repeated the command to Eve it seems that there at the very beginning God gave to the man the privilege and the responsibility of knowing and carrying out his will, and imparting it to the woman. This would appear to be an important factor in Adam's headship.

But what does the phrase 'with her' imply in *Genesis 3: 6*? Does it mean that Adam was present when Eve was tempted? What other meaning can it have?

It may be relevant to quote Mr. A. E. Cundall's statement given in the Scripture Union *Daily Notes* for July 16th. 1978 concerning *I Cor. 11*:

'In ancient Rome, both sexes covered their heads in worship; in Greece neither sex did; in Judaism, the men covered their heads whilst praying, the women were veiled and segregated. Paul sets out a distinctly Christian view, based on Scriptural

principles and on the fitness of things (*14-15*). The argument that his counsel related exclusively to licentious Corinth, where the unveiled woman was usually a prostitute, is ruled out, for Paul appeals to the *authoritative practice* of the churches generally (*16*).

### Mr. J. H. Hughes replies:-

The mature believer as we meet to remember the Lord should by the Spirit see the assembly as God and angels see it, ideally as 'The Body'. Is it that angels see only 'The Man' in what may be called a living parable of future glory?

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... it must have been pretty awful and worthy of oblivion ...

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### Mr. H. L. Ellison replies

I am far from clear how Professor Bruce's question should be answered. On the one hand there is the temptation to regard it as being too frivolous to be taken seriously, and on the other to use a sledge-hammer to crack a nut, and to make an article out of an answer.

If the words quoted are notes of a conference address, it must have been pretty awful and worthy of oblivion. The Hebrew of *Gen. 3: 16*, in spite of so many translations, does not imply a divine command; it is merely a statement that the husband will take advantage of his wife's weakness to dominate her.

Thanks to traditional prejudice, there are few passages in the Bible where the basic meaning has been more obscured than in *I Cor. 11: 2-15*. Paul said nothing about a woman having her head covered; he said she should be veiled. Though the latter presumably includes the former, its purpose is essentially different. If it were to express subordination, surely it would apply to the men as well, as is the case in the Synagogue now, but not then. So far from dealing with a woman's silence, Paul is concerned with her dress, when she is praying or prophesying. The whole thrust of the passage is further distorted by the failure to realize that while in Paul's time 'head' indicated source or origin, today it is understood as leadership or rule. Those who insist on the subordination of woman to man are by inference teaching subordination within the Godhead.

So far as the angels are concerned, it was the general belief of Jews that angels were present at man's worship. Why not? It was hardly to learn what they should have known anyway.



## Readers' Forum

From March 1979 a new-style Readers' Forum will be open to contributions from readers: suggestions from practical experience related to church activities or Christian living; doctrinal or expository questions; useful experiences; what-you-will. Questions, to which other readers will be invited to submit replies, will also be published as they are received, as hitherto. It is hoped that readers will take full advantage of this feature.

### This month's question

*Question 64: submitted by Mr. David Sims*

I have heard the Authorised Version of the Bible advocated on the grounds that those who translated it were more spiritual and more consistently evangelical than the translators of more modern versions. In similar vein I received, not long ago, publicity material for a book which set out to discredit one of 'the Fathers of modern versions' and thus to suggest that such versions were unreliable.

Do readers of the Harvester consider such arguments valid and, if not, on what grounds do they assess the relative merits of the Bible versions available today?

*Mr. H. L. Ellison replies:*

Should anyone be foolish enough to suggest to me that I should use the AV on the grounds suggested by the question, I would ask its advocate who the translators of the AV were. If he were able to surmount that hurdle, I would ask him what he knows about the translators, their spirituality and their evangelical doctrine. When it was first made the AV was rejected by some on precisely these grounds!

To sit in judgment on the spirituality of translators is in itself to declare oneself unspiritual. To question the doctrine of a translator has value only if one can show that false doctrine has influenced the renderings, as in the Jehovah's Witness rendering of *John 1:1*. It must never be forgotten that spirituality by itself can never establish the meaning of a Greek or Hebrew word, or determine which two manuscript readings is the correct one.

... the amazing fact is that the Holy Spirit has no preference ...

The amazing fact about the Bible is that the Holy Spirit quite obviously has no preference for one translation over another. Provided the language is comprehensible—I doubt that the use of the Wycliffe version would bring many conversions—He seems to be quite willing to overrule even mistranslations and misunderstandings. In ordinary Christian work I use the RSV because it is near enough to the AV not unduly to offend the conservative, but modern enough to be understood by the majority. Where I am speaking to the more educated with no Christian background I am likely to use the NEB, and to the virtually uneducated the Good News Bible. In each case I can trust the Holy Spirit to apply the Word which He has caused to be written.

*Mr. Harold J. Hucker replies:*

I think the sweeping statement that 'the translators of the AV were more spiritual and more evangelical than the translators of more modern versions' goes too far. It should be remembered, however, that nearly 100 such versions have been published in the last 100 years and only a handful are still in common use among evangelicals today. This seems to suggest that some degree of spiritual discrimination *has* been made by our generation of evangelical Christians.

It is quite clear that no version is perfect—not even the AV—since we no longer have access to the original manuscripts. I feel sure, however, that we are unlikely to be led very far astray by the AV, or by such versions as the RSV, the NASB, the Good News Bible, or the New International Version. Unfortunately, most Christians are not really competent to decide for themselves on the relative merits and demerits of the many versions—including the AV—that are now available, except perhaps on aesthetic grounds, or on the basis of a few selected test passages.

It follows therefore that the majority of us must rely on the experts to evaluate the evidence and give us guidance. We therefore look to folk like Prof. Bruce to point us in the right direction, and I believe he has already done this as occasion has demanded. This still leaves us with a choice of several versions, and although it is useful to be able to refer to a number of versions, it is preferable to stick to one for general use. I believe the following guidelines will help to decide which is the best. There should be

1. A plurality of translators, working together—the more the better—who are experts in the original Hebrew and Greek languages and also in modern English, as well as being truly evangelical in outlook and firmly wedded to the inerrancy of the original writings as being 'God-breathed', and
2. the translators should use the best manuscripts now available, and moreover use a method which will give the greatest accuracy and clarity of meaning.

This is, of course, a tall order, and probably no single version completely fulfills these requirements. The NIV does, however, promise to be a close runner-up, when the whole Bible is published.

accuracy should be the criterion

*Mr. G. K. Lowther replies:-*

Surely the *accuracy* of any version should be the criterion of its use. Neither their spirituality nor their supposed evangelical stand prevented King James's translators from making mistakes.

... they deserve to be accepted as genuinely devout attempts ...

*Dr. A. G. Newell replies:*

Those of us with little or no knowledge of the original biblical text are compelled to rely on accredited scholarship for translation. Whether these versions are prepared by individuals or by committees, they deserve to be accepted as genuinely devout attempts to render the Hebrew and the Greek into whatever kind of English the translators have stated to be their intention, unless they are self-evidently disqualified by reason of lack of scholarship or overzealous doctrinal consideration. The translators, that is to say, ought not to be assessed as more or less evangelical or spiritual than any others; the question should not arise. What has to be judged

*Continued on next page*

## Correspondence

Letters should be sent to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX.

Publication of letters does not imply that views expressed are endorsed by the Editor or the Trustees.

### OICCU Centenary

From Dr. O. Raymond Johnston

Dear Sir,

On Saturday, May 5th the Christian Union in the University of Oxford will celebrate the centenary of its foundation. Men and women from all over the country will be in Oxford at a great Service of Thanksgiving (at which Dr. J. I. Packer will be giving a major address) to be held in St. Aldate's Church at 11 a.m. and to enjoy fellowship over lunch at Wycliffe Hall. Both places have historic links with the OICCU, as the short history of the OICCU by the Rev. John Reynolds (to be published in April) will make clear.

Arrangements are being made for two prayer meetings, for ex-OICCU members to have tea in their Colleges, and for an exhibition of material illustrating the 100 years of the OICCU's evangelical witness. Any of your readers who can lend relevant posters, programme cards, photographs, diaries, letters, etc. are invited to contact Rev. J. S. Reynolds at The Rectory, Dry Sandford, Abingdon, Oxon.

Many former OICCU members reading this letter will wish to make up a party of contemporaries and to have further details. The Commemorative Programme (including Form of Service) and lunch tickets will be sent out just before Easter, but those intending to be present should send £1 per adult as soon as possible to Tudor Griffiths Esq., Wycliffe Hall, Oxford. Early application will help the Centenary Committee with their arrangements.

21a Down Street  
London W1Y 7DN

Yours sincerely,  
O. R. Johnston  
Chairman

### Readers' Forum continued

is their rendering of the Hebrew and Greek text into English. Details of grammar and niceties of diction apart, where we may prefer (say) the NEB to the RSV in a certain passage, the question at issue is basically one of style. In just the same way we may rationally prefer Pope's verse translation of Homer to Cowper's.

But at this point we arrive at a very knotty problem. Style can't be divorced from content. Rewrite anything and you alter its very content. A language as rich as English is capable of variations and gradations and nuances of meaning, so that a schoolchild's paraphrase of a piece of prose in effect changes the meaning of the original. Translation from one language to another, especially from ancient to modern, is, of course, even more open to interpretive rendering, for two or more meanings on occasion may be legitimately extracted from a given passage, while another may appear to possess none at all (as Mr. Miles's letter in the November issue reminds us).

It seems to me, therefore, that some variety of versions is helpful to the Christian anxious to improve his knowledge of the Bible. But these versions must stand up as *English* (always provided they also stand up as *translation*). The earthly realities and heavenly sublimities alike of God's inspired revelation deserve to be couched in the best possible language. I don't care for attempts to produce a modern English equivalent of NT Greek—the disparity between the cultures is too great. Hence I consider the AV to remain the best available *English* Bible. But to communicate and to study Scripture in the 1970's we must have as well the Bible in good contemporary English that does justice to its eternal themes. Until we are all semiliterate it simply won't do to read our sacred book in 'basic' English.

### The Perspicuity of Scripture

From Mr. T. H. Friston

Dear Mr. Coad,

I have been asked to comment on Mr. Miles letter (in your November issue) by a beloved elder brother who states that it has caused him deep concern because of a certain unbalance in dealing with this subject by Mr. Miles.

The letter is based on the supposed problem: 'If the Bible intends to state proposition A, why does it appear to state non-A?' I believe this premise to be false. When the Bible intends to state proposition A, it does so in fact, state proposition A. It must not be forgotten that there are usually two sides to every doctrine; one cannot assume that the reverse side always contradicts the obverse.

Our Lord pronounced woes on the rich because many had, in their pursuit of riches, abandoned the paths of righteousness. The danger is ever present, but this does not mean that God does not bestow wealth upon men in every dispensation, and with it the responsibility of using it to His glory. To be rich, is not sinful, but the acquisition of riches can be sinfully motivated and organised. There is no conflict of doctrine.

As to the difference between judgement by works and justification by faith, we are never justified by works before God, but our faith should be justified by our works before men. There is no conflict between the Abraham of Paul and the Abraham of James, nor between Abraham and *Hab. 2: 4*. Similarly, circumcision was a sign of the covenant relationship of the earthly people, the Jews, and God. It has no place in the wider relationship of God and the church. Paul may indeed have been in error in requiring Timothy to be circumcised. It was a violation of Timothy's Christian freedom and privilege, and did nothing to appease the Jews.

I suggest that the NT statements on baptism, the Lord's Supper and church government are clear enough to spiritual men. These doctrines have been perverted during the church age by the professing church, and the pure doctrines have been leavened. The fundamental teaching is however clear enough to a humble spirit seeking the help of God.

Regarding the comment in the letter that, 'repeatedly God's command is quite crazy: sacrifice your son, get up and walk, send most of your army home, go naked for three years, give away your goods and follow me. All these throw the rule book out of the window: yet we generally suspect or despise those in the Church who still act in these ways, and prefer those who do everything "decently and in order"; the command to do everything "decently and in order" itself comes out of God's own rule book, and I imagine that He expected all His commands above to be carried out in its letter and spirit, commands which in each case underline the great over-all rule of obedience and love, by individuals in the particular conditions to which God had brought them in order to test their faithfulness.

Lastly, with reference to the statement that 'Jesus did not plainly say, "I'm God"', one wonders how much plainer can you get than *John 8: 58-59* and *John 10: 30-33*? Why should our notions on this be muddled, in the light of such claims? Mr. Miles concludes, 'we are going to have to walk more by faith, less by looking up the appropriate text'. As faith 'cometh . . . by the word of God', I believe that there will be always enough 'appropriate texts' firmly to place our faltering feet upon!

12 Pearson Street  
Cardiff CF2 3EL

Yours sincerely,  
T. H. Friston

## Comments on December Impact Letter overleaf

## Correspondence (continued)

### Comments on the December Impact Letter

From Mr. H. L. Ellison

Dear Mr. Coad,

I am writing with reference to Mr. Taylor's letter in the December issue. I am fully in agreement with its general approach, but I feel that he over-simplifies. Let me make it clear, first of all, that I am completely ignorant of that part of Kent, either by reputation or visits, so nothing I write can be construed as a criticism of local conditions.

Unless a local assembly has a good report in the neighbourhood, is it not presumptuous to assume that the Holy Spirit will guide new converts from such a Crusade into it, however much it has been supported by the assembly? Even if they know vaguely what assembly principles are, it is rare for the newly converted to be particularly concerned about them.

In not a few cases the assembly suffers, often unjustly, from some incident in the past. More often those who worship there are regarded as a group of eccentrics interested in none but themselves. Why then should the newly converted find his way there? The lack of pastoral care is more likely to lead to the loss of those who have come in than to the barring of the door to those that might. If we do not create the impression in our neighbourhood that we are really interested in those round about us (not merely in their spiritual welfare) we cannot expect them to be interested in us.

14 Rosyl Avenue  
Holcombe, Dawlish  
Devon

Yours sincerely  
H. L. Ellison

From Mr. C. G. Martin

Dear Mr. Coad,

Mr. Taylor's question *Why did they go?* highlights an interesting fact about the Church in Britain today. My work lies mainly in education and I find that all the 'service agencies' of work among young people contain many active, original and thoughtful people whose Christian experience has been with Christian Brethren. The number involved are out of all proportion to the relative strengths of 'Brethren' and other evangelicals in the community at large. Many of them do not now meet regularly with Assemblies; many who do meet with Assemblies take no leading part since (like myself) their main evangelistic and pastoral world is of an interdenominational nature. Yet their general biblical literacy and understanding has been largely formed in Brethren circles.

Also on various occasions I have been connected with organising, or participating in, interdenominational activities, rallies, conferences, missions. Here again, Brethren feature as among the hardest working, most generous (and often, most sane) members of Committees—they are completely unsparing of their time and resources, and do not seem to be looking over their shoulders at PCC or Circuit restrictions.

It is certainly surprising that a Christian group that so largely staffs the work of God should seem to profit so little by 'city-wide' campaigns. Indeed there are many vicars (and even more vicars' wives!) who began to serve God among Brethren and who now lead active and thriving Anglican congregations, where new converts are no rarity, and grow steadily.

Mr. Taylor is perhaps a little hard in his solution—though Brethren in general are better at proclaiming the gospel than applying or nurturing it in daily life (at least in my rather limited experience). It may be too, that the folk who 'defect' see greater opportunities of service elsewhere. Certainly this may be the case among women who (having found at University a parity of esteem and usefulness in Christian Union activity) may feel rather harshly deprived of opportunities to which they have grown accustomed. In many areas, assemblies do grow, quietly and slowly, by the individual invitation and witness of members, and the caring interest of Bible Class leaders. It may be disappointing for such unsung shepherds when the eager young 18 yr-old goes off to College, joins a more active fellowship, and is lost not only to the district but to the Brethren movement. For myself, I am happy to let God use the young man or woman wherever he sees best, and be thankful that a local assembly had some part in giving him/her a taste for Scripture, worship and fellowship.

**'It is surprising that a Christian group that so largely staffs the work of God ...'**

Mr. Taylor pin-points a major weakness—the absence in most assemblies of any full-time teaching or pastoral ministry. I would add another—the failure to arrange conference ministry relevant to local needs and the present time. Too often speakers are invited from afar, knowing little of the audience, and expected to give 'a good word, as the Lord leads'. When I have insisted, elders have usually agreed that some of the leading might come through them and their local knowledge, and have given some sort of brief. The other major deficiency, of course, is the 'gospel' meeting where visiting speakers (knowing little of the congregation) continue to indulge in the activity described by an old hymn book preface as 'making people sing hymns as if they had certain feelings and then preaching to them as if they had not'. It should not be beyond the resources of a preacher (even if billed as 'a gospel preacher') to feed sound doctrine and relevant practical help to believers as well as making the blessings of the gospel clear to any (often few) unbelievers who may be present. *Heb. 6: 1* is valuable advice even at 6.30 p.m. on a Sunday evening.

19 Longleat Crescent  
Chilwell  
Nottingham NG9 5EJ

Yours sincerely,  
Charles Martin



# The News Page

Press Day, March 1979, Friday, February. 2nd, for Displayed Advertisements, Prayer List, Forthcoming Events and news items (Please send direct to Publisher at 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW)

## Out and About

### News from Counties Evangelistic Work

John Hadley (Cornwall) reports that three teenagers converted earlier in the year, and their parents converted recently, were to be baptised as a family the end of November. Following the formation of a Christian Union in a local school, John has been able to meet the R.E. teacher and speak to a sixth form group. He is now able to supply the school with Christian books.

Colin Holmes (Hants) has commenced an 'Evangelism Explosion' programme at Buckskin, Basingstoke, and Fleet. 'On each occasion, two hours were spent with three couples on three separate evenings. Two couples were very convicted, the third couple received the Lord—she was 74, he 64. Our fourth visit saw a woman in her 30's trust the Lord. Both churches have been greatly blessed and encouraged.' Colin felt the Lord's help and power in speaking to 100 at the Torch Trust rally in Bournemouth.

Philip Lambert (Wilts) had a happy mission at Calne with 100% support from the assembly. Well over 150 children attended nightly, a high percentage of whom were young teens. 'Many showed a marked interest in spiritual things'. At the final Sunday Family Service, so many unsaved came that the Christians were asked to stay at home and pray. At Penhill the first children's meeting was interrupted by two parents who abusively tried to disrupt the meeting. After some time the mother returned to listen. She also came every night, bringing her son and a neighbour, and was 'extremely close to being saved', by the end of the mission. A preparation mission held in the village of Chapmanslade encouraged one of the few Christians there, who said, 'This is the greatest thing we have seen in the village for 20 years'. 'It is with great anticipation of the Lord's blessing that we look forward to our return in June', writes Philip. Lionel Clargo (Surrey) reports 'two or three meetings a day has been the norm for the past few weeks, with many schools open for return visits. These range from the little village school with only 20 pupils to the big 1,000 pupil comprehensive. One school asked, 'Come on the last day of term and remind us what Christmas is really about.' I was invited to speak to a Christian Education meeting on 'Maturity and Mutuality'. So we went and talked about the Lord. Afterwards a local rector with over twenty years Christian service, admitted he was only half-born, not twice born. Much pastoral work has been done also. This takes up hours of time but it is difficult to write and elaborate on different cases'.

Dennis Pierce (Devon) visited Eire during November. Attendances at Postal Sunday School Prizings were good with parents showing intelligent interest. Two teenagers trusted the Lord.

### Evangelists' Conference

A record number of 197 attended the annual Evangelists' Conference in December. David Watson of York affirmed that continuous personal renewal is the key to effective outreach while George Verwer of

Operation Mobilisation pointed out churches might be lively and yet short on real discipleship; personal discipline is essential. Throughout the conference there was an emphasis on the physical, emotional and spiritual dangers faced by Christian workers. 'Take Care' was the conference title and this was shown to be necessary in view, for instance, of the widespread marital infidelity among Christians in both 'charismatic' and 'non-charismatic' circles and of the flagrant materialism that has invaded the churches in the west. Spiritual oppression could be a real problem for the Christian worker, and it was particularly liable to attack in the middle of a fruitful ministry. There was much frankness and honesty as the speakers shared their own experience of how the Christian was often faced with apathy, slander, and many temptations. His personal problems inevitably impinged on a Christian worker's ministry, and he needed the support of other trusted counsellors.

### Haven Evangelical Church, Dyfed, Wales

References in the (July 1978) News Page of the *Harvester* were among the factors that have transformed the situation of the fellowship. 'As an assembly, this time last year our assets were £230 in the bank, plus our old building, which was worth £9,000 . . . today with our new building we are at present worth £65,500 for which we thank God . . . A modern day miracle of how God is still the same as yesterday in providing those who will go forth in faith.' An accompanying newsletter presents a remarkable picture of an active church offering Christian holidays with a difference and also a 25-week 'School of Evangelism' course aimed at those who are non-academic and who wish to be involved in evangelistic work both home and abroad.

### London Bible College

The Rev. G. W. Kirby, who was due to retire from the principalship of London Bible College in 1979 has been asked by the Board of the College to continue as Principal until Easter 1980. Donald Guthrie, Head of the New Testament Department, has been appointed Vice-Principal of London Bible College. Rev. Derek Tidball, who is Director of Evangelism, will add to this responsibility that of Director of Studies.

### Radio Involvement

Robert Taylor, who works in Kent with the Counties Evangelistic Work, writes to say that all CEW Evangelists have had radio courses in the last two years. A steering committee has been set up under his chairmanship and subject to a number of factors—not the least being the availability of finance—they are planning to produce programmes from October next year. It is hoped for high technical quality and programmes will be offered to local radio where several already have strong links. The help of the BBC producer has been secured for immediate needs.

### Rehabilitation of Ex-Offenders

Readers who remember the article in July 1978 by Peter and Freda Brazier will be concerned to know that they are still waiting on God for developments in their call to establish a rehabilitation centre for Christians in difficulties: at present they are looking at the Reading area. They report continued problems and need for prayer at their work at Langley House, Wing Grange, with staff shortages and sometimes violence from residents: through it all, God has worked and there have been two professions of conversion from

men with enormous problems. They are grateful for help from local assemblies. (Address: Wing Grange, Oakham, Leics. LE15 8SB)

### News from the Scripture Union

Harold Robertson has been appointed as SU's new South-West Regional Co-ordinator. He is 48, and has been a children's evangelist on the SU staff since 1960. He will still be personally involved in children's evangelism, but in his new role will be mobilising and training volunteers for evangelism and to promote the reading and use of the Bible, and will be concerned to extend all SU's ministries throughout South-West England and in South Wales.

The turning point in Harold's life came when he was an 18-year old in the Fleet Air Arm and a close friend and colleague was drowned in a swimming accident. He recalls thinking, as he watched the coffin being lowered into the grave, 'If that had been me. . .' It was some months later, after attending a Mission Hall in Arbroath in Scotland, and realising that he could not earn his own way to heaven, that he knelt (as he recalls) 'by a barbed wire fence in my best uniform' to receive Christ as his Saviour.

### Spiritual Renewal

'I have refused to look only at part of the New Testament Here I stand.' So K. G. Hyland launched the Spiritual Renewal Conference for well over one hundred people at the Granville Hotel, Ilfracombe from 17-19th November 1978. Others wanted to come but had to be turned away as there was no more room. Plainly God was no respecter of persons (those taking part ranged from teenagers to the white-haired) nor of denominations (most were represented, although the majority were Brethren from the South-West). Robert Scott-Cooke pointed out that the Spirit-filled life would have been the norm in the New Testament days and the life regarded as normal by many Christians today in New Testament times would have been seen as abnormal. After this talk, 'Returning to First Principles' he spoke on 'Reviving Spiritual Life', pointing out that the diversities of a God who delights in variety needs to be unified by the one Spirit. Graham Loader, speaking on 'Renewed Spiritual Liberty' investigated what this might mean in worship (more praise, the missing jewel in assembly life!) and in witness (being sociable, sympathetic and spiritual!). 'The greatest need in the church today is for discernment', said Graham, speaking on 'Rediscovering God's Purpose for the Church'. It was amazing what God is doing worldwide. How would you react if you had a telegram from a Catholic sister in Lourdes

assuring you that she was praying for your evangelistic campaign in Bristol?

Tony Hyland spoke on 'Recognising Jesus Christ is Lord' and on 'Realising God's Potential'. The Sunday morning worship session went very quickly and was perhaps best summed up by the man who prayed, 'Gosh, Lord, it's super to be here!' and then wept. Three tapes of all the talks given are available.

1. *Recognising Jesus Christ is Lord; Realising God's Potential; Responding to God's Spirit.* 2. *Returning to First Principles; Renewed Spiritual Liberty.* 3. *Reviving Spiritual Life; Rediscovering God's Purpose for the Church.* 4. *Songs of Worship.* These are £1.25 each (including postage) from R. A. S. Chamings, 4 Lower Lovacott, Newton Tracey, Barnstaple, Devon, (to whom cheques should be made payable).

### Wycliffe Bible Translators

A press release from Wycliffe Bible Translators announces that they have recently published their 100th New Testament. It was presumably because of the burden of producing on average one new translation every two weeks that the press release did not mention the language of the 100th! Not that this will prevent readers of the *Harvester* from praying for the Wycliffe members who are working in over 600 languages in 30 different countries.

### Homecalls

**Grace Cooper (nee Pledger)**, on November 26, 1978, aged 97. Converted at an early age, she commenced Leinster House School, Westcliff (together with her sister) before marrying Ransome Cooper in 1912. She furthered her husband's missionary interest in every way, visiting the Continent and helping strenuously in the work of 'the Gospel to Britain's Guests' and among German prisoners of war. She worshipped at Montpelier Church, Purley, for many years, then at Edmond Chapel, Eastbourne, and later at Tatahi Bay, Wellington.

**Mrs. J. McKinnon**, on December 17, 1978, aged 82. She will be remembered for her sincere, simple and unbroken testimony to the Lord whom she loved and served for 60 years. With her husband she was in all the assembly activities whether residing in Kilmarnock, Rothsay, Manchester, Belfast or latterly in Prestwick. The godly order of her home, the love and hospitality given to many was exemplary. Of later years, due to decreasing health she gave herself to increasing the exercise of prayer. Our sympathy is with Mr. McKinnon and family.

## MEADOWCROFT

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Write for brochure (Sae)/bookings to  
Mr. and Mrs. W. Coates  
Phone: Windermere 3532

### BIBLE READINGS 1979

Spring—April 21st-28th **Mr. S. Emery**  
Autumn—13th-20th October **Mr. A. J. Last**

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# TOMORROW'S WORLD

## Tear Fund Sunday is 4th March

A time to celebrate the joy of children  
and their contribution to our world today.  
A time to join together in sharing and showing  
our care and concern for children today.  
A time to recognize that the children of today  
are the world of tomorrow.



The United Nations has  
designated 1979  
International Year of the Child

Please use my gift of £ \_\_\_\_\_ to help provide basic necessities for today's children.

- ☐ I would like to know more about sponsoring a child. Please send me a leaflet/application form.
- ☐ Please send me information on projects benefiting children and the UN declaration on the 'Rights of the Child'.
- ☐ Please send me details of materials on children for Tear Fund Sunday and throughout the year.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Post to: 11 Station Road, Teddington, Middlesex, TW11 9AA.

TH. 2. 79

**TEAR  
FUND**  
The Evangelical Alliance Relief Fund



# People and Places

## Stewardship

**Retired Missionary Aid Fund:**  
12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields,  
NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies for the  
month of December amounted to  
£3744.11. Anon. £200 (Bristol).

## Prayer List

**Stamped letters addressed c/o**  
**The Paternoster Press, Paternoster**  
**House, 3 Mount Radford**  
**Crescent, Exeter, EX2 4JW will**  
**be forwarded to any of those**  
**whose names appear below.**

**Workers are requested to include**  
**their names on their cards when**  
**returning them each month.**  
**We are still receiving anonymous**  
**contributions from time to time.**

**Blackburn, A. G.:**  
Torquay 4; Wokingham (C.E.W.  
Conference) 8-9; Teignmouth 14;  
Chard 18; Exeter 22; Brixham 25;  
Budleigh Salterton 27; Exmouth 28.

**Burnham, A. E. J.:**  
Chelmsford 3-5; Stamford 10;  
Liphook 11; Portsmouth 17;  
Waterloo 25.

**Galley, W. S.:**  
Catford 1, 8; Aldershot 3; Kingston  
and Wimbledon 5; Wembley 6;  
Enfield 7; Cardiff and district 10-28.

**Gillham, S.:**  
Wallisdown, Stalbridge 1; Tricketts  
Cross 2, 9, 16, 23; Somerton, Wyke  
Regis 4; C.E.W. Clee. 8, 9; West  
Dorset Adventure Time Prizegiving  
10; Boscombe 11, 12, 15; Heather-  
lands Parkstone 13; Chelmsford 17,  
21; Stalbridge 22; Yeovil 24, 25;  
Wyke Regis 27; Marnhull 28.

**Grimsey, A. W.:**  
London 2; Crawley 11; Norfolk area  
(deputation with David Ryan) 26-28.

**Lambert, P. A.:**  
Yarnbrook (Mission) 26-2 March.

**Lowther, G. K.:**  
Malaga, Los Boliches, Southern  
Spain 1-28.

**Meadows, D. R.:**  
Chandler's Ford 1, 8, 15; Winton 25;  
Bournemouth and district 26-28.

**Mills, B.:**  
Chingford 1; Harrow 4; London  
Children's Clee. 6; Evangelists' Clee.  
8-9; Trowbridge 10-11; London Evan-  
gelism Clee. 15; London Counties  
A.G.M. 16.

**Phillips, C.:**  
Reading 3, 4; South Ruislip 5, 12, 19,  
26; Burnt Oak, Woodcroft 6, 13,  
20, 27; Greenford 7, 14, 21, 28;  
Tunbridge Wells 8, 15, 22, 25;  
Kingston 11, 18; Bloomsbury 17.

**Pierce, D. H.:**  
South Hams 3; Chagford 4; Easta-  
combe 5; Wokingham 8-9; Barnstaple  
10; Minehead 11-13; Coleford 14-16;  
St. Austell 17-20; Tiverton 21;  
Barnstaple 25, 26;

**Short, S. S.:**  
Seven Kings 4; Chingford 5, 11, 12,  
19, 26; Berkhamsted 6, 7; Reigate 8,  
15, 22; Caterham 9, 16, 23; Sutton  
13, 20, 27; Walthamstow 14, 21, 28;  
Bristol 17; Cheddar 18; Purley 25.

**Stringer, D.:**  
Woodford Green 3, 24; Woodford  
4, 5, 7, 11, 12, 14, 18, 19, 21, 25, 26, 28;  
Brunel University 6; St. Albans 13, 20,  
27; Barnet 2, 9, 16, 23; N. Birmingham  
Rally 17; Muswell Hill 8, 15, 22.

**Tatford, F. A.:**  
Wimbledon 1; Alresford 2-4; Poland  
7-17; Westminster 20; Ludlow 23-25.

**Thurston, A.:**  
Chillingham 1, 15, 21, 22; Kingsbridge  
2, 13, 16, 20, 25, 27; Crediton 4-12;  
Strete 12, 19, 26; Plymouth 14, 17;  
Dartmouth 18; Schools—Dawlish and  
Teignmouth 12; Plymouth 16.

**Tryon, G. E. O.:**  
Lee Green 4; Kingston 6, 13, 27;  
Beckenham 7, 14; High Wycombe 11;  
Penarth 16-25.

**Whitern R. J.:**  
Chingford 1; St. Albans 3; Berkham-  
sted and Welwyn Garden City 4;  
Waltham Abbey 5-18; Wiltshire  
19-24, 26-March 2; Reading 25

## Forthcoming Events

**The Publishers regret that, owing**  
**to demands on space, it is not**  
**possible to insert an announce-**  
**ment in more than one issue.**  
**Correspondents should indicate**  
**clearly in which issue they wish**  
**their announcements to appear.**

**Brierfield:**  
Hebron Hall, Walter Street. Rallies  
at 7.00 p.m. Mar. 3 Speaker: G. Gill.  
Mar. 17 Speaker: C. Phillingham.

**Cardiff:**  
Rallies each Saturday at 7.00 p.m.  
as follows: Feb. 3 at Leckwith—  
Speaker: R. Persons; Feb. 10 at  
Adamsdown—Speaker: K. Matheson;  
Feb. 17 at Canton—Clee; Feb. 24 at  
Ebenzer—Speaker: Dr. P. Elwood.

**Chesham:**  
Gospel Hall, Station Road. Feb. 24  
at 6.30 p.m. Speaker: E. Parmenter.  
Subject: Acts 21: 20-40.

**Colyton:**  
Gospel Hall, The Butts. Feb. 24 at  
7.00 p.m. Speaker: J. Glenville. Sub-  
ject: Galatians 5.

**Croxley Green:**  
Fuller Hall, Fuller Way. Feb. 24 at  
7.00 p.m. Speaker: A. C. Gooding.

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**Exeter:**  
Gospel Hall, Buller Road. Ann. Clee.  
Feb. 24 at 3.00 and 6.00 p.m. Speakers:  
R. Scott-Cooke and J. Beck.

**Luton:**  
Onslow Road Gospel Hall, Vincent  
Road, Leagrave. Feb. 17 at 4.00-  
5.00 p.m. (Ministry relevant to the  
portion) and 6.30-8.00 p.m. (Con-  
versational Bible Reading). Speaker:  
J. Stubbs. Subject: Colossians 3: 1-15.

**Maidenhead:**  
Monthly Clee. Parkside Hall, St.  
Lukes Road. Mar. 3 at 6.30 - 7.30 p.m.  
and 8.15-9.00 p.m. Refreshments  
between sessions and discussion  
afterwards. Speaker: B. Osborne.  
Subject: Breaking of Bread.

**Woodford Green:**  
South West Essex Women's Missy.  
Clee. Salway Hall, Mar. 10 at 3.30 and  
6.00 p.m. Speakers: Miss M. Skinner  
(Ministry) and missionary speakers.

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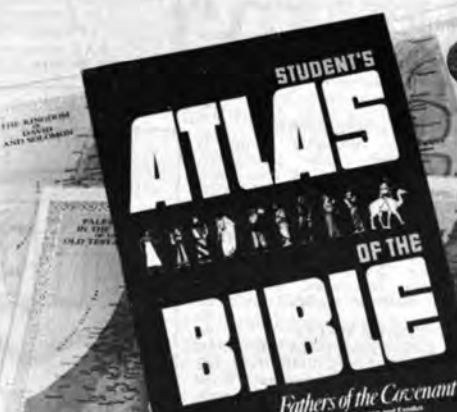
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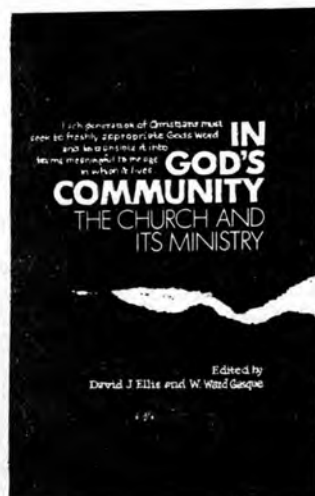
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March 1979  
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Editor: Roy Coad

IN THIS ISSUE  
BOOKS FOR SPRING  
TWELVE PAGE SUPPLEMENT

# The Harvester

Bookworm's Paradise!—E.C.L. Bookshop, Bristol





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A Scripture Reader reports that during recent months soldiers from the armies of Nigeria, Malaysia, Indonesia, Zambia, Malawi, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Nepal together with some Middle East countries have attended meetings in camps along with our British Forces. Good interest in the Gospel has been shown and a number from Africa have embraced the Gospel and committed their lives to Christ. Excellent numbers of overseas personnel now attend Bible Studies for the deepening of spiritual life. The one Gospel for all is at work in our own land.

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# The Harvester

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## Editorial

### Three Million Years

It was a television feature, done in the invariably expert and attractive manner of B.B.C. documentaries. The experts were surveying the latest state of play in human palaeontology. Recent discoveries, it seems, have been playing havoc with all the theories. On a mountainside in Ethiopia they had found them—the petrified bones of manlike creatures, apparently caught three million years ago in a flash flood, while they rested in a dry watercourse; buried it seemed, for ever . . . but three million years were not for ever.

A week or two later came the first of that entrancing series by David Attenborough, *Life on Earth*. Superb and wonderful tribute to the Creator's infinite variety of handiwork! But, oh dear—again that suggestion that this earth was (how many million?) years old: that man or his ancestors walked this planet untold ages ago.

And a shudder ran round so many viewing Christian minds. What unbelief was here: what impossibility of unbiblical theory! What wickedness of unregenerate human wisdom! And another generation of Christian children was presented with a stark choice between what seemed to be the evidence of their eyes, and the assured certainties of their parents' faith.

Just how much longer dare we perpetuate this foolishness? Sometimes it seems that an inherited death wish rests upon so many Christian minds. That the theories of science on human origins are insecure and subject to constant revision—and that many popular ideas that have filtered through to the ordinary man in the street are absurd oversimplifications—is evident enough. That there is every reason for Christian scientists, like all scientists, to treat the theories of their craft with due scepticism, is abundantly true.

But, in the meantime, whatever reason is there for imposing on the minds of immature Christians burdens that are too great for them to bear? That the time indications in the early chapters of Genesis are open to many different interpretations is notorious: but that the chapters themselves are contradicted in their true essence by any geological or palaeontological discovery (or most theories) is an unnecessary misunderstanding. That misunderstanding—and much of the anti-evolution school of thought—rests on a simple confusion of cause with process. When the enthralling pictures appear—do not switch off: explain to your children how they are watching the ways of God in action—that they can thrill (as did a famous scientist of a former century) to the fact that they are thinking God's thoughts after Him. □

# Truth or Tradition?

E. L. Lovering

## *A retired headmaster starts a new series*

'We must break away from tradition and become more progressive'. This, and similar generalisations, are usually biased and naive and require further amplification. There is an implied suggestion that old things are invariably wrong and new things unquestionably right. The truth surely lies in neither extreme, for traditions (like apples) may be good or bad. It is well to remember that today's 'novelties' become tomorrow's 'traditions'.

There can be little doubt that, without the national traditions of food, costume, culture and country, the world would be much poorer. Anything which adds beauty and variety to our aesthetic taste in a day of mass modernity, must undoubtedly enrich our heritage.

Truth, like a diamond, has many facets and (like a building) may be viewed from different angles. While truth is always balanced and permanent, traditions are invariably biased and often the consequence of contemporary thought and behaviour. Victorian architecture, for example, clearly expressed the extravagant wealth and power of a colonial empire, while the uniform terraced houses of the mills and mining districts indicated the close-knit nature of a community under conditions of a stringent economy. The appearance of the 'semi-detached' in the suburban areas at the beginning of the century expressed the emergence of independence and pride of ownership, while the growth of high-rise flats was the result of mass production and a philosophy of equality in status. Ecclesiastical buildings, too, displayed extremes in traditional thought. Cathedrals, with their ornate architecture and decorative art, embodied sentiments that 'God is worthy of the best', while the back-street, upstairs meeting room, with its bare essentials, purported to express the pilgrim nature of the church and the imminent return of the Lord.

How then shall we define truth and tradition? The concise summary of the doctrine of the reformed churches on 'tradition' reads, 'that the holy scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation'. In his book *The New Fellowship*, Mr. Howard Mudditt writes, 'to use non-scriptural phraseology to describe spiritual truth can so easily lead to confusion . . . you do not deny the validity of a doctrine simply because you recognise sensibly and honestly that you cannot guarantee its perfection'. The psalmist declared 'the sum of thy word is truth; and every one of thy righteous ordinances endures for ever' (*Psa. 119: 160*); it is therefore, full and final. To no prophet

was entrusted the full orb of truth, for God spoke in 'fragments' through the ages (*Heb. 1: 1*), but in Christ the truth was finally and completely revealed, for He was himself, the Truth (*Jn. 14: 6*). Let us now consider some New Testament 'traditions'.

## **Traditions of men**

In *Col. 2: 8-10*, Paul writes, 'see to it that no one makes a prey of you by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ'. Here were people who offered a philosophy, which they said was necessary in addition to the teaching of Christ and the truth of the gospel. Handed down by human tradition, it was of human origin, a product of the human mind, with no basis in scripture. It was a philosophy concerned with the 'elements of the world'. The Greek *stoicheia* indicates things which are set out in a row, like the letters of the alphabet, and might denote that which is elementary and rudimentary. Far from being knowledge of a profound and advanced nature, it was not only elementary but utterly futile. What they imagined to be progressive and enlightened thought was retrograde and false. Paul admonished them not to be enslaved by 'the worthless deceit of human wisdom', but to turn their attention to Christ, 'in whom dwells the fulness of the divine nature'. Such intellectualism and pseudo-advanced thinking still charms the unenlightened mind.

*' . . . an implied suggestion  
that old things are wrong  
and new things right . . . '*

The phrase, however, may contain a second meaning; 'the elemental spirits of the world' may have reference to the supposed influence of stars and planets. Emperors and philosophers alike firmly believed in a fatalism which determined their failure or success in life. It was alleged however, that the Gnostics offered a secret knowledge which could procure their freedom. Paul affirmed that they needed nothing more than Christ himself, who was 'supreme over every spiritual ruler and authority' (*Col. 2: 10*).

We fear that many are still enslaved by superstition and fatalism, and that it is not just a matter of 'fun' that people consult their horoscopes, visit the tents of the fortune-tellers and the séances of the spiritists.

## **Traditions of the elders**

Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, 'Why do your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their



hands when they eat' (*Mt. 15: 2*). This was not a matter of physical cleanliness or hygiene but a condition of worship. Essentially this tradition was intended to be an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual state, but its observance had become the essence of religion itself. They had annulled the commandment of God through their tradition, honouring God with their lips, but their heart was far from Him (*Isa. 29: 13*). By the tradition of Corban (perhaps dedicating their gifts to God) they were breaking the fifth commandment, unable to support their parents in need. James describes pure and genuine religion before God and the Father as, 'taking care of orphans and widows in their suffering and keeping oneself from being corrupted by the world' (*Jas. 1: 27*). Could it be that in our zeal for the conventional forms of religious activity and outward observance of details we sometimes make void the Word of God and the essentials of a clean heart and living hope?

#### Tradition of a godly example

The Christian life begins with God's call and choice and develops through the consecration of the Holy Spirit and faith in the truth. Paul exhorts the Thessalonian Christians to 'stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by letter' (*II Thess. 2: 15*). In his progressive spiritual growth, the Christian can derive lasting benefit from the teaching, guidance and example of godly men. God speaks to us through those to whom He has already spoken; 'a saint is one who makes it easier for others to believe in God'. There are those who help us, not by anything they say or write, but simply by being what they are, people of the Presence of God. To read the biography of a saintly life is never wasted effort, for the study of a godly example brings a rich reward. This principle is further illustrated when Paul deals with those who, in view of the hope of the second coming, were living in idleness and 'not in accord with the tradition received from him' (*2 Thess. 3: 6*).

These people were literally 'playing truant', opting out of their practical responsibilities in life. When Paul was with them, 'he kept working day and night so as not to be an expense to any' and his motto was 'whoever refuses to work is not allowed to eat'. They were to stop meddling in other people's business and engage instead in wholesome work.

The Christian, because he is a Christian, should be a better workman than anyone else. Let us not be afraid to imitate the best in those who have lived before us, because they belonged to another generation.

#### Traditions of the fathers

How possible it is to be fanatically zealous for traditional religious forms and yet utterly removed from the truth! Paul had been a fanatic for the faith of Judaism and all that the 'traditions of the fathers'

entailed (*Gal. 1: 14*). In the sincerity of these traditions he had been the arch-persecutor of the church, his goal to annihilate all Christians. The radical change in his life was not due to human persuasion or argument but divine intervention and the sovereign grace of God. It is not our skill in the manipulation of scripture that convinces and converts, but the revelation of Jesus Christ through the truth of the gospel by His Spirit. It is a futile exercise to understand the scripture unless the mind is enlightened by the Spirit of God, 'for the natural man is incapable of grasping the things of the Spirit, they are but foolishness to him' (*1 Cor. 2: 14*).

#### Traditions of the Faith

In *1 Cor. 11: 2*, Paul commends the believers because 'they remembered and maintained the traditions' which he had given them. Of these traditions two are especially important and form the content of the whole chapter, namely, the lordship and authority of Christ and the observance of the Lord's Supper. He writes 'I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of the woman is her husband and the head of Christ is God'. The permanent truth of the passage is the authority and lordship of Christ, coupled with an essential partnership, that of Christ and God and of man and woman. It was obvious that in Corinth, the 'veil' was an essential part of a woman's attire, for it symbolised the status of woman in relation to man, and was the inviolable protection of her modesty and chastity. Does the wearing of hats by women in our present society retain the same significance? Where deep differences of opinion arise in such matters, it is better to abandon rights which may be a stumbling-block to some than to insist on them. Wm. Barclay writes, 'it is the fashion to decry convention, but a man should always think twice before he defies them and shocks others. True he must never be the slave of convention, but conventions did not arise for nothing'. Paul concludes the matter with a rebuke to the man who argues for the sake of argument. While there is a time to stand on principle, there is never a time to be contentiously argumentative. There is no reason why people should not differ and yet remain at peace.

The Lord's Supper was to become a tradition of the church, for Paul writes, 'I received from the Lord that which I also handed down to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night He was betrayed, took bread and after He had given thanks, He broke it and said, This is my body which is given for you; this do that you may remember Me'. In similar terms He spoke of the cup (*verses 23-26*). The significance of the Supper is so simply and clearly stated that it would seem difficult to miss its true meaning. Bread and a cup, the essential ingredients, but man in his desire for complexity will ask a multitude of questions. What kind of bread? How many cups? How shall we be seated? and so on

ad infinitum. During the first world-war, two British soldiers sat down in the trenches to remember their Lord. The 'cup', a disused cocoa-tin; the 'bread', the remnants of a piece of biscuit; and no wine (unfermented or otherwise) but the rain-water which at the time fell in abundance. How very different from the usual 'morning meeting' or the highly organised ritual of the cathedral 'eucharist'—yet surely none the less real and precious. Worship, the spontaneous response of the soul to the greatness and grace of God, finds expression in varying forms. Frequently this depends upon traditions of temperament, culture, taste and background. There was a time when the psalmist would express his praise to the Lord, 'with trumpet sound; lute and harp; timbrel and dance; strings and pipe. With sounding cymbals,

loud and clanging'; indeed he says, 'let every thing that breathes say, Hallelujah!' (Psa. 150). In marked contrast, however, at the observance of the Passover, the family just 'bowed their heads and worshipped' (Exod. 12: 27). Traditional forms would seem of minor importance when compared with the wonder and beauty of genuine, spiritual worship.

To those who had come to believe in Him, the Lord Jesus promised, 'If you obey my teaching you are really my disciples; you will know the truth and the truth will make you free', (Jn. 8: 31, 32). Have we a desire to know the truth? Do we wish to be free from the fear and trammels of human tradition? Then, we must learn from Him, not simply for academic satisfaction or intellectual appreciation but to know His will and worthily to do it. □

### SCRIPTURE UNION CENTENARY YEAR

Scripture Union, the world's oldest and biggest Bible reading movement, celebrates its Bible Reading Centenary this year.

It was on April 1st 1879 that the SU method of daily Bible reading was launched in England with 6,000 members. Today the SU movement is active in 80 countries around the world and has a world-wide membership of around 1,700,000 people who use SU Bible reading materials regularly. The movement is truly international; for example, one out of every three SU members today lives on the continent of Africa. The SU movement began at the instigation of a teenage Sunday School teacher, Annie Marston, who tried to get the girls in her Sunday School class in Keswick to read their Bibles on their own during the week. The first members were all children, and it is a curious fact of history that SU first became an all age movement at a meeting held in Japan in 1883 to mark the 400th anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther.



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# Pure Religion and Undefined

O. S. Papps

*Mr. Papps reviews the recent controversial Reith lectures.*

The Reith lecturer and his subject for 1978 have become almost popular. Pen portraits of Dr. Edward Norman have appeared in the press and an unusually large number of column inches have been devoted to the topic he raised.

Dr. Norman said that some Christian leaders and groups of Christians are losing sight of the eternal truths of the Gospel and substituting sets of political and humanistic beliefs. They are identifying Christianity with the support of liberal causes like the fight for human rights in Russia, liberation movements in South America, the Patriotic Front in Rhodesia. He commented that modern Christian leaders are all tolerance when it comes to departures from traditional Christian doctrine but are ferocious when it comes to departures from the canons of liberalism over such issues as, for example, majority rule in South Africa, adding sardonically that the contemporary equivalent of burning your opponent at the stake is to give aid, as the World Council of Churches does, to those engaged in armed attempts to extinguish their political opponents in the developing world. He described this equating of the Christian message with Western liberal and bourgeois politics as the politicisation of Christianity. In no way did Dr. Norman recommend that Christians should stand aside from politics nor be indifferent to the world's suffering, but he submitted that current political enthusiasms and human idealisms were being made part of basic Christianity. They were replacing or detracting from the heart of the Christian Gospel, which, to quote Dr. Norman, is 'about salvation. Its central concern is the renunciation of the world's priorities and man's need for redemption, the free gift from God purchased for us by the vicarious offering of His Son.'

Most readers of *The Harvester* will give a hearty assent to these sentiments. For some it will confirm their denunciation of what they term 'the social Gospel', and reinforce their opposition to the trends in evangelical circles towards Christian involvement in social and political activity. That there has been a marked change in attitude is indisputable. It has developed from a fresh understanding of 'the world' as used in the New Testament. For many of us brought up among Brethren 'the world' was clearly defined. It consisted of certain specific amusements and included all political activity; e.g. Brethren did not vote, though this didn't preclude some of them from expressing strong opinions on the results accruing from those who did! I also think that a deeper understanding of the Incarnation and the work of the Holy Spirit throughout all human life and activity have contributed to this change of

mind. Today it is accepted among many that we should be involved as Christians in society; but this new attitude brings with it dangers, and this is why we should take heed to Dr. Norman's strictures, for the most irresistible temptation for the Christian is to be seduced by the spirit of the age. At a Brethren meeting some time ago I heard an evangelical minister claim, during the discussion, that he was a Maoist, and the speaker at the meeting got very near to equating Maoist teaching with much of the teaching of Christianity; so let us examine what the Bible describes as 'pure religion'.

James states in chapter one, verse twenty-seven, 'Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father' consists in active social concern, 'visiting orphans and widows in their affliction', i.e. doing something about the poor, the underprivileged, the helpless, the neglected, 'and to keep oneself unstained from the world'.

Taking the second half of this definition first, what does this contamination by the world mean? Surely 'the world' here stands for the attitudes and values of an age which does not believe in God and in Jesus Christ whom He sent, an age which rejects man's inherently sinful nature and believes that he has the potential for creating a just society and saving himself, an age whose philosophy is materialistic and often hedonistic. The Christian, as Dr. Norman has clearly shown, can be affected by what one could term the nobler aspects of the thinking of the age. First, then 'to keep oneself unstained from the world', uncontaminated, untarnished by the age in which we live, means rejecting the view that the causes of hunger, injustice, poverty etc. are largely the fault of the structures of society and that man can create a just and perfect society if he changes the structure, if he gets the programme right. This view holds that the hideous injustices of the world are the result not of man's sinful nature but of structural flaws in the institutions he has created, and since he is capable of achieving the good life all that is needed is to restructure society by adopting a different political system, Marxism, Western liberal democracy, Maoism, democratic socialism etc. This view is based almost on a doctrine of original righteousness. It ignores, what surely the most superficial study of history shows, that man is not only corrupted by power but corrupts the power he is entrusted with.

Secondly, we must be on our guard against some of the pronouncements and theories of the behavioural scientists, those people who claim that all human behaviour can be explained by sociology and psychology, that we are the products of our environment, heredity, education. By all means let us acknowledge gratefully the valuable insights which these sciences have given us, but let us beware



when speculation and theory impinge on what is clearly revealed by God in the Scriptures. I remember listening to a sermon by a well known preacher on the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple recorded in *Acts* chapter three. The speaker poured scorn on social workers, counsellors, psychologists for their inability to make a man whole, likening them and their activities to the alms given to the lame man. 'But', commented someone, 'the alms kept him alive until he could be made whole!'

Turning now to the first half of James's definition of pure religion. Those who hold the view of 'the world' referred to at the beginning of this article would claim that these exhortations 'to visit orphans and widows in their affliction' are fulfilled as we care for such in the local church and perhaps in the locality, and there it ends. I submit that the whole tenor of Biblical teaching, and especially the life of our Lord among men, disproves this narrow interpretation. If Shaftesbury, Wilberforce, Howard, General Booth, Elizabeth Fry and many others had held this parochial view many of the social evils of the nineteenth century would have persisted longer than they did. While such Christian reformers rejected the humanist's utopian visions for restructuring society, they used their time, their means, their influence in the elimination or mitigation of identifiable injustices locally, nationally, and internationally. And so today I believe that 'pure religion' means that we must take the trouble to inform ourselves and be concerned about the physical plight as well as the spiritual plight of our fellow human beings, and according to our gifts and means do what we can to alleviate them. Ronald Sider's book *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* should be required reading and study for us all. Tear Fund, the Langley House Trust for the rehabilitation of discharged prisoners, and many other agencies make us aware of much need, as well as offering younger Christians opportunities of using their specialised training.

Ronald Sider in the book mentioned above shows that running through the Old Testament the burden of God's complaint against his people was twofold, their neglect and often exploitation of the poor and their idolatry. James's definition of 'pure religion' succinctly states these two requirements of our God—concern for the less fortunate, and avoidance of the 'idols' of the age in which we live. Someone has described the attitude depicted in this verse as having one hand extended to man and the other extended to God. Neglect of either of these positions leads in one direction towards a Gospel-less humanitarianism which can never make a man whole, and in the other direction towards a pietism which bears little relation to the life and teaching of Him who 'was made flesh and dwelt among us' (*John 1: 14*) and 'who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil' (*Acts 10: 38*).

In conclusion let me quote some of the things which Dr. Norman said, and said so well, in his last lecture. They are truths which the writer and most of those who read this article (assuming that a few will read it) hold as fundamental. Nevertheless it will do us no harm to be reminded of them. Peter wrote that he intended always to remind his readers of certain things, although they knew them and were established in the truth (*1 Peter 1: 12*).

'At the centre of the Christian religion', said Dr. Norman, 'Christ remains unchanging in a world of perpetual social change and mutating values. To identify Him with the passing enthusiasms of men—each one of which, in its time of acceptance, seems permanently true—is to lose Him amid the shifting superstructure of human idealism'.

'In the world, the Christian seeks to apply the great love of God as well as he can in contemporary terms, and that will actually involve corporate social and political action. But, unlike the secular moralisers whom the Christian activists of the present day so closely resemble, the wise aspirant to eternity will recognise no hope of a better world order in his endeavours, for he knows that the expectations of men are incapable of satisfaction'.

'I suppose that only the Christian who has induced his own soul into a sense of the imminence of the celestial realities may profitably begin to help his brother in the present world'.

'In order to move this world we must have another world to stand upon'.

So, taking heed to these warnings, let us be careful to keep ourselves uncontaminated by the thinking of this age while we 'visit orphans and widows in their affliction' and 'Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked' (*Psalms 82: 3-4*). □

### Professor Bruce Asks

Mr. Miles' letter on 'The Perspicuity of Scripture' in the November issue of *The Harvester* presents a whole series of questions each of which calls for a considered answer. But as one who has for long subscribed to the acknowledgment of the Bible as 'the only infallible rule of faith and practice', let me put to readers one question which his letter suggests. In appealing to the Bible for a ruling in the realm of belief or conduct, are we as justified in appealing to its exceptions as to its regularities? Thus, when appeal is made to Deborah or Huldah as precedents for the ministry of women, is it a sufficient answer to say, 'Ah, but these were exceptions'?

(Correspondence, please, to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX by 15 March)

# The Doctrine of Sanctification

J. E. Todd

The words sanctification and holiness and consecration (RSV) in scripture signify setting apart to God. The word, for it is one word in the original Greek, is used with a double-edged meaning. On the one hand setting apart from all that is common including that which is sinful, fleshly and worldly. On the other hand setting apart to God and all that is good, righteous and true. The word is used both of objects (*I Tim. 4: 5*) and people (*Acts 20: 32*). In reference to persons, the word saint, used in the New Testament of a Christian, literally means a sanctified one, a holy one, that is one set apart to God. The word holy, as used in every-day English, still faithfully renders the meaning of the New Testament word, for it means dedicated to and belonging to God.

## A doctrinal and biblical study

It is perhaps surprising to learn that the word is used twice in scripture of persons before their conversion. 'God chose you from the beginning to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth' (*II Thess. 2: 13* RSV). 'Chosen and destined by God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood' (*I Peter 1: 2*). The sanctification spoken of in these two verses, refers to the setting apart by the Holy Spirit of a person to become the subject of his convicting work (*John 16: 7-11*). This occurs whenever someone comes under the influence of the Gospel. Whenever that influence is responded to by faith the result is, 'belief in the truth' and 'obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling with his blood'.

Even more surprising is the use of the word to describe someone who is not a Christian and might even be antichristian. 'For the unbelieving husband is consecrated (sanctified A.V.) through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is consecrated through her husband' (*I Cor. 7: 12-14*). The marriage union, and therefore the unconverted partner in it, is sanctified in God's sight for the sake of the converted partner and the children. The union is not unholy in God's sight, and is therefore not to be broken on that account.

The term sanctified is also applied in scripture to every born again believer. First, in the sense already mentioned above, that every Christian is referred to as a saint, that is a sanctified one. Second, the term sanctified itself is used of every Christian. Both these points are illustrated in the opening verses of the first letter to the Corinthians. 'To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all

those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours'. Even though some of these Christians were rightly accused of carnality, 'For you are still of the flesh' (*ch. 3: 3*), yet they were still spoken of as sanctified, 'You were sanctified' (*ch. 6: 11*). This means that from the divine point of view the very act of conversion includes sanctification. Every converted person is considered by God to be set apart from all sin, set apart to Himself to live a holy life. But not only is this God's purpose, it is also what he has done, for in giving the gift of the Holy Spirit at conversion (*I Cor. 12: 13*), he has given to each Christian the Spirit of holiness (*Rom. 1: 4*). So sanctification is not an optional extra to justification; to live a sanctified life is obligatory upon every justified person, 'You were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God' (*I Cor. 6: 11*).

But the scriptures also speak of sanctification as being an experience into which the Christian should enter. 'For this is the will of God, your sanctification' (*I Thess. 4: 3*). 'May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly' (*I Thess. 5: 23*). This speaks of the experience of sanctification in the Christian's heart and daily life. The experience may be described in a threefold manner.

First, to be free from besetting sins (*John 8: 34 and 36*). It is a common experience for the self-life to manifest itself in one particular besetting sin. An ill-temper? A censorious spirit? An enslaving habit? We each one know.

Second, to be confident of victory in the time of temptation. Temptations will come, but the truly sanctified man will not be moved (*Rom. 6: 14*).

Third, to manifest the fruit of the Spirit. The life characterised by love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (*Gal. 5: 22-23*).

This is Christian perfection. 'You, therefore, must be perfect' (*Matt. 5: 48*). 'As many as be perfect' (mature, RSV) (*Phil. 3: 15 AV*). Not perfection in the English sense of the word, that is immaculate faultlessness, but perfection in the Greek sense, that is, complete or mature.

But how precisely is this to be achieved? The mechanics of sanctification are of vital importance. It is fundamental to understand that by no means can a holy life be lived out of the resources of our fallen sinful human nature, that nature which the Bible calls the flesh (*Rom. 7: 14-20*). All the religious exercises and disciplines are unavailing; just as blood cannot be obtained from a stone, so holiness cannot be obtained from fallen human nature, 'Those who are in the flesh cannot please God' (*Rom. 8: 8*). Hence the necessity for the new birth, the need to impart a new nature. The new nature

is divine (*II Peter 1: 4*) and therefore sinless. This new nature is spoken of in the scriptures as the spirit. The two natures, the flesh and the spirit, are understandably opposed to each other (*Gal. 5: 17*), but this conflict is not the experience of sanctification.

Our former manner of life, before conversion, our 'old man', was controlled by the flesh. That is my sinful human nature expressed itself through my mind and my body. A sinful nature could not produce a holy life. But that order of things was condemned by God, and the execution was carried out upon the cross in the person of our substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ. 'We know that our old self (old man, AV) was crucified with him' (*Rom. 6: 6*). 'I have been crucified with Christ' (*Gal. 2: 20*). Now there

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... the experience of  
sanctification can have many  
variations ...

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opens up before the Christian an entirely new method of living. Instead of the flesh, human nature, sin, I, self (call it what you will) being in control, now the risen living Christ indwelling in the person of his Spirit can control the life. We are to 'know' this (*Rom. 6: 6*); we are to 'consider' this to be true for ourselves (*v. 11*); we are to 'yield' ourselves to this truth (*v. 13*). But how? By faith, 'I live by faith in the Son of God' (*Gal. 2: 20*). That faith which is the moment by moment expectation that the Spirit of Christ will fill the heart, mind and life in thought, word and deed with every spiritual virtue.

The basic method of sanctification, 'I am no longer I who live; but Christ who lives in me' (*Gal. 2: 20*), never varies. But the experience of sanctification can have many variations. A Christian may walk by faith from the moment of conversion. Or it may be a gradual realisation that one can live by the power of the indwelling Christ instead of by one's own weakness. Or it may come as a sudden flash of truth, a spiritual crisis, in some cases having a greater practical effect upon the life of the person than conversion itself. Or it may be an experience repeatedly gained or lost as the believer alternately walks in the Spirit and in the flesh. Or, sad to say, one may never experience the sanctifying power of the Spirit in this practical way.

But we must not, and this is where so much confusion arises, we must not confuse the experience of sanctification with the perfecting of sanctification. This warning is specially needful in the case of the sudden crisis experience. For this is to enter into a practical experience of the sanctifying power of the indwelling Christ, but the perfecting of sanctification is quite another matter.

We are always in the position of 'perfecting holiness in the fear of God' (*II Cor. 7: 1 AV*). The Lord Jesus Christ is the only man who has ever lived the perfect sanctified life. Our only hope of sanctification is as he lives his own life in us and

through us by his Spirit. For the Lord himself said, 'And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth' (*John 17: 19 AV*). When we walk by faith (*Gal. 2: 20*), when we walk by the Spirit (*Gal. 5: 25*), then we allow the Lord to live in us and through us. Then begins and continues the process of sanctified living and also true spiritual growth. 'Not that I have already obtained this (resurrection) or am already perfect; but I press on' (*Phil. 3: 12*). But the process will only reach its final goal of Christlikeness when we meet him, 'We know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure' (*I John 3: 2-3*). Then will be perfectly fulfilled both the will of God and the apostle's prayer (*I Thess. 4: 3 and 5: 23*).

In the wider field of theology, concerning the doctrine of sanctification there are three forms of 'second blessing' teaching.

There is the Roman Catholic teaching, followed also by Anglicans of the Anglo-Catholic persuasion. This is that a baby or person is regenerated at baptism and then as a second work of grace receives the Holy Spirit at confirmation by the laying on of hands.

Then there are the Pentecostals who teach that the Holy Spirit is not received at conversion, but that he is received at a second experience, known (erroneously) as baptism in the Holy Spirit, when the receiver speaks in tongues.

But neither of these is the classical 'second blessing' teaching, which was originated by John Wesley. Although freely agreeing that the term sanctification is applied in the scriptures to all Christians in a general way, Wesley nevertheless reserved the term 'entire' sanctification for the removal of the tendency to sin from human nature. Summing up his First Conference with his clergy and preachers in 1744, in answer to the question, 'Does this imply, that all inward sin is taken away?', Mr. Wesley replied, 'Undoubtedly; or how can we be said to be 'saved from all our uncleanness''? (*Ezek. 36: 29*). This quote clearly shows that John Wesley could not conceive of a Christian refraining from sin until his human nature was purified. This deduction is as humanly logical as it is scripturally untrue. Wesley also states that this experience is subsequent to justification, 'But we do not know a single instance, in any place, of a person's receiving, in the one and the same moment, remission of sins, the abiding witness of the Spirit, and a new, a clean heart'. (By a clean heart he meant a sin-cleansed human nature). Hence the term 'second blessing'.

This is the official teaching of the Methodist Church and the Salvation Army, although the most ardent teachers of this doctrine today are the Holiness movements. By far the largest of these is the American-based Church of the Nazarene; their official doctrine being that subsequent to conversion



there is a second work of grace when the Holy Spirit eradicates (in the sense of causing to cease to exist) sin in human nature, bringing the person back to the state of Adam before the fall. This is not a teaching of sinless perfection, as it claims to end consciously committed sins only, not to make the person faultless, that is free from unconsciously committed sins, which would include many sins of omission. Also it is admitted that a person can 'lose the blessing' and fall into sin, and so need restoration.

It may well be asked how such a teaching can be held in the light of scripture, when the apostle Paul says, 'Sin which dwells within me, that is, in my flesh' (Rom. 7: 17-18). And the apostle John says, 'If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us' (1 John 1: 8). But if one takes (quite wrongly) the terms 'old man' (Rom. 6: 6 AV), 'the flesh' (Gal. 5: 24, 'I' (Gal. 2: 20), and 'body of sin' (Rom. 6: 6 AV) to mean sin in human nature; and also takes (also wrongly) the terms 'crucify' (Gal. 5: 24) 'death' (Col. 3: 5,—mortify, AV), and 'destroy' (Rom. 6: 6 AV) to mean eradicate; and then takes (still wrongly) the terms 'sanctification' and 'holiness' to mean a second work of grace, then it is quite easy to read the doctrine into Holy Scripture.

Although this is a criticism of the doctrine of the second blessing, it is not a denial of the experience of the many good Christian people in the Holiness movements. As we have already stated above, one of the permutations of Christian experience is a spiritual crisis in which the believer, ceasing to trust in his own resources, begins to trust in the resources of the indwelling Christ, and so passes from an experience of defeat to victory. It is their theological explanation of their experience which is contrary to the teaching of scripture. Their doctrinal error has arisen because of two common human faults, from which none of us is exempt. First, the attempt to rationalise a spiritual experience, that is to explain it by human logic instead of scriptural teaching. For the scriptures teach that it is not necessary to eradicate sin in the flesh in order to live a holy life, 'Walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh' (Gal. 5: 16). Second, the neglect, and sometimes the refusal, to clearly and correctly define terminology. As some say, 'It doesn't matter about the terms, brother, as long as you've got the experience'. Ill-defined terminology makes fruitful discussion and even clear thinking impossible. Or to put it bluntly, one does not know what one is talking about.

To hold a teaching contrary to scripture is a dangerous position, for it leads on to difficulties and further errors. The most basic error in this case is to look for the power to live a holy life within one's own self, that is one's own sin-cleaved human nature, and not looking to the constant abiding presence of the Holy Spirit for sanctification. According to the doctrine of the eradication of sin

from human nature, the new birth with its imparting of a new nature and the indwelling Holy Spirit are logically unnecessary, as the holy life can be lived out of the resources of our own refined human nature.

A most important aspect of sanctification which is neglected in debates upon the subject, is that of baptism. In the act of believers' baptism by immersion, we have a simple and clearly understandable picture of the method and meaning of sanctification. The close connection of sanctification and baptism is brought out in *Romans 6*. The lowering into the water symbolises the death and burial of the old life controlled by our fallen sinful human nature. There is no hope of holiness in that, even the efforts of self to be and to do good must be abandoned (*Rom. 7: 18*). The raising up from the water symbolises resurrection, the new life has entered in by the Holy Spirit at the new birth, now it is to be a life controlled by the risen, living, indwelling Christ. This is the sanctified life.

The subject of sanctification presents each Christian with a challenging question. We are all sanctified in the sense that God has set us apart to be his people. But the question is, am I sanctified in the practical sense of daily living? It may help us to answer this question by asking three practical questions. First, am I free from besetting sins of a habitual nature? Second, am I confident of victory in the time of temptation? Third, am I manifesting the fruit of the Spirit?

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... the real question is, am I  
living a holy life now?

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If we cannot honestly answer these questions in the affirmative, then let us turn to the One who said, 'Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing' (*John 15: 4-5*). As we continually trust in Him, as the branch rests in the vine; as we expect him to continually supply the spiritual life and power, as the vine supplies the branch with life-giving sap; so he will produce his fruit in our lives, as the vine produced its fruit upon the branches.

The real question is not whether I enter this experience gradually, suddenly or repeatedly. The real question is, am I living a holy life now? □

### Another CBRF Seminar!

Following last autumn's successful experiment.  
Saturday 9th June 1979 at London Bible  
College. Subject: **Women in the Church**

## Kathleen White's Column

Edited by Kathleen White, 60 Bowood Road, Swindon, Wilts.

### Crusaders plus . . .

'I went down to the Games evening once. Julian was there on his own, coping with a horde of boys. So I stayed and helped and from then on became involved. It is quite obvious that was where the Lord wanted me'.

No shining light, no mystic experience or voice from outer space—I appreciated John's downright answer to my question why and how he had become committed to his local Crusader class. Often people over-dramatise a call from the Lord. We know He can use, and He has used, angelic beings and visions in the night, but quite often it is just a matter of being available to see where the need lies. As simple as that—a combination of preparedness to work for the Lord and practical commonsense.

Since then, about four years ago, John has worked as a leader with the group as a whole and the older boys in particular. Numbers have increased from 25 to 43 this year; sometimes they have been higher than that, but they fluctuate slightly as boys leave for further education or their families move out of the area. An encouraging feature of the whole enterprise is the good relationship with the boys and the support given by parents, many of whom are not necessarily committed Christians. They attend enthusiastically at the three open meetings each year, the Carol Service, Union Sunday and Crusader Birthday weekend.

Also, they help in many practical ways such as collecting newsprint for fund raising, assisting with two annual events, the Jumble Sale and the local Carnival in which the Crusaders have pulled off a hat-trick. Willing fathers have spent many man-hours on devising imaginative floats representing first Noah's Ark, next London Town for the Jubilee Year and then a Space Station for juvenile astronauts. Mums too have rallied round with appropriate costumes.

*Happenings*, a small duplicated magazine issued quarterly, is John's own special contribution to publicising the class activities. It started as a leaflet but has grown in size, containing original articles and reports from the boys themselves. Also it serves a useful purpose in supplying parents with information and stimulating interest in class. The boys are keen to see their names in the sports section or camp reports.

So far, most of this material could have appeared in describing many typical Crusader classes. But John has evolved an extension to the usual activities which fills a real need in the community, as he explained to me recently. 'The leaders and older boys came together to exchange ideas—however bizarre—for ways in which we could use the potential which we felt existed but so far had remained virtually untapped. We wanted to give out to people around, having been taught and fed on God's word in the weekly class meeting, and to live out Christian truth in a practical way'.

So the Crusader Outreach Group was formed for social involvement with needy members of the community. 'A common project, such as this, binds a group together', explained John, 'and brings to light particular gifts which may have lain dormant up to that time'. For instance, Richard has undoubted talent as a blackboard artist;

he can not only draw but also at the same time carry on an apt and amusing monologue to illustrate the point of his sketches.

'All the members of the group can make a contribution and they gain in confidence with experience. We meet together beforehand to plan the programme and pray about it amongst ourselves'.

Their activities have ranged from a presentation in old peoples' homes, taking part in church services, either gospel meetings or after church fellowships, putting on a magazine-type programme for coffee evenings or performing drama at an area Crusader rally. John is mainly responsible for putting together the script but all the other leaders participate in different ways. Drama varies from original sketches, scenes from well-known literature or humorous acting out in verse of parables such as The Good Samaritan or The Prodigal Son.

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### John has evolved an extension to the usual activities which fills a real need in the community . . .

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The class handbell team put in a great deal of practice to give a polished performance of carols at Christmas events. Last year a local Anglican church staged *Christmas Round the World* for a whole week for schools, youth groups and Sunday schools, and the Outreach group took part in the Sunday service. Also they have put on a programme for Quest and Covenanter groups in the area.

Not all events take place inside, under a roof. A garden party, complete with sideshows, competitions and refreshments, was staged in a leader's garden one (fortunately) fine summer's day. A large amount of hard work and effort went into it but it proved a great deal of fun and a very useful public relations effort with the parents.

Sponsored walks too for charities such as Tear Fund and Help the Aged convince folks in the neighbourhood that the boys have a genuine concern for the under privileged.

Older boys too are encouraged to take Class groups on Sunday. 'Some have shown real leadership talent which has been encouraged. We also went away on a houseparty one weekend and spent most of the time looking at, and discussing the possible activities of the Outgoing group'.

I asked John a final question. 'How long do you envisage this special unit continuing?'

'I hope', he replied, 'that we shall only keep it on as long as it's fulfilling a need. Some boys move on after a while, it's inevitable, but at the moment we have good resources upon which we can draw. As well as serving the community, it also exists to offer a change and a challenge to older boys who need some positive way of developing their gifts and expressing their personalities'.

And many of us in our local churches who have enjoyed the multi-media presentation that these boys have put on to us, sincerely hope that this unique group will be serving the Lord in this very positive way for many years to come. □

Correspondence for this page should be sent to Mr. Peter Cousins, M.A., B.D.,  
The Paternoster Press Ltd., 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW marked 'Harvester Question Page'

## Question and Answer, with Peter Cousins

### The Jerusalem Letter—Binding Today?

#### Question 139

*To what extent are Christians today bound by the decision of the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15: 29)? Has this ever been abrogated? I understand that chickens are often killed by strangulation; while the veto on "blood" would require animals to be "kosher" killed and would rule out black puddings, jugged hare etc.*

Since my maternal grandfather used to decline, on biblical grounds, dishes such as you have mentioned, I have a personal interest in answering this question. It is clear from *Acts 15: 1* that the principle controversy which gave rise to the Council of Jerusalem concerned the grounds upon which Gentiles were saved. Was salvation conditional upon observing the ritual law and in particular circumcision (cf. *15: 5*)? The unequivocal answer to this question was that it was not necessary for Gentiles to keep the law of Moses. Peter said that doing so would be "putting a yoke upon (them) which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear". James recognised that the decision would deprive "Moses" of some potential new recruits but argued that his law was adequately promulgated in the synagogues (*15: 21*).

But although there was no room for doubt concerning the ground of salvation ("the grace of the Lord Jesus", referred to by Peter in *15: 11*, without ritual observance) there remained a practical problem. How could observant Jews who had come to trust in Jesus as the Messiah be expected to sit at table alongside Gentiles whose manner of life included so much that would fill Jews with horror? It was necessary to lay down guidelines which would help to maintain fellowship between Jew and Gentile during this transition period. The four points referred to in *15: 20, 29* were as follows. 1. To refrain from meat taken from an animal that had been offered in sacrifice to a pagan god was of great importance to people brought up to regard idolatry with abhorrence. 2. The reference to fornication may imply only that Gentiles were expected to observe the Levitical restrictions about marrying relations; alternatively, this item may testify to the appallingly low standard of sexual morality among the Gentiles, as evidenced elsewhere in the New Testament. 3, 4. The references to strangulation and blood are both intended to remove the possibility that a Jew might find himself at table where food was being served which infringed his most basic taboo.

As we have seen, these guidelines were intended for a transitional period which is now over. In *1 Cor. 10: 25-30*, we already find Paul introducing a modification; it is in any case significant that he

never refers to the Council's pronouncement.

Although it is sometimes urged that the prohibition of blood has a unique status because it goes back to the Noachic covenant, the New Testament attitude seems to be defined in *Mark 7: 14-19* and *1 Tim. 4: 4, 5*. Christians are, of course, responsible to regulate their diet having regard to both medical and ethical factors, but we cannot look to *Acts 15* for direct guidance on the matter.

### The Conclusion of Acts

#### Question 140

*I have seen it suggested that as the Acts of the Apostles virtually ends with the account of Paul's shipwreck this can be regarded as a kind of parable of what was to follow. Is there any possibility that this is a portent of the "disaster" that was to overtake Christianity when Constantine "popularised" it?*

I think not. The first difficulty about accepting this suggestion is that it is based on a false premise: Acts does not end, virtually or in any other way, with the storm and shipwreck. On the contrary, it ends with Paul at Rome, preaching the gospel. This is an entirely appropriate conclusion, hinted at in *1: 8* and related to the wish that Paul expresses in *19: 21*. The book concludes with the Gentile mission, to which so much of its space has been devoted, still in full swing.

It is quite legitimate to ask why the story of the storm and shipwreck takes up so much of the limited space available to Luke. How we answer this question will depend in part upon our view of the purpose of Scripture and in part upon our view of the overall thrust of the story. To me, the story emphasises not so much the disaster that overtook the ship as the overruling providence of God that preserved Paul and brought him ultimately to his goal at Rome. This emphasis not only fits in with the purpose of the book as a whole but also affords encouragement for Christians individually and corporately, then and today. By contrast, it is difficult to see how Christians in the days of Constantine might have benefited by being aware of the interpretation you refer to. Reading meanings out of—or into—Scripture in this way may be an interesting intellectual exercise but is not likely to help make us better Christians.



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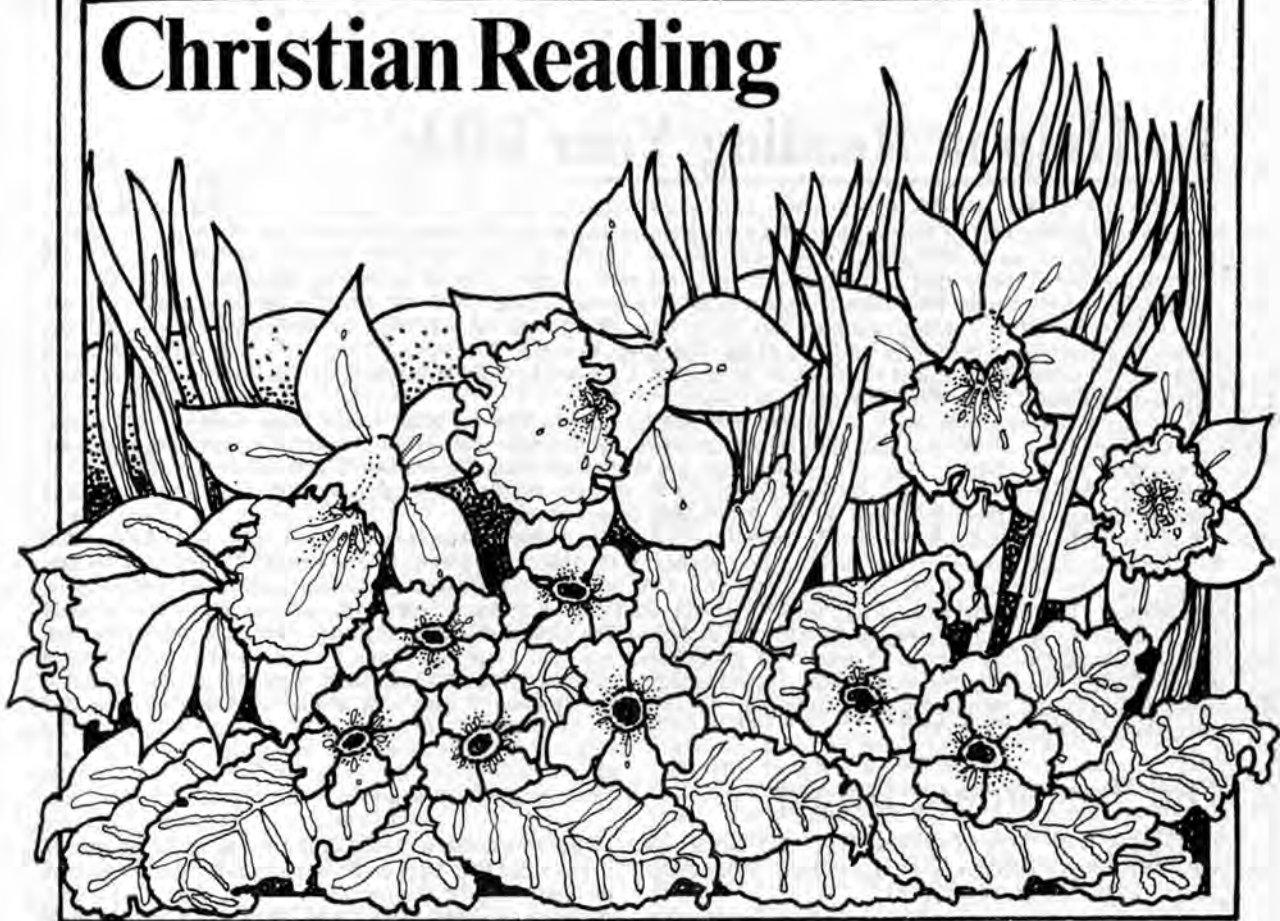
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# Christian Reading



## The Year of the N.I.V.

The major Christian publishing event since our last Book Supplement appeared has undoubtedly been the appearance on 26th February of the whole Bible in the **New International Version**. Produced by well over one hundred scholars from both sides of the Atlantic, all of whom professed a personal devotion to the Bible as the Word of God, it ought to meet with a ready acceptance even from Christians who have been suspicious of the theological pre-suppositions of some members of the translation panels of earlier versions.

The version does not stand on such considerations, however. If it is to be successful, it must be on its own intrinsic merits. For some weeks now, I have been using the new version in personal reading, and early impressions have been wholly favourable. The language is straightforward and contemporary, smoothing out some of the anachronisms that remained even in the Revised Standard Version. It stands in the line of the King James, Revised and Revised Standard versions in that it is a version suitable for close study, aiming for a rendering that is dignified and literate as well as an accurate rendering of the originals: it does not set out to be an 'impact' version for more popular usage, such as J. B. Phillips, the Living Bible, or the Good News Bible (and, dare one add, the N.E.B.). For this reason it may well prove, like the R.S.V., to be widely suitable for public reading in

churches: one of the greatest losses caused by the plethora of modern renderings has been the loss of a standard version for memorising—a feature that, encouraged by the consistent use of the K.J.V. in public worship, as well as its own inimitable cadences, marked out the 'authorized' version as unique. The new version could fill just that role.

For the publishers of *The Harvester* an equally significant event has been the appearance of the second (and revised) edition of **The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church**. That the first edition should have sold out within five years of its initial publication is an indication of the wide acceptability of this Dictionary, and of the speed with which it has established itself as a major standard work of reference. It now appears in a new jacket, uniform with those of the equally warmly received *New International Dictionary of N.T. Theology*. The price of the new edition (of 1074 pages) is £17. The value of the pound has halved since the first edition appeared at £10 in 1974: the publishers are to be congratulated on another major publishing service to the Church.

Finally—and a strictly domestic note for readers of *The Harvester*—at the opposite end of the publishing scale we note two works which may have an especial interest for some of our circle. One is the publication by John Ritchie Ltd. of a devotional study on the titles of Christ by the late David Craig of Scotland and Northern Ireland **That Wondrous Name** (£1.85); the other the

*continued on page 88*

## To Help in Reading Your Bible

New works of biblical exposition continue to pour from the press, and we are able to include a selection of recent works in this part of our Spring Books Supplement. Most of the books reviewed are full-scale expository studies of different parts of the scriptures, but it will be helpful to our readers to mention initially a number of other recent publications that are designed to help the man in the street to know his Bible better.

Kingsway publications announce a new series of popular studies of Bible doctrine, at £2.50 each. Known as the *Kingsway Bible Teaching Series*, they each bear the general title *I Want to Know What the Bible Says About*. . . . The first four titles are . . . *Jesus* (Geoffrey Grogan, Principal of the Glasgow Bible Training Institute), . . . *The Holy Spirit* (John Peck of Suffolk College), . . . *The Church* (John Balchin of The London Bible College), and . . . *The Work of Jesus* (F. F. Bruce).

Then the Scripture Union have two cheap and helpful guides: *The Scripture Union Bible Guide* (95p), a well-illustrated guided tour of the essential Bible landscape, with ample background notes in clear language, and *Introduction to the Bible* (75p), a scholarly but simple survey using the varied talents of Leslie Allen, F. F. Bruce, D. Clines, A. E. Cundall, D. Guthrie and J. I. Packer. In the same category falls the handy and clear *Students Atlas of the Bible* published by The Paternoster Press at £1.00.

For the actual reading of the Bible, Rushworth Literature Enterprise have produced a scheme of *Daily Bible Readings*, designed to cover the Bible in two years, by G. Eric Lane (50p). The Scripture Union *Day by Day Series* contains selected Bible readings from the RSV, superbly illustrated in colour and ideal for selective distribution. Collins have a delightfully colourful childrens' edition in hardback of the *Good News Bible*, and also (for £3.95) a large size and colourfully illustrated *The Childrens' Bible* (but I found the illustrations in this latter a little off-putting at times: I trust that no children are kept awake at nights by them!). The exposition of *Job* in their series of paperback handbooks intended to accompany the Good News Version, as a very simple introduction for the man in the street to whom the Bible is unknown, is also now available: *The Man Who Had Everything* by David Cook (95p).

## Old Testament Books

**FATHERS OF THE COVENANT: STUDIES IN GENESIS AND EXODUS** H. L. Ellison. Paternoster Press. 128 pp. £1.90 (paperback).

Eleven of the twelve studies which make up this little book first appeared in *The Hebrew Christian* and, as in the case of *From Babylon to Bethlehem*, it is good to see them in the new, and more accessible, format. They cover a wide range of topics, from the primeval history to the revelation at Sinai, and, incidentally, make less demands on the reader than the earlier collection.

As well as the breadth of Biblical scholarship which we have come to expect from Mr. Ellison, there are here the other familiar ingredients of psychological insight, imaginative reconstruction of events, and, repeatedly, the personal challenge of the Biblical text. The first two chapters deal with Creation and 'Man's Nature and Fall', and if the former almost outdoes the Genesis original for brevity it is because the author is not particularly interested in squaring up the account with current scientific theory. All praise to him for this, for if there is one genus which the reviewer cannot abide it is that of theologians who masquerade as biologists! On the contrary, one of the chief assets of the Biblical story of Creation is that it is not couched in modish scientific jargon. 'Had its language reflected the knowledge and concepts of the time of Moses, or indeed of any other Old Testament writer, it would long ago have been outdated. Had it embodied the knowledge and language of the second half of the twentieth century, it would have remained a closed chapter until our time, only to become outdated for our children.'

It is interesting to find the experiences of Abraham and Isaac among the Egyptians and Philistines expressed in terms of 'cultural shock', a phenomenon often encountered by the Christian missionary overseas. This has a

very practical side to it (p. 37). In the case of the patriarchs, it was when they were confronted by non-Semitic peoples, in Egypt and in the region of Gerar, that their foibles surfaced. Canaan may have been *terra incognita* to Abraham and his family, but at least it was inhabited for the most part by fellow-Semites.

Over the years Mr. Ellison has exercised a valuable ministry of 'afflicting the comfortable', especially by challenging attitudes and interpretations which have insinuated themselves into the body ecclesiastic without having the proper Biblical support to which they lay claim. The present volume stands in the same tradition! Sometimes, it is true, one suspects a trace of the anti-hero—Jacob rehabilitated and Joseph (the plain man's type of Christ?) cut down to scheming size—but then how else can one correct an imbalance, humans being the obstinate creatures they are?

*Review by Dr. Robert P. Gordon, University of Glasgow*

**THE LAND: PLACE AS GIFT, PROMISE, AND CHALLENGE IN BIBLICAL FAITH** W. Brueggemann. S.P.C.K. xviii, 203 pp. £4.95 (paperback).

With this monograph we welcome a new series of studies—*Overtures to Biblical Theology*—whose stated aim is 'to explore fresh dimensions of research and to suggest ways in which the biblical heritage may address contemporary culture'. Walter Brueggemann, Dean of Academic Affairs and Professor of Old Testament at Eden Theological Seminary, Webster Groves, Missouri, has chosen to begin the series with a treatment of *The Land*, a central motif of the biblical writings which has surprisingly received scant attention in the past. 'The Bible is the story of God's people with God's land'. It is, moreover, a topic of contemporary importance. Industrialised societies exist in an agony of rootlessness



and *anomie*, with individuals and groups dissociated from land; whilst in third world countries people are striving to obtain a hold on land which will assure survival and give a hope of freedom.

Following the historical approach of von Rad, Brueggemann traces the development of the land theme through the major blocks of Israel's traditions, using it as a prism through which other aspects of Israel's faith can be seen. He finds two relationships to and in the biblical writings: presuming upon the land and being expelled from it (e.g. *Gen. 1-11*; the period of the monarchy culminating in the exile); trusting toward a land not yet possessed, but empowered by anticipation of it (e.g. the patriarchs; the Israelites in Exodus and Conquest; the Jews in exile). With a wealth of references to contemporary biblical scholarship and modern sociological writings Brueggemann brings out the tragedy of man's refusal to accept land as a gift from God, to be used according to His will, and man's insistence on grabbing land for himself, to be selfishly exploited at the expense of others.

A final chapter seeks to discuss the land theme in the New Testament teaching on the kingdom of God (Synoptics), eternal life (John), inheritance (Paul), and homeland (Hebrews).

Most overtures are easy listening, preparing us for the heavier works to follow. The somewhat ponderous and repetitive style of this book, the Germanic-like syntax, and the use of technical jargon, mean that it is not easy reading; but it will repay those who persevere with the discovery of many fresh and valuable insights which demand to be applied to modern life.

Review by John W. Baigent, West London Institute of Higher Education

**THE MESSIANIC PSALMS** T. Ernest Wilson. Loizeaux Bros. 188 pp. 2.95 dollars (paperback).

We are indebted to the author for this excellent little book on the Messianic Psalms. In his introduction he instructs his reader how to recognise a Messianic Psalm, distinguishing between the material which applies to the Lord Jesus Christ, and that which expresses the experience of the Psalmist. Ernest Wilson maintains that a citation in the New Testament confirms the Messianic character of a psalm, but claims that *Psalms 24, 72 and 89*, are Messianic even though they are not quoted in the New Testament. The author selects sixteen psalms as Messianic. The text of each of these psalms from the A.V. is printed in full, with the title *Lord* presented in capitals on every occasion it occurs.

Ernest Wilson is clearly a premillennialist, and writes for this school. Commenting on *Psalm 2: 1-3*, he writes 'the confederacy of the cross foreshadows another at the end', contending that 'The second psalm points forward to that day, when a satanic trinity proclaim a decree prohibiting the worship of God and His Christ, our Lord Jesus Christ'. Some readers may feel that the author has paid more attention to prophecy than to personal application, but in his defence we must say that we should expect a study of the Messianic psalms to be largely prophetic in character.

Each study is presented neatly in an analytical form. The style is simple and most effective in presenting the message and meaning of the psalms expounded. A pleasing feature of the work is its lack of dogmatism, indeed where controversial issues arise, such as the nature of our Lord's ministry to the 'spirits in prison' . . . ,

between His crucifixion and resurrection, two views are presented, the author making it clear which he favours. Rightly he writes 'In questions of this kind, by all means let us have mutual love and affection and tolerance for those who hold either viewpoint'. An illustration of his keen perception is to be found in a comment on our Lord's burial, p87. The author points out that 'There are some interesting and beautiful details in the New Testament concerning the burial of Christ. It is a part of the Gospel', then Ernest Wilson goes on to show the spiritual significance of the event. Those who make this book a basis for a study of the Messianic psalms will be inspired to go further. They will find a useful bibliography for further reading at the end of the book.

Review by Dr. Kingsley G. Rendell

**THE SYMBOLISM OF THE BIBLICAL WORLD: ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN ICONOGRAPHY AND THE BOOK OF PSALMS** Othmar Keel. S.P.C.K. £14.50.

For many years now we have been quite well supplied with books that relate the discoveries of archaeological investigation in the Near East to the Bible. Teachers and preachers, as well as scholars and students, have discovered the value of this approach for assisting the understanding of the biblical text, particularly the OT. Normally such books contain translations of ancient texts and pictures of monuments and artefacts which help to illustrate the history and everyday life of Bible times. This present volume is the first systematic attempt to compare the *conceptual* world of a biblical book with that of ancient Near Eastern iconography. It is a translation of a book which appeared in Germany in 1972 and has become a standard work for the study of the OT in its cultural setting. Othmar Keel, Professor of OT in the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, aims to show the relationship between motifs found in the reliefs and paintings of the ancient world and various forms of expression in the OT. The Psalter was chosen as the main area of the OT for consideration (although many other books are mentioned) because of the close relation of the hymns and prayers of Israel to those of neighbouring cultures like Mesopotamia, Egypt, and the Canaanite-Phoenician sphere. Many of the themes which play a special role in the psalms are also favourite subjects in ancient Near Eastern iconography, including the cosmic system, the temple, the king, and the cultus.

This carefully written book is arranged thematically with chapters dealing with Conceptions of the Cosmos, Destructive Forces, the Temple, Conceptions of God, the King, and Man before God. The text largely consists of detailed descriptions and explanations of over 550 line drawings and 28 photographs of ancient Near Eastern symbolic monumental art. In each case the illustration is correlated with references from the psalms and other OT passages. Thus, for example, pictures of the Chaos monster in various forms illustrate the language of *Ps. 74: 12-17* and *Ps. 104: 6-8*. Pictures of the birth-narrative of the Pharaoh are linked with the references to the 'sonship' of the king in *Pss. 2, 89, and 110*. It should not surprise us that the biblical writers made use of the language, thought-forms and symbolism of their day. Nevertheless, we must be careful not to assume that identical language means identical concepts. Although the ancient Israelites may have held views of the cosmos similar to those of their neighbours, their view

of the relation between God and the world was fundamentally different. On the whole this book makes clear both the similarities and the differences; the uniqueness of the biblical revelation is not necessarily compromised in this approach. The whole work is thoroughly documented with notes, bibliography, catalogue of illustrations, and an index of biblical references (which shows that there is scarcely a psalm which has not been referred to and in most cases many verses have been illustrated).

Some may feel that a historical understanding of the psalms only makes them more remote from the devotional needs of the modern Christian. But to be truly satisfying the devotional use of the psalms should be based on a sound historical exegesis. This book provides a vital supplement to the standard commentaries; it is a fascinating book to read and an essential book for reference. *Review by John W. Baigent, West London Institute of Higher Education*

**SONGS FROM A STRANGE LAND: PSALMS 42-51**  
John Goldingay. Inter-Varsity Press. 172 pp. £2.15 (paperback).

John Goldingay is director of academic studies at St. John's College, Nottingham (a leading evangelical anglican college) and is also secretary of the Tyndale Fellowship's Old Testament study group. Thus by profession as well as personal inclination he is fully committed both to the study and advancement of modern Old Testament scholarship and to the communication of its positive fruits for the upbuilding of the Church. Few can therefore be better qualified than he to write for 'the Bible speaks today' series, whose aim, in the words of its editors J. A. Motyer and J. R. W. Stott, is 'to expound the biblical text with accuracy, to relate it to contemporary life, and to be readable.'

Of all the books of the Old Testament, the Psalms are the most easy for the Christian Church to appropriate to itself. This no doubt accounts for the frequency of citations of and allusions to them in the New Testament, as well as the more recent practice of some publishers to produce pocket editions of the 'New Testament with Psalms'. Yet for all this we tend usually to be rather selective in which Psalms we use, particularly in public worship, and this is a reflection of the fact that this part of the Old Testament too is the product of a culture far removed from our own, whose understanding of God, man and the world are still not generally appreciated even by those well versed in the Scriptures.

For instance, after a hearty singing of the chorus taken from one of the Psalms treated here, 'Great is the Lord', I have several times asked what people understand by the line 'Mount Zion on the sides of the north' (*Psalms* 48: 2), but I have never had a real reply, let alone a sensible one, even from those who may have visited Jerusalem. (This, in fact, is not surprising, for the phrase probably has nothing to do with the conventional geography of the city.)

The significance of such details has in some cases been recovered from other texts unearthed by archaeologists within the last few generations. Other passages are better understood as the setting of the Psalms in Israel's own worship is increasingly appreciated, while again we can all profit from the insights of one who has pondered over these verses for longer than most of us are able. But the real joy is the clear manner in which Goldingay has been able to communicate his learning. Good humour,

telling illustrations and above all the infectious enthusiasm of one who has himself heard God speaking to him through these Psalms combine to make this a book which deserves to be widely read. Already I have one friend who has made it the basis of his own daily reading for a period; others will quarry it for help in public ministry. For these reasons and more, I commend it most warmly. *Review by Dr. H. G. M. Williamson, University of Cambridge*

**THE PSALMS** translated by Peter Levi. Penguin Classics. 239 pp. 95p. (paperback).

Perhaps the most valuable parts of the book are the translator's preface and the general introduction by Nicholas de Lange. The mood of the Psalms is often volatile and the language frequently compressed, but these difficulties must confront anyone who would translate poetry from one language to another. In fact, we are assured, there is a compensating factor in the case of Hebrew. 'Hebrew poetry relies for its effect mainly on elements which are, broadly speaking, translatable.' Insofar as Levi manages to convey something of the atmosphere of the Psalms it is because he does not try to smooth over awkward transitions nor, again, to clothe deeply-felt emotions in saccharine language. Having said that much, I must observe that there is all too much substantiation of Levi's claim that he is 'in no sense a Hebrew scholar'. The blame for the fact that the translation is far from adequate should, I think be laid at the door of the series editor.

To save space and avoid technicalities I shall refer only to cases which can be checked against RSV where the latter accurately represents the original. Levi does not indicate verse divisions. First, there is a general infelicity of expression, sometimes occasioned or abetted by poor translation: 30: 9 'What profit is there in my blood, if I fall into the ditch?'; 46: 7, 11 'the God of Jacob is our mountain castle'; 65: 11 'your feet drip riches'; 105: 16 'and broke every loaf'; 121: 5 'the shadow of God is on your right hand'; 137: 6 'and put Jerusalem above the top of my happiness'.

The handling of the Hebrew tenses leaves much to be desired. In particular, the translation of the so-called imperfect by the future at many points is unfortunate; cf. 6: 6; 22: 2, 17, 18 and 23: 1-6. The point of 42: 4 is quite missed, and partly because of the mistranslation of the imperfect. Direct speech can present problems; there are no quotation marks in the original. But even after allowance has been made for this, exception must be taken to the translator's performance in 2: 3 and 91: 2. The ubiquitous Hebrew conjunction 'and' must be handled with sensitivity, and often has to be rendered by anything but 'and'. Both 22: 6 and 75: 9 call out for the adversative 'but'. Sometimes the Hebrew word for 'God' is used to express the superlative so that, for example, 'cedars of God' (80: 10) should really be rendered 'mighty cedars' (cf. also 68: 15). Often abstracts are conjoined with other nouns in an adjectival role; 'the place of your holiness' (79: 1) should be 'your holy temple' (cf. also 103: 1).

There are quite a few places where the translator's insecure grasp of Hebrew meant that he chose the wrong meaning where more than one alternative existed: 69: 1 'the water is coming into my soul'; 'soul' can also mean 'neck'; 73: 3 'the peace of the wicked'; 'peace' often means 'prosperity', 'health', or similar; 73: 4 'They are

not hanged' is curious; I can only guess that the word 'pangs', 'bonds', was mistranslated and then misinterpreted; 74: 2 'you picked it like your stick'; 'stick' can, and here should, be 'tribe'; 74: 8 'every meeting place of God on earth'; 'on earth' should be 'in the land'.

There are very many mistranslations that it would not be profitable to list. But 'the head of Leviathan' (74: 14) should have the plural 'heads' as in the original; Leviathan had seven according to Canaanite mythology (cf. Rev. 13: 1). And finally, 'who sits on the wings of spirits' (80: 1) is hardly defensible; for 'spirits' read 'cherubim'.

A couple of misprints have caught my eye: 186 B.C. should be 168 B.C. on p. xx, and 'Where is there (sic) God?' (p. 123) needs correction.

Review by Dr. Robert P. Gordon, University of Glasgow

JONAH R. T. Kendall. Hodder and Stoughton. 269 pp. £4.95.

The pulpit of Westminster Chapel, London has had some illustrious occupants, such as Dr. J. H. Jowett, Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, and Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, and vast crowds have benefitted and indeed been transformed through their powerful expository Bible ministry. After a considerable period during which there had been no permanent minister, and the numbers attending had been declining, the Rev. Dr. R. T. Kendall, a Southern Baptist minister from America, was invited to devote himself to the church for six months as Visiting Minister. On his arrival he decided to preach eight expository sermons on the book of Jonah. During the course of his addresses on this book, which became extended as he went on to over twenty, he received and accepted the church's call, given to him in May 1977, to become their minister on a permanent basis. And 'having obtained help of God, he continues to this day'. These sermons on the book of Jonah were tape-recorded, and then printed in the monthly church magazine, and they have now been made available to a wider public in this book before us.

The reason why Dr. Kendall decided to inaugurate his ministry with these studies in the book of Jonah was because he felt that the message of this book was so profoundly relevant to the present-day needs of the Church and of the world, and attention is repeatedly drawn to the striking correspondences. He shows, for instance, that the Church today, like Jonah of old, has been given a message to preach but is not preaching it; that it is going in the opposite direction to that which God had indicated, and is thus rebelling against God's revealed will. With reference to the 'storm scene' he makes the point that, as with the mariners and their passenger, the world at the present time is tossed with bewilderment and dimay, and yet the Christian Church, generally speaking, is fast asleep.

As with all great preaching, however, the theme of Dr. Kendall's message in this volume is more about God than it is even about men, despite all their acute and obvious need. We learn here, therefore, about God's character, His anger and also His tenderness, of how He controls Nature, how He answers prayer, how He deals with an individual and brings him back to obedience to His will.

The final chapter of the book of Jonah presents us with a disappointing impression of the prophet's character; but Dr. Kendall contends that the very fact that, later

on, he wrote about this, indicates that he succeeded eventually in learning what God was trying to teach him as to the folly and wrongfulness of his behaviour.

There is no hint in this book that the story of Jonah is a mere fable or parable, as some are contending today. He has too high a regard for the testimony of Christ concerning it to permit him to treat it as unhistorical. Had he doubted that it really took place, he would not have been appointed Minister of Westminster Chapel.

Review by Dr. Stephen S. Short

THE TIME IS FULFILLED: FIVE ASPECTS OF THE FULFILMENT OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE NEW F. F. Bruce. Paternoster Press. 128 pp. £1.90 (paperback).

Herein is the text of the inaugural series of annual Moore College lectures, delivered by Prof. Bruce in Sydney, N.S.W., in September 1977 and issued with commendable alacrity by the publishers of *The Harvester*. Both title and theme recall Prof. Bruce's earlier excursion into the question of the relationship between the Testaments, in *This is That* (Paternoster, 1968; styled somewhat irreverently as *This AND That* in one university syllabus!), but the reader need fear no overlap.

'Fulfilment' as envisaged by our Lord and by many of his contemporaries were very different quantities. There was current in some circles the expectation that the seventy heptads of *Daniel 9* were about to be fulfilled, that the end of Gentile oppression was at hand; on the other hand, 'The enemy which Jesus confronted and challenged in his ministry was not the Roman oppressor but the spiritual power of darkness, the dominion of Satan' (p. 21). (It is evident that the fatal fascination of 'Daniel's Seventy Weeks' can be traced back a long way!)

Apart from the keynote chapter, the other chapter headings are: 'It is they that bear witness to me' (OT themes in the Fourth Gospel), 'Abraham our father', 'A shadow of good things to come', and 'The spirit of prophecy'. In keeping with the needs of the original audience, the use of the microscope is avoided; what is offered instead is a most readable exposition in which the famed sobriety of judgment, though perhaps not the pawky humour, is much in evidence. There are well-chosen words (pp. 43f.) on the interpretive crux in *John 6: 53ff.* ('the impossibility of taking it literally challenges the hearer (or reader) to consider what it means'), and p. 100 has equally instructive things to say about the dominical 'sentences of holy law' which are sometimes said to owe their existence to the inventiveness of early Christian prophets. Ch. 4 ('A shadow —') explores the ideas of shadow and substance and concludes with an interesting piece on the 'continuing relevance of shadow' (pp. 87-94). There is a question mark after 'shadow' in the original, let it be said. Allegorization of Levitical shadows, it is suggested, is not a profitable exercise. Charles Simeon may have come to faith by way of allegorization of an Old Testament passage, but it was well for him that his faith was in God and not in the propriety of the allegory by which he was enlightened.

Review by Dr. P. Gordon, University of Glasgow

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Books on New Testament subjects  
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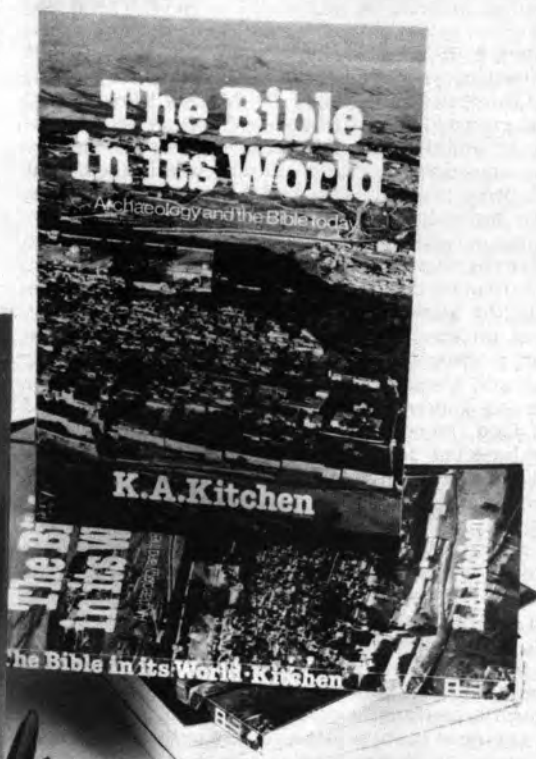
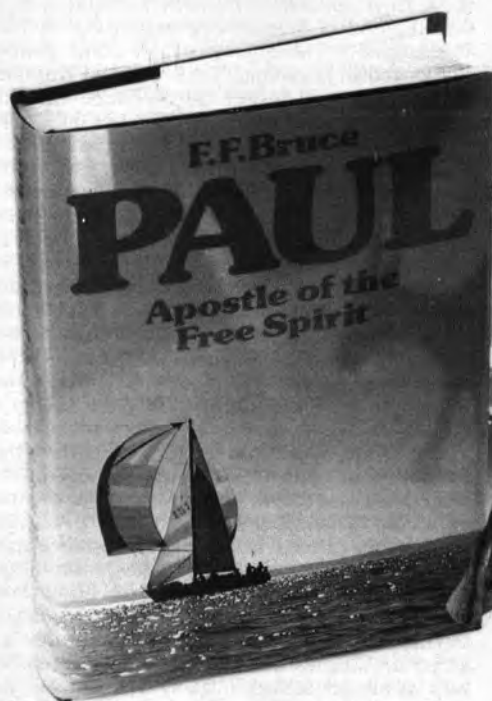
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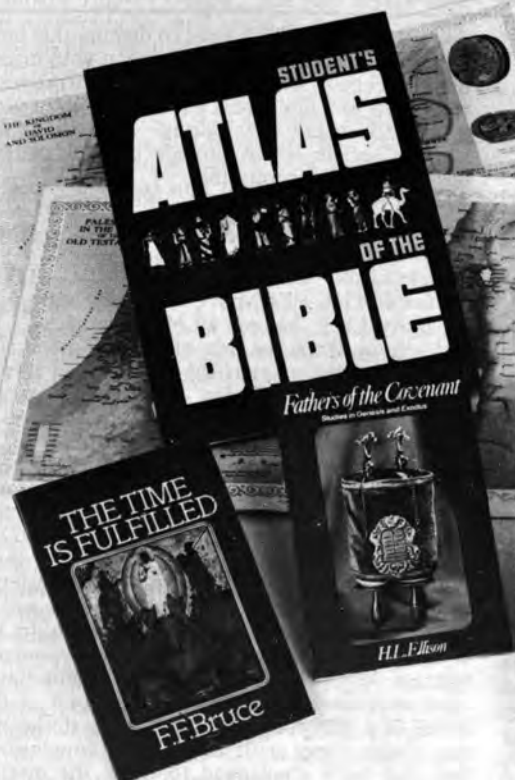
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# To Help in Reading Your Bible (contd.)

## New Testament Books

**THE BIRTH OF THE MESSIAH: A COMMENTARY ON THE INFANCY NARRATIVES IN MATTHEW AND LUKE** Raymond E. Brown. Geoffrey Chapman. 594 pp. £9.50.

Reading this book at intermittent intervals over the long Christmas season has brought home to me yet again the considerable gulf between traditional presentations of the birth of Jesus and the conclusions of even moderate New Testament scholarship—and the fascination of both! Awareness of this is heightened by Raymond Brown's twofold commitment, everywhere apparent, first to the Roman Catholic Church, which in some ways has a particular interest in these narratives, and secondly to the methods of literary and historical criticism, for he is established as a leading Biblical scholar, perhaps especially by his earlier massive commentary on the fourth Gospel in the 'Anchor Bible' series. Indeed, during the year of the present volume's publication (1977) he was president of the American 'Society of Biblical Literature'.

The book is explicitly aimed at a variety of audiences, 'fellow scholars', students of theology and of the Bible, and interested Christians' (p. 8), and this is reflected in the lay-out adopted. The introduction sets the scene by bringing the general reader up to date with scholarly work on the infancy narratives. Then come the separate commentaries on the first two chapters of Matthew and Luke. A translation of each literary unit is followed by 'Notes' in smaller print on matters of detail, proceeding verse by verse; though aimed primarily at the scholar, and thus dealing with such matters as disputed textual readings, these notes also constitute a mine of fascinating information on items of historical background. Next comes 'Comment', which can be read without the notes, and which seeks to analyse the narrative both within itself and in the wider setting of its place within the respective Gospels. Here, technical questions are relegated to footnotes, but even so those not familiar with an open discussion of the history, literary structure and purpose of Biblical narratives are likely to find even these sections heavy going. The book concludes with a number of appendixes, of which the first has the intriguing subtitle, 'Did Jesus have too many grandfathers?'.

We recognize, of course, that these chapters present considerable difficulties: the virginal conception of our Lord is mentioned nowhere else in the New Testament, the narratives cannot easily be harmonized with each other, Matthew's use of the Old Testament is sometimes idiosyncratic, to say the least, and so we could go on. Nevertheless, readers of *The Harvester* are unlikely to be happy with all of Brown's conclusions, moderate though they may be in the present climate of theological opinion. We may feel he is too quick to spot inconsistencies in the text without a full attempt first to resolve them, or too slow to acknowledge the check of tradition on the evangelists' creativity. Yet he is aware that some of his readership will find themselves in this position, and so he treats us gently, though firmly, trying always to point to the theological value of his relentless historical method, and the contribution it can make to appreciation of the Gospel writers' purposes. It would therefore be a mistake if those prepared to think and work at the fundamental

documents of our faith were to dismiss this book without giving it so much as a hearing. Read with discrimination, it can, I believe, help to rescue these narratives from their relegation to a few carols and cards once a year, and put them back where they belong—as introductions to two of the Gospels, which provide the essential setting and key for their interpretation.

Review by Dr. H. G. M. Williamson, University of Cambridge

**CHRISTIAN COUNTER-CULTURE—THE MESSAGE OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT** John R. W. Stott, I.V.P. 222 pp. £2.35 (paperback).

Anything from the pen of John Stott is a significant addition to the evangelical library, and this volume in 'The Bible Speaks Today' series is no exception. This series is pledged to 'expound the biblical text with accuracy, to relate it to contemporary life, and to be readable'. This book more than meets these specifications, and is, consequently, neither a straight commentary, nor a collection of sermons, though some of the material was given at the Keswick Convention in 1972.

One is immediately impressed by the thoroughness of the treatment, and the way in which a variety of approaches and interpretations are considered and evaluated. J. N. Darby's dispensational approach (p.35) is even considered, but alas(!), and probably correctly, it is rejected. However, at all times the author states his own view with clarity and conviction. None of the difficult issues (e.g. divorce) is dodged, and, if the reader does not always agree with Mr. Stott's conclusions, he will find that he is challenged to think the matter through rigorously. The argument is always aptly illustrated with quotations from a wide variety of sources, and the footnotes give many helpful references to primary sources.

The main thrust of the book is essentially practical, and is summed up in the title of the work *Christian Counter-Culture*. Mr. Stott's contention is that, in an age when so many are seeking a better way to live and failing to find it, Christ's way is the only way to live. But why do Christians so often fail to demonstrate this counter-culture? 'Probably the greatest tragedy of the church throughout its long and chequered history has been its constant tendency to conform to the prevailing culture instead of developing a Christian counter-culture' (p.63).

This is a book not just for the scholar and the preacher, but is a must for all who read the Bible to learn God's will for this present time.

Review by Dr. Alastair Noble

**LIVING ETERNALLY** Allen Blair. Loizeaux Bros. 188 pp. 3.95 dollars (paperback).

This commentary on John's Gospel by Allen Blair is the tenth in his 'Living' series. Inevitably the question arises 'Why yet another work on the Fourth Gospel, when there are so many?'! The deep devotional and erudite volumes that have been written on the Gospel of John have their place in every scholar's library. Allen Blair does not claim to compete with them. It is not meant to be a substitute for larger works, it is obviously designed for the reader, who, in a short space, wishes to glean the spiritual message of the Gospel. Because of this, it would be ideal in the hands of a young Christian, eager to know the



nature of his or her new found faith.

It is good to discover such a spiritually refreshing paperback on the Fourth Gospel. The text makes easy reading; the style is crisp, and there is no unnecessary verbiage. The author devotes but a little space to introduction. The reader will look in vain for argument about authorship. Allen Blair accepts without question the authorship of John, the son of Zebedee. Then too, he unquestionably accepts a late dating, in the context of early Gnosticism, declaring that it was written when 'truth had been perverted and the deity of Christ had been questioned'.

The exposition is contained in ninety six short chapters each covering about seven verses. Each chapter is prefaced by an arresting title, e.g. 1: 1-5, 'The Mighty Christ'; 4: 16-30, 'The Joyful Realisation'; 19: 38-42, 'Love's Tender Care'; 21: 15-17, 'Unreserved Surrender'. The many spiritual lessons are clearly and skillfully expressed. The test of any commentary on the Fourth Gospel is to be found in the way it expounds the Prologue. Simply, yet profoundly Allen Blair has dealt with the fundamentals of the great passage. He rightly sees a threefold relationship of Christ, to the Father, to creation, and to men. Similarly the author has plumbed the depths of the many other classic passages of the Gospel, such as the dialogue with Nicodemus; the discourse with the woman at the well, the 'High Priestly Prayer', and the resurrection narrative. The author has paid close attention to the wording of the text; where he feels the A.V. needs amendment or clarification we find it, such as in 1: 5, where 'apprehend' is substituted for 'comprehend', and 'son' for 'children' in 1: 12. Many readers will be disappointed to find no bibliography for further reading. Those whose interest in the Fourth Gospel is stimulated by Allen Blair's commentary, alas, are given no guidance for continued study.

*Review by Dr. Kingsley G. Rendell.*

**CHRIST—PRESENT AND COMING** Rudolf Schnackenburg. S.P.C.K. 1978. 72 pp. £1.50. (paperback).

The author of these four Advent 'meditations' is a prominent Roman Catholic New Testament scholar at the University of Würzburg, several of whose works are available in English. His expensive paperback unfortunately gives an impression of hasty publication: the translation by Edward Quinn is occasionally clumsy, the few references to other books are unstandardized, and each page presents a ragged appearance because of gimmicky 'unjustified' type-setting.

The contents, however, belie their packaging. This is no superficial devotional book. It tackles the 'signs of the times' (its original German title) in a manner which emphatically demands thought. Schnackenburg adopts the presuppositions of modern critical orthodoxy, but nothing he says seems particularly 'Catholic'; indeed, his English publishers do not mention his denominational affiliation, no doubt correctly assessing the volume as acceptable to all varieties of Christians.

Each meditation carefully considers a New Testament passage and draws lessons from it relevant to the present day. Schnackenburg links Christ's three comings (the incarnation, His present coming to and in believers, and the 'Second Coming'), delineating the middle ground between a quietist faith which opts out of society because its hope lies exclusively in the Second Coming, and the faith which seeks to bring in the Kingdom of God solely through active sociopolitical commitment. While he

opposes a 'pie in the sky when we die' attitude, Schnackenburg preserves inviolate the Christian hope of a future which is God's. He sees Jesus as subduing apocalyptic dreams by pointing to what is to be done in the present, secure in the certainty that the future belongs to His Father. 'Hope', he affirms, 'is part of what is distinctively Christian' (p. 41), and it calls us to action.

Schnackenburg's unobtrusive learning roots all he says here firmly in Scripture. I found this a thoroughly rewarding book.

*Review by Dr. A. G. Newell*

**YOUR KINGDOM COME** C. Leslie Mitton. Mowbrays. 151 pp. 95p. (paperback).

Time was when religious paperbacks were solely of a light nature. An era of theologically weighty paperbacks has dawned, of which this book is one. Dr. Mitton surveys the theme of the kingdom of God in the New Testament. His most provocative assertion is that Jesus did not proclaim a Second Coming and never understood God's kingdom in such apocalyptic terms. Rather, his interpreters in the early Church, including the Evangelists and Paul, misrepresented the teaching of Jesus at this point. The author argues that apocalyptic statements of Jesus in the Gospels are re-interpretations of non-apocalyptic material.

This scholarly work has to be read in the light of academic debate concerning the kingdom. Did Jesus view it as primarily fulfilled in his ministry and in that of his disciples or in a catastrophic event in the future, the Parousia? For the author apocalyptic, with all it entails, is a naughty word, to be dropped from the Christian's theological vocabulary.

This is Dr. Mitton's negative contribution. But there are other, positive conclusions, which all protagonists in the debate must take into account. He works methodically through all the NT material concerning the kingdom of God/heaven and discusses it in the light of each context. The kingdom is in general defined as 'God asserting his right to rule over human life and demonstrating his power to overthrow all powers hostile to his purposes and to subdue them to his will' (p. 4). Stress is laid upon the contemporary fulfilment of the kingdom in the ministry of Jesus and upon its future outworking both among his followers, as they continue his ministry, and in heaven. Those who would claim that the kingdom means more than this cannot easily deny these aspects ably shown to be present in Jesus' teaching. There is a fascinating demonstration of the rich diversity to be found in the Gospels, each Evangelist having his particular emphases.

Interestingly the charismatic movement is viewed as one modern way of recapturing part of what Jesus meant by the kingdom, that 'God in his Holy Spirit is eager to break into human lives and cleanse, renew and empower them. . . But by itself this can all too easily become an unbalanced presentation of the message of Jesus, unless closely co-ordinated into it is an equal emphasis on righteousness and Jesus as Lord' (p. 143), other themes which are regular concomitants of the kingdom in NT thinking.

This clearly written analysis of a complex subject is a significant contribution to an ongoing debate, and readers will find themselves drawn in to challenge and be challenged. The name of G. E. Ladd might usefully be inserted into the bibliography.

*Review by Dr. Leslie C. Allen, London Bible College*

## In Practice: Faith and its Distortions

**CINDERELLA'S BETROTHAL GIFTS** Michael Griffiths, OMF Books, 78 pp. 65p. (paperback).

Michael Griffiths suggests that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are 'given to the Church as a betrothal pledge of her final consummation and perfecting', but that 'there are times when the Bride of Christ sits like Cinderella amid the institutional ashes, apparently having forgotten totally that she is meant to be perfecting herself ready for the Day'.

Here is an interesting, well-balanced, carefully reasoned book which repays careful reading—it should not be just skimmed through. The author considers what spiritual gifts are, and how many are mentioned in the New Testament. He distinguishes the differing gifts from one another, and deals in turn with fourteen of them in some detail. His final chapter considers how the gifts are given and whether or not we should seek them. This treatment of the subject can be read with profit by all members of assemblies.

*Review by David R. Jackson*

**BUILDING WITH BANANAS** Derek and Nancy Copley, Paternoster Press, 160 pp. £1.50 (paperback).

A bricklayer on a local building site surveying a pile of badly made bricks exclaimed, 'How can anyone expect to build with these? They're just like bananas!' Hence the unusual title for this book which is concerned with the problems of building the local church when all of us who form it are rather like ill-shaped bricks, 'bent—more or less.' The book is well written and its twelve chapters cover every possible church situation. We are reminded of what the local church should be—a Christ-centred, loving and caring community attracting non-Christians by the warmth of its fellowship, and we are told, what most of us are only too aware of, that the reality often falls far short of this ideal. The authors take account of our humanity, our frail humanity. They give a list of our emotional needs—the need for significance, for belonging, for purpose, for love—given and received and the need for self-esteem. They tell us how we can recognize in each other these basic human needs and we can contribute to their fulfillment. In another chapter entitled, 'Seeing Other People's Viewpoints' the writers tell us how devious can be the reasons for our adoption of certain views which we may convince ourselves are simply based on Scripture; they suggest how to decide between opinions and facts. The book gains immensely by having been written jointly by Derek and Nancy Copley. In many places, and particularly in the chapter on 'Women in the Church' it is obvious how much the book owes to the female member of the partnership.

The book is full of common sense and wise counsel and is firmly based on the Scriptures. It is spiced with humour and the illustrations by Bob Bond are amusing and contribute to the unportentious tone in which the authors remind and inform us of many important truths. This is a book to be read by all who are concerned that the church should be a true community, a family where worship and witness are sustained by mutual care and support. It would be an ideal choice for a study book. May it be used greatly to the building up of the family of God.

*Review by O. S. Papps.*

**JANANI: THE MAKING OF A MARTYR** Margaret Ford, Lakeland, 93 pp. 95p (paperback).

**THE APOSTLE OF THE NORTH** John Kennedy, Free Presbyterian Publications, 292 pp. £3.

**EARTHQUAKE EVANGELIST** Shotaro Kogo, JEB Books, 80 pp. 70p.

Margaret Ford was Janani Luwum's secretary while he was Bishop of Northern Uganda and later while he was Archbishop until he died. In his early days as archbishop, Janani still communicated freely with the President. It was not apparently unusual for Amin to telephone him in the night on state matters. Sometimes the presidential car would arrive unexpectedly at his office with a message that the President wished to see him immediately.

But this relationship did not last. Margaret Ford explains that Amin comes from the only predominantly Muslim tribe in Uganda—the Kakwa—from whom he has drawn all his top advisers. Although at the last British census, Muslims were shown to make up only about 6 per cent of the population, under Amin they have come to dominate predominantly Christian Uganda.

Luwum fearlessly took up the cause of families who suffered at the hands of a regime which became increasingly hostile to the church. Anyone wishing to read the story of Luwum's eventual death at the hand of Amin's Government should get hold of a copy of Margaret Ford's book.

200 years earlier John Macdonald was born in Caithness, in the Highlands of Scotland. John Kennedy's biography of him, *Apostle of the North* was first published in 1866 and has become very scarce as a second-hand book, although the memory of this eminent Presbyterian preacher has not faded from the hearts of his Highland countrymen. Free Presbyterian Publications have now produced a second edition with some minor changes to the text of the first, the addition of four photographs of Macdonald, plus four new appendices.

Few men can have worked harder in the service of the gospel. In no year of his life in Ross-shire did he preach fewer than three hundred sermons. During the last thirty-six years of his life, he preached more than ten thousand times. It was said that he never delivered an unstudied address, and he left among his papers notes for addresses on almost every text on which sermons could be preached.

He once said 'If my mare could speak, she would say "The gospel may be good, and to others it may be good, but as for me, I am ten times tired of it"'. We may not however feel able to agree with the comment of Macdonald's biographer that 'like the horse of another evangelist, she (Macdonald's mare) had done more for the gospel than all the mitred bishops in the land'.

Macdonald could command a nice wit, as when crossing Kessock ferry he was confronted by a drunken exciseman, at whose feet a dog was lying. Recognising the Minister, the exciseman raised the animal, held it in his arms and asked Macdonald, "Will you christen this child?" Macdonald replied, "Do you acknowledge yourself the father of what you now present for baptism?"

*Harvester* readers may be interested in an entry in Macdonald's journal for March 8, 1830: 'This day I

called in the forenoon at Sandside; had some discussion with Major Innes respecting Irving's views on the human nature of Christ; found, on referring to some passages of Scripture on the subject, that he yielded to its authority, and was satisfied that Irving's views were wrong.'

Like Macdonald, but over a century later and half way across the world, Pastor Shotaro Kogo was above all else an evangelist. On September 1st 1923, when he was seventeen Shotaro Kogo miraculously escaped from the great Kanto earthquake which rocked the city of Tokyo. He survived with the loss of an eye, but just as his artificial eye has been a constant reminder of his deliverance, so he has never lost the sense of urgency that he is preaching Christ as a dying man to dying men and women. *Earthquake Evangelist* is a translation by Amy Luke of original articles by Mr. Kogo first published in a Japanese Christian magazine. It is an unpretentious account of a spiritual pilgrimage.

Review by Roger Steer

**DEATH OF A GURU** Rabindranath R. Maharaj with Dave Hunt. Hodder & Stoughton. 224 pp. £1.00 (paperback).

It is not a common event when a Brahmin Hindu turns to Christ, let alone someone who has been deeply involved in the mystical and religious practices of their religion. 'Rabi' as he is called, tells his life story from early youth, through his growing, and training to be a guru while still a teenager, his conversion at the age of 15, and eventually, after studying at London Bible College, his involvement in the Zurich-based New Life Fellowship.

The book falls into the general line of the author's ministry amongst the new Hindus of the west (T.M. adherents, Eastern mysticism linked to drugs, are just examples of the form Hinduism takes). He shows the dangers, satanic origins, and utter inadequacy of Hindu spirituality, experience, and world views as he found them in his own life. 'There's a whole new breed of people in the west now, especially in the universities, with whom the average Christian no longer communicates, but without realizing it,' is the way the author puts it in the epilogue.

It needs to be said that the author's background is that of only one kind of Hindu—some Hindu people in this country of Indian origin would feel rather insulted were you to hand them this book without explanation that you are aware that this is the story of a Hindu whose beliefs and experiences are only similar, not identical, to their own.

The book is very readable, the conversations in Trinidadian vernacular act as a counter to the often frightening intensity of the unfamiliar and often utterly demonic experience of the author's home. I am left challenged by the fervent faith and desire for God shown by Rabi, both before and after his conversion, and amazed at the ways that God used to draw this young man to himself.

Review by Patrick Sookhdeo

**LOVE IS OUR HOME** Faith Lees, with Jeanne Hinton. Hodder & Stoughton. 192 pp. £1.15 (paperback).

This story, of the development of a charismatic community at Post Green, in the village of Lychett Minster in Dorset, is told by one of its leaders, Faith Lees.

She tells of her marriage to Sir Thomas Lees and of her conversion at Lee Abbey, during a period of mental and physical exhaustion. The impression that one receives of the lives of Lady Lees and her husband is one of frenzied and often successful activity, but which clearly put great strain upon them, particularly upon Lady Lees.

After reading *The Cross And The Switchblade* by David Wilkerson, and being much impressed by it, Faith Lees sought out the Fountain Trust, from which she hoped to obtain more copies and, as a result, she and her husband were introduced to the charismatic movement. They had increasing contact with people who had acquired the ability to speak in tongues and they gradually gained this ability themselves, as well as witnessing various remarkable happenings, particularly what appeared to be miraculous healings. Two of the charismatics who influenced them greatly were Jean and Elmer Darnall and they began to try to help people with various problems. Camps and conventions were held at Post Green and a Bible College, the Christian Life College, was established. Post Green was visited and the group there advised and influenced by Rev. Graham Pulkingham, an Anglican charismatic from the USA, and the Post Green Community came into being officially in 1975.

The care that the Lees show for individuals is commendable, but one is very doubtful about the extent to which this book describes the genuine work of the Holy Spirit, rather than frenetic and possibly somewhat unbalanced activities. All believers who have any contact with charismatics, should read 'Love is our Home' and think very carefully about it.

Review by Tony Dean

**FAITH AND THE FLAG: THE OPENING OF AFRICA** Jeremy Murray-Brown. George Allen and Unwin. 238 pp. £6.95.

A historically guilty conscience dictates that we should view the scramble for the colonialization of Africa in a largely negative light. Early missionary endeavours are likewise castigated as proud imperialism under a pious cloak. While confessing the failures of history and the inadequacies of a former generation of literature which glorified the heroic saints of missionary pioneering, we cannot but grieve to see the pendulum swing so violently to unbalanced extremes of criticism. It is therefore refreshing to read Murray-Brown's balanced and well-researched book on the early years of mission in Africa. His journalistic skill is delightfully employed in the relatively brief biographical sketches which form the heart of his book.

Beginning with the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 the author sets the scene in the first chapter by placing his six heroes in the total context of the dramatic opening up of Africa to the Gospel and to western civilization in the second half of the last century. And what colourful and dynamic characters they were! Robert Moffat, the spiritual giant of southern Africa; the enigmatic David Livingstone about whom so much has been written and yet who remains so little understood; the sternly spiritual Ludwig Krapf who pioneered in the face of degenerate political forces from Arabia and the West in the context of the slave-trade and the uncertainties of tribal life; the seemingly worldly and immature jour-



nalist, Henry Morton Stanley, whose life was so changed by his association with Livingstone; the visionary Roman Catholic Cardinal Archbishop Lavigerie with his vivid sense of history and of the dramatic; and finally but too briefly the disciplined figure of General Gordon.

The deep spirituality and faith of these men will challenge all readers—let no one sit in luxury while enjoying this excellent book unless he is willing for that same sacrificial dedication to mission which runs through the characters so vividly portrayed to us by Jeremy Murray-Brown.

Review by Martin Goldsmith, All Nations Christian College

**YOUTH, BRAINWASHING, AND THE EXTREMIST CULTS** Ronald Enroth. Paternoster Press. 221 pp. £2.40 (paperback).

The 'extremist cults' are not the long-standing 'Christian deviations' like the Jehovah's Witnesses, but more recent growths, largely American, particularly attractive to young people, and exacting a commitment which involves almost total abandonment of previous ties and devotion of all one's time, money and energy to the cult—even, indeed, the surrender of the whole mind and personality (hence 'brainwashing' in the title). Mr. Enroth gives case studies from seven such cults (four ostensibly Christian, two ostensibly Hindu, and one, the 'Unification Church' of Sun Myung Moon, proclaiming a new messiah). Despite the apparent variety of the cults there is a disturbing similarity in the stories: nominal religious background, the quest for something deeper, encounter with committed cultists, and first personal inquiries are followed by absorption into the movement, the stifling of all questions and doubts, and the emergence of what seems a new personality dominated by the cult and its clichés. Such similarities make this first (and longer) part of the book less valuable than the second, where Mr. Enroth discusses the methods used to attach 'converts' to these movements, the trait that make people vulnerable, the nature of cultic commitment, and the reaction of victim's families. He defends the much-criticized 'deprogramming' techniques of winning victims back; one would have liked more discussion of this. The last chapter presents the situation as a challenge to the Church from hell; Mr. Enroth's near-equation of the cults with occultism is dubious, but he leaves one no doubt of the evil involved.

Review by R. L. Sturch, London Bible College

## FOR LENT

SPCK have produced *The Giver of Life—an exploration of the Spirit in Meditations for Lent* (price 70p).

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These who enjoy the poetry of Evangeline Paterson will welcome the appearance of *Whitelight* (Mid-Day Publications, Old Fire Station, 40 George St., Oxford OX1 2AQ) at 35p—and every poem full of meat.

continued from page 77

reprinting by John Hadley of Cornwall of a little booklet *The Young Christian at the Lord's Table* which (though old-fashioned) he has found of considerable use in his own work in Bodmin (5 copies 64p., post paid, from John Hadley at Ebenezer, Midway Road, Bodmin, Cornwall). □

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## Readers' Forum

The new-style Readers' Forum is open to contributions from readers: suggestions from practical experience related to church activities or christian living; doctrinal or expository questions; useful experiences; what-you-will. Questions, to which other readers will be invited to submit replies, will also be published from time to time as they are received. It is hoped that readers will take full advantage of this feature.

(In our December issue (p. 365) we promised to reproduce, as the first item in the new style Readers' Forum, the statement produced by the elders of Birkbeck Chapel, Sidcup for the guidance of the church as to the locally accepted position in relation to so-called 'charismatic' teaching. Readers' comments, of a constructive nature, would be welcomed, and should be sent to the Editor at 18 King's Ave., Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX).

### 1. Introduction

1.1. The Elders having studied the present growth of the charismatic movement in the light of New Testament teaching now set out below their unanimous findings which they wish to serve as guide lines for the local Church.

### 2. The work of the Holy Spirit within the believer

2.1. The New Testament teaches that the work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian is twofold. There is the work of regeneration whereby the individual is convicted of sin, repents and believes in Christ for salvation. Then there is His work in 'fulness' whereby, after regeneration, the believer's life is raised to a new level of holiness and the believer is empowered for service by the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

2.2. The work of conviction of sin leading to repentance and salvation is the work of the Holy Spirit acting upon the unbeliever (John 16: 8, 9 and 10). The 'new birth' is the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit (John 3: 4, 5, 6) in the life of the unbeliever whereby there is implanted a new nature (Eph. 2) which is God-conscious, sinless and sensitive to the direction of the Holy Spirit. At the 'new birth' the believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8: 11), which is the evidence of the new relationship with God (Eph. 1: 13, 14). It is the will of God that every believer should be baptised—filled—with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5: 18) so that the power of the Holy Spirit might be released through him (John 7: 38, 39). This demands total submission (Rom. 12: 1, 2) so that the will of God may be followed.

2.3. Whilst in the Book of the Acts there were those who were suddenly filled with the Holy Spirit as part of the development of the Church in its initial stages, nowhere in the apostolic writings is there any teaching that a 'second experience' is a prerequisite to being filled with the Spirit. It should be the constant desire of every believer to seek and experience the filling of the Holy Spirit as a positive reality in their lives and to constantly guard against grieving and quenching the Holy Spirit. Many Christians can recall particular experiences when the reality of this truth first gripped their lives.

### 3. Gifts for recognised Church Officers (Eph. 4: 11-12)

#### 3.1. Apostles

3.1.1. Whilst the New Testament speaks of the twelve and Paul as Apostles in a special sense the term is used to describe many others as Apostles as well. (1 Cor. 15: 5, 6, 7; Gal. 1: 19 & 2.9; Acts 14: 14; Rom. 16: 7; 1 Thess. 2: 6). The word means 'messenger' or 'delegate' and in the early Church the Apostles fulfilled a two-fold role—the defence of the faith and the planting of new Churches. The need for the gift continues today.

#### 3.2. Prophets

3.2.1. In 1 Cor. 14 the role of the prophet is set out. First he speaks to men 'for their upbuilding, encouragement and exhortation' (1 Cor. 14: 3); secondly he 'edifies the Church' (1 Cor. 14: 4); and thirdly his message convicts the outsider who may come in of the presence of God (1 Cor. 14: 24 & 25). His message is controlled (1 Cor. 14: 32) and subject to the judgement of the listeners (1 Cor. 14: 29). God is always revealing Himself to His people through His Word and (empowered by the Holy Spirit) the Prophet applies a passage or sentence from the Word of God to meet a particular need or situation. The need for this gift is a continuing one.

... having studied the present growth of the charismatic movement in the light of the New Testament ...

### 3.3. Evangelists

3.3.1. The Evangelist is literally one who preaches the Gospel (Philip in Acts 8). This is the work of the Holy Spirit who operates through the word of the Evangelist to bring conviction, repentance, faith and regeneration. The need for the Evangelist exists at all times.

#### 3.4. Pastors and Teachers.

3.4.1. The majority of present day commentators regard these gifts as one. Pastors and Teachers are the spiritual overseers of the Church and in the present day their role is beyond dispute.

### 4. Gifts for the whole Church (1 Cor. 12.)

#### 4.1. The utterance of Wisdom

4.1.1. True Wisdom is the understanding of the mind of God, the source of all Wisdom, and can only be revealed by the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 2: 9 & 10). The utterance of Wisdom is the gift so to proclaim spiritual truths that those who hear them can understand them.

#### 4.2. The utterance of Knowledge.

4.2.1. Difficulty has been experienced in differentiating between this gift and the gift of Wisdom. Elisha had the reputation for conveying to the King of Israel the words that the King of Syria spoke in the security of his bedchamber (II Kings 6: 12), while Peter was able to confront Ananias and Sapphira with the enormity of their deception despite the fact that they had not told anybody what they had done (Acts 5: 1-11). The utterance of Knowledge is the Spirit-imparted gift of revealing the mind of God for a particular situation about which



the speaker has no human knowledge. It is a gift for the benefit of the Church and not for any human self-display. It is an area readily open to abuse and its use requires much humility, wisdom and prayer.

#### 4.3. Faith

4.3.1. The gift of faith is the outstanding faith given to some Christians enabling them to rely on God in a special way for the accomplishment of some specific task. A very good example is the case of George Müller.

#### 4.4. Gifts of Healing

4.4.1. In the first place miraculous healing must be always viewed against the background of the teaching of the whole of Scripture on the subject of suffering, disease and death. Scripture teaches that suffering, disease and death are part of man's condition as a result of the fall and will pass away only when God makes His new heaven and earth. Secondly, miraculous healing in Scripture is always associated with the revelation of the character of God. An examination of the instances of healing in the New Testament shows that in each case glory was brought to the Name of the Lord and as a result many were brought to Him in belief. Healing was selective to this end. Both Jesus and the Apostles must have passed many who were ill without healing them. Paul prayed three times for deliverance from a 'thorn in the flesh' each time without success. Epaphroditus fell ill and was near to death and there does not seem to be any suggestion that he was miraculously healed. The servants of God, like Job, are sometimes those most sorely afflicted. Where it is the will of God to heal He may impart the gift of healing to an individual or healing may come about as an answer to prayer. The motive of those who would heal must be the glorifying of God and the uplifting of Christ, for only in this context should the gift even be prayed for. Sometimes healing may be instantaneous and dramatic. At other times it may follow gradually after much prayer. On other occasions suffering may be borne for a lifetime for no apparent reason—as in the case of Paul. Scripture gives no encouragement to those who go round indiscriminately laying hands on all and sundry, claiming to heal in the name of the Lord.

## Prophecy . . . healing . . . tongues. What is the Biblical guidance?

#### 4.5. The working of Miracles

4.5.1. The working of miracles by an individual believer in exercising this gift is comparatively rare in the recorded history of the early Church. Paul's blinding of the false prophet Bar-Jesus is an example (*Acts 13: 4-12*).

It is difficult to come to any firm conclusion as to whether this gift is extant in the Church today. Miraculous happenings in the experience of individuals are however evident in the day in which we live and these vindicate the name of God and the faith of those who witness them. It is interesting to note that Christians under persecution and Christians pioneering the Gospel under dangerous conditions seem more aware of miracles, and the accounts of their lives contain events which can only be understood as miraculous.

#### 4.6. Prophecy

4.6.1. Prophecy in the context of 'gifts for the whole church' as distinct from that of a recognised Church Office appears from *1. Cor. 14* to be largely spontaneous and widely distributed (*verses 26 & 29*). It is given 'that all may learn and may be comforted' (*verse 31*). The content is nevertheless a revelation of the mind of God and is recognised by discernment (*verse 29*). There is always the danger of false prophecy. It is a gift which is dormant to a large degree at the present time, but which the church should be exercised about.

#### 4.7. The ability to distinguish between spirits

4.7.1. When looking at this gift there are two areas of possible operation. When teaching which purports to be from God is presented there is the possibility of the 'spirit of error' as well as the 'spirit of truth' and in *1. John 4* judgement is called for. Throughout the history of the church grievous errors have crept in, such that in *Jude 3* the Christian is exhorted to 'content earnestly for the faith'. Gift is needed to discern spiritual truth spiritually taught and relevantly applied. The second area relates to the awareness of demon possession and this gift requires exercising with the utmost caution. Significantly, in all the ministry of Paul there is only one record of his casting out an evil spirit, and this he did apparently reluctantly after being pestered for many days by the girl who was possessed (*Acts. 16*). There is release in the name of Christ for those who are possessed. There is victory in the name of Christ for Christians who are confronted with those who are possessed and who perhaps in the circumstances of the moment have no one to whom they can turn for help. But this gift, perhaps more than many of the others, needs wisdom and care and discernment in its exercise, and such can come only from the Spirit of God Himself. □

#### 4.8. Various kinds of tongues and the interpretation of tongues

4.8.1. In private use the gift of tongues is a means of addressing God since Paul says in *1. Cor. 14: 2* that 'he that speaks in a tongue speaks not to men, but to God.' It is thus a form of prayer which results in edification to the person involved (*verse 4*). Prayer in tongues is not the only form of Spirit-prompted prayer since Paul in *verse 15* says 'I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the mind also'. Paul goes on to make it clear that the Holy Spirit may prompt both kinds of prayer and this may vary according to the circumstances and needs of the individual. There are devout men of God who have had no experiences of praying in tongues and there are equally devout men who testify to the great personal gain they find in praying in tongues. As indicated in the opening verses of *1. Cor. 12* 'the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal'. The existence of the gift of tongues in the private prayer life of the believer is accepted as God given and inspired by the Holy Spirit.

4.8.2. In public use Paul makes it clear that ordinary language is to be preferred (*1. Cor. 14: 19*) but that if tongues are used careful control is required (*verse 27*) and interpretation is essential (*verses 27 & 28*). In the Church context the criteria is not the benefit to the individual, but the edifying of the Church (*verse 12*). Let all things be done unto edifying (*verse 26*). Where the gift of tongues is granted—and this applies to any gift—it should be exercised according to the principles laid down in Holy Scripture. God will then be glorified and the individual and the Church will be edified. □

# Replies to Professor Bruce

## The January Question

A friend of mine recently beguiled a period spent in hospital by making a comparative study of hymn-books, with special reference to the incidence of hymns referring to the Second Advent. He found that in the older Brethren collections still in use (such as *The Believer's Hymn Book*) the proportion of hymns which at least mention the Advent, even if they are not entirely devoted to that subject, is very high (about 40 per cent.), whereas the proportion in various recent collections used among Brethren is much lower. I have not checked his figures, and I suspect that in recent collections I could find references to the Advent which he overlooked. But if his findings are anywhere near the truth, do they reflect a decreasing emphasis on this subject in ministry and thought?

### Mrs. May Dredge replies:-

Taking the figures as given, I have no doubt that the friend of Professor Bruce is reasonably near the truth in his findings. Could we possibly find one of the reasons for this in, for instance, the feelings of Mrs. Coggan (brought up in a partly Brethren family) as expressed in Anne Arnett's book *Wife to the Archbishop*, in which Mrs. Coggan recalls her fears on one occasion that the Second Coming had already taken place and she alone had been left behind?

Perhaps we have now swung away from this emphasis to a more balanced view of the Gospel, in which there is mercy and love as well as judgement.

We can find a most beautiful hymn which mentions the Second Advent in Number 139 *Christian Worship*.

### Mr. Charles R. Boswood replies:-

In the early days of the Brethren the Second Coming had a prominent place in their ministry and thought. This, I submit, was all to the good. It led, inter alia, to a clarification of the truth of the Church's heavenly calling and destiny and of her unique relationship to Christ. Moreover, this coming was felt to be imminent. It is hard to imagine the blank incredulity which would have resulted could they have been told that Brethren would still be on earth in 1979!

But the emphasis went too far in some places and there was probably justification for C. H. Spurgeon's thrust 'Ye men of Plymouth, why stand ye here gazing up into heaven?'

Now the pendulum has swung the other way, and the tender plant of Christian hope is in danger of being choked not only by love for the present world but also with social concern, plans for evangelism, etc. May the day star arise afresh in our hearts!

The trend observed in hymn books does, I believe, reflect this change of outlook, and the anthologies of Brethren are not the only ones involved. I noticed a little while ago that the *Baptist Church Hymnal (Revised 1933)* has a section 'His Coming Again' embracing only six hymns, but in the *Baptist Hymn Book 1962* even this slim section disappears, three of the hymns being merged in 'His Kingship and Final Triumph' and the other three left out altogether, including Miss F. R. Havergal's exquisite and affectionate outpouring 'Thou art coming O my Saviour'.

### Mr. H. L. Ellison replies:-

The question is difficult to answer accurately for lack of adequate evidence. The drop in hymn references, which is almost certainly a fact, is probably due mainly to the weeding out of a number of below-standard Second Advent hymns and, what is more significant, the lack of worth-while more

modern ones to replace them.

That there is a decreased emphasis on the subject is indubitable, and the reason is clear. Right through the history of the Church there have been periods of intense stress on the Coming, due sometimes to contemporary events, sometimes to quirks in the exegesis of prophecy. These have been followed by reactions due to non-fulfilment and over-stress. There have been three such peaks in the last hundred years, one about 1880, another starting about 1914, and the last caused by the increase of totalitarian systems, leading to the World War and the setting up of the State of Israel. The present reaction was unavoidable.

It was the greater among Christian Brethren and certain other groups, because among them the fact of the Coming had unfortunately become linked with theories about its nature, which sometimes were regarded as a test of orthodoxy. As these have increasingly been questioned and by many rejected, lack of stress on the Coming itself has been natural, sometimes to avoid useless controversy. In addition the increased difficulty for the Christian to live in a monastery without walls makes many younger people more interested in how they should live in the world that is rather than in theories about the world to come.

### Mr. Geoffrey Robson replies:-

This is the other side of the penny from Professor Bruce's April 1977 question: Why do Brethren hymn books modify passages in hymns about facing death to emphasis on the Lord's return?

One hymn in three contains an 'aspiration after heaven': the church's resolution to out-sing mortality. There may have been a desire either to 'gild the bed of death with light' or to avoid the appalling prospect. Victorian emotionalism seems to have tried to assure itself of both reliefs in *Sankey's 1200*. Its sections run as follows: 'Comfort in Sorrow', 38; 'Aspirations after Heaven', 21; 'Heaven Anticipated', 62; 'The Redeemed in Heaven', 34; 'Death and Resurrection', 22; 'His Second Coming', 28. How far revulsion went can be seen in Golden Bells, 1925: 'His Second Coming', 7; 'Heaven', 14—out of 700. John Wesley's *Collection of Hymns for the use of the people called Methodists*, 1780, had 40 within 'Death, Judgment, Heaven, Hell' out of 533. The 1874 supplement increased this by 26 and added 'His Kingdom', 24—out of 1009. The 90 fell to 75 in the 1933 *Methodist Hymn Book*. *Hymns of Faith* has 10 for 'The Conquered Grave' and 30 for 'His Kingdom and Return'—out of 659. *Christian Worship* has 20 for 'His Coming and Kingdom' and 18 for 'The Church Triumphant', out of 716.

A single phenomenon is the dependence of the hymns retained on the *Revelation*. Five of the ten in *Hymns of Faith* are paraphrases of ch. 7: 9-17. Of the *Christian Worship* 18, two are based on ch. 5, three on ch. 7 and six on the new Jerusalem. It includes, helpfully, three Darby hymns: one based on ch. 5 and one on chs. 19 and 21. If Scofield is Darby made plain, the church is out of view after ch. 3, and ch. 7: 9-17 is 'a vision of the Gentiles who are to be saved during the great tribulation'. This would rob the church of the most glorious passages of comfort in its singing about heaven, in the interest of delivering it from the dark passages concerning earth!

The original *Believers Hymn Book* had 21 out of 308 indexed under 'The Lord's Coming Again', and 17 under 'Heaven'. The edition with 157 more hymns added four to the 'Coming' but six to 'Heaven'. The proportion in the 'End' sections of the original *Believers* is thus half of that in *Sankey*, but its 'Coming' proportion trebled that in *Sankey*. The diminution noted by Professor Bruce may simply reflect a general trend in hymn books. Section figures take no account of the convention—Brethren and non-Brethren alike—for the last verse to be 'end' aspiration. Brethren tended to put that in 'Coming' terms: see, for an unpardonable example, the last four lines of

'Hail Thou once-despised Jesus' (no. 61). I notice, too, that *Believers* attaches 'When we've been there ten thousand years' to a hymn (no. 221) completely different from John Newton's 'Amazing Grace'—a verse which on 'higher critical' ground Professor Bruce denied in *The Harvester* years ago could be by Newton. *Believers* ascribes the hymn to Charles Wesley. I have not been able to confirm this, having access to few of his 6,500. His range was very wide: he is said to have written 'Ah! lovely appearance of death. No sight upon earth is so fair: Not all the gay pageants that breathe Can with a dead body compare'. This may be an extreme example of the 'Oh! that we were there' stress in our singing which is in contrast to the whole modern attitude to the event.

Yet, whatever our shifts or mistakes of emphasis, we ought not to forego the triumph of anticipation: as C. S. Lewis said in 1943 'all the imagery (harps etc.) is a merely symbolical attempt to express the inexpressible . . . music is the thing in the present life which most suggests ecstasy and infinity'.

The failure of attempts to convert spiritual anticipation into the writing of future history may be the principal factor in the decreased emphasis which Professor Bruce has observed. (An example is the flatness of v. 4 of Tregelles at no. 46 compared with the rest of the hymn).

#### AND AN ADDENDUM . . .

Dear Mr. Coad,

*Professor Bruce Asks: The November Question*

I said that when the November question had been answered, I might give my own reply to it.

Here it is, then: every one who believes in the God who justifies the ungodly is an evangelical, as I understand and use the term.

Yours sincerely,  
F. F. Bruce

## Correspondence

Letters should be sent to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX.

Publication of letters does not imply that views expressed are endorsed by the Editor or the Trustees.

#### Sponsoring of In Contact Workers

From Mr. Patrick Sookhdeo

Dear Mr. Coad,

As time has gone by the work of *In Contact* has continued to grow until it has now reached the total of 24 full-time workers, with more being added over the coming months. An increasing number are coming from India and Pakistan. They are able to enter the country on a work permit which allows them to engage in full-time evangelistic work.

At the moment the Home Office Immigration Department is unsure of our financial basis, that of looking to the Lord for support, and are refusing to give extensions to visas of those already here.

This has meant that we now have to consider a new type of support which would be on a guaranteed basis. This would allow each worker to work on a salaried basis. For a married couple with two children we are considering a figure of £2,500, and for a single person £1,500. We are therefore in need of assemblies or individuals who would prayerfully consider helping to sponsor *In Contact* missionaries.

I would greatly appreciate any help you would be able to give on this matter.

'In Contact'  
St. Andrew's Road  
Plaistow  
London E13  
(Tel. 01-474 0743)

With every blessing,  
Yours in Christ,  
Patrick Sookhdeo

#### The local church and foreign mission

From Mr. Peter Maiden

Dear Mr. Coad,

I really appreciated the articles in your January issue concerning the local church in evangelism. However, may I suggest another reason why our assemblies are not growing as they ought to be? I believe I have witnessed a decreasing concern for foreign mission in the assemblies I have visited in my travels over the last few years. This can only be to the detriment of our assemblies here at home, as well as to the

Church world-wide. There are many testimonies of churches which have begun to have a vision for the world, experiencing great blessing and growth at home as a consequence of that increased vision. Would it be correct to suggest that in the years when assemblies were really growing in our land, there was this greater emphasis on mission abroad? Do we feel that because times are difficult at home we cannot send our young men and young women abroad?

I have even heard it argued that the day of the foreign missionary is past. Why send people abroad when our own land is in such a serious condition? But is it realistic to argue in this way when there are some lands—such as Mauritania—where there are still no known believers? In many lands, such as Libya and North Yemen there are only a handful, and in countries as vast as Turkey there are less than 100.

I pray that God will give us a less parochial and more expansive vision. I believe that as a result we will experience greater blessings at home.

142 Dantzic Street,  
Manchester  
M4 4DN

Yours sincerely,  
Peter Maiden  
U.K. Director  
Operation Mobilisation

#### Every Boys' and Every Girls' Rallies

From Mr. J. B. Robertson

Dear Mr. Coad,

I was very interested to read the article by Mr. Dunning about the Christian Brethren uniformed organisation, Every Boy's and Every Girl's Rallies. I never knew such an organisation existed until a few years ago and yet I had spent most of my life among the Brethren. There is no doubt that uniformed organisations are capable of attracting a far larger number of children than non-uniformed organisations such as the Covenanters. The extent of the work of the Boys' Brigade alone makes this abundantly clear. Unfortunately there are so many Christians who, while enthusiastically evangelical with regard to most forms of Christian service, seem to find it difficult, even impossible, to extend this evangelical interest to uniformed organisations, in particular to the major ones, where the need for leaders can be desperate at times.

There seems to be a general awakening among evangelical churches and fellowships to the fact that Sunday schools and their week-night counterparts are definitely not sufficient for the all-year-round evangelisation of children. It's not before time! At least 80% of the children in this country are untouched by Sunday schools, etc. The Lord will be coming



again very soon to settle accounts with His servants and, in view of this, the attention now being paid to this form of children's work would appear to be long overdue. Why should it have ever been thought that the Sunday school type of evangelism was the only way of reaching children week by week? Christians who are fitted for children's work may not necessarily be gifted as teachers as well. The Body of Christ is not all eye, or ear, or mouth. If we read *1 Cor. 12: 21-25*, we find that those parts of the Body of Christ which are commonly looked upon as weak, uncomely, ineffective, and without honour are regarded by the Lord as indispensable and upon them He bestows the greater honour.

One of the main objections to the major uniformed organisations by evangelical Christians appears to be that there are not enough born-again Christian leaders in them. If such is considered to be the case, then surely this is all the more reason for giving these organisations more support, not less. If a man buys a new car and it refuses to move because he has failed to supply it with the necessary fuel, it would be ridiculous for him to blame the car and its makers. To put it another way . . . a vicious circle is never broken by continuing it still further.

I heartily endorse the action of those churches and fellowships which have opened branches of the smaller organisations such as the Campaigners and Every Boy's and Girl's Rallies, if this is going to lead to a wider outreach. Nevertheless, in addition to this, there is an equally pressing need for individual Christians to serve in the major uniformed organisations. In some areas, leaders and helpers are in great demand and there are long waiting lists of children. Parents have been known to put down their children's names for entry while they were still in the toddler stage. I heard of one case where a child's name was put down on the waiting list for entry to a uniformed organisation at 6 years of age, but due to lack of leaders and the enormous demand revealed by a long waiting list, he was not accepted until he was 12 years of age. Now this is plain ridiculous. Surely this is a wide open door of opportunity for Christian service by the individual. If a group is connected with a church, membership of that particular place of worship is by no means always insisted upon.

Why is it that so many Christians enter school-teaching with a sense of mission and yet find it almost impossible to do the same with regard to the Scouts, the Guides, etc? 'But we may not get much chance to preach the Gospel', some will object. Well, we can always live the Gospel. (This may have more impact.) If there is little chance to preach, whose fault is that? Such Christians will need to learn to crawl before they can walk in this respect, since we cannot expect to make up for decades of comparative neglect at one fell swoop.

18 Tírre Place,  
Hallglen,  
Falkirk FK1 2PP

Yours sincerely,  
James B. Robertson

#### Written constitutions

From Dr. B. P. Sutherland

Dear Sir:

In response to Prof. Bruce's suggestions that a local church might usefully have a written code of procedure and summary of doctrine, our experience may be of interest.

Our local church is registered under the Societies' Act of the Provincial Government and its document of incorporation includes a simple statement of faith to which all members must subscribe. When individuals express a desire for membership the statement of faith is discussed with them, point by point. In most cases there is immediate acceptance but in some the result has been conversion and in others a basic truth such as the deity of Christ has been clearly seen for the first time. We feel therefore that having a written doctrinal summary does prove useful in practice.

The document of incorporation also includes by-laws prescribing how business meetings shall be conducted, officers elected and the like. We find it helpful to have such a code of procedure and, of course, it would prevent a small group of individuals obtaining control of the assets of the church. There is the usual provision for change of by-laws.

More recently we have felt that we needed to define our stand on marriage and divorce both in connection with reception into membership and also relating to marriages conducted under the auspices of the church. We have therefore prepared a brief summary statement of how we understand Scripture as to principles and as cases arise we try to apply these principles in a reasonable way. By recording details of the various cases we hope to develop practical guide lines within which we can maintain a consistent Scriptural stand while meeting people with Christian understanding and love where they are.

4421 Tremblay Drive

Victoria, B.C. V8N 4W7

Canada

Yours truly,  
B. P. Sutherland

#### Bible reading

From Mr. F. C. Lucas

Dear Mr. Coad,

With reference to Miles Christie's letter on Bible reading in the correspondence section of your January issue.

Perhaps a system of reading through the Bible once each year (apart from more serious study) which I have followed for forty years would help those who feel the task is beyond their powers. It is very simple: read three chapters each week-day and five on Sundays. There are 1179 chapters in the Bible and this method leaves a slight margin for days when chapters are extra long—119th Psalm for instance! I fully agree that it is the quality of our reading that matters, not the quantity; but my own experience is that after reading through the Bible a few times you have a panoramic view of the whole and this enhances the value of your more detailed study. When commuting to the City for a number of years I read my daily ration on the train—and made some interesting contacts with whom at times I shared my gleanings. I might add that I also 'rang the changes' and read amongst others J.N.D.'s version: N.E.B., R.S.V. thus enabling one to discuss other versions from first-hand knowledge, not from reviews or criticisms.

'Beechmount'

57 Beechmount Ave.,  
Hanwell, London W7 3AF

Yours sincerely,  
F. C. Lucas

#### How should we vote?

From Prof. F. F. Bruce

Dear Mr. Coad,

Mr. Morris's letter, 'How should we vote?' in the January issue of *The Harvester* does not incur my wrath, but it contains one sentence which makes me raise my eyebrows—that in which he says that 'Bible-taught Christians will be uneasy at the prospect of a woman Prime Minister'. I am, I hope, a Bible-taught Christian, but the prospect (regardless of her identity or party) causes me no uneasiness. If we are quite happy to have a lady on the throne, 'over all persons and in all causes throughout her dominions supreme', why boggle at the thought of having one in No. 10 Downing Street?

The Crossways,

2 Temple Road,

Buxton, Derbyshire SK17 9BA

Yours sincerely,  
F. F. Bruce

#### Why not thank them?

From Mr. H. V. G. Morris

Dear Sir,

It has been a rewarding hobby over many years, to write to men in the public eye, expressing recognition for that which deserves commendation, and assuring them of a prayerful interest in their efforts.

The unvarying response has shown appreciation; we realise that these great men are very human and are happy to be assured that their efforts are valued.

May I suggest that others with ability to write (and with sufficient 'cheek') should engage in this same useful service. Don't think of it as 'toadyism'. I never hope to make contact with these men.

'Boma'  
121 Birchwood Drive,  
Ulverston,  
Cumbria LA12 9NY

Yours sincerely,  
Hubert Morris

# The News Page

Press Day, April 1979, Friday, March 2nd, for Displayed Advertisements, Prayer List, Forthcoming Events and news items (Please send direct to Publisher at 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW)

## Out and About

### News from the Bible Society

The number of languages in the world with at least one complete book of the Bible at the end of 1978 was 1,660, an increase of 29 on the previous year. Two languages had their first complete Bible published during the year: Kate, a language of Papua New Guinea, and Mofa, from the Cameroon. A further 36 languages had the complete New Testament for the first time, including four in which the New Testament was the first Scripture published in the language: Arabic, Southern Sudan (used in the Sudan), Gamit (India), Tampula (Ghana), and Yareba (Mexico).

### Challenge Literature Fellowship

"A Challenge to the Church" was how David Winter, the BBC's senior producer of religious broadcasts, described *Challenge* at a lunch in London to celebrate the Gospel paper's 21st anniversary. "Challenge puts the Good News in personal terms and is nearer the gospels than the epistles. And the paper is usually delivered personally too which is important." Topscore for *Challenge* is its popular appeal—seemingly as high as ever with the general public. Last year's average circulation of over 138,000 is up by 20,000 for February making a readership of half a million stretched between the Orkneys and the Channel Islands. Distribution is through churches of many denominations and there are now sister-papers, *News Special*, the picture-strip *Plus* for the 11s to 15s and the London City Mission paper, *The Messenger*. For those who think that the church is either dead or snoring it's an eye opener that every month about 12,000 people visit homes all over the country with *Challenge*—and a further estimated 8,000 with *News Special* and *Plus*.

"We find . . . personal stories are the first ones readers turn to," says Derek Sangster, editor for all but one of *Challenge*'s 21 years. "Whatever the news in the ordinary papers we can report what has happened in the lives of Mr. and Mrs. Jones round the corner—how God sent His son Jesus on a rescue operation to give them and all who turn to Christ new peace, new hope and a fresh start in life."

### Covenanters

At a joint meeting of the committee of Girl Covenanters and the council of The Covenanter Union, it was agreed unanimously that the Lord was leading the two movements to merge as one organisation to be known as "Covenanters", subject to the agreement of the Girl Covenanter leaders at a general meeting. This organisation will continue with exactly the same basis of faith and aims as the present movement.

The decision will make no difference to the running of the groups locally, but in due course should make for easier administration, particularly for the many churches with both boy and girl groups.

### News from the Evangelical Alliance

Churches all over the country have recently received an Evangelical Alliance questionnaire in preparation for a National Congress on evangelism in April 1980, intended to be both an inspirational occasion and a help to local churches in their evangelistic task. The event is not seen as an end in itself but as a springboard for action in evangelism in the 1980s. The Evangelical Alliance hopes to bring together Christians of all ages and of different traditions who accept the authority of Scripture and who believe that the time has come for a new thrust in the proclamation of the Gospel in Britain. The questionnaire asks for opinions about the most effective pattern for evangelism and also concerns the choice of an evangelist. It is to be hoped that readers of the *Harvester* will do all that they can to promote discussion of the questionnaire and its ultimate return to the Evangelical Alliance.

**Children's Evangelists' Conference:** At the beginning of the International Year of the Child the first British conference for children's evangelists and Christian workers amongst children was held at High Leigh, Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire from January 15th to 17th, attended by 85 people.

One of the messages of the conference was that, as Jesus put a little child in the midst of his disciples, so the churches must accept children as an integral part of the full church fellowship and give them a sense of belonging. Only so can the churches hope to keep them in Christ's family as they come to adult life. The main theme was how to communicate the Gospel to children in a television age in various situations—the school, the home, the church, the inner city and the open air. Speakers included Gordon Cornell, a Christian headmaster from Galleywood in Essex; Peter Green of the Open Air Campaigners; Margaret Old and David Lewis of Scripture Union; Herman ter Welle, a Dutch children's evangelist; and Roy Harrison, a Child Evangelism Fellowship worker from Switzerland. Bible readings were given by the Suffolk evangelist, Victor Jack.

A further conference is planned for January 5th-7th 1981 at High Leigh.

### Evangelism:

Stephen Gillham writes of the immense need for workers in Dorset. Besides giving encouraging news of well-attended meetings, he asks for prayer for the first totally independent Dorset Adventure Time camps on the new site at East Chaldon, and for the summer crusades which are all going to be in places where there is a small Assembly where the needs are great. "A group of young people to help . . . over a weekend would make such a difference to our work and could prove such a blessing to them."

The Lancashire Gospel Tent, now registered as a charity, is scheduled for intensive use during 1979. The Tent Conference is planned for March 24 at 7.00 p.m. at Bolton.

G. K. Lowther reports many opportunities to contact English-speaking people on the Costa del Sol. He is also ministering the Word to Spanish assemblies in Malaga.

Glyn Morgan reports that 1978 was one of the most responsive years for the Gospel message that he has ever known. There has been a real willingness to listen to the message by people who would normally have no contact with Christianity. Perhaps the most encouraging thing of all has been to see young believers linking up with local churches. He requests prayer for a Crusade at Taunton from March 4 to 18. Hedley Murphy refers to accusations of terrorist activities faced by members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary. Some of these officers have accepted Christ in prison and wives also have been blessed. "God has turned the whole sordid incident which shocked our community into something for His glory."

#### International Fellowship of Evangelical Students

A recent prayer circular points out that one of the founder-movements of IFES in 1947 was IVCF-China; indeed it was believed to be the largest Asian member movement at the time, with many thriving groups showing a real desire for Bible study and a thorough missionary concern. There was a genuine revival situation in many universities immediately prior to the 1948 revolution. Most of the students who made up these groups will still be alive in China today. There is a need for prayer that the changing political situation may lead to a greater openness to the Gospel; also for the witness of the Christian students who must undoubtedly be studying in different parts of China. A vital part could be played by the many hundreds of students from mainland China who are studying in countries like Britain, USA and Canada. Conversions here could be of strategic importance, likewise the ministry of Chinese Christian students from Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and Taiwan.

#### N.F.O.L. and "The Year of the Child"

The National Festival of Light will be holding a rally in All Souls, Langham Place on March 23rd at 7.30 p.m. under the title "Is it well with the Child?". Contributors will include Eddy Stride, Bob Holman and Raymond Johnston, with music by *Meet Jesus Music* who will lead the Rally in singing as well as in making their own contribution. The main speaker will be Canon Harry Sutton, the Rector of St. Paul's Portman Square.

#### The Place Hotel

The Place Hotel, Newquay, Cornwall reports the appointment as Manager and Assistant Manager of Mr. and Mrs. R. Fincham, who have for the last 20 years been connected with a restaurant in Richmond, Surrey. At present Mr. Fincham is a deacon at Duke Street Baptist Church, Richmond.

#### Release Publications

An Advisory Council has been formed: Canon Harry Sutton, President of the Evangelical Alliance; the Rev. David Watson of York; the Rev. Michael Baughen of All Souls, Langham Place, London; the Rev. Donald English, President of the Methodist Conference; Dr. Brian Tatford of L'Eau Vive in France; and the Rev. James Shen of the Eng Yu Mission, Hong Kong. Churches interested in lively up-to-date leaflets for free distribution should send for the *Release Series*.

Among the authors contributing are Michael Baughen, Peter Maiden, F. F. Bruce, and David Watson. The full series covers many major themes of the Christian faith and there is a good variety of seasonal ones. Also of interest is the *Release Nationwide Resource Pack*. It comes up quarterly and includes a selection of feature articles and illustrations designed to communicate Christian ideas in a style which people are used to in popular magazines. Samples are available free (but it is obviously helpful to include something for postage and packing) from Release Publications, 142 Dantzic Street, Manchester M4 4DN.

#### Religious Book Foundation: Christian Book Week Changes

There will be no Christian Book Week this year for the first time since it began four years ago.

Instead the event is being switched to just before Easter 1980 and will last a fortnight.

Christopher Chew, director of the Religious Book Foundation who co-ordinates the work for Christian Book Week, said that it has been switched because it was "getting lost in a welter of pre-Christmas secularism."

"It is a shame to go a year without the event, especially after spending four years getting it accepted, but there is no doubt the change will benefit everyone in the long run," he added.

"Easter has been selected because it is less commercial and seems to have more spiritual impact than Christmas," he explained.

Joint patrons of the Religious Book Foundation, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Donald Coggan, and the Archbishop of Westminster Cardinal Basil Hume, welcome the move, as do publishers and booksellers throughout the country.

And Mr. Richard Worthing-Davies, publishing director of the Bible Society, agreed, "It is a wise move."

Christmas is a very busy time in the publishing world and publishers, booksellers and even people running Church bookstalls will almost certainly find it much easier to make more of an impact before Easter."

Christian Book Fortnight—scheduled now for February 24 to March 9, 1980—is intended to highlight the value of Christian literature.

For further information contact: Christopher Chew 01-248 7042.

#### Rurcon

The Rural Development Consultancy for Christian Churches in Africa Newsletter mentions an interesting problem faced by an African Bible School which was left land, including a coffee plantation. Originally the intention was for students to earn money by working on the plantation in order to keep themselves and their families while at school. This works in a sense, but also creates problems. One is that the Churches sending students to the Bible School do not see that they have a responsibility for them; why suffer to send money to students when they can earn it? On a wider level, as Christians get the impression that the Church has money (and 16 hectares of coffee has quite big potential), even if their impression is false, they can become less enthusiastic about sacrificial tithing. Another problem is that students are reluctant to do other kinds of work that frequently includes a training



element, since they are not paid for it. The coffee plantation is the only place where they can earn cash. What is the answer to these problems? Should they avoid attempts at having commercial enterprises to help finance Christian training institutions? Should they think only in terms of what students can grow to keep themselves?

# U.C.C.F.

The Christian Unions in the Universities and Colleges are about to launch a large number of evangelistic missions. The U.C.C.F. which links the CUs together, reports twenty-four missions this term.

All of these hope to reach many unchurched people and there is much interest expressed already. The first aim is to get the gospel clearly presented to those who would not otherwise hear. For this purpose the smaller informal meetings can be as effective as the larger meetings. In all of them the chief workers are the CU members who can reach their friends assisted by the main speaker and a varying number of assistant missionaries.

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## Home-Calls

**Thomas Clark Hope** on 16th January, aged 77. His father was a founder-member of the Bethany Assembly at Houghton-Le-Spring, where he spent almost all his life, being, over many years, successively secretary and treasurer. His home was a centre of Christian hospitality (see December 1978 issue, where the homecall of his wife Millie was recorded).

**Edith Stephens** on 10th January, aged 71, only six months after the homecall of her husband Harold, at the age of 75. Both were converted in 1933 at Cottage Meetings held in their home village and were baptised in the village stream by the late Welsh evangelist, John Dan Jones. They were in fellowship at the Evangelistic Hall, Tycroes, Ammanford, for 45 years, where for many years Mr. Stephens was an elder. In earlier years, until they moved nearer to the Assembly, they would walk 4 miles each way, whatever the weather, across country to all the assembly meetings. They had the joy of seeing all the children converted and in fellowship.

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It is hoped to make the appointment with effect from 1st September 1979, or as soon as possible thereafter.

Salary will be according to the Lecturer II scales of the Burnham F.E. Report.

Further information about the appointment and the mode of application should be obtained as soon as possible please from the Principal.

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# People and Places

## Stewardship

**Retired Missionary Aid Fund:**  
12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields,  
NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies for the  
month of January amounted to  
£3528.43.

## Prayer List

**Stamped letters addressed c/o  
The Paternoster Press, Paternoster  
House, 3 Mount Radford  
Crescent, Exeter, EX2 4JW** will  
be forwarded to any of those  
whose names appear below.

**Workers are requested to include  
their names on their cards when  
returning them each month.  
We are still receiving anonymous  
contributions from time to time.**

**Bathgate, T.:**  
Beardst 1, 8, 15; Tonbridge 4;  
Sidcup 4; Maidstone 7; Seaton 10-13;  
Welling 20; Plumstead 21; Gillingham  
25; Folkestone 25; Chainhurst 29.

**Blackburn, A. G.:**  
Weymouth 4; Exmouth 6; Ashburton  
8; Bishopswood and Claydon 11;  
Torquay 13; Plymouth 18; 27 Exeter  
20.

**Brighton, K.:**  
Hythe Fields 1; Farnham 3, 10;  
Reading 4, 8, 25; Slough 4; Oxford 9,  
25; Finchampstead 11; Wokingham  
13, 15, 21; Chichester 17-18; Wood-  
croft 24; Langley 28; Maidenhead 31.

**Burnham, A. E. J.:**  
Farnham 11; Fareham 18; Bedham-  
pton 22; Wembley 25; and also other  
places including Selborne.

**Campbell, B.:**  
St. Ives 3; Helston 9; Hill House,  
Osterhampton—Houseparty 9-11;  
Canborne 14; Carnhell Green 18;  
Lapford 24, 25; Falmouth 27-31.

**Galyer, W. S.:**  
Woking 4, 11; Kingston 6, 11, 13;  
Croxley Green 8, 15; Teddington 13;  
Taunton and district 17-31.

**Gilham, S.:**  
Tricketts Cross 2, 23, 30; Farnworth,  
Lancs. Crusade 3-18; Weymouth 20,  
25, 28; Marnhull 21; Stalbridge 22;  
Wyke Regis 27; Heatherlands 29;  
Dorchester 31.

**Greenaway, G. H.:**  
Mattishall 4; Ipswich 7; Burnham  
Market 18; Haverly Green 25;  
Dereham 29.

**Grimsey, A. W.:**  
Norwich 5; Guildford 11; Lowestoft  
18; Tonbridge 23-25; Teddington 31.

**Iliffe, D. J.:**  
Hong Kong 1-5; New Zealand 6-31.

**Lambert, P. A.:**  
West End 3; Weston 4; Devizes 11;  
Village Mission 12-17; Stuckton 18;  
Childrens Mission, Trowbridge 19-24;  
Youth Weekend 30-31.

**Lowther, G. K.:**  
Grimsby, South Humberside and  
Lincolnshire 1-30; Beckenham 31.

**Meadows, D. R.:**  
Gosport 1; New Milton 11; Bourne-  
mouth and district for remainder of  
month.

**Mills, B.:**  
London—CBRF 1; Leicester 3, 4;  
London—CEW 6; Oxford 9; West  
Moors 11; Eastbourne 13; London 15;  
London Mobile Unit Rally 17;  
London Bible College 21; TV/Radio  
Course 26-28.

**Phillips, C.:**  
North Harrow 1, 8, 15; Walthamstow  
and Whetstone 4; Edmonton 6, 13;  
Highgate 7, 14; Alresford 11; Stockton  
17-23; Houghton Le Spring 24-30;  
Redcar 31-6 April.

**Pierce, D.:**  
Barnstaple 1-24, except for; Ashford  
6, 13, 20; South Hams 10; Lovacott  
18; West Dunn, Yeoford 25; Truro  
26-31.

**Short, S. S.:**  
Hornchurch 1, 8, 25; Seven Kings 4;  
Colchester 5, 12, 19, 26; Thundersley

6, 13, 20, 27; Brentwood 7, 11, 14, 21,  
27, 28; Ashbury 18; Romford 22,  
29; Great Wenham 23, 30.

**Stringer, D.:**  
Muswell Hill 1; Barnet 2; Cleveland  
3, 4; Essex area 5; Bournemouth 6-31.

**Tatford, F. A.:**  
France 1-31.

**Thurston, A.:**  
Chillington 1, 14, 15, 21, 22, 28, 29;  
Kingsbridge 2, 13, 16, 20, 23, 25;  
Strete 4, 12, 19, 26; S. Molton 5, 6;  
Balsall Common 7-11; Brixham 14,  
18, 21; Dartmouth 15; Ashburton 22;  
Paignton 23, 30; Schools—Dawlish and  
Teignmouth 26; Plymouth 16.

**Tryon, G. C.:**  
Morden 1; Tunbridge Wells 4;  
Redcar 10-18; Normanby 12; Kingston  
20; East Sheen 25; Southend 26.

**Whittem, R. J.:**  
Devon 3-9; Seven Kings 11, 18, 25;  
Herts Regional Fellowship 12; Kings  
Langley School 14; Youth Camp  
Preparation 19; Colchester 20;  
Southend 21; Sawbridgeworth 22;  
Canada and USA 26-10 May.

## Forthcoming Events

**The Publishers regret that, owing  
to demands on space, it is not  
possible to insert an announce-  
ment in more than one issue.  
Correspondents should indicate  
clearly in which issue they wish  
their announcements to appear.**

**Boscombe:**  
Conversational Bible Readings. Drum-  
mond Hall, Drummond Road, April 7.  
Speaker: A. E. Phillips. Subject:  
Daniel 3.

**Cardiff:**  
Rallies each Saturday at 7.00 p.m.  
as follows: Mar. 3 at Minster—Speaker  
R. Telford; Mar. 10 at Mackintosh—  
Speaker: S. Mustow; Mar. 17 at  
Tavistock—Speaker: S. McGlashan;  
Mar. 24 at Adamsdown—Speaker:  
D. Williams; Mar. 31 at Minster—  
Speaker: J. Mayberry.

**Chesham:**  
Gospel Hall, Station Road, Mar. 24  
at 6.30 p.m. Speaker: R. J. K. Jeffery  
(Reading: Acts 22: 1-30).

**Colyton:**  
Gospel Hall, The Butts, Mar. 24 at  
7.00 p.m. Speaker: A. Wiseman.  
Subject: Galatians 6.

**Croxley Green:**  
Fuller Hall, Fuller Way, Mar. 24 at  
7.00 p.m. Speaker: E. Hughes.

**Horsham:**  
Ann. Cfce. Gospel Hall, Denne Road.  
Mar. 17 at 3.30 and 6.00 p.m. Ministry:  
R. Molton. Reports: R. Molton and  
Miss J. Anderson.

**London:**  
Ann. Missy. Cfce. Paragon Chapel,  
233/241 Glyn Road, Clapton, Mar.  
17 at 4.00 and 6.00 p.m. Speakers:  
D. K. Boak ("Echoes of Service")  
and E. R. Grove (Zambia).

**London:**  
Evangelistic Mobile Unit Report and  
Thanksgiving Meeting. Worpole Road  
Evangelical Church, Wimbledon, Mar.  
17 at 7.00 p.m. Speakers: Unit work-  
ers and B. Mills.

**Maidenhead:**  
Monthly Cfce. Parkside Hall, St.  
Luke's Road, April 7 at 6.30 - 7.30 p.m.  
and 8.15-9.00 p.m. Refreshments  
between sessions and discussion  
afterwards. Speaker: R. Hill. Subjects:  
Prayers.

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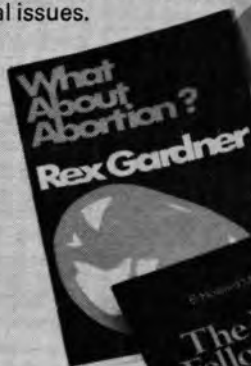
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Speakers expected are Mr. E. J. Strange, BSc., of Bridgewater, Mr. C. W. Phillips of Walsall, Mr. M. W. Palmer of Prestatyn, N. Wales, and brethren representing other assemblies are also expected to take part. We desire to take this opportunity of thanking all those who have supported us in their prayers and practical fellowship, and trust we shall be able to count on the prayerful support of the Lord's people in connection with this venture. (3)

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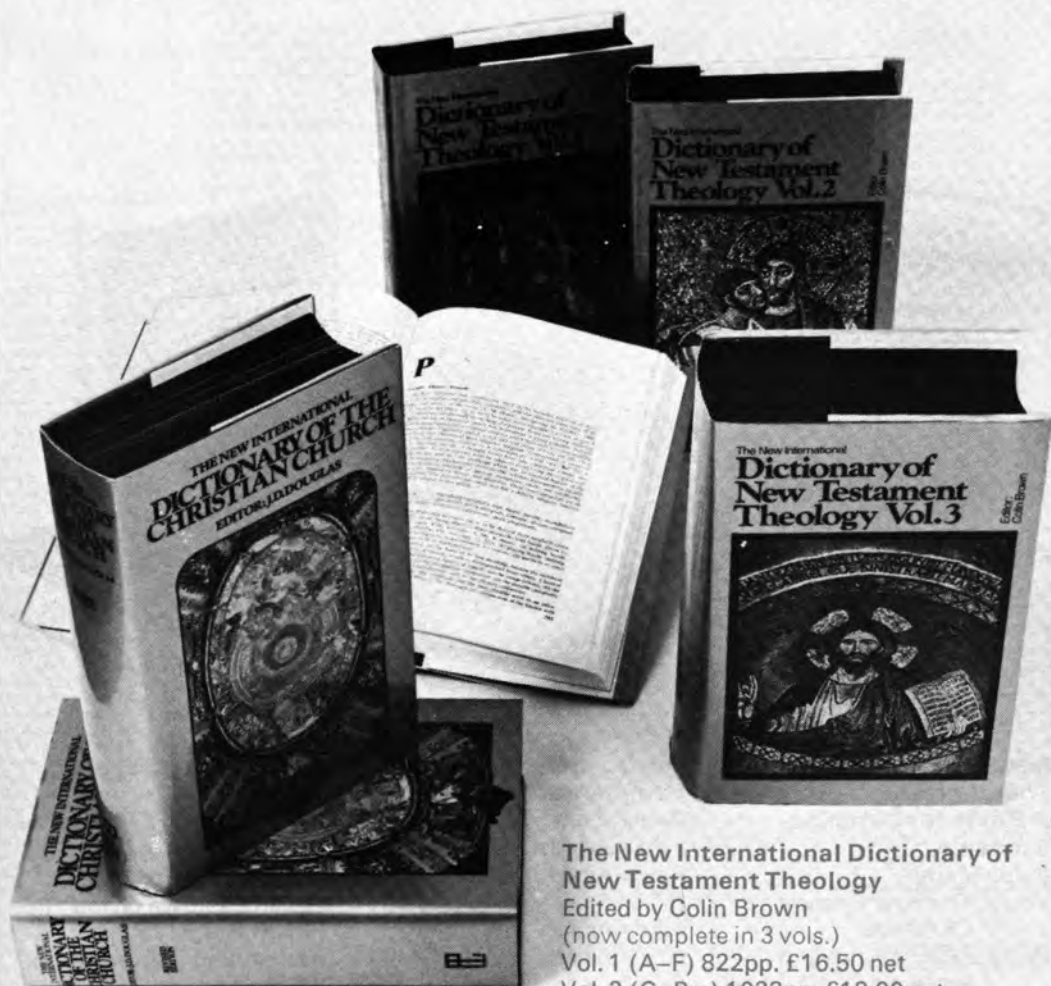
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April 1979

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# The Evangelist

IN THIS ISSUE:  
WHICH WAY FOR EVANGELISM?  
An open letter to the Evangelical Alliance



Thomas Bowman Stephenson  
— Father of the Fatherless

# Promotion

The Scripture Reader entered a room where three men were arguing about promotion. They asserted it was impossible to get promotion unless 'one was in the know'. This gave the Reader a grand opportunity to tell them that one day he was going to be promoted, not because of any personal merit on his part but simply that 'he was in the know'. His opening to talk to these men about knowing the Lord Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour found a splendid springboard from listening to their conversation.

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# The Harvester

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Cover picture: *The Mansell Collection*

## A Local Church Issue

That over-ruling of circumstance, that the Christian believes to be not a product of haphazard chance, but rather a patent evidence of the hand of God, has produced for us in this issue a concentration of material of direct bearing on the life and witness of the local church. Both the church's task in evangelism and also its basic function of worship, are to the fore in our contributions this month.

The Evangelical Alliance's new initiative on evangelism, which forms the subject of a special feature, promises to be a project that will be of real assistance to the church which avails itself of the help that is offered: it is to be hoped that the coming months will see many assemblies in touch with the Alliance, for (as the feature comments) there is much real concern about this aspect of the lives of our churches today. The Alliance is to be congratulated on throwing the project open for full discussion—and some trenchant comments are already available.

Professor Bruce's question on the Breaking of Bread service evoked an unusual response, and this feature (nicely balanced by Mr. Gough's contribution to *Readers' Forum*) contains a great deal of food for thought. The emphasis on evangelism may be a vital one, but it must always be contributory to the major purpose of the church; men and women are brought to God for a purpose, and that purpose is that they should be part of a worshipping community, rejoicing in, sharing and disseminating the glory of God. At the heart of this lies the sharing, symbolised in the service of holy communion.

But a church that remains turned in on itself can never fulfil its destiny: and Leslie James in another of his character sketches reminds us of a man of God who realised that God is served in serving others. The article is first in the issue: but in a very real sense it also rounds off this month's meditation.

One of the contributors to the replies to Professor Bruce rightly laments the artificial distinction between 'Gospel' and 'ministry': he might also have regretted too fine a distinction between evangelism and worship. We often sing 'no Gospel like this feast', and the friends at Wensum Chapel, Norwich, certainly proved the truth of the sentiment after their Breaking of Bread Service had been broadcast by the B.B.C. on 25th February. Their postbag would encourage any other church invited to follow suit. □

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# Father of the Fatherless

Leslie James

*Another of Leslie James's vivid thumbnail sketches*

Away back in the good old days of Wackford Squeers, Bumble and the Workhouse, there were two things which offended the eyes of the citizens of London. They were, and we quote: 'ownerless stinking dogs and ownerless stinking children'. The sight (it would seem) reached more eyes than hearts. How dare they be ownerless and stinking. Something should be done about it. One young man was not just offended, he was disturbed; very disturbed that there were so many dirty, thin, ragged, wild-eyed children on the very doorsteps of the churches, particularly his own church for he was a Wesleyan Methodist minister. His cry, however, was not so

## Two things offended the eyes of the citizens of London...

much 'Something should be done', as 'What can I do?'.

Now enough has been said for most readers to realise that this young man was not Dr. Thomas J. Barnardo, but after reading this short sketch you will no doubt agree that he was very much on the same wavelength as his more illustrious contemporary.

You might have heard of Thomas Bowman Stephenson, for that was his name. But he is not mentioned in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, *Chambers* or *The National Biography*, which makes it apparent that the world in general has passed him by. Christians outside of Methodism who know something of him probably do so because of his child rescue work or his contribution to Church Hymnology. Yet foremost he was an evangelist, and everything else was a means to that end.

Thomas Bowman Stephenson, or Bowman as he came to be known, was born in a manse at Red Barns, Newcastle-on-Tyne three days before Christmas 1839. It was the year Methodism celebrated its centenary; it was also the year in which the renowned Dr. T. Jackson delivered his Centenary Sermon which lasted for three hours less seven minutes. As a thanksgiving for the safe arrival of his seventh child, John Stephenson gave a golden guinea to the Centenary Fund, which was quite a sacrifice for the low paid Wesleyan minister and his wife Mary to make. What they would have thought had they known they were celebrating the arrival of a radical who would always to be the left of their own politics is uncertain.

The Wesleyans were not the only people celebrating. There were at least the Bible Christians, the New Connexion and the Primitives who could also claim to be children of J. Wesley. Victoria and her reign were still young; it was the day of Bounderby

and Charles Kingsley. Rebellion was in the air, and it seems rumblings of it were particularly loud within Wesleyan Methodism. Some were asking why the Church should be ruled by ministerial autocrats, and laymen have no voice in the Conference; others even had the audacity to suggest that some laymen knew as much as their ministers, and a good deal more about business matters. Apparently young Bowman soon took sides against a parson-ruled society.

As the family, under the Methodist circuit system, moved from one industrial town to another, the lad was seldom out of sight of tall black chimneys and grimy men. He did not have to go far out of his way to find children thin, starved and working intolerable hours in factories. Slowly he became aware of the gulf between the proudly respectable people in his father's congregation, and the unkempt, illiterate labouring classes who probably knew less about the Lord Jesus Christ than the natives of Borrioboola-Gha. They would never be welcomed in church unless they could tidy up their habits, which they had no power to do; and, as things stood, would never come into contact with the One who could give them that power. There was also a gulf between Bowman and the children, for he was receiving an education at a number of grammar schools, at least one of which possessed teachers who were not far behind Creakle in their tuition methods. The school at Dudley appears to have been quite an enlightened establishment for the times, and it was here that Bowman made a definite decision for Christ.

By his teens he had decided to become a lawyer, but meanwhile agreed to supply for a sick minister to help pay for his tuition fees. While he was preaching in a Tyneside village chapel the call came loud and clear: he must be a preacher of the Gospel and nothing else. During 1858 he presented himself for the Wesleyan Methodist ministry and was accepted. There followed two years at Richmond College, after which he took up his first appointment at Norwich in September 1860.

His first church was respectable, but not over enthusiastic. They thought their new minister very young, and they were right for he was not yet twenty-one. When they heard him preach, however, they sat up and took notice. He really staggered some when he began to sing solos during service, but when they heard his fine tenor voice ranging down to baritone most of them forgave him, but some did ask 'Whatever will this young man do next?'. They soon found out. With the help of a neighbouring minister he took over a theatre. Many good Wesleyans were quite perturbed. They were not at all sure you could win the lost by going into dens of vice. Bowman proved otherwise; Saturday night theatre-goers also came along on Sunday to hear the Gospel.

The elders were still not convinced. They put him in his place, reminded him of his youth and so on. Now it must be said that Bowman was no ambitious youth charging around in a fiery chariot bent on carving up the fuddy-duddies; he had great respect for his elders, but he would never admit a man right just because he was an elder. The highlight of Stephenson's stay in Norwich was possibly his challenge to Charles Bradlaugh, alias *The Infidel*, to an open debate in the largest hall in town. Bradlaugh's supporters set up a noisy demonstration, but the records leave no doubt that he came off second best.

During 1862 Bowman moved to Daniel Street Chapel, Manchester, and it was not long before the Superintendent of the Grosvenor Street Circuit was receiving complaints from the more opulent members: 'We disapprove most strongly of this young man's activities. He is turning the whole place upside down. Our influential families find his methods most distasteful, sir'.

The elderly superintendent was finding life difficult. Certainly he had no sympathy with his young colleague's liberal views, but where could he find so young a man, or an older one come to that, who was making such an impact. He might be on a collision course with the mill owners, but he was reaching people who had not been reached for a generation.

'You disapprove of his politics, too, I suppose?' he ventured.

'Emphatically. He's a radical . . . he supports these Yankees with their revolutionary ideas . . . he even speaks publicly in their support, in spite of the fact that our Lancashire mills are having to stop work through lack of cotton. . . He's a foolish young man of twenty-three. . . I consider it the duty of his superintendent to put an end to these things, sir.'

We can almost see this worthy *Christian* gentleman ramming his silk topper onto his head as he stalked out. The little fact that Lincoln and his Yankees were fighting to free the slaves who supplied the

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**'Is it by introducing piping finches  
... that the work of God is carried out?'**

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cotton apparently did not enter the question. Besides, anyone on the slightest nodding terms with the American Civil War will remember the 'food relief ships' sent by the Northern States to feed the Lancashire poor during the cotton famine; but they did nothing to bolster the mill owner's deteriorating bank balance. The final crunch came when Bowman spoke from the platform at the Free Trade Hall in support of the *Freedom Society*. The millers demanded his removal forthwith. If they thought to get him sacked from the Wesleyan pulpit their plan misfired for, far from alienating the leaders in London, his activities had marked him as a young man of extraordinary, if somewhat unusual, promise.

1864 was something of a red letter year for Bow-

man Stephenson; during it he was ordained and married to Ellen Lupton. Of Ellen we can say little except that she did not like the limelight. They were to have only one child, Dora, who would later work among the children. Back in Manchester they were moved from Daniel Street to Droylesden for his last year in the Grosvenor Street Circuit. Their next move was to Bolton, and his charge a real 'working men's church'. There was a good congregation and a large Sunday School. These working men liked him. He was willing to adopt their ideas as well as pioneer his own. He organised Saturday 'open evenings' in opposition to the public houses. These were remarkably well organised, and for the three winters he was in Bolton there was an average attendance of five hundred, many of them teenagers seeking education. Stephenson supplied it. Music was on the agenda, but the lecturers were the surprise. They included politicians, writers, artists and well known scientists. That a young man still in his twenties should be able to attract the services of such people is amazing. Ideas flowed out of him; cottage meetings, open air meetings, a new work at Slater's Fields. These were just a few of the things he introduced to Bolton. At the New Year he opened an exhibition in a church schoolroom, the star attraction of which appears to have been a mechanical bullfinch which sang. He was to hear more of this. At the following May Synod an elderly minister rose to his feet. Oh yes, he had heard all about the doings of the young man in Bolton, and he was not so sure of their value as that young man appeared to be himself, not even of his Temperance Meetings. The only thing he saw fit to commend was the young man's early morning prayer-meeting. Then dramatically raising his hands towards the Chairman he cut the ground from under sensationalism forever (how we wish he had): 'Sir, is it by introducing piping finches into our schools, and possibly even into our pulpits, that the work of God is to be carried on?'

Leeds wanted this innovator next, but before he could go the 1868 Conference called him to Waterloo Road, Lambeth. Apart from a few years at the end of his ministry he was to work in London until promoted to Glory.

If we said that the Lambeth of 1868 was rough we should be guilty of understatement. The Waterloo Road Chapel was on the site where later rose the famous Union Jack Club. It was set back some thirty feet from the Road itself. About a hundred yards away was Waterloo Bridge, connecting Lambeth with The Strand. Altogether it was an area with more than its share of squalor and slums. Not far from the chapel was the *New Cut*, notorious for depravity and irreligion, and on Sundays it was lined with stalls, barrows, loud-mouthed costers, cunning faced loungers and evil underworld characters of every description. Some of the few words we are able to get out of Ellen we found, with other information, in Cyril Davey's *A Man For All Children*:



'But Bowman, how do we start to win people like this for Christ?'

'We've got to go to where the people are, . . . ' he replied, 'It's no use waiting for them to come inside the Chapel. And the open space in front is just right for open air meetings'.

Stephenson was quite good with tools, and he built a platform against the front of the chapel with a roof over it, fitted folding doors, installed a harmonium and desk, and powerfully illuminated it.

'It's like a cheap-jack's stall,' observed Ellen. 'Exactly! That's what these people expect to see in the Waterloo Road.'

Just to encourage would-be clients he made the whole thing comfortable with two hundred chairs.

Now all good buskers and costermongers are at heart good showmen, and now the Waterloo Road had its religious showman. No wonder the place was packed out every nightly session, and that included the temperance meetings! Saturday evening was Newspaper Evening when the important news was read out to the mainly illiterate audience. The high spot, however, was undoubtedly the tall moustachioed preacher's singing. The barrow-boys liked him, but again his elders wondered if such a 'frivolous' young man could be really sound.

Immorality, perversion, impiety and particularly hypocrisy of any sort disturbed our hero deeply, but to see multitudes of children mixed up in it almost sent him over the hill. The children of Lambeth were a shade dirtier, just that bit more ragged, beaten up and violent, than most he had seen. Some of them, he suspected, were completely homeless: 'Here were my poor little brothers and sisters sold to hunger and the Devil. How could I be free of their blood if I did not try to save some of them? I began to feel that my time had come.'

He was right, for in the *Methodist Recorder* of 2nd April 1869, there was a notice of two young men who were seeking subscriptions to purchase one of the 'thieves kitchens' in the Mint, and turn it into a Christian hostel. They were Alfred Mager from Bath, and Francis Horner from Dublin. Stephenson contacted them. Mager, who already held some seniority in the London and Westminster Bank, was thirty, the same age as Stephenson. Horner was twenty-two, and beginning a business career in London. After some discussion they agreed to shelve the lodging house project and adopt Stephenson's idea of a training home for destitute boys. They looked around for premises, and finally rented a cottage in Church Street, a small road leading off Waterloo Road.

Number 8, Church Street had seen better days, but the young men set to work and transformed it. By the 9th July 1869, the first two boys, George and Fred, aged ten and twelve, moved in, and one of the most remarkable child rescue works of all time was off the ground. It was to be called *The Children's Home*. There were quite a number of institutions,

but this would be a family. At a meeting held in the premises to promote the work Stephenson said: 'In London alone there are scores of thousands of boys like this who need our help'. His audience gaped with incredulity; he continued: 'Scores of thousands. That is no preacher's exaggeration. It is the sober truth'.

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**'my poor little brothers and sisters,  
sold to hunger and the Devil . . .  
how could I be free of their blood?'**

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Although his own church was not whole-heartedly with him at the beginning, some London Wesleyans saw the value of the work at once; but there were critics. One learned gentleman dismissed them with a flourish of his pen as, '... three injudicious young men who will learn from bitter experience'.

The work expanded rapidly, and as it did so the going became tougher, much too difficult for the first house-parents they hired to handle. It was hardly to be expected that these wild kids would behave like angels. One of them at least claimed he had been on the streets since he was born, another eleven year old had already been to prison! Immanuel Wichern's famous *Raue Haus* in Hamburg might have been rough, but it had nothing on No. 8 Church Street.

What was to be done? The 'injudicious young men' were all in professions, yet they decided to take the Home over personally. Horner, as the bachelor of the party, agreed to sleep on the premises, while the others gave as much time as they could afford. Almost at once there was a remarkable change for the better, and it soon became obvious that the boys were becoming increasingly attached to Bowman. He was their father figure. He taught them to 'Just talk to God as if he were your father'. But 'father' was someone of whom most of them had no memory or wanted to forget. This was just one of the problems Stephenson had to face.

As for welfare, the boys were now comparatively well fed, and decently clothed. What is more they were being educated. Who would criticise such a work of God? Surprise, surprise. This was not what Stephenson was paid to do; why should a Methodist minister do work which the workhouses did anyway etc. Small-minded? Perhaps, but from people one would have thought should have known better. However, the Sanballats did not deter the good old London Wesleyans from supporting the work to the point of sacrifice, yet the Home was always living hand to mouth.

By 1871 thirty-three boys had been *adopted*, and the Conference kept Stephenson near to the work by posting him to Approach Road, Bethnal Green. He responded by opening larger premises in Bonner Street. Girls were also accepted, and a grand old Methodist, James Barlow, presented to the Home a farm of one hundred acres at Edgeworth in the

wilds of Lancashire. This gesture may have influenced the 1871 Conference, for shortly after the Children's Home was accepted as a Wesleyan Methodist commitment. The numbers continued to swell; by 1872 there were over sixty children under care. Stevenson was invited to Canada, and the people of Hamilton agreed to open a Canadian branch. They went ahead, and during 1873 Horner took the first group of children out to the expanding Dominion. The Canadians had put in over two hundred applications for the children. Some were unlucky, for there were only thirty-four boys and fifteen girls to share round.

Just four years after its small beginning there were one hundred and thirty-two children in the Home's London and Lancashire branches, and if this was not a work of God we should like to see one. No wonder the 1873 Conference relieved Stephenson of circuit work and set him apart as *Principal of the Children's Home*. Still the work flourished. A third branch was opened at Gravesend and by 1882 there was also a branch in the Isle of Man, and the New Oscott Branch in Birmingham for deprived children of Christian parents! A training scheme for women as *Sisters of the Children* had been started and, despite the thunderings of clerical bureaucrats, laymen were now admitted to the Conference.

During 1890 Mrs. Stephenson died, but the depression of his great loss which might well have afflicted Bowman was probably lessened by the fact that he had that year been made President of the Conference, and therefore he was too busy to brood. Always an advocate for a United Methodism, he was delighted that the second Ecumenical Methodist Conference should be held during his year of office. He had been involved in the first one in 1881. During his life time he saw the union of the Methodist United Free Churches, the Bible Christians and the New Connexion. Complete union with the Wesleyans and Primitives was not to be until twenty years after his death. His Presidential year also saw the fruits of another of his pioneering ventures. This was the opening of Mewburn House for the training of women workers, and this was the origin of the Order of Deaconesses.

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**'A friend is a bloke wot knows  
all about yer and still loves yer'**

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During 1894 Dr. Stephenson (he had been awarded that honorary degree by Grant University) was appointed Superintendent of the Victoria Park Circuit, and Chairman of the First London District of the Wesleyan Church, which was as near to a diocesan bishop as a Wesleyan could get. It was too much and he had to be released from the District office. Ill health began to shadow him, and on May 9th, 1900, he was forced to resign from the Children's Home. The Conference recorded the

fact: 'that it could not bring itself to entertain the idea were it not for the strongly expressed judgement of his medical advisers that such a step is inevitable. . . . The staff in the Homes were no less distressed, protests flooded in; but there was one thing which must have cheered his heart—the New Connexion and the Bible Christians were now supporting the Children's Homes.

The Conference of 1900 sent him as superintendent to Ilkley near Leeds. Things were a little chaotic at first because he was still Warden of the Deaconess training Institute in London. Then in 1902 a building was purchased to house the Institute in Ilkley, and Dr. Stephenson was installed as Warden. He retained the position until 1907, when he finally retired to Finchley, London. He had been in the ministry for almost thirty years.

It has been said he was not an original thinker. Surely such a statement must be questioned. Certainly he was not first in the field of child rescue work; Barnardo and Kate Booth were around. But he was a pioneer in the idea of the *family group*, which those who have read *Banana Boy* will know the orphanages did not always achieve. And what about the Deaconess Order, was not that original? Even a disinterested person who looked over his life would have to admit almost everything he did was original.

He was also 'instructed in the songs of the Lord'. Not only was he on the committees which produced the new Wesleyan hymnbooks in 1876 and 1904, but he once stood in for Sankey during a Moody campaign when that celebrated soloist was sick. He trained a Home choir and band which he took on extensive popular tours. Amongst the new hymns they sung were: *Onward, Christian Soldiers, Take my life, and let it be, Stand up, stand up for Jesus, Mine eyes have seen the Glory, Tennyson's Crossing the Bar*, and Emily Elliot's *Thou didst leave Thy throne*. Moody and Sankey might have introduced some of these hymns, but it was Dr. Stephenson's Choir and Band who really made them our own.

Few soldiers of the Cross could have been more criticised than Bowman Stephenson. Perhaps we were wrong in referring to them as 'Sanballats' for many of them were believers who honestly thought him wrong. He was regarded as a rebel, but this is not the whole truth. I can find no evidence that he ever joined the Chartists. He was a Liberal with a social conscience, but that is a far paler colour than the deep red in which some painted him. What John Wesley would have thought of this *son in the Gospel* we cannot say, but it is doubtful if he would have judged him too harshly, and before we do so let us remember that Tribunal before which each of us must appear.

He passed on in 1912, and the best testimonial we can think of is in the words of one of his 'ownerless' children: 'A friend is a bloke wot knows all about yer and still loves yer—and he's my friend!' □

## Into the 1980s-

### Which Way for Evangelism?

Special Feature

"In many parts of the country there are encouraging signs of new spiritual life, while at the same time we have to recognise that Britain is a sick nation very much in need of the Gospel. There is a growing enthusiasm amongst young people in particular for communicating their faith to those who are not committed Christians. In many areas local churches are working together on evangelistic projects with encouraging results and there are reports from many parts of the country that the numbers attending evangelistic missions are greater than for many years."

With these words, the council of the Evangelical Alliance recently opened a widely circulated letter announcing a major new initiative in evangelism, running parallel with the less specifically evangelical National Initiative in Evangelism.

The letter went on:-

'All the recent studies on evangelism have shown that the most effective missions are those based upon local churches where there has been a great deal of prayer and preparation and where there is a high involvement of the whole church membership.

'This does not obviate the necessity for larger scale festivals in which a number of churches in an area work together, or for city-wide missions or even for a national crusade in evangelism. But it does emphasise the necessity for rooting evangelism in the local church. A large scale happening that does not stem out of the mission of the local church lacks effectiveness because it leaves ordinary

church members uninvolved. Many churches, however, are not ready for the task of evangelism. There is often a need for training in personal evangelism and a need for restructuring the church so that new disciples are nurtured.

'In many churches there is a lack of enthusiasm for outreach. We have become accustomed to being a small minority. The failure syndrome has paralysed many churches. We do not *ask* for great things from the Lord and we do not *expect* great things to happen. But where Christians are really putting their trust in the Lord He is faithful and there is clear evidence today that the Holy Spirit is at work amongst us.

'There are many signs of hope that encourage the belief that the 1980's will be a fruitful period of growth. This makes it imperative that we prepare the barns for the harvest! There is an urgent need for local churches to embark upon training programmes linking the insights of "Church Growth" with methods of evangelism.'

### But does it concern us?

A recent survey of Brethren churches, which will be published in a few months' time, showed that one of their major areas of concern (indeed, an evangelistic leader described this aspect as an extremely depressing part of the study) was the ineffectiveness of their evangelistic efforts. Consistently, the reply to the question 'Which is the least effective activity of the church?' came across as: 'The Sunday evening Gospel service'.

To those who have lived with such churches, the reply need be no surprise. It is a witness only to the sheer persistence of ecclesiastical traditions that churches can go on, Sunday after Sunday, with

a form of activity that not only produces no discernible results, but often inhibits other means of contacting and influencing men and women for Christ. There are places where men and women are still reached and helped by this service: but almost invariably it is because its form and content have been radically altered from the traditional.

#### To help you!

The new initiative of the Evangelical Alliance ought, therefore, to be of very real importance to such churches. There are three main parts to the initiative.



## A major new initiative

1. The Alliance has created a Department of Evangelism and Church Growth, which will have its offices in Cheltenham. This is intended as a practical resource centre in matters both of direct evangelism and of church growth, and among other aids there is a small team of lecturers available to conduct seminars for leaders of the churches. Details may be obtained, in the first place, from Dr. Clifford Hill, the Secretary for Evangelism and Church Growth of the Evangelical Alliance, at 19 Draycott Place, London SW3 2SJ.

2. The Council is calling a National Congress on Evangelism for Christians from churches all over Britain, with the object of launching into a decade of evangelism. The Congress will be held from 7th-13th April 1980 at Prestatyn in North Wales—a Pontin's holiday camp. The congress will be an inspirational occasion, but it will also assist local churches to understand and be more effective in their task of evangelism locally.

3. A proposal has been made for 'a full scale national outreach to take place at some time during the 1980's', with 1981 or 1982 considered as serious possibilities. A questionnaire has been widely circulated to sound out opinion as to the desirability

and form of such a campaign. Rightly, in this sound opinion, the Alliance has been sensitive to criticisms made of other recent initiatives which have seemed to have been imposed on churches in Britain by self-appointed committees.

### Proving controversial . . .

#### Comment invited

Nevertheless, it is this third suggestion that is proving most controversial, and *The Harvester* would welcome the widest possible expression of views from its readers. These will be reported in the journal as received, as a further help to those who are involved in planning and decisions.

The Secretary for Evangelism and Church Growth of the Evangelical Alliance is Dr. Clifford Hill, and for the time being he should be addressed at the address already given in this feature. In the meantime, the quite separate National Initiative on Evangelism offers to help individual churches or groups of churches to find whatever resources they need to make their evangelism more effective. The address of the Executive Secretary is: National Initiative on Evangelism, 146 Queen Victoria St., London EV4V 4BX.

## Some trenchant questions

One of the criticisms of the third proposal of the Evangelical Alliance has come from Mr. Gordon Bailey of Birmingham, in an open letter to the Alliance which he has circulated to a number of periodicals. Although a few of his points, while earnestly and sincerely made, smack of debating points rather than points of substance, he does make some other very powerful and effective observations. Readers might like to include these in their discussion of the Evangelical Alliance proposals.

Mr. Bailey's most telling questions are:—

*Presuming your concept of evangelism is right:*

(i) Is it traditional?

Yes—well, reasonably recently so.

(ii) Is it feasible?

Yes—it could be organised relatively easily.

(iii) Is it practical?

Yes—the money could be raised without too much difficulty.

(iv) Would it be acceptable?

Yes—most evangelicals love a crusade, especially with a 'big name' evangelist involved.

(v) Is it evangelical?

Yes—the holding of rallies and meetings has become the norm among evangelicals when they think of evangelism.

*Questioning the rightness of your concept of evangelism:*

(i) Is it justifiable?

No—it is a known and established fact that crusade meetings are largely ineffective in reaching the masses. If Wembley Stadium could be filled to its capacity of 100,000 each evening for 10 evenings 1 million people would attend. There would be those who would return for two visits or more, but, discounting them, if we allowed a generous 10% as being previously unreached and unchurched, only 0.2% of the non-Christian population would be so reached.

(ii) Is it moral?

No—the devotion of huge sums of God's money to such ineffective means of so-called evangelism would, in the context of a needy world be utterly immoral.

Real, consistent, long-term, every-believer, church-based evangelism costs little or nothing financially.

If church members refuse to commit themselves to life-sharing, long-term, church-based evangelism, to encourage them further to believe that the work has been done, because such large sums of money and such incredible energy has been employed in the organisation and carrying-through of crusade meetings, is demonstrative of a lack of basic intelligence.

I recently enquired whether it might be possible to persuade those who have large sums of money at their disposal to invest it in providing local churches with full-time Christian workers, men and women who would work a five-day week, year after year, carrying out real outreach from the church, by means of visitation, open-air services, meeting the needs of the sick, the imprisoned, and the lonely. I was told 'No, the money is *only* available for use in bringing to this country, for a short-term crusade ministry, someone of the stature of Billy Graham or Luis Palau'.

(iii) Is it sensibly economical?

No—for every £3000 spent on a nationwide crusade (and I have heard estimates varying wildly from £100,000 to £1,000,000) a full-time locally-based evangelist could be employed for one full year.

Such an evangelist could be 'given' to either a local church, desirous of reaching its community with the Gospel; or sent to an area where there is no regular evangelical witness (and there must be many thousands of rural villages and communities who could benefit in this way).

Instead of buying the services of one man and his team for two or three weeks, taking a mid-way estimate of £500,000 (as needed for the total budget, preparation, planning, and presentation of a nationwide crusade, or a co-ordinated series of city-wide crusades), does your organisation realise that it could finance and commission about 170 full-time Christian workers for one whole year? Or over 55 full-time evangelists for three years?

(iv) Is it scriptural?

No—there exists no scriptural basis for humanly-organised, man-centred, money-squandering, non-evangelistic show business.

The moment I make the other person responsible for whether or not they ever hear the Gospel preached, I have passed the can! Most so-called evangelism which has taken place in the 19th and 20th centuries makes the non-Christian responsible for his or her own evangelisation. If they do not attend the rally they do not hear; if they do not read the literature, or, indeed, if they *cannot* read the literature, they are not told who Jesus is, and all Jesus has done; if they do not listen

to or watch religious broadcasts, then they remain ignorant of Jesus and His love.

When is the Church to be encouraged to accept the very great privilege of sharing Jesus with our world, in the same ways as undertaken by Jesus and His apostles?

We are commanded to 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every person'—nowhere can we justify any method of so-called evangelism which restricts the communication of the Living Christ to those willing to attend a meeting, read a tract, or listen to a broadcast!

In a period of *two years*, the apostle Paul, with a small team of co-workers, so effectively communicated the Gospel, with no vehicles, no printing presses, and no mass media, that it could be truthfully written in the Acts of the Apostles that: 'All the inhabitants of the province of Asia, Jews as well as Greeks, heard the Word of the Lord'.

With all the means at our disposal, how come nothing remotely like this statement can be made about our modern forms of so-called evangelism?

*Have you considered your own previous researches into evangelism?*

During the 1960s the Evangelical Alliance set up a commission to examine and report on evangelism in Britain. Some of the results were published in *On the Other side*.

I believe some facts uncovered, especially concerning organisations involved in crusade-style evangelical activities, were never made known to the Christian public. I also believe that the very methods now being recommended by you in your documents were shown to be far too expensive and far too ineffective.

*Is the church preferring to walk by sight and not by faith?*

Many full-time Christian workers operate in this nation, unsung, unpublicised, largely unsupported to any large extent financially. They and their extremely effective forms of evangelism receive little or no attention. Why?

I suggest that the popularity of crusade-style evangelism has a great deal to do with the unwillingness of many of us to walk by faith—we demand to see something happening before we will believe anything *is* happening.

*Have you considered, seriously, the effect of a national crusade on already-existing Christian work?*

It is a long-established fact that, every time there has been a large-scale national crusade, British-

based evangelists, societies, and charities, suffer financially.

In the same week that your documents arrived in the post I received information concerning TEAR Fund's Child Care Programme. In the same week I also received newsletters and prayer letters from several evangelists and societies permanently based in and working full-time in Britain.

Can it be guaranteed, by those who would give financial support to the scheme you are suggesting, that no regular support will be withdrawn from those who are already working in this nation, and will still be working in this nation, long after any visiting evangelist has been and gone?

*Is there an alternative?*

Yes—a very positive one!

All the time, energy, resources, and money, which would be channelled into a city-wide or national crusade, could be redirected towards the training, support, encouragement, and creation of long-term, life-sharing, local-church-based ministries.

There are many people already involved in seeking to stimulate and encourage local-church evangelism on a long-term basis: The One Step Forward Organisation, The Fishers Fellowship, and British Youth for Christ, to name but three. Each of these organisations is involved in a ministry which could be enlarged and encouraged by the redirection of the total amount of time and resources which would be put into a short-lived, short-term, short-sighted event such as you are proposing. And, in the context of Church history, or our present-day needy world, even a decade of ineffective work truly is short-sighted.

## And meanwhile, in the press . . .

In the meantime, *The Guardian* has got hold of a rumour that Dr. Billy Graham might be coming for another crusade, and on Monday 5th February carried a highly emotional plea from a Yorkshire vicar, headed 'Stay away, Billy Graham, for God's sake stay away.' It was tragic that this article should have appeared in a national paper, because it will simply confirm most unbelieving cynics in their comfortable prejudices: but it was an article that should be engraved on the hearts of every evangelist and Sunday School teacher. Describing his childhood Sunday School, where the Gospel was apparently presented essentially and solely in terms of 'flee from the wrath to come', the author wrote:-

'Well, we did it.' (That is, they 'asked the Lord Jesus to come into their hearts'). 'We all tried in our own ways, in the quiet of our own bedchambers, to ensure that He who hears in secret might strangely warm our hearts and turn them away from sin. And it never worked—except that we got more and more scared and more and more guilty. We were bowed down not, I believe, so much by a sense of sin as by the descriptions of our fallen nature and of our certain future torment regularly repeated by the SS man.'

He concluded: 'Twelve years on and now an ordained priest, I see the immense and sometimes irreparable damage which is done by this kind of evangelism—this SS religion. I am convinced that, so far from it being a form of Christianity, it has nothing to do with the Christian faith at all. It flourishes when and where the church is weak.'

Strong words, and no doubt words to cause a lot of indignation in some of our readers. Happily, there were not lacking Christians to write to correct the balance in the correspondence columns of later issues of the newspaper (and not least to hint that it was a bit unfair to saddle Billy Graham with the clumsinesses of the Sunday School teacher, simply because his preaching included elements of the same warning!). But the episode does remind us that evangelism can easily slide over into psychological manipulation, and the results can be dire. There will be not a few of our readers who in their secret hearts will sympathise with the Yorkshire vicar. □

### SOME REMINDERS

#### 1 CHRISTIAN BRETHERN RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

Open day, 1979: Seminar on the subject  
**Women in the Church**

Mary Evans . Mary Skinner . Prof. F. F. Bruce  
at the London Bible College, Green Lane,  
Northwood, Middlesex on **9 June 1979**

#### 2 CHRISTIAN COLPORTAGE ASSOCIATION

The Hull branch of the CCA is celebrating its centenary year and announces its **Centenary and April Training Weekend, 20-22 April 1979** at Orchard Park Free Church, Hull. Details from Hon. Secretary at CCA, (Hull Branch) Bridge Chambers, 109 Spring Bank, Hull HU3 1BR.



Edited by Kathleen White, 60 Bowood Road, Swindon, Wilts.

## Kathleen White's Column

### A Policeman's Lot

Talking to Stuart about his work as a sergeant in the Police Force was a tremendously interesting experience. He was moved to Swindon last year and I'd met him and his wife and two children many times at our local church but had never got to know them well. As I enjoy finding out what makes people tick, I invited him to come along and discuss with me his job as a Christian policeman.

I started by asking him what made him decide to take up that career.

'I joined the Police Cadets straight from school. To me, the training offered two outstanding assets, further education and physical activity. Moreover, it gave me two years to think about my future. As I like disciplined service, I made up my mind to stay in at the end of that initial period.'

'No, I didn't become a Christian until I reached the age of sixteen. Pauline, who is now my wife, took me along to the monthly interdenominational Challenge rallies in Salisbury. Probably my main motive was to help our relationship at first but Dick Saunders brought the message home to me. I was then in the Cadets and it took me a while to find my feet as a Christian as I didn't know the background. It certainly helped my language problem—I stopped swearing. I had volunteered primarily for the Metropolitan Police but I eventually joined Wiltshire and I feel it's the right place for me. I'm a country chap at heart, not really at home in large cities.'

I ventured to ask him if being a Christian in his job helped or made the situation more difficult. His reply was very positive. 'Emphatically yes, it enables me to keep my temper in difficult circumstances, particularly when abuse is being shown. It eases tension if I still show manners and respect. If anyone loses his temper, he loses control. As I've already explained, I've experienced the Lord's help with language. It's significant in Luke's gospel that He says 'Let your yea be yea and your nay be nay'. On the other hand, I find it harder in some respects. For instance, I don't make a good interviewer because I'm not able to lower my standards and converse in the same manner, so there's automatically a language barrier between us. So I do try to compensate for this by giving as much understanding as possible.'

He agreed when I surmised that he must often find himself in situations of physical danger. 'Oh yes, frequently, amongst crowds at football matches, with drunks or outside nightclubs, wherever there is mass disorder. On one occasion I was trying to arrest a fellow for stealing a car and he drove off for some distance with me still hanging on the side. I fell off into another lane while he was still going fast.

Another time I was threatened out in the street by a lunatic brandishing a knife.

'Yes, there have been times when I've been able to communicate a little of my faith to people in difficult circumstances. A young girl kept running away from home and on the third or fourth attempt I was able to speak to her at the Police Station. She realised there was something drastically missing in her life and so I explained to her what the Lord meant to me. Also I told her how she could ask Him for help. Sometimes I've been given the chance to speak to colleagues with troubles, to offer comfort and reassurance to them; but always the best example is the way you live your own life.'

Stuart had very definite ideas why the crime rate is increasing, and conversely the age of the offender becoming lower. 'There's a general lack of moral discipline and parental control. Standards are lower, schools are slacker. Whereas neighbours used to care for the local kids with a sort of teamwork, now most of the mothers are out at work, sometimes in the day, sometimes the evening. . . The extended family of caring grandparents and aunts nowadays has all too often shrunk into the tight nuclear family, so there aren't sufficient sympathetic and responsible adults to keep an eye on the children.'

When I challenged Stuart whether he was satisfied with the preventative measures for crime and the methods of punishment, he had reserves. 'People should be punished for committing a crime, it's as simple as that. From time to time, the courts levy fines out of proportion, perhaps £60 for stealing and £300 for graffiti on a wall which might take £200 to put right.'

'Society will only begin to change with a re-introduction of self-discipline shown throughout adult life. We need reform and revival. Christians in contact with the world should be as leaven in the lump. As one ardent Communist enthusiasts a band of enthusiastic followers, so Christians on fire for the Lord should inspire disciples for Him.'

Having read of the unjustly bad image of the Police in several areas, I wanted to find out if Stuart felt bitter or angry as a result. 'Not unduly, although I wish that we could use our facilities to better advantage and make people understand through the available channels what we are trying to do. This misrepresentation could be averted if we could educate people about the role of the police. Most of the officers I know enter the force because they are community minded, not for the financial rewards or supposed glamour. It's a tough and demanding job.'

I invited Stuart to make a final comment upon the deplorable moral condition of society today. Without hesitation, he expressed his hopes for the

future. 'I would like to see a sprinkling of Christians in almost all professions and walks of life, spreading the word and acting as ambassadors for Christ rather than a dense concentration in the so called safe and respectable jobs. Only in this way will the message of the gospel permeate through society and the maximum number of lives be affected by the news of God's way of salvation for men.'

After Stuart left and I began to think over our conversation, I felt my conscience pricked as a mother. How often do we parents encourage our children to train for the most academic professions with the largest possible financial remuneration instead of simply praying for them and with them that the Lord will clearly direct them into the pathway of His choice?

A momentous decision like this is not to be taken lightly. It will affect the whole of the future course of our children's journey through life and also all the lives with whom they may come in contact.

As with so many other people who have appeared on these pages, we can be thankful to God for Stuart and the position which he now holds. We can also pray for Pauline that she may be relieved of all anxiety about her husband while she is at home caring for the children and Stuart is possibly facing difficulties and danger. □

## Professor Bruce Asks

It is not unknown in the churches to which most of us belong for someone who for reasons of health cannot be baptized by immersion to be treated in all respects as having been baptized. Moral theologians would speak of such a person as having received the 'baptism of desire'; less technically, he or she would perhaps be assured by responsible brethren that the Lord, knowing the circumstances, would 'take the wish for the deed'. But I have reason to know that a Christian in such a situation would have a greater sense of spiritual satisfaction if the baptismal ceremony were duly carried out, but with a token amount of water—that is to say, by affusion rather than immersion. Is this a valid consideration, or is total immersion so essential to baptism that it is better to forgo water altogether than to use only a little?

*Correspondence, please, to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey, SM5 4NX by 10 April.*

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Correspondence for this page should be sent to Mr. Peter Cousins, M.A., B.D.,  
The Paternoster Press Ltd., 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW marked 'Harvester Question Page'

## Question and Answer, with Peter Cousins

### Is the NIV unnecessary?

#### Question 141

*Since we already possess in the Revised Standard Version a translation which is dignified in tone and fairly literal (contrast the "dynamic equivalent" of the Today's English Version), do you think there is any need for the New International Version?*

In principle, and before reading the New International Version, I should have been inclined to agree with you. The NIV was not in any case served well by individuals who promoted it in advance as part of a smear campaign against some members of the committee which translated the RSV. But from what I have seen in particular of the translation of the poetic passages in the Old Testament, it is apparent that the NIV makes a distinctive contribution in this field at least. (It is also most attractively presented and highly legible.)

### "Why Do You Call Me Good?"

#### Question 142

*How would you explain the difference between the reply of Jesus to the rich young ruler as recorded in Matthew 19: 17 and Mark 10: 8?*

According to Mark and Luke, the Lord Jesus replied: "Why callest thou me good? None is good save one, even God." But in Matthew we find: "Why askest thou me concerning that which is good? One there is who is good." Such apparent discrepancies are not infrequent and every student of the gospels has to take account of them. The simplest answer here and elsewhere would be along the lines suggested by Harold St. John: "Every reverent Christian believes that Christ's full reply covered both of the above statements, but obviously they are entirely distinct. His words probably ran on the following lines, 'Why do you inquire of me as to abstract goodness? Only One can tell you about that! Why do you call me good? There is but One to whom that word can be applied absolutely, even God.' On this assumption we may still wonder why both 'Matthew' and 'Mark' abbreviate the reply and what induced each to do so in a different manner.

Some readers may conclude it better to follow Calvin in his comment on *Matthew 12: 29*:

"Though the Evangelists differ a little as to words, there is a perfect agreement among them as to the substance of this discourse." In other words, the gospel writers should be permitted this same freedom as human beings normally use in reporting an incident.

However, it may also be significant that Matthew further differs from Mark and Luke about the young man's question. (What shall I do?/What good thing shall I do?) He also omits the epithet "good" from the young man's address to Jesus. This all seems to suggest a deliberate purpose. Guided by the Holy Spirit, the evangelist has removed from the story a phrase that might seem to cast doubt on Jesus' oneness with the Father. In addition, he has shown that the person who is anxious to do good deeds should be willing to accept the revealed will of God who is himself the source and the fullness of good.

### "Above Five Hundred Brethren"

#### Question 143

*What do you think of the suggestion that the appearance to more than five hundred mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15: 6 took place at the Day of Pentecost? After all, in Romans 8: 9, 10 and 1 Corinthians 15: 45 Paul identifies the risen Christ with the Holy Spirit.*

Like many that relate apparently unconnected passages, this view is superficially attractive but does not stand close examination. The first difficulty is that, as you imply in your question, *Acts 2* records a *manifestation* of the Spirit, whereas Paul speaks in *1 Corinthians 15: 6* of an *appearance* of the Saviour. Even if we ignore the appearance/manifestation distinction, it is still going beyond the evidence to suggest that Paul did not distinguish between the risen Christ and the Holy Spirit.

The second problem is that the distinctive feature of each episode has to be read into the other before they can be identified in the manner suggested. After all, *1 Corinthians 15: 6* says not a word about speaking with tongues, just as *Acts 2* is completely silent about any vision of the Lord Jesus. Yet without these features, we are left with no common factor apart from the fact that large numbers of people were present.

If you were to ask why Luke ignores such remarkable confirmation of the resurrection narrative as that referred to in *1 Corinthians 15: 6*, two answers might be made. 1. None of the gospel writers uses this tradition so that Luke's failure to do so does not present a unique difficulty. 2. Luke lays emphasis in particular upon Pentecost as the decisive incident in the dynamic life and growth of the Church and thus had good reason for ignoring any episode that might seem to diminish Pentecost.

## Looking at Books

### The Land illuminates the Book

**ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS IN THE HOLY LAND** Volume IV (Or ha-Ner—Tel Zeror). Edited by Michael Avi-Yonah and Ephraim Stern. Oxford University Press, London. 301 pp. £8.25.

In this splendid volume 39 contributors (mainly Israeli) have joined to present the history and results of their excavations at ancient sites in Palestine. Such an authoritative survey of places from prehistoric to Islamic times with its accompanying wealth of 365 illustrations in photograph (10 in colour), plans, drawings, reconstructions and maps will go far to make the archaeological discoveries intelligible and vivid to any reader. Major Biblical sites include Samaria, Shechem, Tell er-Ras (Gerizim), Petra (Sela'), Tiberias and Qumran (the site rather than the Dead Sea Scrolls). Other articles cover Synagogues, The Sharon Plain as well as various churches and even monuments of the Byzantine and latter periods. This book is thus of interest to a wide range as a source

referring to archaeology in its widest sense including inscriptions (e.g. the note of '30 shekels of gold from Ophir for Beth-Horon' probably the temple at Qasile shown here from the period of the Hebrew Monarchy). The illustrations will bring knowledge of all this, together with the art and architecture of Old Testament times, to many a reader whether Bible student, teacher or tourist or even archaeologist amateur or professional. The high standard noted by the reviewer of the earlier volumes in *The Harvester* is well maintained here. Indexes make it a valuable aid to study. I would recommend this, and the preceding volumes (totalling 1237 pages and c.2,000 illustrations) of the series now concluded. They are, and will remain for some time, the best reference work on Biblical Archaeology for the general reader. You too can safely recommend them to your local library, school, church and, not least, for your own bookshelf and reading.

*Review by Professor D. J. Wiseman of the University of London*

### SOME DEVOTIONAL MEDITATIONS

**The Stranger of Galilee** R.E.O. White. Arthur James Limited. 152 pp. £3.95

**Consider Him** J. Oswald Sanders. OMF Books. 48 pp. 45p. (paperback)

Both of these books are about our Lord Jesus Christ. It might seem curious to describe such a One as 'the Stranger of Galilee'; but the expression, of course, derives from the charming poem (set to music, and often sung as a solo): 'In fancy, I stood on the shore, one day, of the beautiful, murmuring sea'. And one supposes that the title in that song owes its origin to the words of Cleopas and his friend to the Saviour: 'Art Thou only a stranger...?'

Neither of these books is a formal 'Life of Christ'; but the former of them does approximate to this on a small scale. Although, however, the scale is so small, the book is of considerable value in that it takes up the various main events in our Lord's life and ministry and, with incisive skill, indicates their importance and meaning and practical relevance. This is a scholarly work, and is based on a profound acquaintance with the Gospel records; and yet it is also deeply devotional and personally challenging.

A feature of the second book is the brevity of the chapters. In the 43 pages of its text are as many as 22 chapters, most of which are of one and a half pages each. Twice in the *Epistle to the Hebrews* are Christians enjoined to 'consider' the Lord Jesus (3: 1 and 12: 3), and the purpose of this book, as its title shows, is to help them to do this. It consists in a series of brief devotional meditations on such themes as 'the head of Christ', 'the face of Christ', 'the hands of Christ', 'the love of Christ', 'the power of Christ', 'the humility of Christ', 'Union with Christ', 'Christ all in all', and finally 'Ambassadors for Christ'. Each little study draws out one's heart towards Him in love and in worship.

*Review by Dr. Stephen S. Short*

**Daily Thoughts on Holiness from Andrew Murray** edited by Frank Cumbers. Marshall, Morgan & Scott. 213 pp. £4.50

This book is essentially a practical challenge and stimulus to holy living. Extracts from some twelve of Dr. Murray's books provide the essence of his teaching on the deepening of spiritual life. With each reading clearly identified, the total content is in no way restricted or limited. While asserting the essential doctrines of the Faith, he warns of 'a dead article of faith, held fast and proved out of Scripture, but without any living influence on the soul' (page 107).

He acknowledges that 'there are questions we may not find easy to answer. Was the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost the complete fulfilment of the promise... given once for all to the new-born Church?... Is the sealing of the Spirit... in regeneration to be counted... as his baptism of the Spirit?... but... we should not allow ourselves to be occupied with points as these... but fix our whole hearts on the great spiritual lessons that God would have us learn from the preaching of the baptism of the Holy Spirit' (page 90). Is this too fundamental an issue to be thus dismissed and are the references to the Spirit's activities too 'flexible'? Baptism of and with the Spirit, receiving, indwelling and fullness are treated as synonymous terms.

Throughout, we observe a three-fold theme, the challenge, condition and character of holiness. Dr. Murray recognises two distinct operations of the Holy Spirit in the believer, 'the first is the preparatory operation in which He simply acts on us... leading us to conversion and faith... The second is the higher and more advanced phase... when we receive Him as an abiding gift, an indwelling Person... this is the ideal of the Christian life' (page 31).

To read this book is to feel the heart-pulse of a 'holy man of God'. An attractive dust-cover, clear type and adequately bound, the book is ideally suited for daily use.

*Review by Edgar L. Lovering.*

**A Way of Seeing** Edith Schaeffer. Hodder and Stoughton 255 pp. £3.25 (paperback)

This volume, by the wife of Francis Schaeffer and co-founder of the L'Abri fellowship, consists of sixty short reflections (each may be read in 5-6 minutes) designed to 'refresh and charm'. Originally published in *Christianity Today*, they have been revised and edited afresh by Mrs. Schaeffer.

She explains that the material here is 'in embryo form' and that it is to be 'developed in our own thinking and followed through', and suggests that the pieces could be used to start dinner-table conversation, or for family devotions, or merely to foster relaxation and meditation. Her over-riding desire is that the volume will aid the reader's understanding of the 'practical applications of the Word of God, as well as the worship of God'.

These reflections have arresting titles, for example, *Reversed Deterioration*, the subject being the Second Coming; *Who is the Snob*; *Balanced Buckets*; *Illusion and Reality*; *God's Mask and Snorkel*. Mrs. Schaeffer's method is to begin with an event or experience from everyday living followed by the teaching of the Bible on the particular topic being discussed—*Fresh Daily Bread*, for example, begins with an account of her custom of bread-making on Sunday mornings, followed by an analysis of the scriptural passages about Him who is 'the Bread of Life'. The book is thus eminently practical and Biblical.

Certain themes are heavily emphasised: the sinless life and death of the Lord Jesus Christ; the absolute dependability of the Word of God; the need for humility and careful conversation on the part of the believer and his obligation to resist premature judgement of other people; the comfort of prayer and of the scriptures; finally, the 'any-moment expectation of Jesus' return'.

This volume contains nothing new for the experienced believer, but its freshness and charm lies in its portrayal of christianity as something vibrant and exciting which is meant to permeate all aspects of our lives. Highly recommended.

Review by John Peters, Charterhouse School

**Facing Suffering** Herbert M. Carson. Evangelical Press. 134 pp. £1.90 (paperback)

We sometimes hear sufferers described and prayed for as those who are 'laid aside'. It is an unfortunate phrase. Far from being removed from the heat of battle they are in the thick of it, right up there in the firing line. As the title indicates, this is essentially a book for those who are facing suffering. It is much less a book for those with a general interest in the topic; it is not a survey of what others have said on the subject but a devotional approach with references which are mainly Biblical.

The book is in three parts containing, in turn, three, five and seven chapters. One chapter in each section is devoted to a case history of a Bible character (Job; Paul; Jeremiah). The first part deals with the problem in general. The reader is reminded that for the Christian 'It is in fact his faith which presents him with the problems, though paradoxically it is that same faith which furnishes him with the answers'. Part two, entitled 'Practical Answers', is less convincing and perhaps the least satisfying of the three parts. There are chapters on the caring Father, the sympathetic Christ and the Holy Ghost the Comforter. Rather too much of these chapters is devoted to general exposition of these topics. The third part deals with particular forms of suffering. There is much sound advice in the chapters on Mental and Physical Handicap and on Depression. Bereavement, 'Walking in the Dark' and Unhappy Marriage are other topics considered.

What about the overall impact of the book? Some years ago I asked a friend of mine how he had enjoyed a particular book. 'Well', he said, 'I could put it down'. Now this was a book which at times I could put down although I feel that this had to do with approach rather than style, for the author writes well with a good turn of phrase.

There are no easy answers to the problem of suffering. The more facile and glib the answer, the more does the one who gives it deserve to be dubbed a 'Job's comforter'. Mr. Carson is to be commended in that he does not commit that easiest yet deadliest of errors in counselling the suffering. His treatment is far too sensitive for that.

Review by Alex. F. McIntosh

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## Readers' Forum

*Readers' Forum* is open to contributions from from readers. Please send suggestions from practical experience, related to church activities or christian living; doctrinal or expository questions; useful experiences; what-you-will; to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX. Questions, to which other readers will be invited to submit replies, will also be published from time to time as they are received. It is hoped that readers will take full advantage of this feature.

This month's *Forum* is contributed by Mr. R. P. Gough

### What kind of church?

Have you ever asked yourself the question. 'What kind of a church would I like mine to be? At heart, we are idealists, at least many of us are if we are frank about these things, and would like to think that there was a perfect church somewhere not just around the corner, but somewhere! If only there was! But wait a minute: someone has said 'If you find a perfect church, don't join it.' Why? 'You'll be sure to spoil it.'—There's a lot of truth in that; the pity of it is, we are so imperfect.

But isn't it a fact that there are some folk who spend (and waste) an awful lot of time trying to find such a church, getting more and more frustrated, and contributing less and less to the work of Christ wherever they roam? I suppose some people would call them 'grasshoppers'. Mind you, I feel very sorry for them, because I can't help feeling they are missing the great blessing of a real spiritual home. Just as most of us have a permanent dwelling place called 'home', (and there's no place like it, is there?) So God wants us, as His own children, to enjoy a stable spiritual home.

There is a stigma about the term *no fixed abode*: when we read in the 'local' about someone of this description, we picture a person who is destitute, desolate, lonely, not wanted—without a home. This is certainly not the intention of the Risen Christ, the Head of His Church, for His own sons and daughters. Every member in His local church is precious to Him. He wants them all to contribute in some way to the Life of the church, and to enjoy family life within the local church, and all the benefits that accrue.

What kind of church then would I like mine to be?

Would you agree that we should be able to experience the following?

#### 1. The Reality of the Living Lord in His Church

What do I mean by this? Just this, that every time I enter in through the door, I shall experience the presence of the Lord Himself in the church whether it is a service for worship, preaching, teaching, or just a social occasion. Didn't He say, 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst'? Now I hasten to say that this experience will depend on at least two factors. First of all it will depend on the spiritual condition of myself, and then it will depend on everyone else in the church too. The spiritual life of any church is only as strong as its individual members allow it to be. That is why the word 'fellowship' is such a

lovely meaningful word. Someone has expressed it simply as fellows-in-the-same-ship, pulling together, working together, with the Lord at the helm, and in perfect command of His ship.

#### 2. The Reality of Christian Life within His Church

I remember hearing a great servant of God asking this question on one occasion: 'Is there so much love and concern amongst the folk in your church for each other, that the unbeliever who chances to walk in is so impressed that it brings its own conviction to his life and creates a desire within him to find out more of what they've got which is so attractive and obviously worth having? Is it like that in your church; and if not, what are you doing, what am I doing towards that goal? If the local church is a living organism (and we believe that it is), Christ the Head, and each member part of His Body, then surely, the Christ like life should be expressed through these lips, this heart, this mind, these hands, these feet, this whole body of mine—this is why constantly in his letters Paul the Apostle was the expressions 'Christ in you' and 'in Christ' in relation to the revelation and demonstrations of the living Christ in the life of the individual Christian.

#### 3. The Reality of Witness in His Church

As I see the concept of the New Testament Church as revealed in the Scriptures, the primary purpose of Christ's Church on earth is to evangelise: to spread the Good News of Salvation and to make disciples of all nations. There are a variety of ways of doing this, but certainly, there should be regular services for the preaching of the Good News indoors and outdoors (weather and seasons permitting), personal evangelism by door to door visitation, Sunday school and youth evangelism, special activities to meet the needs of particular groups e.g. old people, hospitals, prison and institutional visits. The latter activities will not necessarily have an emphasis on preaching so much as demonstrating the love of God in caring concern, and sharing our Christian faith with others outside the confines of the church. We are living in a situation where despite advances in medical care and attention, there are many sick in mind and body within the community. Consequently, there is a great need for those in the local church to show a care and concern for the sick and the aged—not only those of the church fellowship, but those outside too. All these kind of activities witness to the Christ-like lives of those of whom our Lord said 'By their fruits ye shall know them.'

#### 4. The Reality of the Holy Scriptures in His Church

As I see the scriptures, they are no less than the living words of God penned by holy men of God as they were inspired by the Holy Spirit. They are to be believed and obeyed implicitly, and put into practice. An academic approach to them just will not do: a literal approach will not do, not even a theological one, nothing short of a spiritual approach, for they are God breathed, God inspired, God given. Each time I desire to learn their precious truths, I must call upon God's Holy Spirit to enable me to understand and apply them to my own life, and situation. I would like to see in my kind of church therefore a broad approach to the Scriptures, regular systematic teaching of all aspects of Christian truth, doctrine and ethics—a well balanced diet for practical daily living, and active participation in the work, worship, and witness of the Church.

These are just four basic essentials in my kind of church, not forgetting by any means the enablement to carry through these basic ideals, i.e. prayer, prayer, and more prayer. You may well think of many other priorities, but you'll agree, these are four good starters, aren't they?

May we each do our part and fulfil our role, and function wherever He has placed us! □

# Replies to Professor Bruce

## The February Question

H. M. Carson, in his book *Farewell to Anglicanism* (p. 125), makes this interesting remark: 'The weakness, as I see it, of the Brethren breaking of bread is the absence of a sustained exposition of the Word by a teaching elder who has been given gifts by the Spirit for this purpose. The ideal gathering for the worshipping community on the Lord's Day, and one that would approximate best to a Biblical pattern, would be one which combined both these features—the freedom of the breaking of bread and the strong emphasis . . . of a regular and sustained exposition of the Word of God.' There are places where an attempt is made to make this twofold provision. Do readers think that Mr. Carson has put his finger on a real weakness?

## Not the whole answer

*Mr. G. E. M. Simmons replies:*

Whilst I agree that part of our problem is lack 'of a regular and sustained exposition of the Word of God' I am not sure that that is the whole answer.

There are a number of assemblies which have systematic teaching and yet do not seem to grow either numerically or spiritually: others which apparently neglect this practice still flourish or at least exist on the same level as those better taught.

Perhaps a study of church growth principles would teach that this is only one of many contributory factors—can we say that it is the most important?—this underlines Professor Bruce's use of the indefinite article in his question; it is just one of our many weaknesses!

It could be argued that if you put this one right the others would follow; but how can you introduce (the abstract concept of) systematic teaching if the leaders or the church are unable or unwilling to adopt it? My experience shows that it is even harder to re-introduce it where it has been tried and found wanting.

The problem, as always, is: which comes first, the chicken or the egg—systematic teaching or good leadership?

But as a positive step to increase systematic teaching could your own excellent magazine set an example by publishing systematic articles(!) and encouraging all teachers in Sunday Schools, Bible Classes, Women's meetings as well as those who book speakers for Sundays and weeknights to start on the great foundation doctrines of scripture (I believe there are only 10) and so make sure that at least the saints know the basics of the faith and the sinners have a ground for their belief in God.

## Problems of tradition

*Mr. K. H. Smellie replies:*

'A regular and sustained exposition of the Word of God' is a very serious lack in most Brethren churches. It is undoubtedly a major factor in the increasing number of transfers to those Baptist, or other, churches which provide such a ministry.

Assuming a capable teacher to be regularly available (and this is frequently not so), in some cases the obstacle is either an excessive fear of 'one man ministry', or the notion that in order to be led by the Holy Spirit ministry must be unprompted.

Even where there are no such inhibitions, the normal length of the period devoted to worship and the Lord's Supper leaves inadequate opportunity for any substantial ministry, unless the meeting is to be longer than most people (especially those with children who may already have spent an hour in Sunday School, Covenants, etc.) find acceptable.

Probably, in the past, the deficiency was partly remedied by better attendances at separate ministry meetings, or by reading serious expository books, and by personal Bible study. It seems that, in recent decades, recreational activities have expanded faster than leisure time and fewer of us today possess the Bible knowledge for which the movement was renowned.

I believe it is tragic that a too rigid and largely artificial, distinction between 'Gospel' and 'Ministry' has often prevented a balanced presentation of Bible truth as a whole in the meetings usually held on Sunday evenings.

More needs to be done to encourage young men to acquire training in the Word and its ministry; but we must also give them opportunity to exercise their gift in more than the haphazard way which is so common. If we do not, we shall deserve to lose them to those denominations which do.

## An ideal opportunity

*Mrs. May Dredge replies:*

Yes, I think that Mr. Carson has put his finger on a real weakness.

In the evangelical church (assembly) to which I belonged a few years ago, the Breaking of Bread service was followed by ministry, given by a variety of brethren, not only teaching elders, and was very profitable. The point here is that, as I understand it, the teaching gifts are not confined to elders (1 Cor. 12).

Many are unable to attend the mid-week ministry service regularly so this is an ideal opportunity for them to hear the Word of God expounded.

However, this would be rather difficult in a smaller assembly where there is perhaps not much teaching gift and where it is not conveniently situated to invite speakers (brethren from either assemblies or evangelical churches) for this purpose.

## Matching the movement of worship

*Mr. J. E. Todd replies:*

No, I do not think Mr. Carson has put his finger on a real weakness. We should (and do) have ministry of the word at the breaking of bread. This is scriptural; wherever the breaking of bread is recorded or described in scripture, ministry of the word is associated with it. But the ministry must be fitting to the movement of the worship. This precludes pre-arranged subjects, which I presume is what Mr. Carson means by 'sustained exposition of the word'. There are other meetings for the 'regular' exposition of the word, the Bible reading (book by book) and the ministry meeting (subject by subject). We cannot do everything at the breaking of bread!

Some assembly programmes of pre-arranged subjects look like a university curriculum (is this where the idea came from?). We must remember that not all the Lord's people are academics. Also this pre-arranging of subjects could become a device for evading uncomfortable ministry, denying the Holy Spirit the opportunity to surprise us!

It also needs to be emphatically stated that having a series of subjects is *not* a 'Biblical pattern'. There is no scriptural evidence that the Lord or the apostles or their associates ever preached in this fashion.

## A practical example

*Mr. Brian Elliott replies:*

I think that H. M. Carson is making a very pertinent point when seeing a link between the breaking of Bread service and exposition of the Word of God. The recognition of a connection between the two is not, in my opinion, widely recognised in assemblies today.

Three years ago we made, as elders in a small rural assembly, an attempt to achieve and blend Bible teaching with the remembrance of the Lord Jesus. The move over to a Sunday morning family Gospel service provided the opportunity to replan the evening gathering. After some experimentation the Lord's people found the following arrangements particularly helpful:

- 6.30-7.15 Bible teaching  
(Preceded and followed by a Hymn and a prayer)
- 7.20 The table is placed in a central position and some chairs rearranged
- 7.25-8.00 Breaking of Bread

Changeovers are not simple, even in a small assembly, and need prayer and exercise. With love and understanding a pattern can be developed which meets the needs of the assembly. I emphasize this latter point because our changes did not suit all the dear brethren from other assemblies who have ministered the word here over the years. Several in fact asked to be relieved of existing commitments—I cannot serve God in the Gospel until I have been to the Table.

The benefits of combining ministry with the Breaking of Bread service are:

1. Ministry sets believers in the attitude to remember the Lord. We don't have to 'turn worship on' at 11.00 a.m.
2. Some saints who cannot get to weeknight ministry meetings get spiritual food.
3. Elders, with a teaching gift, are able to give systematic teaching on fundamental doctrine and practice.
4. The Lord's Day finishes on a high spot with sweet thoughts of Him!

## A narrow view of teaching?

*Mr. Arthur Henderson replies:*

Acts 2: 42 gives four objectives for believers' meetings, not mentioning evangelistic and pastoral purposes, so it is not surprising that most assemblies arrange some meetings with two or more major objectives. However, if an assembly chooses to combine a 'breaking of bread' service with the didactic exposition of the Word ('apostles doctrine'), it should not be for the reasons suggested by H. M. Carson in the passage quoted, for he seems to be making four questionable assumptions; viz.

- (i) that there is weakness in the freedom to participate
- (ii) that there is no other opportunity for Bible study

(iii) that the best way for every believer to understand the Word is to listen passively at length to one person's explanation

(iv) that the spiritual gift of teaching is evidenced mainly by the skills of intellectual analysis and clear fluent expression.

On (i), I find that 'breaking of bread' is quite an adequate objective for a meeting, but frequently I am learning incidentally in such a meeting, with greater impact than in a 'ministry' meeting.

On (ii), if the assembly takes its Bible study seriously, it must offer a variety of methods to match the range of ages, experience, interests, and literacy, not forgetting that each member is today exercising considerable choice in the way he receives ideas—in print, in sound, and on screen. The compulsory sermon is bound to give limited help.

(iii) and (iv) present a very narrow view of teaching. In the last year I have interviewed many teachers (of management subjects) who have told me the skills they have tried to develop. While some try to lecture in an entertaining, challenging, and relevant way, nearly always trying to get some response from their audience, others deliberately eschew this dominant expert role because it diminishes the responsibility a learner must take for his own learning if it is ever to become part of his own thinking and behaviour. Instead, these teachers become more self-effacing, more available, more patient, more supportive, more open, and more flexible than the lecturer, even though their efforts may be unappreciated by those who distribute rewards. Can we discern such a variety of teaching gifts in the assemblies? Not many of those who minister to me are in the conference-speaker category.

No, Mr. Carson has not put his finger on a real weakness. Perhaps as a cleric he does not really understand how a church can operate without one designated leader. Formerly an Anglican, he seems to be yearning for the nonconformist sermon which inspired and helped many in former years. I suggest the place for sermonising in today's Western society is a much smaller one and should not be introduced into the 'breaking of bread' service unless it is planned to be supportive of remembrance and worship rather than restrictive.

## Dr. Carson is correct

*Mr. H. L. Ellison replies:*

A little observation should convince all but the biased that Dr. Carson's criticism is correct. During the past forty years there has been a steady increase in the number of assemblies where there is a *regular* ministry of the Word associated with the Lord's Supper, though in some cases it comes in a separate service (often called a Family Service) coming immediately afterwards. There may be a few assemblies where the reverse has been true, but I do not know of them. In addition the ministry of the Word is a regular part of the worship in many countries, and this was the normal practice in the early days of the assemblies.

We must, however, go further and deeper. Both in Hebrew and Greek the verbs translated 'to worship' imply submission to God and His will, and the Church has always accepted that the knowledge of God's will comes primarily through His revelation in the Scriptures. We find in the liturgies of the unreformed churches that their two foci are the reading of the Word, very often followed by a sermon, and the partaking of the bread and wine. With the Reformation the stress on the Word and its exposition became much stronger, because it was realized that the hearing of God's Word and submission to it are an essential part of worship.

Today, however, it is possible in some assemblies to partake of the Lord's Supper without hearing the Scriptures read, much less expounded, unless indeed it be the account of the institution itself. Finally, I want it understood—I think this



influenced Dr. Carson's words—that by exposition I do not mean some sentimental, saccharine, allegorical twaddle, or even a bit of formal theology however orthodox, but a clear 'thus says the Lord'. The structuring of the service is of secondary importance, though there is more to be said for having God's Word expounded before we partake of His gifts of bread and wine than those who know only Brethren practice may realize, though this is not intended to be a commendation of the far too common practice elsewhere of making the Supper a mere postscript to a preaching service.

## Apposite

*Mr. Douglas Humphreys replies:*

Mr. Carson's comment does seem apposite to many assembly 'Sunday Morning meetings', in so far as my limited experience indicates.

Having shared in worship in a variety of types of Christian church both in this country and in Africa, I would agree that there is a value in the freedom of the Brethren type of Breaking of Bread service, provided that two pitfalls are avoided. These are (a) a 'free for all' where the impression is of a 'stack' of brethren each eagerly waiting his turn to come in like aeroplanes at Heathrow, and (b) a sterility where long intervals of silence are interrupted by some brother being shamed into taking audible part whether or not he 'feels led'. The antidote to both these failings is of course the conscientious preparation in prayer in the preceding week by the church elders both collectively and individually.

I am convinced that the lack of 'regular and sustained exposition of the Word of God' is one of the greatest weaknesses today in Brethren type churches as well as others. I believe it to be the responsibility of the elders to draw up a syllabus covering the complete spectrum of Christian doctrine and every section of the Bible. They should then allocate the sections of this syllabus to the main church meetings and ensure that every part is adequately covered on, say, a three year cycle.

The various meetings of the church will obviously be suitable to different items in the syllabus: the more devotional aspects to a clearly defined section of the Breaking of Bread Service, the evangelistic and teaching aspects to (probably) the Sunday evening service, and the more intensive verse-by-verse analysis of parts of the Bible to a weeknight Bible teaching session.

In line with this, I would suggest that the Sunday morning service might possibly be arranged thus:

40 minutes 'open worship', with the Breaking of Bread coming approximately two-thirds of the way through.

30 minutes 'ministry', i.e. pre-arranged and prepared exposition of the Word of God by a competent person.

'Pre-arranged and prepared' does not exclude the guidance of the Holy Spirit. On the contrary it will allow the minister adequately to absorb beforehand what the Holy Spirit would teach the church.

Incidentally, I have often felt that the insertion of notices and an offering into the Sunday morning service are a disturbing intrusion into the spirit of worship. Are they really necessary?

## Is it a 'Biblical pattern'?

*Mr. L. L. Fox replies:*

Mr. Carson did indeed put his finger on an important matter and I sympathise very much with his intention. It is doubtful however, whether, as it seems likely that he had pre-arranged ministry in mind, he points to the preferred solution, and one

that 'approximates best to a Biblical pattern' (Ex. 25: 40, 1 Chron 28: 11, 12 and Heb. 8: 5 come to mind).

It can be realized now, that when the Lord came together with the twelve apostles for the passover of Luke 22 etc.—the only time He ate the passover as head of a family, at least in His public ministry—He had it in mind to initiate a coming together or focus for 'His own' (John 13: 1) that would replace the passover (Luke 22: 16 & 18); because, as far as they were concerned, the passover was one of those Jewish rituals that was soon to be ready to vanish away (Heb. 8: 13). For His purpose, the Lord condescended to our low estate by providing us with symbols, natural things—bread and wine—that would be 'used' whenever a local company of His own met to assert the fellowship (1 Cor. 10: 16) that had been assumed to, and did, exist during the week or whenever that the members were apart from one another, to borrow from the meaningful language of one, Ryder Smith.

No doubt at this 'breaking of bread,' the Lord's supper was, and still is to be, eaten. But other things did, and still can, take place when a local company come together to break bread. Thus, when the Lord instituted the breaking of bread, He not only distributed the bread and wine bidding the apostles to remember Him, but He also talked to His own about various

**'... many things take place when we come together to break Bread... an expedient may overcome the symptom but not deal with the disease'**

topics, during which time five of the twelve apostles, Peter, John, Thomas, Philip and Judas (not Iscariot), asked questions (John 13 & 14). (Readers may like to ask themselves, when was the last time anything like that happened at their Sunday morning meeting.) In like manner, at Troas (Acts 20) Paul discoursed—reasoned, disputed—at length when the saints came together to break bread; at some time during that coming together the company no doubt ate the Lord's supper. Again, at Corinth, there was the Lord's supper together with the freedom for prophets to speak by two or by three, to edification etc. (1 Cor. 11-14). So, eating the Lord's supper, ministry of the word, and various other activities are quite in place whenever His own gather to enjoy what I may term the 'total experience' of breaking bread.

It can happen, as Mr. Carson postulates, that at the breaking of bread there unhappily tends to be a dearth of spiritual food for the saints. Faced with this situation some elders, acting from the highest motives, seek to fill the gap by inviting, say Brother X or Y to minister the word, for a number of weeks at a time maybe, after the partaking of the Lord's supper. The intention of such elders is wholly laudable; but in my view their action may not go to the root of the matter. A wonderful feature of the breaking of bread according to the scriptural pattern, in open meeting, is that in the wisdom of God it is—if we will—self-regulating. Thus if the breaking of bread is 'poor' in that there is little spiritual food, then rather than attempting to fill the gap by the expedient of prearranged ministry, ought we not to see the poverty as designed to make us look for the cause? Surely poverty is evidence that we have moved away from the Lord in our hearts. If we were in the 'place' He has prepared for us, should we not be eating spiritual bread without scarceness, and lacking nothing (Deut 8: 9, 1 Cor. 10: 1-11)? If and when, in the spirit of Mal 3: 7-10, we return to the Lord, will we not find, with Naomi, that it is harvest time and there is plenty in place of poverty (Ruth 1: 22)?

There is certainly a great need for spiritual food when we break bread. But please let us think very carefully before attempting to improve things by replacing the Biblical pattern with an expedient that may overcome the symptom but not necessarily deal with the disease.

## Correspondence

Letters should be sent to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX. Publication of letters does not imply that views expressed are endorsed by the Editor or the Trustees.

**Sir Robert Anderson**  
From Dr. C. A. Russell  
Sir,

Some recent historical researches in to the relationship between science and the Christian religion have led me to some interesting statements made by the late Sir Robert Anderson. I am familiar with his standard biography (published in 1947) but would be most grateful for any information as to the whereabouts of his personal papers. They are presumably in the possession of his descendants whom I have so far been unable to trace. If any of your readers could either put me in touch with surviving members of Sir Robert's family, or suggest where his papers might have been lodged, I should be extremely grateful.

The Open University  
Walton Hall,  
Milton Keynes,  
MK7 6AA

Yours sincerely,  
C. A. Russell  
Reader in History of Science

### Why did they go elsewhere?

From Mr. Stanley Linton  
Dear Mr. Coad,

I have been following with considerable interest the correspondence arising from Mr. Taylor's letter in the December issue of *The Harvester*.

It might be helpful if we were to say a little about the way in which those responding at a 'Way to Life' Crusade are looked after. Where a person counselled comes with a Christian they are normally referred to the church where their Christian friend worships—unless they express a desire to go somewhere else. This is sensible since it builds on the link already forged. Where a person counselled has come along without any identifiable Christian support they are referred to the nearest supporting church and the task of after-care rightly falls on that church.

During one of our normal three week Tent Crusades the number of people counselled varies somewhere between 500 and 1000, and we usually receive from the local committee a careful analysis of how those counselled have been allocated amongst the various churches. It is most interesting to note that time and time again the majority of those counselled have been brought along by Christian friends—and hence they are referred to the churches from which their friends come. In a number of instances churches have seen their membership doubled as a result of a Crusade. The pattern that seems to emerge is that the churches which are blessed are those where their members are in active contact with a number of unbelievers often over a period of many months or years, and that the Crusade provides the opportunity for the Spirit of God to move them through to a final commitment.

It appears to be that those churches which have an ongoing relationship with those around are the ones who are blessed with new converts.

27 Selborne Road,  
Sidcup,  
Kent.

Yours sincerely,  
Stanley Linton  
Crusade Director,  
Way to Life Ministry

### The Second Advent

From Miss F. A. Brockett  
Dear Sir,

As a regular and avid reader of *The Harvester* for many years, I have often felt inclined to reply on matters raised therein. I am now strongly moved to do so, first in response to Professor Bruce's request on page 11 for correspondence

on the subject of the alleged smaller proportion of Second Advent hymns in recent collections; and secondly having regard to the new style 'Forum' announced on page 29, also inviting correspondence.

Professor Bruce asks whether there is a decreasing emphasis on the subject of the Advent in ministry and thought. My unhesitating reply is that I do feel this is so, and I would like—if I may—to describe something of my background and leading on the subject.

I am in my eighty-third year, and was brought up in the strictest set of the dear Brethren, meeting in 'a large Upper Room', no musical instrument being allowed. The *Little Flock Hymnbook*, compiled in 1856 was used, and although subjected to various revisions the hymns on the Lord's Coming were never omitted.

When I was only eight years of age, a Mr. Hickman preached with great solemnity on being ready to meet the Lord, Who was soon coming! From that time onwards I was frequently in deep distress whenever the Lord's coming was mentioned, but in His mercy He saved me three months before my thirteenth birthday. I could then sing with delight such hymns as: 'It may be at morn when the day is awaking', and I began to look forward with unbounded joy to the 'trumpet call' and immediate translation! So real was the conviction that the Lord's Return was imminent that when I obtained a grant for two years' 'further education', my dear Father bade me not to give time to education, but to 'study to show myself approved unto God'; so—to my regret in later years—the offer was declined!

The outbreak of the First World War increased the zeal and fervour in ministry generally that the return of the Lord was most certainly very near; but hostilities continued, yet hope still flourished. When the armistice was signed further assurance was held out by ministry on 'When they shall say "Peace & Safety" then sudden destruction!' Hope was renewed, but still the Lord hadn't come!

During the years between the wars there were numerous forecasts as to when the Lord would come, some even hazarding exact dates. To me it seemed a built-up theory, but I hoped it would prove correct. Twenty years passed and then the second great war broke out, with all its unspeakable horror, suffering and blood-shed, during which I held to my belief and hope. Nevertheless the 'home-call' of a number of my choicest Christian friends who, like me, had firmly believed they would be 'caught up' and translated, caused me intense sorrow, disappointment and perplexity, and I began to give myself to the study of the Scriptures relative to this precious subject. In God's infinite mercy the writings of dear George Müller, James Wright, Dan Crawford and not least C. H. Spurgeon, came to my notice, and I was thrilled to learn that such saints did not endorse what was termed the 'any moment' theory, which had brought such misgiving to me. My soul dwelt upon the certainty of my Lord's return being in the Father's purpose, and a wonderful rest came to me that, whether I would be here when He came, or whether, in His purpose, I leave this 'tenement of clay' makes no difference.

I feel that others may have been like me and enjoyed the singing of the dear old hymns on His coming again, but the prolonged delay and frustration to their hopes may have cooled their ardour. I realise that we should not become slack in our watchfulness, for we have the unshakeable promise that 'He that shall come will come and will not tarry'. However I have come to realise that it is clear from prophecy that there are still many events which must take place before His appearing, as for example, the national return to Palestine of the Jews. Since this leads me to divergent views of the time and manner of His coming, may I put a question to you: Do you think that because of these different interpretations some of our spiritually taught, esteemed and gifted brethren have felt it desirable to avoid the subject in their ministry, hoping thus to prevent speculation as being—perhaps—unprofitable?

In closing this letter, I apologise for its length, and trust that it may prove to be a contribution to the point raised.  
59D Warwick Ave., Yours in Him whom we love and serve,  
Bedford MK 40 2EC Florence A. Brockett

From Mr. C. E. Oulton Lee

Dear Mr. Coad,

It is entirely probable that I am the one to whom Professor Bruce refers as having reviewed certain hymnbooks during a recent spell in hospital, for I mentioned the matter to him about a year ago.

I was particularly concerned to find in the latest hymnbook now coming into use in a number of Brethren assemblies and other Christian communities, that the number of hymns directly relating to the Lord's coming for His saints was only 4—and of these two were not clear—out of a total of 716 hymns! By contrast, the Believers' Hymnbook contains 71 out of a total of 465 hymns! As we say in legal circles: *Res ipsa loquitur*! I sensed the loss first of all in *Christian Praise* for the same cause. *Hymns of Faith* contains a larger percentage—more when combined in *The Mitchley Supplement*. But why, oh! why, the omission on such an extensive scale in so otherwise worthy a compendium as *Christian Worship*?

My acquaintance with the assemblies has been a lifelong one, largely in the Liverpool and Merseyside areas, and I am now in my 81st year. I recall with what pleasure I have distributed amongst inquirers that admirable booklet *Safety, Certainty and Enjoyment* composed by the late George Cutting—still I believe in print and greatly blessed. He was also the author of another booklet, *Caught up with the Bridegroom, Coming with the King*, an exceedingly lucid exposition of the Second Coming now, sadly, out of print. The *parousia* seems to have receded from our perspective as the Hope of the Church in a wholesale reversion to the Apostles Creed, to our intense loss.

I think you were present when I mentioned to several of the convenors of the 1978 Swanwick Conference of Brethren as I

was departing that when discussing the question 'Where do we go from here?' it was truly remarkable and significant that once only—and that in the final paper (by Dr. Griffiths) was mention made of the *parousia*, whereas fifty to seventy years ago it was prominently in the forefront of Brethren teaching and witness. It is rarely heard of nowadays. That is how far we have fallen from grace as assemblies. It was one of the most precious achievements of the early Brethren to retrieve this 'lost' truth, and I am sure its present loss accounts largely for our lack of power in testimony in these days.

Stroma,  
Manorial Road,  
Parkgate, South Wirral,  
Cheshire. L64 6QN

Yours in the Blessed Hope,  
C. E. Oulton Lee

'How should we vote?'

From Mr. Miles Christie

I find myself in agreement with much in the letter from Mr. H. V. G. Morris (January). However, I do not understand his objection in principle to a woman Prime Minister. He appears to be willing to live in a country ruled by a Queen who is not only very much higher in rank, but who appoints and can dismiss the Prime Minister. Should Mr. Morris have emigrated on the accession of Her Majesty?

The Bible contains four examples of women in positions of authority, but we should not overlook Deborah (*Judges 4*) who appears to have been about the most successful of the judges. Her husband, though named, did not share in her work. There is also the case of Queen Esther.

Nor should we forget that this country has in many ways seen its best days under Queens Elizabeth I and Victoria.

The whole question of voting is entirely personal and rightly secret. To my mind the main problem is as to whether one should vote for a party or for a person (the local candidate) sincerely,  
Miles Christie

## This month's Impact Letter

'We never expect the Brethren to be interested'

From Mr. A. Maynard

Dear Mr. Coad

The report of the Religious Book Foundation's Church Bookstall seminars and the total disinterest on the part of the Brethren churches (February *Harvester*), prompted us to analyse the Book Agencies serviced by E.C.L. Bookshop—the Christian literature work founded by George Müller in 1834.

A total of 100 Book Agencies with a total turnover in 1978 of £39,200 comprised:

45 Anglican £23,200—including 17 in Bristol, 2 in Paris and 2 in Guernsey

27 Baptist—£7,205

7 Methodist & URC—£1,820

4 Colleges & Christian Unions—£3,815

4 Brethren—£750

13 Others, FIEC etc.—£2,410

One of the Brethren churches happens to be the church that the writer attends (Clifton Bethesda), a church at which George Müller ministered, and another the church which the publisher of this magazine attends. It could be said that we are biased!

Why should there be this seeming lack of interest in Christian reading among the assemblies? The trained (ordained) minister has had to read widely in the past and continues to do so. Realising the tremendous value of contemporary Christian writing many positively encourage their people to read, by reviews from the pulpit and in the church magazine, by study groups with a set book, or by a 'Lent book' (one church sells up to

75 copies of its recommended Lent book each year) and most importantly, by actively supporting the church bookstall and its manager.

How many of our churches encourage in this way? When was a book last reviewed and recommended in your church or the reading of Christian books put forward as a positive aid to growth in the Christian life? Is there a fear that a bookstall will encourage 'Sunday trading'? (My publisher book agent could answer that one). Is it the excuse that 'books are expensive'? (Many are a fraction of the cost of an evening meal out). Or 'I don't have time'? All symptoms of disinterest.

A Christian bookseller knows his regular customer readers and they mutually support each other, but he also knows that maybe only 5% or 10% of church attenders ever enter his bookshop to browse and buy for themselves. It is here that the keen book agent with his well stocked and attractively displayed bookstall plays such a vital part in the distribution of Bibles and Christian literature, reaching the 90% who seldom cross the threshold of a Christian bookshop.

Ample evidence that people will read when encouraged by a church or conference bookstall and that their Christian lives have been enriched and witness strengthened could be given. But why not experience this for yourselves and in your own church! Some 300 Christian bookshops are ready to share with you and encourage you in this ministry. Your nearest bookseller, the Religious Book Foundation, or the undersigned will gladly help.

ECL Bookshop  
60 Park Street  
Bristol BS1 5JT

Yours very sincerely  
Alan Maynard



# The News Page

Press Day, May 1979, Monday, April 2nd, for Displayed Advertisements, Prayer List, Forthcoming Events and news items (Please send direct to Publisher at 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW)

## Out and About

### Drug Addiction

A location has at last been found for the clinic for drug addicts that George and Margaret Patterson have been trying to establish for some years. July 1-3 is scheduled for the official opening at Broadhurst Manor, Horsted Keynes, Sussex. They trust this may be journey's end, following seven changes of address since they left Harley Street in order to reach this goal.

### Evangelism:

#### New exhibition van commissioned: Counties

Evangelistic Work has taken delivery of a new, specially designed mobile exhibition unit, complete with back projection unit, professionally designed exhibition, and live-in facilities.

The van was on display for the first time at a special commissioning service held during a 24 hour conference for the Counties evangelists, committee and administration staff at Wokingham in freezing mid-February. The van is intended as a tool for use in evangelism in agricultural shows, carnivals and shopping precincts, and also as a venue for small group meetings in villages and hamlets. The van is equipped with 16 mm continuous projection facilities, and will carry short films suitable for use in various situations. A let-down screen will enable these to be used indoors as well. A built-in amplification system, with a facility for extension speakers, means the unit can become an open-air preaching platform where appropriate. The eight-foot-wide doors give an open access to the well lit walk-in exhibition area. The exhibition majors on Christ, and with the aid of spotlights and rear-lit units, is a colourful attraction.

It will include a small bookstall. A special four-page tabloid paper entitled "Good News" is being produced by Challenge Literature Fellowship. The newspaper will particularly concentrate on the way in which people in the public eye have become Christians. Gospels and Bibles in the Good News version will be available, and enquirers will be offered a Bible study course related to their needs.

It is anticipated that the unit will be available for independent evangelists to hire, as well as the 32 Counties evangelists. A number of bookings for 1979 have already been made. "I would feel proud to use a unit of this quality", said an evangelist. "It honours the Lord". Total cost will top £7,500 most of which has been subscribed by interested Trusts. Running costs are estimated to be about £1,000 per year. Further information from Brian Mills at Counties Evangelistic Work.

Arthur Thurston reports a good mission among young people and teenagers at Crediton. John Hadley writes from Bodmin that there is now just over £17,000 to commence building operations. If the price is suitable, building can commence in the late Spring. In addition, a married couple of 30 are moving into the church from Maidenhead so there is good reason for praise as well as petition.

The South West London Evangelistic Mobile Unit plans two tours this year, one to Wantage from May 29 to June 1 and the other to Yapton from August 17 to 24. There is a permanent problem of personnel shortage and an urgent need for a new garage to house the unit since the present garage is being re-constructed as living accommodation and the unit has been asked to quit.

### Overseas

Africa FOCUS (Fellowship of Christian Unions) has been established to regionalise student work in East, Central and Southern Africa. The countries covered by FOCUS are the Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Rhodesia, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. FOCUS is an evangelical movement and is associated with the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES). The regional base is in Nairobi, Kenya. One of its goals is to establish national evangelical students fellowships. The importance of these movements is considerable. Take Zambia as an example. Groups of students have been meeting for mutual spiritual encouragement since the late '60s. FOCUS was introduced to Zambia in 1973. There are ten main post-secondary school institutions in the country with a total student population of about 7,650 at 12 campuses. Each campus has a Christian Union (CU) and six of these are affiliated to FOCUS. It is estimated that about 10% of the student population attend CU meetings. Of these a quarter or so are reckoned to be committed Christians.

### France

Young people who already speak French or who are prepared to take lessons with a trained staff member may be interested in the possibility of a study and practical training course in French in the Bible Discipleship and evangelism. The course is held at the Centre de Formation Biblique, L' Eau Vive-Provence, 13122 Ventabren, France and lasts nine months from mid-October to the end of June. But the studies are structured in balanced units of three weeks or one month thus permitting the completion of whole courses even during a stay of as little as one month which is the minimum permitted.

Along with the main doctrinal topic, *each unit* contains the following elements—the study of at least three books of the Bible, the life of the disciple, other religions and ideologies, apologetics, evangelism (training and experience in association with the local churches).

Students should have the backing of their own local church. The cost of food and lodging will be 650 French francs per month.

### Middle East

The troubles in Beirut during 1978 halted the printing of the Arabic translation of *Search of the Scriptures*. If the printer cannot complete the work soon it will be necessary to begin all over again with another printer and pay considerably more.

Student work is obviously of great importance in the Middle East as elsewhere. An IFES student conference is planned for September 4 to 13 in Cyprus. It is hoped to have representatives from all over the Middle East and North Africa. Meanwhile, prayer is requested for outreach to the large number of students from Islamic countries such as Iraq and Turkey for studying abroad in France, Germany, Britain and elsewhere.

The news from Iran may have given the impression that all Christian workers have left. But in spite of dangers and discomfort, John Ray and his wife Aqeela are continuing to work in Tehran with the Anglican diocese and amongst students. Their families in Singapore and in England telephoned them to express their anxiety. "But we both strongly feel that while we can be of encouragement to the people amongst whom we are, we should remain. For instance, on Sunday evening when Tehran was totally deserted because there was no petrol, I was astonished to find 40 people at church. At the baptism service and the communion service which followed, there was a real closeness of fellowship and oneness in the Lord in our small Persian congregation. Some days ago, whilst standing in line for almost two hours for 20 litres of kerosene, I found myself shoulder to shoulder with my neighbours in the street, and took the opportunity to get to know some of them for the first time."

#### Russia

A new threat to Soviet dissidents will come into operation on July 1. By virtue of a law passed on December 1, 1978, Soviet citizenship is no longer an automatic right but persons must be "worthy bearers of the high title". Those who are not "true to their Socialist Motherland" or who "besmirch" the reputation of the Soviet Union or bring harm to its prestige may be stripped of citizenship by local courts and officials. Previously such power was granted only to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. Any person who loses citizenship could find himself in an intolerable situation, unable to hold a job to support his family or to receive unemployment benefit, to own a home, to receive medical care—even to leave the country. Dissident Christians will, of course, be among those threatened by the new law.

#### South America

The Aymara Indians of Bolivia, a pre-Inca tribe, has formed a missionary association to sponsor its own missionaries to the Navajo Indians of North America. The Aymara tribe, which numbers about one million, has been extremely responsive to the Christian message. Recent reports indicate that about one church has been established each week and the Christian leaders feel that the saturation point has nearly been reached.

On learning of the existence of the Navajo Indian tribes of New Mexico, Utah, Colorado and Arizona, the Aymara's Christian leaders expressed an interest in sending missionaries to reach them with the gospel. Two families have volunteered to go on that service. Observers point out that the decision is a significant one for a tribe that has had little contact with the outside world. One of the Aymara leaders states, "For us to send missionaries to the Navajo would be the equivalent of the Americans sending a man to the moon."

This development is another instance of the increase in cross-cultural missionary activity in which the newer churches of the world are raising their eyes to unreached peoples beyond their borders.

#### News from the Scripture Union

Linked with the International Year of the Child, a Scripture Union Summer School on "The Child and the Church" is to be held at Moorlands Bible College,

near Christchurch, Dorset, from July 9 to 14, to think strategically about their work with children and families. Church structures will again be on the agenda, as will the development of scriptural perception in children, the counselling of children and the child in the urban environment.

John Tigwell, who will be among the leaders, reports considerable interest in the Summer School from leaders with children in this country and overseas. Details of the Summer School from SU Education in Churches Department, 47 Marylebone Lane, London, W1M 6AX.

#### Tell a Tourist

Some readers may not be aware of the number of organisations sponsoring this form of evangelist outreach. They comprise the European Christian Mission, Pocket Testament League, Open Air Campaigners, The Evangelization Society, All Souls Langham Place, Gospel Recordings, London City Mission and York Evangelical Council. This year campaigns are scheduled in York from July 12 to 28, in Bath from July 22 to August 8 and in London from July 28 to August 16. Tell a Tourist needs prayer partners, local representatives and an international team of young people. Members of the team should be willing to fit into its work in any way at all for the good of the whole, should be willing to contribute to expenses and should feel a concern to serve God in this way. It is helpful if they have facility in another language. Offers to—and information from—24 Elm Grove, London, N8 9AL.

#### Home-Calls

Annesley Logan on January 24, 1979 in Cape Town, South Africa aged 70 years. A native of County Antrim and for a long time associated there with the work in Carrickfergus until his wife's death, following which he gave himself to fulltime service in south Africa. For twelve years he was busy preaching and teaching, regarding them as the most fruitful period of his life. His body was flown to Carrickfergus where he was buried on February 5.

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# People and Places

## New addresses

**Eastbourne:** Please note that Dr. Frederick A. Tatford's address is now: 14 Burlington Place, Eastbourne, East Sussex. BN21 4AP. Tel. 0323-23378.

**Sheffield:** Please note that all correspondence for Fitzwilliam Chapel, Fitzwilliam Street, Sheffield, should be addressed to Mr. R. K. Hadfield, 8 Mercia Drive, Sheffield, S17 3QF. Tel. Sheffield 361478.

## Stewardship

**Retired Missionary Aid Fund:** 12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies of the month of February amounted to £327.66.

## Prayer List

Stamped letters addressed c/o The Paternoster Press, Paternoster House, 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter, EX2 4JW will be forwarded to any of those whose names appear below.

**Workers are requested to include their names on their cards when returning them each month. We are still receiving anonymous contributions from time to time.**

**Bathgate, T.:** Sturry 1; London 3, 10; Chainhurst 5; Strood 8; Plumstead 11; Catford 12; Welling 17-22; Bromley 18-25; Tonbridge and Gillingham 24; Ramsgate 25; Folkestone 19-26; Ashford 28; Dartford 29; Rochester 30.

**Blackburn, A. G.:** Swanwick 1; Tiverton 3; Exeter 8; Newton Abbot and Teign Village 12; Bristol 14; Bees 19; Puddington 22; Newton St. Cyres 29.

**Burnham, A. E. J.:** Guildford 1; Southampton 5, 12, 19; Ramsdell 8; Andover 15; Bournemouth 21-27, Calne 29, 30; also at Selbourne and other places.

**Campbell, B.:** Falmouth 1-3; Camborne 4, 18, 22; Redruth 8; Falmouth 12, 16; Newquay 29.

**Clifford, D.:** During April in Fanwood; Middlesex (N.J.); Belmar; Hauppauge (N.Y.); Harrisburg (Pa); Hull, Yorks.

**Galyer, W. S.:** Taunton, 1, 2; Byfleet 3; East Sheen 4, 11, 18; Kingston 7, 8; Wandsworth 8; Worcester Park and Kingston 10; Chingford 12, 19; Burnt Oak 15; Mid-Devon 21-30.

**Gilham, S. A.:** Dorchester 1-3; Wyke Regis 2; Marnhull 4; Blandford 5-9; West Moors 7, 20, 21; Charnminster 10; Stalbridge 12; Wallisdown 15; Dorset Regional Fellowship 23; Swanage 24, 29.

**Greenaway, G. H.:** Hopton 1; Burnham 3; Stonham 8; Mickfield 15; Reedham 22; Sheringham 29 and other visitation work.

**Kagan, M.:** During April and the beginning of May, ministry will take place in Brussels, Belgium; Bielstein, W. Germany, and in Holland.

**Lowther, G. K.:** Chelmsford 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, 18, 23, 25, 29, 30; Plainstow 3, 4; Bromley 13, 15; Bishops Stortford 21, 22; London Colney 24; Ilford 30.

**Meadows, D. R.:** Clapgate, Wimborne 1; Wallisdown 24; Bournemouth and district the remainder of the time.

**Mills, B.:** Kenton 1; Maidenhead 8; Newent 10; Littlehampton 20, 22; Wareham 23; Chingford 26; Leatherhead 27; Wembley—Way to Life Rally 28; Balham 29.

**Phillips, B.:** Holland 11-20.

**Phillips, C.:** Redcar 1-6; Kensington 11, 18, 25; Greenford 13, 17; Heathfield 13; Elmfield North Harrow 15, 22; South Ruislip 15; Liphook 16; Potters Bar 17; Hemel Hempstead 19, 26; Wolverhampton 21; Hampstead 22; Walthamstow 24; Burnt Oak 29.

**Pierce, D. H.:** Barnstaple, Okehampton and Newent during April.

**Short, S. S.:** Hereford 1; Alresford 8; Bath 9; Weston-Super-Mare 15; Brentwood 20; Woodford Green 22; East Statham 23, 26; Mickfield 24; Brockford 25; Stafford 28, 29.

**Stringer, D.:** Bournemouth 1-30.

**Tatford, F. A.:** Marseille, France 1; London 3, 4; Eastbourne 8; Eastcombe 12-15; Torrington 16-18; Teignmouth 19; Daventry 20; Birmingham 21; Coventry 22; Worcester 23; Munich, W. Germany 30.

**Thurston, A.:** Strete 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; Paignton 3, 6, 10; Brixham 4; Chillingham 1, 4, 5, 7, 11, 12, 18, 19, 25, 26; Buntingford 8; Dartmouth 15; Plymouth 22; Kingsbridge 17, 24, 29; Dawlish and Teignmouth Schools 9, 16; Plymouth School 13.

**Tryon, G. E. O.:** Highgate 1-6; Ely 7; Cambridge 8; Tolworth 12; Tooting 14; Bexhill 15; Loampit 16; Purley 22; Loughborough Junction 23; Fetcham 26; New Milton 28-30.

## Forthcoming Events

**The Publishers regret that, owing to demands on space, it is not possible to insert an announcement in more than one issue. Correspondents should indicate clearly in which issue they wish their announcements to appear.**

**Bishop's Stortford:** Christian Assembly, Church School. April 21 at 7.00 p.m. Speaker: G. K. Lowther.

**Bournemouth:** Bournemouth and District Ann. Convention, May 1-3 in Strouden Park Chapel, Woodbury Avenue, Strouden Park. Morning Bible Readings at 10.45 a.m.-12 noon on "Selected themes from the Book of Revelation" (discussion period). Wednesday afternoon at 3.30-4.30 p.m. on "God's principles of guidance". Evening sessions at 7.30-9.00 p.m. on Studies in the Epistle of James "Faith in Action". Speakers: G. Tarpur and B. H. Mudditt.

**Bournemouth:** Conversational Bible Reading Conference. Slavanka, 42 Belle Vue Road. April 21-28. Speakers: C. Hocking and A. E. Phillips.

**Bridlington:** Easter Cfce. The Gospel Hall, St. John's Walk. Good Friday, April 13th at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. Speakers: S. Emery and F. C. Parr.

**Bromley:** Whitefoot Hall, Whitefoot Lane. April 13 at 3.00 and 6.00 p.m. Speaker: G. K. Lowther.

**Cardiff:** Rallies each Saturday at 7.00 p.m. as follows: April 7 at Leckwith—Speaker: S. Pascal; April 14 at Heath-Heath Cfce.; April 21 at Ebenezer—Speaker: P. Davies; April 28 at Ebenezer—Homeworkers Cfce.

**Chesham:** Gospel Hall, Station Road. April 28 at 6.30 p.m. Speaker: A. Wiseman. Subject: Acts 23: 1-24. May 12 at 3.00 and 6.00 p.m. Ann. Cfce. Speakers: S. Emery and A. E. Phillips.

**Colchester:** Ann. Ministry Cfce. Assembly Hall, Maldon Road. April 21 at 3.15 and 6.00 p.m. Speakers: C. Goldfinch and J. H. Large.

**Colyton:** Ann. Cfce. Town Hall. April 16 at 3.00, 4.45 (Tea and Fellowship), 6.00 p.m. Speakers: J. Baker and T. N. Ledger.

**Croxley Green:** Fuller Hall, Fuller Way. April 13th at 3.15 and 6.00 p.m. Speakers: G. Bull and W. Crago. April 28 at 7.00 p.m. Speaker: Dr. A. Linton.

**Dublin:** Dublin and district Missy. Conv. Merrion Hall, Lower Merrion Street. April 27-30. A warm welcome is extended to all visitors.

**Felixstowe:** Women's Cfce. Ranelagh Hall, May 5th at 3.00 and 5.30 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. N. Cawston and Miss M. Ingleby.

**Grimsby:** Wellowgate Chapel, 67 Wellowgate. April 21 at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Will Cryer.

**Linfield:** Mission Hall, High Street. May 5 at 6.00 p.m. Speaker: G. Bull.

**Littleport, Cambs.:** Gospel Hall, City Road. May 5th at 7.00 p.m. Speaker: G. K. Lowther.

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**Luton:** Onslow Road Gospel Hall, Vincent Road, Leagrave. April 21 at 4.00 p.m. (Ministry relevant to the portion) and 6.30 p.m. (Conversational Bible Reading). Speaker: R. Sharman. Subject: Colossians 3: 16-4.

**Newcastle-upon-Tyne:** Tyneside Ann. Cfce. St. James's United Reformed Church, Northumberland Road. April 13 at 2.30 and 6.00 p.m. April 14 at 6.30 p.m. April 16th at 2.30 and 6.00 p.m. Speakers: A. M. S. Gooding, G. Harrison, M. Jones.

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Assemblies in Britain and other parts. A reprint of this list of Assemblies will be undertaken in the near future. It would be of much help if Correspondents could inform us before the end of May 1979 of any inaccuracy in the details relating to their Assembly in the present 1975 edition, and also advise of any new Assembly in their neighbourhood.

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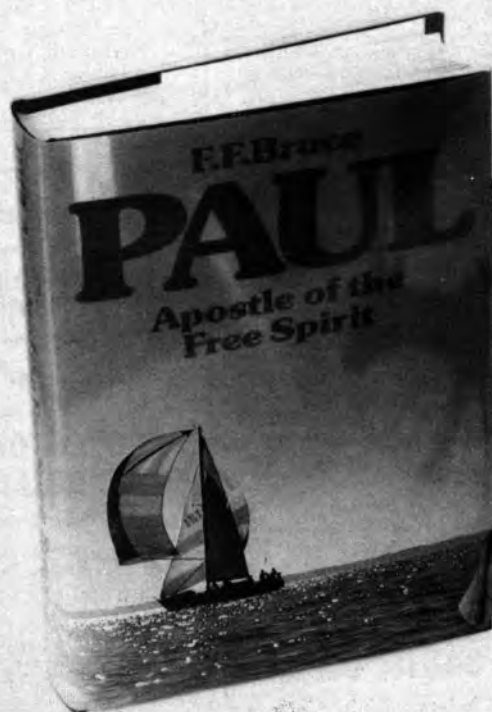
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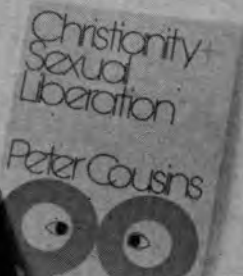
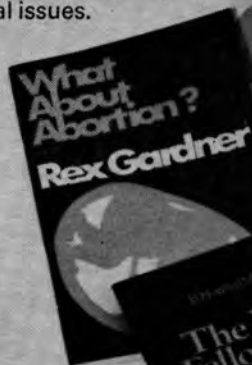


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**'TASK OF THE CHURCH'**  
People rather than Places

# The Harvester

Inside: Male and Female Identity in Corinth





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# The Harvester

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## Thoughts from Middle Age

There used to be an advertisement, put out by an insurance company, which showed a man at different ages. It pictured him thinking about his pension on retirement. At 25 he cared little; by 45 he was beginning to worry; by the 60s he was panicking, but it was too late. One was almost reminded of some of the more vivid preachers of one's youth!

The process of ageing takes us in a similar fashion. At 25 it cannot happen to us; at 45 we begin to make wry comments; as we approach 60 the subject is a serious one; by 70 some prefer not to mention it. By that time many of our friends have preceded us into a larger and fuller life, and our own generation is beginning to be sadly depleted.

These thoughts have been strongly with me during this past weekend, as the news of the homecall of no less than three friends reached us within a few days. There are many who will be grateful that they can remember Barbara White, her happy constancy and her strong faith, and the long years of service to young people and older by both Barbara and her husband Stanley: of Kenneth Hyland it must surely be true that few of his generation can have been more loved and respected, and few who retained to the end such an openness of mind and youthfulness of spirit: Theo Snitselaar we had met just once at a never-to-be-forgotten weekend while passing through on holiday by the French Scripture Union HQ at Guebwiller in Alsace—but there are some meetings that make a permanent impression, and the regular lively newsletters that followed from 'the Snitzes' (as they dubbed themselves) surely made many like ourselves feel entitled to call them friends. His sudden summons at the age of 53 is a sad deprivation for evangelical witness on the continent.

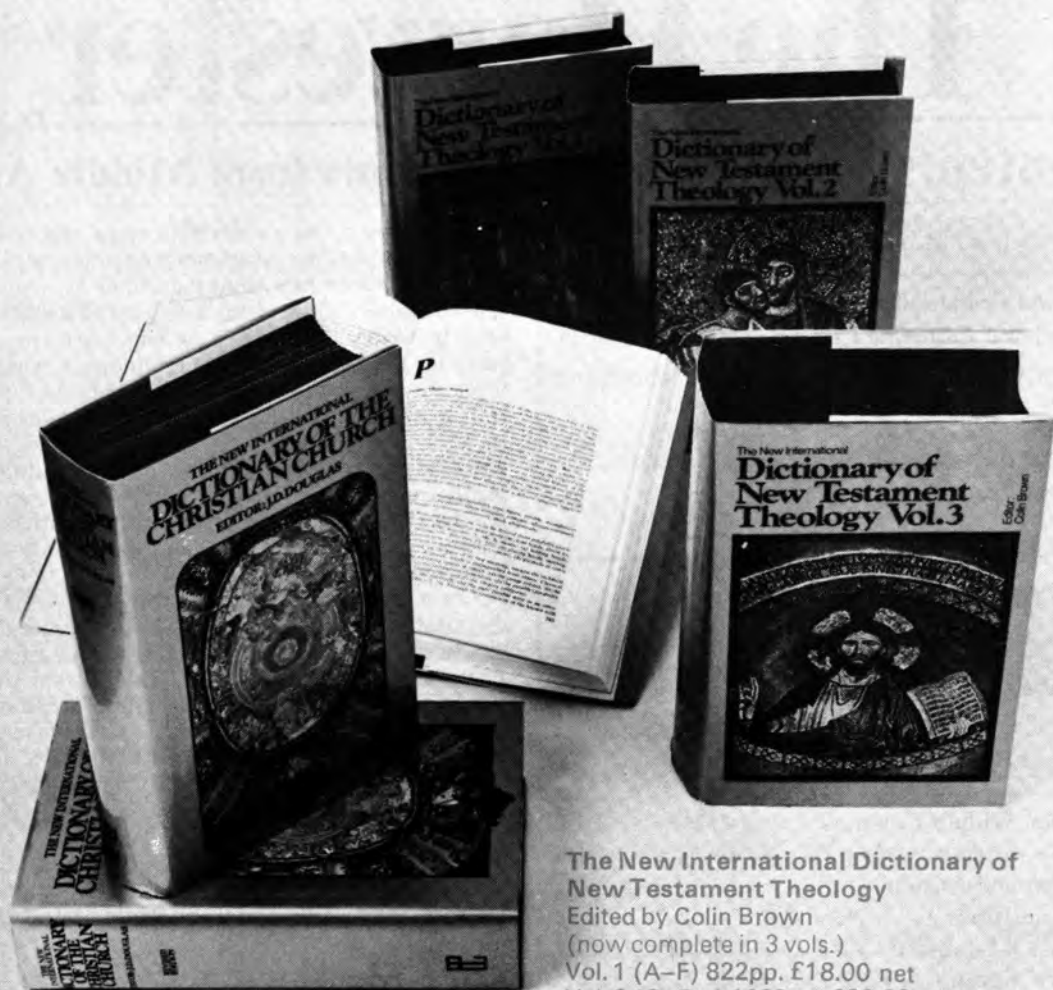
And what have the years done for each of us? Are there others who feel with me that, as many things that seemed so clear-cut and certain in youth have tended to become less certain, and to recede into the background where formerly they blocked our view by their prominence, so the real assurance of the presence and grace of God has been the stronger? That faith has become less dogmatic, and yet seemingly more like faith than mere assertion? That the perspective of life has shifted; that the ideas and thinking of strangers are more understandable, and some of the ideas of one's own immediate environment less so? That life has more and more of interest and fascination, in ever more unexpected facets? I hope there are! □

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Richard and Catherine Clark Kroeger

## Male and Female Identity in Corinth

*In this article, reprinted by permission from The Reformed Journal of Grand Rapids, U.S.A., the authors set some of the controversial scriptures on men/women relations firmly in the setting of the surrounding culture and its morality, and show how Paul's teaching re-established the human rights of men and women in the face of a depraved environment.*

Richard Kroeger is a Presbyterian minister who has studied at Yale, Fuller Theological Seminary, Biblical Seminary, and the State University of Iowa. Catherine Kroeger is a Bryn Mawr graduate who has done further study at Yale and the University of Minnesota, specializing in the latter case in the study of women in ancient religion. She and her husband have had five children and seventeen foster children.

First-century Corinth was caught in the web of a sexual identity crisis. The confusion was manifested in the art and literary forms of the day as well as in the actual practices. Lively debates went on about the relative merits of homosexuality and heterosexuality.

Deeply entrenched in Greek society, homophilia was considered highly chic by the Roman intelligentsia. Most of the poetry in the ancient world had been written to persons of the same sex, though Virgil, under the influence of Augustus' stern morality, presented a healthy and positive picture of heterosexual love. Others viewed it as an aggression, a disease, or madness. The lyric poets extolled the virtues of the *domina*, a woman of loose morals, usually someone else's wife. Indeed, Ovid depicts half the fun of the conquest as being that of outwitting the husband. Juvenal and Petronius portrayed sexually aggressive females and sometimes impotent males.

Marie Delacourt has identified some fifteen vase paintings depicting bearded men in feminine attire and women disguised as men (*Hermaphrodite*, 1958, p. 22). Both statuary and paintings reveal hermaphrodites with the attributes of both sexes. Torn by tremendous social upheavals throughout the Roman Empire, individuals were asking, 'Who am I as a sexual human being?'; 'With whom can I establish a significant relationship?'

Although we cannot know the precise question which elicited Paul's response as recorded in *I Corinthians 11: 1-16*, it is obvious that he is speaking in these verses to an identity crisis. He brought an answer rooted in Jesus Christ, God's Son, in whom all human beings may find meaning for themselves and for one another.

Paul's answer is a complex one, perhaps best understood by peeling it off in layers like an onion. The most outer level is obviously the veiling of women. Careful scrutiny of the passage cited below demon-

strates that it might more accurately be described as a discussion of appropriate attire and hairstyle for both men and women:

Any man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonours his head, but any woman who prays or prophesies with her head unveiled dishonours her head (her husband)—it is the same as if her head were shaven. For if a woman will not veil herself, then she should cut off her hair; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her wear a veil. For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man. . . Judge for yourselves; it is proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? Does not nature itself teach you that for a man to wear long hair is degrading to him, but if a woman has long hair it is her pride? For her hair is given to her for a covering (*1 Cor. 11: 4-7, 13-15*).

While Paul affirms that 'in Jesus Christ there is neither male nor female' (*Gal. 3: 28*), he is calling for

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### The cultural background to some controversial scriptures

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a differentiation in their personal appearance at worship services. This becomes comprehensible when one understands the importance of sex reversal or exchange of sex roles in many ancient religions.

Most frequently, this sex reversal took the form of assuming the garb of the opposite sex during religious observances. This practice, found in many of the surrounding cults, had been clearly forbidden in the Hebrew Bible (*Deut. 22: 5*). In the Greco-Roman world, there is more evidence of men assuming women's garb than the other way around. Paul's words appear to be a directive against such pagan activities, for he tells the men to pray bareheaded although Jewish men covered their heads with prayer shawls, and the priests wore turbans on their heads when they served in the temple (*Ex. 39: 28*).

Among the Gentiles matters were different. 'It is more usual for women to go forth in public with their heads covered and men with their heads uncovered', Plutarch wrote of the Romans (*Roman Questions*, 267a). Corinth, a Roman colony on Greek soil, had become increasingly Greek in its traditions, including stricter veiling and seclusion of women. The Corinthians had imbibed deeply of Greek religion and had carved two images of Dionysus (the Roman Bacchus) out of the tree from which King Pentheus, dressed as a woman, was said to

have been dragged and dismembered by frenzied female adherents of the god. Those who had read Euripides' *Bacchae* will recall that Tiresias and Cadmus also donned women's vestments before joining the rites. Clothing exchange was quite widespread in Dionysiac religion, and Philostratus reports that the sage Apollonius of Tyana rebuked the Athenian men at a festival thus:

No one bears a helmet, but disguised as female harlequins, . . . they shine in shame alone. Nay more, I hear that you turn yourselves into winds, and wave your skirts, and pretend that you are ships bellying their sails aloft (*Life of Apollonius*, IV, xxi).

At certain religious events women also shaved their heads, and men assumed veils or long, flowing hair and golden hairnets. Though the earlier Greeks engaged in the Trojan War are described as 'long-haired Achaeans', by the first century of our era a

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**'Paul spoke to a deep-seated  
hatred and fear of women  
prevalent in Greek society'**

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shaven head on a woman and long tresses on a man were viewed as sexual inversions. Hebrew heroes such as Samson, Absalom, and the Nazirites, had also maintained long hair with no suspicion of effeminacy, but this was no longer true in the New Testament period. For example, artistic representations of Dionysus became less masculine and developed softened features and lengthened hair 'that renders it difficult at times to distinguish a head of Dionysus from one of Ariadne' (Farnell, *Cults of the Greek City States*, V, p. 278). The god himself was becoming sexually ambivalent and was called 'shaman', 'in feminine form', 'male-female', and 'double-natured'. 'And if the faithful who took part in the Bacchic train wore the krokotos, the saffron-coloured feminine veil, it was to imitate the god himself, who was in this late era often interpreted as a sign of softness and debauchery' (Delacourt, *Hermaphrodite*, p. 39).

Sex reversal was also a significant factor in the worship of Aphrodite (the Roman Venus), whose temple dominated the Corinthian acropolis. Within stood an enormous statue of the goddess in her Asian form, clad in armour, the male accoutrements of war. In many other places her sexuality was ambivalent. 'There is in Cyprus a statue of her bearded, but with female dress, with the sceptre and signs of the male nature, and they think the same goddess is both male and female. Aristophanes calls her Aphroditos' (Macrobius, *Sat.*, 3.8). Women sometimes shaved their heads to honor an image of Aphrodite having 'both male and female organs' (Scholiast, *Iliad*, II 280).

Even the pagan philosophers of the era were dismayed by the confusion of sexual lines, and Epictetus wrote: 'Therefore we ought to preserve the marks God has given us; we ought not to give them up, nor, as far as we can prevent it, confuse the sexes which have been thus distinguished' (quoted by Grant, *Hellenistic Religions*, p. 155).

Against such blurring of sexual differentiations the Apostle Paul speaks out: it is good to be a man, it is good to be a woman. He defined sexual identity in terms of God's loving creation of men's and women's need for one another. To repudiate or to obliterate the identity God has bestowed on us as sexual beings is a 'disgrace', a remnant of the pagan religion the Corinthians had so recently left (1 Cor. 12: 2).

Not only was the veil a distinctively feminine article of clothing, but it also indicated the claims of husband and home. Indeed, the absence of a wife's veil was proper cause for a divorce in Hebrew tradition. The Hellenized Jew Philo called it a 'symbol of modesty' (*Special Laws*, III, 56). But Greek women 'driven (in Euripides' words) from the shuttle and the loom by Dionysus' discarded their veils and hailed the god as *Lusios*, Liberator. Certain of his rites still held an influence over some of the members of the Corinthian congregation: drunkenness (1 Cor. 11: 21), pagan feasts (10: 20-22), madness (14: 23), and promiscuity (5: 1). This is scarcely surprising, as Corinth was a major centre of the cult.

Bacchus/Dionysus was immensely popular with women, especially as the worship of him provided the cloistered Greek wife an opportunity to leave her home under divine compulsion and afforded a vent for sex hostility. Virgil describes a queen who tried to use a Bacchic revel to arouse public opinion against her husband: "'Evoe Bacchus", she shrieks. . . "Ho, mothers of Latium, give ear, where'er ye be! If in your loyal hearts still lives affection for unhappy Amata, if care for a mother's rights still stings your souls, doff the fillets from your hair, join the revels with me" (*Aeneid*, VII, 384ff.).

The veil and orderly tresses, by contrast, indicated propriety and harmony with husband and home; their removal the reverse. But Paul stresses unity rather than hostility. While several of the ancient religions offered temporary release from the marriage tie, this was not true of Christianity. The Christian individual retained his/her sexual identity, and commitment to one's spouse was an integral part of the Apostle's perception of the church. In the Christian community, where the incorporation of both sexes into the same worship service was something of an innovation, neither man nor woman was independent of the other.

We come then to the second level of our onion peeling. Here we find a positive affirmation of Christian marriage in particular and of heterosexual relationships in general. Paul spoke to a deep-seated hatred and fear of women prevalent in Greek society.

The mythology is full of menacing maternal figures both human and divine. Medea killed her children. Hera, the mother-goddess, visited mortals with death and madness. A young man complained to Socrates that he preferred the ferocity of beasts to that of his mother (Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, III, 12-13). Philip Slater holds that the mother, degraded and imprisoned, emotionally and sexually deprived, tended to vent her hostilities especially on the male child.

The generalized fear of women was coupled with the more specific aversion to female reproductive organs, especially those of the mature woman.

O God, you have married men to living engines of death. You have married them to woman. Why? To perpetuate the human race? Then women were the wrong means. You should have let us donate a sum of gold or silver or copper to your holy temples, and buy our children from you. At least, we would have had value for our money and at home a life of liberty and no plague of women (Euripides, *Hippolytus*; tr. Corrigan, p. 94).

Apollo expressed resentment of the mother's status as child-bearer:

The mother is no parent of that which is called her child, but only nurse of the new-planted seed that grows. The parent is he who mounts. A stranger she preserves a stranger's seed, if no god interfere (Aeschylus, *Eumenides*; tr. Lattimore, II, 660-63).

So great was the repugnance that in the initiation of certain mystery religions, men crawled through a stone tunnel to effect a 'new birth' not dependent on women. It is thought that this marked distaste for women and their sexuality was, at least in part, responsible for the pederasty (homosexual love of boys) which permeated Greek life and thought.

Paul addresses himself to the initial point of difficulty: the dependence of men on women in the birth processes.

I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a woman is her husband, and the head of Christ is God. . . For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. . . Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God (1 Cor. 11: 3, 8-12).

He points out that originally woman was brought forth from man; indeed, he is the source of woman-kind. For the Greek *kephalos* meant both 'head' and 'source' (as in the English 'headwaters' of a river). The beginning lies in man rather than in woman, and there is a cycle: woman from man and man from woman. Neither need fear the other, for they are of a common substance. There is an interdependence in the economy of God; the woman is quite as dependent on man for her origin as is man on the woman.

And the source of both is ultimately in God.

Paul speaks also to the alienation and estrangement of the sexes as it existed in Greek society. Socrates once questioned a man.

'Is there anyone to whom you commit more affairs of importance than you commit to your wife?'

'There is not.'

'Is there anyone with whom you talk less?'

'There are few or none, I confess' (Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, III, 12-13).

Another reported that he married a girl who had been raised 'seeing, hearing, and saying as little as possible', but that after he had 'tamed and domesticated' her enough (note the animal terminology frequent in Greek literature about women), he was able to discourse with her about her domestic duties (*ibid.*, VII, 5). Men and women did not eat together or share the same sleeping quarters; and men spent most of their waking hours outside the house where the wife was confined. While conversation was discouraged between husband and wife, brilliant courtesans known as *hetairai* afforded better company. An older man made every effort to improve the mind and virtue of his boy-favorite, but the wife was kept in ignorance and solitude. By contrast, Paul encouraged the wife to ask questions and the husband to discuss the things of God with her (1 Cor. 14: 35); for if one member is deficient, the whole body suffers (12: 25, 26). He rejected the segregation of men from women in both worship and the home (11: 11), gave full equality of sexual rights in marriage and insisted that each partner meet the erotic needs of the other (7: 3-5).

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'There is interdependence  
in the economy of God  
. . . the source of both  
is ultimately in God'

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Perhaps most perplexing to the nascent church were the theological and philosophical arguments marshalled to justify and indeed perpetrate the practice of homosexuality in the ancient world. Aristotle held that a woman was inferior to a man in both virtue and courage and therefore could not be a fit companion (*Politics*, 1253b-1260b). In a literary debate the judge declared an Athenian who favored homophilia to be the victor over a Corinthian who endorsed heterosexuality:

Therefore let marriage be for all but let the love of boys remain alone the privilege of the wise for a perfect virtue is absolutely unthinkable in women. But be not angry, my dear Charicles' if the crown belongs to Athens and not to Corinth (Lucian, *Erotes*, quoted in Licht, *Sexual Life in Ancient Greece*, p. 491).



Plato on several occasions affirmed the greater nobility of what was indeed a spiritualized institution:

But the offspring of the heavenly Aphrodite is derived from another in whose birth the female has no part—she is from the male only; this is that love which is of youths, and the goddess, being older, there is nothing of wantonness in her. Those who are inspired by this love turn to the male and delight in him who is the more valiant and intelligent nature (*Symposium*, 181c, d).

Which was God's best? For Christians in a sexually preoccupied city, there must be clarification.

As the justification for homosexuality lay in the inferiority of women, so Paul's answer lay in the assertion that she was a special creation to meet man's need for spiritual, emotional, and physical partnership. A man, indeed, ought not to have his head veiled, for he is an image and glory of God; but woman is a glory of man . . . And man was not created for woman, but woman for man. Both male

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**'Because a woman is God's special gift to man, she should have authority over her head (i.e. her husband)'**

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and female were created in God's image, and both were essential to his plan (*Gen. 5: 1, 2*). The creation of man, a marvellous creature 'in the image and glory of God', brought forth the statement that it was 'not good' that man should be alone. As his final, crowning creative act, God made woman to complete the fulfilment of his purpose.

To say that woman is the glory of man is far from detrimental, nor does it imply that she is a mere 'reflection of a reflection'. Glory is that which enhances a person's worth, substance, or honor; and the Greeks prized glory more than riches, comfort, or life itself. It is woman to whom God has given the power to uplift man, to bring out the best in him. She is the 'fit companion' rather than another male. A relationship which is limited exclusively to persons of one sex is less than a total manifestation of God's image and defrauds the body of Christ.

At the very heart of our passage lies a consideration of the relationship between husband and wife.

I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a woman is her husband, and the head of Christ is God. . . Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. That is why a woman ought to have authority over (a veil on) her head, because of the angels.

This text is often applied to marriage as a proof-text for who should be the greatest—a consideration which Jesus discouraged. Marriage is not a power

struggle. Part of the syllogism is that God is head of Christ, who proceeded forth from the Father but is equal to him in power, goodness, and love.

Other Scripture passages also embody head-and-body imagery as it applies to Christ and his church. *Eph. 4: 15-16* stresses coordination and communication and in *Eph. 1: 22-23* the church is called the 'fulness' (abundance, completion, fulfilment) of the one who fills all. *1 Cor. 12: 21* shows the need of the

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**The message is for us as well . . . we must respond to one another in the fellowship of the redeemed**

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head for other parts of the body, for head and body cannot be severed so long as life shall last. *Col. 1: 16* calls Christ 'the first born of creation . . . the head of the body, the Church . . . the beginning, the first born from the dead'; for the head is that part of the body which is usually born first. The beautiful picture of *Eph. 5* likewise reveals Christ's initial action in seeking, wooing, and redeeming the church. The head-body simile is introduced by a concept of mutual subjection (*5: 21*) and reaches its height in demonstrating how highly Christ prized the church and what he was willing to suffer that he might present to himself a 'glorious' bride, called into existence to be his completion and fulfilment. Even so was woman, the glory of man, made *on his account* a being worthy of love, dignity, and honor.

Because a woman is God's special gift to the man, she should have authority over her head (i.e., her husband). Although translators are fond of altering the meaning (cf. RSV and RSV margin), the Greek is quite simple: 'a woman should have power over her head'. The same vocabulary, 'have power over', is used for Christ's power and that of the angels of the Apocalypse (*Matt. 9: 6; Mark 2; Luke 5: 34; Rev. 11: 6; 14: 13*), and Paul has already spoken of the power which the wife should have over the husband:

The husband should give to his wife her conjugal right and likewise the wife to her husband. For the wife does not rule over her own body, but the husband does; likewise the husband does not rule over his own body, but the wife does (*1 Cor. 7: 3-4*).

Contrary to heathen tradition, the Christian wife had an equal right to demand that her husband forsake all extramarital unions and commit himself wholly to her. The sacred tie was to be respected by both husband and wife.

Often the outside world failed to understand this. The charge of promiscuity was hurled frequently against Christians, especially in their observance of the Lord's Supper. It is significant that this teaching

in 1 Cor. 11 does immediately precede a discussion of order at the Eucharist. *Angeloi*, the word for 'angels', also means 'messengers', and may well refer to those who might visit the service and carry home a message about the activities. It was important that they understand the Christian concept of marriage and sexuality. The veil, already a symbol of the wife's commitment, might also remind the husband of his—to the edification of the onlookers.

But the message is for us as well as the Corinthians.

Although it was apparently addressed originally to male questioners, the answer includes us all. God has given each one of us full personhood, and we are stewards accountable to him for all that we are as spiritual, emotional, and sexual beings. We do not exist alone but must respond to one another in the fellowship of the redeemed. It is good that there are differentiations of a sexual nature, for they may draw us closer to one another. And the unifying principle is a person, even Jesus Christ. □

## Professor Bruce Asks

Michael Miles packs more explosive material into one sentence than most of us distribute over a whole article. What about his remark in the February *Harvester*: 'On questions of women, sex, penal code and property, Islam offers teaching much more palatable to our more traditional-minded brethren than what they often receive at home'? Is this really so?

*Correspondence, please, to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX by 10 May.*

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## London City Mission Annual Meeting

A report by Kathleen White

The Livery Hall of the City Guildhall made a dignified setting for the Annual Meeting of the London City Mission on Thursday, March 15th. With its gracious wooden panelling, sparkling chandeliers and concealed lighting in the ceiling, it must have afforded a stark contrast to the many dirty and disreputable areas in which the missionaries have to work throughout the year. But it was fitting for them to receive the thanks and acclaim of many grateful citizens in this lovely building. And it was even more fitting that the first address was given by Sir David McNee, QPM, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police.

He added his own personal appreciation of the work carried out by the Mission and assured the members of his wholehearted support. 'In one sense, the Police and the Missioners both work to help people in need. They have a tradition of service to the community, but the City Mission is able to do something extra—care for their spiritual needs.'

Having given us a short resume of his own upbringing and career, paying tribute to caring Christian parents, he went on to outline the problems society has to face today. Although there was a slight decrease in figures of serious crime committed in London last year, the nation as a whole faced a complex social problem owing to a lack of standards, leadership and moral guidance.

In closing, Sir David touched briefly on the story of

Anne, a young girl abandoned by her mother at birth who finally, after a short life of sin, misery and heart-break, managed to kill herself by taking an overdose for the eighth time. She was just one example of the hundreds of pathetic creatures that the Mission tries to seek out and help.

'The Mission's role is in the greatest tradition of evangelism', Sir David added, and then closed with the blessing, 'The Lord recompense thy work and a full reward be given to thee by the Lord God of Israel'.

Mr. Farrant, missionary in Tollington Park, followed with a vivid account of his work in that area and then The Rev. Canon H. Sutton, President of the Evangelical Alliance, added his comments and appreciation. Lt. Commander S. E. Sharpe, DSC, moved the Resolution of Thanks.

It may sound from this report as if it were a very formal occasion but it must be stressed there was a profound impression left of dedication, deep caring and ceaseless toil by the hundred missionaries who, according to the statistics on the back of the programme, made 283,980 house to house visits last year, distributed 457,746 tracts and provided 5,403 meals, just to quote a few of the figures.

Our capital is indeed fortunate to possess such a sincere Christian as our Metropolitan Police Commissioner and to be served by such a responsible band of men from the Mission who labour ceaselessly on behalf of the Gospel. □

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# The Last Trump

Harry F. Thompson

In the *First Epistle to the Thessalonians* the Apostle Paul urges Christians to order their life towards the Second Advent of Christ, and to look forward to it, for it is through this great event that the faithful will be delivered from the 'wrath to come'; that is from

## A study of a none too popular subject

the judgement of condemnation on the wicked at the *parousia* (*1 Thess. 1: 10*). Concerning the 'last things', the one on which the early Church most insists is the dogma of the Last Judgement. Modern man, however, does not appear to be interested in the Last Judgement, and in many churches today the subject is seldom, or perhaps never referred to. But the Bible has much to say about judgement, and shows that there is both a continual and a final judgement. 'It is appointed unto men to die once, and after that comes the judgement' (*Heb. 9: 27*).

The truth of the matter is: 'Light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil' (*John 3: 19*).

All around us we see the fruits of original sin in alarming forms—lawlessness, greed, violence, and a degraded sexual relationship. At the last judgement, however, everything will appear in its true light, all deception will vanish, and everyone will receive his his or her just deserts. The judgement that will overtake man, however, must not be thought of as the revenge of one who has been consistently despised and rejected by men, but the result of man's refusal to give heed to the words of the Lord: 'He who rejects me and does not receive my sayings has a judge: the word that I have spoken will be his judge on the Last Day' (*John 12: 48*). In a sermon preached during Advent, 1879, Gerard Manley Hopkins said: 'Every man is judged at death though at the Last Day all men are to be judged together; those that are judged already, their judgement will not be set aside, it will be confirmed with all the world to hear it'. Thinking cannot enable us to imagine the state of the soul at the moment of separation from the body. We can be sure, however, that certain objects that attracted, occupied and distracted the soul during life on earth mean nothing to it now. In *Matthew 25*, there is a vivid description of the universal and final assize. 'At the end', said Brother Lawrence, 'we shall be judged on love' (*Practice of the Presence of God*). There are clear warnings in the Bible that the return of the Lord Jesus Christ in His glory, an event which Christians should look forward to with longing, will take place suddenly:

'The Day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When people say, "There is peace and security", then sudden destruction will come upon them . . .' (*1 Thess. 5: 2-4*). The angels who, following Lucifer's lead, rebelled against the order of God ordained for them face the judgement of the Great Day (*Jude 6*). Lucifer (Satan), of course, is man's arch enemy. It is his aim to involve us in his own ruin by luring us as far away as possible from the glory of God. In a Sermon preached on the Day of Pentecost (*Acts 2*) Peter exhorted his hearers to save themselves from a wicked generation, and those who responded were convinced that the world they had belonged to was doing the Devil's work, and that it was under the judgement of God, because its Prince was Satan who was already judged.

In *1 Corinthians*, Paul says that on the day of Judgement every man's work will be made manifest: 'For the Day will disclose it; because it will be revealed by fire and the fire will test what kind of work each one has done' (*1 Cor. 3: 13*).

Commenting on a passage from Isaiah 'Walk in the light of your fire, and in the flame which you have kindled for yourselves' (*Isa. 50: 11*), Origen (c.185-254) said this passage seems to indicate that 'every sinner kindles for himself the flame of his own fire, and is not plunged into a fire which has been previously kindled by someone else or which existed before him. Of this fire the food and material are our sins, which are called by the apostle Paul, wood, hay and stubble' (*1 Cor. 3: 13-15*).

At the last judgement,  
everything will appear in  
its true light . . . it is  
not revengeful

It cannot reasonably be denied that a time of deep darkness is spreading all over the world, and many people are fearful 'for looking after those things which are coming on the earth' (*Luke 21: 26*). The view that the meaning of human life is to be found in prosperity and pleasure-seeking has become the guiding idea for the majority of people, who now pay little or no attention to the stable values of faith and culture. The central teaching of Christianity is that only by the Cross of Christ can the facts of evil in the world be adequately confronted. Separation from God is the source of all man's unhappiness.

'The day is not far distant', writes Teilhard de Chardin, 'When humanity will realise that biologically it is faced with a choice between suicide and adoration' (*Le Milieu Divin*). □

Edited by Kathleen White, 60 Bowood Road, Swindon, Wilts.

## Kathleen White's Column

### Pilgrim's Progress: the film

Although I had been very anxious to view the film *Pilgrim's Progress* for some time, it was not until late in February that I was afforded a chance to see it locally. Originally, of course, it was produced by an American director, Ken Anderson, to mark 1978 as the great tercentenary year of Bunyan's masterpiece.

The filming took place in Northern Ireland in the summer of the previous year. Obviously, Ken Anderson did not undertake the task lightheartedly. On his own admission, he spent hours in prayer, seeking from God just what the script should be, in order that the great spiritual truths illustrated in the book should be clearly shown.

In screening a story of the calibre of *Pilgrim's Progress*, a producer has a two-fold task: to preserve the strength of plot and characterisation, and as far as possible the beauty of language, of what is undoubtedly one of the outstanding classics to be written in the English tongue; also, at the same time he must endeavour to portray clearly the great Christian truths and principles contained within the text. And at the end we have to ask ourselves just how successful Ken Anderson has been in both respects.

I went with a completely open mind, not having read any critics' reports beforehand. The introduction I approved of wholeheartedly, a few facts of the life and times of the author illustrated by shots of the Moot Hall at Elstowe and its environs, setting the scene for the plot to unfold.

With the selection of incidents from the whole theme I would not quarrel. It would be impossible to include the entire story on film and I thought he had made a judicious choice. I must confess I felt a trifle cheated because we were only allowed a glimpse of the Celestial City through a telescope, but at the same time I must admit that it would be an exceedingly difficult scene to portray. Perhaps he was wiser to omit it completely rather than give a false presentation.

Two incidents in the film seemed unnecessarily laboured. In the original text, Bunyan only admits to Christian seeing a cross on the hillside. In the film we were shown a little of Christ's actual sufferings on the cross. Now I realise that the producer is only trying to project to us what actually went on in the mind of Christian at that moment of crisis. He must have related that stark cross mentally with the agony of Calvary; but the elderly lady sitting next to me found this portrayal of Christ distasteful, as did a few other members of the audience, young and old, so he

might have been better advised to stick to the symbolism of the empty cross.

The second occasion which offended me much more was the burning of Faithful at the stake. A brief glimpse to make the point would have been sufficient but we were treated to a long drawn-out sequel of Faithful writhing in the flames. Many children were present at the viewing and they showed obvious signs of mental distress at the prolonged martyrdom. Of course children are taught the facts of religious persecution in history at school but it is not essential to underline and spell them out in detail.

The Devil himself worried me considerably! Again, an allegory is a most difficult prose vehicle to reproduce successfully in dramatic form. But in the film he smacked too much of a wizard in a show. His make-up and characterisation were far too theatrical. He appeared and disappeared in an instant at the trick of a camera and gave the children rather the impression of a magic performance. In reality, he was much more subtle than his film portrayal.

Yet it would be unfair to leave this account without also mentioning the well-deserved credits. The background scenes and costumes had been painstakingly researched. And the one really important impression that made its mark on so many of the audience was the constant repetition of the word of God. This came across with great force and clarity.

So, for myself, I shall go back to reading my own well-loved text and try to forget much of the film production. However, knowing full well that fewer children and adults are likely to read the book than ever before, because of the decline in literacy, I would probably recommend people to view this film rather than miss out on such an essential story of man's pilgrimage and salvation.

I shall still, though, cherish the hope that someone, somewhere may eventually feel motivated to screen this magnificent drama again and this time do fuller justice to its outstanding narrative and compelling imagery. □

*(For readers interested in acquiring copies of The Pilgrim's Progress, there are excellent illustrated editions by Banner of Truth at £4.00 and (a superb one) by Norfolk Press at £6.95. Scripture Union have also produced a very successfully modernised version, illustrated and abbreviated.—Ed.)*

Correspondence for this page should be sent to Mr. Peter Cousins, M.A., B.D.,  
The Paternoster Press Ltd., 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW marked 'Harvester Question Page'

## Question and Answer, with Peter Cousins

### Unbelieving . . . Unevangelized

#### Question 144

*If by his death on the cross Jesus achieved so much why do so few among the untold millions of mankind appear to believe? Must all be counted as "unregenerate"? What can we say about the eternal destiny of this immense multitude?*

As you say in your letter, glib answers, whether optimistic or gloomy, are out of place when faced by questions such as these. We dare not take the significant silences of Scripture and use them either to construct an "Iron Curtain" surrounding heaven or an inclined plane down which all may slide there without choice or volition.

So far as the extent of the efficacy of the death of Christ is concerned, there are several truths to bear in mind. First, that it is sufficient for all mankind without limitation. Second, that it will ultimately bring into existence "new heavens and a new earth" where "all things" will be united in Christ. This "eschatological universalism" is the direct result of the Cross. Third, the blessings produced by the Gospel—what the late Professor Rookmaker used to call "the fruit of the fruit of the Spirit"—have immeasurably liberated and enriched even unbelievers.

As we have already said, the death of Christ is sufficient for all but if we ask the Scripture to tell us how many receive salvation through it, we receive no answer to satisfy our curiosity. Certainly the Saviour speaks of his followers as a "little flock" but John the Seer sees "a multitude that no man can number". We dare not ignore the implications of "no man comes to the Father except by me" and "there is no other name . . . by which you must be saved". But statements such as these were not made in order to convey inert information. They were intended to affect the behaviour of those who heard them. The warnings of Scripture are given to those who are being challenged by the Word of God. They are also surely intended to spur the church on in its missionary task. If I ask the Scripture questions about the number of those who are saved, then it tells me (a) to examine my own relationship to Christ and (b) to play my part in telling others of the only Saviour.

In fact, there are some passages which hint at the possibility of a trusting relationship with God which is not (so far as human awareness is concerned) mediated through Christ. Passages sometimes cited in this context include *Acts 10: 34, 35* and *Romans 2: 13-15*. There is some evidence from the mission field to support this viewpoint: stories of individuals in unevangelized places who, upon hearing the Gospel, have welcomed it readily,

saying (in effect) that they had always reckoned something like this must be the truth. It is not forbidden by Scripture to hope for the salvation of many who have never heard the name of Christ but for whom he may be "the light that lightens every man", so long as this is not made an excuse for evading the responsibility to witness for him. This is of crucial importance. If we ever think of the appalling number of children whose lives are made into a hell on earth, or terminated in appalling circumstances, or warped throughout their whole course as a result of parental failure and sin, and if we accept this as an inevitable result of the way in which we are all "bound up together in the bundle of life", then we must also recognise a similar principle at work wherever men and women are left in the eternal hell caused by sin simply because nobody has gone to tell them how they may be set free. The principle involved in both cases is similar. In each example, God allows human failure to have tragic consequences in the lives of others. The Scripture is equally practical in what it reveals about life after death. Just as it is not our business to conduct a census of the elect, so there is no justification for speculating about the fate of those who have never heard Christ. What the Scriptures say concerning the fate of those who consciously reject him is terrible enough, yet even this has been found to admit of diverse interpretation in detail.

In the last resort, however, we must put our trust in the New Testament extension of *Genesis 18: 25* and *Wisdom of Solomon 11: 26*. We are not only confident in the fairness of the "judge of all the earth" but we can trust to the mercy of the "lover of souls", while in the cross of Christ we see that these are no mere abstractions but a costly reality.

### Moral Rearmament

#### Question 145

*Why is it that many evangelicals apparently disapprove of Moral Rearmament?*

Many 'Catholics' as well as 'evangelicals' feel dubious about Moral Rearmament on doctrinal grounds. It should be stated, however, that, by the same token, Christians in both categories have also been found to have approved of the movement. The doctrinal factors are these: (i) The movement sometimes seems to suggest that it appeals to all men of good will rather than to those who accept the unique lordship of Christ. (ii) The nature of the emphasis placed on obedience to the 'absolutes' has sometimes implied a belief in salvation by works rather than forgiveness through the death of Christ. (iii) It has also been suggested that the

*continued on page 153*



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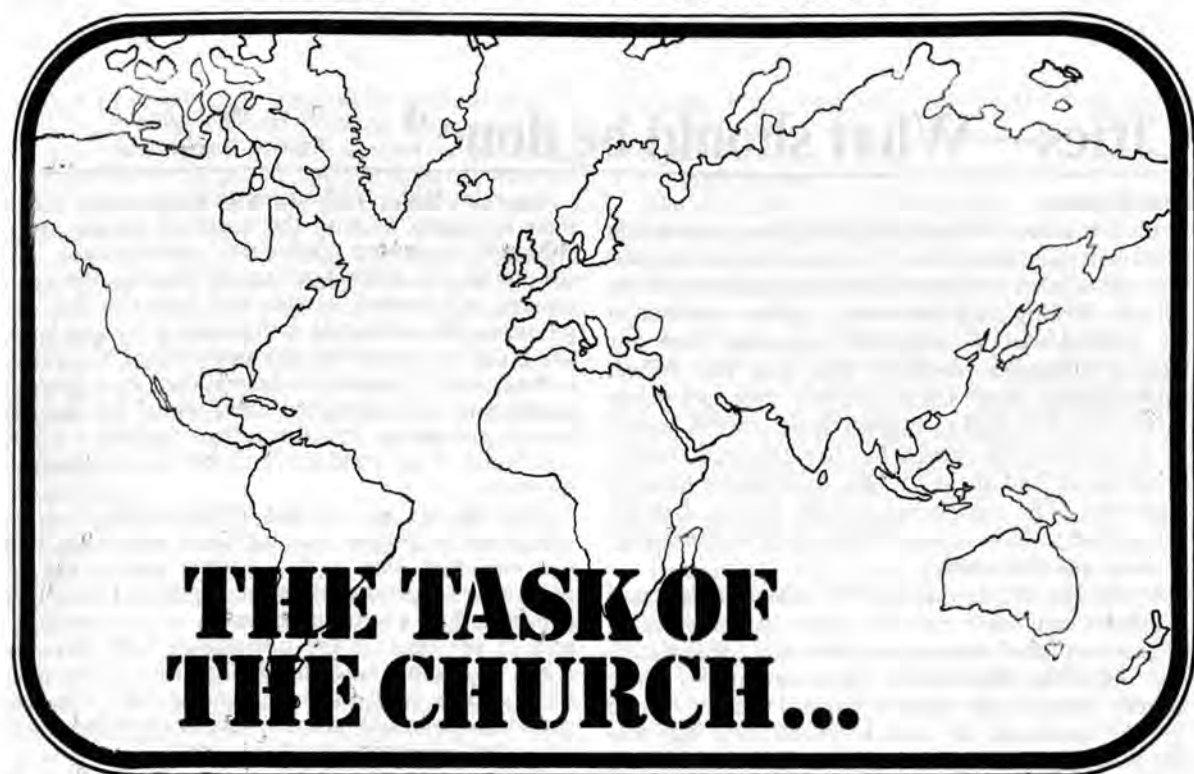
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## Geography in Mission—Editorial

'People rather than places' is a necessary corrective to the type of thinking that has seen mission principally in terms of geography. Yet, right though it is, places do represent people. Focussing upon particular geographical regions can therefore highlight priority areas for the Gospel.

It is all too easy, as we sit week by week in churches that we know quite well and in areas with which we are well acquainted, not to be aware of what is happening, or not happening, in other parts of the British Mission Field. Recently a survey was taken of the Christian population in the London borough of Newham, whose total population is about 250,000 people. Approximately 3,000 people attend Protestant churches each Sunday. A suggested number of born-again believers is put at 1,500. The percentage of Christians to population is, interestingly, almost the same as that of Syria—a Muslim country in the Middle East.

The urban areas, rural areas and new towns of Great Britain constitute a mission field. The difficulty facing the church is not just the realization of that need, but to discover how that need can be met. Many assemblies in such areas are small and struggling and all too often sinking into oblivion.

Sometimes, however, an almost 'pathological insistence' on the autonomy of each local church has effectively barred fellowship with other assemblies and churches in advancing the Kingdom. A view that accepts no responsibility for anywhere or

anyone else beyond each church's narrowly-drawn limits must be seen as unbiblical and bordering, at times, on irresponsibility when compared to the vast need. There was undoubtedly a concern between the early churches for physical, financial and spiritual needs, and a responsibility for areas beyond their borders. The poor at Jerusalem were supported from Macedonia; the believers at Thessalonica reached out with the Gospel to Macedonia and Achaia. What the Americans call 'mutuality' needs to be expressed between churches—not just for what is loosely termed 'a time of fellowship', but in co-operative evangelism, church planting and church building. The strong need to help the weak; the weak need to accept the help of the strong; together they need to offer Christ's love where it is unknown.

It is easy, comparatively—and more comfortable—to send money and offer prayer for needs in remote parts of the world, rather than to grapple with the costly sacrifice involved in permeating the neglected areas and people of our country with the Gospel. For if we do not take up Christ's cross, and cross *our* cultural, class and geographical barriers in His Name, we shall be judged to have failed our generation and our Lord, Who said, 'Go . . . preach . . . baptize . . . make disciples . . . Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria and . . . '—areas beyond the immediate reach of the disciples. But to them they went, and so must we.

# Cities—What should be done?

Brian Mills and  
Patrick Sookhdeo

## Identification

In the December 1975 issue of *The Witness*, an article contained this comment, 'It is startling to be told that the almost complete deChristianization of the British working-class has been a potent element in the breakdown of industrial discipline, and our relative economic decline'. But was the British working-class ever Christianized? Not according to Bishop Winnington-Ingram who in 1896 wrote, 'It is not that the church has lost the great towns, it has never had them.' When Archbishop Longley remarked, 'The church has lost the towns', Disraeli is reported to have replied, 'Your Grace is mistaken, it never had the towns.'

Under the watchful eye of the village squire rural labourers attended church regularly, but as the migration of the population to the cities began during the Industrial Revolution church-going for these people immediately ceased. Several factors related to this cessation of church attendance, but one factor which must have played a large part in this was the low number of 'free sittings' available in the established churches. For example, in Sheffield in the nineteenth century there were fewer than 300 free sittings for a population of more than 60,000. The church at large became anxious about the situation and important local benefactors, mill and factory owners, built the terraced housing surrounding the mill or mine that is such a feature of many industrial areas. At the same time they built large chapels and churches to which their employees were expected to go on Sunday with their families. So the serfs worked in the factory, lived in the housing the owner had provided, attended the church he had built—all as part of the contract. However, this did not have the desired effect and the Mann census indicated that only 58 per cent of the population attended church—what of the other 5½ million, the labourers? The census claimed:

They (the labourers) dislike the social distinction in the churches, the division into respectable and free seats, and regard religion as a middle-class propriety or luxury, suspect the churches of being indifferent to their poverty, and think that the message of the clergy is vitiated because they are paid to deliver it. They live in such physical squalor they cannot rise to the things of the Spirit. . .

It was the ruling classes who were associated with church-going, education and establishment and therefore antagonism and suspicion were naturally extended to include the church.

The working-classes have never, in a general sense, gone to church since cities began. They do not belong there in the cultural setting it provides. Although from a historical viewpoint the working classes are largely anti-church, they are not anti-God.

The relationship of housing to employment is still there in places, as with the northern mining areas, although elsewhere industrial development has swallowed up older housing, dispersing the community into council estates and high-rise flats. As rehousing has taken place the church, by and large, has failed to move with the population. Sometimes it tenaciously 'maintains the witness' in a decrepit building in a depopulated area, whilst the forcibly moved population find themselves rootless in a new area which is not conducive to identity or community spirit.

The life of the city has dehumanized and demoralized its people making them mere cogs in a machine. Not only is this country pagan, but the cities are proportionately more pagan and spiritually deprived than all the other areas of the country—and 75 per cent of the population lives there. In many of our big cities the individual has about as little chance of receiving an evangelical Christian witness as he would have in some of the best-known, untouched missionfields of the world.

Materialism, immorality and racial conflict are just three of the complex social problems rampant in the city. Violence, crime, drunkenness and other allied social ills constantly rise. Despite all the money and research given to explore the problems no satisfactory plan has been devised to provide adequate social services and housing.

Dr. Roger Greenway of America has said, 'The church must learn to evangelize the city. The growth of cities is the great fact of our era and it provides the church with an opportunity to win great numbers to Christ. No other area in evangelism deserves more urgent attention.' Hippocrates once said, 'Whoever fails to reach the common people and make them listen to him, misses the mark.' It is significant to remember that of Christ it was said, 'The common people heard him gladly.' Alas, today, 'Christianity has become synonymous with a gay, unconcerned and irrelevant selfishness; and communism synonymous with a committed, disciplined and sacrificial way of living', according to Samuel Escobar. That is probably why communist influence in the cities is more and more apparent. We Christians have failed our nation and our Lord.

In order to find ways of expressing God's concern to urban man, we need to show our concern. We need, first of all, to acquire a concerned understanding of the composition and characteristics of our own city or suburb, and more particularly the immediate area where we live. We need to be aware of the influences that have led people to live where they live, and to think and act the way they do. Are we aware that in suburban middle class Britain the average family moves every three to five years, which means they seldom put down roots or stay long



enough to develop any community spirit or discover an identity? Are we aware of the motivating force in their life? Or do we realize that the percentage of urbanites living in apartments, high-rise flats and other multi-residence structures is certain to increase, and that people who live in such areas develop a life-style of their own, that increasingly isolates them from their fellow flat-dwellers and others? Do we realize that in some areas broken homes and one-parent families can be as high as 60 per cent of the total family population? Have we then asked, how can the church which I attend, or where I live, express Christ's love in a way that will immediately begin to meet my neighbour's need socially and spiritually?

#### **Mobilization**

We cannot do anything without personnel—personnel who are willing to venture into the church's no-man's land of inner city or industrial areas, recognizing that it is as much a mission-field as any foreign country, where a language and a whole new subculture will have to be understood. We suggest that more full-time workers are desperately needed in our cities, serving the church that exists there, spearheading evangelism into neglected areas, taking as many church members as are willing to be trained. As evangelists and modern missionaries, they will desperately need the fellowship, financial support and prayers of supporting churches. There is the need for the injection of people into urban and suburban areas, who go not so much because it is pleasant and congenial to live there, as because the love of Christ constrains them.

#### **Proclamation**

We need to be in the forefront of mass means of communication through which city man acquires his information—the press, television, cinema, radio etc. 'The cost is too great,' 'we don't have the expertise,' 'we haven't the time,' or, 'we mustn't get involved in the world' are our oft used excuses. If we had the enterprise of the early Brethren, and the faith to trust the promises of God we could use all the means of communication in order to reach men. The Morecambe Strategy Conference report calls for 'all church leaders to be bold and imaginative in releasing latent creative talent in the service of Christ. We found a biblical basis for the use of modern communication techniques, i.e. visual aids, audience participation, poetry, prose, music, movement and drama. . . The church needs to structure itself on a co-operative basis across denominations in an attempt, *inter alia*, to influence for Christ the opinion-formers locally. It has been estimated that in any town or city, there would be no more than 300 people in this category. We find that this, strangely, was St. Paul's strategy. 'To the Jew first' involved approaches to the religious leaders with whom he may not have been in agreement or fellowship. Then there were others—devout Greeks and leading women in Thessalonica, the businessmen of

Philippi, kings and civic rulers. He preached to small and great.

#### **Adaptation**

##### **(a) Small groups**

The explosion of little congregations is the most important single factor in the renewal of the church throughout the world. The key growth areas of the church are those where there exist multi house-group structures, rather than single fellowship centres. At Lausanne, Dr. Greenway of U.S.A., said, 'The house-church will probably be the organizational form in which Christianity grows the fastest during the remainder of this century, and therefore church leaders should do everything possible to fit it properly into their church structures.' Talking of high-rise flats and other multiple residence structures, James Wong of the Singapore Church Growth Study Centre said, 'If people living in high rise areas are to be disciplined a greater number of house churches must be developed.' The existence of neighbourhood groups means that the Christian community is exposed for examination, and the locality is exposed to its influence in a way which is impossible when the Body of Christ only expresses itself within the four walls of a church building. 'It is far more important to multiply witnesses in the local community than to multiply the hearers of a well-known evangelist', comments David Wasdell in a workpaper of the Urban Church Training Project.

The loneliness, insecurity and frustration created by city life are ministered to best through the local assembly of Christians who meet regularly for worship and fellowship and belong to one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. The transformed lives of believers have more influence than any other factor in improving the quality of life in an urban community. What better place to give folk a better opportunity of beholding this than in small neighbourhood groups?

##### **(b) Crossing cultural barriers**

In many areas the life-style of church members, who frequently travel in to worship, is radically different from that of the local residents. We are of a totally different culture, we think differently, our whole outlook on life, for obvious reasons, is different. In the past there have been attempts to build bridges—social bridges—into the community in order to break down the barrier of cultural differences. Today there are very few social bridges left to build across into the lives of the average English family. The church has lost her position as social centre for the community and because of this we can no longer go further down the scale offering more attractive social events than the bingo hall or the community centre. Our spheres of contact today must come through personal relationships and direct evangelistic outreach—we have no more bridges to build. Even in an immigrant situation the bridges of language teaching, sharing of English customs, sewing groups, have been sadly neglected

for the church seems not to feel any responsibility or concern in these realms.

### Implementation

In medical science, doctors, practitioners and surgeons may say: 'We are doing O.K., we're treating physical ill-health with drugs, surgery and medical care.' But they don't go on to say, 'therefore we don't need research'. They are only too aware of the need for researchers, specialists, trying to expose the cause of illness and discover effective cures, finding out what social factors as well as viruses, bacteria etc., contribute to certain types of illness. So too, we need people who will determine the causative factors of non-effective penetration with the Gospel, analyse the findings and prescribe cures. The results of adequate research must inevitably lead to *forward planning* in our strategy for evangelism in all geographical areas, but particularly in large centres of population where we have a failure problem. Forward planning is needed because of the sophistication of modern life. Forward planning is needed because as disciples, we should be disciplined in our use of time, resources, and in the priorities we accept. Forward planning is not unspiritual, but inherent as part of life in an ordered universe and natural support system. It is also biblical.

We need to plan, with others, to enter areas of low spiritual impact, all the time being aware of the timing of God. Where housing development on a local or town-wide scale is imminent, we should plan with the planners at an early stage. If population movements are involved, we ought to prepare as a church to provide for the Christians that will inevitably be a part of that population movement as well as for the non-identity new populace. For example we should constructively plan for 1.5 per cent of any population movement to consist *now* of committed Christians. This must necessarily involve church planting on a scale not known in this country

in decades. We need to set more goals in our evangelism. 'If Christians dare set their goals and sights high, they can expect, with God's help, the possibility of doing something great for Him.' The disciples learned the practical lessons of launching out into the deep at His command. We have the commands—we must launch out. The proposal to multiply churches in all segments of the towns and cities, where there is none already, must be regarded as feasible, and as the will of God. Perhaps a working group of interested people, with specialist knowledge in goal-setting in evangelism, church planting, house planning and development, sociology and training might be formed to examine these and related factors more closely. The way forward into areas of missionary need in our towns and suburbs will obviously require the mobilization of as many Christians as possible. But as so many, it seems, are weighted down by present activities, or overawed by the task, one asks how can they realistically be able to do anything to meet the vast missionary need? We firmly believe that serious training and retraining is an essential prerequisite. We must prepare, restructure, re-appraise ourselves and our churches for mission in these last days. We must encourage and train our personnel. We must see the divine priorities, and proclaim unequivocally the Gospel of redeeming grace.

In Christ's name we go. With His wisdom may we know how and where to go. With His love may we share His message of love. With His Spirit we shall have power to go. With His church we have the people to go.

**'Let us go forth  
unto Him  
outside the camp  
bearing His reproach.**

**For here we have no continuing city,  
but we seek one to come.'**

## Book Review

### THE STUDY OF LITURGY

Ed. Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright and Edward Yarnold, SPCK 532 pages. £8.50 (paperback)

Tozer once spoke of worship as 'the missing jewel of the Christian church'. The church's life should essentially be a life of worship. *The Study of Liturgy* is taken up with this theme of worship. What is the theology of worship, how has this worship developed throughout the centuries, what part does baptism, the eucharist, etc. play in worship, how do Christians from differing denominational perspectives see these issues? This book goes through the history of Liturgy from the New Testament period through the early church fathers, the medieval period, the rise of the historic denominations through to the present day. It is a book which can help us to understand the wider perspectives of worship. For the true worship of God can never be encased in any one system.

It has been said that the purpose of liturgy is "to give glory

to God", but this expression needs examination. Sometimes the "glory" has been interpreted in purely human terms suggesting that worship, elaborate ceremonial, somehow impresses people and makes them think that God is a great and splendid being. If this was ever so, it is not so now. People are not impressed by a splendid ceremonial performed by people whose lives do not reflect what their worship expresses. It is seen nowadays (although St. Benedict said it long ago) that glory can be given to God only through the *lives* of those who worship Him. It is through the witness of the lives of Christians that glory is given to God, and it is they who, expressing in their lives the mystery of Christ, manifest it to others.' (page 29)

Valuable features of the book, in the light of present day discussion within the Brethren, are the sections dealing with ordination, use of music in the church and church order, etc.

## Evangelizing Rural Parts

Brian Mills

As society increasingly becomes urbanized, the needs of the villages and villagers are in danger of being overlooked—both in the secular and in the Christian world. What has happened in the inner cities of our land has also happened in many parts of rural Britain. Hundreds of churches, chapels, and mission halls have closed in the last two decades; very many more are barely able to maintain any meaningful witness, beyond providing occasional services for the few who continue to come.

Population movement in the last quarter of a century has resulted in an exodus of people from the countryside to the larger towns and cities in search of employment, education and entertainment. So, many village areas have become dormitories, with little evidence of the community spirit that once was part and parcel of village life. Of course that isn't the case everywhere—there are still closely knit communities where family ties are strong, and where the changes of post-war years have made less of a mark on the traditional village dweller. But by and large the composition of rural Britain has changed.

As long as ten years ago, planners commented.

'Some villages have predominantly middle class, managerial or professional immigrants (as high as 35 to 60 percent), whereas others have the lower middle class burdened with a heavy mortgage and journey to work costs (between 8 and 25 percent). Some are born in a village, some choose to live in a village, and some have a cheap house on a village estate thrust upon them. Some are rich, have two cars and a dispersed activity pattern; others are poor, have no car, and cannot afford to leave the village.'

A villager is a complex phenomenon, crossing every social barrier. He is no longer a member of a static society. Even if he lives in a small agricultural community, with up to 100 per cent being classed as 'the traditional villager', through the world of television and travel he belongs to the 'global village', and is therefore affected by what happens elsewhere. He is just as susceptible to changing life-styles, opinions and attitudes as a city dweller—only the process may take longer in the village. The planners agree that the term 'urban' and 'rural' have very little meaning as a guide to a pattern of social relationships. Thus there is little difference between the lives of villager or townsman—it is simply size of settlement in which they live that differs.

It is the size of unit in which the villager lives that has to some extent influenced his pattern of living. Because smaller units are not large enough to sustain essential services most have to go from their living area elsewhere for all that contributes to their way of life. Visits to market or the nearest large town for essential commodities, clothing, schooling, medical

services, council services and the like establish a living pattern that affects the Church. Many Christians find it more congenial to travel many miles from their villages (are the towns any different?) to a large church, than risk the spiritual deprivation that would be theirs by associating with a local village chapel—if there is one! Because of this understandable trend, many rural parts are now left with little or no witness to Jesus Christ. The church once the centre and hub of community life is now deteriorating in structure, declining in influence and dwindling in numbers. The congregations that do exist can be said to be largely small—large buildings, small companies. Yet more than one fifth of the total population of the country still live in the country areas. Are they to be neglected by the church in the towns and cities?

When we look at Scripture, we discover that both the Lord and the apostles were concerned for the villages. 'Jesus went about all the cities and villages teaching . . . and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing. . . .' (Matt. 9: 35). Peter and John, after being sent from Jerusalem to Samaria city after a big campaign held by evangelist Philip, 'returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans' (Acts 8: 25). Of course they were concerned for the Gospel to be proclaimed to all and sundry, wherever they lived, and whatever their background. It seems today, however, that few have any concern for anybody—whether they live in cities or villages.

### Growing Churches

Fortunately, the picture is not all black: growth is taking place in some areas. I was recently told of a Devon village assembly that has grown five-fold in the past five years and is having to rebuild to accommodate the numbers coming. I know of another, also in Devon, that was said to be at a very low ebb ten years ago, but now has over seventy 'in fellowship'. The fruit of assembly outreach in rural areas in the past is still to be seen today. Perhaps the lessons that our forbears have to teach us can be applied to our modern needs with profit. Many Devon villages have assemblies which came into being during the revival period at the beginning of the century. The work of Norris and Trew in the South Wales area resulted in the start of many of today's valley assemblies. The influence of the Brealey family from 1863 to 1973 in the Blackdown Hills resulted in a quality of Christianity known and respected throughout the area.

Two years ago a survey of some twenty village churches of less than 60 membership each was undertaken to determine what common factors could be attributed to the growth they were experiencing. The result was not surprising but interesting. 1. *Growth in maturity and relationships.* The quality of spiritual life had improved in all through Bible Study



and prayer. As a consequence this had healed and strengthened relationships, encouraged outreach, and increased numbers.

2. *A growing church is a praying church.* Every church had a prayer meeting—some in mid-week fellowships, others in homes. When we pray specifically for people and situations, we will often find ourselves becoming the means whereby the answers to prayer can be achieved. Thus prayer must precede and accompany any action or outreach.

3. *Leadership played an important part.* Sometimes the dedication and initiative of one person was the key in a growing church. But in each case it was not leadership 'from the front' from a strong personality that was the factor, but from one able to encourage by example, love and concern the greater participation of all members.

4. *Visitation and Friendship.* In every case the building of friendships with non-Christians, and visitation and hospitality, were bridges which God used to bring about conversions. This is important, if the sense of community spirit that once existed in village life has been lost. With little else to occupy them in a rural community, people will respond to genuine friendliness.

5. *There must be change.* In each case the programme of the church had changed in the past five years. Old ways, forms of service, types of activities have somehow not been right, or our village churches would have a different story to tell. In an age of change, there must be a willingness for change in the church. The message of the Gospel is one of perpetual change, and if the church is therefore resistant to change it is in danger of denying one of the basic tenets of the Gospel it proclaims. Christ changes us when we become Christians, the process is continued as we live the Christian life (2 Cor. 3: 18), and will be complete when He returns (1 Cor. 15: 51). Villagers are reputedly more resistant to change than other sociological groupings. So if the Christian message and ministry can be shown to be producing change for the better in people and in the church and in the community, it is bound to have an effect.

6. *Personal evangelism productive.* This is a natural follow-on from the building of bridges of friendship. But it was seen to be almost entirely the reason for the conversions that took place. I'm not sure how that reconciles with 1 Cor. 1: 21, but nevertheless it is a fact of life today. We must be willing to be more than friendly; we must also be willing and able to give a valid and meaningful 'reason for the hope that is within us'.

These findings, spread over every type of village, are not new. Many have been saying these same things for years. We must deduce that the lessons, whilst perhaps being acknowledged as being valid, have nevertheless not been implemented, or we would have far more growing churches in rural Britain. Every village church could, with value, discuss these points within its membership, in an attitude of

submission to the Lord, respect and regard for each other, and in an atmosphere of prayer and deep yearning before the Lord. Then apply the principles. **Unevangelized villages**

We may not live in a rural area, or we may belong to a church that is live and growing—does that exempt us from involvement somewhere else? Not really. For wherever our 'Jerusalem' is, we all have 'Judeas, Samarias and uttermost parts' that need the Gospel. But what might be done to change the scene? Firstly, let us see the way in which a full-time worker, settling in a rural unevangelized area, can, over a period of time, bring about a considerable change in the spiritual climate.

1. *Aim at an area.* By living in the rural area, and working from home, an evangelist or church planter can develop a strategy over a period of years, that is appropriate to the needs of the area.

2. *Build for the future.* Instead of merely maintaining the status quo, he has the opportunity to look to the future prosperity of the church in his area. Thus a number of evangelists have evolved activities, and patterns of working that have this in mind. One evangelist produces a series of large visual aids, trains young men in the use of them, and then leaves the materials in their hands for continual use among children. He follows this up by a regularly organised day seminar for those involved in children's work. Many others return again and again to the same group of villages, with teams of helpers, working towards the day when there will be enough Christians, indigenous to the area, to form a church.

3. *Church planting.* Increasingly the Counties evangelists are working and praying towards the establishment of new churches in spiritually deprived areas. The presence of a resident evangelist over a period of time enables such to take place. He then can encourage and be a part of the growth, numerically and qualitatively, of the church. At present six Counties evangelists are personally involved in the early growth of a church started as a result of their ministry in rural areas.

4. *Develop a Programme.* Instead of engaging in evangelism that merely responds to invitations to established churches, and which may have no overall strategy in view, by being resident in an area an evangelist has the opportunity to develop a programme based on a thorough understanding of all the local, spiritual, social and cultural factors. So the evangelism programme arises out of the local situation rather than being imposed upon it. As a result, relationships can be established with non-Christians and Christians alike; with secular bodies, councils and education authorities, as well as with other churches, house groups and individual Christians. Respect has time to grow. Again, quoting from the experience of Counties evangelists, as the work develops in an area the evangelist will introduce new factors to cope with the developing need. He himself allows his own gift the opportunity to develop

as he responds to changing spiritual circumstances.

**Staying in an Area**

For 15 years Victor Jack has been the resident evangelist in West Suffolk. During that time he has concentrated his efforts, through church based and tent missions, on a target area within 30 miles radius of his own home. It is mostly a sparsely populated rural area. Almost 100 missions have been conducted, 8,000 Emmaus Bible courses completed, and two new fellowships established. Arising out of the blessing experienced and the needs identified, four booklets were written for young people—three on the initial stages of becoming and being a Christian, and one on baptism. Initially written just for his own area, these booklets have now been translated into many other languages and are available in many parts of the world. He began also a Bible School ministry (another name for a series of systematic teaching and learning sessions) to cater for the unmet needs of young Christians. Coupled with this was the commencement of week-long houseparties for further instruction, fellowship and pastoral help of youngsters from a widely scattered area. A careful balance was kept in the early stages to ensure that those who needed to benefit most were able to come. So half would come from non-Christian homes, half were new converts from the previous twelve months. Soon more in-depth teaching was required as advance was made in the Christian life by some. So houseparties for potential preachers, young married couples, Sunday school teachers, and on missionary work were arranged. Soon a Conference centre was needed to cope with the constantly recurring needs in this regard. So Sizewell Hall, with room for over 80 occupants, was acquired, and a full-time warden appointed.

As an outcome of all this, 12 Suffolk youngsters have gone abroad as missionaries, 3 have joined Counties work as evangelists. Previously none had gone from the area into full-time Christian work from assembly sources for many years. Many more are now in positions of responsibility and leadership at colleges, universities and in employment. Because he has *remained in the area*, it has been possible to establish strong and well-respected links with local authorities, social services, youth clubs and other churches. Openings regularly into schools are legion. Invites come to speak at school speech days, Christmas and Easter functions; a whole day seminar arranged annually in school time for 5th and 6th, formers of West Suffolk schools attracts on a volunteer basis over 200 youngsters. Local radio opportunities occur from time to time.

God has undoubtedly blessed the consistent and concentrated efforts over this period. The same kind of development is also occurring in other counties where an evangelist is prepared to look long-term at his prime area of responsibility.

In East Suffolk, John Sparkes has concentrated

primarily on an area within 10 miles of his home in Halesworth. There was no distinctly evangelical witness in this region, although there were one or two pockets of Christians. Five years ago he started with a small group of young converts from a tent mission, meeting weekly in his home. By *staying in this immediate area*, concentrating on one-to-one relationships, visiting homes of Christians and contacts, witnessing to neighbours and friends, the work has grown, and God has brought many to Himself. There are now 6 weekly house Bible study groups in 6 separate villages around Halesworth, eight weekly house meetings for children, and other activities for young people and for worship together. The main public hall is used occasionally for special events, like a family film night, carol service and other seasonal services, and for rallies for the Christians in the area. The sense of community in the body of Christ has been encouraged, although this has inevitably been time-consuming as personal problems have been dealt with over a period of time, and the love of Christ has been allowed to triumph.

The Sparkes have moved into a 7 bedroomed house in order to be able to 'extend' their sense of community and love to some who might need prolonged care that can best be given in a home environment. Two others have joined them in the work, pretty well full-time. The maturity and growth of the Christians there has been remarkable. Their desire for spiritual reality and the knowledge of God's Word is such a contrast to the half-heartedness of so many. In summer time, two or three tent missions are held in nearby villages, with the intention that the witness should ever widen into the surrounding area. The 'converted' from the Halesworth area provide the personnel for the many forms of outreach involved. Their commitment—day and night—ensures that the message preached is also lived.

In West Sussex, David Iliffe has concentrated from his south coast home on an area known as the mid-Sussex barren belt, situated away from the retirement and tourist resorts. By *concentrating on this locality*, the Iliffes have seen the climate change in the past 12 years. There are now Christian groups functioning in more than half a dozen places. All the activity in the area—visits to over 40 schools on a regular basis, houseparties, camps for children, day seminars for young people, monthly area children's clubs—all are inter-related. As a consequence, Christians, once isolated and often feeling alone, have been able to discover fellowship with many others like themselves, and this has strengthened their witness. Hitherto dead churches have been revived; Two full-time evangelists from the area are now with C.E.W., one having settled in Petworth in the centre of this barren area, particularly to help the growing church that has started in his home. The local town hall becomes the venue for area activities, attracting up to 200 people each time. 'The more you stay in an area', says David Iliffe, 'the more you become known.'

You just have to stay'. Having said that, he is now able to concentrate more on a roving ministry in training others to reach children, with his colleague John Riddell firmly established as the resident evangelist in the mid-Sussex area.

In all these cases quoted—and there could be others—the evangelist has only been one person among many others involved. Without the dedication and commitment of other Christians to identify themselves with a young work—sometimes to move house specifically to be in a better position to help—none of this growth could have occurred. This merely underlines the need within the body of Christ for each member to function to the mutual benefit of the other members. 'When each part is working properly, . . . makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love' (Eph. 4: 16).

### Conclusion

What lessons can we draw from the experience of others to help us, particularly if we live in a rural area which has no resident evangelist, and where the church may be weak or non-existent in any identifiable form? Or perhaps the fellowship to which we belong could do something more to take the Gospel to nearby villages—where do we start, what can be done?

1. *Co-operation.* We need the fellowship of others. If we live within a rural area, we need the fellowship in prayer and action of whatever Christians might live there, and we need to identify who they are, irrespective of denominational affiliation. The people best able to reach a village are the Christians who already live there. Co-operation can also take place over an area, as in West Sussex. The experience of 'Tell Yorkshire' in the late fifties showed that it was possible for assemblies to co-operate for the purpose of reaching out into the villages and towns without a 'testimony'. That outreach took detailed planning, involved two or three personal visits to every home in the target area, the provision of a Bible correspondence course, and further visits to homes where particular interest in spiritual realities was shown. All this took place before an evangelist came on the scene—it was a co-operative effort, with young and old spending the majority of their summer Saturdays, and some week-nights, in travelling into the countryside to make Christ known.

2. *Adopt a village.* An assembly or church in a nearby town could 'adopt' a village—perhaps one in which one of its members live. Then as the church begins to pray specifically for the village, its needs, its people, a concern will be established, within which evangelistic forays over a period of time can take place, with the village becoming a kind of 'mission outpost'. The manner in which that evangelism takes place may vary from place to place. If a sense of rural community spirit does not exist, the nearby church's interest may well help to establish such a spirit, within which the Gospel will then have particular relevance. The Gospel of Christ must be seen to be meeting the most recognizable need in a locality, as well as the spiritual need of the individual, if a community is to be won over to the Lord.

3. *Start a house group.* Whether one lives in a village, or visits a village for evangelistic purposes, the commencement of a house group will be a key to the start of anything long-term in the area. In nearly every case where a church has been started in a rural area in recent years, the house group has been the starting point. Sometimes an 'interested' non-Christian will be willing for their home to be used as a venue for others, who will generally be known to the owner, to gather to pursue their common spiritual interest. Homes are the most natural environment in any neighbourhood for the encouragement of fellowship among Christians and for sharing one's faith with neighbours in an informal spontaneous way.

4. *'Pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers'* (Matt. 9: 38). God will cause people with ability and His concern to move into an area in response to the prayer of faith. Many times over has this occurred, when people have prayed.

The dark villages of Britain are still dark. But they can be illumined, if we trust God for His pattern and power. All that is needed is prayer, faith, personnel, enterprise, and an ear to hear what the Spirit is saying to us. There is blessing in the villages—there can be more.

*Footnote*—The emergence of Postal Sunday School, sometimes coupled with an ambitious exhibition at an agricultural show, is resulting in thousands of children and parents in rural areas being informed about Biblical truth. The climate is changing!

## Book Review

### CAN BRITISH CHURCHES GROW?

Compiled by Robin Thomson, BMMF. £2.95

The question 'can British churches grow?' would at first sight seem to be an irrelevant one. Of course the answer is yes; it is taken for granted that British churches like any other churches around the world can and should be growing. Yet the question remains, do they?

The fact that there are numerous churches in Britain that are not only stagnant in terms of church growth but also in a state of declension needs to be accepted. This book does not seek to outline the need but instead to give principles by which a church can grow. It is essentially a work book, a book that

is a course designed for personal study. It is made up of nine units of study material and an appendix. The study material considers such subjects as the setting of objectives, what is happening within the church, what are the growth factors within a church, how does the church get moving and who does it, etc., etc. The course is not intended for theoretical study alone, it is meant to be used in the context of a particular assembly. Leaders within a church and others concerned with the growth of their churches would therefore do well to give this book their utmost consideration. It cannot be recommended highly enough. Perhaps this is the sort of book many assemblies have been looking for to help them plan their evangelistic outreaches.



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# New Towns as Mission Areas

Brian Mills  
and Barrie Leete

*A review of strategy for evangelism in new towns, in the light of the experience of Barrie Leete, who has been an evangelist in the new city of Milton Keynes for three years.*

In 1971 the Evangelical Alliance published the report of its New Towns Study Group entitled *Evangelical Strategy in the New Towns*. Based upon extensive research into fourteen books, papers and reports, and the investigation of church life—ecumenical and evangelical—in twenty-one new towns, it represented a major piece of work by the specialists involved. But how practical were their suggestions? What difference have their conclusions made to the Church and its task in this country, and more particularly in the new towns themselves? Or was it a useful exercise, which church leaders have conveniently forgotten because it raised too many radical challenges to our preconceptions? As one reads through the pages of the report again, this is the impression that is overwhelmingly gained.

To be realistic, possibly the only way to evaluate the tangible results of that report would be to engage in another costly research exercise of new town churches, but the risk would be that the report, once published, would raise a few eyebrows and then once more be conveniently forgotten.

The report threw out a challenge. That in the new towns existed thousands of rootless people, whose spiritual needs were largely unmet, but who by reason of their unsettled way of life, were wide open to militant evangelism and Christian concern. That challenge has, sadly, mostly gone unheard. Where it has been taken up, the problems which the report highlighted have generally been reproduced.

To give some means of testing the current scene, we review here some of the conclusions of the report alongside the recent experience of Barrie Leete who moved into the new city of Milton Keynes three years ago from rural Somerset, specifically to engage in evangelism alongside the Christians that were there. His only qualification for this was a desire to share his faith with others, a working class background, and a young wife—all of which seemed necessary prerequisites for any meaningful building of relationships.

He also had a copy of *Evangelical Strategy in the New Towns*!

**Barrie Leete:** 'Milton Keynes, a purpose-built city designed and planned to meet the needs of thousands of people seeking for security, recreation, a home and friends. Is this new "city of trees" as it is called, meeting the real needs of those who leave their old home surroundings and decide to start A NEW LIFE IN MILTON KEYNES? The new city draws its people from over-populated areas, mainly London, and seeks to give them new homes, new jobs and a new environment which will be

ideal for all age groups. When the new city is complete it will house and provide work for nearly  $\frac{1}{4}$  million people, and should be—so they tell us—an ideal place to be!

My wife and I are working in and around the city area, seeking to be used of the Lord in sharing and helping the people among whom we live.

For the first year in the city, we were loaned a house by a Baptist minister who was spending a year in the USA. During that time, we went through the normal procedure to obtain a Development Corporation rented house which would house us and provide room to carry out our work. Many of the houses however were either too small for our storage of equipment and office space, whilst others were on estates where, due to thin walls, it would have been unsuitable to have people into the house for any kind of meeting, except perhaps a silent prayer meeting! At last we did find a house which seemed reasonable for our needs, but, the whole estate which was being developed had a serious fault; we waited on the list, often being told that we would be in within a week, but nothing happened. In the meantime our minister friend had returned so we had to find lodgings. We were offered no temporary accommodation by the Development Corporation. Any house we were offered was too small for our work. The house we now have is still not large enough and we have problems with black mould on the walls. From things I see and read about, I am sure that our housing problems are very similar to those of many who come to the new city.

## PROBLEMS

New cities and towns do have problems, and in many ways the Development Corporations are doing their best to provide a suitable environment but there are things which only God can do and also "things which man can do better". We have some excellent leisure centres with just about every kind of activity available. There is a boating lake, car repair workshops for use on a Do-It-Yourself principle; there are footpaths, trees, cycle paths, roundabouts everywhere and . . . more trees! In fact every tree in the new planting has its own computer record—I wonder if we do too!

## Mobility

**Evangelical Strategy:** 'The New Towns are areas of mission because an adequate structure of the church for nurturing Christians and for evangelism does not exist within these towns. There is no evangelical church present in the area of designation for development, or if there are, the ones that exist are small, struggling and geared towards a rural or country town approach. Thus there is an appalling vacuum created by the absence of any established Christian tradition. It takes many years for a real sense of community to be established, and loyalty

to anything is minimal. People are given accommodation strictly fitting the size of their family, and as children come, so they move. This mobility, added to the sense of rootlessness when they arrive makes for instability in the community and greatly hinders the steady building up of life by conversions.'

**BL:** 'There is a great need in the city of Milton Keynes to reach the people with the good news of the Gospel and to help them make friends in the place where they are settling down. We have found that many of the people move from estate to estate; this creates much difficulty in maintaining contact. In our local Sunday School there has been nearly a complete change of children over the last two years, either because of moving to a different area of the city or of moving away from Milton Keynes back to their old town.'

#### Family Life

**ES:** Human resources are also to be seen in the *Christian families* that are to be established in New Towns. Problems in families and other personal relationships can be very great in New Towns. It may be an exaggerated picture, but a Christian family in such a setting can be a palm tree in the desert. The family will not be without stresses, but it will not be without testimony either.

Strategy in such towns can best be seen as placing Christian cells in every place possible. The church is then seen as the place of support and instruction, as well as sacramental worship, for those who are living for Christ in every part of the town.'

**BL:** 'In normal circumstances, a community is able to a certain degree to cope with its own problems; folks visit their neighbours and friends and are able to encourage one another. In a new area this does not seem to work. Friends and neighbours have their own problems and often the tendency is for people to get lower rather than to be lifted up. Marriages are getting destroyed, children are facing tensions which they cannot cope with and the society as a whole lacks real purpose and stability. We are finding that the best way to reach people is to be of help to them, very often in a practical way. When they can see we are interested in their problems, then there is the opportunity to share about the Saviour.'

#### Rootlessness

**ES:** 'There is one way in which the New Towns differ from many areas of mission. It is possible for *Christians to move into New Towns* if they have the right skills and qualifications to offer the community. In speaking of the towns as areas of mission which are open to Christians, we are not saying that there is no sacrifice involved. It is possible to argue, however, that the rewards of participation in a self-consciously new and growing community are great. It is also arguable that to be engaged in Christian work in New Towns is to be engaged in *establishing roots of the Church for generations to come*. These areas of mission demand that Christians move in, and stay in. New Towns tend to have a fairly mobile popu-

lation, particularly in the more qualified strata. To go into a New Town is to begin to grasp the importance of the work that has to be done, but to stay in is to come to terms with the reality of the demands that are being made.'

**BL:** 'Churches in the new city face many problems too. One of which is Christians moving into the city, and then moving away again. Everything is fluid and there is a great need for stickability where relationships can be built up and where a stable Christian witness can be maintained. Our prayer is that people will be renewed in their faith and be open to the Lord's leading and building up, in order to be fitted for the task of reaching people with problems which are very much of a specialist nature. We have faced counselling difficulties where we have been at an utter loss to know what to say or do. It is only as we allow the Holy Spirit to work through us and in us that we are able to be channels of blessing to those around.'

#### OPPORTUNITIES

##### Outside Help

**ES:** 'The New Towns are areas of mission because Christians in them need the *help and support of people at present outside* the New Towns. Christians who move to New Towns have come from diverse backgrounds and often have held little responsibility within the church fellowships from which they come. In view of this they need help to cope with the new problems that are arising, within the Church and within society as a whole. Few Christians are moving into New Towns, and this makes the situation worse, for often they can be isolated, and overwhelmed by the greatness of the work to be done.'

**BL:** 'I see the need for all BELIEVERS to be able to work and pray together. At present there are some groups which are struggling on and others which are fading out. We need one another, to stick together and to reach out to this great stronghold of Satan that it may be won for Christ.'

#### Starting Churches

**ES:** 'New Towns are areas of mission because of the strategic nature of their position. Biblically, we can see how St. Paul worked through the towns of the Mediterranean. He was concerned to establish work in these towns. Following up the initial planting of the church in these places, we can see a spreading-out of the faith into the areas surrounding. Villages and hamlets were brought within the scope of evangelism, because the people in the towns carried their Christian experience and understanding beyond the limits of the towns. New Towns are being established in the setting of rural England. Into rural England the mass media have gone already, bringing many of the urban attitudes but almost nothing of the faith of Jesus Christ. It is possible, with an outward-looking faith, that the New Towns could be of immense importance in the maintenance and strengthening of Christian fellowship in the rural parts of our country.'



**BL:** 'The eyes of the world are on Milton Keynes. Not only would revival in this city affect Great Britain but it would speak to the world too. We have a great God who loves to reach out to the needy folk around. He is STILL THE SAME and is able to work in situations where man has failed utterly. We need Church buildings instead of community centres, we need God-given unity instead of man-made togetherness, we need prayer and the ability and strength to go on . . . and on . . . and on in bringing New Life to the New City of Milton Keynes' **Challenge for The Future.**

**ES:** 'New Towns are areas of mission in the sense that they require consecrated support from those who live elsewhere. The nature of New Towns is such that the kind of work we would want to see established could take many years of supported work before external support can be withdrawn. New Towns are areas of mission because of the large number of unconverted people present in them. The people who move to New Towns are not representative of those found within our churches. If they come from the denser urban areas it is statistically unlikely that they are Christians. In practice, we find that in the New Towns there is less allegiance to the Church and to Christ than there is in the population at large. This is accentuated because the suburban fringe that supports a large amount of Christian work in the

urban areas is not present. In the New Towns we must come to terms with the way in which people live and recognize that their culture is something different from what we expect of Christian people in the strongholds of evangelical churches. There is a cultural gap between the typical evangelical Christian and most of the people in the New Towns, and indeed in the urban centres of our country. That gap is not necessarily a gap created by Christ. It is substantially a gap created by us to protect ourselves from a living encounter with unbelief. The challenge of New Towns is seen in bringing Christians into the position where they can talk and act in a way that expresses Christ to unbelievers in ways which they understand, even if they reject. Perhaps we will see a new expression of evangelical faith emerge. It may be very different from anything we have ever known in this country so far. We are sure that if it duplicates the suburban churches where we have so far managed to hold on to fairly healthy numbers, it will not be a work that God is demanding of us. It will have been a retreat into what we already feel secure in, rather than an adventure with God in what He is wanting to do in the New Towns!'

**ES:** *Evangelical Strategy in the New Towns* 126 pp. Scripture Union 60p.

**BL:** Barrie Leete.

## World News

### Algeria

The North Africa Mission reports surveillance by the authorities of both expatriot and national Christians.

### Israel

Operation Mobilization have reported good sales of Christian books in secular bookshops.

Fear of persecution causes many believers to remain secret.

### India

In West Bengal requests for Bible correspondence courses have been overwhelming. Alternative follow up for responses to literature distribution are being considered. In one district of Gujarat there is no known believer in a population of one million.

A unique outreach called 'Sat Sang', an approach specially developed to reach Hindus, is to be used in outreach to the major cities of India. It is estimated that 98 per cent of India's population has not been reached effectively with the Christian message.

### Singapore

The five day Billy Graham Crusade in Singapore last December has been described as the largest religious event in the island's history. Over ten thousand of the capacity crowds at the National Stadium indicated first time decisions for Christ; the majority were young people.

### Bolivia

The Aymara Indians of Bolivia have formed a missionary association to sponsor their own missionaries—to the Navajo Indians of North America.

Recent reports indicate that one church a week is being established among this tribe of one million.

### Turkey

The draft of the Living Bible in Turkish was completed in November of last year. It is not yet ready for publication however.

### Peru

Two leading evangelicals are currently helping draft a new constitution for the 15 million people of Peru. They are members of the 100 member Constitutional Assembly called to incorporate changes made during the country's 11 year socialist military rule, before elections are held for a civilian government.

### Poland

Invited by the Polish Baptist Union and the Polish Ecumenical Council Billy Graham experienced good response from a country whose population is estimated at 35 million. Of that number 90 per cent are Catholics and for the first time in his life Billy Graham delivered evangelistic messages in many Catholic churches. Reports coming in after his visit have been very encouraging.

### Mexico

Over 3000 responded to the Gospel in Vera Cruz during a joint crusade with Luis Palau and M.V. Doulos personnel.

### Gospel Literature Outreach

plan several crusades on the continent at Easter and in the Summer. For further information write to Training Centre, Dalziel North, Muir Street, Motherwell, ML1 1BN, Scotland.

## Readers' Forum

*Readers' Forum* is open to contributions from Readers. Please send suggestions from practical experience, related to church activities or christian living; doctrinal or expository questions; useful experiences; what-you-will; to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX. Questions, to which other readers will be invited to submit replies, will also be published from time to time as they are received. It is hoped that readers will take full advantage of this feature.

In the May *Readers' Forum* Mr. L. L. Fox raises a question of interpretation which is often loosely put forward as an easy way out of the apparent contradiction between *I Cor. 11: 5* and *I Cor. 14: 34* on women speaking in the churches. He feels that the matter deserves closer examination. Comments are invited.

### Do the words 'assemble as a church' carry a special technical sense?

1. It was not until 1978 that I started to read *The Harvester* on a regular basis. January's 'This month's question' concerned the role of sisters 'in the assembly' and I had the feeling 'this is where I came in over 40 years ago!' The correspondence on this and other topics throughout the year has been enjoyable and informative, and Mr. Miles's point (Jan 78) about our being called to exercise faith hope and love was well made. Even so, I wonder whether you would allow me through your correspondence column to pose a question that has not, as I see it, received the detailed attention it deserves.

2. May I set the scene? It seems to me that there is a distinction to be made between (a) determining, as accurately as we can at this distance, what the text of scripture says and what those who first read—or heard read—Paul's epistles, for example, would have gathered that Paul was telling them; and (b) interpreting how those same scriptures are to be applied in our particular circumstances today. My question is of the (a) variety.

3. When we read *I Cor.* in the RSV and in JND's translation it is clear from both that Paul begins a fresh section of his letter at what the AV calls *I Cor. 11: 17*. This new section, running to at least the end of *I Cor. 14*, is concerned (verse 18) with the members of the church at Corinth 'when you assemble as a church' (RSV); 'when ye come together in assembly' (JND); 'when you come together as a church' (NASB), with a note that literally it is 'in church'. Consideration of *I Cor. 11: 17* to *I Cor. 14: 40* together with *Eph. 5: 18, 19* and *Col. 3: 16* reveals that the hallmark of the coming together of the members of a local church 'in assembly' (not 'in the assembly') is that there is opportunity for the Lord to speak through whomsoever he will—through the prophets, for example, by two or by three, and for any or all

of the men to address God audibly; it is as we say an 'open meeting'. An attempt at an approach to this type of coming together is seen in the traditional Brethren meeting for the breaking of bread if there is no pre-arranged ministry of the word; the 'open' prayer meeting, too, partakes in part of this 'in assembly' character.

3.1 By contrast, when the members of a local church assemble, usually on Sunday evening, for the typical 'gospel meeting' they are there as lending their support to someone who has been invited to conduct the whole meeting; that kind of arranged gospel meeting is most definitely not a meeting at which the prophets have opportunity to speak by two or by three—it is not a coming together 'in assembly'.

4. The question can now be put. It is: 'The verses from *I Cor. 11: 17* to *I Cor. 14: 40* are concerned with the coming together of a local church 'in assembly'; do verses *I Cor. 11: 1-16* refer to the coming together of a local church 'in assembly', or do they not? If we could obtain an acceptable answer to this question we should be better placed to take up the study of women's role.

4.1 One answer would be that as *I Cor. 14* deals with coming together 'in assembly' and ordains the silence of women, but verses *I Cor. 11: 1-16* cater for sisters speaking, therefore *I Cor. 11: 1-16* cannot be referring to a coming together 'in assembly', whatever other kind of 'meeting' *I Cor. 11: 1-16* might be referring to. However, there have been those who held that women should be silent when a church comes together 'in assembly' but yet have had ways of explaining, at least to their own satisfaction, that nevertheless *I Cor. 11: 1-16* referred to coming together 'in assembly'. On the other hand there have been those, of no less stature (JND notably) who have pointed out that *I Cor. 11: 17* begins a new section of Paul's letter; that that new section is all about coming together 'in assembly'; and that *I Cor. 11: 1-16* must refer to some other kind(s) of occasion.

5. The question is, I submit, worthy of detailed study and if you saw fit to publish this letter I would hope that any who provide answers would feel they should deal with the matter in depth, and would supply chapter and verse for the views they express.

## Question and Answer

(continued from p.139)

practice of 'listening' may open the mind to subconscious or merely psychic influences rather than to the Holy Spirit.

More generally, the movement is suspected of offering simplistic solutions to complex problems and is accused of claiming success in areas where other knowledgeable people have not been conscious of any change.

*Note:* Following the appearance of Question & Answer 132 (February 1979) a friend has written to say that much that was formerly regarded as distinctive Honor Oak teaching has in fact been abandoned so that (to that extent) the answer is of historical interest only.

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## Replies to Professor Bruce

### The March Question

Mr. Miles' letter on 'The Perspicuity of Scripture' in the November issue of *The Harvester* presents a whole series of questions each of which calls for a considered answer. But as one who has for long subscribed to the acknowledgment of the Bible as 'the only infallible rule of faith and practice', let me put to readers one question which his letter suggests. In appealing to the Bible for a ruling in the realm of belief or conduct, are we as justified in appealing to its exceptions as to its regularities? Thus, when appeal is made to Deborah or Huldah as precedents for the ministry of women, is it a sufficient answer to say, 'Ah, but these were exceptions'?

### Mr. H. L. Ellison replies:

God's purpose in creating man involved of necessity a revelation of His character and purpose, which had to grow ever deeper. It is useless our asking what form this would have taken had man not fallen, but because of the fall it has had to take place among those who have been crippled in all parts of their being and who live in a marred world. It is God's desire that we should know Him and enjoy Him for ever, and in Jesus Christ He has provided the means by which this can be attained.

How difficult this task has been is suggested by the fact that God waited at least six thousand years before He really began the process in the call of Abraham; another two thousand were to elapse before the Saviour was born, and another two thousand have passed before the day in which every knee is to bow in the name of Jesus. Much happens in the schools for mentally and physically handicapped children that the ordinary College of Education would never contemplate. We should not be surprised then that God has accepted much, which we regard as exceptions, e.g. David's eating of the Shewbread.

On the other hand we equally, though perhaps more rarely, find normal rules of education ignored with the exceptional pupil. Even so the history of Christianity contains numerous examples of those who ignored what seemed to be God's clear rules and yet were richly blessed by Him. Often, however, their imitators found that they had landed in real difficulties.

Let us take the example given in the question. To most it is clear (alas not to all!) that in the creation purpose of God man and woman are complementary, forming one unit in which one cannot speak of one or the other being more or less important. This was marred by the fall, but was in principle restored in Christ, in whom there is neither male nor female. The ascended Christ has given His gifts as it pleases Him, and who dare question His wisdom or authority? Paul is concerned that these gifts be used to the glory of God in a way that will demonstrate God's will for original unity and harmony.

It seems fair to say that the normal points to what will generally be best, but the exceptional reveals what the normal is intended to produce. One is taught at school that 'the exception proves the rule', which means that it tests it. The exceptions in Scripture help us to test our understanding of the normal, whether it is correct or not.

### Mr. I. M. Sutton replies:-

Whether we are justified in dismissing 'exceptions' or not, I feel that such an appeal is tactically a very dangerous one. Who is to say that we are not in the middle of just such an exceptional situation ourselves? In other words, we are inviting the retort: 'Agreed, but that simply proves that in an exceptional day such as the present we are justified in setting aside the regular.'



# Looking at Books

## Aspects of Church History

**THE CHURCH. ITS CHANGING IMAGE THROUGH TWENTY CENTURIES** Volume 2, 1700 to the Present Day. Eric G. Jay. S.P.C.K. 227 pp. £3.50 (paperback).

This second volume of Prof. Jay's survey of ideas held about the Church throughout its history is to be warmly welcomed. On a subject like this one cannot afford to be ill-informed, even though one disagrees strongly with many of the views in question.

The author has chosen (wisely) to be selective, and thus be in a position to give good coverage to the representative thinkers of his choice. It would be churlish to criticise his selection. The period under review is divided into two parts, covering the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the twentieth century respectively. Each part is introduced by a general survey, the second of which turns out to be a potted history of the ecumenical movement. The account given of the various views is generally fairminded, but it is astonishing to read the statement that Anglican Evangelicals possessed 'the conviction that the sole work of a Christian minister is to convince hearers that justification is by faith alone in the efficacy of Christ's atoning sacrifice' (my italics).

This volume will be of particular value in introducing readers to the ecclesiology of recent writers like Barth, Tillich and Küng. Those who are unfamiliar with the ferment of ideas in the Roman Catholic Church today will find Küng's ecclesiology breathtaking—if not unbelievable!

Review by Dr. Harold H. Rowdon, London Bible College

**THE FALL OF JERUSALEM AND THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH** S. G. F. Brandon S.P.C.K. 294 pp. £6.50 (large paperback).

This is a paperback reissue of a pioneer study of the effects of the Jewish overthrow of AD70 on Christianity. It was first published in 1951 and has since become a classic. The second edition in 1957 enabled the author to take some account of the evidence of the Dead Sea Scrolls and recent studies of the *Corpus Paulinum* and the *Markan Apocalypse*. The author died in 1971.

Professor Brandon's thesis is that Christianity is 'twice-born': once at the Resurrection and again in AD 70. He argues that the destruction of Jerusalem in AD70 emancipated the infant faith from its Jewish cradle, thus making possible its career as a world-religion. He claims that it was Paul who proclaimed Jesus of Nazareth as Lord and Saviour of all mankind; that when Paul was arrested (AD55 according to Brandon) the church at Jerusalem was left free to propagate its own form of Christianity as a Jewish Messianic sect; and that this crisis was only averted by the overthrow of the Jewish state in AD70. The synoptic gospels are then seen as reflecting the post AD70 fusion of the Pauline idea of the Saviour God and the Jewish church's christology of the Jesus of history. The survivors of the Jerusalem church are depicted as fleeing to Alexandria (not to Pella as Eusebius says they did) which becomes a centre of Jewish Christianity from which the Gospel of Matthew, the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Epistle of James emerge.

This is a closely argued and well documented thesis which demands to be answered point by point. It is based on a careful examination of the NT documents and other relevant literature, but the author feels free to question the historicity of biblical writings like Acts and drives too big a wedge between Paul's christology and that of the Jerusalem church. It must also be noted that on many points the NT documents are silent and the author is thrown back on to conjecture. It would be well to read this book in conjunction with Dr. J. A. T. Robinson's recent book, *Redating the New Testament*,

in which he argues that the absence of any references in the NT to the events of AD70 means that the NT documents were all written before that date. Despite one's doubts about some of the conclusions of this thesis, it is a fascinating study which has drawn attention to the importance of AD70 for the history of Christianity.

Review by John W. Baigent, West London Institute of Higher Education.

**GOD SENT REVIVAL. THE STORY OF ASAHEL NETTLETON AND THE SECOND GREAT AWAKENING** J. F. Thornbury. Evangelical Press. 230 pp. £2.60 (paperback), £3.50 (clothbound).

**FROM OFFICE TO PROFESSION** Donald M. Scott. University of Pennsylvania Press. 190 pp. £9.30.

The Puritans aimed to establish in New England that 'Godly Commonwealth' which eluded them in England. In Connecticut and Massachusetts Congregationalism was the established religion and in the course of his fascinating biography Mr. Thornbury gives a clear account of New England Theology, the moderate Calvinism of Jonathan Edwards, which was the orthodoxy of these churches.

Asahel Nettleton was a conspicuous revivalist during the Second Great Awakening of the 1790s to about 1821. His biographer presents a sympathetic account of this humble and modest man but dramatic and powerful preacher. His methods were the traditional ones of public preaching, private counselling, and prayer meetings during the week: 'he started his public ministry as a 'missionary' in 'waste places', and very soon he gained a reputation as a sort of spiritual surgeon, who was called upon to operate upon congregations which were nearly dead. His success in this is phenomenal by any standards'.

Nettleton was a man of strong conviction opposed to emotionalism and to 'new methods' in evangelism. This led him into controversy with C. G. Finney over the latter's departure from orthodox belief in the depravity of man and the effect of sin and his introduction to New England of what Nettleton saw as the undesirable practice of appealing for converts to 'come forward'. The description of the conflict is somewhat one-sided, and indeed the whole book is consciously written from one particular theological viewpoint—that of Nettleton. This however detracts very little from its value.

Professor Scott's approach is quite different. He examines the institution of the ministry and with no lack of sociological jargon traces its transformation from being a central feature of eighteenth century life, an integral part of the social structure, to exercising a more peripheral influence as an increasingly self-contained and denominationally conscious professional group.

This changing nature of the ministry explains how some of the problems Nettleton fought against came to be. In the eighteenth century the parish minister 'talent spotted' and then educated the potential minister himself before the pious youth moved on to Harvard or Yale. The ordinand was often 'apprenticed' to another minister before going to his own pastorate. Between 1702 and 1794 we are told, 71% of the ministers from Yale served only one church for their entire career.

The Second Awakening stimulated a new evangelistic and missionary concern expressed by 'a vast network of . . . tract, bible, education, home missionary, temperance & sabbath school societies, designed to convert, reform and church the American people'. A systematic 'men for the ministry' campaign recruited larger numbers of ordinands from a wider social background and they were trained in newly-founded seminaries. This development weakened local church authority as the students were now given independent financial aid. The seminaries strengthened denominational as opposed to doctrinal loyalty and standardized not only training but also attitudes.

Scott emphasizes the devastating effect the one-issue fanati-

## Correspondence

Letters should be sent to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX.

Publication of letters does not imply that views expressed are endorsed by the Editor or the Trustees.

### Evangelism by the Local Church

From Mr. Robert Scott-Cook

Dear Mr. Coad,

The article on 'Evangelism by the Local Church' in the January *Harvester*, described the challenge of more consecutive local evangelism and the need for more pastoral-teaching ministry in our local church. If there is anyone, who is currently exercised concerning such a full-time ministry and would value specific fellowship in prayer in this matter, I would be delighted to hear from them.

162 Westbury Road  
Westbury-on-Trym  
Bristol

Yours sincerely  
Robert Scott-Cook

### Hymns and the Second Advent

From Dr. Arthur C. Hill

Dear Sir,

It so happens that I get my *Harvester* by overseas mail and so usually about two weeks after everybody else has got theirs in the old country. However, I would like to make a few remarks about Prof. Bruce's question in the January number of the *Harvester*. He asks the question why it is that the early Brethren and the early hymns of the Brethren emphasized so much the Lord's second coming and nowadays this emphasis is much lower and even infrequent in the new hymns.

I think there are one or two very good reasons for this. I have been associated with the Assemblies in Ontario and Quebec all my life and of course have come to know a great many of the Lord's servants who work among our assemblies, both here and in the old country. The doctrine of the premillennial return of Christ was revived by the Brethren in the early days of the last century and gradually it was pretty well accepted by almost all the evangelical churches. As Professor Bruce remarks, there was a great deal of teaching regarding the Lord's coming, with a special emphasis upon His imminent

return. This was still the case in the nineteen thirties and the nineteen forties and I remember two men, Baptists by persuasion, who said quite freely that they thought we would never see nineteen forty. Our Gospel preachers used the imminent return of the Lord as a strong point in persuading sinners to receive the Lord as Saviour. This whole doctrine was over-emphasized to the place where they neglected the social duties of the church and Christians became known for their knowledge of the doctrine of the Bible rather than for their service to the world around them. This got to the places sometimes where Christians almost withdrew from society and actually had very little impact on it. One of the side effects among our own assemblies was that higher education was discouraged and very few of our men went to college or university and certainly not to seminary.

In our days, I am thankful to say, all this has changed. We still believe in the premillennial coming of Christ and we look for His imminent return but we also realize we have a tremendous responsibility towards those whom we meet with every day. We must serve men in every way we can and show the love of Christ in all our contacts with what we think of as an ungodly society. At the same time, more and more of our aspiring preachers go to college and even to seminary and Assemblies of Brethren are again beginning to turn out a number of real Bible scholars.

I am sure this is the reason for the tendency which Dr. Bruce has found in our recent hymnology.

309 Dufferin Ave.,  
Sherbrooke,  
Quebec J1H 4M5  
Canada

Sincerely yours by His grace  
Arthur C. Hill

From Prof. F. F. Bruce

Dear Mr. Coad,

With regard to a comment by Mr. Geoffrey Robson in his letter in your March number, he may rest assured that Charles Wesley is no more responsible for the stanza 'When we've been there ten thousand years' than John Newton is. I have never discovered who is responsible for it. The first three stanzas of Hymn 221 in *The Believer's Hymn Book* are taken from a lengthy hymn by Wesley, entitled 'At Parting of Friends' (*The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley*, edited by G. Osborn, vol. iv, pp. 280-2), but (regrettably) not in a textually pure form. The original text of what appears as the first stanza in *BHB* is: 'Our souls are in His mighty hand, And He will keep them still, / And you and I shall surely stand With Him on Zion's hill.' But Wesley's last stanza (not reproduced in *BHB*) strikes the authentic Advent note: 'Then let us hasten to the day / When all shall be brought home: Come, O Redeemer, come away! / O Jesus, quickly come!'

The Crossways  
2 Temple Road, Buxton  
Derbyshire SK17 9BA

Yours sincerely,  
F. F. Bruce

## Looking at Books

(continued from previous page)

cism of the abolitionists had in dividing churches into camps, when slavery legally constituted, sustained by the American Constitution and practised by many revered Churchfolk, was denounced as sin. The new crusade against drink was also often bitterly resented by lay-people.

Already in the 1830s Nettleton was attributing spiritual recession to watered-down theology and superficial evangelistic methods. By the 1840 and 50s the spiritual unity of these churches had been shattered. It was this area Mr. Thornbury sadly concludes that 'led the way in the great theological and spiritual apostasy of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.'

The second book is primarily historical and sociological and is mainly of interest to the specialist. The first book, however, is a thrilling biography which deserves to be popular. For Christians who are sceptical of the concept of 'revival' this book is important because it describes extensive revivals of an unusually moderate kind. Nettleton stood against excesses, but believed firmly in the powerful work of the Holy Spirit in revival. Many of us have never seen anything which we would describe as a genuine revival, and are consequently doubtful. We should read this thorough and stimulating book.

Review by Peter Wales and Peter Balaam

### Charismatic Teaching—the March 'Readers Forum'

From Mr. H. L. Ellison

Dear Mr. Coad,

The elders of Birkbeck Chapel are to be congratulated and thanked for a careful and balanced statement. It would be most ungenerous to pick up some relatively minor points that might have been better expressed. I wish rather to point out the need for a second statement, whether by Birkbeck Chapel or by some other group.

What we need is some indication of how the balance here indicated is to be applied in practice, for it deals with an acute form of a perennial problem, for the tension between the traditionalist and the enthusiast—I use these terms because I can find none better—runs right through church history and from it it is clear that each side needs the other. Separation has never provided the answer.

It is easy enough to refer to 1 Cor. 12: 14, but unless we do so in the spirit of ch. 13, we are not likely to solve our problems. This evidently did not exist in Corinth for in the First Epistle of Clement, written about AD90, we find that the bishops (elders) had been expelled, apparently without adequate reason, except that the dominant party did not approve of them. If the traditionalist has his way it very often leads to stagnation, but when the enthusiast reigns, divisions and chaos are all too often the result. We have to find the golden mean between the all things that are lawful and the things that build up.

The Little Manor,  
14 Rosyl Avenue,  
Holcombe,  
Dawlish, Devon

Yours sincerely  
H. L. Ellison

From Mr. Ron Smith  
Dear Editor,

In the ministry of the 'Fishers Fellowship' we often receive letters asking for further light on the so-called 'charismatic movement', especially with regard to speaking in tongues. The following study outline with questions has proved a help to many to discover exactly what the Bible has to say on this important subject. This is an area where personal feelings and experience can so easily, even unconsciously, formulate belief.

First of all, consider the instances where tongues are mentioned (use various translations).

(a) Once in the Gospels (Mark 16: 17).

The 'new tongues' of Mark 16: 17 are the 'other tongues' of Acts 2: 4. These languages were not new, or unknown, in the sense that they had never been heard before. They were

## This month's impact letter

### How do we meet them?

From Mrs. M. H. Lynes

Dear Editor

I have read Mr. Allan's, Mr. Scott-Cook's articles (January) and Mr. Taylor's letter (December) with interest.

While New Testament Church Principles can apply, and always win, I think it is a mistake to try and act as if we are in a New Testament situation. We have no 'New Thing' to report: the resurrection took place nearly two thousand years ago. We are in a situation of apostasy. People have had the light and have heard the truth over many years, but have rejected it.

What then can we do?

We can preach the coming of unmitigated judgement, sooner rather than later, as some sections of the church do.

We can say everything is 'too awful for words', and we can wrap ourselves up in the knowledge that 'we are alright' that 'the Lord looks on us, at least, with favour,' and so go on with our set programme of meetings; preaching the gospel 'faithfully' week by week in our churches, and never mind if only the saved are there to listen.

We can support vast campaigns with our time and money, and invite our friends (if we have any unsaved friends) to hear someone else preach the word. On the way home we may timidly ask 'how did you get on?' and when we are told that the man behind was chewing peppermints, we shut up like a clam. After all we have tried—spent our time and petrol, and it's a pity 'nothing happened'.

The very costly alternative is to try and get inside what the apostle Paul (and many good ones since him) were really like, and what he meant when he said: 'I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win the more; to the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews; to those under the law, I became as one under the law; to those outside the law, I became as one outside the law, that I might win those outside the law; to the weak, I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that by all means I might win some' (1 Cor. 9: 20-22).

What did he mean? We are so afraid of 'letting the side

down' (even becoming 'contaminated by contact with the unclean') 'whatever would so and so think?' 'It's a pity they have so many worldly friends'. How Satan must laugh! What a successful strategy is his: we say we have no time, are too busy, that life is too full. We have the same amount of time that Paul had, and he was a tent-maker as well as an evangelist. Probably the two things went together.

The world today is full of lonely, unsatisfied and anxious people. We have the only answer to their needs, yet we can't seem to get it across. There is only one way. To become as they are—without condescension. In Ezekiel 3: 15 we read 'And I came to the captives, sat where they sat.' Are we prepared to do this? Ezekiel sat there for seven days. No doubt he got dirty and hungry and the ground was hard and uncomfortable, but those people knew that he really cared about them, as he shared their condition with them. No doubt they unburdened all their sorrows and problems and perplexities to him; and although they were guilty, and had turned their backs on God, he was able to give them God's message.

Can we do the same? Oh yes, it will take time. We shan't be able to watch 'the box' so much, or concentrate so hard on our 'ceiled houses' and their gardens. At the end of the day we may feel like Paul 'who is weak and I am not weak?' (II Cor. 11: 29). Are we prepared for this way? The Master, the apostles and many of his servants since have been this way. Perhaps this is why, when people are saved that they are not attracted to our fellowships: because we don't care enough, and all too set in our rigid patterns and other phraseology of one hundred years ago!

But it is no good trying to get alongside people and 'share' with them if we have one eye on the meeting-hall door, or perhaps the building of a new meeting-hall! Jesus didn't preach to make people a new and better brand of synagogue-goers, but to attach them to 'the Church which is His body'. Unless our aims are the same, people will soon realise we just want them to join 'our club' and anything we may try to do will be useless and barren. We must care for people because they are people—made in the image of God.

Moor Farm  
High Halden  
Tenterden  
Kent

Yours sincerely  
M. H. Lynes



simply new languages to the speakers, that is, different from those in which they were accustomed to speak. How many signs (attesting miracles) can you find in verses 17 and 18? How many were fulfilled in the Acts?

## Tongues: a Bible study

(b) *Three times in the Acts* (Acts chapters 2, 10 and 19).

What exactly happened in each case? What was seen and heard? When did these things happen? Who was present at the time? What actual language was being spoken? How were the languages recognised? What was the subject of this speaking in different languages? How did Peter explain this phenomenon (see *Joel 2: 28-32*)? Can we explain tongues in these ways today?

*Acts 10: 46 (please read the entire chapter).*

What exactly happened here? Who was hearing the gospel for the first time? Why was Peter in such a home (28)? What did he explain (24, 25)? When exactly did the Holy Spirit fall upon the people in the house (44)? What were they hearing? How did the Jews know that the Gentiles had become the recipients of God's Spirit? Was this sign gift different from that in *Acts 2: 4-6*? (see *11: 17*). Why were the Jewish believers amazed? Did they consider that the Gentiles' experience was similar to their own (47)? What did Peter then order should take place (48)? Were the new Gentile believers readily accepted by other believing Jews who were not present (*Acts 11: 1, 2*)? How did Peter explain and justify his actions (*11: 15-17*)? Is this same gift given in this same way as the Gospel is being preached? Do some suddenly begin to praise God in languages they have never learned to the amazement of those who know the languages?

*Acts 19: 6 (please read the entire chapter).*

What exactly happened here? Who were these disciples? Had they previously received the Holy Spirit (2)? Could they be considered born again Christians? How far had they understood the gospel? What further revelation did they need (4)? What was the next step of obedience that they took (5)? In what context did they receive the filling of the Holy Spirit (6)? Are we justified in formulating present day practices upon apostolic reports? How was the filling of the Holy Spirit evidenced in their lives? To what extent are we justified in believing that this is normality? How many men were involved here? What other sign gift is also in evidence? That this was probably an initiatory event must be recognised. The Lord was performing many such signs and miracles at this time (*11-17*). It is not uncommon for such special sign attestations to accompany the movement of God (e.g. The dividing of the Red Sea, Elijah calling down fire at mount Carmel, the division of languages at Babel and the speaking in other languages at Pentecost). In each case we accept that these signs are for special purposes and not intended for continued effect. Do some suddenly begin to praise God in other languages and prophesy when hands are laid upon them today? Do those who are unbelievers who are present and who know the languages experience amazement and marvel?

(c) *Several times in 1. Corinthians.*

*1. Cor. 12. (please read in various versions).*

Why is Paul now writing (1)? To what practice does he refer (2)? What did they want to know (3)? Notice the different functions in the same Body. Make a list of them. Are they all in evidence today? If not what are missing? Why? Who divides or distributes the gifts of the Holy Spirit (11)? How many are baptised into the Body by the Spirit (13)? How many are made to drink of that one Spirit (13)? Is there any indication that a spiritual gift is the only evidence of the Spirit's presence? Who has the sovereign right to set the members in the Body as it pleases Him (18)? Can anyone say that he is all parts of the Body? Does God give every Christian the ability to teach (29)? Are all given the gifts of healing (30)? Do all Christians have the gift of speaking in a language that they have never learned? Have we the right to speak in another language, to effect miracles or prophesy, or is the over all

implication of this chapter that sign gifts were being over estimated (31)? What is the twice used phrase concerning the giving of spiritual gifts (18 and 28)?

The teaching of this chapter is obviously in the form of correction to what could become a wrong emphasis. Spiritual gifts are designated to members of the Body for the building up the Body of Christ —the Church. Where so called gifts are causing division, we need to question their authenticity as being of God.

*1. Cor. 14. (please read in various versions).*

In *1. Cor. 12: 1-4* and *14: 1-4* Paul is contrasting heathen worship and its personal gratification, with true Christian worship. The latter always seeks the edification and the salvation of others. Apparently these believers had in their previous days spoken in various forms of ecstatic utterance. This however was not the sign of God at all. The 'worshipper' had experienced a sense of personal elation and release. Such experiences are known even today among non-Christians. Which gifts were they encouraged to pursue? Why should prophecy be chosen before speaking in tongues (12)? Can we detect a check here on a senseless babel that some were still practising, and the encouragement to pursue gifts in the right order? Incidentally notice in the AV that the extra word 'unknown' before tongues is in italics: that is, not in the original. Just the word language is an adequate rendering.

In verses 5 to 12 they are reminded that their speech ought to be intelligible. The illustration of musical instruments is used. If the notes are not distinguishable, then who can recognise the tune? What is the whole point of his argument here? Why? To say the least, the kind of senseless babel, that some seemed to be practising was considered selfish and not to be practised in the Church context (4). On the other hand prophetic utterance, if by that we mean a special revelation of the mind and will of God, was in order. At least it could edify the church (4). If we happen to be given to ecstatic speech, for what should we pray in order to become more mature in our faith (15)? In verses 15 to 20 Paul is making the very important point that in true worship the mind matters. Although he personally spoke in more languages than they all (18), and yet in the Church setting it was the understanding that really mattered (19). To what did he liken those who thought otherwise? It is sad to see an experience being sought today with the predominant motive of attaining spiritual status with the splinter group. What was the purpose of speaking in another language (22)? A sign to whom? What would result if unbelievers heard many languages with a Church setting (23)?

In this precious and important chapter Paul is clearly pointing out the danger of pre-occupation with ecstatic utterances. Such were non-living languages, self edifying and ought not to be practised within the Church context. On the other hand he reminds them that the true sign-gift of speaking in another language is a sign for unbelievers, that they might hear the wonderful works of God and be suitably impressed that it is God who is at work.

What is meant here by the prophecy that causes conviction (24, 25)? How does Paul expect the service to be conducted (26)? What kind of tongue is being referred to in verse 27? Is this a sign gift for the unbeliever? In which case why should it be practised in the Church at all in contradiction to 19 and 22? Or is it a word, a psalm, a doctrine (26) in another language, not necessarily a sign-gift of God. If the latter is true, then the speaker should make sure that there is someone present in the Church who can interpret what he says so that others may profit therefrom. How many should be allowed to take part in this way (29)? What basic Christian discipline is here encouraged (30, 31)? Should those who are moved by the Spirit be out of control (32)? What should characterise the assemblies of God's people (33)? Paul then goes on to correct another wrong tendency and give counsel on another matter of Church discipline. This also is explained away by many today (34-40). Paul very bluntly calls such explainers—ignorant (38)!

96 Plaistow Lane,  
Bromley, Kent

Yours sincerely,  
Ron Smith

# The News Page

Press Day, June 1979, Monday, May 2nd, for Displayed Advertisements, Prayer List, Forthcoming Events and news items (Please send direct to Publisher at 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW)

## Out and About

### Africa

The Uganda Refugee Appeal reports receiving £81,700 in the first three weeks following its launch on February 18. Some churches promoted the Appeal as their Lenten project.

Eric Hutchings reports that four nurses and an ophthalmologist are required for a new eye clinic in Mali. Funds are available but so far no people. Volunteers are needed within about one year and anybody interested should communicate with Eric Hutchings at 13 Lismore Road, Eastbourne.

### Asia

Dr. G. D. James, founder of the Asia Evangelistic Fellowship, reports on his journeys during recent months. In Bombay he shared in planning for the united evangelistic 'Bombay Penetration Plan', the co-ordinator of which is the general secretary of AEF, Mr. K. J. Joseph. In Germany he was present at the Mission Commission sponsored by the World Evangelical Fellowship. He also reports on his preaching tour of USA, including the opportunity to preach the Gospel on NBC TV. He expresses particular gratitude to the friends in Australia who cared for their goods while they were away, and tells us of a full programme of conferences and crusades in Australia, the Philippines, Malaysia and Singapore during the coming months.

## The Bible

### Put the Good News Bible to music

That's the challenge to musicians throughout the country from the Bible Society, publishers of the Good News Bible. They want to see the words of the Bible play a part in the new music being used in churches of all denominations and are making a competition of it. Anyone with an ear for music can take part—solo singers, guitarists, organists, choirs, groups or bands. Words must be based on passages from the Good News Bible, but that does not rule out repeated lines or small alterations to make the lyrics scan properly, so long as the meaning is not lost. Competitors must send a cassette tape of their work. The music can be in any style, traditional or modern. The organisers hope that entrants will choose their favourite passages from the Good News Bible and that this will inspire them to dream up a melody. Tom Houston, Executive Director, says: 'We are not pretending it's easy—nothing worthwhile ever is. That's why we are offering the prizes as an added incentive to potential composers to lift the text out from between the covers of the Bible and give it a new musical dimension. Undoubtedly, the Good News Bible has captured the hearts and imagination of many with its simple dynamic style. People who have never considered reading the Bible before are turning to its pages for help, encouragement, inspiration and teaching. It is bringing a new freshness and vitality to people and above all a new hope. We believe that that hope can be expressed in music.'

Prizes will be: first—£500; second—£300; third—£200; and fourth—£100. The money can be used, however, to enhance the music of a named church, group or school. Entries will be on cassettes so written music is not essential. To encourage the interest of schools, a special prize of £500 worth of musical instruments is offered by the Society and the Salvation Army for the best school entry. The competition closes on June 30th, 1979. Entry forms can be obtained from the Bible Society, 146 Queen Victoria Street, London, EC4V 4BX.

### The Bible in the Inner City

'God's Word speaks to the harsh realities of inner-city life,' said the Rev. Roger Sainsbury, Warden of the Mayflower Family Centre, at a reception held at the Mansion House on February 26 to mark Scripture Union's Bible Reading Centenary.

'Using the Bible daily,' Roger continued, 'changed the whole direction of my life.' He left the 'cosy quads of Cambridge and Bristol' for the inner-city areas—first Spitalfields in London, then Shrewsbury House in Liverpool, then back to London to the Mayflower in Canning Town. 'I can testify to the usefulness of the Scriptures in "difficult times" in the inner-cities—and to the encouragement of the fellowship of the SU family.' He referred also to the relevance of a number of SU publications. 'Looking at the Gospels' he said, 'we have found God's Son as one who is fully human and fully able to identify with the feelings of inner-city powerlessness. Like missionaries overseas, I have learnt from the Bible to distinguish between what is sinful and what is cultural, between culture and Christianity. . . And, whilst I don't believe we can use the Bible as a party political manifesto, I do believe we can use the Bible to help us form right political attitudes to burning issues like unemployment and racism. Bible-using Christians can never have a 'head in the sand' attitude to these problems that affect the daily lives of every man, woman and child in the inner-city. Decisions taken here in the City of London affect the quality of life of many inner-city dwellers. Over the past years, I have felt we must be bold enough to use our Bible in looking at our whole economic life. 'Our concern in this SU Centenary Year is not just for Bible knowledge, but for Bible use and active involvement in all areas of life. We want to make new appointments to the SU staff, people who will use their Bible in the cities, throughout the nation and in the Third World. Our appeal target is £150,000 and so far we have reached £65,000.'

In welcoming the guests at the Reception, the Lord Mayor of London, Sir Kenneth Cork, emphasized his personal belief in the importance of the Bible, and referred to the fact that he had the whole Bible on tape beside his bed at the Mansion House. (Also concerned with the inner-city is a filmstrip designed to be used by churches and Christian groups who may have no direct contact with matters concerning racialism and immigration. 'There's None Around Here' features the lives of people from Bangladesh who live in the Spitalfields/Brick Lane area of East London. Through the eyes of a community doctor we see some of the joys of working with Bangladeshi people, some of the traumatic problems they face and some of the dramatically unhelpful reactions that come from white British Christians. The filmstrip with cassette tape, script and discussion

notes costs £9.95 inclusive and can be obtained from Visual Aids Partnership, 25 Lucien Road, Wimbledon Park, London, SW19 8EL.)

### Books

The fourth annual Christian Booksellers' Convention concluded at the Wembley Conference Centre on Thursday, March 8. More than 700 visitors from 18 different countries attended the Convention. On the Tuesday evening several authors attended a special 'Authors' Evening' when such different speakers as the Rev. John Stott and Fred Lemon shared the same platform. Professor F. F. Bruce was presented with a specially bound copy of the NIV Bible when he was named Christian Booksellers' Convention 'Author of the Year', with special reference to his book *Paul: Apostle of the Free Spirit*.

### Europe

#### PTL Group

The Pocket Testament League Gospel music group, The Sojourners, have a wide-ranging ministry. Originally trained to sing in Serbo-Croat, they were deported by the secret police in Yugoslavia. But they still aim to reach Yugoslavs outside of their own land. They also sing in French and their schedule includes tours in Sweden, Greece (at the universities of Thessaloniki and of Athens) and Grenoble. A series of mini-campaigns in Britain is planned for November. Offers of hospitality in the South East of England between September and December would be welcomed by Peter Honour at 16 Holwood Road, Bromley, Kent.

#### Romania

It is reported that three parcels of 60 Bibles each intended for an evangelical movement within the Romanian Orthodox Church were intercepted by police in January. Under intense interrogation Costan G., a brother from an assembly in Ploiesti, was named as the person passing Bibles from the west. He and his wife are said to be under severe police interrogation. This is only one of a number of similar incidents in Romania.

#### Russia

It is reported that 22 year old Peter Vins was set free at the end of February after 11 months in prison. His father, Georgi, is reported as taken from Moscow to Siberia to continue his sentence.

### Home Evangelism

#### Christian Colportage Association

The annual conference held recently at Pilgrim hall was marked by a sense of expectancy as the future was discussed. Preparations for the rebuilding of the fire-gutted headquarters were well under way, and the Rev. William Guttridge was said to be sufficiently recovered from his serious car accident to be involved in his work as General Secretary. It was announced that the Association would in future be known as C.C.A.—Mission for Home Evangelism. This new name for a work established in 1874, emphasizes the special role of C.C.A.'s Evangelists whose calling is to

go from home to home with the message of the Gospel especially to the many millions who never attend a place of worship. C.C.A.'s motto 'An open Bible in every home' stresses the vital place the Bible has in home visitation evangelism.

The proposed itinerary of the Mobile Evangelistic Unit was outlined at the conference. This year from May to September the Welsh counties of Mid Glamorgan and Powys are the areas to be visited. A rota of evangelists working in pairs alongside local churches will seek to extend the ministry of home visitation evangelism in areas where there is no resident C.C.A. Evangelist.

#### Counties Evangelistic Work Film

'SAY IT' is the title of a new Counties Evangelistic Work film production based on the theme of communication which has just been released. This 30 minute documentary is based on a sermon preached by Doug Barnett, lecturer in evangelism at Moorlands Bible College, when he was special guest at a Counties Send-Off meeting in West Sussex. The theme of his sermon was communication.

The film features evangelists David Iliffe, Dick Saunders, Glyn Morgan and Barrie Leete, also Brian Mills of Counties Evangelistic Work who introduces some of the other Counties evangelists and the new purpose built exhibition unit constructed for use in agricultural shows, carnivals, shopping precincts and villages. Cliff Richard makes a special guest appearance, performing at a Way to Life Rally.

The film was shot in Fittleworth, Croydon, Pontypridd, Milton Keynes and Wokingham, emphasising the preaching of the Gospel where the masses are and contrasting well-attended large-scale meetings in major centres of population with the poorly attended meeting places for Christians in the new city, Milton Keynes, where the spiritual and social needs of the people are so acutely felt.

The film has been produced by a small team of Christian professionals. Three copies are available for immediate use, and Counties evangelist, Reg Whittern, is available to show the film on request anywhere in the country. Bookings should be made to the office of Counties Evangelistic Work at 221 Kings Road, Reading, Berkshire. (Telephone 65299)

**Duncan Leighton** urgently needs a full-time pianist/musical director who is prepared to trust the Lord for provision! He requests prayer for the widow of a man saved a few months ago but now with the Lord—that she might be saved also.

#### Librarians' Christian Fellowship

Some readers may not be aware of the existence of the Librarians' Christian Fellowship. This small but steadily growing fellowship, now affiliated to UCCF Associates, exists to provide opportunities for Christians in librarianship to meet for Bible study, prayer and discussion; to witness corporately and as individuals, within the library world and to the public at large; and to exercise a special concern for the quality and scope of the stocks of Christian literature available to users of non-specialist libraries. Future events include a seminar to be attended by representatives of some evangelical publishers, and a public lecture, planned for the Autumn, which will be



open to all interested librarians, the subject being staff relations within library systems.

The Vice-president of the Fellowship is John Andrews of Lancaster, but inquiries about the work of the Fellowship should be directed to the Hon. Membership Secretary, c/o 4 Salford Road, Ainsdale, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 3JN.

#### **London Bible College**

Michael Griffiths who for the past 10 years has been the General Director of OMF, is to succeed Gilbert Kirby as Principal of London Bible College. London Bible College has been attracting increasing numbers of overseas students and Michael Griffiths' appointment will obviously influence the development of the College in its ministry to the world church. Converted to Christ as a boy at Christ's Hospital School, Michael Griffiths went on to Cambridge University where he studied natural sciences and theology. After this he served three years as Travelling Secretary for the IVF (now UCCF), and in 1957 joined the OMF and went to Japan where for 10 years he was engaged in church planting and university student work. In 1969 he was appointed General Director of OMF. God willing, Michael Griffiths takes up the principalship of LBC in the autumn of 1980.

#### **London City Mission**

'In this age of conflict and pluralism, with its apparent lack of any overriding social consensus, the need for standards and leadership is paramount declared London's Police Chief, Sir David McNee at the Guildhall last week (March 15th). A crowded audience of influential businessmen, Mayors of London Boroughs and supporters of the London City Mission heard him outline something of the needs of our multi-racial society today. 'The Prime Minister had recently put the question "What kind of society do people want?"' he said. 'As Christians we should be in no doubt that what we want is a God-fearing, compassionate and caring community, and these were the very things the London City Mission stands and works for. In so doing they had his wholehearted support and equally that of the dedicated men and women of the Metropolitan Police'. He went on to show that city missionaries and police officers both work to help people in need—in this country when people are in trouble they automatically turn to the police for help. A tradition of service to the community was the very rock upon which British policing was built and police work is concerned with the whole range of man's social problems from birth to death. 'The police had been described' he said, 'As a seven-day, 24 hour fully mobile social service. But London's policemen know that on occasions not far behind them (or even ahead of them) they would find the London City Mission. London's policemen were proud of the service they provide, but they were the first to recognise that the Mission was able to do something extra for people—not only did they provide continuing care for those in physical need, but they provided also for the spiritual needs of the people'. Sir David declared himself basically a simple man—one who wanted to make sense of the world around him and he believed that the lack of standards, leadership and moral guidance was the single greatest contributor to the high rate of crime today. There was a need to spell

out that right was right and wrong was wrong, and all had a responsibility to do that. 'The spiritual lead given by members of the City Mission as they reach out to the citizens of London is an example to us all' he said. 'One thing was certain the work and witness of the London City Mission would not diminish, he personally would like to see it grow. More and more an affluent, sophisticated and complex society will require the work of the Mission. Not just among unfortunate individuals on the Embankment, but also counselling backstage in West End theatres, visiting police stations, and markets and reaching out into the community, the London City Mission will provide an increasingly valuable service to London's multi-racial society'.

#### **Radio**

##### **BBC Radio 2**

Nick Page's 13-week series of Sunday Morning music has been extended and will now run to the end of June. Between 200-300 different hymn titles have been nominated after Nick's invitation to listeners to vote for their top five hymns and Christian songs. Among the guests scheduled for future programmes are Robert Dougall, Edward Heath, Lady Barnett, Burl Ives and Len Murray.

##### **Cambridge Radio Course 1979**

A repeat of this much-praised course is scheduled for St. Catharine's College, Cambridge, from July 16 to August 10 1979, applications being required by May 28. Its intention is to provide Christians already involved in broadcasting or those with experience who wish to extend their skills with an intensive education in radio programme production at a professional level. It uniquely combines philosophy of broadcasting and theology of Christian communications with highly professional production training. Details from Alan Foster, Cambridge Radio Course, 2 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2JP.

##### **Christian Radio Productions of Warley**

It is felt the time has come for the work to be terminated. But their equipment has been placed in the hands of the Far East Broadcasting Association. Some of it will be used in studios in India to make Christian programmes there and the rest by FEBA in various other places for the purpose of their missionary endeavour.

##### **Tear Fund**

Tear Fund's supporters are familiar with Tearcraft which was launched four years ago as a subsidiary trading company to help people in developing countries to produce and market handicrafts. During this period 100,000 customers throughout Britain have bought over one million pounds worth of Third World crafts.

Such has been the growth of the company that last year alone they doubled their sales in this country. In order to maintain this commercial momentum and extend the scope of the operation, Tear Fund has agreed to sell the present assets of the company to an independent Christian trust which will operate under the name of the Traidcraft Trust with wider terms of reference in order to meet the growing opportunities for expansion and thus extend the marketing services for groups throughout the developing countries. Tear Fund, through its on-going Tearcraft department,

will now concentrate on the setting up overseas of new handicraft groups amongst evangelical churches, agencies and missions and help to extend the facilities of groups that Tear Fund has already been supporting. At the same time it will confine its marketing and servicing activities to a limited sphere in this country, acting as a catalyst and specialist sales outlet, providing a comprehensive service and test marketing base for evangelical groups overseas.

Over the next two years Traidcraft will require considerable funds to provide continuity of employment for more than 6,000 people in the developing countries. The immediate financial need is for £60,000 to be raised by June 30. It is hoped to raise this from the growing number of people who recognise their responsibility towards those in poorer nations and see the work of development through craft marketing as an appropriate response. Further details are available from The Traidcraft Trust, Carloli Square, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 6TY.

### UCCF

The past term has seen 24 evangelistic missions run by Christian Unions affiliated to the UCCF in universities or colleges. They ranged from Aberdeen to Swansea and Ulster to London. The first aim has been to reach new people and in this they have been very successful. The interest aroused has quite often surprised the CU members and drawn into the meetings some who are known to be strongly opposed or who appeared beforehand to be totally uninterested. A considerable number in each place are showing continued interest and the CUs are busy trying to integrate them into their Bible study groups and discussion groups. It is a change today to find that many non-Christians are interested in Bible study and this is the ideal method of following up the interest aroused. The UCCF staff who were very heavily involved as Assistant Missioners are now busy helping to train more group leaders. There were in each mission some who professed to become Christians and, in the weeks that followed, there have been others—in several cases more than during the mission week itself. We hope that this will continue as it often has done. Sometimes people who have become Christians a year or two after a mission have said that it all started during the mission and we pray that this will be so again.

Perhaps the greatest thrill has been seeing some of the total outsiders respond, even during the mission week. People who were apparently part of the drug scene and of the wider elements of student life have in some cases professed conversion. In one university the unofficial 'president of the atheists' became a Christian. Students from overseas, brought up in other faiths, have also been reached. It has been notable that the best work has usually been done where the Christians are living in the same residence as their friends and

have shown by their lives as well as their words the reality of the faith. His first preaching engagement was at Umberleigh—where he spent his last eight years. After completing his dental training, he practised in Wimborne, Shaftesbury, Retford and Poole. He was active both in the local church as a good pastor and a wise counsellor and was especially helpful to young people. He was also associated with various conferences: the Young Men's Bible Teaching Conferences at Oxford (later Winchester), the Swanwick Conference of Brethren, and later—arising out of a deep concern—the Wessex Conferences, concerned with Christian home and family life.

It was in more than one respect typical of 'K.G.' that during his last years he was actively involved in promoting spiritual renewal conferences in Devon. In point of fact, one of the landmarks of his spiritual life had been an experience of the Holy Spirit during his late teens, but he had said little of it since it did not conform with 'Assembly' expectations at that time. He had been invited in 1971 to return to Umberleigh and help with the work there, which he did, fortified by the support of his wife. For him, living the spiritual life in the present tense, meant a mind and heart ever open and receptive. One of his family commented that 'he grew more radical as he grew older'. His wife, two sons and daughter survive him.

**Henry Mansfield, OBE, IPFA, FBCS, DPA**, of Cardiff on March 8, 1979. Having commenced as a junior clerk in the City Treasurer's Department of the Cardiff City Council in 1930, he became a City Treasurer and later (1974) the Chief Executive of Cardiff. The funeral service, held at Ebenezer Hall, Cardiff, with which he was associated throughout his Christian life, was attended by the Lord Mayor, Councillors and members of the staff of other local authorities, representatives of the police, fire and ambulance services and various other bodies. Himself a keen student of Scripture and of prophecy, he and his wife, Evelynne, maintained an active interest in the mission field, showing a large heart for missionaries' children during school vacation. He had the joy of seeing his five children trusting Christ, his son, John being engaged in full time service at Pembroke Dock, pioneering the work of the Assembly and the founding of the Haven Conference Centre.

**David Robertson** on March 6, 1979, in Kirkintilloch, Glasgow. Saved when 13 years of age, and received into fellowship in Kirkintilloch a few years later, he remained there until his homecall and will be remembered for his faithful testimony and for his help at Birdstone Hospital, which he regularly visited with a party from the Gospel Hall. Prayer is requested for Mrs. Robertson and the family.

**Theo Snitselaar** on March 7, 1979, aged 53, at Bruges. General Secretary of the Scripture Union France, his unexpected death occurred while he was on his way to the Christian Booksellers' Convention. A former member of the French Resistance, he was equally indefatigable in the Lord's work. Prayer is requested for his wife and children.

### Home-Calls

**Kenneth George Hyland** on March 17, 1979, aged 79. Born at Wimborne and saved while young, 'K.G.' was a conscientious objector during the First World War. He was sent to work on a farm at Chittlehamholt and

# NEW TITLES FROM PATERNOSTER



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# People and Places

## New addresses

**Southport:** will correspondents please note that BRIAN ELLIOTT has now moved from Parbold to 14 Curzon Road, Southport, Merseyside, Tel. (0704) 35604.

## Stewardship

**Home Workers' Fund:**  
Equity House, 450 Hackney Road, London, E2 6QL. Total receipts for the month of March amounted to £170.75.

**Missionaries' Children's Fund:**  
29 Queen Street, London, EC4R 1BH. Gifts received during the first quarter of 1979 are as follows: January £325.05; February £525; March £290.25.

**Retired Missionary Aid Fund:**  
12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies for the month of March amounted to £2246.48.

## Prayer List

Stamped letters addressed c/o The Paternoster Press, Paternoster House, 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter, EX2 4JW will be forwarded to any of those whose names appear below.

Workers are requested to include their names on their cards when returning them each month. We are still receiving anonymous contributions from time to time.

**Burnham, A. E. J.:**  
Calne 1; Bedfordhampton 6; Southsea 9; Andover 10; Southampton 13; Staines 23; also at Selborne and other places.

**Campbell, B.:**  
Falmouth 1-4, 10-24; Carbis Bay 6; Camborne 9; St. Ives 25-31.

**Gillham, S.:**  
Three Cross 1, 17; Dorset/Somerset C.E.W. Preparation Meeting 5; Tricketts Cross, Wimborne 6; Charminster 12, 19; Sturminster Newton 13; Wyke Regis 14; Wallisdown 15, 22; Bournemouth 16; Basingstoke 20; Lyme Regis Crusade 26-10 June.

**Greenaway, G. H.:**  
Hornsey 6; Haverhill 13; Rugby 16; Dereham 27; and visitation work.

**Grimsey, A. W.:**  
Bedford—Bunyan conducted tour 7; with David Ryan (Brazil) U.F.M. Deputation Tour 21-28; Norwich 21; Briston, Kessingland 22; Dereham, Sherringham, Norwich 23; Cromer 24; Burnham Market 25; Tofwood 26, 27; Mattishall 27; Stadbrooke 28.

**Lowther, G. K.:**  
Southborough 1; Grimsby 2-4, 25-31; Littleport 5, 6; Bow 7; Rainham 8, 9, 20; Gillingham 9, 16; Enfield 10, 17; Ilford 10; Downham 13; Crouch End 15, 22; Pinner 15; Cray Valley 17; Leytonstone 21; Beckenham 23; Hampstead 24.

**Meadows, D. R.:**  
Southbourne 8; Chandlers Ford 13; Totton 25-28; and the remainder of the time in Bournemouth and district.

**Mills, B.:**  
London Committee Meetings 1, 3, 5; C.E.W. London Rally 12; Egham 15; E.A.—London 17.

**Phillips, C.:**  
Walthamstow 1; Burnt Oak 2; Stanmore 3; Luton 5; Wokingham 6; Whetstone 13; Llanfairfechan 18-25; Grimsby 26-28.

**Pierce, D. H.:**  
Newent area 1-15; Chillington 19; Little Hill 20; Sizewell 25-28.

**Short S. S.:**  
Burnham-on-Sea 3, 10; Chelmsford

5-9; Newport (Gwent) 13; Hutton (Avon) 14, 21; Swindon 15; Querington 16; Clevedon 20.

**Stringer, D.:**  
Bristol area 1-28; Thundersley 29; Enfield 30, 31.

**Tatford, F. A.:**  
Munich 1; Warsaw 2-11, Ruptawa 12; Sofia 13; Bulgaria and Hungary 13-18; Marseille 19, 20; Ventabren 21-26; Aix-en-Provence 23; Lyon 27-31.

**Thurston, A.:**  
Kingsbridge 1, 4, 8, 11, 18, 25, 27; Chillington 2-3, 7, 9-10, 19, 23-24, 31; Strete 6-7, 21, 28; Badminton 12-16; Silvertown 20; Exeter 22, 29; Crediton 30; Schools—Dawlish, Teignmouth 7; Devonport 11.

**Tryon, G.:**  
New Milton 1-6; Farncombe 13-20; Peckham 22; Welling 23, 30; Ewell a.m., S. Norwood p.m. 27; Reigate 31.

## Forthcoming Events

The Publishers regret that, owing to demands on space, it is not possible to insert an announcement in more than one issue. Correspondents should indicate clearly in which issue they wish their announcements to appear.

**Boscombe:**  
Conversational Bible Readings. Drummond Hall, Drummond Road. June 2 at 7.00 p.m. Speaker: B. Osborne. Subject: Daniel 4.

**Coldridge:**  
Ann. Cfce. Allerbridge Gospel Hall. May 26 at 3.00 and 6.00 p.m. Speakers: G. Loader and other ministering brethren invited.

**Crawley:**  
Southgate Hall. July 21 at 3.00-6.30 p.m. approx. Special reception of friends and supporters of Alfred W. Grimsey to mark 40 years' ministry and 65th birthday. For invitations and details write: Mr. B. Phillips, 18 Arden Road, Crawley, Sussex or "Grimsey", Dereham, Norfolk.

**Croydon:**  
Ann. Cfce. Cranmer Hall, Sylverdale Road. May 26 at 4.00 p.m. Speaker: C. Marsh; 5.00 p.m.—Tea; 6.00 p.m. Speakers: C. Marsh and P. Sookhdeo.

**Croxley Green:**  
Fuller Hall, Fuller Way. June 2 at 7.00 p.m. Speaker: A. Carew.

**Crugbybar, Llanwrda:**  
Ninth Anniv., Ty Brasil, Floodvale. June 2 at 3.00 p.m. Speaker: Lennard Jones.

**Grimsby:**  
33rd Ann. Bible Convention. Wellowgate Chapel, 67 Wellowgate. May 26 at 7.00 p.m. and May 28 at 3.00 and 6.00 p.m. Speakers: C. Phillips, J. R. Taylor (Argentina).

**Luton:**  
Onslow Road Gospel Hall, Vincent Road, Leagrave. May 19 at 4.00 p.m. (Ministry relevant to the portion) and 6.30 p.m. (Conversational Bible Reading). Speaker: E. Hughes. Subject: Colossians 4-5-18.

**Swanage:**  
Ann. Cfce. Gospel Hall. June 2 at 3.30 and 5.30 p.m. Speaker: J. H. Large.

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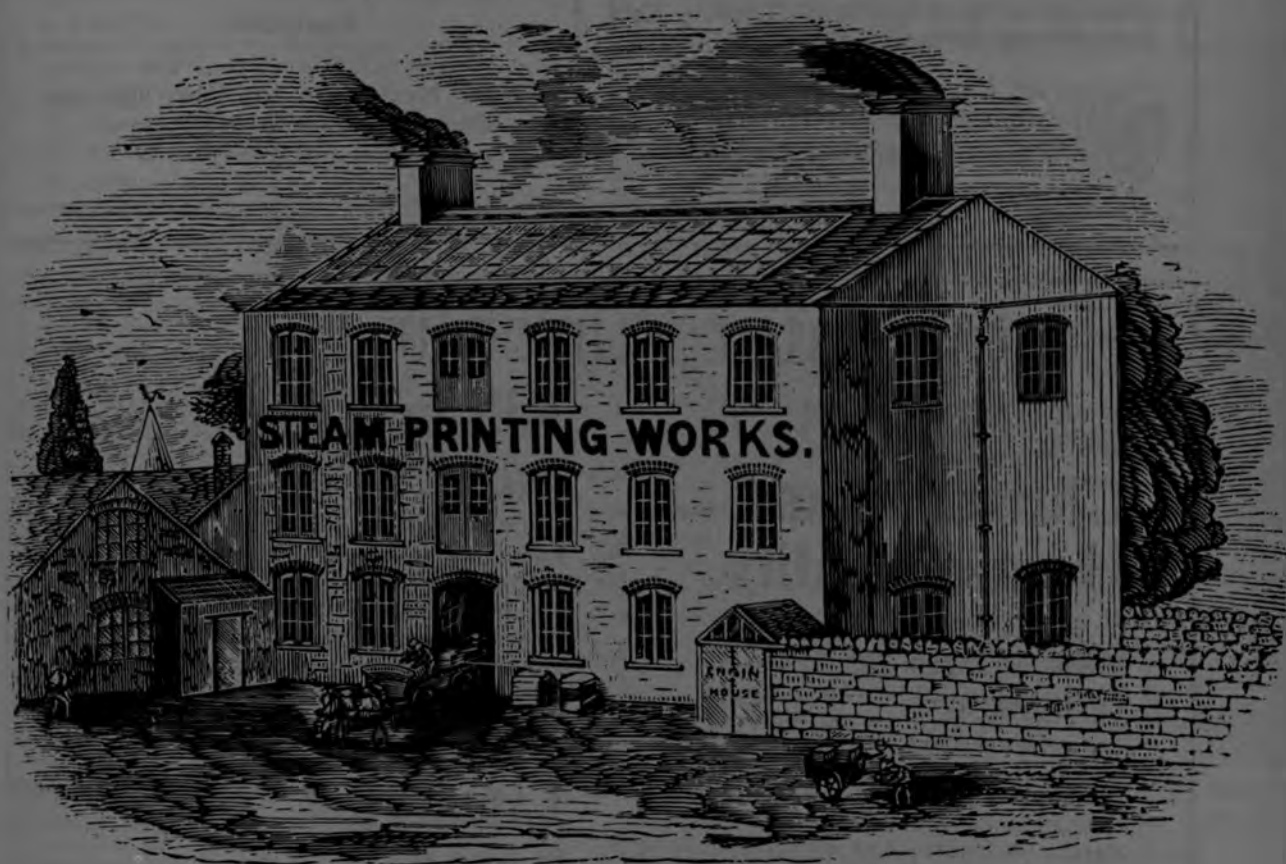


June 1979  
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Editor: Roy Coad

IN THIS ISSUE:  
DOUDNEY: PRINTER AND  
PREACHER

# The Harvester



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# The Harvester

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## An Easter Indeed

This editorial is going to press a little earlier than usual. As I write, the Easter weekend is not long over; an oasis of sudden bright weather after a long winter; and the world awakens again to warmth and beauty and song. The coincidence of Easter with a request to conduct a Bible study on the prophet Elijah brought to vivid focus the strange mystery of the divine triumph of which Easter is the potent symbol: that triumph which is content to hide itself in apparent defeat, and to proclaim deliverance to those who remain in captivity.

For Elijah was the archetype of the underground church: the prophet who spent much of his career in hiding, tracked down by the bitter hatred of a jealous persecutor. Yet from his obscurity he triumphed: by the sheer force of his personality and his faith he became a legend while still alive, and kept a whole nation from irreversible apostasy. And what volumes we learn about the ways of God with His persecuted people from the scanty records of Elijah's career: of the mystery of His silence and apparent powerlessness, and the majesty of His delivering arm when all seems lost! Is there justification for imagining a divine humour in the picture of Elijah, hunted in every nation by the malice of Jezebel, and in vain, while God provides for him a refuge in the one country she would not think to search—with a poor widow in her own native land of Sidon?

At an Easter time when we sang the triumphant victory of Christ, it was well to think of our brothers and sisters in Christ, oppressed in lands where to name Him is to court shame or worse; lands where political atheism makes belief a cause for social ostracism and sometimes for imprisonment; lands where the fanaticism of other religions will cause men and women to commit murder on their own kin if they dare to name Christ as Lord. Yet God does move in deliverance even in the modern world: with what glad meaning must many Christians in Uganda have hailed the dawn of this Easter from out of the sorrow of their sufferings! For them it was an Easter indeed.

But our prayers and our efforts must continue for those who are still in bondage. It was good to find the Archbishop of Canterbury speaking out again this Easter about the denial of the basic human right of worship in countries of the eastern bloc. By what strange twisted imagination can men turn a longing for God—that most basic of human longings—into a crime? □



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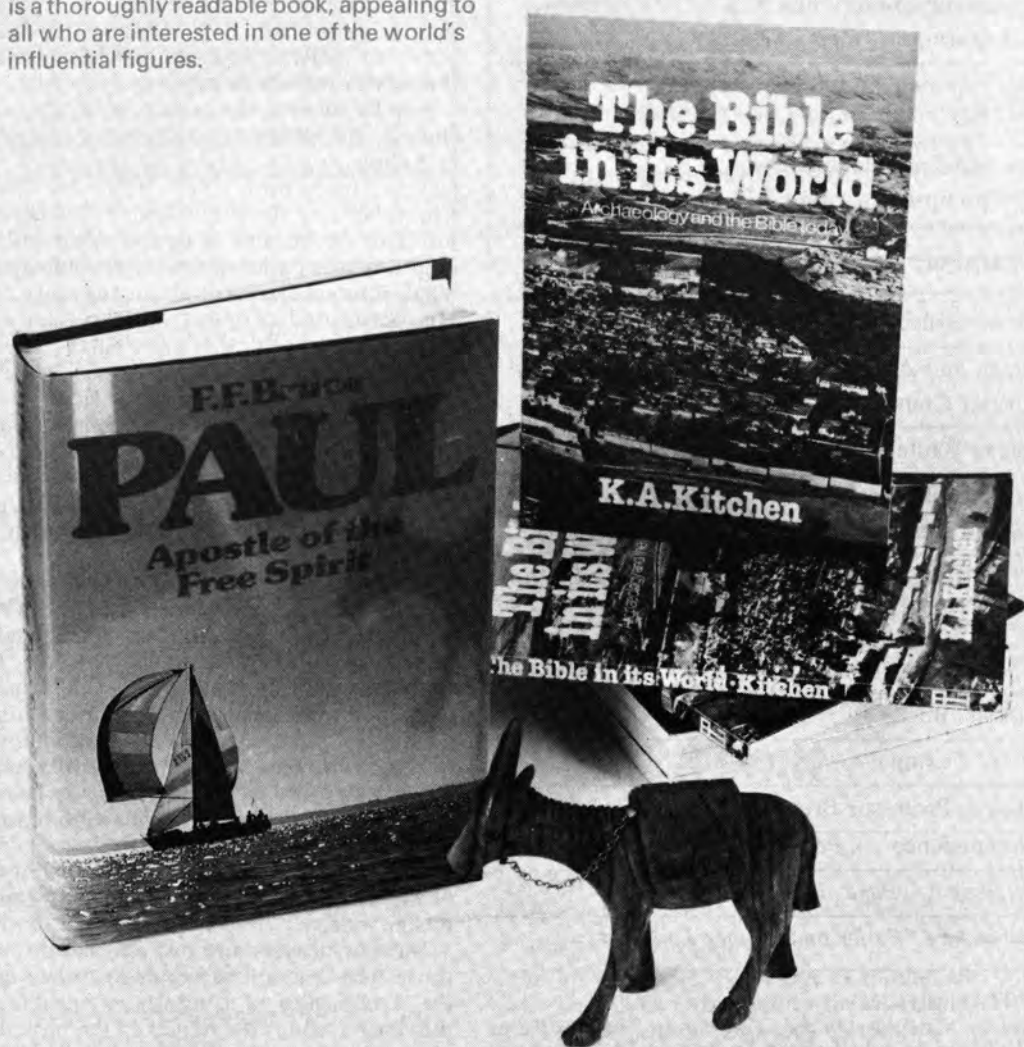
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## Doudney—Printer and Preacher

Leslie James

*Another character study from our regular contributor*

Whenever I am exhorted to leave all and *go forth*—and how I have been exhorted—I am, in these days of extravaganza, obliged to ask the Joad-like question, 'What is meant by *going forth*?' Does it mean leaving a life mediocre and going forth to a life of top flight earth shrinking? Does it mean leaving university to go primitive for peanuts? For David A. Doudney it meant something a little different, yet just as spectacular in its way. Before middle-age he had laid the foundation of what was to become a well known press and publishing company, yet in the middle of all his success he strongly desired to quit and *go forth*, which he finally did when little more than four and thirty. Surely here is one we can listen to when he exhorts to *go forth*. We might, but strangely enough David does not seem over anxious to hand out such advice. In fact he was reluctant to even start a diary lest it should pander to spiritual pride. All we can say is, we are glad he did.

He was born at Portsea on 8 March 1811, into a typical middle-class Georgian family. His father was getting on in years when he was born, and like many another father of the time, kept a cane handy. But he could also be kind, and the children had a happy life. It soon became obvious, however, that academic study was not David's line of country. Quite early he had been taken over a printing works, and became completely hooked. This did not please his father; but his mother, who was probably Doudney's second wife, and younger, sensed the hand of God might be in it. So at the age of thirteen off to Southampton went David to learn printing, and there his troubles really began. His progress was rapid enough, but his master's only son, a lout spoiled by his mother, was a bully-boy who decided that the well mannered little apprentice needed a regular roughing up. Unfortunately we cannot linger over his three unpleasant years under articles. It appears he wandered in darkness until about sixteen, when he was converted in a most unexpected manner.

He had been reading Doddridge's *Rise and Progress of Religion in the soul*, but the climax came, of all places, in the local theatre while watching a performance of *Black Beard*. Suddenly the ghost of the murdered Horra 'made, apparently, directly towards me; it was as if I, and I alone, were her object. My terror was extreme; it was to me like the appearance of Samuel to Saul, when he said, "To-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me". . . He went home to his lodgings in a sweat, shadowed by Horra. The following Sunday at church he heard nothing. He read Doddridge like a dying man 'for it seemed as if in a day or two at the furthest I should be in hell!' So he continued until the following

Saturday, when, near mid-day, he became desperate. 'Well, I'll try once more, and this shall be my last time.' We are not told how long he remained upon his knees pleading such promises as *him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out*, (after all what is time to one wrestling with eternity?) At last 'My arguments were exhausted; . . . I stood pondering over my state; when all of a sudden . . . these most suitable and timely precious words were spoken to my heart, with a power I can never describe: "*Son, be of good cheer, thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee.*" Oh! the light, the love, the joy, the holy heavenly transport which instantly flowed into my soul! . . . I forgot myself and everything; . . . and could not understand what it all meant, except that my sins were pardoned. . . .

His new profession did not help his intolerable situation at work. He earnestly prayed for relief, but on the completion of his articles he found himself in an establishment which was 'as it were, a very hell upon earth!'. So you think you've got problems? A day in this 19th century printing works and you will no longer need Trevelyan to remind you that things were not so great a hundred and fifty years ago as they are sometimes painted. Yet David confesses, 'I don't think my own soul ever thrived, in a spiritual sense, as it did in that very position.'

From the first Doudney was obviously enchanted by words, and wrote his first book at about the age of twenty-one. It sold some four or five thousand copies, and encouraged by the success he tried again. But now a London reviewer took a hand, and cut it up so badly that he effectively put out of action a beginner who showed real talent, which was a strange service to literature and no mistake.

During 1832 David left Southampton for London. His new situation was in a large establishment, and such was his expertise that in three weeks he occupied one of the most lucrative posts in the place. He was soon in a position to marry his fiancée, Miss Jane Draper of Southampton, which he did on 6th May 1834. She was a talented young lady with a book already to her credit.

For some time Doudney had thought of setting up in business on his own. He placed the matter into the hands of God and went ahead in a small way, with very limited capital, at Holloway. Real integrity pays, and it was not long before he was able to move into the City. Here he founded what was to become The City Press (W. H. & L. Collingridge) and now part of the Hamlyn Publishing Group. During 1840 he became editor of the country's oldest Christian periodical, *The Gospel Magazine*. In his opening leader he asked: 'Can we venture to take up the pen which they (former Editors) have laid down?' Well might he ask, for among the former editors were A. M. Toplady and the venerable Walter Row, and

it was through the pages of *The Gospel Magazine* that *Rock of Ages*, among other things, was introduced to the world. We do not wonder that at twenty-nine Doudney felt his inadequacy. He waited every post for a more suitable leader, but it never turned up, and, with one exception, he wrote it himself for fifty-three years. He need not have worried, for a young man who recognised as brethren all who loved the Lord Jesus Christ, was well equipped for the task.

During 1840-1841 tragedy struck Doudney's happy little family. Three of his four children and his wife died in succession. An entry for 20th May 1841 comes out of his diary like an apparition from Job: 'Oh! my God! look—look, in tenderness and compassion upon me! Sanctify this affliction. I do not murmur. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord!"' What words from a young man just thirty.

But when you are the editor of a widely circulating magazine, and head of a printing works, life must go on. He reveals a little of his mental and spiritual conflicts during eleven years in business, from having to turn down worldly inducements which did not honour God, although greatly needing the capital, to rejecting the work of those propagating false doctrine. One day there called at his office a middle-aged man from the country accompanied by his son, a lad of about seventeen. The father was anxious for his son to join Doudney's business, and after some deliberation Doudney agreed. He never regretted it, for that boy was William Hill Collingridge, who was to take over *The City Press* when he finally *went forth*.

David Doudney was married a second time on 22nd February 1842 to Miss Eliza Durkin of Southampton. Theirs was to be a happy life. They had nine children, three of whom died quite young. His new wife was a devoted Christian well fitted to help him step out into full-time service, which he was soon to do. After all, his monthly leaders were practically sermons; why should he not preach them?

One day he went into a West End park and deliberately told the Lord he 'was willing and should be happy to enter His service upon the merest pittance, rather than have all the world could bestow, independent of that service'. The Lord heard his prayer, and he was unexpectedly brought into contact with the Bishop of Cashel. After they had talked for a while he told Dr. Daly that he 'was engaged in a large way of business in the City, but that for twenty years I had been so exercised about the ministry that my heart was divided.' As he was now thirty-four the bishop waived the usual theological course and said: 'Come over to Ireland and see it. . . A man must have a missionary spirit indeed who is willing to go to Ireland. No full churches there.'

David was undeterred. 'I should be willing to go to Ireland, if the Lord were to make the way plain.'

This was quite a decision for, as his old friend Mr.

Spurgeon had added a proviso to his Bill of Service excepting the Baptists, David had done so excepting Ireland. Like his illustrious contemporary, however, he finally went where led, and on 4th November 1846 left his little family and *went forth* to Templemore, in 'that most dreaded of all counties, Tipperary!'. He went to Ireland when a malignant old man stalked the land; he had a scythe in his hand; he was no stranger—his name was Famine. How many did he mow down in this, his great harvest? No one knows. He cut them down in the open field, on the mountain and in the glen; he crept into their isolated cabins; the coffin makers were out-paced; multitudes were left unburied to be torn to pieces by dogs. Exaggeration? Sensationalism? Read a *good* historian and make your own mind up, but don't try to inhabit dead men's minds, that might be a short-cut to madness.

No wonder Doudney expected to be met by a savage people bent on mischief, for that is how the media of his day had presented them. Imagine his surprise to find the exact opposite. 'Attention, and the greatest possible civility, marked the conduct of the people on landing.' Dublin, itself, was a fine city, and for the first twenty or thirty miles towards Tipperary things looked as prosperous as England, which, after all, in some areas was nothing to write home about. Then he saw them: 'A number of mud huts, with just a low doorway, . . . are where the father, the mother, and the children, together with the pigs, the poultry and occasionally the ass, take up their abode. . . ' Doudney wondered how his fellow countrymen could vote 'thousands for the spread of the Gospel among the heathen . . . ' and practically ignore those on their own doorstep where it was 'quite as much needed, and perhaps much more to be appreciated, than in heathen lands'. He anticipated Mrs. Jellyby and Jo, that 'dweller in the tents of Tom-all-Alone's' by a few years. The day after he arrived at Templemore he watched a share-out of meal to a crowd of 'poor, ragged creatures, without shoes or stockings, whose haggard countenances struck to the very heart! . . . I wept, and could not help it, . . . I pass from the contemplation of a scene, to which my pen refuses to do anything like justice'. We must do the same.

Templemore was a town of some three thousand inhabitants, three-fourths Roman Catholic. Our probationer's scene of operations was four miles away up in the wild mountains of Tipperary. The first Sunday he preached in a cottage little better than a clay hovel to 'five-and-twenty, old and young, upon the verge of starvation.' The school building was a barn-like structure. It catered for children from three or four to 'great boys, and great girls, sixteen or seventeen years of age'. Until the arrival of the rector, Mr. Ormsby, a few months previously, they had not known a letter of the alphabet. If winter had not been coming on he would have ordered a hair-cut and tub all round. Nevertheless,



beneath 'that nasty clotted hair' were some beautiful intelligent faces; their owners would go a long way if shown where to go.

As for the Irish peasantry, David found them pleasant and sociable, but this is not surprising, for this out-going man made friends very easily. Perhaps he was accepted here so quickly because of the *six stolen sheep*. They went missing soon after he arrived, and they were all the poor farmer had. He tried to console the family with the story of the Good Shepherd who never lost a sheep, and then had the courage to pray publicly that the little flock might be returned. This was the day of the organised rustler, and if those sheep were ever seen again, except as mutton, it would be a miracle. Yet when he approached the farm-house the following Sunday he was greeted with, 'Oh, sir, Davis's sheep are restored!' The rustlers fled when no one pursued.

Doudney's ministry made the grade, and he was ordained in June 1847. His first, and as it turned out, only appointment in Ireland, was to Bonmahon, a coastal village in the county of Waterford. At the time it was no health resort. 'One's heart perfectly sickened at beholding the filth, the wretchedness, and the misery that presented itself on every hand. It seemed unendurable. . . . The congregation consisted of seventy persons, churchmen and dissenters all mixed together in one little Protestant place of worship. But Doudney's vision went beyond four walls. All round boys were growing up with no prospect of employment. So one day the readers of *The Gospel Magazine* learned that their editor proposed to set up a printing school at Bonmahon, and not only set it up, but reprint *Dr. Gill's Commentary*. Would anyone care to subscribe? Now many of his readers had contributed very generously to his appeals for the Irish famine victims, cut *Dr. Gill's Commentary* was a work of nine quarto volumes. It was to be produced in a remote Southern Irish village by a crowd of green boys who in all probability could hardly read and write. We are not surprised that some thought twice before dipping their hands into their pockets. Even so the response was encouraging enough to go ahead.

The London publisher he approached was cautious. Who can blame him, seeing he was footing the bill? 'Boys, you know', he warned, 'are of no use for the first six months.' 'I know the character of the boys I have to deal with,' was the reply.

How right he was. Instead of the boys being of no use for the first six months, they had during that time (assisted by three skilled operators) arranged over eight million letters! The *Commentary* was completed within two or three weeks of the given date of just over two years. They had printed 2,250 sets of six volumes each; over twenty-five tons of paper had been used, and the cost of carriage alone was more than £300. For good measure this little group of Shamrocks had also composed the type for the whole of the New Testament. The Printing School was in

business, and went on to print at least fourteen other works. *The Gospel Magazine* was also printed at Bonmahon for four or five years, while the illustrated monthly *Old Jonathan* was born there.

The go-ahead-curate next opened an infant school, and gave each child a meal of porridge and skimmed milk a day. The only condition for entry was that every child who came to the school, when he had been taught to read, should read the Bible. A training school opened for the young women where they might be trained to work congenial with their sex. That was a tougher consignment than might appear on the surface, for most—if not all—of the girls did not even know how to sew.

Things went along fairly well for some years, but by 1857 the schools were costing around £2,000 a year to maintain, and the work was drying up. At last, after struggling on for a while with the help of a generous gift, he was obliged to shut up shop, and considered his usefulness in Ireland at an end. He resigned his curacy in 1858. He had been in Ireland some eleven years all of which except about seven months had been spent in Bonmahon. He had the satisfaction of knowing that he had set many a young person up for life, and not a few, we trust, for eternity. There was great consternation at his leaving, and we are not surprised.

So at the age of forty-seven he returned to England without an appointment, but after a while he was offered the new parish of St. Luke's, Westminster. It was a down grade area near the Bristol Docks. Few of its teeming populace ever went near a place of worship, let alone into it. For a start a temporary wooden construction was erected in Princes Street and opened on 1st May 1859. The Spirit of the Lord was in evidence at once. Let's see what the worldly press had to say:

'You approach a plain but substantial wooden structure, and find it crammed in every part, before the hour of worship, by a promiscuous congregation, chiefly of the humbler class. The minister is a genuine Englishman, with a clear sonorous voice, and a genial, glowing countenance. . . . The singing, too, is lively and general. When the prayers are over, a difficulty arises with the clergyman—he is so hemmed in that he cannot get back to the vestry to change his surplice for the gown. To meet this he puts both on ere he enters the reading-desk, and doffs the light one while the hymn is singing before the sermon. The preaching is simple enough. . . . There is no attempt at fine language. . . . It is plain speaking, frequently pathetic and moving, directed to the heart more than the intellect. . . .

The attendance never flagged. It appears there were often crowds of strangers at the doors. One night a man was trying to push his way through the crush when some one told him in a loud voice, 'It's no use your pushing here, for you'll certainly not get in to-night.'

'Well, if I don't get in to-night, there will be no

service', came the reply. It was Doudney himself.

At last the new church of St. Luke's was built. It seated over twelve hundred, and provided for a congregation which two years previously had not existed! The church wardens for many years were Messrs. Drake and Duck, while the sexton and sextoness were named Paine and Fear. Now Mr. Punch, an up-and-coming lad of some twenty years, would not let such a circumstance pass unnoticed. He hoped something to the effect 'that the congregation would not make "ducks and drakes" of themselves, or suffer from such close association with pain and fear!' *Punch* was not with it or he would also have noted that Mr. Morse, the organist, had his own code of communication.

The work thrived, but as yet there was no day school. This must be put right. The minister spoke to the Sunday school children about it, and they voted a schoolhouse should be built, and one little lad stepped up and put a threepenny piece in the speaker's hand as something to be getting on with. Now none knew better than a business man like Doudney that to build a school was a formidable task. But then he thought of the new orphanage opened by Mr. Müller and 'felt ashamed of myself before the Lord, that I could not trust Him for the trivial sum still wanted in this parish.' The money was found and the building completed in an incredibly short time. Next came a vicarage and 'a noble mission hall and soup kitchen. . .'. All this was costing thousands. Where did the money come from? Well might those of lesser faith ask.

1868 was a sad year for Doudney. First he had an accident which laid him up for sometime; then, before he had recovered his wife died of heart trouble. The experience was traumatic; he formed a strong impression that his preaching days were over. Indeed, this might have been the case had he not gone to visit his son who was a minister in Carlisle. David junior appears to have been a 'chip off the old block'. Incidentally, his wife was a grand-daughter of Elizabeth Fry, and we can imagine what that meant. One Saturday evening, in order to spare his son the labour of preparing two sermons, David senior agreed to try and say a few words himself. He did so, and preached right on for another twenty years and more.

Doudney married again, and his third wife was Kate Bell, daughter of a London solicitor. He never ceased to thank God for giving him such a fine young companion for his declining years.

Our subject was certainly a man of many parts. What was his major role on the nineteenth century evangelical scene? It must be as a writer. Not only was he editor of the *Gospel Magazine*, but he was also a prolific producer of booklets and tracts. Perhaps his best known efforts were *Sympathy* and *Walks and Talks with Jesus*. *Old Jonathan* had a circulation of seven million during its first twenty

years. When he reached the half-century as editor of *The Gospel Magazine* he was presented with £1,000 by its readers. If you think of the change in fashions—even religious fashions—you will agree that fifty years is quite a time to occupy such a hot seat. You will also agree that the degree of DD awarded to him on the completion of his twenty-seventh year as editor, by the German University of Giessen, was well earned. How did he do it all? Simple—he kept Wesley hours—working while others slept.

When he was around eighty a throat affliction compelled this grand old parson to resign his parish. Needless to say, this did not please the parishioners. Among the many testimonials which have come our way we have space to insert a fragment of one only: 'I have often heard that the "busiest people have the most leisure," and I have truly found it so. Here was the beloved Dr. Doudney, editing two monthly publications, preaching three times a week—frequently much oftener—superintending a large parish, with Sunday and Day Schools, Ragged Schools, Printing Nursery, and Soup Kitchen; also with the public meetings and the many claims which devolve upon a clergyman's time and thoughts; yet voluntarily finding time to undertake other work. . . . My pen is powerless to write all I feel and all I ought to record of the tender-hearted, noble-spirited, gifted Christian clergyman. . . .'

If her pen was powerless so is ours, for the lady who wrote that was quite a well known writer of her day.

Like many another saint who walks with God, Doudney sensed heaven was at hand. While apparently still in good health he gathered his papers together, and wrote a leader for *The Gospel Magazine*. It was to be his last. He had been editor for exactly fifty-three years. He took to bed on 1st April 1893, and, we believe, passed into glory on 21st April. They laid him to rest in the cemetery at Southsea beside his second wife and companion for twenty-six years. His had been a rugged pilgrimage; he had followed two wives and several children to the grave. There were no favourites, but we feel he particularly missed his lovely little Annie, 'the child of his old age', who died aged six and a half. At his funeral service the Rev. J. C. Martin said: 'His one theme was Christ, who formed in his heart the hope of glory . . . his great delight was to exalt Him and His finished work. . . .'

Among his many words he sent down the years just before he crossed the river are these: 'He told me long ago, "I will guide thee with My counsel, and afterwards receive thee into glory"'. . . .

What more can be said? Plenty, but unfortunately we lack the space. One thing we must say, however: not only does the soul of this great soldier of the Cross march on, but his magazine is also still marching, and that is a march which began in 1766—seventy-five years before *Punch* was born. □

## Twentieth Century Approach

Between the bustling commercial port of Marseilles and the throbbing university city of Aix En Provence (with its 20,000 students) lies the attractive little village of Ventabren, nestling in the pine trees on the mountain slopes. Its picturesque houses, built in the typical Provencal style, struggle up the sides of the mountain to fling their stepped and cobbled streets across the summit. At the top is the ancient castle, the delight of all visitors to the area, and from the upper village there is a breathtaking view of the countryside for miles around.

Embedded in the trees on the side of another mountain nearer the village of Coudoux is a complex of buildings bearing the name of L'Eau Vive Provence. Here hundreds gather during the year for conventions and weekend conferences—between 300 and 400, for example, at the Easter Convention. Although it is used as a conference centre, the primary purpose of L'Eau Vive is the training of young men and women in a knowledge of the Bible, in evangelism and in Christian leadership. Of France's population of 55 million, over half are under the age of 25 and, if leaders are to be found, they must come from the ranks of young people.

If the Church in that country (or, indeed, in any mission field) is to become truly indigenous, French leaders must assume the responsibility and they must be trained for that purpose, so that the foreign missionary may be gradually phased out. The Church will certainly not flourish if left permanently under the paternalistic control of foreigners.

It was with this realization that Dr. Brian Tatford, who has been engaged in Christian work in France for some 27 years,

had the vision of a Bible training and conference centre and eventually founded L'Eau Vive Provence. Here young people come from France, Switzerland, Belgium, Britain, Canada and U.S.A. to learn the doctrines of the Bible, the contents of its books, the principles and methods of evangelism, and the constitution and conduct of the church. Some come for a few weeks, others for months, and some for the full year, but courses are so planned that it is possible to participate in them at any time with spiritual profit, so that students may come for just the period they can spare.

In addition to Prof. Brian Tatford as Principal, regular lectures are given by M. Fred Olney, B.A. and M. Dennis Roshier, and visiting lecturers include Prof. Pierre Berthoud, M. Pierre Coleman M.A., Dr. Fredk. A. Tatford, M. José Danet (ex R.C. priest), M.K. Guindon (ex Jehovah's Witness) and M. Ralph Shallis.

Local churches at Aix and Istres are supported by members of the centre, and active evangelism is also conducted in Marseilles, Orange, Digne and other localities.

The centre affords an opportunity for English young people to spend a period in a missionary country in ideal conditions, equipping themselves for the future and, at the same time, engaging in active missionary work. The experience acquired will obviously be of permanent value.

Those desiring further information should write (enclosing a Post Office International Reply Coupon) to the Secretary, Centre de Formation Biblique, L'Eau Vive Provence, 13122 Ventabren, France.



Dick Saunders and the  
team are opening this  
summer's tent season at

**Carlisle**

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Dick and the team then  
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# Toleration or Compromise?

E. L. Lovering

The second article in Mr. Lovering's new series

The present move towards Christian unity, in fulfilment of the Lord's own desire 'that they may be one . . . that the world may believe' (Jn. 17: 21) must give cause for thanksgiving. When the world sees Christians united in an inexpressible fellowship like that of the Father and the Son they will not find it difficult to believe. Is it true, however, as some have suggested, that the price of unity involves compromise? These are the issues we wish to explore.

## Basics of belief

The lordship of Christ should be the motivating factor in our toleration of others, and the compassion of Christ the example in our consideration of others. When His lordship becomes a reality, problems in personal relationships are soon resolved, for we recognise that Christ is lord both of the strong and weak. It must be recognised, however, that there are axioms of belief which are permanent and fundamental. Paul wrote, 'welcome the person who is weak in faith but do not argue with him about his personal opinions' (Romans 14). The strong in faith will find no difficulty in matters of diet or days, but his weaker brother who thinks differently is not to be despised, for he, too, behaves as he does, in 'honour of the Lord' and 'God has accepted him'. Professor E. M. Blaiklock in his *Commentary on the New Testament* writes, 'the Christian with deviant convictions is often a problem—the sectaries of Corinth, the foolish Galatians, the superstitious Colossians . . . no man is an island; neither in life nor in death are we self-contained units! At the judgment seat of God, each one of us shall give account of himself to God—so we should look to our own integrity'. 'We who have strong faith ought to shoulder the burden of the doubts and qualms of others and not just go on our own sweet way' (J. B. Phillips). With the lordship of Christ we link—

The authority of His name. Mark 9: 38-41 describes the incident of the man whom the disciples found casting out demons 'in His name'. Because he did not belong to the group they endeavoured to stop him but Jesus rebuked them, saying, 'there is no one who shall do a mighty work in my name and be able quickly to speak evil of me, for he that is not against us is for us'. Dr. Campbell Morgan comments, 'this man was irregular, he was not in the true order, he was not in the appointed succession, he was outside!—oh! the devilishness of this sense of official privilege and dignity . . . behind the thunder of the Lord's words was all the refreshment and coolness and beauty of a high conception of fellowship'. If lives are being blessed and delivered from the power of evil, such work ought not to be hindered. 'There is no more forthright rebuke of ecclesiastical intol-

erance than this . . . even a much less spectacular service than exorcism, a cup of cold water in His name, shall earn its reward if it be from the right motive' (New Bible Comm. Rev.). Christ's Lordship and Authority must lead us to consider the—

*Central issues of the Faith.* It cannot be too strongly emphasised that we are not here dealing with personal relationships but with matters of belief. Paul's 'face to face' encounter with Peter at Antioch (Gal 2: 11-21), suggests that occasions arise when toleration is both undesirable and unwarranted. This was not a matter of personal hostility but of vital issues relating to the heart of the gospel and Christian experience. This leads us to the delicate issue of ecumenism and the doctrinal issues involved. It has been stated, somewhat dogmatically, that 'evangelical periodicals, which in their earlier days were like watchmen upon the walls, no longer sound the note of warning when the fortress of faith is imperilled'. Under the sub-title 'Perilous Precedent', the *Churchman's Magazine* (Nov/Dec 1978), stated, 'At a recent press conference, Dr Coggan repeated his assertion that vast numbers of Anglicans were 'looking for intercommunion' with Rome. The *Roman Catholic Universe* (Aug 11), reported 'bishops of the Anglican church attending the Lambeth conference in Canterbury were attending a Requiem Mass for Pope Paul . . . the suggestion for this unprecedented gesture was made by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Consultative Committee of the Conference'. In a paragraph entitled 'Primate Challenged,' the Anglican magazine continues, 'having regard to recent archiepiscopal actions and current trends, it is considered fair, reasonable and right to challenge the Primate of All England to give unequivocal answers regarding his belief or disbelief in the following:- transubstantiation; infallibility of the Pope when speaking 'ex cathedra'; that the Pope is the Vicar of Jesus Christ; the Immaculate Conception; the Assumption; that Mary is a mediatrix; prayers for the dead; invocation of saints (including the 82 created by Paul VI); giving to relics a degree of worship; the unique supremacy of Holy Scripture; justification by faith?' It is not for us to answer these questions for the archbishop, but from his writings and very positive contribution to the T.V. series *Simple Faith*, we have no doubt that Dr Coggan is a true evangelical, not lacking in courage of his conviction and well able to answer his questioners. We raise the issues here as we consider them of contemporary importance both ecclesiastically and nationally.

The late Bishop J. C. Ryle of Liverpool in pamphlet entitled *What do we owe to the Reformation?* wrote, 'for ever let us thank God for the Reformation. It lighted a candle which ought never to be extinguished or allowed to grow dim; . . .

was won for us by the blood of the martyrs, quite as much as by their preaching and praying and writing and legislation. Shall we talk lightly of the great work which they did? Shall we hold cheaply the privileges which they won? Shall we entertain for a moment the idea of forsaking Reformation principles and going back to Rome? Once more, I say, God forbid! . . . I never met a sensible Evangelical Christian who did not admit fully that the church of England is a comprehensive church. But, though our mother has wide arms and a large heart, I am sure she never meant to embrace both Lambeth and the Vatican'. Strong words indeed and uncompromising, from a devout saint whose heart was always greater than the 'establishment' and whose fellowship was wider than the Anglican communion.

Yet it is true that ample evidence exists that within the 'Catholic' system many are experiencing new life in Christ, and turning to the Scriptures for guidance. From a E.U.S.A. study paper on 'South America yesterday and today' by Colin A. Grant, comes the following extract; 'among the changes sparked off by the Second Vatican Council was a new attitude to the Bible. In the last few years, hundreds of thousands of copies of the scriptures have been sold to Roman Catholics, both through evangelical centres and colporteurs. Bible study groups are frequently popular in R.C. parishes and there have been repeated reports of invitations to Evangelical pastors or missionaries to conduct Bible Studies for such groups and even for groups of priests and nuns. Evangelicals are now increasingly regarded as 'separated brethren' rather than 'heretics', though it should be said that this attitude has not spread uniformly throughout the continent; . . . in a continent where the majority are nominal Roman Catholics, we cannot shut our eyes to the ferment of renewal within the Church of Rome. Our trust in the Word of God, the distribution and reading of which continues to accelerate within Catholicism, causes us to hope for renewal. New wine cannot be contained in old wine skins, neither can a living, regenerate soul be confined within an inflexible system'.

Writing on the work of L'Eau Vive Province à Ventabren, Dr Brian Tatford describes the 'change in mentality' which has occurred over the years, from monologue to dialogue; when, 'men's needs are more readily answered by direct dialogue, where problems can be shared . . . the evangelist can no longer just deliver his message and then walk off the platform, but must be ready to talk and to listen quietly as hearts are unburdened' (Feb 1979). There seems little doubt that this change in mental climate has encouraged the desire among Catholics to study and discuss God's Word for themselves.

From an American missionary in Pasto, Colombia, comes the story of a group meeting in a Catholic home. During the singing of choruses, by church-going Catholics, who had never sung congrega-

tionally before, a couple who were backsliders 'came in happy and rejoicing'. The missionary continues, 'I thought to myself, Well, what next? Here we are in a Catholic group, Protestants teaching it and two Protestant backsliders dragged in from the neighbourhood by the Catholic woman who is running the meeting!'. This would seem to be typical of many such groups throughout the world.

From Rhodesia comes the news that '700 copies of the first Ndebele Bible—the first Bible to be printed in Rhodesia—are to be made available at a Thanksgiving service at a Roman Catholic church in an African suburb in Bulawayo on Bible Sunday, with an initial printing order of 20,000 . . . thereafter it is planned to put 10,000 per year'. The writer, however, expresses disappointment at the inclusion of the Apocrypha in some 10,000 copies. From Scripture Union, Emmaus courses, Postal Sunday School and 'SOON' (W.E.C.) foreign courses come reports of requests from R.C.'s, in increasing numbers.

With yet another version of the Bible to appear in press we sincerely hope that further debate on the relative merits of versions, translations and paraphrases will not detract from the all-important fact that, 'God's Word is infallible . . . though no Christian individual, group or church has ever been or will ever be an infallible interpreter of God's Word', (J. R. Stott). Mr. Stott quotes Dr. Alan Cole as saying, 'God sometimes blesses a poor exegesis of a bad translation of a doubtful reading of an obscure verse of a minor prophet'. This of course, does not justify a poor translation in a slovenly style, but as Mr. Ellison writes, 'the amazing fact about the Bible is that the Holy Spirit quite obviously has no preference for one translation or another . . . provided the language is comprehensible He seems quite willing to over-rule even mistranslations and misunderstandings. I can trust the Holy Spirit to apply the Word which He has caused to be written', (Harvester Feb '79). In the matter of the central issues of faith, we assert that the *authority* of the Bible must be paramount.

Turning from matters of creed let us now consider—

### Codes of conduct

*Balanced conduct* is the secret of harmonious living. 'Two great principles are involved . . . the objective which dwells upon what Christ himself is . . . the subjective, with our actual present state. The believer may be a credal formalist, accepting all the facts . . . agreeing to all the derived doctrines but experiencing little of their living power . . . balance is indispensable', (from *Balanced Christianity* G. H. Lang). It was said of R. C. Chapman, 'We talk about the heavenly places, *he* lives in them.' Extremism invariably results in intolerance. The life of the Lord Jesus was one of perfect balance, for He came 'full of grace and truth'. Paul exhorted the Ephesian Christians to 'speak the truth in love that they may

grow up', (Eph. 4: 15), and for the Philippians he prayed that, 'love may abound yet more in knowledge', (Phil. 1: 9). Grace and truth, love and knowledge, the essentials for spiritual maturity.

In dealing with the Corinthian problem of food sacrificed to idols, Paul wrote, 'it is easy to think that we know over problems like this, but we should remember that while knowledge may make a man look big, it is only love that can make him grow to his full stature' (1 Cor. 8: 1). Knowledge alone is not the basis of our actions towards others but the love of God, especially towards those who have lesser knowledge than ourselves. We should sacrifice our liberty of thought for their benefit. Though the situation was a local one, it bears strongly upon such contemporary issues as one's attitudes towards T.V., social drinking, partnerships and recreations. The Corinthian problem is continually with us. As for Paul, he resolved that 'if there is any possibility of meat injuring my brother, I will have none of it as long as I live, for fear I might do him harm'.

*Biblical characters* so often illustrate the dangers of compromise. In his dealing with the king of Sodom, Abram refused the smallest gift lest he should compromise his integrity (Gen. 4). Daniel resolved to abstain from the daily portion provided by the king that he might not appear to be guilty of idol worship (Dan. 1: 8), while his friends rested their case uncompromisingly in God's hands saying, 'our God whom we serve is able to deliver us . . . but if not . . . we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image' (Dan. 3: 16-18). From king Saul's failure in the matter of the Amalekites comes the principle of permanent value, 'to obey is better than sacrifice' (1 Sam. 15: 22). Action which defies the will of God is never tolerance but compromise.

*Within the family* the grace of tolerance is especially needed. It is said that home, where we are treated the best, is where we behave the worst. In a day of easy divorce and family 'break-up', how relevant the Pauline charter for harmonious marriage 'that wives learn to adapt to husbands and that husbands love their wives as themselves' (Eph. 5). In the contemporary child-parent situation, Paul's words have added significance, 'that children obey their parents as those whom the Lord has set over them', and that parents 'do not incite children to anger, but bring them up with Christian discipline and instruction'. In the wider circle of industrial relations, mutual respect and responsibility, with adequate reward for work well-done, would ensure amicable decisions and avoid industrial actions so crippling to the nation's economy and well-being of society.

#### Pride and prejudices

Most things in life can be standardised but there are no 'standard' human beings. The complex nature of human personality requires mutual under-

standing and tolerance to avoid strains and stresses in social relationships. Personal pride and inborn prejudices, with reluctance to admit personal failure or accept inevitable change frequently result in discord. When the disciples disputed who should be the greatest, the Lord directed their attention to a little child and the nature of true humility (Mk. 9). It is of course, possible to be proud of being humble with consequent conceit, dogmatism and contempt for those who differ from us.

#### Matters of conscience

Finally, there are issues where scripture gives no 'specific' guidance and each must be 'fully persuaded in his own mind' (Rom. 14: 5). Involvement in politics and war may be such issues. Of the latter, the late G. H. Lang wrote, 'as regards public ministry on the subject, there is no example of this in the New Testament . . . so that a teacher would have to be very sure in his mind that it was his duty to expound it publicly. It is a further consequence from this reticence in the Word that no bondage can be rightly laid upon any conscience in the matter'. Let us remember in all our actions that 'the greatest thing in the world, the *summum bonum*, is love' (Henry Drummond). □

## Professor Bruce Asks

At the end of his *History of the Plymouth Brethren*, W. B. Neatby expresses his conviction that 'Brethrenism is the child of the study of unfulfilled prophecy, and of the expectation of the immediate return of the Saviour' (by 'immediate' he means within about a generation from the 1820s). Writing three quarters of a century later (1901) he concludes that 'it is clear now that Brethrenism took shape under the influence of a delusion, and that that delusion was a decisive element in all its distinctive features'. Would readers who have paid some attention to this matter care to say how far they think Neatby was right? And to those who think that he was right, I should like to put a more serious question: How far could the same thing be said about the Christian church itself?

*Replies, please, to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey, SM5 4NX by 15 June.*



Ronald Diprose

## Evangelism and the Italians' Religious Cocoon

*Another report from Italy by Ronald Diprose in Naples*

When a believer, especially if he (or she) is a foreign missionary, commences witnessing in Italy, he can easily be deceived by folks' apparent openness to the Gospel of God's grace. Many 'good' contacts obstinately remain just that: Roman Catholics who genuinely respect the consistent life and clear convictions of their Evangelical friend. This tends to be true whether the Roman Catholic in question is the postman, a University professor or anything in between.

The problem is general. The Gospel outreach of the Brethren Assemblies in Italy—15 private Radio transmitters which broadcast Bible-based programmes around the clock, 9 Gospel tents used for an average of 3-4 months each year, Gospel film projections, an extensive work with literature and Bible correspondence courses, not to mention regular assembly activities and personal witness—all this has but little effect on society at large. Nor is the experience of other evangelical movements markedly different. Never has there been such liberty to evangelize and never has so much organized activity been carried on with a view to evangelizing the masses, but the fruit is disappointing.

Materialism, incipient atheism and widespread indifference partly account for this, so do half-heartedness and a lack of consistency of life among believers. It is also possible that in some cases the task of evangelism should be undertaken differently, working more from within the social and cultural structures of Italian life. However there is another very influential factor, easily overlooked, which has a strong neutralizing effect on evangelical endeavour. The advent of television has meant that the Pope is seen and listened to regularly in news programmes in almost every Italian home. Modern media has turned him into a kind of nation-wide parish priest and spiritual leader. Though Polish, Pope John-Paul II speaks good Italian and has a winning smile; besides he represents quite explicitly both traditional Catholicism—among other things he is very devoted to the Madonna—and the project (growing out of the Vatican II Council) to build a new Universal Church in which Roman Catholics and 'separated brethren' alike will find a place.

The voice and characteristic gesture of blessing of the Supreme Bishop of the R.C. Church keep its members, sitting comfortably in their homes, consciously in touch, increasing their sense of belonging, however critical they may be towards the same Church for certain past actions such as its official association with Fascism from February 1929 till the downfall of Mussolini. Besides, the alternative

to making do with their historic religion would require sorting out the claims of a confusing array of sects and closing an eye to the divisions within Protestantism (in Italy all Protestants are known as Evangelicals). It is hardly surprising then if all, except those genuinely touched by the Spirit of God, opt for the authoritative voice of the Pope and what he represents. Very often this decision is purely passive inasmuch as it is not accompanied by any active involvement in a local parish church. It simply seems 'safer' and less demanding to stay with the historic church than launching out on a search for a purer Gospel or accepting that each one is answerable directly to God for his actions.

Another, growing, group of Roman Catholics feel as unsatisfied with the corrupt modern society as does the average evangelical. Bible study and prayer in groups is an important part of their lives. Often these folk will recognize that aspects of the structure, teaching and practice of the Roman Catholic Church are out of harmony with Scripture. Yet they do not feel any need to leave the structure. How can this be explained?

I believe any answer to this question must take into account the following two factors. The evangelical churches, including assemblies, do not always make a very good job of living triumphantly as a minority group in what is basically a permissive society. So a Roman Catholic who is already living a group experience where the Bible is freely read, does not, looking in from the outside, feel drawn to investigate any further. Secondly, and probably more important, in the prevailing ecumenical climate, a decision to leave the Roman Catholic Church appears, to say the least, unnecessary.

Let us then pray that the continual exposure of many Roman Catholics to the Scriptures of truth will lead to genuine conversions to Jesus Christ followed by lives of discipleship and that local evangelical churches may be increasingly effective in their testimony so as to attract those who see the error of the hierarchical Church of Rome. □

### Prayer and Enlightenment

*(continued from page 176)*

form or another, and learn to listen to God speaking to us through the Holy Spirit. 'Be still and know that I am God' (Psalm 46: 10). Contemplation must not be seen as way of escape from the pain and sorrow of the world. Indeed, it should lead to real creative activity, and to an intensive study of the Bible.

'Contemplation', said Bishop Zazpe (Argentine), 'is the root and foundation of all proclamation of the Gospel.' □

# Prayer and Enlightenment

H. F. Thompson

*Another devotional meditation from a regular contributor*

Prayer has been simply defined as 'the lifting up of the mind to God'. It is one of Almighty God's most precious gifts to man, yet it seems that prayer occupies a very small place in the life of many people. Perhaps in a large measure this is due to the failure of parents, teachers, and the clergy to give sound instruction on the subject. Meaningful prayer brings inner peace and poise to troubled souls. But modern man is so taken up with chasing this world's goods, and with having what he calls a 'good time', that there's no time left for prayer.

There is much more involved in prayer than just petitioning God for this, that, or the other. Of course, the prayer of petition is a very important and necessary part of prayer, but there are other realms to be explored. The Apostle Paul, addressing the worldly-wise people of Athens, proclaimed that it is in God 'we live, and move, and have our being' (Acts 17: 28). But how many Christians realize that God is a real, personal, attentive presence at the heart of our being? Admittedly, we live in an age of noise and restless activity which is not conducive to meditation and contemplation. Moreover, serious instruction on mental prayer and contemplation is a rarity in the churches of the West, and this, surely, is why many people, specially young people, are looking to eastern religions for spiritual enlightenment and peace.

Consciousness of the presence of God in all created things is the basis of eastern mysticism. There is a gift of mysticism which is bestowed on man by God, and it can lead to a transfiguration and illumination of the creature. The German mystic Eckhart (1260-1327) teaches: 'God expects only one thing from you, and that is that you should come out of yourself in so far as you are a created being, and let God be God within you'. It is important, however, to distinguish between mysticism and magic. 'Mysticism', says the Russian spiritual writer, Nicolas Berdyaev, 'is union with God; magic with the spirit of nature and its elemental forces—Mysticism is detached and contemplative; magic is active and militant, it reveals the secret forces of humanity and of the world without being able to reach the depths of their divine origin.'

Meditation and contemplation help us to increase our knowledge and understanding of the loving purpose of God for the whole of creation. Meditation as distinct from contemplation, is essentially a work of reasoning, which can be summed up in the term 'mindfulness'. For example, to meditate on the patience Christ exercised during his trial and crucifixion may well serve to bring home to us still more vividly the need of patience and love in all our

dealings with our fellow creatures. Or we can meditate on words spoken by Christ—an invitation, a promise, a warning, and gain a fuller understanding of the reality of their content.

Carlo Carretto, in his book *Letters from the Desert*, says there are many ways of meditating, and advises everyone to seek and find by experience the way that suits them best. Concerning books for meditation, he writes: 'Above all other books, choose the Bible—the Bible is the letter which God himself wrote to men in the thousands of years of their history.'

Contemplation usually leads to a deeper insight into the majesty and love of God than is experienced in meditation. In contemplation the Holy Spirit speaks to the waiting soul while the soul keeps silence. 'In the midst of silence', writes Evelyn Underhill, 'a hidden word was spoken to me'. Teresa of Avila, who is generally regarded as one of the foremost authorities on contemplative prayer, said that we don't need wings to go in search of God, but have only to find a quiet place where we can be alone and conscious of His presence within us. She stressed the importance of grasping this truth: 'The Lord is within us, and that we should be there with Him' (*Way of Perfection*). John of the Cross, a contemporary of Teresa, thought the reason why some spiritual persons didn't enter more fully into the true joys of the spirit was because they felt they were bound to pray and worship almost exclusively in churches and oratories. 'These means', he warned, 'should not be so used that the satisfaction and delight of the Soul stems entirely from them, thereby causing one to forget to pray in the living temple which is the interior recollection of the Soul' (*The Ascent of Mount Carmel*). St. Augustine looked everywhere for God, and at last he found Him in his own heart: 'O Beauty ever ancient, ever new, too late have I known thee, too late have I loved thee. And behold thou wast within me whilst I was without seeking thee—Thou wast with me but I was not with thee' (*Confessions*). The twentieth century spiritual writer, Thomas Merton, who has been instrumental in quickening the interest of many people in mental prayer and contemplation, said that 'the real purpose of interior prayer is to enter into a conscious and loving communion with God, in which we are disposed to receive from Him the help we so desperately need, and to pay to Him the praise and honour, and thanksgiving, and love which it has now become our joy to give' (*New Seeds of Contemplation*). Meditation and contemplation should not be looked upon as practices suitable only for monks and nuns. Everyone who truly desires spiritual enlightenment and peace should engage in interior prayer in one

(continued on page 175)

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## Question and Answer, with Peter Cousins

### Are There Special Conditions For Prayer?

#### Question 146

*In view of the simple promise of Matthew 7: 7 ('Ask and it shall be given to you'), why do speakers insist so often on the importance of fulfilling certain 'conditions' in order to have prayers answered?*

The short answer to this question is that no Scripture should be viewed in isolation, apart from its relationship to other Scriptures on the same subject. (It would, in any case, be ridiculous to suppose on the basis of this text that God would be willing to smite with an incurable disease anybody I happened to dislike!)

When we collect together what the Scriptures say about the conditions on which God answers prayer, we do indeed end up with a rather lengthy list of provisions. However, closer investigation shows that these conditions are not in any way optional extras, as if having been saved (as a basic minimum so to speak) we might then proceed to gain the qualifications necessary for answered prayer. What is required in order that our prayers be answered is neither more nor less than what is involved in turning to God in conversion.

The first requirement is *trust*. If we doubt either God's love or his power, our relationship with him is damaged and the confidence that brought us to him for salvation is no different from what leads us to pray to him (*Matthew 21: 22, James 1: 5-7*). This means that our relationship with God is still one of *grace*, as is made clear in *Matthew 7: 7-11*. We do not 'deserve' to have our prayers answered. *Psalms 66: 18, Isaiah 59: 1, 2 and James 5: 16* all show that *repentance* is just as necessary for prayer as it is for salvation. If we turn to God then we turn from sin. Our relationship with him is based on forgiveness and results in forgiveness extended to others (*Mark 11: 25*). Obviously we shall see things through his eyes and share in his desires for people around us only if we are open to and with him; this openness requires honest confession of and turning from sin.

*Obedience* is not a price that God demands of us before he will answer prayer but (as in the case of conversion) a sign that our relationship with him is such as to find expression in prayer that is according to his will. *John 8: 29, 1 John 5: 14 and John 16: 23, 24* emphasise the importance of doing God's will—something which is, in one sense, 'only natural' to believers.

It thus appears that there are no 'special conditions'—but that prayer of a kind that God can answer follows naturally from a right relationship with him.

### Reconciling the Resurrection Narratives

#### Question 147

*A recent reading of the gospel accounts of the Resurrection have left me puzzled about precisely what happened at the tomb. How many young men (or angels?) announced the Resurrection? In what order did the visitors arrive at the tomb and tell others? Can you throw any light on these apparent contradictions and inconsistencies?*

The hero of Samuel Butler's novel *The Way of All Flesh*, "lost his faith" over this very issue. The episode serves as a reminder that these Resurrection narratives are notoriously difficult to harmonize in detail. If you want to see one way in which this has been attempted, you may look at the relevant pages of Westcott's commentary on John. There is also an interesting discussion in Calvin's commentary on John. But it is just as true today as it was when C. F. Hogg answered a similar question many years ago, that no solution has commanded universal agreement. This does not mean that the attempt is worthless, merely that failure to account for every detail is nothing to be ashamed of.

Many defenders of the faith have pointed out that this very difficulty constitutes a powerful argument in favour of the historicity of the Resurrection. If we were dealing with carefully contrived narratives, then we could be sure that the authors would not have left so many 'loose ends' but would have taken care to remove all possible sources of difficulty. This negative argument leads us to a positive one—that such superficial discrepancies are precisely what might be expected if we were dealing with a number of eye witness reports. The case would of course be different if these were legal depositions, subject to cross-examination and clarification by legal counsel. But that is just what we do not have here. We need not be surprised that the stories agree basically while leaving 'loose ends' which could presumably be tidied up by further investigation.

But this sort of neatly displayed and tightly organised pattern is precisely what God has not provided for us in the Gospels—a state of affairs that has implications for our understanding both of the Scriptures and of faith.

### Jezebel at Thyatira

#### Question 148

*In Revelation 2: 20-23, is Jezebel to be understood as an individual? If so, is not the threatened judgement on her children the case of the innocent suffering for the sins of others?*

In the Old Testament, Jezebel is notorious as a

Edited by Kathleen White, 60 Bowood Road, Swindon, Wilts.

## Kathleen White's Column

### Trans World Radio

March 31st marked an important day in the history of Trans World Radio. At their headquarters in Tower Bridge Road was held a reception to introduce the new British director, Dr. Louis Muggleton.

He has already served in a part-time capacity as the mission's scientific adviser for sixteen years. In 1973 he moved from senior lecturer in the Department of Electrical Engineering, University of Edinburgh, to Inaugural Professor and Founder Dean of the Faculty of Engineering in the University of Rhodesia.

On New Year's Day he was the subject of an attack by five armed terrorists. As a result he received seven stab wounds, one of which punctured a lung. In his address, he explained how it seemed that the Lord had prepared him before hand. The previous day, his passage in his Daily Notes was *Psalm 97*, 'He protects the lives of His people—He delivers them from the power of the wicked.'

'Even my training in unarmed combat during the war took them off their guard. They are used to people cowering. Amazingly, in spite of bayonets, I suffered only superficial wounds and was out of hospital by the next day.'

Turning from his personal experiences, Dr. Muggleton quoted, 'Behold, I set before you an open door which no-one can shut' (*Rev. 3: 8*). 'No iron curtain, no bamboo curtain, can shut out the air waves taking the gospel message from country to country'.

He gave a quick summary of his involvement with scientific research into working out wavelengths for different stations, starting from his army service in 1943 and going on to his period at Edinburgh University from 1962-1973. Obviously, this was all part of God's plan for his life.

Dr. Muggleton ended his talk with these words. 'Britain is more of a mission field than ever. Radio can play a great part in reaching people for God'.

Leslie Edgell, by virtue of his long association with T.W.R., followed with his address, likening the workers in the organisation to the four men who carried the sick man on a litter to Christ. 'They too are bringing sick folk to the Lord—it is a together ministry. We are labourers together for God, workers together with Him and you are also helping together by prayer'.

Afterwards, I seized the opportunity to ply Dr. Muggleton with a few more questions. I wondered if he might miss the academic side of his life

in his new post, but much as he enjoyed the successful setting up of the new faculty in Rhodesia, he looked forward to the challenge of his appointment as British Executive Director as well as Director of the new Wave Propagation Department of T.W.R.

'What aims have you for the development of radio work in this country?' was my next question.

'I would like to see more British broadcasters come on the air speaking in their own idiom and also I want the work to be self-financing'.

'Have you plenty of trained folks to call upon for work?' I queried.

'The Director for Europe is short of staff speaking in Hungarian, Russian and Czechoslovakian', Dr. Muggleton replied, 'He would be most grateful for volunteers'.

I came away from the reception with my vision enlarged of the possibilities of Christian radio work both at home and overseas, and challenged to more regular prayer and financial support. □

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#### Question and Answer (Continued from p. 178)

queen who led Israel into idolatry which will have included disobedience to God's law and also ritual fornication. It seems as if a woman in the church at Thyatira was having a similar influence on Christians there. It is impossible to say from verse 20 whether her authority was officially recognised but apparently many people took notice of her. She will have argued that there was no reason why Christians should not participate in feasts held in heathen temples (cf. *1 Cor. 8: 4*). In view of this, it seems unnecessary to assume that "fornication" (verse 20) means spiritual unfaithfulness, as it does often in the Old Testament and also here in verses 21 and 22. Literal and physical fornication will have formed a natural sequel to the pagan festivities. Judging by later developments, it is likely that "Jezebel" will have argued that a person of maturity and insight would remain *spiritually* uninvolved by participation in these *physical* activities.

The reference to "great tribulation" suggests that the "bed" of verse 22 is one of suffering and sickness, and we may cite *1 Cor. 11: 27-29* as a possible parallel. The "children" are not to be understood as her physical offspring but rather as her followers, who imitate her behaviour (cf. *John 8: 44* and *Matt. 5: 44, 45*).

## Looking at Books

### Belief and Business

**LAING** The Biography of Sir John W. Laing, C.B.E. (1879-1978). Roy Coad. Hodder & Stoughton. 238 pp. £6.25.

We know the Editor of *The Harvester* to be an accomplished historian; in this latest work, which is bound to be of great interest to many of our readers, he shows that he has what it takes to be a biographer. He makes Sir John Laing come alive, and that is the real test of a biography.

This book might be read as a success story, telling how a family business in Carlisle was built up into a national, and then an international, corporation. The man who built it up was plainly no ordinary man. Sir John knew all about the manual side of the business: he was trained in carpentry, masonry and bricklaying. Aneurin Bevan may have been surprised when Sir John spoke to him as a bricklayer to a politician, but the fact that Sir John knew about the practical side of housebuilding no doubt impressed the Minister of Health, and it is pleasant to read of the mutual esteem which developed between these two very different men. Over and above this practical knowledge, Sir John began very early to pay careful attention to costing and work study; in this as in other respects (e.g. employee shareholdings) he was well in advance of his contemporaries. If he drove his employees hard, he drove himself harder, and won their respect for it: 'Always setting the example', said one of them, 'he expects the impossible and usually gets it.'

But this is the biography of a man of God. For such a successful industrialist to adorn the doctrine of God his Saviour in all things called for consecration of no mean order. Sir John had been set a good example: when his parents died in 1924 he found that out of an annual

income of £1000 they had been giving away three quarters. But fifteen or sixteen years before that, in a very critical situation, he had made a solemn vow that, if God brought him through that situation, he would 'make Him a participating partner in his business', and when deliverance was on its way, he wrote down in financial detail what this would mean in practice, and kept the document into old age as a reminder of his vow.

The number of good causes which were helped, and in several cases brought into existence by his generosity were, if not quite legion, getting that way. Countless places of worship, from Coventry Cathedral to small Brethren chapels, owe him a great debt. London Bible College and Tyndale House, Cambridge, could not have got off the ground without him. It was mainly through Tyndale House and its library that the reviewer learned to appreciate Sir John's far-sighted sense of evangelical strategy; other opportunities of getting to know him were provided on the governing body of Clarendon School and at the meeting of *Harvester* trustees.

Mr. Coad truly says that Sir John's gentle appearance concealed an iron will. He quotes one of his associates as saying that perhaps he had never met any one who said 'no' to him. Well, once or twice the reviewer has heard 'no' being said to Sir John; the reaction was memorable.

From early days Sir John played a full part in local church fellowship and witness. Patron of biblical scholarship though he was, his own theology was simple and uncomplicated. But it is interesting to read how as a young man he came to terms with Darwinism, and found his simple faith in no way impaired thereby.

The volume is well illustrated: in almost all the photographs where Sir John appears he wears his characteristic happy smile. Many of us will endorse Peter Cousins' tribute to 'the immense impression of peaceful happiness, simplicity and contentment that JWL radiated'.

Review by Prof. F. F. Bruce

## The Christian Life

**What it Means to be Born Again** J. C. Godwin. Coverdale, 95 pp. 85 p. (paperback).

This book comes from an American background and is written in a journalistic style with headlines introducing each chapter-section. The author uses, in the main, everyday language, and includes a wealth of illustrative stories. The book is therefore easy to read and holds the attention well. I would quarrel with it on only two counts: some of the quotations from modern writers use a high-flown vocabulary which seems out of keeping with the rest of the book, and there are occasional extended Scriptural quotations in AV language (though other translations are usually employed). The writer relates what the Bible says about being born again, and shows that many have perverted or forgotten the Biblical message. He also describes the new quality of life which should appear in a born-again believer. The book is suitable for giving to any interested non-believer, of whatever educational background.

Review by David Jackson

**Hunger for Reality** George Verwer. Send the Light Trust 96 pp. 60p. (paperback).

This book, by the leader of Operation Mobilisation, was formerly published as 'Come! Live! Die!'. It is a challenge to all Christians who are guilty of 'split-level living'—not allowing their Sunday faith to control their weekday attitudes and behaviour. The author calls us to a genuine heart-hunger for God, prays for release from all the bondages of self-centred thinking, and invites us to respond to the fact that the Promised Land of rest is at the same time the place of challenge and conflict. He warns of the perils of being in the front-line against Satan, and specifies ways in which the devil can attack and the Christian can resist and escape. The book is a plea for reality in Christian living, for a revolution which will change comfortable habits into New Testament Christianity. Such books, we too often conclude are for young Christians. Here is a challenge which middle-aged believers would do well to face.

Review by David Jackson



**All about Prayer** W. E. Davies, Evangelical Supplies, 105 pp. 85p. (paperback).

No doubt many readers of this little book will feel that the title is misleading. One would expect a work with such a title as this to be a massive treatise on the subject of prayer. It is the very opposite, a collection of anecdotes on prayer. As Dr. Tatford has pointed out in his foreword, the author is 'more concerned to emphasise the importance of this essential feature of the Christian life, and to demonstrate its effectiveness

in practical experience'. Any book which aids our prayer life is valuable. All too often as the author writes 'many of us have probably plodded on in our prayer life with little success. The same words—lacking spiritual freshness and vitality have mechanically rolled off our tongues for years'. The contents are clearly set out in a table, but how much more convenient it would have been—for the preacher especially—if the illustrations had been divided into sections according to subject matter. As it is, they appear to be written at random. *Review by Dr. Kingsley G. Rendell*

## Human Values

**Diagnosis: Cancer—Where do we go from Here?** Jeanne Scheresky, Marshall Morgan & Scott, 63 pp. 50p. (paperback). **Winter Past** A Story of Depression and Healing, Nancy Anne Smith, I.V.P. 120 pp. 95 p. (paperback). **Is There Life after Death?** Weldon and Levitt, Kingsway Publications, 159 pp. £1.25 (paperback).

These three books deal with subjects of great concern to many people today. Cancer is the hidden fear in many a heart! A very high proportion of the community suffer from depression in one form or another. And death (after being a taboo subject for years) now exercises a morbid fascination as people try to get in touch with relatives who have died. All three books have been written by Americans and unfamiliar words and phrases occur here and there, but are readily understood in the context.

**Diagnosis—Cancer** is the story of a man of 45 who was found to be suffering from the disease, and his wife recounts the last seven months of his life. Every member of his family, his friends and even his doctors and nurses were affected in one way or another. His confidence in God's goodness was unshakeable. This is a moving book to read. And there is much in it to help us all. This is extracted from the last chapter: 'Today when I hear couples bicker . . . my heart aches, thinking "Don't waste your time together. . . Enjoy each other. Listen to each other. . ." Married couples never know how long their time together is likely to last.'

**Winter Past** is also a personal testimony. There is a Foreword by Dr. Marion Ashton who has been able to help many people facing a crisis. Nancy Anne Smith went through the trauma of having her past brought back to mind. She had suffered terrible experiences as a child and had buried the memories deep. They all had to be brought into the open so that forgiveness and healing could take place. Few people will have had the same problems. But many know what it is to live in tight, self-contained 'boxes' unable and unwilling to love and trust or be loved. Nancy's biggest difficulty was trying to be the kind of Christian she thought others expected her to be. Eventually she came through into peace, and even found members of her family when she was ready for their love because she too was ready to love.

**Is There Life After Death?** could be called a text-book. Zola Levitt and John Weldon have collaborated to examine the considerable amount of material now available about what life is like 'on the other side'. They have studied many stories of people who 'died' and returned, they have examined papers and articles written on the subject, and they have looked too at the doctors and others who work in this field. Much of their findings can be summed up by what Hal Lindsay wrote of this book, and which they quote: 'We are engulfed in an occult explosion which has been predicted immediately to precede the return of Christ. Paramount among these prophecies is the warning about an awesome acceleration of demonic deception. I believe Weldon and Levitt's book unveils an upsurge of a very old and insidiously appealing deception . . . that the dead are free to roam as spirits and communicate "superior" wisdom to the living . . . Scripture is clear, that the unsaved dead are confined and the saved are with Christ.'

The latter part of the book examines what the Bible says on the subject, and even includes a Christian woman's experience

of near death—so different from the others. The book ends with advice on how to be sure of eternal life now, so there may be confidence about 'Life after death.'

These three books will not only prove helpful to the readers of this Magazine, but they will be useful books to have on the book-shelf to lend to others as the need arises. They deal with subjects of universal and constant concern.

*Review by Marion A. Timmins*

**Life in our Hands—A study in Human Values.** C. G. Scorer M.B.E., M.D., F.R.C.S. I.V.P. 160 pp. £1.95 (paperback).

The author has been a consultant surgeon for many years and is thus well placed to tackle the problems he sets himself in this book. As the title suggests he places a high value on human life and shows that this ideal is being threatened by a number of contemporary ideas.

He first of all defines human life and values as not just in relationship to others' life in community' but to God. Right from the outset of the book there is an unashamed statement of Christian values. Man's individual response to another and to God through belief in Christ is expounded as the basis for a true value of life. Man is not just mind and spirit but also fashioned in the 'likeness of God his Creator'. He is in 'a continuing relationship with the Lord of the Universe'. Mr. Scorer suggests in a number of ways in his second chapter that the trend away from natural patterns of activity is responsible for allowing confusion in the roles of men and women in society. 'We cannot for long cut adrift from our biological norm, it leaves us restless and unsatisfied'. He deals in turn with family, sex roles, drugs, childbirth, breast-feeding, artificial insemination, sex selection and embryo transfer. These subjects are dealt with only briefly and without full discussion, but in chapters on marriage, conception and contraception, population control, induced abortion, euthanasia and life and love he extends his basic concept in depth from a widely based knowledge of the biological facts and also from contemporary references. He does not avoid the difficult aspects of some of the topics he has elected to discuss but clearly states within a well worked argument the Christian view point. 'Sexual intercourse outside of marriage is not acceptable for a Christian and faithfulness within marriage is of the very essence of a relationship founded on love.'

I have enjoyed reading this book and learned from it because the author's wide experience clearly shows through together with his clear conception of Christian values.

*Review by Dr. Peter Webb*

**Human Sexuality** A. Kosnik and others (eds.). Search Press. pp.xvi & 322. £4.95 (limp covers).

This book describes itself as 'New Directions in Catholic Thought'. It is basically an attempt to break away from traditional patterns of Roman Catholic moral theology in sexual matters. These had taken the primary purpose of sexuality to be procreation, and this enabled fairly hard-and-fast rules to be drawn up; the present work, taking a wider view of sexuality's meaning, sees the moral questions as much less

clear-cut. The contributors begin with a discussion of the Biblical teaching on sex and sexual morality, and a brief survey of subsequent developments within the Roman communion. (Protestant thought is not considered, though in other sections of the book Protestant writers are mentioned and quoted.) There is also a section on the data of the empirical sciences, data of particular relevance to any 'natural law' moral theology such as has been traditional among Roman Catholics.

The main body of the book consists of a fairly short essay 'Toward a Theology of Human Sexuality' and a long section on 'Pastoral Guidelines' for counsellors and confessors. The general tendency is to maintain that sexuality is meant to foster 'creative growth toward integration', integration both of the personality and of the individual within society. Such a view means that in general the old rules and prohibitions may have been justified, but that they cannot be regarded as absolute, since they derive their force from the goal of creative integration.

While the contributors regard their position as a development of, not a departure from, traditional attitudes, they appear to sit very light to the teaching of Bible and Church. Biblical injunctions are regarded as purely culture-bound: condemnations of prostitution and homosexual practices in the Old Testament were brought about by the prevalence of these in Canaanite idolatry, and Paul's similar language by the abuses current in contemporary pagan society; Christians need not therefore feel themselves bound by them. (One wonders why, then, the Old Testament did not condemn prophecy and sacrifice, which were features of idolatry too, and whether a similar attitude to Paul's might not be called for in our society today.)

The 'pastoral reflections' in the second part of the book contain a fair amount of sensible suggestions for Christian counselling. It is probable that in many cases people seeking such help would not be helped by a straight 'laying down of the law', and then the more indirect approach suggested here could well be found useful. But the general impression given by the book is of a morality which is basically twentieth-century humanist, in which the specifically Christian elements do not seem really at home.

Review by R. L. Sturch, London Bible College

**Eros Defiled, The Christian and Sexual Guilt** John White. Inter-Varsity Press, 168 pp. £1.25 (paperback).  
**Whatever Happened to Sex?** Mary Whitehouse. Hodder and Stoughton, 284 pp. £1.25 (paperback).

There was a time when Evangelical Christians liked to think that people who had sexual problems (or those with nervous breakdowns) could, hopefully, be avoided or ignored. The large number who had not (God be thanked) been affected by

either trouble could hide behind the self-satisfied assumption that it shouldn't happen to Christians; and leaders in the church confronted by people in distress would try to cope by administering a concentrated dose of suitable scriptures and hoping the problem would go away.

There seems to be more compassion and understanding abroad nowadays. There are certainly more books on the subject. Those who have had distressing experiences speak and write about them. Those who counsel them and study the problems are sharing their findings.

The American psychiatrist author of this book wants to help 'the sexual sinner'. Having answered the question whether sexual pleasure is a sin or a gift from God, he examines one by one all the problems that go along with the practice and enjoyment of sexual activity . . . masturbation, pre-marital sex, adultery, homosexuality and others. His style is vigorous and his attitude positive. He addresses, and offers Bible-based advice and cautions to, the person with the specific problem as well as others involved. He illustrates from examples of people he has known within and outside his consulting-room. His analysis is detailed and forthright. He calls a spade a spade! But his approach is not clinical. He sees in each case a human being who either is, or should be, struggling to know the will of God. And with advice to the strugglers he also offers insight to youth and church leaders. To any who still want to avoid or ignore the problems he urges a change of heart (and quotes some sad cases of churches failing to cope with their members who get entangled in sexual misdemeanours). To all who have any opportunity to help or guide others he urges that same compassion and ability to get alongside that Jesus himself showed, when he deliberately mixed with sinners and offered himself as the Physician of all who are sick in mind or body. A very helpful and readable book.

You get 100 pages more for the same money from Mary Whitehouse. The book provides 242 pages of evidence from films, printed material, debates, interviews and letters and from the many contacts the author has made in the course of her work here and in Scandinavia of the 'pollution . . . that permeates our culture'. It is an impressive mass of documentation presented with personal observations that reflect the author's passionate concern, especially for young people.

In toto it is a very gloomy book. But it is depressing for more than one reason. I feel Mrs. Whitehouse has overstated her case. She began to alienate me about halfway through. It may all be very true, but I just didn't want to read any more. It was all so over-whelmingly negative. Maybe she realised this herself. The last chapter is six pages long and is called 'Days of Hope'. Here at last was something more positive, and it was so short!

I admire much of what Mrs. Whitehouse does and is. But this book helps me to see how even her sympathizers can get impatient with her.

Review by Pam Cousins

## The Theological Background

**Themes of Fundamental Moral Theology** Charles E. Curran. University of Notre Dame Press. viii & 241 pp. £3.70 (paperback).

Father Curran has set out to examine not specific ethical issues but the principles behind Christian ethics. His work might interest readers of *The Harvester* for either of two reasons. First, those interested in the R.C. church and in particular the recent changes that have taken place within that church will find much fascinating material in this book. While showing respect for the Catholic tradition and the teaching authority of the church the author is politely but firmly critical of both. The encyclical *Humanae Vitae* of Pope Paul (condemning birth control) is repeatedly criticized. In the second chapter the contrast between the classical world view (underlying traditional R.C. theology) and the modern

world view (increasingly accepted since Vatican II) is concisely and helpfully spelt out, point by point. From the standpoint of the modern world view Curran is repeatedly and radically critical of the traditional R.C. approach to ethics. It is criticized, among other reasons, for being legalistic and for seeing sin in terms of external acts rather than in terms of relationship. In keeping with the spirit and aims of Vatican II Curran seeks to be scriptural in his approach and this leads to many insights that would be acceptable to evangelicals. At the same time it is clear that the author's basic position is that of a Roman Catholic.

Secondly, those with a particular interest in ethical principles will find much of interest in the book. Even where the issues discussed are very distinctively Catholic (though the conclusions are usually very different to traditional Catholicism) these issues are often capable of application to

evangelical church life. The discussion of the role of church law, for instance, raises questions about the role of a discipline like the 'quiet time'. But much of the material is of common interest to evangelicals and Catholics. Particularly stimulating is the discussion of the relevance of 'the gospel ethic' (e.g. the Sermon on the Mount) to Christian ethics. Various positions are explored and the issues are clarified in a manner that will stimulate those who do not necessarily agree with the author's own conclusion.

In conclusion, this book is worth the attention of those with an interest in modern Catholicism or in ethical principles, and especially of those interested in both.

Review by A. N. S. Lane, London Bible College

**Meditations on Freedom and the Spirit** Karl Rahner. London, Burns and Oates. 115 pp. £1.95 (limp)

Karl Rahner is a distinguished theologian of the small group who first came into public notice (Congar, Kung, Schillebeeckx, etc.) at the second Vatican Council in 1962. The aged Pope John XXIII's Council was in many ways a breath of fresh air, though even now some see it as a rearguard action of traditionalism digging its heels. History will judge; but it cannot be disputed that fresh winds were blowing; the stranglehold of Latin on the liturgy has gone, and this volume is evidence of a new outlook.

Rahner, who has been called a 'collar and tie Jesuit' is a voluminous writer. The publishers list thirty titles in English translation; another publisher has a dozen volumes in print

of a comprehensive outline of theology which bids fair to rival Karl Barth's in magnitude.

Here are three papers brought together, in English translations by different hands, by Rahner. In the first, 'Faith as courage', the Christian faith is described as an expression of radical courage, not for a specific or individual act, but in the whole sphere of human life. The distinctions between faith and hope are also explored. The second topic is 'Freedom and manipulation in society and the church', to be treated theologically rather than sociologically. Man can experience freedom in salvation, but socially to exercise one's freedom can deteriorate into manipulation. The church has not often been 'an outstanding champion' in the struggle for freedom. Within the church, moreover, ecclesiastical authority must always proceed from love, belief in its doctrines can never be compelled.

The discussion leads on to a consideration of 'Toleration in the church', not an easy-going attitude to deviations, but bearing with the as yet unintegrated.

This is not an easy book, nor will it appeal to everyone. It is a work of devotion and of theology, but not written in the usual language of devotion or theology. It is a book of *meditations*, and the reader who takes a chapter, a page, even a paragraph at a time and meditates, digests it slowly and prayerfully, will do so to profit. Moreover, he will meet one of the most significant contemporary theological thinkers, and gain an insight into the new Catholic thinking.

Review by Laurence E. Porter

## Children's Books

by Kathleen White

**What Jesus Did, What Jesus Said** Pickering and Inglis. 95p.

These Bible stories retold by Jean and Jennifer Rees and Mary Batchelor are straightforward paraphrases of well-known Bible incidents for children. It is the presentation about which I am unhappy, however. Little has been changed since the reward books of my day, a thin and pallid Jesus dressed in a long white robe. I'm afraid, in spite of the reasonable text, these two books are old-fashioned and not produced in the current idiom which appeals far more to children today.

**Colouring Book of Flowers** Lion. 25p.

This is much more than a fill in and colour painting book. The attractive cover provides a guide for the colours to be used; inside can be found a useful description of the different plants and their habitats, a catholic selection from many countries of the world. Also there is included a short paragraph on God's goodness in creating such a beautiful and useful universe. It is only one of a series of eight in God's Wonderful World series and a very welcome innovation for junior children.

**Rabbit to the Rescue, Rabbit in Danger, The Daring Rabbit, The Foolish Rabbit** Terence Kelshaw. (Scripture Union.)

All these four rabbit stories for younger juniors start off with the same first page by way of introduction. The stories are pleasant but slight and owe a little in conception to Beatrix Potter and her famous rabbit characters without achieving her superb mastery of language. An unusual but refreshingly different innovation is the page of questions at the end, designed to make young readers relate the incidents to events in their own lives and also to point them to a parallel situation in a well-known Bible story. A short prayer is also included.

I would give full marks for appearance. The shiny outer cover is most attractive and fairly child-proof; the illustrations inside are drawn with meticulous and loving care by Elsie

Wrigley. Each page is a feast to the eye and sketched in with painstaking detail.

Most small children would welcome them as a gift. They are skilfully designed so that they do not look like moral books with a message but nevertheless they should make their young readers stop, think and pray.

**Zilya's Secret Plan** Ulrich Schaffer. Lion. £1.50.

Ulrich Schaffer as a sensitive story-teller is on the right wave-length for children. He does not try to write down to them but uses language and imagery with which they will be already familiar. What is more, while they are enjoying the account of Zilya's adventures as she devises a secret plan to save her lovely valley from destruction, they cannot fail to become aware of their natural heritage of beauty which it is their responsibility to care for and preserve. Too, they will be reminded of their creator God who made everything attractive for man's pleasure and gratification.

The cheerful, coloured illustrations by Tahashi Shoji are in the modern idiom and should appeal to most juniors of today.

**The Mystery of Pheasant Cottage** P. M. St. John. Scripture Union. 95p.

A new book by Patricia St. John is always an important publishing event for younger readers. In her latest adventure *The Mystery of Pheasant Cottage* she shows she is still in touch with children and possesses the art of weaving a compelling story. It's not quite the old formula—the action is more widespread and I don't think it will achieve the popularity of *Treasures of the Snow* or *Star of Light*. For all that, I found it difficult to put down, the plot has some unexpected twists and Miss St. John deals with the Christian content with a sensitive touch so that it fits in quite naturally with the situation and background without appearing forced or contrived.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS by Kathleen White



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## Readers' Forum

*Readers' Forum* is open to contributions from readers. Please send suggestions from practical experience, related to church activities or christian living; doctrinal or expository questions; useful experiences; what-you-will; to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX. Questions, to which other readers will be invited to submit replies, will also be published from time to time as they are received. It is hoped that readers will take full advantage of this feature.

## Church Publicity

*Our Readers' Forum this month is a suggestion submitted by Mr. Brian Elliott of Parbold, Lancs.*

Many fellowships have printed cards to introduce their programme of activities to their neighbours, and the card which Mr. Elliott sends, from his own fellowship at Parbold Evangelical Church, Chorley Road, Hildale, is a particularly well-thought-out one. It describes the fellowship as 'an independent Christian fellowship, established in 1879, to proclaim the good news of salvation through personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ'. Inside, there is a brief description of the main activities:-

**Sundays. 11.00 a.m. Family Gospel Service**—'this service is designed to show the relevance of the Christian faith to the needs of people in modern society' (an ambitious and well-worded objective: it would be interesting to have observations on the extent to which local people feel that the preachers are able to live up to it!—Ed.)

**6.30 p.m. Evening Worship and Communion**—'the first part of this service includes a Bible address. This is followed by a simple communion service which enables Christians to express their love and devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 11: 23-26).'

**Wednesdays. 2.30 p.m. Ladies' Fellowship Hour**—'all ladies are welcome to attend . . .'

**7.30 p.m. Prayer and Bible Study Hour**—'these services are convened both for fellowship and the deepening of the spiritual life of the Christian.'

In each case there is a list of the speakers, and the back of the leaflet bears details of young peoples' activities and of *Saturday at Seven*—these informal meetings help to encourage Christian fellowship and are held in various homes around the village.

On the often maladroitly handled matter of preacher's expenses, the church has devised a specially printed envelope—'Mr. . . . We appreciate your help and fellowship and would like to thank you in the Lord's name'—which is placed on the lectern (with the gift inside). The cost—about £6.50 to £7.00 for 500 envelopes.

## Replies to Professor Bruce

### The April Question

It is not unknown in the churches to which most of us belong for someone who for reasons of health cannot be baptized by immersion to be treated in all respects as having been baptized. Moral theologians would speak of such a person as having received the 'baptism of desire'; less technically, he or she would perhaps be assured by responsible brethren that the Lord, knowing the circumstances, would 'take the wish for the deed'. But I have reason to know that a Christian in such a situation would have a greater sense of spiritual satisfaction if the baptismal ceremony were duly carried out, but with a token amount of water—that is to say, by affusion rather than immersion. Is this a valid consideration, or is total immersion so essential to baptism that it is better to forgo water altogether than to use only a little?

#### Mr. H. L. Ellison replies:-

There is no more subtle and widely-diffused superstition than that man can influence his fellow-man or even God or be influenced by the conjunction of stars and planets. This can best be summed up under the general term 'magic'. It would need an article to show how this concept constantly rears its head among those who call themselves Christians.

Though God had instituted and minutely detailed the Levitical sacrifices at Sinai, the popular concept that they had an intrinsic power that controlled God Himself was vigorously and decisively rejected by the canonical prophets. Equally the Reformers scandalized the Church of Rome by their root and branch rejection of the *ex opere operato*, i.e. automatic, concept of the Christian sacraments, of which they counted seven. The mediaeval church fathers devoted much attention to questions like whether baptism in anything but water or with an incomplete Trinitarian formula was invalid—hence the still prevalent Roman Catholic practice of conditional baptism, if it had been first carried out by one who was not a priest.

We tend to pity the unreformed churches for being concerned with such things, but we are little better, as Prof. Bruce's question indicates. Some of us can debate endlessly and even cause divisions by questions whether the Lord's Supper should be held in the morning or the evening; whether we should use one or more or even individual cups at it, and whether they should contain wine, grape juice, or even some other fruit juice. Similarly there are many who dare to question the validity of a believer's baptism made on confession of faith, simply because an inadequate amount of water was used.

I am grateful to God that when I was immersed in baptism the tip of my nose did not go under the water, for this troubles some of my friends addicted to 'magic', who consider that I should have asked to be re-immersed.

The Reformers' maxim, 'Believe and you have eaten', was up to a point a very true and wise one, at a time when many were excluded from the fellowship of the Church and its ordinances. To suggest, however, that when by reason of circumstances or physical weakness we cannot administer the sacraments as we should like to, we should ignore them, is to hand ourselves over to the sway of 'magic' and the worship of the physical. Is living under conditions where wine (or grape juice) or an adequate quantity of water for immersion are unavailable, really an adequate reason for ignoring the Lord's Supper or Baptism? Even to ask the question is surely to answer it.

#### Mr. L. L. Fox replies:-

As I see things, the answer to Prof. Bruce's April 79 question, is 'no'. That is, in the special case of one who would like to be baptised by immersion but for health reasons can only go as far as affusion, 'total immersion is not so essential to baptism that it is better to forego water altogether than use only a little'.

Even though the old covenant was outward whereas the new covenant is inward (*Rom. 2: 28, 29; II Cor. 3*), the Lord has nevertheless provided us with symbols of water for baptism, which has to do with the start of Christian life; and bread and wine, which have to do, among other things, with the support of that life. Christians use these symbols whenever they can, as appropriate, but this use of symbols while it may be obligatory is not essential, else we would be back on Jewish ground.

Very briefly, baptism is a visual demonstration to onlookers of the fact that the one being baptised, having passed from death unto life, has decided in all things to look to the Lord Jesus for the leadership of life (*I Cor. 10: 2; Heb. 3: 1-6*). The actual plunging into water, effects nothing whatever for the one being baptised, although one trusts that inward experience corresponds to outward act. How glorious that an infirm one should wish to demonstrate, in the only way possible, that they have handed over their life to Christ and wish to follow Him (however deeply or otherwise the doctrine may be understood).

It may be that the infirm person is the only one 'for baptism' on the particular occasion in question. If so, I would like to suggest that in order that the Christians present can demonstrate to any unsaved who may be there, the 'death, burial

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There is no more subtle and widely-diffused superstition than that man can influence . . . God

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and rising again' signification of baptism, the affusion of the infirm one be accompanied by the re-baptism of a Christian volunteer; it being explained to all that this was what the infirm one would have liked to have been able to undergo. This would give the speaker the opportunity to underline that baptism is only a symbol. What a bond, too, would be forged between the infirm one and the volunteer! How all Christians there would be able to feel that they had done what they could for the infirm one, and, in the spirit of *I Cor. 9: 22, 23*, for any non-Christians present. It seems to me that this would be one of those occasions where the spirit of 'we are not under the law, but under grace' would apply (*Rom. 6: 16*).

#### Mr. Ronald J. Pantlin replies:-

I was most interested in Professor Bruce's question on this matter in the April *Harvester* as I was involved in such a case some years ago in a well-known Midlands Assembly when I lived in that area.

We had a young lady Christian who wished to be baptised but, for medical reasons, it was not thought to be wise to subject her to immersion.

The elders felt that she should be given the opportunity to confess her faith publicly in conjunction with a number of others who were to be baptised, and I did the baptising.

Before I entered the baptistry I stood with her and she publicly stated her faith in response to my asking her the customary question. Taking her hands, I then said 'On the declaration of your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ I would have baptised you in the Name . . . etc.'

In deciding upon this procedure, the thought of using any water did not occur to us but, had some form of 'affusion' or 'sprinkling' been put to us, I think we should have said it was not necessary and, indeed, that such would have carried with it quite the wrong implications.

## Correspondence

### Pre-arrangement at the communion service

From Mr. D. H. Dunbar

Dear Sir,

I read with considerable interest the replies to Professor Bruce's February question, relating to the subject of arranged/unarranged ministry of the Word at the breaking of bread service. I would like to submit one or two observations.

1. It is held by some that arranged Bible teaching inhibits the freedom of the Spirit. I think there is a definite distinction between formal, expository Bible teaching, for which, according to passages in *1 Corinthians*, the Holy Spirit has gifted some (but not all) in a local church, and the informal type of experience sharing which all true Christians ought to have the freedom to do, in order to encourage and upbuild the fellowship by sharing their experiences of Christ in their individual lives—for this one does not require a gift, merely an experience.

Having structured Bible teaching based on a pre-arranged syllabus does not exclude opportunities for anybody in the fellowship to share an experience or to pass on a message given to him by the Holy Spirit, during the worship service—and this can be in context with the tone of the service.

2. Mr. Todd's reply is rather unfortunate in that he defeats his own attempt to reject the idea of arranged Bible teaching. He claims that some programmes of pre-arranged subjects look like a university curriculum. . . . We must remember that not all the Lord's people are academics. However, it is precisely because all the Lord's people are not academics that consecutive, arranged Bible teaching is beneficial.

In our fellowship in Troon we have recently been engaging in a study in the book of *Romans*. Try expounding the intricate, intellectual arguments of Paul's logic in a haphazard, one-off fashion, and the chances are the academics will follow it, and the non-academics will be lost.

33 Victoria Drive,  
Troon, Ayrshire

Yours sincerely in Christ,  
David H. Dunbar.

### Uniformed Youth Organisations

From Mr. L. Reveley

Dear Mr. Coad,

I was interested to read John Robertson's letter about uniformed organisations as a means of reaching more young people with the Gospel. I do, however, question his contention that uniformed organisations are capable of attracting a far larger number of youngsters than the non-uniformed organisations such as the Covenanters. Younger children no doubt are attracted by a uniform, but many are embarrassed as they move towards their middle teens, and uniform (unless of a military nature like Army Cadets) becomes a hindrance to recruitment rather than a help.

However, the question of uniform or not is clearly debatable, but John Robertson goes on to encourage Christians to join the major uniformed organisations as leaders and he specifically mentions Scouts and Guides. I agree that we need Christians in every branch of life and particularly in places where youth can be influenced. I would submit nevertheless that the question a Christian youth worker should consider is where he/she can be most effective to achieve clear objectives. What are these objectives? If they are to train youngsters in good citizenship, social behaviour and general character building then where better than the Scouts? They do a splendid job in these areas and the enthusiasm and dedication of Scout/Guide leaders is in every way commendable. But are these our *only* objectives as Christians? Surely not! Let's not be ashamed of them. Our aim is to create an environment in which the Word of God can be systematically taught, where the claims of Christ on the allegiance and lives of young people can be presented. Our prayer is that youngsters will come to Christ, be baptized, become active Christians and develop to their full potential spiritually, mentally and physically. These are precisely the aims of such organisations as the Covenanters.

As a father of three children I have reason to be really grateful, to this movement. All my children went through 'Covies' and they are all now engaged in some form of Christian leadership. Covenanters would I believe be beneficial to so many assemblies and other evangelical churches who are finding it so difficult to hold children beyond the age of 10/11.

The nub of my argument is that our Christian youth leadership resources are limited both in terms of people and the time they have available. These limited resources should be deployed in such a way that they will make the most impact. If some individual Christians feel called to serve the Lord in the major uniformed organisations, then more power to their elbow: but are they really being as effective as they could be? If some organisations have a full programme of social activities but have little or no focus on spiritual things, the Christian leader is bound to get bogged down in things which, while good in themselves, do not address the Christian leader's objectives as outlined above. It is true that such organisations as the Covenanters engage in a great variety of games, sports, achievement 'seals', covering all sorts of skills, camps and houseparties; but always the essential aims are toward the Christian commitment and development of the youngsters.

May I suggest, therefore, that Christians contemplating youth work should consider carefully their objectives and then invest their talents where they will have the maximum opportunity, in a practical sense, of achieving them.

25 The Avenue,

Pinner,  
Middlesex.

Yours sincerely  
Len Reveley

### The Second Advent

From Mr. T. B. Wattam

Dear Mr. Coad,

Thank you for publishing the letter by Miss Brockett on the Coming of the Lord. It is evident she has done what we should all do, that is read for ourselves instead of accepting what others have said without any sort of qualification. The four authors she quotes could now be multiplied on both sides of the Atlantic. There are two streams of thought held by Christians equally godly and gifted. One is that the Coming is in two distinct parts separated by about seven years. The first is said to be the rapture, the second the appearing. It is said this truth was lost from apostolic days until the beginning of the 19th century when it was once again revealed.

This means that God allowed this truth to be unknown for seventeen centuries. There is plenty of evidence that the early fathers believed in the Coming, but not in two stages. It is assumed that Paul taught a secret rapture that was completely gone with not a single trace of it to be found within a decade or so after the close of the days of the apostle John, and although thousands of saints died for their faith God did not allow the truth of the two aspects of the Coming to be known until the 19th century!

The late Mr. C. F. Hogg said the ablest and best written books on the subject were those written by the 'other side' (i.e. those who believed the *Parousia* and the *Appearing* were one and the same). There is one text that is vital to this subject (*Titus 2: 13*). The blessed hope and the appearing in glory of our great God and Saviour are the same thing. The Christians hope is the appearing; the rapture is an incident spoken of in a word of comfort for the bereaved in *1 Thess. 4*, hardly anywhere else.

By this time both Miss Brockett and the writer will have had a title bestowed upon them. We shall be called 'tribulationists'. We have only to put an 'ist' at the end of a name and the bearer is tagged for ever! Surely a wise outlook on these things would be to be less dogmatic about the 'sweet bye and bye' and do what we can in the 'sweet now and now'.

Charnock Dale Rd.

Sheffield  
S12 3HR

Sincerely  
T. B. Wattam



# The News Page

Press Day, July 1979, Monday, June 4th, for Displayed Advertisements, Prayer List, Forthcoming Events and news items (Please send direct to Publisher at 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW)

## Out and About

### The Boys' Brigade looks for Leaders:

The Boys' Brigade urgently needs more help to staff the local Companies in preparation for the massive National Development Campaign for Boys, which will be launched in September 1979. Many major churches in Britain gave their enthusiastic support for a week of prayer during the period 17th to 23rd April. As a recently issued press release says, "Men and women, young or old, there's a job waiting to be done within the life of an active Christian Youth Organisation."

### Changes at CLC:

Ken and Bessie Adams, for so many years Field Leaders of CLC International, will be passing their responsibilities to Bob and Dorothy Gerry, who will be moving to North America after 28 years of productive ministry in Japan. Bob Gerry will also continue to serve as the Crusade's International Secretary. Mr. and Mrs. Adams reiterate (as if we could fail to believe them!) that they are *not* retiring, only changing hats! A thoroughly scriptural attitude—if only some of us, who seem to imagine we can "drop out" while still in comparatively early middle age(!), would take a leaf out of their book!

## News from the Evangelical Alliance:

**Race Relations:** Nat Nkosi, who lives in Soweto and, in association with Scripture Union, is in charge of Christian work in black schools in South Africa and Namibia, was guest speaker at a conference on "Christian Responsibility and South Africa" arranged by the Evangelical Race Relations Group held at Harlesden Congregational Church from 10.45 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. on Saturday, 19th May. Nat Nkosi spoke in the morning on "Being a Christian in South Africa" while in the afternoon a speaker from "End Loans to South Africa" focused on how Christians in Britain can act responsibly towards South Africa.

**How do we live with the fact of our guilt?** About two hundred people attended a half day conference on the subject of guilt, arranged by Care and Counsel at St. Paul's Church, Robert Adam Street, London on March 18th. The conference sharpened up the distinction between true and false guilt, and the theme was looked at from a theological perspective by Dr. James Packer, Associate Principal of Trinity College, Bristol, and from a psychiatric angle by Dr. Gaius Davies, a consultant at a London hospital.

**The Local Church and Evangelism:** "The time for talking about evangelism has gone. The time for action in evangelism has come. The key to effective evangelism in the 1980s lies in the full involvement of the local church." This is the theme of Clifford Hill, the Evangelical Alliance Secretary for Evangelism and Church Growth, writing in the Spring issue of IDEA.

But the EA's plans for evangelism in the next decade are not limited to local church activity. "We need both local evangelism and mass evangelism for effective outreach to the nation", adds Clifford Hill. "The right pattern will be a mosaic. There is no one form of evangelism that will reach our highly secularised, urban, industrialised, technological population."

The EA plans to start the new decade with an emphasis on prayer for evangelism (especially during the Week of Prayer from January 6th to 13th). Then the national congress on evangelism, 'Spring 80' at Prestatyn in North Wales, in Easter Week of next year, will aim both to inspire and to assist local churches to prepare for evangelism. After a commissioning at the end of Spring 80, delegates will return to their local churches with a covenant for evangelism which all will be invited to enter on Whit Sunday 1980, committing each church to God for renewal and growth, that the country may be healed. A concentrated period of locally based evangelism that is also nationally co-ordinated through the use of common symbols and forms of publicity is planned for the rest of 1980 and 1981. Believing that the movement of God's Spirit that is already evident in a small way will have led to the mobilising and outreach of many local churches by 1982, the EA envisages these churches sharing in a national outreach in that year with mass meetings. This will be followed by a further period of locally based and regional evangelism from 1983.

### FEBA Radio

FEBA Radio's news service to listeners in South Asia will close in September unless two more staff join the editorial team in Seychelles in the next three months. "It is impossible to maintain news in our schedules without more help," said Dr. David Bacon, Director of FEBA's international Christian radio station in Seychelles. "Losing news will lose us listeners, too." The present two-man team has been operating a seven-day-week service of news bulletins in English to South Asia, but the Chief News Editor is now due for home leave. One man cannot maintain present output alone; two more people are needed. Peter Bayes, Administration Director of FEBA Radio, explained that the organisation is looking for two Christian journalists with sub-editing experience and a good background in international affairs. If they have acceptable radio voices this will help. "Above all," says Peter, "they must be willing to go to Seychelles soon. They will work hard there, facing the pressure of deadlines in tropical heat, all for the missionary allowances and the joy of serving the Lord."

### Mid-Wessex Christian Camps:

A new camp site is being sought. This Young People's work, which provides low cost holidays in a Christian atmosphere, is now seeking a site within 4 hours' travelling time from Woking. A minimum of 1 acre is required, ideally near to the sea, a lake or river and available for 4 weeks in the school summer holidays. Anyone who can help in any way should get in touch with Peter Howitt, White Timbers, Hook Hill Park, Woking, GU22 0PX (telephone Woking 72930).

### Rurcon:

"There is a village in the People's Republic of Benin where Christians form the majority of the population.

One of the Church leaders is the government agricultural extension worker. While communist "Party" speakers were claiming that the Christian way led people to think only of the after-life, with the result that the progress of the country is impeded, farmers in this village were working hard and putting new agricultural ideas into practice. Their yields were above those of any other village in the Province. At a ceremony, Party officials congratulated the village on their achievement. Then they listened, quietly impressed, as Christians explained why the village did so well and shared their faith in the Jesus who came to save body as well as soul.

The foregoing is typical of the fascinating material drawn from many lands and cultures, included in the latest Rurcon Newsletter. Copies may be obtained from Peter Batchelor, at Rurcon, 4 Churchfield, Wincanton Somerset, BA9 9AJ.

### News from the Scripture Union:

**Three hundred at training day in Reading:** Three hundred people attended the first of SU's Centenary Workshops—training days in the sharing of the Word of God—at the Alfred Sutton Girls' School in Reading on March 24. The three hundred came from many denominations, and ranged from teenagers to senior citizens.

Participants could choose between groups which gave training in sharing the Word with adults in preaching and in house groups, with families and in family services, or with various age groups of children and young people. There were also seminar groups for day school teachers and for those involved in voluntary Christian groups in schools, and for those working with non-literate young people in youth club situations. Nearly all the seminars were led by Scripture Union staff members.

SU are planning ten similar Workshops for the autumn—in Manchester (September 22), Newcastle (September 29), Bradford (October 6), Cambridge (October 13) Birmingham (October 20), Leicester (October 27) Bristol (November 3), Bournemouth (November 10), Croydon (November 17) and Watford (November 24).

### Uganda Refugee Appeal:

Bishop Festo Kivengere, Anglican Bishop of Kigezi, Uganda passed through London on Tuesday direct from Tanzania. Speaking of the situation in Uganda at the present time Bishop Kivengere said the mood is one of jubilation.

"It is a time of real deliverance and most Ugandans look at it as the hand of God using their neighbours in Tanzania to bring about the change for which most Ugandans, both Christian and non-Christian, have been longing for eight years. This has brought a link between Uganda and Tanzania which is stronger than just a political relationship.

"The Ugandans now look at Tanzania as a sister country which has already sacrificed itself for the sake of liberating Uganda from a dictator's hand without any vested interest other than its own borders being safe.

"To Ugandans, Tanzania has done a great work of rescue. However, there is a tremendous work still to be done in reconstructing Uganda and this is to be done

by Ugandans themselves supported by their friends in Africa and overseas.

"We need to help the people by teaching them in seminars and conferences that love and forgiveness are the best weapons for reconstruction. This needs men and women who have been prepared educationally and who have a vision to bring back value to human life and human rights for everyone and also respect justice and the law of the land.

"This means that there is still a tremendous need to train Ugandans who have ability, preparing them for this work which is an on-going work of reconstruction. Thus we are thrilled that those who strengthened our hand in the initial stages of RETURN are now seeing the outcome of what they committed themselves to and we encourage them all to continue their efforts because reconstruction is now no longer in the future but in the immediate present.

"This is why I am hurrying back home."

### Wycliffe Bible Translators/New Appointment:

Mr. Don Gregson (43), for 6½ years Director of Business Services of Wycliffe Bible Translators and Summer Institute of Linguistics in Britain, has been appointed Area Director for Asia. Mr. Gregson will share the responsibility for the oversight and co-ordination of all existing work in the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia and South and South East Asia. He will also be involved in the development of new work in Asia, as God leads. His work will include the encouragement of divisions in Japan and Korea. The administration for Asia is carried out in Manila, Philippines. In addition to overseeing the small Asia Area Office, Mr. Gregson will be travelling around the various countries helping to establish a long-term strategy for bringing God's Word to around 1,200 language groups of Asia still without any word of Scripture. Over 30% (more than 1,500) of the world's languages are spoken in Asia. Mr. Gregson, with his wife and two young children, move to Manila this month (June).

### The North of England Women's Conference 1979:

"About ninety women from the North East and further afield spent a most illuminating weekend in Durham (6-8 April) considering His Power in Us—the Holy Spirit at work. Honest, clearheaded and powerful ministry was given by May Laird and Grace Ruoff, covering many aspects of the subject in the light of Scripture. Everyone had opportunity to contribute in small group sessions, when the book of Jonah was studied. At another session Rosemary Attwell described the development of a Christian witness at Cramlington New Town. There was a chance to relax or explore Durham as well as to enjoy informal musical interludes and chat over the splendid meals provided in the lovely college setting.

Our friends from Humble most kindly came with their recording equipment and have tapes available of the main addresses, which they are willing to send post free and at less than cost price. Please send to: Recording Secretary (Durham), 'Algrade', Humble, East Lothian, Scotland. Cost for one set of four tapes is £5.20 and cheques or postal orders should be made payable to Miss B. Waugh. (Tape 1: The Holy Spirit in Action—Yesterday and Today—Mrs. Laird; Tape 2: The Holy Spirit in the Christian—Helper and Guide—

Miss Ruoff; *Tape 3: The Holy Spirit in the Church His Gifts—Mrs. Laird; Tape 4: The Holy Spirit in Me—His Power and His Fruits—Miss Ruoff.*”

Mary K. Batchelor

## Home-Calls

**The Rev. Ben Peake** at the Pilgrim Hall and Conference Centre on April 12th, aged 69. Together with his wife Eileen, he had been a Director at Pilgrim Hall for eight years.

Previously he was General Secretary of the Movement for World Evangelization for many years, where he was well known for his work with the Filey Holiday Crusade. He had also been a Pastor of Banstead Baptist Church in Surrey, and at churches in Dublin and Doncaster.

Only three days before his death, Mr. Peake and the Trustees of Pilgrim Hall appointed Robin and Barbara Solly to succeed him and Eileen as Directors. Robin (aged 44) and Barbara have served with the Wycliffe Bible Translators for almost twenty years, mostly in Brazil and more recently at the British headquarters. They are planning to go to Pilgrim Hall later in the summer. The Trustees of Pilgrim Hall issued a statement in which they “praise God for all He has accomplished through the love, enthusiasm and hard work of Ben and Eileen Peake.” They continue to offer love and support for Mrs. Peake.

The funeral service was held at Pilgrim Hall on Wednesday, April 18th, and details of a memorial service are to be announced later.

**T. G. Smith** at Northampton on March 1st 1979. Converted at home following a gospel meeting at a

London City Mission Hall at the age of 16. He later came into fellowship at Enfield Highway, from whence he was commended to full-time work in 1926 at the age of 20. This took him on gospel campaigns throughout Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Essex and Suffolk (also he spent a time with one of the Bentall brothers in Devon as a result of which contacts were made with Merion Hall, Dublin) until the outbreak of war, when he was compelled to take up secular work, to which he added Warden Service. He married in 1930. Enfield Highway recognised his abilities and encouraged him in ministry of the word and evangelism. Their esteem for him led them to seek his wise counsel in elderhood at an early age. That wise counsel has been available to many others among whom he worked in several assemblies, where his tact was often used in mediatorial ways. Since retirement, his work in Northampton included elderhood at the Duke Street assembly, liaison and supervision of building alterations there, including helping with manual labours; Missionary secretaryship in addition to much visiting, Old People's Work, preaching and ministry of the Word throughout the country. Our prayers go to his wife and daughters and the family in this time of sorrow.

Shropshire Assemblies Young People's  
Christian Camp

### TOWYN GWYNEDD

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# People and Places

## Stewardship

**Home Workers' Fund:**  
Equity House, 450 Hackney Road,  
London, E2 6QL. Total receipts for  
the month of April amounted to  
£845.22.

**Retired Missionary Aid Fund:**  
12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields,  
NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies for the  
month of April amounted to £5370.47.

## Prayer List

Stamped letters addressed c/o  
The Paternoster Press, Paternoster  
House, 3 Mount Radford  
Crescent, Exeter, EX2 4JW will  
be forwarded to any of those  
whose names appear below.

Workers are requested to include  
their names on their cards when  
returning them each month.  
We are still receiving anonymous  
contributions from time to time.

**Blackburn, A. G.:**  
Weymouth 3; Exmouth 5; Salford  
8-13; Chard 17; Teignmouth 24;  
Exmouth area 25-30.

**Burnham, A. E. J.:**  
Pamber Heath 3, 27; Portsmouth 4,  
5, 6, 7; Winchester 13, 20; Ash Vale  
17, 24; Fareham 26; and at  
other places.

**Campbell, B.:**  
St. Ives 1, 4; Camborne 6; Falmouth  
7-16; Redruth 17; Newquay 23;  
Falmouth 24-30.

**Clifford, D.:**  
At the following places during June:  
Charminster, Bournemouth, West  
Moors, Dorset, Glasgow, Milngavie.

**Galyer, W. S.:**  
Bishopsgate 3; Epsom Races 6-9;  
Streatham 10; Kingsheath 11; Morden  
13; Haywards Heath 14; Trafalgar  
Square 16; Cambridge 17-25; Gwent  
30.

**Gillham, S.:**  
Lyme Regis Crusade 1-10; Wyke  
Regis 15; West Moors 16; Weymouth  
17, 19; Wyke Regis Tent Crusade  
23-July 11.

**Grimsey, A. W.:**  
Wensum Chapel Deputation at Dere-  
ham 9; Ringland Evangelistic outreach  
11; Cromer 24.

**Lowther, G. K.:**  
Southampton district 2-6, 8; Swan-  
wick, Hants. 7, 9, 10; Weymouth 11,  
13; Sturminster Newton 12; Ware-  
ham 13, 14; N. Pickenham 22-24;  
Grimsby 25-30.

**Meadows, D. R.:**  
Southbourne 7; Charminster 17; New  
Milton 26; and the remainder of the  
month in Bournemouth and district.

**Mills, B.:**  
Woking 3, 10; Reading Committee 5;  
London Committee 7, 12; Woking-  
ham 9, 17.

**Moutstevens, S.:**  
Ramsgate 10.

**Phillips, C.:**  
Thirlmere, St. Albans 12, 19, 25;  
Aylesbury 13, 20, 27; Chingford  
Ridgeway 14, 21, 28; Bush Hill Park  
17; Hampton 18, 25; Harlow 24.

**Pierce, D. H.:**  
South Molton Tent Crusade 3-17;  
Chillington Tent Crusade 23-July 15.

**Short, S. S.:**  
Yatton 10; Weston-super-Mare 14,  
21, 28; Minehead 17-19; Berkhamstead  
24; Bath 25.

**Stringer, D.:**  
Home Counties Tour 1-8; Long Eaton  
9; N.W. London 10-15; Wimbledon  
16; Thundersley 17; Essex Area  
Tour 18-24; Sidcup 25; Enfield 26-27;  
Cambridge 28; Kingsbury 29; Wands-  
worth 30.

**Tatford, F. A.:**  
Heyels 1, 2; Brussels 3-4; Gloucester  
9-11, Newent 12; Tewkesbury 13;  
Bristol 14; Brierley Hill 16-19; Port  
St. Mary (I. of Man) 23-29; Barrow-in-  
Furness 30.

**Thurston, A.:**  
Open Air Meetings in S. Hants villages  
2; Paignton 3, 17; Secrete 4, 11, 18;  
Kingsbridge 5, 19, 24; Plymouth 12;  
Chillington 4, 6, 11, 13, 18, 20, 21 and  
Chillington Tent Crusade with D.  
Pierce 23-30; Balsall Common 14-16;  
Dartmouth 10, 21; Kingsbridge  
Youth 18-22; Schools—Dawlish and  
Teignmouth 4; Plymouth 8.

**Tryon, G.:**  
Cambridge 3; E. Yorkshire (Hull,  
Rawcliffe, Bridlington, Scarborough,  
York, Driffield) 9-28.

## Forthcoming Events

The Publishers regret that, owing  
to demands on space, it is not  
possible to insert an announce-  
ment in more than one issue.  
Correspondents should indicate  
clearly in which issue they wish  
their announcements to appear.

**Albrighton, Salop:**  
Ann. Bible Convention. The Rectory  
Grounds, Donnington. June 8 at  
8.00 p.m., June 9 at 3.00 and 5.45 p.m.  
and June 10 at 8.30 p.m. Subject:  
Studies in Philippians. Speakers:  
G. Harpur, M. Baughen.

**Castle Cary:**  
Gospel Hall Fellowship Meetings.  
Hillcrest School Hall. June 20 at  
3.00 and 6.00 p.m. Speakers: J.  
Harrison, A. Nute.

**Frinton-on-Sea:**  
Ann. Thanksgiving Meeting of the  
Ernest Luff Homes. Frinton Free  
Church. June 20 at 3.00 p.m.

**Frinton-on-Sea:**  
Jubilee Bible Convention. The Gospel  
Hall. June 30-July 6. Meetings for  
prayer 8.00-8.30 a.m. and Bible  
Readings 10.15 a.m. by Rev. Gilbert  
Kirby from July 2-6. Programme for  
Convention as follows: June 30 at  
8.00 p.m.—Rev. Duncan Whyte;  
July 1 at 6.30 p.m.—United Service  
in Frinton Parish Church. Preacher:  
Rev. Duncan Whyte; July at 8.00 p.m.  
—Justyn H. Rees. July 3 at 8.00 p.m.  
—Rev. Gilbert Kirby; July 4 at 8.00  
p.m.—Rev. Dr. Raymond Brown;  
July 5 at 8.00 p.m. Rev. D. M. Carr;  
July 6 at 8.00 p.m.—Rev. Edgar  
Wright; July 4 at 2.30 p.m.—Women's  
Rally. Speaker: Sister Kay Horne.

**Grimsby:**  
BBC Radio Humber, Broadcast  
from Springfield Gospel Hall. June 24.  
Speaker: Dr. P. Elwood.

**London:**  
Trafalgar Square Evangelistic Rallyes.  
June 23 at 3.00 p.m. Leader: G. Hider.  
Speakers: Dr. R. T. Kendal, E. Biggs,  
Rev. Ken Paterson.

**Luton:**  
Onslow Gospel Hall, Vincent Road,  
Leagrave. June 16 at 4.00 p.m.  
(Ministry relevant to the portion)  
and 6.30 p.m. (Conversational Bible  
Reading). Speaker: W. Sumner. Sub-  
ject: Philemon 1-25.

**N. Pickenham, Norfolk:**  
Bible Study Weekend. 'Brecklands'  
Cfce. Centre. June 22-24. Speaker:  
Kingsley Melling. Enquiries to  
Wellowgate Chapel, 67 Wellowgate,  
Grimsby. Tel: 0472 55634/5.

**Swansea, Hants:**  
Ann. Meetings for Ministry and fellow-  
ship. Duncan Road Church. June 9  
at 3.00 and 6.00 p.m. Speakers:  
G. K. Lowther and R. Bolton.

# FAMILY CHALLENGE FROM PATERNOSTER



**Youth Brainwashing  
and the Extremist Cults**  
Ronald M. Enroth £2.60 net

A professor of sociology examines the methods and teaching of seven cults including Hari Krishna, Children of God, Moon Organisation and Divine Light Mission. Case histories of young people who became involved are followed by three chapters on the nature of the seduction syndrome, the personalities most at risk, the plight of parents and the controversial issue of de-programming.

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## Personal

### ALL CHRISTIANS

coming to Lake District, Cumbria, welcomed at Gospel Hall, Queen St. Penrith. Sundays 10.45 a.m. and 6.30 p.m., Wednesdays 7.30 p.m. (12)

### BABBACOMBE

Kingsway Gospel Hall, 133 Babbacombe Road, Torquay. Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11 a.m. Gospel Service 6.30 a.m., Thursdays: Ministry 7.30 p.m. Visitors warmly welcomed. (9)

### BOURNEMOUTH

All Christian visitors warmly welcomed at Victoria Gospel Hall, Victoria Park Road, Winton, Bournemouth. Sundays: Lord's Supper 11.00 a.m. Gospel 6.30 p.m. Car park. Phone 529425. (7)

### CLIFTON HALL

Whitehorse Lane, S. Norwood, SE25, welcomes visitors. Sundays 11.15 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. Thursdays 8.00 p.m. (Almost opposite Crystal Palace Football Ground.) (9/78)

### COMING TO LONDON

warmly welcomed at Parkhill Chapel, 17 Fleet Road, Hampstead, NW3. Sunday: 11.00, 6.30. Buses: 24, 26. Tube: Belsize Park, British Rail: Hampstead Heath, Gospel Oak. (12)

### CORRESPONDENCE

for the Gospel Hall, 105 Milton Walk and St. James Street, Doncaster to A. C. Jones, 22 Town Moor Avenue, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN2 6BN Tel.: Doncaster 49844. (6)

### CROYDON AND DISTRICT

Visitors warmly welcomed at Cranmer Hall, Sylverdale Road, Croydon. Sundays 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. Wednesdays 8.00 p.m. (12)

### ISLE OF MAN

Christians visiting the south of the island warmly welcomed at Bay View Road Chapel, Port St. Mary. Lord's Day: 10.00 a.m. Breaking of Bread, 11.15 a.m. Family Service, 6.30 p.m. Gospel Meeting (except for July 22nd - Aug. 12 inclusive, 7.45 p.m.) (8)

### THE NEAREST ASSEMBLY

to the Dawlish Warren holiday camps is Cockwood Chapel situated 1½ miles towards Exeter, where a warm welcome awaits you at 11.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. (9)

### NORWICH

Douro Place Chapel, Douro Place, off Dereham Road (formerly Gospel Hall, Dereham Road). Sundays 11.00 a.m. and 6.45 p.m. Other activities. Warm welcome to those coming to Norwich especially students. Enquiries Mr. G. A. Oakes, Tel.: 52730 or P. Earl. Tel.: 24753 (9)

### OTLEY

Gateway to the Yorkshire Dales. Assembly at Bethany Hall, Myers Croft, Station Road. Otley welcomes visitors: Sundays 10.45 a.m. and 6.30 p.m., Tuesday 7.45 p.m. Further information telephone Menston 74700 or Leeds 678944. (8)

## Accommodation

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### DEVON DELIGHTS

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### HARROGATE SPA

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### ILFRACOMBE

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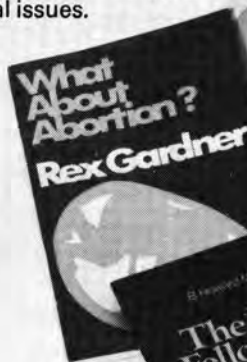


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July 1979  
Vol LVIII No 7  
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Editor: Roy Coad

# The Harvester

Twelve Years of School—for This?  
(See Readers' Forum inside)

IN THIS ISSUE:  
"By the Backstreets of Babylon"  
—an interview with Roger Luther





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# The Harvester

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## Editorial

### No Commendable Zeal

One of the hardest facts for parents to face is that their children grow up into independent adults, with the human right to turn their back on all that their parents hold dear. When cherished and deeply loved children go off, apparently trapped by some bizarre cult, and reject (sometimes most hurtfully) beliefs that to the parents are almost identical with life itself, the anguish must seem intolerable.

It is on to such anguish that a phenomenon, already of some size in North America, but not unknown in this country, has battered. 'Deprogramming' as it calls itself received some (happily adverse) publicity in this country a year or two ago. Now there reaches us, through Regent College, Vancouver, the documentation prepared for conferences on religious deprogramming that were held in New York and Toronto two years ago. Prepared for the American Civil Liberties Union and the Toronto School of Theology, they are a damning indictment of the whole process.

The file is a horrifying one. We have been used to receiving literature describing some of the atrocious events perpetrated against Christian believers in some communist lands. Here is a detailed account of chillingly similar actions perpetrated largely against members of fringe cults, but including members of some groups described as 'well inside the spectrum of "accepted" religious bodies'—in the main, fundamentalist revivalist groups; but perpetrated inside North America, and at times with the connivance of the authorities who dismissed the events as 'family matters'.

We insist as emphatically as possible: let the provocation be as unbearable as it may, let the fringe group be as way-out or objectionable in its own methods as can be, nothing (but nothing) can justify the use by Christians of the techniques of 'deprogramming' organisations. Their bona fides can be judged from the manual prepared for the use of 'deprogrammers' in Britain: 'It is strongly recommended that the Technician collects his full fee before embarking upon any aspect of the Deprog.' reads this revolting document—claiming that after 'success' the 'client' often tries to wriggle out of payment!

What was done to the Moonites or to Hare Krishna yesterday, is being done to the New Testament Missionary Fellowship (a fundamentalist group) today; and can be done tomorrow to the convert of the Dick Saunders crusade or the local assembly fellowship—or the charismatic Anglican group. To countenance in any way the use of such techniques is to cut the ground from any protest against persecution of Christians in other lands, and to betray our suffering brethren worldwide. □

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## By the Backstreets of Babylon Peter Lowman

*A few issues ago our News section briefly featured Roger Luther, who is Inter Schools Christian Fellowship travelling secretary working in schools in London and the south-east. One aspect of Roger's work has been involvement with ISCF teams working on inner-city estates during school holidays; and we thought some of Roger's reflections on this experience might well be of interest to our readers. The following interview was taken by Peter Lowman, who works for the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students.*

**P.L.:** Roger, there's a lot of talk about the church's responsibility for the inner city these days, and some of it gets fairly colourful. Now it's obvious that it's shameful for the churches to be clustered in the suburban highlands and absent from the hard areas of the city. But then you hear people talking about how unbearable life can be in the really deprived areas, and sometimes you think, Well, this is the seventies and we've got the Welfare State, surely they're piling it on a bit?

**R.L.:** Well, I think it runs in areas. You see as a Christian I believe that life is going to be shoddy and meaningless at bottom for anyone who isn't a Christian. But it's just that we have all sorts of good ways of shielding ourselves: mere material surroundings, work, possessions, cassettes, anything we can make into an idol to plug some of the gap where God should be: any way to forget! But in the inner city areas you simply haven't got so many of these shields available. In a 'nice' area you might have good attractive youth clubs for the kids, shops, good facilities for the evenings. And the size of the town means usually that you can escape, you can get away. But on a big city estate like, say Camberwell, you can walk four miles in most directions and still only see slums and scrapyards. The estates were probably designed by someone with the best of intentions but they're awful now. And I find that in the schools some of the kids may have just one goal, to make the teacher burst into tears, go mad, have a breakdown. They know everyone's given up on them, they're the rejects. And they know when they leave it's a pretty menial job with no fulfilment or no job at all.

**P.L.:** And outside school?

**R.L.:** Well, there's their mates, but there's nothing very positive they can do so they start smashing things up. They want you to know they're there, at any rate.

**P.L.:** Which is also the reason why you might want to put some graffiti on a wall.

**R.L.:** Yes. We had a playscheme for youngsters with an ISCF 6th form team at a church in Camberwell and the kids started throwing bangers in through the door: making their mark somehow. But you can

understand it. Their environment is pretty horrible: scrapyards, boarded-up buildings. And people just get mad. The *Sunday Times* followed up a report on the Brandon Three estate, and apparently while the researcher was going up the steps to one house, a wardrobe came flying out through a window, or people will throw cats out of high windows. In Liverpool a woman jumped with her baby from a tenth floor window, she just couldn't stand it any longer. You can imagine. Living in a tower block, with three rooms, perhaps as many as four or five kids, mother in with a baby all day, not knowing her neighbours. It gets bad. It's curious even how the lifts are designed. There's one lift for the odd-numbered floors and one for the even numbers. So as there may not be anyone on the same floor as you, you get this tremendous feeling of isolation.

**P.L.:** And in such a populous area.

**R.L.:** Yes. Instead of having a long street where you know people, it's as if the street has been piled up, turned on end. A woman can't leave the baby for an hour with granny while she goes out, because the relatives are all dispersed quite a distance—in fact if it's a black family they may be back in Jamaica. So, for the next generation, it's not exactly a wonderful place to grow up in: and of course few of the kids will stay on into the sixth form because their parents need money. And so I've met these kids at the youth club who just want to get out and don't know what they want to do. And so the youth club gets wrecked.

**P.L.:** So you come into this situation and you're a Christian, what do you hope to do?

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Instead of a long street where  
you know people, it's as if  
the street has been piled up,  
turned on end . . .

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**R.L.:** Well, one thing will be to show that the church isn't merely middle-class, to show that Jesus has something to offer them.

**P.L.:** Could you expand on that a bit? I mean, it's very easy to say the church is middle-class and perhaps a sociological survey might back that up: but what sort of things are you thinking of?

**R.L.:** Well, a problem for these kids will be books. In Christianity it helps to be able to read. How many of them want to? Very few will be used to doing it. The idea of sitting down with a book is foreign. And the question is how far you accept that and how far you try to educate. Scripture Union are now doing 'start the day' cassettes for people who can't sit down with a Bible.

*P.L.* Yes, that's important, because you've got to get the Bible across. What do you do?—because if someone doesn't read God's Word they've got nothing to set against the world, to keep hold of amongst everything the media throws at you.

*R.L.* Well, you spend time with them, maybe you can read the Bible with them. Christian comics are quite popular. They appeal to the kids—just like they'd read the cartoons in the *Sun*. Later, as they mature, they will study the Bible for themselves. Even the idea of a sermon is foreign to them. If they watch a serious programme on TV it's because it's more dynamic. So you need to rearrange things, use more visual aids, emphasise key words. Think of the TV programme *The Sunday Gang*: there's an example of a very visual, dynamic show.

*P.L.* So there are problems in some pretty central areas, then! I mean, Bible reading and the teaching in a church are pretty central to surviving spiritually.

*R.L.* There are problems in other areas too. I'm not thinking so much of dress: people don't gasp now if you walk into a church wearing jeans. But smoking is an example of something that can make Christians very suspicious. Maybe it has to be accepted for a while? Jim Punton of Frontier Youth Trust was saying recently that sometimes our critical lack of charity might be a lot more sinful than the kid's act of smoking.

*P.L.* So how do you fit in? After all, you're pretty middle-class.

*R.L.* Yes, and it makes me a bit schizoid: I'm not at all in tune with these kids' lifestyle, I'm miles away. How you talk and all sorts of things will show that. But you don't have to emphasise the

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**We're aiming to introduce them to Christ . . . that will make them more entire people . . . the church must be involved in the neighbourhood.**

---

attributes that make you different. You can talk on their level; you know them as people, not as members of a class. And that way you can introduce them to the church: it's your relationship with them that counts. It'd be wrong for me to pretend to be like them. When I'm down there sometimes they'll take the mickey out of the way I talk and so on. But you just aim to be genuine. And that's why older evangelists can get through to these kids. Sometimes the strangest people! For example, Graham Leavers who died last July, was on the Frontier Youth Trust staff: he was in late middle age, with old-fashioned clothes, wasn't very well up on the rock scene; but he got on with the kids. He opened his home to them.

And that's fraught with danger. The kids will walk off with things. He had some kids round, and as they knew where the place was they took a look

around while they were there and later on broke in. We have to be controlled by the Spirit to work in this sort of situation. It means throwing off some of our inhibitions—about how the kids treat your home, not wiping their shoes, not using ashtrays: these can be the hardest things to take. You can give a lot outside your home, but when someone starts treading ash into your carpets that can hurt a lot. But we'll only reach these kids if there are Christians who have homes that are open and accessible to them. And that of course means Christians who haven't emigrated out of the area.

*P.L.* So what needs will you be aiming at?

*R.L.* Meaning in life, perhaps; friendship.

*P.L.* Isn't meaning in life a rather airy concept?

*R.L.* Perhaps it is, as a concept, but the fact that there really is no meaning for these kids is staring you in the face. Someone in a different situation might use their career or the future to provide meaning. They've something to look forward to.

*P.L.* How would you react to someone, say a Marxist, who says that as you can't offer them a job you're really only offering words? What can you offer?

*R.L.* Well, first of all you're offering them a friend. In fact two friends, yourself and Jesus. There's two things you can do. You can help them practically—guide them through the bureaucracy, tell them where the Job Centre is and all the rest of it. And also you can get them to take school seriously. Being a Christian involves the idea of looking ahead, which for many other kids simply isn't there.

*P.L.* So that being a Christian gives the idea of a plan in life?

*R.L.* Yes; and the idea that work is worthwhile. Some kids get to be happy just staying on the dole. And then as Christians they may be better equipped for work: you know, the Protestant virtues; honesty, reliability.

*P.L.* You're saying that there's nothing wrong with a certain kind of 'Protestant work ethic', it's a question of the use to which it's put?

*R.L.* Yes.

*P.L.* And when they become Christians you believe that it'll be different, that they can have God's peace and a sense of His purpose, even on the dole?

*R.L.* Well, the problem with that is that there are simply so few Christians I know like that. Let's say we're aiming to introduce them to Christ, and to His family, the church; and that that will make them more entire people regardless of whether they get a job or a new council flat.

*P.L.* What does the church do in this situation?

*R.L.* Well, there are opportunities for the churches too, in tackling the situation as a whole. Someone was recently saying what a marvellous idea it would be if a church opened a corner shop that also served for counselling, a place where a pensioner could get one or two eggs late, and where people could drop in for a chat. The church has got to get involved in

the neighbourhood. Maybe through running a launderette or a fish-and-chip shop. People are more willing to come to a corner shop than to a church. It can also help if the church building is multi-purpose. Brandon Baptist Centre in Camberwell is a geriatric day centre, a youth club in the evenings and a church on Sundays.

**P.L.** Let's finish up by talking about the more general situation. As an ISCF trav. sec., what kind of support do you feel the work in the schools needs from the folk in the churches?

**R.L.** What is really important is that we should all see the schools as missionary situations where the kids are the missionaries, and take that seriously. Quite a lot of kids go to Crusaders or church YPF's

and aren't known as Christians at school. The church must take a real, concerned interest in this work. It's part of a more general problem of people not seeing their place of work as a mission field. Some churches I've seen would never mention work in a sermon, yet that's where you spend five of your seven days in each week, and that's where your Christianity should be shown. Just so the kids can seem fine at the YPF, but what about Monday to Friday? The churches are never going to reach the 10 million schoolkids in Britain: the best missionaries to them are the Christian kids. It's vital that the churches develop a real vision for this opportunity, and stimulate and encourage their young people to get stuck into the work. □

## Professor Bruce Asks

Sixty-five years ago, in *The Principles of Open Brethren* (p. 124), Professor Rendle Short wrote: 'Few, if any, Brethren speak on political platforms; a fair number use their vote, but probably the majority abstain.'

This question is sent in during the General Election campaign, which brought Professor Short's remark to my remembrance. Could any readers estimate what the situation is today? On the eve of a general election in the 1950s I said, while ministering in a rather traditional local church, that Christians who voted were responsible to the Lord for the way in which they voted, and that Christians who abstained were responsible to the Lord for their abstention. At the end of the meeting more than one senior member of the church approached me and said, taking care not to be overheard, 'We've always been told we shouldn't vote, but I've always voted!' It seemed to be assumed that I had given them the green light for using their vote, but of course I had done no such thing.

*Correspondence, please, to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX, by 15 July.*

## MARRIAGE, DIVORCE AND THE CHURCH

With the increase in marriage breakups in society generally, many elders and pastors are having to grapple with the very human problems resulting. When church members are involved, what principles must we adhere to? What does the scriptures have to teach us? How can the need for discipline be reconciled with the need for care and understanding? These and many more relevant questions are dealt with in a series of talks on cassette:-

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## Young Church—Young Town

Stephen Potter

*A brief look at the response of one church to the challenge of a rapidly expanding new town. Dr. Potter is associated with the fellowship of which he writes.*

The new towns of Britain contain over two million people, and although plans for their expansion have been curtailed, many towns will still grow at a massive rate over the next twenty years.

One of the largest is Milton Keynes in Buckinghamshire, which has grown from a population of 35,000 in 1970 to 85,000 today and is expected to reach 200,000 by the 1990's. It is the fastest growing area in Europe. Since 1970 19,000 houses have been built together with over 50 schools and 24,000 jobs have been created. Only two churches have been built.

To the Christian Church, new towns such as Milton Keynes represent an enormous challenge. With thousands seeking a 'new life' for themselves and their families, it is a wonderful chance to show them the real meaning of 'new life'.

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**'Even given this encouraging position within the national denominations, there is a vital role for the independent evangelical church'**

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The national denominations have adapted their approach to new towns over the years, and in Milton Keynes largely favour an ecumenical approach, with team ministries, a limited number of 'Church Centres' and local 'Community Churches' based upon house meetings. Often the evangelical church is wary of being too closely involved with ecumenical experiments, but in Milton Keynes this structure does not seem to have hindered the evangelical branches of the participating Churches.

However, even given this encouraging picture within the national denominations in Milton Keynes, there is a vital role for the independent evangelical church and several have sprung up in recent years. One of these indigenous churches, founded not by a denominational alliance but by a group of Christians brought together by Milton Keynes, goes under the elaborate title of the South Milton Keynes Christian Fellowship. This is a church without denomination or clergy, free to be able to work out the reality of the Christian Message in Milton Keynes.

The Fellowship started as a house meeting in the existing town of Bletchley, and moved to the new estates as soon as they were developed. They now

meet in a rented hall and members' houses, although there are well advanced plans to build a chapel on a site nearby.

New towns present one of the greatest challenges that a young independent church can face. The SMKCF has certainly found this so during the five years they have been based on the Tinkers Bridge Estate.

Local loyalties to anything tend to be minimal, as it takes people a good while to settle down. Added to this there is a great deal of movement within the town itself. As such, all local voluntary activities suffer from a lack of stable leadership and committed helpers, especially as the population is so young. With the highest birth rate in the country, children's work in Milton Keynes is never without a ready membership, but such activities tie up a lot of the all too valuable helper's time for very little result. The effect upon parents is negligible. The major challenge is maintaining a balanced outreach programme. Attracting children is easy, teenagers and adults very very difficult.

Trying to establish a church as an important centre of community life is very much an uphill task. Trying to establish an independent church in a rented hall (which is used for all sorts of activities) is even more difficult as people find it very difficult to identify you as a church.

This identity problem, coupled with the vision of a church which can fulfil a role as an effective centre of Christian care, worship and outreach, has led the Fellowship to plan the construction of a new chapel on a site close to the present rented hall. Such a project, taken on by a small independent church in a difficult area must seem a daunting prospect. Indeed it is, but this project was not entered upon lightly or in haste, or for that matter without much prayerful thought.

The cost of the new chapel is estimated at £100,000, but great economies have been made possible by the miraculously optimal mixture of building talents that exist within the Fellowship. Many gifts have been received and fund raising by the Fellowship has been encouraging. But a lot more work, money and prayer is needed before the chapel will be ready and working for the Lord.

Indeed, new towns do represent one of the greatest challenges that an independent church can face. But easy soft options were one thing that Christ never promised to His followers. □

*The South Milton Keynes Christian Fellowship has produced a free leaflet on their church and the chapel project. It is available from: Mr. R. Adamson, 36 Passmore, Tinkers Bridge, Milton Keynes MK6 3DZ.*



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# The Minister of the Gospel

J. H. Hughes

*The first of another short series from a veteran contributor.*

The preaching of the Gospel is a priestly function, and the preacher occupies a priestly office. The apostle Paul states his office, and the fruits of his labours: 'That I should be the minister of Christ to the Gentiles, ministering in sacrifice the Gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit' (Rom. 15: 16). All who feel called to this ministry should ponder this verse. Paul himself was a sacrifice to God, presented without blemish upon the altar of the Cross. His 'stewardship' was to minister the sacrificial work of Christ among the Gentiles, the result being the calling out from among them of his elect people. There was, and should be, a prophetic element in preaching. Many talk about the Gospel, but few preach it and possibly one of our greatest

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**'The preaching of the Gospel  
is a priestly function, and the  
preacher occupies a priestly office'**

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needs today is that God would raise up a new generation of men to proclaim the Gospel in its fulness, with the function of the Spirit which only God can give. To this end these notes are made.

*The Acts of the Apostles* records the witness of the early church, and the spread of the Gospel from Jerusalem to Samaria, then to Rome and the world. The epistles unfold the meaning of it, beginning with the doctrine of the Cross; sanctification through the indwelling Spirit; the spiritual blessings of sovereign grace, all pointing to the coming of the Lord, and the ultimate establishing of the new Heaven and Earth, wherein God will be all in all.

All these truths are enshrined in the four Gospels, the Lord himself being the first to preach them. The minister of the Gospel must be the same, otherwise he may talk *about* it without knowing its vital impact on himself. We are all guilty in one way and another of 'trafficking in unfelt truth' as Darby expressed it. Conversely, it was said of Moody that he preached the Cross as though he was hanging upon it!

The preacher therefore will meditate constantly on the four Gospels, drawing out the truth and the message given to us in so great a variety of ways and means. He will ponder their different characteristics, seeking in his preaching to combine them all. The wise may plumb the depths, for they are the revelation of the Father, but a child can trust the Saviour they reveal. Great or small, wise or simple,

all may learn that God has nothing else to say; that the one who spake 'as never man spake' is He whom the universe cannot contain—the Jesus who still bids little children to come to him, and who reminded his disciples that 'of such is the Kingdom of Heaven'.

It is proposed to make four short studies of the Gospels, which may be used as a background of our preaching. Four very different men wrote them, and combine to give us a perfect portrait of the Saviour, and a perfect picture of the work he accomplished. In the order we have them, Matthew was a Jewish tax-gatherer; Mark a servant; Luke was an educated Gentile and a doctor; and John a simple fisherman. So Matthew's Gospel is political, centered around the King and his Kingdom; Mark shews the character of the King; Luke expands the Message to all mankind; while through John the Spirit reveals the meaning of all three to the humble, believing heart.

The cherubim were always identified with the Throne of God, their four faces symbolising the universal scope of the Gospel, and in the order in which we have them. They have the face of a lion, a calf, a man, and an eagle. It is instructive also to recall that the four main offerings of Leviticus set forth in type the perfection of the one sacrifice made for us, again in the order of the four Gospels. The burnt-offering, wholly consumed foreshadowed Matthew; the fine flour of the meal offering presented with it shews the character of the perfect Servant; the peace-offering foreshadowed Luke, where a Babe lies in a manger, and angels sang 'Peace on earth'. Finally John unites us with the sin-offering, and the Baptist crying 'Behold the Lamb of God'.

Finally, bringing all to its simplest form, the writer has been helped by four words which could well be inserted in all our bibles, with a corresponding word for our guidance:—

Matthew tells us what the Lord said: 'we speak with authority'.

Mark tells us what the Lord did: 'we speak with humility'.

Luke tells us what the Lord felt: 'we speak with compassion'.

John tells us what the Lord was: 'we speak from the sanctuary'. □

*(Readers might be interested to examine the translation of Rom 15:16 in the New International Version: 'to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles with the priestly duty of proclaiming the Gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit'—Ed.)*



# 'Think About These Things'

Bernard Martin

Mr. Martin contributes a series of articles based on Philippians 4: 8 (RSV).

When the question is asked as to what it is that makes man different from the rest of the animal creation, the obvious answer is—his capacity for thought. And when we go further and enquire why human beings differ so much from each other, we find the reason in the fact of their varying thought-patterns.

'As he thinketh in his heart, so is he' is a well-known proverb—an inspired one (*Prov. 23: 6, 7*). Actually the context is one of those 'situation comedies' which light up the book of Proverbs, vividly illustrating exactly what is meant. Here it is in part: 'Do not eat the bread of a man who is stingy; do not desire his delicacies, for he is like one who is inwardly reckoning. "Eat and drink" he says to you; but his heart is not with you'. The assumed hospitality fails to disguise the mixed motive. The inward reckoning, the calculation, the thought of the person, stamps itself on the deed, thereby proclaiming what sort of person he is. This involuntary self-disclosure is one of those facts of life which we are slow to admit.

Since then, what we are, is what we think, how important is thinking! And the phrase 'inwardly reckoning' shows us that in thought there is an element of reason—we come to conclusions. It is not day-dreaming or the nothingness of Transcendental Meditation, but positive thinking. And what are we Christians to think about? Paul tells us in the verse. But that we are bidden to think, should first of all impress us with the fact that as regenerated human beings, we still are human beings made in the image of God, able now to use the natural faculties with which He endowed us, for His glory. Because we are Christians, God does not by-pass our thinking. It is our thinking which passes into prayer, and it is our thinking through which He guides us, and our thinking through which we glorify Him, for as Christians it still governs what we are, what we say and what we do.

But when we look at this verse we may well hold our breath! The realms in which we are bidden to ponder are so wide—no narrow-mindedness here! Yet of course we know that it is exactly positive meditation in these fields, that preserves us from wandering in the alternative, tempting fields of rottenness which ruin lives.

'Any excellence—anything worthy of praise'—this is the broad expanse prescribed in this verse as food for thought. We need never have a dull moment! This panorama includes the other six categories (each preceded by the word 'whatever')—another mark of the comprehensive nature of our possible thinking) mentioned in this verse (each

a future article) but these do not exhaust it.

Paul prays for those to whom he is writing that they might have 'knowledge and all discernment' enabling them to 'approve what is excellent' (*Phil. 1: 9, 10*) (or as the RV margin has it 'try things that differ'). Even natural man (made in God's image) knows the difference between the praise-worthy and the contemptible. But the believer is enabled to recognise it, in this complex world, with greater accuracy, and also to choose the excellent. He has the Spirit of God helping him to understand the Word of God, the theme of which is the 'more excellent way' (*I Cor. 12: 30*). i.e. LOVE. But the 'anything' of our verse includes not only the works of the Lord as Redeemer, but also as Creator. Christ redeems us in His mighty love, not only that we might have the personal advantage of being saved, but as a means to an end—that as children of God, as sons, even as 'friends' (*John 15: 15*), we might in some degree enter into His thoughts and purposes and each do His will in a filial manner.

Even if—like the present writer—we are not Greek scholars, it cannot be anything but helpful to look at the meaning of an original word used in a particular NT or OT passage. What, for instance, is the meaning of the original word behind the word 'excellent'? To those Greeks of near 2000 years ago it meant virtue, valour, goodness, wondrous deeds, anything which deserved high estimation. In the Authorised Version it is translated 'virtue' in our verse, and in *I Pet. 1: 3, 5*. But in *I Pet. 2: 9* it is translated 'praises', meaning the wonderful deeds of God which is in keeping with the OT usage, for in the Septuagint the word is used to denote the things of God which elicit the praise of men, as in *Isa. 43: 21*—'my people whom I have preserved to tell forth my praises' and *Isa. 63: 7*. 'I remembered the mercy of the Lord, the praises of the Lord in all things wherein He recompenses us'. Here, as in *I Pet. 2: 9*, 'praises' refer rather to those things seen to be worthy of praise, than the actual rendering of praise. The men God looks for are those who perceive these 'praises', and then declare them, so that both they themselves and those to whom they speak may be moved to the offering of praise.

But, as we have seen, the thinking has got to come first. Before we can speak adequately of the praises of our God, and declare them by our manner of life, we have to think about them. That does not mean we have to be 'intellectual'. Thinking is as natural to everybody as breathing. And just as you can take a deep breath, so you can think more deeply than usual!

In the ensuing articles, we shall hope to look more closely at the various aspects of the 'excellent', mentioned in this verse—true, honourable, just, pure, lovely, gracious. □

# Swanwick 1978

## A Report by Geoffrey Robson

*The conveners of the 1978 Swanwick Conference awaited the publication of the full report \* before Mr. Robson sent us this account of this conference. Like most Swanwick conferences, this conference was popular and heavily over-subscribed.*

*The Harvester* may be the *Brethren Times*, and *The Witness* its *Telegraph* (a difference of aim, not quality). *Times* articles are longer, its ideas and style are more complex, more reading time and facility are needed. *The Telegraph* addresses itself to the faithful, in direct and simple fashion. So might be contrasted the length and complexity of *Harvester* articles, and the briefer expository-devotional elements in the *Witness*. The contrast is sharpest in the Editorials. *Harvester's* are visionary and oblique; *Witness* has a number of direct self-contained Christian current affairs paragraphs. These characteristics are illustrated and interwoven in the three addresses by the respective editors, which made up half of the programme of Swanwick 1978.

John Polkinghorne's assignment was *Ministry*. He dealt with precisely that—simply, directly, but with fervour and characteristic wit. But it was based on another sphere of activity than the editorship of *The Witness*. Nobody can more loyally or sacrificially have served our traditional 'speaking' occasions. Out of this supreme experience, he described, diagnosed, predicted, and prescribed a change of system as the only means of saving the patient. This was plain *Witness* editorial pragmatism: what we have doesn't work; what we reject (and it is supported by the Pastoral Epistles) does; we must change.

Roy Coad's first address was to give the conference its devotional start at the same time as describing *Where is here?*; a difficult combination. The second was to speak currently on *Unity*—on which he had given a statesman's world view at a Swanwick with that title in 1964, at the crest of the ecumenical wave. Borrowing J. B. Phillips' title 'Your God is too small', he described a Creator God whose purposes may far transcend our common view. He is not the God of prescriptive practices, dividing us from all who do not conform to them. This was why we are 'here': strategy, tactics, logistics all too small. But, paradoxically perhaps, *Harvester* was more conservative than *Witness*: our problem not that we have too much of everybody's involvement, but too little: we have the form, but not the substance—failing at the very point where 'minister-led' churches are beginning to succeed, the maximum deployment of everybody's gifts. His *Unity* address starting with

*Acts 17: 26* and ending with *John 17: 23*—the maker of all nations who would have even the world that hates Him and His to know His unity—was *Harvester* vision (a trace of *The Guardian*?). Yet it was 'simple Bible study', of highest *Witness* devotional order. The 'all nations' in Abraham (*Gal. 3*) and the no nations (*v. 28* and *Eph. 2: 16*) embraced all mankind (cf. C. Wesley) yet utterly vindicated individuality; in the Cross and the Spirit, in Baptism and Breaking of Bread. So he spelt out the single paragraph hint at the foot of page 275 of his 'History of the Brethren Movement' (p. 277 of the second edition).

Victor Jack's *Membership* was nearer to a description of 'Where is here?' and his was the urgent eloquence of the evangelist who has seen so much, on the one hand, and has such noble concern, on the other, for that which will so work that Christian life and love are not strangled in dying or dead forms.

Michael Griffiths on both *Leadership* and *Maturity* eschewed pragmatism: he would have a Biblical answer for everything and so took us through every Greek New Testament church mention of those words—with no deprecatory apologies—so that his hearers were as much at ease with them as he was. This was no academic search for a 'pattern' to which we should conform. Rather it was vibrant with pungent relevance to real-life situations. Because he was insistent on keeping his feet on Biblical ground, or because he knows the worldwide Brethren situation better than most, he renounced pessimism.

He was characteristically painstaking in elucidating the Pauline references to women, not accepting the Coad 'cultural situation' line. There seems to have been a surfeit of discussion, without any resolution, since Montague Goodman in 1954 (the second year of these conferences) 'Wherever you get a suspicion of law in the things of God, view it with suspicion'; and E. W. Rogers, 'Paul seems to contradict himself . . . there must be some explanation'. Michael Griffiths offered explanation and resolution. These negative ritual directives seem strangely unique in the NT, and yet no other topic has been the subject of more frequent question, answer, counter-answer in *The Harvester*. Indeed, to borrow Hallesby's phrase, this, and many other of the issues raised in 62 pages of discussion in the official report seem 'religious, not Christian' questions of the order 'how do you run the morning meeting?'.

Alan Bamford, Conference Chairman, gave the closing address, and warned that it is not the 'functions', mathematically speaking, of our activity—our forms of meeting—which will determine the ongoing life but the reality of individual spiritual life

in Christ. Bamford, this generation's Groves, has contributed six prefatory pages in the most irenic vein to the official report of the conference, to balance its varied elements, so that all his brethren, of whatever standpoint, may be helped by it. He is, at the same time, both more conservative and optimistic than some. He warns that there might be a danger of two groups passing each other in opposite directions: those with professional local ministry who want to diminish it and those who haven't it and want it.

A fully printed report of the conference addresses ceased to be viable after 1966. It seemed right however in 1978 to print in full\* for the 25th year of the Conference and the 150th of the Brethren, and because of the great interest evidenced by the applications to attend. A solution of the discussion problem has been reached: discussion material has been organised into a dozen subjects, and each into sections; the whole has been kept in first person speech without attribution. Questions are pleasingly distinguished by italic type. Not every contribution could be contained, and the significance of some that have been may be questioned. But every credit should be given to Arthur Ginnings and Clifford Wadey who collated the material at great speed. There is a photograph of the team who officered the conference, with the speakers. Consistently, only

the latter are named. Perhaps in AD 2030 there will be historical research into the other identities.

Text covers 82 pages of addresses; 62 discussions; 12 preface and conclusion—with chapter breaks and so on, 182 in all. The cover picture is striking. £2.95 amounts roughly to one month's *Telegraph*. This record of how things stand with the Brethren after 150 years, and Swanwick after 25, may be of much more lasting value to Brethren and their friends than a month of the news which passes into secular oblivion. Bill Spencer who kindly covered the conference journalistically and photographically had a remarkably instant pen for the monthlies. His quotations were all verbatim accurate, but, being selected, might be sensational. Anyone made anxious by his articles should read the book for a more positive whole picture. The record would not have been possible without the warm and active cooperation of Henry E. Walter Ltd. and particularly their Brethren-bred Gerald Thompson, and we hope that a full review will be carried in a later issue of *The Harvester*. □

*\*The report Where Do We Go From Here? (ed. Alan Bamford, pub. H. E. Walter) costs £2.95. Apropos Mr. Robson's journalistic comparisons, the Editor of The Harvester notes ruefully that there seems little prospect of The Times re-publishing!*

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Russell J. Clark

## Good Stewardship: Can the UK Evangelisation Trust Help You?

As befits its name, the U.K.E.T. has as its purpose the spread of the Gospel primarily, though not exclusively, in this country. To be more precise, the Trust assists others to spread the Gospel by providing a limited, but important, number of financial services to assemblies and to individual Christians. The wise use of money is an essential aspect of Christian Stewardship; but many, perhaps most, assemblies lack financial expertise. It is in filling at least a part of this gap that the Trust can be helpful. The Trust, which was founded in 1906, is recognised as a charity by the Board of Inland Revenue and hence is exempt from income tax. It is, moreover, certified by the Lord Chancellor as a trust corporation which enables it to act as executor and trustees for other bodies or persons. By putting these powers and privileges at the disposal of assemblies and other Christian bodies, including several eventide homes and a medical mission, the Trust has grown steadily, if somewhat slowly, over most of the seventy odd years since its foundation. Recently, however, the pace of growth has quickened quite sharply, which suggests that there has been a corresponding growth in the need for the kind of services it can provide. It may be that the need sometimes goes unmet because the work of the U.K.E.T. and of other similar bodies, is largely unknown.

### *Management of the Trust*

The Council of the Trust is comprised of men who have had long association with the assemblies and who, between them, represent a wide range of business experience. They come mainly from London and the South East of England. This does not imply a regional bias on the part of the Trust but simply represents a desire to save time and expense when the Council meets at the office of the Trust in London. While the Council is responsible for policy and for major decisions, particularly those relating to loans, the day to day work is handled by a firm of solicitors.

The inevitable costs are met out of income which derives from dividends on investments (mostly gifts from friends of the Trust), commissions, interest on loans and rents. As a matter of policy the Trust is so managed that there is each year an excess of income over expenditure, the bulk of which, after certain provisions have been made, is distributed to various bodies engaged in evangelism. Initially the Trust was very closely associated with the Counties Evangelistic Work; they shared an office and a secretary. Though now very much looser, the link remains and is valued by both bodies.

### *Building Loans*

Mention has been made of growth in the work of the Trust. Two services have been in particular demand. These are the management of covenants for individual Christians and the provisions of loans to assemblies for building projects of various kinds.

The latter has been growing rapidly and it is this increase in the demand for loans that, more than anything else, has prompted this article.

In spite of the increasing secularisation of society and the apparent indifference to spiritual things, there are many companies of Christians who are experiencing the Lord's blessing on their work. Numbers attending services are encouraging and in many places, youth work is flourishing. There is, in consequence, the need to refurbish or extend existing premises or even to re-build completely. There are welcome moves to make old fashioned and inconvenient accommodation more attractive. In many older buildings occupied by assemblies, kitchens and lavatories are primitive and totally unsuitable for present needs. There are in some places recently formed assemblies that started as house meetings, often on new estates, and after a time moved to a rented schoolroom but now clearly need premises of their own.

Reasons for wanting to build are many and varied but a feature common to most situations is a shortage of money. It may be that far sighted brethren started a building fund long ago; but it is often found that vague plans for the rather distant future attract little support and the growth of building funds tends to be outpaced by the rise in costs. Thus when the time comes for action resources do not match the need.

This is where the Trust may be able to help, and not only in the provision of funds. It can, for example, advise assembly elders on the acquisition of suitable sites and on legal problems that may arise. It can help in presenting a case for planning permission. These things may often be more troublesome even than finding the necessary money. Nevertheless, money is needed and, though the Trust does not make grants, it is able either to lend from its own resources or assist the assembly by sponsoring an application to some other lender, a building society, for example.

### *Stimulus to Local Effort*

Not infrequently when a loan has been arranged the full amount is never taken by the borrowing assembly. Sometimes a loan is not used at all. What happens is that the willingness of the Trust to lend enables the elders to get moving on their plans, which have often been long deferred. The evidence of activity, in turn, stimulates local interest and giving to an extent that had previously been thought impossible. Negotiations with the Trust may be sufficient to "prime the pump".

In seeking to obtain a loan from the Trust the first thing to do is to write to the Secretary, setting out as clearly and fully as possible the nature and purpose of the project for which the money is required. The letter should also say what, if anything,

has been done so far. In particular estimates of the likely total cost and how much can be met from the assembly's own resources should be included. Of course, not all the required information may be immediately available, but this should not delay an initial enquiry.

There remains the awkward question of repayment and applicants should give an indication of the period for which a loan is required. Because there are likely to be other equally deserving assemblies putting forward requests for help, the shorter the proposed duration of a loan the more favourable will be the consideration given to it. Ten years would normally be the outside limit.

The process of preparing an application to the Trust helps to crystallize an assembly's ideas. It may, for example, become apparent that the project need not be undertaken all in one go and that, by proceeding in stages, the burden of financing it can be reduced. In any case discussion within the assembly may well promote interest and revive flagging enthusiasm.

#### *Reserves are Limited*

If the Trust is to lend it must have reserves from which to do so. Though funds have been built up over the years, they remain very limited. They are certainly not sufficient to satisfy a big rush of applications for loans. One way in which the Trust's resources might be increased is by way of deposits. Assemblies and individual Christians with funds intended for future use, but not required immediately, might consider placing a part of them with the Trust. This would mean a slight sacrifice of interest—though not much—since the Trust charges, and therefore pays, rates a little below the market level. Gifts and legacies are always welcome but deposits seem to be the most practical form in which an increase in resources can be raised by the Trust.

#### *Covenanted Giving*

The other aspect of the Trust's activities that has grown, and in which there is scope for yet more growth, is the handling of covenanted gifts. The rise in personal incomes has made an increasing number of people subject to a substantial amount of tax at the standard rate. Many people may not be aware that there is a provision in the tax law that permits them to enlarge their personal giving without any financial disadvantage to themselves. This can be done by entering into a covenant, the cost of which is minimal. Many Christians who know of this provision already make regular gifts to their assemblies, to missions, bible societies, education establishments and other charities by way of seven year covenants. This arrangement enables the charities concerned to benefit by recovering from the Inland Revenue the tax paid by the donor. Some people enter into a number of covenants. This not only involves them in a fair amount of work but also has the disadvantage of inflexibility, since neither the amounts donated annually nor the recipients

can be readily changed.

The Trust offers an alternative way of making gifts. Because the Trust is a recognised charity it is able to reclaim tax on any payments it receives under a covenant. This means that someone wishing to make, payments to say, twenty beneficiaries a year can enter into a single seven year covenant with the Trust for the total annual amount. As directed by the donor the Trust will then make payments on his behalf up to a total amount representing the sum actually paid by the donor, plus the sum reclaimed by the Trust from the Inland Revenue (less a small charge to cover the costs of administration). The donor can direct that the same amount be paid to the same recipients year after year or he may wish to vary both. Once set in motion the whole business can be left to the Trust; or if, as is usually the case, this seems too impersonal, arrangements can be made by the donor for a letter to accompany some, or all, of his gifts. Whichever way he chooses to do it, he will receive a statement from time to time showing the payments that have been made and the balance in his fund.

#### *Trusteeship of Buildings*

These two aspects of the work of the Trust—financial assistance with building projects and the handling of gifts under covenant—illustrate what it is doing in the service of the Lord's people. Just one other thing should be mentioned to complete the picture. From its earliest days the Trust has owned a number of places of worship, having received them as gifts from men who desired to provide for a continuing Christian witness in particular localities. In most cases rents are paid to the Trust by the assemblies occupying these premises. The money received in this way, after the related costs have been met, forms part of the income of the Trust to be used for Christian work at the discretion of the Council. Assemblies occupying premises owned by the Trust are spared the trouble of appointing trustees. Trustees may move and assemblies lose trace of them. In any case the advent of old age and death necessitates the appointment, from time to time, of new ones. Aware of the problems that may arise, some assemblies have appointed the Trust to hold their premises on their behalf. As society is becoming more mobile an increasing number of assemblies are finding this arrangement sensible and convenient.

The foregoing gives an overall picture of the work of the Trust. Anyone who would like to have further information or who may be interested in depositing funds with the Trust should write to the Secretary, United Kingdom Evangelization Trust (Incorporated), Equity House, 450 Hackney Road, London, E2 6QL. The members of the Council of the Trust hope that, as the work of the Trust becomes more widely known, the benefits that some have received over the years may be extended to others. □

Correspondence for this page should be sent to Mr. Peter Cousins, M.A., B.D.,  
The Paternoster Press Ltd., 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW marked 'Harvester Question Page'

## Question and Answer, with Peter Cousins

### The Gift of The Holy Spirit

#### Question 149

*Would you please comment on the following remarks of William Kelly: "So far is it from being true that a man receives the gift of the Holy Ghost the moment he believes, that it may well be doubted whether there was ever such a case since the world began. I do not mean to deny that the gift of the Holy Ghost may be practically on the same occasion, but never in the same moment. . ."*

In your letter you refer also to C. H. Macintosh and J. N. Darby in connection with this view, but I should find it difficult to be so dogmatic about the matter as people often are. And there are two reasons for this. The first is a matter of nomenclature—people often use different names for the same experience. The second is the immense diversity of Christian experience; believers are individuals and not products on a conveyor belt. There can be no doubt that the New Testament says all believers possess (to use one word of several which might be chosen) the Holy Spirit. "Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him" (*Romans 8: 9*). "By one Spirit we were all baptised into one Body" (*1 Corinthians 12: 13*). Certainly on the Day of Pentecost, Peter takes the association for granted: "Repent, and be baptised . . . and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (*Acts 2: 38*). The fact that the Holy Spirit descended upon Our Lord at his baptism does not seem to me to count against this point of view since if John the Baptist was to be filled with the Holy Spirit from birth (*Luke 1: 15*) then no less will have been true of the Saviour so that this subsequent descent of the Holy Spirit must have further significance. As you point out, the baptism experience of Our Lord was associated with his entering upon a new ministry and there can be no doubt that for various reasons believers do experience the filling of the Holy Spirit on different occasions with varying degree of intensity. For some, their conversation may be an intense experience in which they are conscious of the new life and power they have received; indeed, this happens so frequently that I am rather surprised at William Kelly's scepticism. For others, however, such an experience may come later and for all of us it is (one hopes) to be repeated.

What I have said is in no way intended to encourage the self-satisfied Laodicean attitude which replies to every question about the Holy Spirit, his baptism, his fulness, his anointing, with the claim that "I received it all when I got saved". An answer of this kind invites the sort of question that Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones poses in one of

his commentaries: "If you received it all—whatever has happened to it since then?"

### A Scribal Addition?

#### Question 150

*Most modern Bible translations omit John 5: 4 and part of verse 3. On what basis is such a decision made? How could it happen that such additions should be made to God's Word?*

The words "waiting for the moving of the water . . . with whatsoever disease he was holden" are omitted by many of the most important early authorities for the text of the Gospel. These include important Greek manuscripts such as Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, Bezae and Washington, some ancient Latin translations and the early versions in Syriac and Egyptian. (The importance of these early versions is that they witness to the Greek text that their translators had before them.) Including the verses, on the other hand, we find Codex Alexandrinus and most of the other Greek manuscripts, together with the majority of the early Latin ones and another different Syriac translation. The weight of the evidence is decidedly against the verses.

Can we explain how they came to be inserted? Certainly they offer an explanation of verse 7 ("the moving of the water"). It seems likely that such an explanation will have been current at the time, and that a scribe, copying the text, inserted the passage, perhaps as an additional note) which later became incorporated into the text itself. It is interesting to note that some Greek manuscripts mark the passage as doubtful.

The question seems to imply that God's Word should have been preserved from alterations of this sort which are in fact likely to affect any document that anybody copies. But after all God does not generally provide special grace to help people with responsibilities that he has given them the ability to perform. Indeed we know he does not act in this way: witness an edition of the Bible containing the Commandment: "Thou shalt commit adultery". The arguments sometimes put forward in support of the view that God would not allow the transmission of the Scriptures to be adversely affected by human failure have an interesting parallel which indicates their weakness. For a similar argument has been used to support the infallibility of the Roman Catholic Church and of the Pope since surely, it is urged, God would not leave his people without a guide that they could trust implicitly. There is no good reason to accept either argument.



Edited by Kathleen White, 60 Bowood Road, Swindon, Wilts.

## Kathleen White's Column

### Christian recreation

I am greatly indebted to this month's contributor, Mrs. Phyllis Bell of East Sheen, whose work has already appeared on this page, and look forward to further articles on the Brontes individually.

If other readers would care to write to me, describing their hobbies and leisure-time pursuits and how their lives have been enriched and expanded as a result, I should be most grateful.

### Getting to know the Brontes

*Christian Friend:* Where are you going on holiday this year?

*US:* We're spending part of it at a Conference.

*C.F.:* Oh, yes, Keswick, Filey, perhaps?

*US:* No, actually, it's a Bronte conference.

Polite surprise on part of Christian Friend.

For the past three years we have been to a Bronte Conference at Leeds University, for the Bronte family and their writings are the subject of a great spare-time interest of ours. My husband and I have found these not only a mind-stretching and yet relaxing holiday but also much to our spiritual benefit.

Perhaps you find this surprising—but, if you will, imagine a very happy collection of folk of a surprisingly wide age-range, all at one in their united Bronte interest, and you can imagine an atmosphere in which personal conversations at meal-times and on our various expeditions proved to be a sharing-ground of all our interests and a great opportunity for Christian witness.

Quite apart from that aspect too, and in particular relation to the Bronte family, we very soon found that it was impossible to study them for long without embarking on consideration of the spiritual content of their lives, and this has emerged in most interesting ways in our various group discussions.

If all the true life drama of the Rev. Patrick Bronte and his family were written in lurid novel form, it would be rated too far-fetched to believe that this could all happen in two generations of one family.

Patrick's wife, Maria, died of cancer after only nine years of married life, leaving six children, the youngest just eighteen months old. The two eldest children died only four years later, Maria on May 6 1825 and Elizabeth on June 15 1825, aged twelve and eleven respectively. A heart-broken widower and father was left in the cold, bleak parsonage at Haworth surrounded by the stark beauty of the Yorkshire moors, with four children to bring up, the famous Charlotte, Branwell, Emily and Anne.

His sister-in-law, Aunt Elizabeth Branwell, nobly came from Penzance to share this responsibility with him and was with the family until her death twenty-one years later. Patrick outlived his four brilliant children, all of whom were to die so young, Charlotte reaching the longest life-span and that only thirty-nine years.

The spiritual life of the family is of absorbing interest and far too long a story to write of in detail here, but a few observations might serve to set the scene.

The Rev. Patrick was a devout and convinced Anglican but much influenced by the early 19th century Evangelical Revival. Amongst his prolific writings—poor poetry perhaps but rich in Christian content—we find in 'The Happy Cottagers',

'In sweet discourse we spent  
The fast declining day:  
We spoke of Jesus' love  
And of the narrow way.  
The wondrous plan of grace  
Adoring we surveyed,  
The birth of heavenly skill  
In Love eternal laid.'

Aunt Branwell brought to the Parsonage an influence of Calvinistic Cornish Methodism, but perhaps a true insight is gained into her faith by one of her most treasured possessions (still to be seen in the Parsonage Museum), a china teapot inscribed 'To me to live is Christ, to die is gain.' It certainly emerges that both Father and Aunt had a true Christian faith which would inevitably influence the children. It is a fascinating study to find how it worked out in their lives and is seen in their writings.

For Charlotte, author of *Jane Eyre* and three other novels, it was often a struggle to come to terms with her own ideals and her actual spiritual achievement. Hers was a faith that rebelled sometimes but it strengthened her in the loss of her two sisters and her brother—all three died between Sept. 1848 and May 1849—so that she could write in the desolation of lonely grief: 'I do not know how life will pass but I certainly do feel confidence in HIM who has upheld me hitherto.'

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'For Charlotte it was a struggle . . .  
Emily was a true mystic . . . Anne's  
faith was the most clear and uncomplicated'

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The faith of Emily was that of the true mystic, and she found God in the beauties of nature and the grandeur around her. One has only to read 'Wuthering Heights' to enter into something of her feeling for the natural world, but there was a definite personal response in her own heart, as she expressed in her last poem.

'No coward soul is mine  
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere;  
I see Heaven's glories shine,  
And faith shines equal arming me from fear.  
There is not room for death,  
Nor atom that his might could tender void,  
Thou, Thou art Being and Breath  
And what Thou art may never be destroyed.'

Anne, 'sweet gentle Anne' had a struggle to come to terms with the strict Calvinistic teaching of her aunt, but eventually perhaps her Christian faith was the most simple, clear and uncomplicated of them all. It shines in many of her poems, as well as in her novels 'Agnes Grey' and 'The Tenant of Wildfell Hall.' The last lines

(continued overleaf)

## Looking at Books

### The Faith of the Archbishop

**THE HEART OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH** Donald Coggan, Archbishop of Canterbury. Collins. 94 pp 75p. (paperback).

This book contains fifteen meditations on some of the great words of Christianity and was originally prepared for broadcasting and reproduction on tapes in America. They present the core of the Archbishop's teaching ministry and the basic convictions which he holds. They are, therefore, written in a straightforward style, aimed at reaching a very wide public. Limitation of time and space prevent any sustained argument and consequently 'the element of assertion rather than argumentation' dominates the book. Dr. Coggan does not wholly regret this, since he believes that there are 'a great many people who want to learn, in language which they can understand . . . the basic truths at the heart of the Christian faith'.

The first four chapters survey the basic doctrines of Man, God, Jesus and the Church; the next five chapters the Christian qualities of Love, Faith, Grace, Peace and Life. There are two chapters on the problems of Suffering and Anxiety, while the remaining four chapters deal with

the requisites of Discipleship, Guidance, Prayer and the Bible.

While each chapter is an entity, Dr. Coggan has succeeded in producing a continuity of thought. He begins with man, made in the image of God and 'vested with divine authority', answerable and responsible to God, who is both king and loving father. By his response of perfect obedience and love, 'even to the death on the Cross', Jesus has opened the way for his followers and to a new community, the church, whose supreme characteristic will be evident in love of God and neighbour, 'a command totally impossible' except by the miracle of God's own infilling love. There is faith, 'a supreme trust in God and Christ, through whom we come to God' and grace which provides the gifts of forgiveness, peace and everlasting life.

Christians, however, are not immune from life's vicissitudes and ailments, so there are chapters on suffering and anxiety. The requirements of discipleship are met, with the chapters on guidance, prayer and the Bible, and with love for one another and obedience, the test of its reality. Dr. Coggan writes, 'how urgent does this test make our ecumenical relationships! Suspicion and ignorance of one another have to go and their place must be taken by a loving understanding and caring.'

The author's sincerity, humility and conviction must commend this little book to its readers. The reviewer has found it a rewarding exercise and truly refreshing.

*Review by E. L. Lovering*

*(Reviews are continued on the facing page)*

*Kathleen White's column (continued)*

she ever wrote when she knew death was imminent, said this:

'I hoped that with the brave and strong  
My portioned task might lie,  
To toil amid the busy throng  
With purpose pure and high,  
If Thou should'st bring me back to life,  
More humbled I should be,  
More wise, more strengthened for the strife,  
More apt to lean on Thee.  
Should death be standing at the gate,  
Thus should I keep my vow,  
But, Lord, whatever be my fate,  
Oh, let me serve Thee now.'

Charlotte wrote of her on the day she died, only twenty-nine years old—'My poor sister is taken quietly home at last. She died on Monday. With almost her last breath she said she was happy and thanked God that death was come, and come so gently.'

And what of Branwell?—poor, brilliant Branwell, the

object of all his father's hopes and the adored brother who was the presiding 'Chief Genius Brannie' who organised the prolific juvenile writing of stories bound in miniature books by the four children. Alas, there was no self-discipline or concentration to harness all that potential intellectual and artistic aptitude and Branwell never succeeded. As life progressed from disappointment to utter failure and despair, he found his only solace in alcohol, laudanum and morphia until at the age of thirty, they killed him. And yet, even at the end of that wasted life it seems that the grace of God triumphed and in the last hours all the family noted a different, softened attitude. He whispered a heart-felt 'Amen' to his father's last prayer at his bed-side.

Much more could be said, the Bronte family is a never-ending source of potential and absorbing study, but, to return to the beginning of this article, perhaps I have shown how possible it can be to pursue a hobby with like-minded folk and also to find in it a source of Christian witness and spiritual enrichment. We can heartily recommend it for your attention and consideration. □

## DOCTRINES OF THE FAITH

**Pocket Guide to the New Testament** Francis Foulkes. IVP. 160 pp. £1.25 (paperback).

**Pocket Guide to Christian Beliefs** I. Howard Marshall. IVP. 144 pp. £1.25 (paperback).

Francis Foulkes, lecturer at the Bible College of New Zealand, has condensed a wealth of material into a minimum of space. His aim is to high-light the 'chief purpose or purposes of each book in the New Testament, how it came to be written and what are its contents'. He takes the view that 'study of the content . . . is of far greater importance than the study of dates and authors'. However, a comprehensive list of 'Reference Books' and 'Matters for Further Study' supply ample background reading for this purpose. 'Study Questions' on each chapter provide a useful revision, and suggest practical applications to contemporary situations. There is an adequate page index to main themes and subjects, with corresponding scripture references.

Of the Gospels, *Mark* is taken first and of Paul's letters, *Galatians* and *Romans*, as they 'show most clearly the gospel which Paul preached'. Then follow the letters which 'give an insight into the life and problems of the churches that ne established' and finally there are the letters to *Timothy* and *Titus*, 'his colleagues in the work'. The remaining books are covered in the last six chapters and there is a concluding paragraph 'about translations'. Quotations are mostly from the R.S.V. (1971 edition) and a map of 'The World of the New Testament churches' provides a useful reference.

Written in a style clear and concise, the book is not for the casual reader; but, for the disciplined student of scripture, there is great reward.

The second book, first published in 1963 and now appearing in its third edition, has been completely revised and expanded. Dr. Marshall, senior lecturer in New Testament exegesis in the university of Aberdeen, presents a 'bird's-eye view' of the essentials of Christian doctrine. This he defines as, 'an exposition of God's revelation of himself in the Bible', and asserts that 'the Bible is the basic and normative source . . . other sources of knowledge stand in a subordinate position to its supreme authority'.

In seven short chapters we are introduced to the 'knowledge of God' in creation, history, Jesus Christ and the Bible; to the nature of God and the world and its creation and fall into sin. This leads to a consideration of 'God's supreme act of love' in the coming of Jesus into the world as Saviour—the 'central theme of Christian theology'. The author then proceeds to show how God's new creation becomes effective in the individual and the church and concludes with a chapter on the 'last things'.

There are thought provoking paragraphs on baptism, the Lord's Supper, ordination of women, the millennium and eternal punishment, and also 'Questions for Study and Discussion', a book list for 'Further reading' and a Scripture and Subject Index.

As companion volumes these books provide the new-comer as well as the mature Christian with an excellent 'guide' to the basic themes and issues of the Christian faith, and maintain the consistently high standard of I.V.P. publications.

Review by E. L. Lovering

**Christian Baptism** R. E. O. White and Ian Smith. Pickering & Inglis. 24 pp. 40p (booklet).

If anyone had told me they were going to write a booklet on Christian Baptism and make it amusing, my first reaction—my instinctive reaction as one brought up in an assembly from youth—would have been 'You'll never get away with it.'

I would have been wrong, for R. E. O. White and Ian Smith (familiar name) have got away with it, and what is more they have put over the message very effectively.

*Christian Baptism* is a dialogue between two youngish men in a coffee bar. At the first humorous drawing I took sides. The well groomed chap with the collar and tie was obviously

our man, while the 'with it' looking individual in the polo-neck must be from a camp which did not go along with baptism by immersion. Some twelve drawings, and twenty-two pages of conversation later, I was not too sure I had chosen right. But, while hardly realising it, I had been reminded of all, or practically all, the truths connected with believer's baptism which we hold dear. Furthermore there was the bonus of discovering why the Jews baptised pagan proselytes, and why our Lord himself was baptised. You may not agree with all their conclusions, but I could find nothing wrong with them at all; in fact I was given a new insight into the symbolic meaning of this ordinance.

They also delve into the question of sprinkling, without getting hot under the collar, and quote Church of England, Congregationalist and Presbyterian sources, and if that is not value for money perhaps you will tell me what is. They go deep, at least our man does, and all the time they are drinking coffee.

If you are one of that increasing number of well read Christians who like to see old truths in modern garb you might like this book. If you are a young Christian who loses interest in biblical publications unless the presentation is unusual, you will like this book. But if, like me, you worship in an Assembly where more and more young people are attending the Lord's Table as observers, who have never committed themselves to Christian Baptism, then for you this booklet is just the thing to hand round. As an Elder in such an Assembly I certainly intend to do so.

Review by Leslie James

**The Logic of Faith** Dale Rhoton. STL Books. 92 pp. 70p (paperback).

In this small book the author has assembled the well-known 'proofs' and arguments for the truth of Christianity. He begins by quoting the references to Christ by the 1st and 2nd century pagan writers, Tacitus, Pliny, Lucian, Suetonius and others—a useful reminder that no educated person can seriously doubt the historicity of Jesus. A chapter follows in which he discusses the miracles of Christ, devoting most of the chapter to the convincing evidence for the truth of the greatest miracle of all, the resurrection, which authenticates all the others. The chapter dealing with the Bible points out how archaeological discoveries have corroborated many Biblical events. A list of prophecies is given and against them their fulfilment. Unfortunately the author does not deal with what is perhaps the greatest problem for many in the Old Testament, viz. the violence and cruelty carried out apparently at the behest of God, and the difference between the God so revealed in some parts of the Old Testament and the God and Father revealed by Jesus Christ. I believe there is a satisfactory explanation and it would have added to the book if it had been discussed.

By a quotation from Sigmund Freud at the end of the book it would seem that the author renders his carefully marshalled evidence for Christianity largely unnecessary for Freud apparently said that the will is an immense force in deciding what to believe, 'logical arguments are impotent against effective interests, and this is why reasons, which, in Falstaff's phrase, are "as plenty as blackberries" produce so few victories in the conflict with interests.' Nevertheless, in spite of this I imagine that our wills are unlikely to decide to believe in something which is demonstrably unreasonable and so Dale Rhoton's book will help the inquirer to see the objective evidence for the claims of Jesus Christ are considerable.

Review by O. S. Papps

**The Search for Salvation** David F. Wells. Inter-Varsity Press. 1978. 176 pp. £2.65 (paperback).

Our need both to explore what we ourselves believe and to appreciate what other Christians are saying has been recognized by IVP with their series 'Issues in Contemporary Theology', inaugurated by Dr. I. Howard Marshall with his volume on *The Origins of New Testament Christology* and now continued



with this book by Dr. David Wells of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois. Its prospective readership must embrace every evangelical seriously interested in his faith—'seriously', because Dr Wells subject does not make for easy reading. It offers, however, a spiritual and intellectual tonic as the reader thinks through the multifarious understandings of 'salvation' today.

A stimulating Introduction and Conclusion enclose a description, analysis and critical evaluation of six contemporary theological attitudes, each of which confronts the problem 'of how to be a Christian in a secular age'. Wells has had to formulate the conservative Protestant view of salvation for himself, rather than simply recording and assessing the ideas of selected representative writers as he has been able to do with the other theologies he reviews; thus he deplores the 'sketchy, tentative state' of conservative theology today and the almost exclusive preoccupation of conservative scholars with biblical studies. The remaining, slightly shorter, chapters deal with neo-orthodox, Christian existentialist, secular theological, the theology of liberation's and Roman Catholic views of salvation. The theologians' names may be more familiar to us than their teaching. (The 'comprehensiveness' of the Church of England justifies Wells in not devoting a chapter to that strange and slippery body, but I was disappointed not to find something on the lines of Professor S. W. Sykes' splendid *The Integrity of Anglicanism*, albeit covering only views on salvation.)

With ample bibliographical notations Wells leads us through this maze of current theologies, crisply encapsulating biblical teaching in the process. Apart from the conservative all are either fully or partly apologetic in intention, and, in a manner already familiar to readers of Dr. E. R. Norman's 1978 Reith Lectures, accommodate themselves to modern thought. With the same exception, all start with man, belittle sin, and affirm or imply universal salvation. The author's conclusion expresses the hope that dogmatic and apologetic theologians will learn from each other, so that theologies will emerge which can effectively communicate biblical doctrine to the contemporary world. 'Christian faith does not change; its relationship to the world does', he explains. 'Conservatives are right to attempt to interpret biblical doctrine from within a biblical world-view but mistaken when they imagine that they themselves live in that world.'

The scope of the book inevitably makes for compression occasionally at the expense of accuracy, while Wells' analytical faculty perhaps leads him to over-systematize. The index includes only personal names, which renders it less useful than it might have been. But the author's civilized, literate, allusive style itself affords fresh insights, and his choice of chapter epigraphs is happily provocative. The volume provides a most valuable study text on the doctrine of salvation for mature personal or group use.

Review by Dr. A. G. Newell

**Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity** Karl Rahner (translated by William V. Dych). Darton, Longman and Todd. 470 pp. £14.00.

This is a book from a very influential Roman Catholic theologian. Its intention is to place Christianity 'within the intellectual horizons of people today'. The treatment is not just a paraphrase of traditional presentations but aims to some extent at a restatement of the Christian faith. It is openly conceded that this will not necessarily result in an easy book to read. There is going to have to be a willingness on the part of the reader to wrestle with ideas which are either completely novel or at least couched in an unfamiliar form. Yet the point of the book is to express the central affirmations of the Christian faith and to provide an introduction, as the title suggests, to the fundamentals of Christianity.

As a book by a Catholic theologian, it is of great interest to the Protestant and Reformed reader who wants to keep in touch with developments in the Roman world. Such a reader will not find it easy to assess this work. He may be disturbed at what he sees as an inadequate view of salvation and atonement; he is likely to be fascinated by Rahner's treatment of

the Marian dogmas—the bodily assumption is but a particular instance of the resurrection of the body which is the anticipated future of all Christians; he will be unconvinced by the 'method for showing the legitimacy of the Catholic church as the church of Christ'; he may well be heartened by the constructive acceptance of the three Reformation 'solas'—by faith, by grace and by Scripture alone. And so it may go on; it is impossible to do justice to the subtlety and complexity of the book in a brief review.

A publication of this type can hardly hope to avoid comparison with another book from the Catholic ranks—Hans Kung's *On Being a Christian*. This also claims to be an introduction and covers approximately the same ground. I have to confess, however, that I found Kung's treatment more Biblically-oriented, more aware of the situation of the serious reader who is interested but lacks technical theological knowledge, and much easier to read. The sheer difficulty of Rahner's prose (at least in translation) will probably mean that most people will opt for Kung's version of what Christianity looks like to the modern Catholic theologian.

Inevitably one fastens on themes which seem to be treated in a particularly lucid, helpful, thought-provoking or stimulating way. Rahner recognises that to be a Christian in the present age is to take up a position which is far from indisputable and which demands justification. It cannot rest in a too-easy acceptance of ecclesiastical pronouncements nor, he argues, in a mere Biblicism. The faith must be 'won anew'. It must be reasonable. Hence the importance of reflection on the nature of one's ordinary experience. It is in pondering what it means to be human that belief in God is to be justified—as the answer to the question posed by the totality of my human experience. There is thus an 'anonymous' knowledge of God ever-present in what Rahner calls 'transcendental experience'. Man himself 'is the question which rises up before him, empty, but really and inescapably and which can never be settled and never adequately answered by him'. Man is thus asked 'whether in responsibility to himself . . . he can affirm as the conviction which is to be the truth for him that he is not such a person as Christianity tells him he is.'

From this point of departure Rahner develops an understanding of man as a creature, as one who is aware of absolute mystery, as one who is free and yet dependent, as one who experiences hope, as a moral being and as one 'threatened radically by guilt'. It is then possible to connect up these basic human experiences with the being and attributes of God and with the freedom Christ gives.

In all this it is possible to hear echoes of Tillich and Bullmann and of course, Rahner's early studies under Martin Heidegger. Nevertheless this, for me, was the most valuable feature of the book—the determination to make personal existence the starting-point for a demonstration of the reasonableness of Christianity and for a pressing of the decision-question. Here is no approach through history or 'traditional proofs' but through a kind of theological anthropology.

Some readers may feel that something important has been sacrificed here—that the crucial question is 'what think ye of Christ?' rather than 'how do you understand yourself?'; that the distinctively objective nature of the gospel has been smudged. This need not be the case, however. Held in balance with other methods of approach, section after section of Rahner's book will be found to have considerable apologetic power. There is, after all, no overriding obligation to accept an author's argument *in toto* in order to find parts of his treatment helpful and suggestive.

Review by David V. Day, Derby Lonsdale College of Higher Education

**Christology at the Crossroads** Jon Sobrino SJ. SCM. 432 pp. £4.95 (paperback).

In order to understand how a Jesuit can find himself reinterpreting Roman Catholic dogma and the 'Spiritual Exercises' of Ignatius Loyola, one must try and see things from a Latin American point of view. In the past the Roman Church has often supported the prevailing Establishment which has equally often been dictatorial and oppressive. There is, and

always has been, a great gulf fixed between rich and poor which has not really narrowed in recent years in spite of millions of dollars spent in 'Development'. If anything such policies have only reinforced the unjust structure of societies where there is no constitutional way of peaceful reform.

It is against this background that a number of Roman Catholics have experienced uneasy consciences and have become deeply concerned—along with others—about the poor and needy. This concern has expressed itself in Liberation Theology which tries to apply the Christian message to the inequalities and oppression in that situation. The contention of theologians involved in the movement is that their particular scene requires a different approach from that of Western Theology which, it is apparent to them, has produced little in the way of practical social change over the years and which, in fact, has merely helped to perpetuate the status quo. Perhaps the most positive contribution of the South Americans is their insistence on the practical outworking of theological thought (in what they would call 'praxis'); indeed, it may be correct to say that this is where they start rather than conclude.

It is at this point, however, that we meet with what is to them an indispensable presupposition: that we must understand and evaluate the social scene in Marxist terms. As far as they are concerned the key to their situation is the dialectic of class-struggle which they then proceed to Christianise. In this book we see a Jesuit combining the insights of Marxism, critical Biblical theology and the views of such moderns as Rahner, Moltmann and Pannenberg. On more than one occasion he insists that theology must come to terms with the Enlightenment and its legacy of rationalistic philosophy if it is to be viable today.

It is not easy to summarise his argument—he takes 50 pages to sum up himself—and the language in which it is couched is complicated in the extreme. One would hope that for his sake it has suffered in translation from Spanish!

His Christology may be understood as a reaction against the traditional formulations which in his opinion (and to some extent he is correct) suffered from the fact that they were put together by Greek theologians. We must go back behind them to the historical Jesus and see him as he really was, a man amongst men. In this way he has inherited from Western Theology the dichotomy between the Jesus of History (Jesus as he really was) and the Christ of Faith (Jesus as he has been interpreted by Christians, including the earliest ones). He sees a totally human Jesus in the Gospels beset by ignorance, developing his ideas as he went along and making mistakes. Caesarea Philippi was a major crisis for Jesus before which he anticipated the immanent arrival of the Kingdom, and after which he changed his mind realising that 'all that is left is the power of love in suffering.'

According to Sobrino the power of the cross was the scandal of Jesus being abandoned by the God whose grace he had been preaching. Even the apostles got it wrong and explained his death in other terms, while the Church has done likewise. It is only in the context of modern political suffering that we see the real meaning of the cross once again. It speaks of a God who suffers with his oppressed people, for Jesus died as a political agitator championing the cause of the underprivileged classes.

While talking about the resurrection and understanding it in theological terms, Sobrino does not appear to be too sure if it actually happened. Like a number of moderns he seems to be content with the assurance that the disciples were convinced about it. At this point as at many others in his treatment of the New Testament he bows to the opinion of 'modern exegesis'. The Biblical descriptions of Christ (including the Virgin Birth) are the result of the theological reflection of the early church which later hardened into doctrinal norms (in Roman terms 'dogmas') as time went by.

Dogma is something of an embarrassment to him and he spends time if not actually denying it, at least relegating it to the realm of 'doxological statement'. The real Christ for him is the human Christ reconstructed for us by modern (Western!) scholarship. He seems to quote Pannenberg with greater conviction than he quotes Paul.

For years the Roman Church has been able to control if not the convictions of its adherents, at least the literary expression of those beliefs. The recent easing of the situation has revealed not only a diversity of viewpoint beneath the surface but also the inroads of modernism. Sobrino's book is a good illustration of this.

Review by John F. Balchin, London Bible College

## FIVE BOOKS ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

On this subject, at least, there's no shortage of books. Even I can remember the time when the doctrine of the Holy Spirit could be called the neglected doctrine of the church, but no more. Regrettably it has become the battlefield of the churches, and one tends to select one's books according to one's own battle-line.

Understandably *The Renewing Spirit* and *The Holy Spirit today* share a common view. The first book is written by George Duncan and is commended by Canon Houghton, the second is by Leith Samuel and is commended by Eric Alexander: the Keswick imprimatur is very apparent. The books are very brief: George Duncan's just exceeds a hundred pages (the first chapter begins on page 13), while Leith Samuel's covers only 56 pages. And one can't really expect any penetrating discussion of so vital a theme in such a brief compass. Actually one rather wishes that the two authors had got together to pool their ideas since the two books run so parallel to one another. Each has a chapter on the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, each has one on the gifts of the Spirit and each has a chapter on speaking in tongues.

And each of them speaks from a position of experience which makes them less than enthusiastic about the charismatic movement. Obviously what they have to say is scriptural. It also tends to be negative, and doesn't really come to grips with, for example, *1 Corinthians 13: 10* or *1 Corinthians 14: 5*. And yet Leith Samuel must take seriously the very obvious damage produced by unbiblical views of spiritual healing. He quotes several first hand examples of such cases. But it would be regrettable if an awareness of such aberrations should interfere with our exposition of scripture. And I fear that it does.

George Zeller's *God's gift of tongues* is another century: chapter 1 starts on page 15 and the text closes at page 116. Incidentally it is time to call a halt to the padding out of books by chapter dividers and blank pages: this book actually has sixteen completely blank pages to it! This book is a more than usually thorough attempt, even allowing for the comparatively brief length of the book, to look at the Biblical teaching on just one aspect of the charismatic scene. It is valuable, for example, to see Tongues set in the context of mission, and judgement, where they belong. The pattern which Zeller observes: God has a message for his people; the people refuse to hear it; God causes tongues to be heard as a sign of judgement and then judgement in the form of dispersion follows; this pattern, although some of the examples seem a little artificial, is both interesting and significant. It is out of this pattern that Zeller follows the common argument that tongues finished in or about AD70, with the destruction of Jerusalem. But this is where his lack of church history (a common weakness across the Atlantic: when will it be redressed?) lets him down. Jerusalem in fact limped on to the Bar Cochba revolt and the construction of Aelia Capitolina from which the Jews were banned. But his theology lets him down too, on that same critical passage in *1 Corinthians 13*. 'When the perfect comes' can really only be taken to refer to the *parousia*. But Zeller's book is well worth study.

It is interesting to find Tim LaHaye's *Spirit controlled temperament* re-issued by Kingsway Publications: over 180 pages for 90p. The book was first published back in 1966. It deals in a very interesting and practical way with a rather simplistic diagnosis of human temperament into the sanguine,

the choleric, the melancholic and the phlegmatic. The author uses his material very well and on the whole fairly. He makes it quite clear that no-one is ever wholly phlegmatic or sanguine, but that we change and switch and vary the mix. Here are some interesting insights into our own habits: do we make decisions or form committees, do we act or re-act or maybe simply spectate. Tim LaHaye is concerned to see the Holy Spirit let into these temperaments of ours simply because part of our right as children of God is to be set free from those character-crippling characteristics which we inherited from our parents.

My fifth book is very different. I unwrapped my hermetically-sealed copy of *Baptismal anointing* with some curiosity. I was out of England, a missionary in Ethiopia, when it was first issued and vaguely recalled the review by W. G. Davies: 'a masterly survey'. The book is a doctoral dissertation by Leonel Mitchell and deals with the practice of anointing baptismal candidates with oil. He discusses the Syrian rites, the practice at Rome and the New Testament evidence (which is somewhat scanty). He comments on the number of anointings, the point within the baptismal liturgy at which they took place, by whom the anointing was administered, priest or Bishop, the interpretation placed on the anointings and the relation of anointing to the laying on of hands and the act of renunciation of the Devil and all his works. And, of course, there is a rather arid discussion of the point at which the Spirit was assumed to descend on the neophyte. The practice of Chrismation, anointing with oil as an accompaniment to baptism, was abandoned by the Reformers, and while Dr. Mitchell's study shows tremendous erudition yet his attempts to justify the imposition once again of an early church practice which, however, has no authority in scripture, is little more than applied archaeology.

Incidentally it is a sad commentary on the times that what was published in 1966 at two guineas should now be re-issued at £8.40!

**The Holy Spirit Today** Leith Samuel. Pickering and Inglis. 56 pp. 75p. (paperback).

**The Renewing Spirit** George B. Duncan. Pickering and Inglis. 118 pp. £1.00. (paperback).

**God's Gift of Tongues** George W. Zeller. Loizeaux Brothers. 126 pp. £2.50. (paperback).

**Spirit Controlled Temperament** Tim LaHaye. Kingsway Publications. 188 pp. 90p. (paperback).

**Baptismal Anointing** Leonel Mitchell. University of Notre Dame Press. xvii + 199 pp. £8.40.

Reviews by Dr. F. P. Cotterell, London Bible College

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## Readers' Forum

*Readers' Forum* is open to contributions from Readers. Please send suggestions from practical experience, related to church activities or Christian living; doctrinal or expository questions; useful experiences; what-you-will; to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX. Questions, to which other readers will be invited to submit replies, will also be published from time to time as they are received. It is hoped that readers will take full advantage of this feature.

*Mr. Frank Potter was stimulated by Leslie James's recent articles, and particularly the April study of the life of Thomas Bowman Stephenson, to write the following letter, which forms an admirable challenge for the July Readers' Forum. Comments are invited.*

After reading several of Mr. James's articles, one begins to receive a greater realisation of the debt we owe to those who have gone before.

Although the times were perhaps more opportune, in that conditions were more flagrant, yet this last article brings home the burning need for those who believe in the changing power of the Gospel not only to be Christian, but to be seen to be Christ-like. As one who works on the shop floor of an engineering factory, a trade-unionist, and I hope one called to be an evangelist, my whole experience of Brethren gatherings is that 'social

'We give money . . . send others to foreign lands. But in England . . . how many factory workers are there in the assemblies?'

evangelism is out'. Of course there are noble exceptions. But in perhaps 35 years I find we will give money—in plenty; we will send others to foreign lands to work among social outcasts. But in England we just don't want to know. How many factory workers are there in the assemblies? How many in Roman Catholic meetings? Our time-personal involvement amongst those who are 'socially inferior' is negligible.

For the few of us who try to be involved there is criticism, but little help. Some of my own people tell me that now there are no poor, and if they are it is because of their own fault, through alcoholism etc. Leslie James tells me of men who knew others' faults, and the reasons, but were moved by love of Him who first loved us when we were unlovable and at fault. Did men like this only live in days gone by? Have we no men who foremost are evangelists—and use *everything* else as a means to that end?

Articles like Leslie James's renew my faith, and keep my hope bright that one day, if it is not too late already, we shall be seen to be concerned in all aspects of society, and not with 'a great gulf fixed.'

If possible, could Mr. James give us an article on a modern day work of social evangelism in England today?

## Replies to Professor Bruce

### The May Question

Michael Miles packs more explosive material into one sentence than most of us distribute over a whole article. What about his remark in the February *Harvester*: 'On questions of women, sex, penal code and property, Islam offers teaching much more palatable to our more traditional-minded brethren than what they often receive at home'? Is this really so?

*Mr. H. L. Ellison replies:-*

The amount of explosive material packed into a sentence is no measure of its truth, especially when it has been lifted from its context, and so it is here.

If I may be allowed to generalize, and therefore to distort, Muhammad's doctrine and ethics are essentially based on Judaism without many of its Pharisaic refinements, and adapted to the very much simpler forms of Arabian life in his time.

In the Reformation period, the first strong influence on Britain from Europe came from Luther, but later Calvin became the strongest influence. For a variety of reasons this was considerably weaker in England than in Scotland and tended to be confined to certain social classes. Calvin's great merit as a reformer was the stress he laid on the Old Testament, and this heritage was strengthened by the interest of the early Brethren in typology and dispensationalism.

This has meant in practice a tendency to interpret New Testament ethics in the light of the Old—not a bad thing, if it is not overdone—and so we get the suggested links with Islam. These have been strengthened by the widespread modern tendencies to antinomianism, which all too often have led to a legalism in reaction. But then at all times the true Christian path has been a very narrow one between these two errors, where we have to learn to say neither-nor, but only the Spirit's guidance.

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Barcelona this year. National EAs from Italy, East Germany, Portugal and Greece have all been received into the EEA during the last four years. In Western Europe only Belgium and Eire have no national EA.

### Evangelical Library

Westminster City Council who own 78 Chiltern Street, W.1, where the Library occupies the first and most of the second floor, have agreed to the Library purchasing its portion on a 99-year lease. The number of books currently at headquarters is 80,000; there are also 170,000 books at the 130 branches.

### Evangelism

Donald Meadows reports the "largest number ever" during the Totton Weekend. George Tryon had excellent children's missions in New Milton and Farncombe.

### International Fellowship of Evangelical Students

A recent newsletter tells how God is working in Eastern Europe: "In one of the Eastern European countries where Christians face tremendous opposition, the zeal to be a Christian within structures which allow little or no freedom to express and live out one's faith is of a quality unknown in Western countries. What is more, the eagerness of non-Christians (including many students) to get to know the essentials of the Christian faith is incredible. In one university city 1000 young people gather together each Wednesday evening to attend a Bible study. The place is packed, the listeners scribble notes on scraps of paper resting on their knees or walls. Officially, it is forbidden to go there, but when such a large number of people have decided to take the risk, it is rather difficult for the authorities to counteract them. It is very much a matter of courage, or to put it another way, of trust, that inspires these young people to take part in a miracle. The speakers at such meetings are indigenous; for in spite of having little literature, and what we would call a tradition of good teaching, there are several Christians who have an outstandingly mature knowledge of their faith, to which Western Christians can have little or nothing to add. We can rather gain from them and rejoice at what God is doing." There is some encouraging news from parts of Western Europe, including Belgium—historically one of the most difficult countries in Europe for student work. A graduate team working in Louvain-la-Neuve reports that a dozen students have joined in their Bible studies. They have come across some Catholic students who were unusually interested in this Bible study group. In addition, there is witness to foreign students in this French-speaking university.

### Ireland Outreach

Without either postal service or telephone communication, Ireland Outreach has been in difficulties. But Mr. Jimmy Murphy of Evangelical Outreach, Studio 162 has allowed them to use his Belfast address. Letters should be sent to Mr. J. W. Gillett, c/o Mr. J. Murphy, 16 Castle Park, Belfast, BT15 5FF, Northern Ireland. Telephone contact may also be made by ringing either Ireland Outreach's secretary, Miss Julia Tan at Dublin (01) 800 037 after 6 p.m. or Ireland Outreach Trustee, Mr. Eric Davis at (01) 856 581.

They are looking forward to the summer outreach work and send encouraging news of a new-Christian Bible study group which is receiving much blessing from the study of Paul's missionary journeys.

### Leicester

During April Don Summers had one of the most controversial campaigns of his life in a city where the church leaders were completely divided over so-called "mass evangelism". "In over 25 years of ministering amongst British churches I have never been in any place where they have spoken, written and preached against me so much without even hearing me! But now I now why . . . we have over 400 good reasons why the Leicester Crusade had to be; each of them a precious person that Christ challenged and brought to himself in these days."

There was even a letter in the *Leicester Mercury* from B. L. Zeebub, explaining why he supported the Council in banning open-air evangelistic meetings but permitting the National Front to march. "Don Summers . . . is a known agent of that infinitely more dangerous revolutionary, Jesus Christ . . . if He is allowed to capture the hearts of all the people of Leicester, He will radically alter the very nature of our society . . . there may even be unbridled singing and dancing in the streets—perish the thought!"

### London City Mission

Among the speakers at the 144th Annual Meeting of the London City Mission, held on May 23, was Ted Chubb who described his ministry to 15,000 employees on British Rail's Southern Region. He finds he must always be ready to listen to objections, be a patient listener, correct misconceptions and in a gracious way commend. Minds are often firmly closed. "One man presented at his canteen table with a Christian paper refused it saying he did not want to read it. Gently Ted insisted adding that he might find something there to interest him. Without even looking at it he declared he never read anything he didn't agree with. "How can you know you don't agree with it until you read it?", asked Ted.

A large proportion of manual staff on British Rail today are immigrants, many of them Asians with either a Moslem or Hindu background. Ted finds there is a great need to build bridges if he is to reach people of other faiths. A Turkish Cypriot had approached him on the platform one day and said that as he was a "holy man" perhaps he could offer advice with two problems he had—it was Ted's privilege to give Christian counsel, and he believes that much prayer, love and holy resolve is needed if the Christian Church is to see such men turn to Christ.

### Mentally handicapped—Peacehaven

The building work on the houses in Greystones is now finished and the time has come to begin furnishing them. There is also a need for residential staff, whether a married couple or one or two single people. Although formal training in working with mentally handicapped adults is not absolutely essential, some knowledge of their special needs and limitations will be expected.

### Regent College, Vancouver

Dr. J. M. Houston, who was associated with the founding of the college ten years ago, has been

appointed Chancellor. Dr. Carl Armerding has succeeded him as Principal. The College continues to offer a unique opportunity for Christians in North America to follow courses of biblical and theological study, not so much with a view to full-time work but rather as loving God with "mind" as well as "heart".

#### Scripture Readers

At the annual meeting held on Saturday, May 19, the President pointed out the special needs of young men and women who leave troubled homes to seek security within the Army or Royal Air Force. They offer a special challenge to the Scripture Readers. The Treasurer spoke of the varying trends of income and expenditure over the past years and regretted that gifts received during 1978 had amounted to only £91,000 whereas the cost of maintaining the work was £92,000. One reason for the difficulty might be that fewer and fewer people had any direct experience of life in the services. Humanly speaking, the work could not go on unless donations increased.

#### Scripture Union

Scripture Union were in action at the biggest children's party in the world in Hyde Park on May 30 and 31. "Every hour on the hour", children joined an SU team of staff and volunteers at "The King's Party" with a programme of games, chorus-singing and a contemporary presentation in drama of Jesus' parable of the wedding feast and the guests who made excuses. The title, "The King's Party" attracted the attention of the Duke of Edinburgh, who pointed it out to the Queen with a nod during the royal walkabout at this event to mark the International Year of the Child. As they left "The King's Party", children were handed leaflets which included the Good News Bible version of the parable and teaching material to emphasize its meaning. Despite the mud and the struggle to make themselves heard above the music of a steel band and other competing sounds, the SU team felt that their participation had been worthwhile. "It's good for a Christian society to be seen here in action. Our presence has been an encouragement to other Christians visiting the event. And seed has been sown."

#### South Africa

Ronald Pillay reports that he has been refused permission to preach to prisoners since there is a regulation forbidding an ex-prisoner to preach in jail. He is praying that the situation may be changed if it is God's will and refers to the request prisoners have made for Bibles. He needs help in supplying 90 in various languages.

#### Sunday School by Post

The Worcestershire Postal Sunday School continues to average about 500 scholars, with another sixty doing introductory lessons for full recognition as postal Sunday school members. Christians in other parts have begun to follow their example.

#### World Evangelical Fellowship

Some points from a recent newsletter: nearly half of the world's 8.5 million refugees today are in Africa. According to Dr. Tokunboh Adeyemo, General Secretary of the Association of Evangelicals of Africa and Madagascar, they form "a new class" which must claim the attention of Africa churches. . .

More and more Christians are endorsing the international boycott of Nestlé products. Nestlé reportedly controls more than one-third of the world's infant formula market. Religious bodies have cited research indicating that the substitution of commercial infant formula for breast milk in areas where poverty, illiteracy, impure water and inadequate sanitation prevail has resulted in infant malnutrition, illness, brain damage and death.

A book on the life of Christ by a Japanese novelist has sold 300,000 copies. The author, Shusaku Endo, explained that often the Christian God appears as a harsh, authoritarian father figure. The book draws from the gospels a picture of a warmhearted Jesus "who lived for love" and "who pleaded to be the companion of every wretched soul."

#### Home-Calls

**Bernard Goodall** on May 22, aged 81. Associated with assemblies in Retford and Beighton, Sheffield, he was active in personal evangelism, visiting every home in the village where he lived. He actively supported the Scripture Gift Mission and Pocket Testament League and was an enthusiastic member of the Gideons. For many years he was an honorary Army Scripture Reader working mainly amongst troops at Ranby Camp. He is survived by his wife, son and daughter.

**Lily Roberts** at Warrington, aged 84. From her teens she was in fellowship at Forster Street and later at Hebron. She and her husband, who was called home in 1966, were known to many, especially service-men and women, for their hospitality. Although latterly weak in body, she was mentally alert and spiritually alive up to the time of her homecall. She is survived by two daughters and a son, all in assembly fellowship.



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# People and Places

## New addresses

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## Stewardship

**Home Worker's Fund**  
Equity House, 450 Hackney Road, London, E2 6QL. Total receipts for the month of May amounted to £752.00.

**Retired Missionary Aid Fund:**  
12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies for the month of May amounted to £12,798.97

## Prayer List

Stamped letters addressed c/o The Paternoster Press, Paternoster House, 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter, EX2 4JW will be forwarded to any of those whose names appear below.

Workers are requested to include their names on their cards when returning them each month. We are still receiving anonymous contributions from time to time.

**Blackburn, A. G.:**  
Yeoford and Westdown 1; Clayhidon 8; Allerbridge 15; Tiverton 22; Honiton 29; Exmouth Beach Mission 23-31.

**Burnham, A. E. J.:**  
Rainham 1; Southsea 8; Fareham 10; Standford 15; Maidenhead 24; Portsmouth 26; Fleet 29; also at other places.

**Campbell, B.:**  
Helston 1, 2; Camborne 4; Falmouth 5-13, 16-20, 29-31; St. Ives 14, 15; Otterhampton 21-28.

**Clifford, D.:**  
At the following places: Alton, West Moors, Barnstaple, Braunton, Tiverton, Lapford, Ilfracombe, Gosport.

**Galyer, W. S.:**  
Gwent 1-11; Burnt Oak 15; Kingston 17, 24; Walthamstow 18; Sidcup 22; Hershham 25; Weston-Super-Mare 27-31.

**Gillham, S.:**  
Wyke Regis Tent Crusade 1-12; Wimborne 13; Dorchester 14; Hamworthy 15; Neacroft 18; Dorset Adventure Time Camp 19-August 6.

**Greenaway, G. H.:**  
Mildenhall 1; Finningham 5, 9, 22; Framlingham 8; Stowmarket 11; Tibenham 15; Bradfield St. George 29; also visitation work.

**Grimsey, A. W.:**  
Mattishall 1; Kings Lynn 6; Balham 14-15; Sunbury Court 16-19; Special Thanksgiving at Southgate Hall, Crawley at 3.00 p.m. on 21; Yaxham 29.

**Lowther, G. K.:**  
Grimsby 1-8; Helmsley 9-13; York 12; Humberstone & Lincolnshire 14-31.

**Meadows, D. R.:**  
Bournemouth and district during the whole month of July.

**Mountstevens, S.:**  
Gillingham 1, 11, 18, 25; Folkestone 12, 29; Wainscott 15; Margate Beach Mission 23-August 25.

**Phillips, C.:**  
Woodford 1; Ealing 2, 9, 16; Headstone 3; Whetstone 5, 12; Hemel Hempstead 8; Kingston 10; Wembley 11; High Wycombe 15; Walthamstow 17, 24, 31; Hounslow 18, 25; Luton Selbourne 19, 25; Bath Manvers 22, 23; Hampton 29.

**Pierce, D. H.:**  
Tent Crusade, Chillington 1-15; Braunton 22-24; Boys' Camp, Strete 28-August 6.

**Stringer, D.:**  
Bournemouth 1-17; Sussex Cove Rally 7; Saffron Walden 18; Cambridge 19; N. Essex area 20; Herne Bay 21-28; West Wales area 29-31.

**Thurston, A.:**  
Woodbury 1; Chillington Tent Crusade 1-15; Chillington 8, 15, 18, 19, 26; Strete 16, 30; Kingsbridge 17, 27, 29, 31; Frogmore, Sharford, Ellington 21; Weymouth 23-25; Schools—Dawlish and Teignmouth 16; Plymouth (D.S.M.) 20.

**Tryon, G.:**  
Balham and Southall 1, 2; South Woodford 9-15; Guildford 17, 24; Tunbridge Wells 19, 26; Kanton 20, 27; Eltham 22; Cambridge 29.

**Tatford, F. A.:**  
During July at Barrow-in-Furness, Preston, Blackburn, Bexhill, London.

## Forthcoming Events

The Publishers regret that, owing to demands on space, it is not possible to insert an announcement in more than one issue. Correspondents should indicate clearly in which issue they wish their announcements to appear.

**Boscombe:**  
Conversational Bible Readings. Drummond Hall, Drummond Road. August 4 at 7.00 p.m. Speaker: D. E. West. Subject: Daniel Ch. 5.

**York:**  
Gospel Hall, Spen Lane, St. Saviourgate, July 12 at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: G. K. Lowther. Subject: Report on Faroe Isles.

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## **The Bible in its World** Kenneth Kitchen £2.40 net

This survey of biblical archaeology from Creation narrative to Dead Sea Scrolls concentrates upon the earlier periods and devotes a chapter to the sensational discoveries at Ebla. Slipshod media-disseminated scepticism does not survive Kitchen's rigorous treatment of primary sources.



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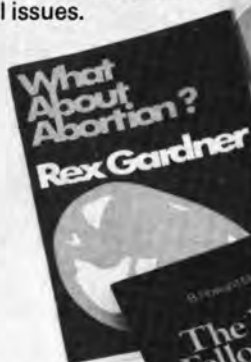


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August 1979  
Vol LVIII No 8  
Price 30p  
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Editor: Roy Coad

IN THIS ISSUE:  
**THE NEB DEFENDED**  
by Philip Elliott and John Andrews

# The Harvester

Bible Translation—'70s Style





## Fish and Chips

A not very likely way of introducing the Gospel you might think? Not so, as one of our Lady Scripture Readers found on a visit to a Hospital. Eight ladies on the ward desired fish and chips! Imagine their surprise and delight when they were supplied to them—even wrapped in newspaper! This incident afforded not only the Lady Scripture Reader's involvement with the eight patients but was also used of the Lord to bring the one she was originally visiting to a deeper commitment to the Lord. Please pray on for all such visits.

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Dick Saunders

# The Harvester

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Cover picture: *The Bible Society*

## Why use Latin in our Services?

'Assist us, we beseech Thee, as we endeavour to contemplate these glorious truths'. The good man was utterly sincere, and his sentiment impeccable: but where else, other than at the Sunday morning communion service, would he express his wishes in quite those words? Possibly at the church prayer meeting. Everywhere else, of course, he would have said 'Please help us as we try to think about these wonderful truths'. Does God not understand plain English, or is it that the latinate sonorities add a little warmer emotional glow to our worship?

It crops up everywhere, this latinity. Missionaries, as has often been observed, never work—they labour. Listen carefully to ten minutes of almost any of our meetings, and you will notice several dozen examples. But does it matter? It matters, because language is not only a passive tool: it has a powerful feedback. And if people think we are less than human when we tell them about our faith (I nearly wrote 'proclaim the Gospel')—well, the language which we have used has had a great deal to do with it.

The church of Rome authorised the use of the vernacular in its services a long time ago. Cannot we get around to doing the same?

Which brings us on to the contents of this month's issue. The study of language is a fascinating and ever-deepening subject. Most of us are completely unconscious of how the words which come out of our mouths mark us out; how they create sympathy or alienate our hearers; how they shape our understanding even as we are using them to express what we already know. And in no area does the use of language create more problems than in the necessity to translate from one language to another.

We had hoped to have been able to carry a series of articles which would have helped to guide readers through the maze of modern translations of the Bible—a field where our very riches sometimes obscure as much as they illuminate. Unfortunately, it has not yet been possible to secure the articles we are looking for, but the quest has produced some highly interesting work which may deal with areas that seem remote from our immediate Bibles—but which will prove on closer examination to produce some food for hard thinking. We are glad to include three of those articles in this issue.

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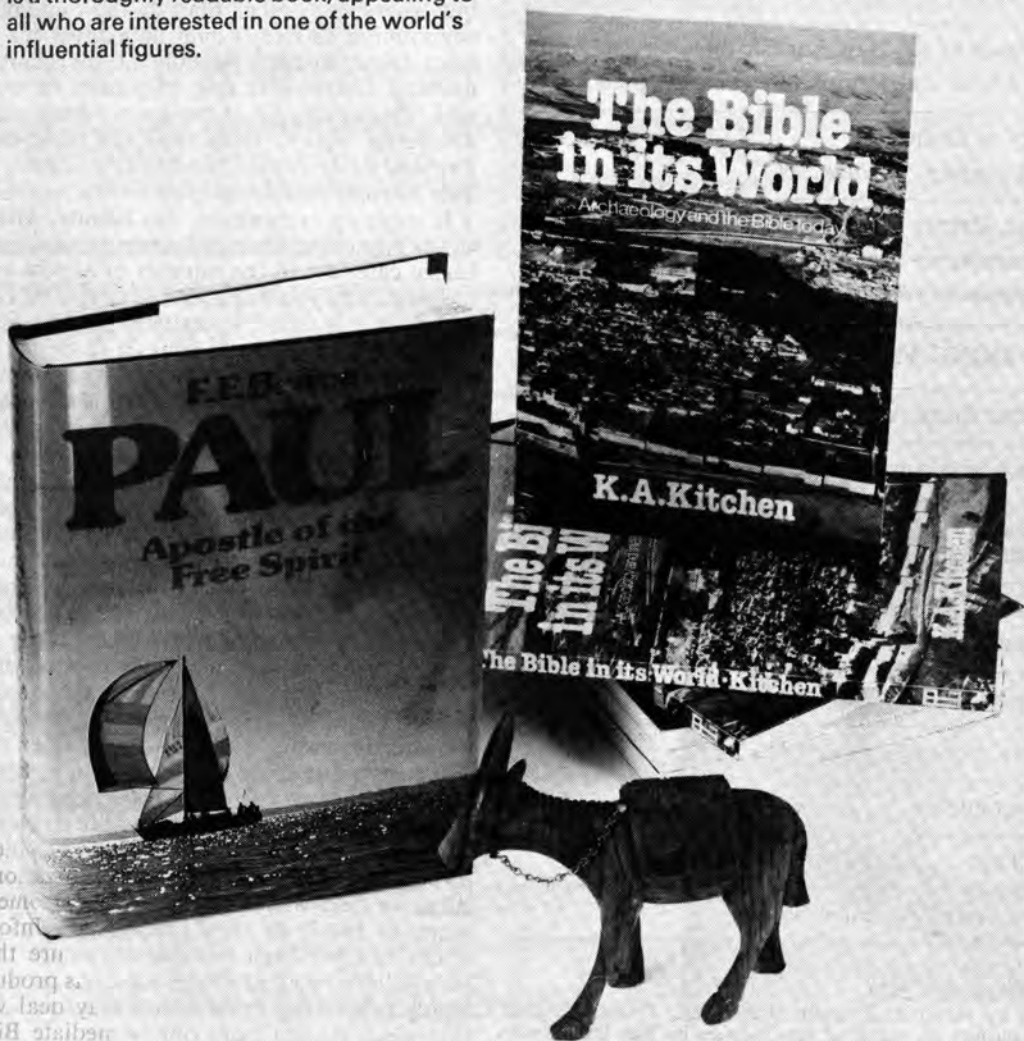
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# Versions Ancient and Modern

Robert P. Gordon

## Ancient and Modern

*Another article from the pen of Dr. Gordon, of the Dept. of Hebrew and Semitic Languages at Glasgow University, draws some modern lessons from ancient vents.*

'If one translates a verse literally he is a liar; if he adds to it he is a blasphemer and a libeller.' No, this is not the late Mgr. Ronald Knox declaiming on the perils of 'Englishing the Bible'; it is a quotation from the Babylonian Talmud warning the would-be translator of the pitfalls lurking in a verse like *Exodus 24: 10*. The way of the translator is hard! It always has been, and although the Talmud has nothing to match the later (Christian) accounts of bishops burning translations—not to speak of translators—it does give a third-hand report of how Rabbi Gamaliel, renowned teacher of Saul of Tarsus, ordered that an Aramaic translation of the book of Job should be immured. Gamaliel probably regarded written translations of the Hebrew Bible as some sort of profanity, since in synagogue it was impermissible to use a written text alongside the Hebrew original lest the authority of the latter should be compromised.

The history of Bible translations would suggest that there is something gravely wrong with a translation which fails to draw fire from somewhere. Draw the critics' fire was certainly what Jerome, secretary to Damasus bishop of Rome, did in the late fourth century when, at his superior's behest, he set about restoring order to the chaos of the Latin Bible. Compared with the later venture on which his fame largely rests, Jerome's revision of the Latin Gospels was a mere flexing of the muscles, but his tampering with familiar words and phrases was enough to earn him the reputation of a heretic. However, whereas the Broughtons and Burgons of a much later period delivered their attacks on translation panels which might be little inclined to answer back, Jerome's critics found themselves outplayed when it came to acerbity and vituperation. Those who could not stomach his reversion to the Greek original of the Gospels were denounced as 'two-legged asses' who imagined that correcting faulty manuscripts was tantamount to rewriting the sayings of Christ!

The critics were given greater cause for complaint a few years later when Jerome abandoned his attempt to revise the Latin Old Testament on the basis of the Septuagint and instead began on a completely new translation from Hebrew manuscripts. He knew what to expect from his 'two-legged asses', so he delivered a preemptive strike in the preface to his translation of Samuel-Kings, the first books which he tackled in this new venture. The preface was entitled *Prologus Galeatus*—'Prologue with a Hel-

met'! Other books were supplied with prologues and from these we might gain the impression that Jerome worked on his translation against a background of jeering mobs congregated outside his study window. Augustine of Hippo was a more courteous critic of Jerome's defection from the Septuagint, but he received double for all his sins just the same. The correspondence between the two dragged on for a decade and, on Jerome's side, seldom rose above the acrimonious.

Jerome's offence was that he appeared to be casting doubts on the inspiration of the Septuagint—the version which really was 'good enough for Paul'. The Septuagint was the *Authorized Version* of Jerome's day. Created originally by Jews for Jews, this version of the Old Testament in Greek was already old and venerated by the time of our Lord and the apostles. The Palestinian rabbis might have their misgivings about it, but for large numbers of Diaspora Jews it was 'the Bible'. Perhaps it was inevitable that many of them thought of the version itself as inspired. Early in the first century AD the Alexandrian Jewish philosopher Philo could salute the original translators as 'prophets and priests of mysteries, whose sincerity and singleness of thought has enabled them to concur with the purest of spirits, the spirit of Moses.'

But the reality was somewhat different, and while the Septuagint basked in glory not altogether deserved a few scholarly souls were quietly engaged, already by the beginning of the Christian period, in the work of revision. There were several reasons why revision was desirable. In the first place the Septuagint is only 'good in parts'. On the whole the Pentateuch is rendered adequately, but some of the other books did not fare so well at the hands of later translators. (Strictly 'Septuagint' refers to the

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**'If one translates a verse literally  
he is a liar; if he adds to it  
he is a blasphemer and a libeller'**

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Greek version of the Pentateuch produced in Alexandria in the early third century B.C.) The translation of Daniel, for example, was so poor that it was all but eclipsed by the Theodotion revision; only a couple of manuscripts of the actual Septuagint text of Daniel have survived. Secondly, the Hebrew text itself did not exist in a standardized form until c. AD 100 at the earliest; the revisers had to take account of the evolving Hebrew text.

The third factor in the revision of the Greek Old Testament is closely connected with the expansion of the early Church. The Church which regarded itself as the true Israel had no hesitation in taking

over Israel's Greek translation of the Bible. The upshot of this was that within a relatively short time the Jews had abandoned their version to the enemy. It was not just that the Greek-speaking Christians of the Mediterranean world found a ready-made translation in the Septuagint which was then regarded by Jews as unclean by association. Much more decisive for the Jew's relinquishment of their version was the fact that the Christians were using it against them with no little success. The Christians were making capital out of the Septuagint's handling of *Isaiah 7: 14*, where the Hebrew *'almāh* is translated by 'virgin'. There was little point in protesting that the Hebrew word was not

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**'The NT writers were aware  
of a problem familiar to  
modern readers of the Bible ...'**

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quite so specific as that; it was in the Jews' Bible and that was that! (Regrettably, they would have had no more success with the translators of *NIV* who could not even rise to a footnote explaining that they differ from the majority of Hebrew scholars, many evangelicals among them.) There was too the odd case of a doctored manuscript—all in the cause of saving a few Jewish souls, of course. There were in circulation texts of *Psalms 96: 10* with the reading, 'The Lord reigns from the tree'. Jews who accepted neither the reading nor the deity of the crucified Christ were accused of having expunged the interpolated words from their manuscripts! (It is worth reflecting on the fact that the reference to the three heavenly witnesses in the *AV* of *1 John 5: 7* has a not dissimilar origin.) So the Jews fell out of love with the Septuagint; soon there were other, more accurate, versions available to them.

These were the versions which appeared under the names of Aquila, Theodotion and Symmachus in the second and early third centuries AD. But these translations represent the culmination of the revision process which we have already noted, so that they are not to be regarded as entirely new and independent versions. That is why we find readings characteristic of one or other of them in texts composed in the first century or even earlier. There are Theodotionic readings in the New Testament—quotations from the Old Testament which agree with the second century version of Theodotion. This leads us to the observation that the New Testament writers used a number of different versions of the Old Testament and were, perhaps, aware of a problem which is surely familiar to modern readers of the Bible—a multiplicity of versions! Nor did they restrict themselves to Greek translations, for there are occasional citations from the Aramaic Targums, the vernacular translations originally accompanying the reading of the Scriptures in the synagogues of Palestine and Babylonia.

The parallel between the first century and the modern era comprehends more than the number of versions current in each period. Whether they were translating into Greek or Aramaic or Ethiopic, the ancient translators grappled with much the same problems as confront their modern confrères. And the tendencies they exhibited, as well as the techniques they applied, find an echo in many a modern translation and paraphrase. Here are a few examples:

**Literalism** There is a line of reasoning which says that if the Bible is verbally inspired then every preposition and particle should be represented in translation, even at the cost of readability. Advocates of this view usually turn for inspiration to the literal translation and interlinear versions which have become available during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Two examples of this genre are Robert Young's *Literal Translation of the Bible* (1862) and the *Concordant Version of the Sacred Scriptures* (from 1926 on). How many exegetical mares' nests have been discovered between the lines and on them, with common-sense the victim on the altar of 'increased comprehension'! *Caveat lector!* The tradition goes back to Aquila's version—the Jews' answer to the Christianized Septuagint—which was issued in the early second century. Aquila aimed to provide his readers with as literal a translation as it was possible to make, even to the extent of representing the etymologies of words. The trouble with such undertakings is that they are of limited use to the general reader; indeed, Aquila's version would really only have made sense to readers proficient in Hebrew.

**Sectarian Versions** There are 'Protestant Bibles' and 'Catholic Bibles'—and sectarian Bibles in the narrower sense of the word. The *New World Translation* of the Jehovah's Witnesses is a good example of the last-named, as may be seen from its treatment of such references as *John 1: 1* and *II Peter 1: 1*. The oldest sectarian version of all is the Samaritan Pentateuch, although strictly an edition of the Hebrew text of the Pentateuch. The differences between the Samaritan and the standard Massoretic text add up to about six thousand, but many of them are no more than variations in spelling. What marks the Samaritan as a sectarian text, however, is its advocacy of the claims of the Samaritan shrine on Gerizim to be regarded as the divinely-appointed centre of worship in Canaan. This is achieved by altering statements and by interpolating references to Gerizim at various points throughout the Pentateuch (e.g. *Exodus 20: 17*), and it is one reason why the textual witness of the Samaritan Pentateuch has been lightly esteemed by the modern textual critic.

**Captions** It is not always easy to decide who is the speaker in certain sections of the Song of Songs, nor will a knowledge of Hebrew, in which number and gender are indicated, solve all the problems. At least two modern versions, *NEB* and now *NIV*, offer assistance to their readers by inserting captions

showing who, in the opinion of the translators, is speaking. In this they are but following the example of two of the most important Mss of the Septuagint, Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Alexandrinus. The Targum to the Song of Songs, which treats the book as a historical allegory, also makes use of captions. In point of fact, captions are used frequently in the Targums to indicate the identity of a speaker, though, in the way of the ancient versions, the 'caption' forms part of the running text. It occurs most commonly in the prophetic books in passages where the prophet speaks—or is thought to speak—in the first person, or where the text launches into the imperative. Thus the Targumic version of *Isaiah 61: 1* begins, 'The prophet said, "The spirit of prophecy from before the Lord God is upon me"' (cf. *Luke 4: 18f., 24*).

**Double Readings** Readers of *The Amplified Bible* will be well acquainted with this method of dealing with words of doubtful meaning, and also of avoiding difficult choices between variant readings. As an example of the former we may take *Isaiah 52: 15* where the *Amplified* gives 'startle and sprinkle' for a problematic word in the original. These are the two main translations which have been proposed for the word, but they imply different etymologies and only one, if either, can be right. For an example of an uncertain reading treated in similar fashion we turn to *Isaiah 19: 18* where 'the City of the Sun or Destruction' incorporates rival readings each of which has support in the Hebrew manuscript tradition. (It may be added that 'City of the Sun' is almost certainly the original and correct reading.) In modern versions such matters are usually handled in margins or in footnotes; ancient translators generally had no use for such devices and this is certainly true of the Targums, in which the combining of variant readings seems to have been a matter of policy. In *Isaiah 19: 18* the Targum, anticipating the *Amplified Bible* by about two millen-

policy is adopted by the translators of the *Good News Bible*; anthropomorphic terms are often represented by interpretative equivalents (cf. *Luke 1: 66*), albeit more in the interests of simplicity and directness.

It is a fact that some Christians view the proliferation of Bible translations with something less than enthusiasm, fearing lest the sheer multiplicity of versions will detract from the authority of Scripture by seeming to make its voice sound unduly equivocal in matters central to the faith. Yet, as we have seen, the early Church was not altogether unacquainted with this kind of problem—a 'problem' which has a very positive side to it, to be sure—and still they 'turned the world upside down'. Irrespective of the vicissitudes of transmission and translation, the Spirit who caused the autograph manuscripts to be written has seen fit to use the imperfect texts and copies which have been available to the Church throughout its history. There never has been a generation which has had access to the whole of Scripture, or even to a substantial part of it, 'as originally given'. □

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**'The Spirit has seen fit to use  
the imperfect texts and copies  
which have been available . . .'**

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nia, also opts for ambivalence with 'the City, the House of the Sun, which is about to be destroyed.'

**Anti-anthropomorphisms** Scripture frequently speaks of God in anthropomorphic terms, using expressions such as 'the hand of the Lord' and 'the arm of the Lord'. But this kind of figure was too strong for the religious susceptibilities of some of the ancient translators. The tendency to eliminate anthropomorphisms is noticeable in the Greek revisions of the second century, especially in the version of Symmachus, and the same applies with even greater force to the Targums which usually substitute words like 'power' and 'might'. A similar

## Bernard's Acre

Bernard Partridge was a Christian youth worker at Belmont Chapel, Exeter. He is remembered for his devotion to the Lord and to the young people he served. When he died at the age of 42 a memorial fund was established and used in 1978 to fulfil his vision and buy a centre on Dartmoor.

Bernard's Acre provides a 'breathing space' for small Christian groups of any age. The quietness and beauty of the surroundings offer not only a means of escaping the pressures of daily life but a chance for physical and spiritual refreshment for a day a weekend or a week.

Accommodation is simple. There are three bedrooms each taking up to 7 persons and a double room for leaders. A 35 foot common room gives plenty of space for meals and group activities. There is a well equipped kitchen and adequate shower and toilet facilities.

The grounds, planted with trees and rhododendrons, slope towards the river Taw. A circular area, sheltered by bushes and trees, is ideal for 'camp-fire' style meetings or simply for sitting in the sun. The centre is surrounded by open moorland.

Bernard's Acre is on the outskirts of Belstone. This quiet little village, with its 15th century church, stocks and unusual 19th century Methodist chapel, lies on the north eastern edge of the 365 square mile Dartmoor National Park. Yet it is less than 2 miles from the A30 and only 3½ miles from Okehampton.

Further information from the bookings secretary, Mrs. M. Partridge, 25 College Rd., St. Leonards, Exeter.



# The Battle for the Gaelic Bible

Donald E. Meek

*Dr. Meek, a native Gaelic speaker from the island of Tiree, and currently working on The Historical Dictionary of Scottish Gaelic at Glasgow University, writes of the vicissitudes of the Highlands' Bible, 'for our instruction.'*

Gaelic-speaking Highlanders have long been known for their piety and religious fervour, and two-hour church services are still common in many parts. Nevertheless, it is a remarkable fact that the Highlands received their first complete translation of the Scriptures almost two centuries later than their English-speaking neighbours. Only in the first half of the nineteenth century did the present translation of the Gaelic Bible become widely known and generally accepted in the north, and such acceptance was hard won. Needless to say, the eventual triumph of the translation expunged the memory of 'old unhappy far-off things and battles long ago', and since then it has enjoyed a status probably higher than that of the English Authorised Version! Highlanders have by now largely rejected the view that Gaelic was the language of the Garden of Eden, but they still aver that their translation is 'closer to the original' than the AV!

It should not be thought, however, that Highlanders were in utter spiritual darkness before the first part of the new translation, the New Testament, appeared in 1767. Ministers had by then evolved a method of extempore translation of the appropriate passage, basing their translation either on the Irish version of the Scriptures, which in Scottish dress came to be known as Kirk's Bible, or on the English Authorised Version. This method was effective, and produced a generation who were 'mighty in the Scriptures'. The tradition of extempore translation died hard, and there is clear evidence that ministers were reluctant to use the Gaelic New Testament when it appeared. When the famous Dr. Johnson visited the island of Coll, as part of his celebrated journey of 1773, he discussed the new translation with the local minister, Mr. MacLean: 'Mr. MacLean said he did not use it, because he could make the text more intelligible to his auditors by an extempore version. From this I inferred, that the language of the translation was not the language of the Isle of Coll'. Dr. Johnson had a particular interest in the translation since he himself had advocated strongly that Gaelic speakers ought to have the Scriptures in their own language. His views were clearly influential with the SPCK, who undertook the translation. No doubt the worthy doctor found it a trifle disconcerting that the New Testament had not gone down well in Coll!

The reaction of the Coll people was probably not untypical. Nevertheless, the SPCK were encouraged by the sale of the New Testament, and work on the

Old Testament was begun not long afterwards. The translator of the New Testament had been the Rev. James Stuart of Killin, assisted by the Rev. James Fraser of Alness, and the Gaelic hymn-writer, Dugald Buchanan. In translating the Old Testament, the mantle fell on Stuart's eldest son, the Rev. Dr. John Stuart of Luss. Dr. Stuart translated three of the four parts in which the Old Testament was published, and the fourth part—the Prophets—was translated by the Rev. Dr. John Smith of Campbelltown.

Translators are particularly liable to be regarded with suspicion and charges of 'tampering' are not infrequently made. It would seem that Dr. Stuart escaped any such charge; his only sin was that of procrastination, and it was only under dire threat that the SPCK managed to extract the third part of the Old Testament from his hands. This was published in 1801, and considering that Stuart had already completed two volumes, due allowance must be made for sore eyes and writer's cramp. Much more serious were the charges levelled against the translator of the fourth part—which appeared before the third in 1786! Dr. John Smith of Campbelltown—whose literary works include some fine

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## Translators are particularly liable to be regarded with suspicion

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'imitations' of earlier 'authors'—was rash enough to disclose that he had made use of the latest textual criticism in his translation, and cited a list of scholars to whom he was indebted, including Bishop Lowth, Benjamin Blaney, Bishop Newcome, Father Houbigant, and Dr. Kennicott. Such a bold confession seems to have aroused suspicion, and Smith's translation was subsequently regarded as 'heretical' by the SPCK, who passed on the work to the Rev. Alexander Stewart of Dingwall. Stewart's translation was accepted, but Smith's efforts were not forgotten. In fact, the British and Foreign Bible Society printed an edition of the Gaelic Bible at Chelsea in 1807, and this contained Smith's translation of the Prophets! The result was that two 'rival' versions of the Gaelic Old Testament were circulating in the Highlands until the mid-nineteenth century! No doubt many good sermons were preached about the Tower of Babel!

What was the nature of Smith's 'heresy', and how was 'heresy' defined in this case? A full study is beyond the scope of this article, but it would seem that Smith's study of textual criticism led him to produce a translation which in certain points anticipated the English Revised Version, published in

1885. John Stuart of Luss, and Alexander Stewart of Dingwall, worked with an eye on the Authorised Version, and it would seem that the AV was the touchstone of orthodoxy. Smith was prepared to challenge the readings of the AV, and to alter where necessary (in his opinion). The point can be illustrated with reference to chapter 9 of the *Prophecy of Isaiah*. A literal translation of Smith's rendering of the first verse is as follows:

'But after this there will be no darkness in the land which was in difficulty; in time past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali; but in the latter time he made it glorious, even the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the nations.' The same verse in Stewart's translation (which is the basis of the present edition of the Gaelic Old Testament) reads:

'Nevertheless the dimness will not be as it was in the time of her distress, when he first lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and thereafter he afflicted it more heavily by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the nations.'

The relationship between these examples and the RV and AV renderings can be seen by looking up the appropriate verse in each translation. It is worth noting, however, that although Stewart corrected Smith's 'errors' where required, he did not obliterate Smith's translation, and even the present-day edition preserves a great deal of Smith—at his most orthodox, of course!

Smith's radical turn of mind was not limited to the text of his translation. The 'Advertisement' of his volume indicates that he intended to supplement his work 'with an Introduction, containing some account of the different prophets and the state of their country when they lived—general and particular remarks tending to illustrate the prophetic style—the contents and transitions of each chapter—the circumstances which they occasionally allude to—and the various events to which they seem to refer.' This ambitious project never reached fruition; no doubt the reputation of the author would have been sufficient to send it into oblivion, even if it had appeared. Nevertheless, Smith's intentions to publish a sort of commentary indicate that he was well aware of the need to provide back-up material in Gaelic for the use of ministers. Although many volumes of sermons and many translations of English Puritan classics appeared in Gaelic in the succeeding years, no original Gaelic commentaries were published, and none has yet been attempted. Smith seems to have been the only one of the translators to acknowledge this deficiency, and it is regrettable that he went no further in his efforts to remedy it.

While the problem of heresy was scarcely to be passed over lightly, far less forgotten, it was soon to be followed by a controversy of another kind. This had to do with the language of the Gaelic Bible.

Spoken Scottish Gaelic varies from area to area, and a number of different dialects exist; for example, the spoken Gaelic of the Outer Hebrides differs from that of the Inner Hebrides, and the spoken Gaelic of the mainland is different again. Within these areas there are further regional variations, but all dialects are mutually intelligible, when due concentration is given. The translators of the Gaelic Bible were Perthshire and Argyllshire men, which meant that the new translation had a pronounced southern mainland flavour, where dialect was allowed to come through. Dr. John Stuart of Luss admitted this problem when he published the first volume of the Old Testament; the translator, he noted, had 'sometimes been obliged to use words which may not be known in every district of the Highlands. To remedy this inconvenience, he has likewise subjoined, in notes, other words which convey the same meaning.' This

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### On a literary level, the Gaelic Bible became the main standard for writing

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volume was also equipped with a Glossary providing both Gaelic synonyms and English equivalents.

Dialectal variations were not the only difficulty, however. All the translators had used a form of Gaelic which differed from the ordinary, spoken Gaelic of their day. It was a sort of 'classical' Gaelic, which owed something to the preceding Irish translations of the scriptures, and the rhythms and cadences of the English Authorised Version.

Furthermore, there was a strong tradition dating from the mid-sixteenth century that translations of religious works into Gaelic should be in an elevated prose style, which was no doubt meant to reflect the sacred nature of their contents. By continuing this tradition in a modified form, the translators of the Gaelic Bible developed a language which was to a large extent artificial and beyond the immediate comprehension of the average Gaelic speaker. Dr. Johnson's observation (already quoted) that the language of the new translation of the New Testament 'was not the language of the Isle of Coll' was wholly justified. In reality it wasn't the language of any part of the Highlands!

The most serious challenge to the new translation came from Ross-shire, in the north-west Highlands. The minister of Lockbroom, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Ross, was reputed to have made another translation which was vastly preferred by his parishioners. His efforts to publish his work had met with no success, and in May 1820 the Synod of Ross presented an Overture to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, complaining of 'various obstacles . . . thrown in the way', and recommending that Dr. Ross's translation be used 'in those districts of the country where it shall be best understood, or otherwise preferred'. An ardent supporter went so far

as to claim 'that a great part of the people of Ross-shire could not understand Dr. Stewart's translation; and that the type was so small and the paper so coarse, that the generality could not read it'. The idea that different parts of the Highlands should have different versions, making allowances for dialectal variation, was anathema to the fathers and brethren, and the motion was roundly condemned and thrown out.

In this way, the supremacy of the original translation of the Stuarts and their colleagues was estab-

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### There is need for a new translation in modern, meaningful Gaelic

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lished against all comers. From then on, it could not be dislodged from pulpit, pew or home. The results were far-reaching. On a literary level, the Gaelic Bible became the main (in fact, the only) standard for writing, producing an important succession of authors who copied both its style and orthography. Through its use in church and family worship, Highlanders gradually accepted its peculiarities of style and diction, and became wholly familiar with its vocabulary. The distinction between 'pulpit Gaelic' and workaday Gaelic was thereby confirmed, and the superiority of the former was never called in question. The only attempt to provide an alternative translation during the 19th century was that of the Roman Catholic church. In 1875 a translation of the Vulgate version of the New Testament was published. This was largely the work of the Rev. Ewen MacEachen of Arisaig, who adopted a style which was much closer to everyday, spoken Gaelic than that of the Protestant version. Even so, it is said that Roman Catholics preferred the older Gaelic translation, because of its stylistic dignity.

Although the main version of the Gaelic Bible was firmly fixed by 1820, this did not mean that there was an end to debate. Versions are revised from time to time, and revision can often prove to be a task fraught with as much danger as translation—if not with more! The first revision of the Gaelic Bible was begun by the original translators shortly before their deaths in 1821, and completed in 1826. This escaped serious criticism, although some important textual changes were introduced. No doubt the high standing of the original translators helped to quell any alarm. The next revision, completed in 1860, was given a less gentle reception, and the columns of the *Edinburgh Courant* resounded with a vigorous controversy in which the revisers and their opponents hammered one another with typographical errors and apostrophes. Subsequent revisions, most noticeably that of 1902 which partially followed the English Revised Version, raised a few eye-brows, mainly among scholars and devotees of *Textus Receptus*.

In spite of the revisers' work, however, the text of the Gaelic Bible remains substantially that of the first translators—a point well illustrated by the fact that the Gaelic-speaking population took little part in the conflicts which engaged the academics of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. To the adult majority, there is only one text, and the need for an alternative is probably not immediately obvious. But there is evidence that the existing text is becoming less accessible and less relevant to the younger generation of Gaelic speakers who have not been steeped to the same extent in the traditions of Gaelic worship and scripture-reading. For this reason alone, there is a clear need for a new translation in modern, meaningful Gaelic—a Gaelic equivalent of the *Good News Bible* or the recent *New International Version*. The publication date of such an edition is still a long way off—but the first steps have been taken, and we pray believing that the vision will become a reality. □

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## Professor Bruce Asks

It is commonly said that, of the multiplicity of English versions of the Bible now available, some may be suitable for one class of reader or for certain purposes, and some for others. One may think of such various occasions as school assembly, coffee-bar evangelism, private devotion, public reading in church, detailed Bible study and so forth. It is unlikely that any one person will have experience of all these situations and the version most appropriate for them, but if those with experience of one or a few of them could say which version or versions they have found most helpful, I should be glad to know. Will readers please co-operate in this?

Correspondence, please, to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX, by 15 August.

### Guide to Giving

Some facts to stimulate thought!

Since the last quarter of 1973:—

The Retail Price Index has risen 2½ times

Average earnings have risen 2½ times

House prices have doubled

My giving has . . . ?



Philip Elliott and John Andrews

## In Defence of the New English Bible

*Mr. Elliott of Esher has kindly given me a free hand to recast his article, which first appeared in 1961 in reply to an attack on the then recently published NT part of the NEB. Apart from abridging and rewording, my comments have been enclosed in brackets (John S. Andrews).*

One opponent of the NEB quotes some 60 passages from it for condemnation, but does not disclose that in 24 of these the NEB simply follows the Revised Version of 1881, and in another 8 the RV margin. Thus in at least half the offending passages the NEB does not introduce anything fresh, but merely repeats versions that have been current for 80 years. Yet in one case only is this correspondence with the RV mentioned. (In many cases the RV was anticipated by J. N. Darby's translation.)

It is true that (like the AV itself) the RV met with a storm of criticism when it first appeared, and it is also true that it has never become popular (mainly because its passion for literal accuracy in representing the original text affected its readability). Nevertheless there are many reputable Christian teachers who have made regular use of it themselves and have commended it to others. Its departures from the AV are open to reasoned criticism, but hardly deserve immoderate condemnation. Whether or not we agree with the translators either of the RV or the NEB ought we not to be ready to credit them with a sincere desire to give what they honestly consider is most likely to have been the original version? And are we in a position to disagree dogmatically, unless our knowledge of the subject is equal to theirs?

### The Deity of Christ

The NEB contains numerous statements confirming the Deity of our Lord, e.g. *John* 1: 1-4; 5: 18; 8: 58; 10: 30, 36; 14: 9; 19: 7; 20: 28; *Rom.* 1: 4; *Gal.* 4: 4; *Phil.* 2: 6; *Col.* 1: 15-17; *Tit.* 2: 13; *Heb.* 1: 1-14; 2 *Pet.* 1: 1; 1 *John* 4: 14-15. In two of these the NEB is more definite about our Lord's Deity than the AV is, for the AV might be thought to be referring to two persons, (1) 'God' and (2) 'our Saviour Jesus Christ'. The NEB leaves no possible room for doubt; the term 'God' is specifically applied to the same person as the term 'Saviour Jesus Christ' (or 'Jesus Christ'). *Tit.* 2: 13: NEB "when the splendour of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ will appear"; AV "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ". 2 *Pet.* 1: 1: NEB "the justice of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ"; AV "the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ".

Two other instances where the NEB is in better accord with the truth of our Lord's Deity than the AV are *Col.* 1: 15 and *Rev.* 3: 14. The Jehovah's Witnesses habitually quote these texts in support of their view that Jesus is not the eternal Son of God,

but a created being. They urge that since He is described as 'the firstborn of every creature', and 'the beginning of the creation of God', He himself must be a creature. The NEB does not permit of such an interpretation. *Col.* 1: 15 reads: 'his is the primacy over all created things'; and *Rev.* 3: 14 reads: 'the prime source of all God's creation'. These translations are therefore much to be preferred to the AV.

The proof of our Lord's Deity is not confined to the direct statements of the NT. There are many indirect proofs. In his valuable booklet *Jesus of Nazareth—Who is He?* Mr. Arthur Wallis writes: 'In the cross-examination of a witness it is often the facts which emerge accidentally that provide the most convincing witness to the truth, just because they are unintentional, rather than calculated and prepared. So it is with this theme in Scripture.'

### Departures from the AV are open to reasoned criticism, but hardly deserve immoderate condemnation

Not only in the great doctrinal passages, so often the battleground of controversy, but in the most casual allusions and seemingly incidental statements scattered throughout Scripture, so we find pointers to the truth. He then proceeds to quote some 90 NT passages which imply that Jesus was no less than God. Most of the quotations are taken from the RV. In no fewer than 77 of these the NEB supports the implication of our Lord's Deity just as much as the RV or the AV.

*Monogenes* (This Greek word, literally rendered as 'only begotten' in the AV, is rendered simply as 'only' in the NEB (*John* 1: 14, 3: 16, etc.)) I should have preferred to see the word 'begotten' included for the purpose of conveying more exactly the meaning of the Greek. But it seems far-fetched to suggest that the translators hated the word 'begotten', and that to omit the term is to strike at the Deity of Christ. The declared object of the translators is to present the meaning of the original in English which is as clear and natural for the modern reader as the subject matter will allow. Which of the following sentences represents the more natural way of speaking today: (1) Mr. A. has sent his only begotten son abroad; or (2) Mr. A. has sent his only son abroad? We do not use the term 'only begotten' in ordinary conversation today; nor is there any reason why we should. 'Only son' means 'only begotten son'; what else can it mean? Therefore the term 'begotten' can be omitted without loss; and the most reasonable explanation of the omission of the word from the NEB is that the translators wanted to express the meaning of the original in language that is natural to these days.

(Some scholars hold that the Greek word was already being used before the first century to signify 'only', having lost its precise etymological signification.)

*Thee and Thou.* The second person singular is not used in ordinary speech in educated circles today; and it might be regarded as a sign of grace on the part of the NEB translators that they have departed from their normal rule of using everyday language and have used the second person singular when God is addressed. The Lord Jesus Christ is man as well as God, so that the translators had to choose between putting the emphasis on His Godhead by using 'thou', or on His manhood by using 'you'. Whether their decision to say 'you' was the better is open to discussion; but to say, as some have said, that it amounts to a rejection of His Deity is unfair. It might just as well be claimed that Paul was guilty of 'a subtle act to separate Jesus Christ from God' when he wrote: 'There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus' (1 Tim. 2: 5).

To sum up, passages can be found in the NEB where the Deity of Christ is not brought out as it is in the corresponding passages of the AV. On the other hand:

1. There are numerous other passages where our Lord's Deity is made quite clear; in some cases more clear than in the AV.

2. There are very many passages where our Lord's Deity is implicit, even if not quite so many as in the AV.

It may therefore be claimed that the NEB gives massive support to the truth of the Deity of Christ. This fundamental doctrine is not only stated explicitly, but is woven in the very warp and woof of the NEB, as of other versions. Even if it were true that the NEB translators were keen to rob Christ of His essential Deity, the fact would yet remain that after they have done their worst, their version of the New Testament still bears unequivocal testimony to our Lord's Deity, and is therefore the strongest possible witness in confirmation of our faith.

### The Worship of Christ

It certainly seems regrettable that the NEB does not always render *proskyneō* by 'worship', and particularly when it relates to our Lord. But as already seen, the witness of the NEB to the Deity of Christ is so abundant that it is not affected by the fact that in Matt. 2: 11, for example, the wise men are represented as doing homage to Jesus, as to a King, rather than as worshipping Him as God. (J. N. Darby, who translates 'did him homage' even in Matt. 2: 11 and John 9: 38, explains that in the NT most persons coming to the Lord had not the least idea of owning Him as God. See F. F. Bruce, *Answers to Questions* (1972), p. 173, for full discussion.)

Moreover, it is not true that, as has been alleged,

in the NEB our Lord Jesus Christ is never worshipped. Does not Thomas worship Him in John 20: 28? Does not Paul show us the whole universe worshipping Him in Phil. 2: 9-11? Is John's ascription to Him of glory and dominion for ever and ever in Rev. 1: 5-6 not true worship? And could not such examples of worship offered to our Lord Jesus Christ, even in the NEB, be multiplied?

There is one instance where the NEB ascribes worship to Christ more clearly than the AV does. In Rev. 5: 14 the NEB, agreeing with the RV, omits the words 'him that liveth for ever and ever'. In 4: 10 we read: 'the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever'. Here the object of worship is clearly God the Father. When the AV says in Rev. 5: 14 that 'the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever' the inference is that the worship is again offered to the Father. But if the final words are omitted, as they are in the NEB, then the context suggests that this time the worship is offered to the Lamb. Therefore in this instance the NEB does use the word 'worship' with reference to our Lord Jesus Christ, and it is in a verse where the AV suggests that the worship was directed to the Father rather than to the Son.

### The Virgin Birth of Christ

Luke 1: 26-27. Since the word 'girl' does not convey the full content of the Greek word *parthenos*, it may be fair to suggest that the NEB is defective to this extent. But the reason for preferring 'girl' to 'virgin' is simply for the sake of using language that is in common use today. We do not normally speak of 'virgins', we speak of 'girls'. Whether the translators have carried their purpose of putting the Bible into the ordinary language of today too far is a reasonable question to raise. It might be argued that in this instance the more technical term 'virgin' would have been preferable to the more commonplace 'girl'; but to suggest that their choice was determined by animosity against the doctrine of the Virgin Birth is unwarrantable. The NEB contains two clear statements of the manner in which the birth came about. Its translations of Matt. 1: 18-25 and Luke 1: 26-35 are perfectly clear, the one giving the story from Joseph's side and the other from Mary's side, the two being in perfect harmony. Either would establish the doctrine of the Virgin Birth; their combined force can only be rejected by a deliberate act of unbelief. If it is assumed that the translators do not themselves accept the doctrine of the Virgin Birth, then the NEB's witness in support of it is all the more powerful; for on that assumption they would have got rid of it if they could and manifestly they have not done so. The truth does not depend upon whether the word 'parthenos' is translated 'virgin' or 'girl'; but upon the two simple unequivocal stories of what actually happened.

(Luke 1: 34. According to the 1961 NEB Mary

says, 'I have no husband'. The 1970 revision changed this 'inept rendering' into 'I am still a virgin'. See F. F. Bruce, *The English Bible*, Rev. ed., (1970); his chapter on the NEB is essential reading.)

**Matt. 1: 16.** The NEB translates 'Joseph, the husband of Mary, who gave birth to Jesus called Messiah', but adds a footnote 'one early witness has "Joseph, to whom Mary, a virgin, was betrothed, was the father of . . ."'. It has been contended that this footnote displays the 'Satanic malignity of the translators against the Virgin Birth of Christ'. Whether the 'early witness' represents the original or not, it is clear that within the context of *Matt. 1: 1-16* Joseph was the father of Jesus, i.e. His legal father. Otherwise why trace the descent of Joseph from the royal house of David? The 'early witness' specifically states that Mary was 'a virgin', thus excluding the thought that Joseph's paternity involved anything more than a legal relationship for the purpose of the genealogical table in which the phrase appears. Moreover the chapter goes on to show positively that Joseph was not the natural father of Jesus. But because Joseph married Mary before the birth of Jesus, Joseph was His father in the eyes of the law, and so, and only so, could pass on to Jesus a legal title to the throne of David. Hence the statement that 'Joseph . . . was the father of Jesus', when read in its context, is a fact of considerable importance. Properly understood it is no more objectionable than Mary's own statement twelve years later, 'thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing' (*Luke 2: 48*). Are we to accuse Mary of displaying 'Satanic malignity against the Virgin Birth'? Or are we to follow the more reasonable course of taking her words in the sense in which they were meant?

(*Matt. 1: 23* (and *Isa. 7: 14*). See Bruce, *Answers to Questions*, pp. 39f., especially the conclusion: 'our Lord's virgin birth is not brought into question by these philological debates; this is plainly recorded as a fact in the nativity narratives of Matthew and Luke. . .')

#### The Sinlessness of Christ

**John 14: 30** Whether the NEB translation is the best possible is a matter for the experts. I am in no position to offer an opinion. But the witness of the NEB to the sinlessness of Christ is quite definite, e.g. *2 Cor. 5: 21*: 'Christ was innocent of sin'; *1 Pet. 1: 19*: 'A lamb without mark or blemish'; *1 Pet. 2: 22*: 'He committed no sin'; *1 John 3: 5*: 'There is no sin in Him'. There is therefore no justification for alleging that the NEB seeks to destroy the Lord's inherent sinlessness.

#### The Death of Christ

The NEB contains many clear references to the sacrificial nature of the death of Christ and the significance of His shed blood, e.g. *Matt. 20: 28*; *Rom. 3: 25*; *5: 6-10*; *1 Cor. 15: 3*; *Eph. 1: 7*; *Col. 1: 20*; *Heb. 9: 22, 28*; *10: 19*; *1 Pet. 1: 19*; *2: 24*; *3: 18*; *Rev. 1: 5*; *5: 9*; *7: 14*. We may wish that par-

ticular verses had been translated differently; but it cannot be maintained that the NEB as a whole strikes at the vitals of the sacrificial death of Christ, or teaches a bloodless theology.

#### The Resurrection and Ascension of Christ

The minor omissions in *Luke 24* are all supported by the RV margin. Presumably this means that they do not appear in some of the more reliable MSS and are judged to be unauthorized editions to other MSS. As so often this is a matter for the experts. If someone has the necessary qualifications he must put forward evidence in support of the versions he favours, other than that they are followed in the AV. If we assume that the NEB translators have rejected any passage regarding which there is some doubt, then what remains is all the more valuable, because we can be satisfied that, having passed through their

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sieve, there can be no doubt about it at all. It is clear that the NEB as it stands, denuded of the questionable passages, still bears ample testimony to the Bodily Resurrection and Bodily Ascension of our Lord.

#### The Second Coming of Christ

The deletion from *Matt. 25: 13* of the words 'wherein the Son of man cometh' was made by the 1881 Revisers, presumably not without reason. (Newberry places them within square brackets.) It is hard to see how the omission detracts from the meaning or force of the parable in the slightest.

#### (The Holy Spirit)

The AV rendering of *Rom. 8: 16, 27* ('The Spirit itself . . .') and its frequent use of 'Holy Ghost' make modern readers doubt the personality of the Spirit. The NEB is preferable.)

#### The Inspiration of the Scriptures

**2 Tim. 3: 16.** The NEB follows the RV. Whether this is the best translation or not, there is nothing new about it. (The AV and the RSV state inspiration. The RV and NEB take it for granted. But cf. Bruce, *Answers to Questions*, and D. Guthrie, *The Pastoral Letters* (Tyndale Comm.).)

**Luke 23: 45.** Compare the AV, 'And the sun was darkened', with the NEB 'the sun was in eclipse'. It certainly seems an unfortunate translation, because an eclipse in the ordinary sense of the word could not have occurred at Passover time, when the moon was full. It is to be hoped that the translators will amend this verse when they revise their translation. The RSV reads: 'the sun's light failed', which seems a much better translation. (The 1970 NEB follows the RSV. Sir Godfrey Driver refutes the eclipse interpretation (see Bruce, *Answers to Questions*).)



*Matt. 23: 14.* In omitting this verse, the NEB follows the RV; but parallel passages in *Mark 12: 40* and *Luke 20: 47* include the words: 'they will receive the severest sentence'.

# **Alleged R.C. & High Church Traits**

*Matt. 16: 18.* 'Rock' is spelt with a capital 'R' because it is a proper name (or nickname) and therefore takes a capital, just as 'Peter' does. The 'rock' on which our Lord said He would build His Church is spelt with a small 'r', thus distinguishing it from Peter the Rock-man, and leaving the reader free to infer that it stands for the fundamental truth to which Peter had just confessed, namely, that Jesus was nothing less than the Messiah, the Son of the living God. (The translators wanted to convey 'the assonance between the Greek words for 'Peter' (*petros*) and 'rock' (*petra*)—an assonance which would have amounted to identity in the Aramaic lying behind the Greek, for in Aramaic both 'Peter' and 'rock' are *kēphā*, F. F. Bruce, *The Books and the Parchments*, 3rd ed. (1963), p. 251 (see also his *Answers to Questions*).)

Anyone who wants to understand *Matt. 16: 18* should read it in the light of the rest of Scripture, whether in the AV or the NEB, e.g. *1 Cor. 3: 10-11*; *Eph. 2: 20*; *1 Pet. 2: 4-6*. He will then see that:

1. the bed-rock foundation of the Church is Christ Himself;
2. when Peter confessed his faith that Jesus was the Christ he became one of the foundation stones of the Church, built upon the bed-rock foundation of Christ himself;
3. when anyone else accepts Peter's invitation to come to Christ (N.B. *not* to Peter), he in turn is built, as a living stone, into the same spiritual temple.

All this the NEB shows at least as clearly as the AV. If in spite of this anyone makes the mistake of putting his trust in Peter, rather than in Christ Himself, the blame cannot justly be attributed to the NEB.

(*Matt. 18:17.* Where a local company is in view the NEB returns to earlier models than the AV by preferring 'congregation' to 'church'. Some of us also like the NEB version of *Heb. 10: 24*, '... not staying away from our meetings, as some do...')

*Matt. 6: 13.* In omitting the doxology the NEB follows the RV; so that any risk of promoting unity with Rome as a result of this omission has been with us since 1881. It does not originate with the NEB.

(*John 10: 16.* Westcott claims that the A.V. 'there shall be one fold' (cf. RV and NEB 'flock') 'has served in no small degree to confirm and extend the false claims of the Roman See'.)

# **Omission of the title 'Saint'**

One good feature of the NEB is that it departs from the practice of prefacing the names of the Apostles with the title 'Saint'; e.g. the NEB heading to the first Gospel is simply 'The Gospel according to Matthew'. In this respect the NEB is less 'Rom-

anist' than the AV.

# **The Resurrection of the Body**

*1 Cor. 15: 44.* The Greek word translated 'natural' in the AV is *psychikos*, one meaning of which, according to Young's Concordance, is 'animal'. Dr. Weymouth used the word 'animal' in this passage; so whether it is a happy translation or not, it is not a novelty of the NEB. The RSV has 'physical' an anglicized form of the Greek, which is more pleasing to the ear. At all events the NEB plainly teaches both the resurrection of the body and the senselessness of asking how it will happen, or what kind of body it will be (*1 Cor. 15: 35-49*). In this it agrees with the AV, and the substitution of 'animal' for 'natural' does not affect the matter.

# **The Translators**

Certain quotations from one of Professor C. H. Dodd's books indicate an attitude to the Bible which to my mind is most regrettable and which I certainly do not share. One can only hope that similar views were not held by the other translators. But even if they all shared the Professor's 'higher critical' outlook I do not think it necessarily follows that the NEB is unreliable on this account. On the contrary, if the translators have done their best to shake all that can be shaken, may we not have all the stronger confidence in those things that remain? Surely what remains is substantially the same Book, not materially altered, presenting to us the same glorious Lord Jesus Christ, and the same way of salvation through repentance and faith in Him.

(Professor Bruce in his obituary of Professor Dodd for the Nov. 1973 *Witness* explained that his earliest writings reflected the theological liberalism in which he was brought up, but that his later writings helped to create a different climate. For decades he maintained against opposition the historicity of the gospel narrative. His last book, *The Founder of Christianity* (1971), reaffirmed this emphasis. David F. Payne discusses theological bias among other topics (e.g. the authority of the 'Received Text') in his excellent booklet, *Modern Translations of the Bible* (Pickering & Inglis, 1973). Finally, one should not necessarily assume that the AV translators were themselves beyond reproach in every way.)

All the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith find ample support in the NEB, including those which some consider to be endangered by it. We can hear these doctrines saying reassuringly: 'do thyself no harm for we are all here!' Let us then be most thankful to God that these great doctrines are set forth in the common language of the English-speaking peoples of the 20th century, and let us pray that the Holy Spirit may bring them home in fresh power to the hearts of many who read the NEB and other modern versions. Let us receive this Book as the Thessalonians first received the Gospel, 'not as the word of men, but as what it truly is, the very word of God'. (*1 Thess. 1: 13* NEB) □

# ANDHRA PRADESH

Two cyclones and a tidal wave slammed into India's east coast in November 1977, wreaking havoc and devastation. In May 1979 another major cyclone hit Andhra Pradesh. Villages were wiped out. Thousands died. Homes, possessions, land, water and power supplies, cattle and crops were destroyed. But this farmland is home to millions...

Photograph by Vlamik Thapir, Alan Hutchison Library.



The press cameras leave. The headlines die. Then the disaster victims' agony really begins. As they struggle to piece their lives together, the pain of loss and realisation sets in. For some it's almost too much. Now they need a practical expression of Christ's love - real, enduring, prepared to get its hands dirty. Tear Fund exists for them; ready to act swiftly, set up lines of operation, assess priorities. It takes time to build a future. But Tear Fund, with the support of concerned Christians, is prepared to take that time - and whatever else it takes - as a direct response to Jesus' commandment to love our neighbours.

# UGANDA

Thousands were murdered. Justice and law broke down. Building and development programmes ground to a halt. The economy collapsed. In April 1979 an 8 year reign of terror under Amin ended. The rebuilding has only just begun...

Photograph by Michael Page.



# LEBANON

Fighting continues daily throughout the Lebanon. The government has little authority. The United Nations peace-keeping force is hard put to defend itself. Ordinary people have lost their homes, possessions, livelihoods - even their friends. They live from hand to mouth. A normal life is almost impossible.

# BOAT PEOPLE

Over a quarter of a million Indo-Chinese have reached Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines and Hong Kong. Thousands more died on the way. They left Vietnam by boats, large and small, to escape the communist regime. They have escaped into camps, prisons, disused factories, condemned warehouses, and makeshift shelters. There they wait...



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# Liberty or Licence?

E. L. Lovering

*Continuing Mr. Lovering's study of some modern dilemmas.*

It was Augustine who said, 'love God and do as you like'.

Inherent in man's nature is his prerogative of choice, restricted only by his love for God and neighbour (*Matt. 22: 37*). Such freedom, the exercise of 'will', involves-

## Moral responsibility

Made in the image and likeness of his Creator, with powers of choice, thought and discovery, man's development was to be an educational process, for he was not supplied with 'manufactured' knowledge; it was to be his right and privilege to exercise his powers of thought and speech as he catalogued the names of all the creatures as God brought them to him (*Gen. 2: 19, 20*). Exercising his will within the framework of God's law, his physical, intellectual and moral faculties were in perfect harmony. The 'will' being the only fount of ethics, nothing is moral which does not proceed from it. How then was that 'will' to be developed? As body and mind are strengthened by exercise, so it must be with man's 'will'. Commenting on *Genesis 2: 15*, Dr. J. Cynddylan Jones writes, 'this was the purport of the tree of knowledge and of good and evil . . . a simple but indispensable means to awaken the will into healthful exercise, to start it right on a course of moral development. It was a tree of moral not intellectual knowledge, placed necessarily at the threshold of ethical evolution to train and guide the human will aright. In Hebrew thought the essence of knowledge is not intellectuality but morality; not metaphysics but ethics' (from *Primeval Revelation*). The same Divine love that erected the tree of the Cross on Calvary to deliver man 'from' sin, set up the tree of knowledge in Eden to keep man from falling 'into' sin. Within the confines of God's law, he was at liberty to eat 'freely' of every tree of the garden; he would learn that the way of obedience was the way to life and liberty, of disobedience to death and bondage. As in Eden's paradise, so on Sinai's mount, God's law was given, not to curb man's liberty but to aid his choice. To flout God's law is not to enjoy liberty but to experience bondage. While man's 'will' enabled him to choose God's way, his intellect enabled him to think God's thoughts, so that his freedom was not only volitional but-

## Intellectual

[Capable of immense intellectual powers, man's efforts in research have produced astonishing results. He has peered into the minutiae of matter and harnessed its energy and scanned the vastness of space. He has trodden the surface of the moon and projected satellites to distant planets. He has broken

the code of chromosomes and synthesised the genetic molecule of heredity. In his effort to prolong and 'produce' life, he has developed spare-part surgery, genetic engineering and artificial insemination, while at the same time he is prepared to consider methods of euthanasia as a means of reducing the number of old people in the world. His present achievements and almost frightening potentialities for future developments, would pose the question of a possible limit to his intellectual freedom and boundaries across which he should not pass. It was when God saw that 'every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually' (*Gen. 6: 5*), that He pronounced human depravity to be total, the fortress of the mind had fallen. How vitally important that the mind be guarded from evil and filled with good. Paul prayed that 'the peace of God which transcends human understanding keep constant guard over your hearts and minds as they rest in Christ Jesus' (*Phil. 4: 7*). In the exercise of this liberty let us, 'pull down every proud obstacle that is raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive and make it obey Christ' (*2 Cor. 10: 4, 5*). Passivity of mind is never encouraged in scripture lest it should become a prey to invading forces of evil. Paul admonished Christians not to be uncontrolled under the influence of drink, but to 'seek the fulness which the Spirit gives', (*Eph. 5: 18*), that He might have complete control. There is a freedom not only of the will and intellect but also of the emotions-

## Emotional

Unhealthy thoughts breed unhealthy emotions, which enslave a man and reduce him to worship and servitude of animal instincts. Paul describes those who 'although they knew God, did not honour him as God . . . but became futile in their thinking and their senseless minds were darkened' (*Rom. 1: 21-27*). Dr. M. Lloyd-Jones writes, 'what calls forth the sarcasm of Paul is that all this was done in the name of wisdom! They preened and prided themselves on it and boasted of their advance. There is something rather pathetic in the way in which men have fondly imagined that they have done something new and original in giving up the worship of God . . . in terms of advance and enlightenment, knowledge, and understanding, emancipation from bondage and tyranny, and liberty and freedom. It has become the hall-mark of intelligence to scoff at religion' (from *The Plight of Man and the Power of God*.) Commenting on the list of foul and ugly emotions which Paul enumerates (*verses 26-32*), he continues, 'this must surely be as accurate a description of life today as it was then. What more perfect account is possible of our sex-ridden mentality, leading to promiscuity, infidelity, divorce and the moral muddle of present-day society? Life has



become loud and ugly, decency and chastity are almost regarded as signs of weakness and incomplete development. Everything is justified in terms of self-expression and the more animal we are the more perfect we are'. This liberty with which man has been invested involves not only individual moral responsibility but a sense of-

### Social obligation

'No man is an island', for 'none of us lives for himself only, none of us dies for himself only' (Rom. 14: 7). In the nature of things there is no completely detached individual. In the exercise of freedom it must be remembered that everyone is linked with the past, present and future. Wm. Barclay writes, 'No man is a self-made man; "I am a part" said Ulysses, "of all that I have met"; a man is a receiver of a tradition, of a heritage, of an heredity. He is an amalgam of all that his ancestors made him'. There is little doubt that in the sphere of industrial relations, present-day conditions and rewards have been obtained by the efforts of a past generation, and in this process trade-unions have acquired an immense degree of political power. In view of recent events might we not ask whether the original motive for their existence has been forgotten. In the exercise of personal liberty can we justify restrictive practices, irresponsible strikes, and the closed shop? Can the needs of the sick and dying and the provision of essential services be ignored? While acknowledging that motive is an essential factor in the exercise of liberty, we question the morality of much that appears as artistic and cultural expression. The dividing line between indecency, pornography and such forms of expression is often extremely tenuous. When does free-speech become gossip, libel or even blasphemy?

As to man's link with the future, Wm. Barclay continues, 'it is our terrible responsibility that we leave something of ourselves in the world by leaving something of ourselves in others. Sin would be a far less terrible thing if it affected only a man himself. The terror of every sin is that it starts a new trail of evil in the world'. How important then, to give careful consideration to family responsibilities, to world population, termination of life and care for the under-privileged and elderly. Surely, individual freedom is firmly linked with social obligation. There is yet a freedom for the Christian of the highest order, namely that of-

### Spiritual privilege

As a member of the body of Christ, vitally joined to the head, its law and life, there is liberty of individual function. To usurp the place and function of another is an abuse of such liberty, for God 'arranged the organs in the body, each one of them as He chose' (I Cor. 12: 18). To disagree with 'one man ministry' is not to condone a 'free-for-all'. In the economy of grace there is freedom under control for 'the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of

the Lord is, there is freedom' (II Cor. 3: 17). The Gnostic teachers in Colossae propounded a creed of abstinence and self-mortification, of angel worship and observance of days and feasts, as a means to holiness. It was Paul's instruction to the church there, that only as they 'held fast their liberty in Christ as members of Christ's body' they would 'grow as God wanted them to grow' (Col. 2: 16-19).

### The freedom of faith

There is a *theological importance* which this freedom demands. 'Freedom is what we have—Christ has set us free! Stand then, as free people and do not allow yourselves to become slaves again' (Gal. 5: 1). There is but one gospel for Jews and Gentiles; salvation is God's free gift in Jesus Christ by faith apart from the works of the law. We are, said Paul, no longer like slaves under the law, but 'freemen', not chained to a treadmill of religious ritual. His anger was stirred against those who would put them into bondage, 'I wish those who were so eager to cut your bodies, (by circumcision), would cut themselves off from you altogether'. There are, however, in this freedom *ethical implications*.

Christians are freed from the old law to accept the bonds of another, the law of Christ, the law of love. True freedom implies service to others and must not be used as a pretext for carnal desires. Paul's final advice is that 'unless you solve the problem of living together you will make life impossible and unlivable at all'. Selfishness in the end does not exalt a man, it destroys him.

### Law and Grace

'Now what is our response to be? Shall we sin to our heart's content and see how far we can exploit the grace of God? What a ghastly thought! We who have died to sin—how could we live in sin a moment longer? (Rom. 6: 1, JBP) Professor E. M. Blaiklock writes, 'a temptation for the theologian is the verbal quibble and Paul imagines some such quibbler saying, "the more we sin, the greater the grace bestowed"'. The believer is united with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection and this he demonstrates by his baptism. Although he has died to sin it must be remembered that sin is not dead in him. Its power has been broken but its presence remains; he is no longer in the flesh but the flesh is still in him, unchanged and unchangeable in its nature, always to be treated 'with no confidence' (Phil. 3: 3). But this is no excuse for bondage to sin, for 'reckoning yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus . . . sin shall not have dominion, for you are not under law but under grace' (Rom. 6: 11, 14).

'Human rights, (momentous things in their place), must be of secondary importance for the sake of Christ's rights and of that blessed bondage to Him which alone is perfect freedom' (Dr. Handley Moule). □

John Peters

## Modern Heroes of the Faith

We hope to carry over the next few months a series of short biographies of noted modern Christians. In this article, their author, John Peters introduces his theme.

The title, 'men of God', is used frequently in the Old Testament to describe such people as Moses (*Deut.* 33: 1), Samuel (*I Sam.* 9: 6-10) and David (*II Chron.* 8: 14), to name but three. In the New Testament it occurs twice only (*I Tim.* 6: 11; *II Tim.* 3: 17). Taking the references to the 'man of God' together, it is clear that the Biblical concept is of someone who is dedicated to God, has a vision of His essential grandeur and holiness (*Exodus* 3: 14), leads a disciplined and holy life (see *II Kings* 4: 9 where it is said of Elisha: 'Behold now I perceive that this is a holy man of God') and also one who is equipped for his work by the Word of God (see *II Tim.* 3: 17 'The Scriptures are the comprehensive equipment of the man of God and fit him fully for all the branches of his work'). Spiritual men like Abraham, Moses, Elijah and Elisha also possessed those qualities of leadership which were recognised by their contemporaries and more importantly, by God. They had definite aims and ambitions as did the Apostle Paul of course—see *Romans* 15: 19, *II Cor.* 5: 9-10, and *Colossians* 1: 28. Towering personalities these men certainly were, but not without their faults—remember David's adultery with Bathsheba, Moses's striking of the rock instead of speaking to it, Elijah's lethargy and lack of resolve (*I Kings* 19: 4), and Peter's denial of his Lord. But such men by their example influenced their immediate contemporaries and were clearly 'men of destiny'. Equally clearly the history of the Christian church has been altered by such men as the Apostle Paul with his burning conviction about the transforming power of the Gospel; Martin Luther, with his courageous stand against the dead orthodoxy of the Roman Catholic church; John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, whose business he declared was 'to save souls, I think every day lost which is not (mainly at least) employed in this thing. *Sum totus in illo* (I am completely committed to this)'; and Livingstone and Carey, the intrepid missionaries. Such men exercised an influence for good on those with whom they came into contact. The same might also be said with equal conviction about the following men whose careers will be outlined in this new series:

James Hudson Taylor (1832-1905): Saint and Visionary  
C. T. Studd (1862-1931): Sportsman and Missionary  
Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-45): Martyr Extraordinary  
Watchman Nee (1903-72): Triumphant in Adversity  
C. S. Lewis (1898-1963) Scholar and Apologist  
Martin Luther King (1929-68): Champion of the Underdog

Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones: Prince of Preachers.

Whilst the studies will be primarily biographical, an attempt will also be made to indicate the significance of each individual's particular contribution. It is hoped that this little series will encourage all believers as they aspire, with God's help, after the dignified title of 'men (and women, of course) of God'. □

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Correspondence for this page should be sent to Mr. Peter Cousins, M.A., B.D.,  
The Paternoster Press Ltd., 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW marked 'Harvester Question Page'

## Question and Answer, with Peter Cousins

### Lukewarm Laodiceans

#### Question 151

*I can understand why the church at Laodicea was condemned for being "lukewarm" (Rev. 2: 15, 16). But how would things have been improved if they had been cold? Surely, even a tepid Christian is better than somebody who is spiritually dead?*

Here, as elsewhere in the Letters to the Seven Churches, knowledge of local conditions aids interpretation. (The original recipients of the Letters possessed this knowledge, of course; things that are obscure to us must have been obvious to them.)

We know that Hierapolis, six miles from Laodicea, possessed hot springs. But as they flowed over the edge of the plateau on which Hierapolis stood, they naturally became lukewarm. Colossae, which was also a neighbour of Laodicea, had cold springs which will have been refreshing in the summer. If Laodicea, by contrast, had neither hot nor cold springs, then its water would by comparison be useless. Hot water is good for washing, cold water is refreshing, but lukewarm water is useless except as an emetic.

It seems to be this matter of usefulness that is the point of the comparison. We are not concerned with three degrees of spiritual intensity, represented by hot, cold and lukewarm, but with the question of whether the Laodicean church was doing any good. Its condemnation is not that it is 'spiritually lukewarm' (i.e. half-hearted) but that it is of no use.

### An Unbelieving Partner

#### Question 152

*What does Paul mean in 1 Cor. 7: 14 when he says that a husband who is not a believer is "made acceptable to God by being united to his wife" (Good News Bible)?*

It is interesting, first of all, to notice what Paul does *not* say. He does not say, for example, that the unbelieving husband is either *justified* or *saved* in this manner. Indeed, in verse 16 he refers to the possibility that the husband who is described in verse 14 as "made acceptable" may subsequently perhaps be saved.

But the word he does employ presents problems. Literally it means "sanctified", "made holy" or "set apart for God". The term is usually applied to God's people who are once for all sanctified in Christ when they trust him (1 Cor. 6: 11) but are also called to grow in holiness day by day (Rom. 6: 19-22; 1 Thess. 4: 3-7). How can such a word be applied to an unbeliever?

We may find some help if we can discover why Paul wrote on this subject. It appears that some Christians at Corinth were so "spiritual" that they

disapproved of marriage all together. In this seventh chapter, Paul first quotes their arguments ("A man does well not to marry"—verse 1) before going on to explain the importance of marriage and of intercourse within marriage (verses 2-5). Later he turns to the special case of the man (12) or woman (13) who was married to an unbeliever. If some people were disapproving of marriage even between Christians, they were even more likely to denigrate marriage to an unbeliever, trapped in the darkness of sin. How could a Christian man or woman continue in such a relationship?

In reply, Paul claims that the "unholiness" of the unbelieving partner is overcome by the "holiness" of the believer. In God's eyes, the marriage and the children (verse 14) have in some sense been brought into a relationship with God. Although salvation is not necessarily involved (*that* must needs be an individual matter) the family group is nevertheless set apart for God in some sense that did not apply before the believing partner turned to Christ. (It goes without saying that Paul is not here concerned with the possibility of a believer deliberately choosing to marry an unbeliever. He is discussing the case of people who turn to Christ when they are already married.)

### "Nor the Son"

#### Question 153

*What do you think of the suggestion that the statement in Mark 13: 32 (that the Saviour did not know the day of his own return) can be explained, not by his ignorance but by the fact that Mark is the gospel of the Servant and that the Servant does not know his masters affairs (John 15: 15)?*

I can see little to be said for this argument. It is based on a highly questionable interpretation of Mark's gospel, which (if it is to be described in any simple terms), must be seen as "the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God" (11). In addition, the link with the passage in *John 15* is quite arbitrary. Most serious of all, it seeks to evade the plain meaning of the verse in question. This states, not that Mark decided to represent Jesus as not knowing something, but that Jesus in simple truth said he did not know it. If this statement is difficult to reconcile with the ideas that some people have about the incarnate Christ, then so much the worse for their ideas about the incarnate Christ. If we are humbly submissive to the teaching of Scripture, we have to recognise that, so far as his consciousness was concerned (which is for practical purposes the important thing) there was at least one matter concerning which he remained in ignorance.



Edited by Kathleen White, 60 Bowood Road, Swindon, Wilts.

## Kathleen White's Column

As Swindon is one of the pioneer areas of the country in resettling the 'boat people' and three of the young people in our church are involved in visiting them, I was glad of the chance to cross-question Dave when he called at our house one evening. Twenty houses have been made available in the town for this purpose but only eight occupied up to the present, equally divided into two groups of four on two large estates. Dave told me the refugees had already been installed a few weeks before he joined the volunteers.

'What actually triggered off your interest?' I asked.

'Well' Dave replied 'I had been reading a book, *Dust of Life* by Liz Thomas (Collins Fount:) telling the story of a nurse in Vietnam, working with children on the streets of Saigon. I suppose it stirred my conscience. Then Helen Penfold of Cambodia for Christ and South-East Asia Outreach spoke and showed slides one evening. She mentioned the need for helpers and I thought it over carefully.'

'Had you been looking for some service for the Lord, then?' I asked him next.

'Yes, for some time but I didn't feel I would slot easily into the usual pattern of Sunday School or Covenanter class activity. I had been praying that it would be made plain to me and this new situation seemed to challenge me and appeared to fulfil my requirements. Let me explain. As I'm training to be a nurse in a hospital for mentally handicapped I'm used to stimulating conversation and dealing with people over an unsettled and difficult period in their lives.'

'How did you set about it?'

'I went round to see Helen afterwards as she is the official resettlement officer for this area as well as a committed Christian. She put me in touch with a family who needed frequent visits every week.'

'Did you feel it was proving a success immediately?' I was curious to know.

'It's slow work and I didn't tell anyone for a while until I saw what progress we made. But it was heartening to be joined some time after by Pauline and then later Roger—not that we visited the same families but we could discuss our problems with each other and I found this a great help. It was one factor which encouraged me to feel that the Lord had indicated this form of service for me specially. Also I had small answers to prayer which were all straws in the wind. For instance, without my own transport it meant long walks in the bad weather throughout the late winter and early spring into Swindon from my hospital several miles outside but often I was picked up and given a lift. I'm sure the Lord provided this for me on stormy, cold evenings'.

In case this sounded too easy and smooth, I asked Dave to fill in the details, outlining some of the problems.

'I was allocated a family of father and mother with three children, a girl of 6, a boy of 4 and a little girl of 2. The wife's two brothers also live there. To add to some of her complications, the wife has become pregnant again which presents difficulties to her in her present situation although it could eventually prove to be a factor in settling her and making her feel more involved with the local community. It has given her some confidence to meet Pauline who works as a midwife at the maternity hospital which factor also emphasises our team work, as Christians working together.

'It's also good that another Christian from our church is deputy Head at the school where the oldest girl attends. She was worried because the girl was so often turning up late for school so we talked it over and I found out they didn't know how to operate an alarm clock. I went round and sorted this out for them. It was only a small detail but it made all the difference. Again they were puzzled how to write out a note ordering different amounts of milk in the morning and I helped them with this too.

'They had a lovely home in Vietnam but, as they were all Chinese, they were compelled to get out or lose their identity and independence. Although they were glad to be safe as a family, this small house on a council estate furnished with second-hand odds and ends provides a complete contrast to their former way of life. Naturally the men are longing for employment again but until they have acquired sufficient English, they attend a special language course at the local college. Mothers go to a pre-school play-group with their toddlers where they are also given help twice a week by language teachers'.

I was anxious to find out how their relationship was developing. 'I hope I'm slowly gaining their confidence. They accept me as a friend and I stress that I'm not just another language teacher. They picked up a few words at Kensington Barracks before coming down here and I'm building on that. Any toys I'm given I pass on to the children, also I've taken them to the local Sports Centre and hopefully some time I'll be able to sort out their garden for them. I try to visit them three or four times a week and listen to their problems. It's difficult liaising with Helen as she's so hard-pressed, particularly with the next batch arriving, possibly from the new Bournemouth camp, but, even if we can't always manage to meet, we chat over important items on the phone'.

I wondered if Dave's 'family' had shown any reaction to the fact that he was a Christian. 'Of course, they know I go to church but I'm very careful not to force my faith upon them. I go as a friend not to evangelise them in the first place. "You are good to come," they say sometimes. It was difficult at first, they could read English better than they could talk but one of them, a fifteen year old boy has said he will come to church when he knows enough of the language. Another Chinese man was given a bible in London from someone in the Chinese church.

'We're thrilled that two of the older women have become Christians but basically I'm there to help them. If they see anything in my life that's different, perhaps later on, years later, they may begin to enquire about the Christian faith. But right now, without work, living on a small allowance, they're suffering from severe culture shock and need outside contacts badly.' □

Dave's Chinese family is only one of hundreds who will be trying to settle down here during the next few weeks. Already there are centres in many areas including Peterborough, Wolverhampton, Birmingham, Leicester, Wales and Yorkshire. If anyone reading this wants to know more about the boat people, and how volunteers can assist them initially, they can contact either myself (my address and telephone number is always at the top of my page) or Mrs. Helen Penfold, 19, Edale Moor, Liden, Swindon. Tel.: 46282. She will be able to put them in touch with a responsible official in their own vicinity. There is a tremendous opportunity for a rewarding and different type of service for the Lord.

## Looking at Books

### Women of the New Testament

#### GOD AND WOMEN

Dorothy Pape. Mowbrays. 208 pp. £3.50 (paperback).

This book is written by an author who describes herself also as a wife and grandmother. She firmly believes that a mother's place is mainly in the home while there are children to be cared for. But, she asks, is this women's only role in life, particularly if she is a Christian?

Dorothy Pape's views and insights are based on her knowledge of God's use of women, particularly in China, and on her own experience of Christian work in England, Canada, China, Japan and Germany. Against the backcloth of this wide and varied experience, she sets out carefully to analyse what the Bible has to say for and about women. She pays particular attention to what Jesus and the apostle Paul actually said regarding the roles they should play. She also seeks to prove that Christianity is the true movement of women's liberation and pours scorn on the idea that ladies should merely be pew-fillers and church flower arrangers—this she dismisses as wasteful nonsense.

While turning the pages of this book the reader will find that, far from treating women as inferior beings, many examples taken from the New Testament demonstrate the respect with which Jesus spoke to them. Also, and significantly, it will be seen that it was when teaching women that Jesus made some of the most profound revelations concerning His Father and Himself i.e. He told the woman of Sychar that God must be worshipped in spirit and truth; to Martha He declared that He was the resurrection and the life. Again, it was women whom He sent hurrying from the garden with the message that He had risen from the dead.

As Norah Coggan so rightly says in her Foreword, this is a thoughtful and thought-provoking study. To this I would add that male as well as female readers will do the thinking—and possibly some will re-think preconceived ideas of what the Bible really has to say about the 'weaker sex'.

Review by Christine Wood

#### THE HUSBAND BOOK

by Dean Merrill  
£1.60 net

It's probably the most important job a man ever has. But nobody bothers to train him for it. He doesn't even have the benefit of a job description! Absurd, isn't it? But not amusing. There's nothing funny about a broken home. Here at last is the missing job description. Realistic, revolutionary, humorous, it outlines a programme that can turn areas of marital stress into sources of strength.

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## Replies to Professor Bruce

### The June Question

At the end of his *History of the Plymouth Brethren*, W. B. Neatby expresses his conviction that 'Brethrenism is the child of the study of unfulfilled prophecy, and of the expectation of the immediate return of the Saviour' (by 'immediate' he means within about a generation from the 1820s). Writing three quarters of a century later (1901) he concludes that 'it is clear now that Brethrenism took shape under the influence of a delusion, and that that delusion was a decisive element in all its distinctive features'. Would readers who have paid some attention to this matter care to say how far they think Neatby was right? And to those who think that he was right, I should like to put a more serious question: How far could the same thing be said about the Christian church itself?

### Mr. H. L. Ellison replies:-

It is about half a century since I read W. B. Neatby's book and I do not have a copy to refresh my memory. I cannot, therefore, remember how he proves that 'Brethrenism is the child of unfulfilled prophecy', but I do not doubt that he was essentially wrong in his judgment.

It is, of course, true that at the time when 'Brethrenism' was in its formative stage there was very widespread interest in the Lord's return, and this will have drawn some of the early leaders into contact with one another. But there seems no reason to doubt the generally affirmed wish for unity in worship as the driving motive, and the recognition that a return to New Testament Church principles was essential if such a unity was to be attained.

On the other hand the stress on a double Return, as well as certain other doctrines propagated by J. N. Darby with great vigour, laid the foundations for the disastrous split that made nonsense of the claim to New Testament unity. The same is true today. Wherever it is claimed that only one particular view of the Parousia is Scriptural, there is a tendency to disunity.

Today we need to stop criticizing the W.C.C. and to learn to show a more whole-hearted desire for a demonstration of the unity of all believers. Where that exists, the claims of the 'Brethren' are likely to be treated with far more respect by those that love Christ, but who think that 'Brethren principles' are a pipe dream.

### Mr. L. L. Fox replies:-

Having been brought up, to the age of about ten, in nearly 'the most straitest circle of fellowship' (shades of the AV of *Acts 26: 5*) may I offer some comments prompted by Prof. Bruce's June question, concerned with W. B. Neatby's *History of the Plymouth Brethren*.

As an aside, it is not I believe splitting hairs to distinguish between, on the one hand, the terms 'Plymouth Brethren' and 'The Brethren Movement' and, on the other hand, the expression 'Brethrenism', used by WBN. To me Brethrenism is descriptive of attitudes and modes of conduct by Brethren, and to which, unhappily, some stigma attaches. It is not the present purpose to consider such flaws, though one is painfully aware of our failings.

Writing of the early days it is plain from the *Histories* that there was intense interest attaching to study of the Bible

prophecies. But, as far as I can trace, two other factors were at least as, if not much more, important in influencing the considerations and actions of the relatively few who, it was to transpire, were around 1825-1830 in process of begetting the Brethren Movement. These factors were a growing realization from scripture—not least on the part of Dr. E. Cronin—that there was a common brotherhood of all believers, despite man-made barriers; and that in virtue only of their common life in Christ i.e. without the need for any human ordination, there was liberty for believers to meet together for such purposes as breaking bread, prayer, and reading of the word.

One, but only one, of the many scriptural truths in which the Brethren rejoiced was that of the Lord's coming again. Whether or not they were deluded, as WBN apparently thought, in the prophetic scheme they mostly, I believe, held, this did not prevent an amazing amount and variety of gift manifesting itself as their numbers grew; and the dissemination by means of lectures, tracts, pamphlets, and larger works, of a rich harvest of sound teaching, garnered from a study of the word of God.

In connection with WBN's *History*, it is worth recalling the statement of April 1902 by W. H. Cole, who was associated with Brethren from 1843. He held that WBN's *History of the Plymouth Brethren* 'would be more correctly termed the history of Darbyism, as Mr. Darby and his way are the theme of his book, and he almost ignores the position of those called "Open Brethren", or he says a good deal to belittle them'. I do not think that at this distance we should be too affected by whatever WBN wrote. We are called upon to serve our own generation (*Acts 13: 36*).

No doubt the interpretation of any Scriptures that refer to prophecies as yet unfulfilled will be more clear to those alive at the relevant time than they may be to us today. Your correspondence columns have shown recently that interest in at least the detailed interpretation of events connected with the Lord's coming has waned. Valuing highly the work of Philip Mauro in this field—though not necessarily accepting all his conclusions—I am not unduly dismayed by the lessening of interest in details. It is to be hoped that, instead, there is a growing awareness through the Spirit that all scripture has a spiritual relevance for us today.

### The Editor replies:-

It is of interest that Neatby himself modified his judgement in the second edition of his *History*, where the closing sentence reads (I have italicised the amendments—they are not Neatby's italics): 'it is clear now that Brethrenism took shape *in part* under the influence of a delusion, and that that delusion *left its traces, more or less deeply, on most of the distinctive features of the system*'. In drawing attention to this amendment in the preface to the second edition, Neatby explained: 'I would draw attention to a modification in the wording of the closing sentence of the book. This was misunderstood (strangely, as I think) to imply a denial of what is called the pre-millennial Advent, that is, the second coming and personal appearing of Christ before the epoch of universal blessedness. I therefore ask the reader to notice that all that I asserted was that the expectation that the Advent would take place within three-quarters of a century from the year 1825 was delusive—which is surely self-evident. The modification I have now made has, however, been chiefly designed to meet another, and I think a more reasonable, objection. The words I used tended perhaps to involve primitive Brethrenism in a general charge of delusion; whereas all that can fairly be said, and all that I really intended to express, is that the delusion in question had a serious influence on the formation of the system.' (We must also remember that in Neatby's perspective 'Brethrenism' was far more closely identified with Darby's distinctive—and



perhaps eccentric—views on the Church than would today be considered justifiable).

This, I think, puts Professor Bruce's question into clearer perspective. The eighty years that have passed since Neatby was writing the first edition of his *History*—a period equal in length to the history of Brethrenism that preceded his writing—have shown that there was very much more to 'Brethrenism' (and certainly to the 'Open' type of Brethrenism which Neatby found of comparatively little interest) than elements that arose from the study of unfulfilled prophecy. They have shown, too, that there are enduring features of Brethrenism—and not least of its very radical ecclesiology—which not only survive without the distinctive views of prophecy that marked the early movement, but can also be seen to be akin to movements that have existed within the wider sphere of Christian profession for centuries.

Does not this lead to the answer that, while there may well have been features of the early Church that (like Brethrenism) were influenced by contemporary apocalyptic expectations, it is a gross over-simplification to suggest that the disappoint-

ment of such expectations is in itself an adequate explanation of the transition from primitive to catholic Christianity?

There are two incidental remarks that might be added:-

1. Whatever might be thought of Neatby's judgement on this point, another judgement of his is surely vindicated by what we have said: namely, that 'such an experiment' (i.e. Brethrenism) 'in the hands of eminent men could scarcely fail to yield a considerable harvest of interest and instruction; and it has actually shed, if I mistake not, a flood of light on many of the obscurities and incredibilities of the history of the Church' (2nd edn. p. 3).

2. We must remember that the New Testament picture of the Church shows it living in a short period when it was a struggling and (historically speaking) tentative minority. For a perspective on the long-term relationship of the people of God to the world at large we still very much need the Old Testament as well. Our understanding of the Church must include an element which is drawn from Old Testament life—we cannot throw away the major part of our Bibles when we discuss church doctrine!

## Readers' Forum

*Readers' Forum* is open to contributions from readers. Please send suggestions from practical experience, related to church activities or Christian living; doctrinal or expository questions; useful experiences; what-you-will; to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX. Questions, to which other readers will be invited to submit replies, will also be published from time to time as they are received. It is hoped that readers will take full advantage of this feature.

*The August Readers' Forum is contributed by Mr. Charles G. Martin*

From time to time various of your correspondents comment on the way in which speakers are invited and the amount (or lack) of briefing they receive. As one who is occasionally asked to speak at conference or regular Sunday services, I remain firmly of the opinion that the Holy Spirit can guide elders to a sound judgment of the type of ministry that is required, as much as he can guide the invited speaker to follow or work within the guidelines given in the invitation. Sometimes I find that this idea is strange to those who invite me to speak 'as the Lord leads', but usually they respond positively and helpfully to my requests for information and guidance.

I recently discussed this with a friend who does a great deal of speaking, and he mentioned that he uses a form which he sends in reply to requests. This has the dual value of providing him with information and also making the inviting church think seriously about the needs of each meeting. For myself I would like to include an additional question: What special information or experience do you believe me to have that those within ten miles of your meeting do not have? There needs to be substantial reason to go beyond the local knowledge and gift found in the neighbourhood.

The form reads as follows:

### Please Introduce Me to Your Group

So that I don't say all the wrong things, can you please tell me the following rough details about the people I shall be speaking to:

How many?

What age-span?

Mixed/one-sex only?

What proportion of committed Christians to people who aren't yet decided?

What interests have they got in common?

What strong likes or dislikes, if any, have they expressed about previous speakers?

What do they hope and expect from a meeting of this kind?

What have you done in recent meetings?

What do you plan to do in any meetings immediately before I come?

Will the group have Bibles with them? If so, which version is the most popular?

Do you want me to give a 'straight talk' or a more varied presentation involving discussion, etc.?

How long do you want my session to last?

Is there anything else you want to advise/tell/ask me?

Please return the completed questionnaire to:

## Correspondence

Letters should be sent to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX

Publication of letters does not imply that views expressed are endorsed by the Editor or the Trustees.

### Radio Outreach

From Mr. R. V. Taylor

Dear Sir,

Thank you for publishing details of the interest of Counties Evangelistic Work in Radio Outreach through T.W.R. We did have quite a useful response through this and articles in our own publicity.

Many folk expressed real interest and enthusiasm and some sent gifts and others were prepared to commit themselves to financial help if the work commenced. Others expressed some doubts and some were against the idea feeling it was outside the scope of our work or doubting the effectiveness of this medium.

We did set a financial target to be reached by a certain date if we were to take up the T.W.R. offer. This was not reached and so we are not going ahead at this time. Nevertheless it was felt we should keep the matter open and it does seem that openings may exist in local radio and in the will of the Lord, this is what should be considered.

Several folk with considerable experience have come forward to offer their services and it does seem that the Lord is directing although we are not yet clear as to where.

With the heavy summer programme now on us, we will possibly not pursue the matter further till September, but would value prayer and the comments of brethren and sisters and any advice or help that they may feel appropriate.

Tall Trees Lodge,

Station Road,

Staplehurst,

Tonbridge,

Kent TN12 0PZ.

### Church publicity

From Mr. H. L. Ellison

Dear Mr. Coad,

The publicity of Parbold Evangelical Church, mentioned in the June issue, is to be commended for its thoughtfulness and 'civilized' approach. I would, however, respectfully suggest, that unless its appeal is almost exclusively to an educated middle-class constituency, some of the language used has little relevance to the mass of the modern unchurched.

'Fellowship', 'salvation', 'personal faith', 'worship' have little place in the vocabulary of the modern young man or woman. I would also respectfully suggest that unless the speakers listed are all well-known local people, the outsider is far more likely to be interested in a list of the subjects, supposed to be relevant to his needs.

14 Rosyl Avenue

Dawlish, Devon

Yours sincerely

H. L. Ellison

### Large-scale evangelism

From Mr. K. H. Smellie

Dear Mr. Coad,

It was interesting to read Mr. Stanley Linton's letter in the same issue (April) which featured Mr. Gordon Bailey's devastating broadside against the large crusade type of evangelism!

There is much in Mr. Bailey's comments to give grounds for very serious thought. Undoubtedly he is right to stress the priority of 'real, consistent, long-term, every-believer, church-based evangelism'. The lack of this cannot be compensated by any number of Billy Grahams. But are we really to conclude that so many outstanding men of God are as utterly blind to the proper use of their evangelistic gifts as seems to be suggested? Surely a life's work so tragically out of God's will would not drag on, unperceived and unrepented, yet with so much evident fruit?

Mr. Linton reminds us of the partnership of those who labour long in earlier contacts with people, and those who, through a crusade are used to move them through to a 'final commitment'.

The famous evangelist's task may be a little less crucial than that of his anonymous brother (or sister), but I believe we should recognise the many different ways in which the Lord works and give our support to Crusade activities, without neglecting less spectacular responsibilities.

5 Craigen Ave.,

Croydon,

Surrey CRO 7JP

Yours sincerely,

Ken Smellie

*(As an afterthought, is it not also time for us to substitute for the use of the words 'crusade' and 'campaign' a more apt and less aggressively military title? The word 'crusade' especially carries with it to the Muslim a connotation not dissimilar to that attaching to the name of Sir Francis Drake among Spanish-descended South Americans. Now that we have a multi-racial population, it might be to the honour of our Lord to change it!—Ed.)*

## Preserving Historic Brethren Material

From Professor F. F. Bruce

Dear Mr. Coad,

From time to time I hear from people who have in their possession collections of what might be called 'Brethren archives'—books, pamphlets, periodicals, reports, letters, etc.—of relevance for the history and principles of the Brethren movement. They are concerned that there is no central depository where this material could be placed when they have no further use for it, so that it might be readily useful to others.

One of the most reputable reference libraries in Great Britain is willing to provide a home for such material, where it could be accessible to those who are interested in studying the subjects with which it deals. If some of your readers have material which they would like to make available in this way, they are invited to get in touch with either you or me. But we beg them not to send the material itself either to you or to me!

The Crossways,  
2 Temple Road, Buxton  
Derbyshire SK17 9BA  
England.

Yours sincerely,  
F. F. Bruce

# The News Page

Press Day, September 1979, Friday, August 3rd, for Displayed Advertisements, Prayer List, Forthcoming Events and news items (Please send direct to Publisher at 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW)

## Out and About

### News from Africa

A South African Christian Leadership Assembly held in Pretoria from July 8-15 attracted 10,000 people, 6,000 being church leaders and the remainder consisting of political, economic and industrial leaders, high school students, university students and leaders of Christian youth organisations. Open to Christians of all cultural, racial and denominational groups, the proceedings comprised five parallel conferences and three large public rallies. Speakers from all over the world, Tom Houston of the Bible Society and Bishop Festo Kivengere among them, aimed to stimulate a cross-pollination of ideas which would enable the delegates to interact with one another and so tackle the problems facing the country.

**Tear Fund responded to requests from Uganda** following Amin's overthrow. Just three days after Tanzanian and Ugandan-exile forces captured Kampala, MAP International, an American Christian relief and development agency, arranged the delivery of the first of several consignments of urgently needed medical supplies for hospitals in or near Kampala. When Dr. Rob Morris with his wife and family attempted a one hundred mile journey for Tear Fund in early May they had to negotiate twenty-five military road blocks. Tear Fund has received a detailed "shopping list" of supplies which the hospital needs to get back on its feet. The supplies include spare generator parts; tanks, filters etc., to ensure safe, constant water; a refrigerator; and vaccine for cholera which has reached epidemic rating in the area. The cost is £12,000 and Tear Fund has arranged for these to be purchased in Nairobi. RURCON Rural Development Consultancy for Christian Churches in Africa raises some searching questions in a recent newsletter. Although fully committed to a rural development programme, Peter Batchelor is increasingly conscious of the problems this can raise especially when the church is not very strong spiritually—"when Christians appear to lack commitment to Jesus; when they find it easy to go along with the crowd because their faith is not costing them anything.

"In such circumstances we have to ask ourselves: how wise are we to encourage a church to broaden her witness to include a major social component? Perhaps the first priority should be to seek for spiritual renewal, or maybe a deeper commitment to service. Is there a stage when we may have to say to church leaders: 'I don't think the time is right for you to begin an agricultural programme.'? Some of the problems we see when 'weak' churches have top-heavy social and economic

sides to their work include:-

- a pre-occupation with money-making
- an unbalanced view of the 'whole person' with over-emphasis on temporal needs
- a siphoning off of scarce leadership from an evangelistic Bible teaching, church building ministry into organising other forms of development work.

"All this sounds as though I no longer believe in the ministry of the Church to the whole person, body and soul; as though I do not recognise that we cannot divide a person up into spiritual and temporal compartments. This is not the case. What I am searching for is the right balance; I am asking whether in some situations the need for spiritual renewal is so much a priority that health, nutrition and farming have to take second place? And I would love to hear your views. I imagine that there will be some violent disagreements!"

In rural development programmes, the role of the agent is vital since they alone are on the spot and able to help a community adopt new methods. But should they be voluntary or salaried? "Unpaid extension agents, though limited through lack of training and constraints on their time, can often make a greater contribution to the development of an area for the following reasons:-

1. They are usually highly motivated since they are willing to work for no salary. Thus they are good at helping others.
2. Since they are themselves farming, living from what they grow, they are practical and relevant in the new ideas they share with others.
3. Because they are volunteers they cannot so readily be ordered to propagate a certain new method. They can be asked and they will only agree if they are convinced that it is likely to be worth the risk that comes when anything new is tried.
4. In some conditions, as they are volunteers, their influence is far greater because they are not so easily identified with unpopular bureaucracy.

Another advantage in using unpaid workers is that lack of finance to pay salaries is not going to limit expansion. However, it can be near to impossible to get such volunteers where there is no tradition in the Church or in the community, of people working for others without some financial benefit."

### Christian Radio

HCJB reports that Mr. Roger Stubbe, Frequency Control Engineer, plans to spend a period of two months, commencing mid-September, in the British Isles, for the purpose of visiting short wave listeners and DX Clubs in this country. In 1976 Mr. Stubbe made a similar tour which proved most successful and a number of requests were made for him to return. On this occasion he will be accompanied by his wife, Joyce, who works in the English Correspondence Department at Quito. Together they hope to be able to meet some of the prayer teams and participate in college and university C.U. meetings, as time permits.

**Introducing HCJB:** A revised and enlarged edition of the introductory brochure is now available, entitled "Introducing Radio Station HCJB". This 24-page colour booklet gives a brief description of the various ministries and departments of HCJB in Ecuador.



**Radio To Communist Lands** is being widely heard and appreciated. The Far East Broadcasting Corporation reports a greatly increased mail response to programmes directed into mainland China with over 3,000 letters being received in the first three months of 1979. Dictation speed reading of the Bible in Chinese languages has led to many requests for Bibles to the Bible Society in Hong Kong. On a visit to China it was found that the FEBC station had a much stronger signal than the BBC which lay just beside it on the dial. Similarly, David Oram of Back to the Bible Broadcasts reports that many in Poland listen to their programmes and are hungry for Christian ministry and for copies of Christian songs and other literature.

**Trans World Radio** reports a heavy response from people in all parts of the continental Europe and the United Kingdom who listened to the nightly broadcasts of the Luis Palau Crusade in Scotland (June 8-17).

## News from Europe

**Advances in Spain:** "People in Spain are now 'liberated' politically and thus many have no interest in religion", stated Roy Anderson, Pocket Testament League Director for South West Europe, during his recent visit to Britain.

At the same time, people are open to the Gospel of Jesus Christ as never before. They willingly take copies of our John's Gospel. Hundreds sign up for a Bible correspondence course—and in the last five years, fifteen new churches have been started through the ministry of PTL.

In the past year a young missionary, Karen White, has joined the full-time PTL staff in Spain and she works alongside Esther Rodriguez dealing with correspondence, organising teams and carrying out an extensive follow-up programme. These two young girls visit the new churches started through the PTL ministry, encouraging them to catch a missionary vision as well as to reach out to other towns in their own country.

Future plans for Spain include four summer campaigns, each of three weeks duration. Thirty young people will be on each team and the purpose is to make a total impact on the town they visit. Each team member pays his own way, lives in difficult circumstances, and is expected to be out in evangelism many hours a day. New converts are immediately discipled and the one who leads them to the Lord spends an hour each day with them in Bible study.

At a special Easter Retreat for training and challenge 150 young people attended and some gave their lives to the Lord for "full time service". Most of the young people will work on the Summer Campaigns and there will be one team going to Portugal—the first-ever Spanish missionary team working outside their own country!

**A European young people's missionary convention,** Mission 80, is being held in the Palais de Beaulieu in Lausanne from December 27 to January 1 1980. It will provide a wonderful opportunity to British Christians to interact with fellow-believers from all parts of

Europe as well as to receive a new vision of the worldwide evangelistic task facing the church today. Michael Griffiths will give Bible expositions and there will be practical seminars and workshops. Details of Mission 80 can be obtained from David Winter, 5 Watton Road, Knebworth, Herts., SG3 6AH (0438-811468).

**The Netherlands:** Dutch leaders have agreed to form a Dutch evangelical alliance concerned above all with working together to bring the gospel to the Dutch people.

## News from the Evangelical Alliance

**Church Growth:** Most church growth thinkers today recognise four different aspects of growth—quantitative, qualitative, organic and incarnational. The effective growth within the life of the local fellowship includes all four dimensions of growth. The modern interest in church growth is a healthy sign that more and more churches are willing to examine the life of their fellowship in basically biblical terms and to try to understand the factors that promote or retard growth.

The Council of the Evangelical Alliance have felt it right to set up a Church Growth Unit within the Department of Evangelism and Church Growth. It has two main objectives. The first is to develop church growth thinking among evangelicals in this country. This involves communicating the basic principles of church growth to evangelicals, applying church growth insights to local churches within the evangelical constituency, and ensuring that evangelicals contribute fully to the development of church growth theory and practice in Britain. The unit is aiming to develop a small team to advise local churches, conduct seminars and produce and distribute literature.

The second objective is to assist local churches to play their full part in the Decade of Evangelism for which the EA is calling in the 1980's. The Church Growth Unit is important even without the Decade of Evangelism—alongside it, it is indispensable. Evangelism and church growth, although so different in many ways, are entirely complementary.

The EA is initiating an Association of Church Growth drawing together those who are interested or involved in church growth in Britain. There are many people involved in the widening field who are making valid contributions in different parts of the country and it was felt that the time was right that all these should be linked up through a loose association so that all could be aware of others' working in the field. Current trends and fresh insights could be shared through a news-letter, especially concerning the situation here in Britain. Should you be involved in church growth in any way and would be interested in this association please write to Monica Hill, 19 Draycott Place, London SW3.

(Readers may also be interested to know that a church growth course is scheduled at London Bible College for Spring Term 1980 and is intended for Christian workers who want to know more about church growth and related subjects.)

Among the new group members of the Alliance are Bearwood Chapel, Smethwick and Springfield Hall, South Tottenham, London.

**Sunday School Anniversary**—The Evangelical Alliance points out that 1980 sees the 200th Anniversary of the first Sunday School to be founded in Gloucester under Robert Raikes. In order to celebrate this historic event a committee has been formed to enable churches throughout the country to take positive action to evaluate the educational work that their own church is doing today and to prepare themselves for a major thrust forward in their education ministry with all ages. During the latter part of 1979 and into 1980 five packs of material will be produced which will contain ideas and resources for churches to appraise their own work and be ready for the year of celebration in 1980. These resource packs can be obtained at a cost of £2 per set of five by writing to the 200th Birthday of Sunday School Action Group, Evangelical Alliance, 19 Draycott Place, London, SW3.

1980 will culminate with a festival which will be held in the Wembley Conference Centre on Saturday, October 11, 1980 and will be known as Family Fun Day. It is hoped that families will come together to enjoy excitement and fun together. The day will culminate in a festival of thanksgiving for the 200th Birthday of Sunday School.

**President's Night**—Monday, October 1st, 1979 sees Harry Sutton retiring as President of the Alliance. He is to be succeeded by Gilbert Kirby. Both will be present at a meeting to be held at 7.30 p.m. at All Souls Church; also taking part will be Clifford Hill, the Secretary for Evangelism and Church Growth. The closing speaker is Luis Palau and although admission is free tickets can be obtained from the Evangelical Alliance.

## Evangelism

**Mid-Wessex Christian Camps** is seeking a new camp site. This Young People's work, which provides low cost holidays in a Christian atmosphere, is now seeking a site within 4 hours travelling time from Woking. A minimum of 1 acre is required, ideally near to the sea, a lake or a river and available for 4 weeks in the school summer holidays. Anyone who can help in any way should get in touch with Peter Howitt, White Timbers, Hook Hill Park, Woking, GU22 0PX (Tel. Woking 72930).

**News from workers:** W. S. Galyer and G. K. Lowther report encouragement in their work. George Tryon's visit to Yorkshire brought him into contact with many who had been blessed through his ministry in the past.

**Pye Barn Trust:** Dr. Q. M. Adams writes asking for help in re-establishing connections with those who have supported the work of Pye Barn Ltd. during recent years. This small charitable trust runs homes where young people with spiritual or psychological difficulties (including drug addiction) are cared for, where the gospel can be offered them and their rehabilitation into Christ begun. The work has recently been reorganised and there is a new warden at 16 The Chase, Clapham. Since the list of prayer partners and contributors since 1974 has apparently been destroyed, it is requested that supporters who read this announcement get in

touch with Dr. Adams at Tremore Manor, Bodmin, Cornwall, PL30 5JT.

**Tracts:** A letter from Mr. and Mrs. J. Harrold of Hounslow reminds us that in November 1971 we reported that they had given away 10,000 leaflets. The total is now over 1½ million—and still going strong. They supply the material from their home at 24 Roseville Avenue, Hounslow, Middx, TW3 3TD.

## News from the Scripture Union

**An International Conference** held from June 11-16 was attended by forty-five delegates from 29 countries in all continents and besides the main topic of the movement's ministry to children the agenda included the interpretation and use of the Bible, social concern and liberation theology, and the continuing growth and development of the SU movement, now having a staff of 650 worldwide. The Conference proceedings were translated simultaneously into English, French and Spanish. In the discussion on SU's ministry to children, delegates from different backgrounds probed the theological, psychological and sociological aspects of childhood, and unanimously agreed on a statement which calls on the Scripture Union movement worldwide "with persistence and enthusiasm" to continue the task "of obeying the great commission and presenting the Gospel to every creature, including the children . . .". The Conference emphasised that children's work must be concerned with teaching not manipulation; that family evangelism should be the objective; that since children are in the process of development, they should not be expected to show an adult level of understanding and response; and that children's evangelism calls for the highest standard of responsible interpretation of Scripture.

The Conference also issued a statement on liberation theology. It did not feel able to endorse liberation theology as an adequate expression of biblical Christianity but recognised that it presented a challenge to Scripture Union to the more effective implementation of the movement's own oft-repeated biblical concern for the whole man. We are concerned as the people of God to make the right response to the injustice and poverty in which the world abounds by embodying the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and involving ourselves in Christ's transforming mission with the poor and the powerless.

## News from Tear Fund

**Close Encounters with the Third World** is the title of a Tear Fund course being held twice—on 3-14 September at Bulstrode, Bucks, the home of Worldwide Evangelization Crusade; and on 26 November-7 December at All Nations Christian College, Herts.

The course sessions, which will be undertaken by permanent staff from the two centres, and visiting lecturers experienced in various fields, will cover a variety of subjects, including the biblical basis of missions, Christian witness to other faiths, culture appreciation and culture shock, Christian conduct in situations of conflict, relationships, changing patterns

of Christian mission, and appropriate technology. Further details and a booking form for the course, which costs £54, are available from the Overseas Personnel Department, Tear Fund, 11 Station Road, Teddington, Middlesex, TW11 9AA (Tel: 01 977 9144).

**Tearcraft:** Because of legal and financial difficulties the proposed sale of Tearcraft Ltd. by Tear Fund to the Traidcraft Trust will not now take place. Tearcraft Ltd. will continue to operate as a wholly owned subsidiary of Tear Fund. Its scale, scope and method of operation are being reviewed to enable the company to fulfil its original purposes of assisting producers in the developing world within the stated criteria of Tear Fund. The Traidcraft Trust will report on their plans to the Christian public as soon as possible.

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—Autumn, Winter and Spring Breaks

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## Home-Calls

**Mrs. M. Gillies** at Portree Hospital, Isle of Skye on 24th April—aged 92. Saved as a young woman after receiving the news of her brother's death during the First World War, she was baptised and received into the fellowship of the assembly in Kirkintilloch some time later. She remained there until 1970 when due to health reasons she went to reside with her daughter in the Isle of Raasay. She is remembered as a wise, consistent, spiritual and godly sister who always maintained a deep devotion for her Lord, His people and His work.

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Spring—12th-19th April, 1980 **Mr. S. Emery**

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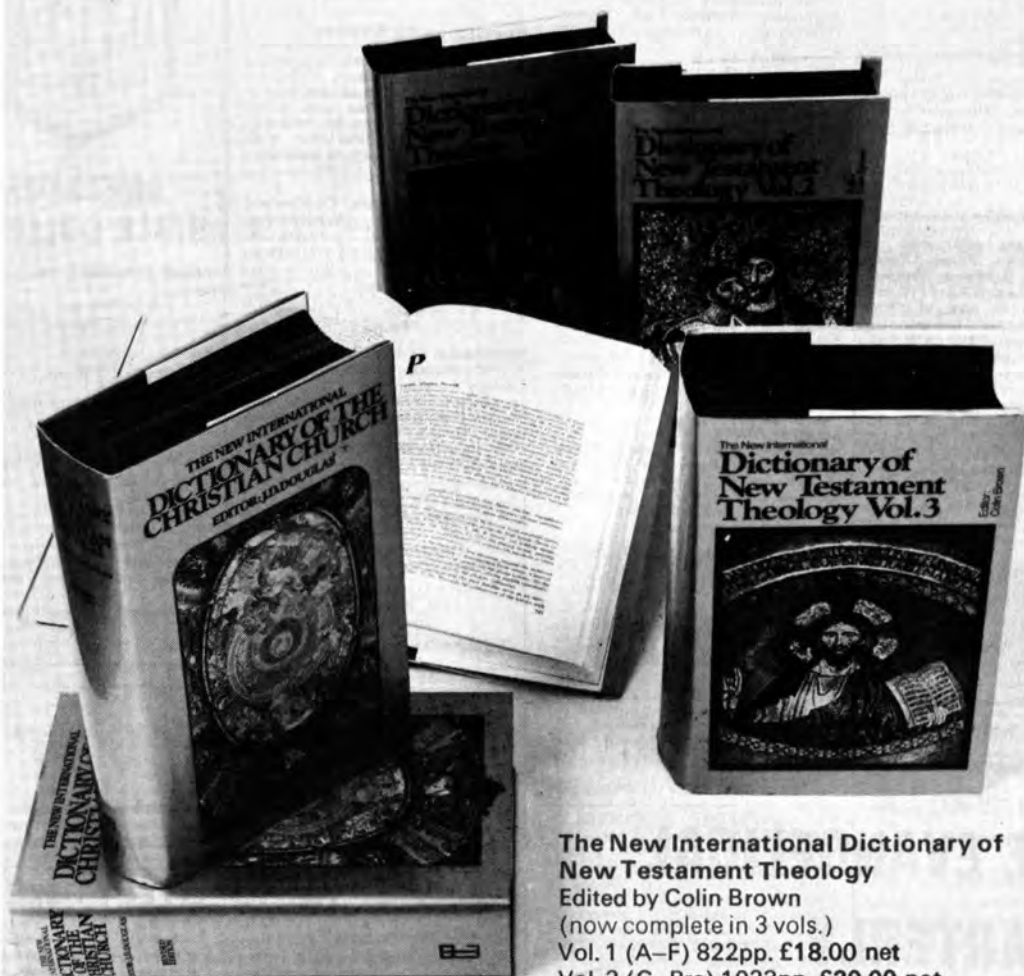
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# People and Places

## Stewardship

**Retired Missionary Aid Fund:**  
12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields,  
NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies for the  
month of June amounted to  
£18,731.26.

## Prayer List

**Stamped letters addressed c/o  
The Paternoster Press, Paternoster  
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Crescent, Exeter, EX2 4JW will  
be forwarded to any of those  
whose names appear below.  
Workers are requested to include  
their names on their cards when  
returning them each month.  
We are still receiving anonymous  
contributions from time to time.**

**Blackburn, A. G.,**  
Exmouth Beach Mission 1-17; Sid-  
mouth 5; Cumbria area 18-31.

**Burnham, A. E. J.:**  
Fareham, 5; Copnor 12; Chichester  
19; Winchester 26; and also at other  
places.

**Campbell, B.:**  
Falmouth 1-3, 26-31; Carnell Green 5;  
St. Ives 10-17; Hill House Camp  
18-25.

**Clifford, D. L.:**  
At Weymouth, Alresford, Gcspart,  
Fareham, Poulner during the month  
of August.

**Galyer, W. S.:**  
Weston-Super-Mare 1-24; Balham 26;  
West Moors 30.

**Gillham, S.:**  
Dorset Adventure Time Camp 1-6;  
Sturminster Newton Tent Crusade  
11-26; Melpash Agricultural Show 30.

**Grimsey, A. W.:**  
Kings Lynn 3; Potters Bar 5; Norwich  
12; Uckfield 28-31.

**Iliffe, D. J.:**  
Holland 1; Children's Camps, Wester-  
gate 4-18; Angmering 20-15.

**Lowther, G. K.:**  
Grimsby, Humber-side and Lincoln-  
shire during the month of August.

**Mountstevens, S.:**  
Maidstone 5; Broadstairs 12.

**Pierce, D. H.:**  
Boys' Camp 1-6; Tiverton 8, 15;  
Ashford 12; Eastcombe 19; Woola-  
combe Beach Mission 12-24; Pudding-  
ton 26; Barnstaple 27-31.

**Short, S. S.:**  
Fort William 5, 7; Weston-Super-  
Mare 12; Bristol 15; Bath 19, 20;  
Ambleside 26.

**Stringer, D.:**  
West Wales area 1-10; North Wales  
area 11-18; Chelmsford 19-20; Islin-  
gton 21; Enfield 22; Hornchurch 23;  
Monkton Combe 24-28; N.W. London  
29; Essex area 30-31.

**Thurston, A.:**  
Kingsbridge 1-5, 14, 17; Chillington 1,  
15-16; Badminton 6-11; Dartmouth  
12; Strete 13; Balsall Common 19-31.

**Tryon, G.:**  
Kingston, Tolworth 5; Staines 6-10;  
Market Deeping 12-19; Quadding 20-  
24; Eltham Park 26, 29; Balham 27-31;  
Reigate 30.

**Whittem, R.:**  
Youth Camps 1-11; Family Camp 11-  
18; Norfolk Broads 25- September 1.

## Forthcoming Events

The Publishers regret that, owing  
to demands on space, it is not  
possible to insert an announce-  
ment in more than one issue.  
Correspondents should indicate  
clearly in which issue they wish  
their announcements to appear.

**Cleveleys:**  
Ann. Cfce. Cleveleys Cumberland  
Chapel, North Drive, August 11 at  
3.00 and 6.00 p.m. Speakers: W.  
Banks, G. Neilly.

**Eastbourne:**  
Sisters' Missy Cfce. Edmond Chapel,  
Church Street, Old Town, September  
5 at 3.15 and 6.00 p.m.

**Winchester:**  
The Winchester Cfce. King Alfred's  
College, September 7th-9th.  
Speakers: Ernest Oliver, Charles  
Martin and Brian Tatford. Booking  
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High Beeches, Fir Tree Road, Ban-  
stead, Surrey.

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Visitors warmly welcomed at Cranmer Hall, Sylverdale Road, Croydon. Sundays 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. Wednesdays 8.00 p.m. (12)

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- C10 : Safe as Poison
- C11 : Knots Untied
- C12 : The Wisdom of Donkeys



September 1979

Vol LVIII No 9

Price 30p

(including postage)

Editor: Roy Coad

40-PAGE ISSUE  
8-PAGE PULL-OUT  
Students' Church Directory

# The Harvester

Inside: James Hudson Taylor, Saint and Visionary



## A Major Mission Field

Did you know there were over 250,000 men in our Armed Services, plus 11,000 within the Women's Forces. We are convinced that the Services represent a major mission field in our country today. There are open doors to bring the Gospel to men in the barrack room, hospitals and the detention centres to name but a few places. This past year has seen some real blessing in gospel work in detention centres. Praise God "He looseth the prisoners". In the best possible sense! The season of outreach at the Royal Tournament and Cardiff and Edinburgh Tattoos is now virtually over but the influence of the Word remains in many lives. Please pray home this thrusting ministry of the Spirit upon the Word and the human conscience.

*Extending opportunities greet the men and lady Scripture Readers of SASRA and your prayers are sought for this autumn's ministry. Pray the fruit may remain. Thank God for Senior officers of the Forces who are being drawn to the Truth.*

*Details of the Association's ministry will be sent on application to the General Secretary at 75/79 High Street, Aldershot, Hants, GU11 1BY*



THE SOLDIERS' AND AIRMEN'S  
SCRIPTURE READERS ASSOCIATION

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**Andrew Creamer** (Missionary in Battersea)  
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# The Harvester

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## Editorial

### Race and the Churches

An ounce of help is worth a pound of precept—although the precept is not to be despised in making us sensitive to issues with which we may not have been personally involved, or where we are personally involved but just have not noticed that they exist!

So much has been written and debated about racial problems that few can be ignorant of their existence. We may not find it so easy to recognise when we ourselves contribute to them—and not least in church life, where we are apt to take so much for granted. (Would we for example have expected to find that contemporary casualness in dress could give very real offence to black Christians joining a London church? It did, because their standards in this matter were much higher—and closer to our own English practice of forty years ago.)

But the problems go so much deeper than that. It is good to report three very real attempts at practical help to churches in this field: all, incidentally, are deliberately provocative (and constructively so). The literature on *Making Peace*, essentially a practical course of private or group study cut down to basics, is available from In Contact, St. Andrews Road, Plaistow, London E13 8QD—who will put you in touch with Malcolm Martin, the secretary. Then an excellent sound-strip *There's None Around Here* is available from John Forrest of the Visual Aid Partnership at 25 Lucien Road, Wimbledon Park, London SW19 8EL. It costs £9.95, and a remittance should be sent with the order: the soundstrip is ideal for small or large groups, and can be used over and over again. A leaflet is also available from the Visual Aid Partnership. Finally, those who are already deeply involved in inter-racial church work might like to get hold of details of the *Zebra Project* from the Bow Mission, Merchant Street, London E.3.

Also of help is the paperback *Jesus Christ the Only Way*, published by The Paternoster Press, and resulting from the work of the Evangelical Alliance Commission on the Christian approach to those of other faiths — (£2.60 from Evangelical Missionary Alliance, 19 Draycott Place, London SW3 2SJ).

To turn to a different subject, the considerable number who attended the recent CBRF day seminar on Women and the Churches will have been convinced of the value of such study sessions. CBRF are laying on another seminar, again at the London Bible College, on *The Caring Church*, on Saturday 20th October. Details appear on page 253 of this issue.

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# FAMILY CHALLENGE FROM PATERNOSTER



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and the Extremist Cults**  
Ronald M. Enroth £2.60 net

A professor of sociology examines the methods and teaching of seven cults including Hari Krishna, Children of God, Moon Organisation and Divine Light Mission. Case histories of young people who became involved are followed by three chapters on the nature of the seduction syndrome, the personalities most at risk, the plight of parents and the controversial issue of de-programming.

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It's probably the most important job a man ever has. But nobody bothers to train him for it. He doesn't even have the benefit of a job description! Absurd, isn't it? But not amusing. There's nothing funny about a broken home. Here at last is the missing job description. Realistic, revolutionary, humorous, it outlines a programme that can turn areas of marital stress into sources of strength.

# Modern Heroes of the Faith

John Peters

## 1—James Hudson Taylor, Saint and Visionary

*The first article in John Peters's new series.*

Over seventy years have elapsed since James Hudson Taylor, the founder of the China Inland Mission, died in Changsha, but the society he founded—now known as the Overseas Missionary Fellowship—still operates in almost fifty countries, thus indicating the durability of the principles he laid down. China, of course, is a vast distance from Barnsley where he was born on 21st May 1832, but it appears that from a very early age he was destined to work in that country. His father, for example, was distressed by the apparent lethargy of the Church towards that immense land and it seems that JHT determined there and then to be a missionary to China. The next crucial year in his experience was 1849, for in that year whilst reading a tract which spoke about the 'finished work of Christ' he realised that His work on the cross was an atoning one and later he recorded his conversion like this:

'Why does the author use this expression?' I questioned. 'Why not say the atoning or propitiatory work of Christ?'

Immediately the words 'It is finished' suggested themselves to my mind.

'What was finished?'

And I at once replied, 'A full and perfect atonement and satisfaction for sin. The debt was paid for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.'

Then came the further thought, 'If the whole work was finished and the whole debt paid, what is there left for me to do?'

And with this dawned the joyful conviction, as light was flashed into my soul by the Holy Spirit, that there was nothing in the world to be done but to fall down on one's knees and, accepting this Saviour and His salvation, praise Him for evermore.

The dramatic nature of his inward illumination may be compared with that of St. Augustine who, in 380 AD, after reading *Romans 13: 13b-14* tells: 'No further would I read, nor had I need: instantly... a clear light flooded my heart and all the darkness of doubt vanished away' (*Confessions* 8, 29). Seven months after this transforming realisation, Hudson Taylor placed his talents and energies entirely at God's disposal and again we have his description of the moment:

'Never shall I forget the feeling that came over me then. Words can never describe it. I felt I was in the presence of God, entering into covenant with the Almighty. I felt as though I wished to withdraw my promise, but could not. Something seemed to say "Your prayer is

answered, your conditions are accepted". And from that time the conviction never left me that I was called to China.'

Henceforth China was to dominate his whole life, and writing to his sister in 1850 he expressed his feelings in the following way:

I have a stronger desire than ever to go to China. That land is ever in my thoughts. Think of it—360 million souls, without God or hope in the world! Think of more than twelve millions of our fellow creatures dying every year without any of the consolations of the Gospel. Barnsley including the Common has only 15,000 inhabitants. Imagine what it would be if all these were to die in twelve months! Yet in China year by year *hundreds* are dying, for every man, woman and child in Barnsley. Poor, neglected China! Scarcely anyone cares about it.

**'If the whole work was finished and the whole debt paid, what is there left for me to do?'**

Three years later, after much study of Greek, Latin, Theology and Medicine, together with practical experience of the latter, he sailed for China from Liverpool on 19th September. The voyage itself was hazardous and when he got there he found that the difficulties were indeed enormous, requiring immense application and tact on his part. Not only was there the intellectual effort of acquiring a complex foreign language, but Shanghai was also in a state of war, with local rebels called the 'Red Turbans' opposing the Imperial Army. Further, as an agent for the short-lived Chinese Evangelisation Society he was something of an 'outsider' and he quickly discovered that much missionary work is routine, even mundane, and not at all romantic or glamorous. But typically Taylor persisted with the work he had been called to, and on Sunday 16th December 1854 started out on his first evangelistic foray into the wealthy industrial centre of Kashing-fu. Later between May and June 1855 he travelled up the Yangtze river covering well over four hundred miles, preaching in almost sixty cities in the interior in places where a Protestant missionary was a completely unknown quantity. He adopted Chinese dress at this time in order to show his identification with the Chinese people. All this time he was learning to depend entirely upon God, making sure of the Divine approval before embarking on any course of action. Once convinced however that he should do a certain thing nothing would



hold him back, a good indication of this being his decision to go to Swatow in 1856 despite all the difficulties inherent in such a plan. In this way the pattern of his life in China was laid down from the very first: travelling, preaching, exhorting, going on evangelistic journeys often in dangerous conditions, paying punctilious attention to financial and administrative matters, meditating deeply in the Word of God, spending much time in prayer, but all the while possessed of an inner serenity and calm which flowed from his absolute conviction in the rightness of his work and his total belief in the protecting power of God. In 1857 he resigned from the Chinese Evangelisation Society, but the first reference to the China Inland Mission does not occur until 27th June 1865. The reason for this 'gap' of almost eight years was mainly due to ill health, with recuperation spent in England. His burden for China grew even more intense during this period, however, and with the unwillingness of the other missionary societies to support him he founded the C.I.M. From the first he insisted upon certain distinctive features: total dependence upon God for all needs; identification with the Chinese people in matters of dress; the involvement of Chinese workers in all aspects of the work; the direction of the mission from the field itself and not by a group in England by processes of 'remote control'; and finally an insistence on scrupulous efficiency in administrative and financial matters. JHT saw the need for expansion in order to open up the hitherto closed provinces and now began a series of appeals by him for workers to make this vision a reality. Requests for 24 were soon followed by those for 30, 70, 100 and finally there was desire to bring the Gospel 'to every creature':

'I confess with shame, that until that moment the question, What did our Lord *really mean* by His command "Preach the gospel to every creature"? had never been raised by me. I had laboured for many years, as have many others, to carry the Gospel further afield: had laid plans for reaching every unreached province and many smaller districts in China, without realizing the plain meaning of our Saviour's words!'

Not disobedient to the heavenly vision, he realised that at least 1000 workers would be necessary and it was for this number he appealed at the Shanghai Conference in 1890; amazingly, by April 1895, 1,153 new missionaries were added in China—God had indeed blessed Taylor's faithfulness in a remarkable way. In fact, by this date he was in charge of half the entire Protestant force in China: in the conservative language of the New International Dictionary of the Christian Church, 'Despite opposition from missionaries and mandarins, some internal dissension and several riots, the CIM established itself as the "shock troops" of Protestant advance! In addition, Taylor's sterling qualities and the general standing of the CIM meant that his influence spread beyond China itself.'

Not surprisingly, over forty years rigorous effort began to affect JHT's health, and the years from 1895 onwards were marked by increasing ill health until it gradually became clear that he could no longer sustain his position at the head of the C.I.M. In August 1900, D. E. Hoste was appointed acting Director General and in 1902 was formally appointed General Director of the mission. Life was closing in for Taylor and not unnaturally after a life of feverish activity he found retirement irksome and

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'I cannot read; I cannot think;  
I cannot even pray; but I  
can trust'

---

difficult—as Howard Taylor says:

The change had come about so gradually that to many it was hardly felt, but it was evident to those who saw below the surface that Taylor deeply and painfully felt his inability to labour as formerly. The true joy of life, he said once, was to do all for Jesus' sake. Sacrifice and labour were alike sweet when it was for Him. Then he added after a pause, 'But it's hardest of all to do *nothing* for His sake.'

Retirement was spent quietly by the Lake of Geneva in Chevalleyres with his second wife Jennie, whom he married in 1872. She died in 1904 and there remained only one more visit to China where, on 3rd June 1905, he died in Changsha, capital of Hunan province, being subsequently buried in Chinkiang.

To read the various biographical studies of JHT's life is to become aware that, firstly, *he was a man with a vision*: to bring the Gospel to the millions in China dominated his whole thinking and energies for over fifty years. Something of his burning zeal may be gleaned from the following letter he wrote over twenty years after going to China: 'My souls yearns, oh! how intensely, for the evangelisation of the 180 millions of these unoccupied provinces. Oh, that I had a hundred lives to give or spend for their good'. Secondly, *he was a man of holiness*. He constantly stressed the need for that inner cleansing, that inner consecration, apart from which the believer cannot maintain a close fellowship with God. It was this very inner peace which gave Taylor not only equanimity but real tranquillity often in the face of appalling difficulties and dangers. Thirdly *he was a man of faith*. During the worst moments of the Boxer atrocities when many hundreds of Christians were put to death with great brutality, he is reputed to have said: 'I cannot read; I cannot think; I cannot even pray, but I can trust'. It was such a faith in the absolute faithfulness of God that drove him forward even at times of personal tragedy and bereavement, for his first wife and four of his children died in China. Doubtless a lesser man would

have been overwhelmed: 'dwelling in Christ he partook of His very being and resources in the midst of and concerning the very matters in question. And he did this by an act of faith as simple as it was continuous', is how an Australian friend explained the outlook of JHT. Fourthly, *he was a man of prayer*. At every juncture of his work in China we find him at prayer. Not surprisingly the Lord Jesus Christ was for him 'A living bright reality/More present to faith's vision keen/Than any outward object seen', and thus Taylor was able to carry on to the end. Finally *he was a man of courage*. China in the nineteenth century was a dangerous and violent place, but he endured it all like a 'good soldier' of the Lord Jesus Christ. Perhaps nothing illustrates more eloquently the guiding principles of James Hudson Taylor than a letter he wrote to a friend, then experiencing hard times: 'Go forward in the strength of the Lord, and in the sufficiency that

comes from Him alone, and thank Him for your conscious insufficiency, for when you are weak, then He can be strong in you. Do not let any self-consciousness prevent your being at God's disposal for any message He may want you to give at any time, to anyone. Never mind what people think about you' (1898). His life is a supreme example of what God can do with someone who is prepared to be obedient; it is a clarion call to prayer, faith and action. □

#### Bibliography

Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor, *Biography of James Hudson Taylor* (in two volumes, 1912 and 1918, entitled 'The Growth of a Soul' and 'The Growth of a Work of God'; an abridged edition of this work was published in 1965, the centennial year of the Mission); J. C. Pollock, *Hudson Taylor and Maria* (1962); article in *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church* (1974). Quotations in the above article are from the 1965 abridged edition of the *Biography* and are gratefully acknowledged.

## Swanwick 1979—a Reminder

28-30 September 1979 will be the 28th in the series of men's residential conferences—since 1957 at The Hayes, Swanwick, Derbys. The aim has always been to try to discover the biblical bases and principles on which our individual and corporate lives in Christ may be lived in face of current life and thought. We have not wished to deviate from Montague Goodman's five simplicities: assembly, worship, purpose, testimony, and conduct. Yet the world in which we have been placed becomes increasingly complex and frightening, and it is in that world that our faith must be lived out. In 1977 we considered the unique claims of Christ. In 1979 we would direct our consideration to 'the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ': we would find the answer to the challenge in *Ps. 42: 10*—'Where is your God?' In 1979, the challenge comes from Western hedonist no-godder, imperial Marxist atheism, aggressively revived Islam, and exclusivist paganism. England, the spring of the world's lingua franca, and much of world Christian mission, sees the building of mosque and temple but can do little for the defence of the faith in many lands where we have missioned. In no century, has *Heb. 11* been more true: 'escaped/slain by the sword'. The century of man's crowning achievement has been that of his crowning wickedness: two suicidally internecine world wars, each succeeded by a 'great leap forward' of atheism. How can we find working confidence that we know the God of gods, that He created, has redeemed, is still sovereign, and will yet be vindicated? How may we meet the Tozer challenge: 'The world is perishing for lack of the knowledge of God and the church is famishing for want of his presence!' Peter Kimber, who has served as a meteorologist in Antarctica and is a schools examiner in Scotland, James Fairbairn, professor of the specialised faculty, Pharmacognosy, at London, Paul Marsh, Scripture Union publishing director, after fifteen years mission to Pakistan, and Alan Nute, itinerant expositor and Keswick speaker, give six addresses between them: equal time is given to open sessions. □ (See p. 270)

### Christian Brethren Research Fellowship

### Autumn Seminar 1979

on

**SATURDAY, 20th OCTOBER, 1979**

from 10.30 to 17.30 hrs.

at

**London Bible College, Northwood  
Middlesex**

### 'THE CARING CHURCH'

A study of the pastoral concerns and responsibilities of a local church for its members and friends.

Discussion of the range of care and counsel problems involved in assembly life will be led by experienced workers, in practical cases and in open forum.

The Seminar will be opened by the Rev. Gilbert W. Kirby (President, the Evangelical Alliance, retiring Principal, the London Bible College) on the pastor's tasks and the closing paper given by Miss Joy Guy (Assistant Director, Central Council for Training of Social Workers) on the caring resources needed in local churches.

*Admission* 50p (for LBC use)

Light refreshments available during day.

## 'Think About These Things'—2

Bernard C. Martin

### Whatever is True

*Mr. Martin's second article in a series based on Phil. 4: 8 (RSV)*

In an age of innocence the word *true* would have no particular significance, because there would be nothing to contrast it with. We come to appreciate good qualities only when we have the not so good, or the positively evil, to compare them with.

Adam and Eve at the first had no knowledge of evil as contrasted with good, and therefore no knowledge of the false as contrasted with the true. Actually there is no falsehood which can stand up as a complete antithesis of truth, because falsehood always arises out of ignorance of the truth or as a deliberate distortion of known truth.

**We come to appreciate the good only when we have the not so good to compare it with**

The whole environment of our first parents, the fair creation fresh from the hand of God which he pronounced as 'good', could be described as *true* because it was reality, the way things are as willed by the Creator. That is the ultimate definition of *truth* and that vast realm which believers are bidden to contemplate. But a choice has to be made because the fall of man let in the *lie*, the lie that if man defied his Creator, that would not result in death as God had said, but rather would give him equality with God, thereby ridding him of his creaturely dependence. Thus we see that there is no eternal principle of evil as opposed to the good; the possibility of evil arises from the fact that God did not make his intelligent creatures automatons, but gave them the power of choice—to obey or disobey. Thus Lucifer fell, and man fell.

Man was deceived and paradise was lost. The paradise he thought he was going to enhance itself disappeared, and with it his intrinsic discernment of truth. No longer aligned to truth but the lie, man no longer stands before his creator delighting to do His will, but he is estranged, pursuing the fascination of his own will.

Man being made in the image of His Creator, was part of the true. But when in the darkness of the lie, men aspire to be gods, they are no longer brothers, but are in fierce competition to be the greatest; thereby bringing untold hardship misery and pain into the world.

Can the true be regained? Through the infinite mercy of God—yes! The despairing may, with a sure hope, listen to the voice of a Man in Palestine near 2,000 years ago. And what is He saying?—'I am the

way, and the *truth*, and the life; no one comes to the Father but by Me' (*John 14: 6 RSV*). This is the Man, who was put to death on a Cross (under the rule of the lie), but who rose again (in accordance with Truth's irresistible triumph) and whose atoning work and saving power are proclaimed in a book, which has proved it is the Word of God it claims to be.

Wonderfully, we are back with the true. As made anew in Christ—the Truth—the redeemed man can now clearly see all the things which are true as contrasted with the perverted truth which has permeated the human race.

This is a great experience. Now at last we distinguish the true from the false, the real from the illusory, the actual facts from the distortions, the good from man's substitutes. And this enlightenment may pervade the whole of life—how far will depend on our willingness to think along the true line.

The Greek word for true is *alēthēs* meaning real, unconcealed, not illusory, right. The Bible opens to us a vast field of the 'true' in this sense, both in the spiritual and material spheres. And it not only gives us this, but at the same time moulds our thought to think in a right away about everything—creating attitudes that fashion our conduct.

*Alēthēs* is used widely in the Septuagint: One instance is *Job. 42: 7*—'You have not spoken of Me what is right as my servant Job hath'. We must beware of a slipshod theology held through slovenly thinking! Job's three friends actually added to Job's acute distress by flinging in his face what they imagined to be orthodoxy, but which was in fact error, namely that Job's great sufferings were the result of his great sins. What they said was not 'right'

**. . . dwelling on the things that are true, there will be no room for the destructive attributes**

—that is, not in accordance with the truth of God nor the truth about God. Suffering is still in the church to-day through an unbalanced dogmatism in various channels. Dwelling on the things that are true, the spacious and authentic image in our minds of things as they really are, there will be no room for those attitudes which are in contradiction to this—such as self-importance, harbouring of resentment, carping criticism, selfish overriding of the rights of others or an unforgiving spirit.

In the eighth chapter of *John*, we see the Truth and the Lie in stark opposition. Jesus said 'If you continue in My work . . . you will know the truth and the truth will make you free' (vv. 31, 32). But the Jews were incensed by the implication that they were not



free, and Jesus proceeded to tell them that they were of their 'father, the devil' (v. 44), of whom He further said 'there is no truth in him', and that he was 'the father of lies' (v. 44). In the end, they took up 'stones to throw at Him' (v. 59) an ominous precursor of Calvary where eventually the lie crucified the Truth—in vain, of course, as the events of the third day triumphantly proclaimed.

If we continue in His word, this will probably mean throwing overboard some of our natural trends that get us nowhere, but truth will shine the more brightly in our souls, and give us a freedom, so that we are not taken in by the lie which is still powerfully abroad in the Spirit of antichrist. □

### Home Workers' Fund

for relief in age, sickness and necessity.  
Gifts received in the month of June for the general purposes of this Fund amounted to £4,347.

*Secretary and Treasurer:* A. E. Wakeling,  
Equity House, 450 Hackney Rd.  
London E2 6QL

## Professor Bruce Asks

In my younger days as a preacher, I preached very frequently on our Lord's parables. It occurs to me that during the past twenty years or so I have preached on them very little. This is probably due in large measure to a feeling that by preaching on a parable I might obscure the point which it was intended to make. Perhaps the simple re-telling of a parable, suitably translated into contemporary terms, could be as directly effective today as the original telling was to its first hearers. What do readers think? I should be particularly interested to have the opinion of those who have had experience of preaching on the parables.

*Correspondence, please, to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX by 15 September.*

## The Way to Life

Dick Saunders and the team  
will be visiting

**Tiverton Baptist Church**  
31st August—9th September

This Autumn Dick Saunders will be  
conducting four crusades in  
**The West Indies**

# The Minister of the Gospel

J. H. Hughes

## 2—Matthew: What Jesus Said

*The second article in Mr. Hughes's series.*

Matthew reveals Jesus as King, and where there is a king there must be a kingdom. 'He spake with authority', and those who believe are born 'from above' into his kingdom (*Jn. 3: 3*). The kingdom is invisible now; it is 'in the midst', and where there is a believing heart the kingdom is there through the indwelling Christ. It is strange that we hear little of this aspect of the Gospel, even though the last thing related of the apostle Paul is that 'he preached the kingdom of God, no man forbidding him' (*Acts. 28: 31*). Therefore one of the marks of the 'man of God' is 'authority'; his message is from the Throne. We must never apologise for what we say.

Let us notice a few of the aspects of the Gospel peculiar to Matthew. First that Christ was 'born king', and he was always king in life, death and resurrection. His last word was 'All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth'. If we had only Matthew's account we should not have known that he had left the world. Of Israel it was said 'The shout of a king is among them', so the preacher is in the king's service, an ambassador of good news to a lost world.

**Where there is a believing heart  
the Kingdom is there through  
the indwelling Christ**

It follows that like the Master the servant must speak with authority. The sermon on the mount demonstrates His superiority to Moses and the law. 'I say unto you' is absolute and final, and the apostolic preaching bore this same mark of authority. 'God commandeth all men everywhere to repent' (*Acts. 17: 30*). And *Rom. 1: 5* 'We received... apostleship, for the obedience of faith among all nations'.

The first universal invitation was given by the Lord himself in the words 'Come unto me', sublime in their simplicity. Truly, God hides his treasures from the wise, but gives them freely unto babes. The earnest preacher will however ponder the background of these words, and notice that the early chapters of *Genesis* were in the mind of the Lord as he spake. He will compare the cities which rejected him with the first city built by man, and the line which perished in the Flood. Against this was the line of Seth, accepting the sentence of death, and believing the promise in Eden. These were God's elect, with Enoch and Noah, whose name means 'rest', and the ark of safety, and in a figure, a new creation. These fragmentary thoughts will indicate how the wonders of the Gospel are enshrined in the artless narrative.

John the Baptist proclaimed that 'the kingdom of heaven is at hand'. It is always so, for God's time-piece measures not days or years, but events. And 'events' can accelerate as we look at the Middle East today and remember the Balfour declaration of 1917. The king's business is urgent.

We are not to be deterred or discouraged by apparent failure. The 'good seed' in chapter thirteen bore fruit in ever decreasing measure some 100, some 60, and some 30. The King himself was crucified outside the city which he himself had called 'The City of the great King.' And the last parable of the seven tells of one pearl, to possess which the merchantman sold all that he had. The pearl was not counted precious to the Jew, and by the Gentile was despised. So the wise preacher will be careful in reckoning 'results', but wise to see the working of the Spirit in those 'who are ordained to eternal life.'

Of first importance is the Lord's statement in chapter sixteen that on the rock of our confession he would build his Church, and that 'the gates of hell should not prevail against it'. When we remember God's promise to Abraham (*Gen. 22: 17*) that 'Thy seed shall possess the gates of his enemies', it becomes clear that the Church will be the instrument of his power in his coming reign. Our present life is the training ground, but the battlefield will be when he rules in power, when the nations will have no choice but to render him 'feigned obedience' (*Ps. 110*). But one word is necessary, which is to remind ourselves of Paul's word to Timothy so near to his own 'exodus': 'Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ' (*2 Tim. 2: 3*).

These are but a few of the characteristics of this Gospel, and we may well end by noticing its universal scope. It is to 'every creature'. The Cross reconciled fallen man to God, and gave him the right to claim the sovereignty of the world at his coming. This gives the confidence of faith to the preacher, and the vision of the Day when 'every knee will bow to him, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.' □

### The Story of Easneye

All Nations Christian College will be known at first hand to many of our readers, and all will have noticed contributions to our columns by members of the staff of the college.

We announce with pleasure the publication of a short history of the college and of its three predecessors—All Nations, Mount Hermon and Ridgeland Bible Colleges. The Story of Easneye is obtainable from the college bookshop (All Nations Christian College, Easneye, Ware, Herts SG12 8LX) at 50p.

# God's Work in Old Creation

A. E. Long

*The first part of a double article on Creation.*

There are modern theories of origins that postulate a design without a designer, cosmos without intelligent cosmic force. Nothing in the Bible supports such a theory: indeed, everything in it contradicts it. The choice is between believing an unproved hypothesis of man, or the revelation of God in Scripture, which everywhere teaches that God created all things. Man can *make* artefacts from such materials as lie ready to his hand, but he cannot *create* those materials. Only God can create, that is, 'bring into being or form, out of nothing.' Creation can only be the work of the Creator. Such theories therefore deny to the Creator the glory of creation, by attributing it to blind mechanistic forces. *Psalm 19* states 'The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard'. By day and night the heavens bear their mute yet eloquent witness to the great Creator. As Addison finely wrote:

The spacious firmament on high,  
With all the blue ethereal sky,  
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,  
Their great Original proclaim.  
The unwearied sun, from day to day,  
Doth his Creator's power display;  
And publishes to every land  
The work of an almighty hand.

In *Revelation 4* the twenty-four elders prostrate themselves in worship before the throne of Deity, saying 'Worthy art thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honour and the power; for thou didst create all things; and because of Thy will they are, and were created'. As creatures, however exalted and close to the throne of Deity, they rightly worship the Creator.

In his massive indictment of the pagan world of his day in the epistle to the Romans, Paul wrote that what is *seen* in creation witnesses to what is *unseen* about the Creator, 'for the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse'. The 'everlasting power and divinity' of the Creator is reasonably to be inferred from His handiwork, even as the skill of an artificer ought reasonably to be inferred from his artefacts. To refuse such witness to God in creation is to leave such as refuse 'without excuse'. Of such Paul wrote 'they exchanged the truth of God (viz. as Creator) for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever'. They worshipped visual images of created

things instead of worshipping the unseen Creator. Israel's idolatry was the background of Isaiah's magnificent challenge 'Lift up your eyes on high, and see who hath created these, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by name; by the greatness of his might, and for that he is strong in power, not one is lacking'. God is not to be likened to graven images, made by cunning workmen, for He is 'the Creator of the ends of the earth'. Moreover, that 'not one is lacking' among the star-spangled heavens shows that the Creator of the universe also *maintains* it, as the writer of the *Hebrews* states in attributing creation to the Son, 'through whom also he made the worlds . . . and upholding all things by the word of his power'. Paul also writes of the Son as 'the first born of all creation' (i.e. not as being *part* of creation, but having the *primacy* in it as Creator)—'For in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and invisible, . . . all things have been created through him, and unto him; And he is before all things, and in him all things consist'. Without Christ, the universe could not have come into being; apart from Him, it could not continue in being.

*Genesis 1: 1* states 'In the beginning God (Heb. *Elohim*) created the heaven and the earth'. *Elohim* is a uni-plural noun, and thus the uni-plurality of the Godhead appears in connection with man's creation—'Let us make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness . . . and God created man in *his* own image'. Within this concept of the uni-plurality of Deity, *verse 2* draws attention to the creative activity of the *Spirit* of God—the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters'. Job says 'By his spirit the heavens are garnished'. *Psalm 33* may be thought to refer to this—'By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the *breath* of his mouth'. On the earthly plane, *Psalm 104* says of the lower creation—'Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created'. Not incompatibly with these Old Testament assertions, the New Testament attributes creation to *Christ*, in which, as in redemption, He acted as God's agent (cf. *Prov. 8: 30 RV*). John accordingly writes 'All things were made by him; (i.e. as 'the Word') and without him was not anything made that hath been made.' *Genesis 1* has eight references to 'and God said', which may be thought to imply Christ acting in His capacity as 'the Word', for God. In *Colossians 1*, Paul attributes creation to Christ, 'the Son of (the Father's) love' acting on His behalf—'In him were all things created . . . all things have been created through him, and unto him'. It was 'through (Him) also he (God) made the worlds'. It would therefore seem clear that the Trinity was involved in creation, as a uni-plural Person.



In his creation, Adam was made God's vicegerent on earth, as the words signify—'Let them have dominion over the fish . . . the fowl . . . the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing . . . upon the earth'. *Psalm 8* restates this—'Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet'. This purpose for man was expressed *before* the Fall, through which man forfeited and largely lost his dominion over the lower creatures. In fact man himself had been seen to be unsubject to God, he was clearly unsuited to represent God as 'lord of creation'. This loss of dominion is pointed by the writer to the *Hebrews*, in his quotation from *Psalm 8*—'Thou didst put all things in subjection under his feet. . . But now we see not yet all things subjected to him'. Although 'yet' has prospect of hope of future restoration, it shows the present fact of man's lost dominion through the Fall. Indeed, Paul envisaged all creation as involved in the consequences that flowed from the Fall, for he writes in *Romans 8* 'For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will but by reason of him who subjected it'. Because of this subjection, 'the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now', although 'travail' has prospect of birth, in this case of a new world order. Indeed, its subjection is 'in

hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God'. Such 'hope' is centred in Christ 'the last Adam', for if, as the *Hebrews* writer states, 'we see not yet all things subjected to him (i.e. man) . . . we behold . . . Jesus . . . crowned with glory and honour', of which 'the first man Adam' proved himself to be unworthy. In Christ, all that Adam lost will be more than restored:

In him the tribes of Adam boast

More blessings than their father lost (Watts).

In Christ, creation will be restored to a greater glory than ever before.

Isaiah foresaw a new cosmos—'I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered, nor come into mind'. John saw this in vision: 'I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away. . . And he that sitteth on the throne said, behold, I make all things new'. Peter, too, prophesied the destruction of the present heavens and earth by fire in 'the day of judgment' and the coming of 'new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness'. But this will be the consummation of *New Creation*, which will be the subject of our next paper. □

## THERE WE FOUND BRETHREN

Although a little-noticed part of New Zealand society, the "Brethren" form nearly one per cent of the population and there are nearly 300 local fellowships.

In this definitive study, Peter Lineham, a research historian in fellowship at Wairakei Road Gospel Chapel, Christchurch, tells the story of the New Zealand assemblies, beginning in 1852 when J. G. Deck fled there to escape the bitterness of controversy in Britain and left the Exclusive fold—until J. N. Darby reclaimed him.

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218pp . . . 77 illustrations . . . 6 statistical tables . . . map . . . list of assemblies . . . £6.50 post free (£6.00 to CBRF subscribers) . . .

The Paternoster Press Ltd., Paternoster House, 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter, Devon EX2 4JW

# Homosexuality

F. A. Tatford

*Dr. Tatford has felt impelled to write on an often-shunned but, today, highly urgent subject.*

I had been friendly with Charles (not his real name) for many years. Like most people who knew him, I had classified him as a confirmed bachelor. It was obvious that he had no intention of entering the married state. But one day Charles fell—and fell heavily. No one could possibly compare with the girl who had come into his life so suddenly and unexpectedly! They were married within twelve months and, at first, seemed extremely happy.

It has been said that the course of true love never runs smoothly and it was evident after a couple of years that something was wrong. At first he

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**'We are not hurting anyone  
and I can't see that it is wrong'**

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confided moodily that his wife seemed more interested in an old girl friend than in him and was spending a lot of her time with her. Later she had insisted that her friend should live with them so that they could see more of each other. The climax came when his wife declared her intention of sleeping with her friend instead of with her husband. It was probably inevitable that the argument should be heated: it had been a long and bitter experience for Charles and he could take no more. He challenged his wife to choose between him and her friend. That evening he returned home to find that they had left and a note declared that his wife would never return. Despite all entreaties and the attempted mediation of friends, she never did.

An isolated case? Only in so far as she had entered into marriage and had attempted to establish a heterosexual relationship. But there are many Christian girls and women living together in a lesbian relationship and apparently quite happily and without any sense of guilt. Many are regular in attendance at church and some are occupied in religious activities of various kinds. As one charming and well-educated American woman said to me on one occasion, 'We have a special contribution to make which others cannot. You may not like our life style, but Jesus never condemned it and He would have been more merciful than most preachers.'

It was the eve of a young man's wedding and a friend had arranged a 'stag' party of nearly thirty in his own restaurant. There were jokes and pleasant conversation, but nothing unseemly. As we were putting on our overcoats prior to departing, our host asked one young fellow to drive me to the place where I was staying. It was some distance away and, after a few minutes, the young man turned and

said, 'Our host knew I had a problem and he thought you might be able to help'.

He pulled in by the side of the road and stopped the car and then commenced talking. It was a long story, dating back to boyhood and seduction by an older man, and then the development of unnatural desires and finally the link-up with another with similar desires. Both were Christians and actively engaged in religious work. 'I can see nothing wrong in our way of living,' he said, 'It is just that we are made that way. But when I was preaching a few weeks ago someone attacked me for my "sin" and told me he would drive me out of every pulpit he found me in and expose me to everyone. We are not hurting anyone and I can't see that it is wrong.'

An isolated case? No. A friend had picked me up at the airport and had driven me to his home for the night. As we got out of the car, a boy of about 12 was standing there. 'Hullo Richard', said my friend and, turning to me, said, 'This is my friend Richard'. 'Pop in and get yourself an ice and I'll see you presently', he added to the boy. He was a man of over 50 years of age and I had no idea that there was anything out of the normal, but when I mentioned it casually to his wife, she said, 'Oh, that's only one of his boys. Scores of them come here and he gives them a dollar or two to co-operate'. Neither evidently saw anything wrong in what was happening.

Isolated? One estimate of the homosexuals and lesbians in the U.S.A. sets the figure at over 20 million and in Britain as over 2 million. N. Pittenger has estimated that 5 per cent of adults in Britain are homosexuals, but F. E. Kenyon puts the figure at 4 per cent for men and 2 per cent for women. In America alone there are nearly 2,000 'gay' organisations. Not all of these individuals are practising homosexuals but many are. Some—either from a sense of shame or else to avoid upsetting other people—preserve their secret and do not advertise their tendencies or practices. Quite a number nowadays, however, are adopting a militant attitude and are demanding a recognition of the propriety of their life style. Indeed, there seems an all-out campaign to gain recognition and to promote acceptance and extension of the practice of homosexuality. 'Gay' magazines and books, clubs and organisations, and even churches and ministers are rapidly increasing in number and influence. The Metropolitan Community Church founded by Troy Perry, a defrocked Pentecostal minister, who is himself a confessed homosexual, has become the forerunner of 'gay' churches in America. The denomination which has resulted has a worldwide membership of 70,000. Many homosexuals and lesbians have even gone through a form of marriage in the attempt to make their relationships socially acceptable.

Homosexuality has been practised in various

countries for centuries. It was certainly prevalent in ancient Greece and Rome and was one of the factors contributing to the downfall of the Roman Empire. In Greece, Socrates and other philosophers were homosexual. In Rome, 14 out of 15 emperors were. The Kinsey report states that one in 25 males in U.S.A. are exclusively homosexual, one in 10 have practised it for at least 3 years and 3 in 10 have had some homosexual relationship. That it has existed in Britain for hundreds of years is evident from the Acts of 1290, 1533, 1861 and 1967. Indeed, until 1861 it was legally an offence punishable by death and, even until the passing of the Sexual Offences Act, it still attracted a sentence of life imprisonment. Under this Act, of course, the performance of homosexual acts in private by consenting adults is no longer regarded as a crime.

Investigation into the causes of homosexuality indicate that, in a large proportion of cases, the reason is found in an unsatisfactory emotional environment in childhood. D. J. West, in his book *Homosexuality*, says that 'it was the combination of unsatisfactory father and mother which was particularly characteristic of the male homosexual patients' backgrounds' at Maudsley Hospital, London. Others confirm that, in many instances, an unemotional and unresponsive parent (or sometimes two frigid parents) has played a considerable part and that this has been emphasised still more if the other parent had attempted to 'smother' the child with affection. The creation of a sense of insecurity in the home by divorce, alcoholism or constant quarrelling is undoubtedly another contributory factor.

Adolescent experimentation, often springing from personal masturbation; or a restless teenager seeking after new thrills; or, only too frequently, deliberate seduction by an older person with homosexual inclinations; or even an unhappy love affair; each may be the reason for the formation of tendencies which subsequently shape nature and outlook. Boarding schools, barracks, ships and prisons have, of course, long been breeding grounds for the practice.

It has sometimes been claimed that the explanation of these tendencies is biological, that genetic and chromosomal factors are responsible. This is not usually accepted today. Hormonal imbalance or defective genes or hormones are not the cause. In fact, it is now the general view that no person is born a homosexual, but acquires certain inclinations or tendencies primarily because of environment, friendships, emotional disturbance or shock, curiosity or a desire for experimentation.

The average homosexual claims that, because his nature is different from that of the average individual, he cannot avoid living and acting as he does, that his tendencies are compulsive because of his peculiar nature, and that there should, therefore, be a recognition of the legitimacy of his life style. In *Eros Defiled*, J. White, writing from a psychiatrist's view,

says emphatically that 'homosexual behaviour is not in any sense inevitable to someone who engages in it. It may be understandable. But no homosexual (certainly no Christian homosexual) has the right to say, "I am not responsible for what I do because my homosexual nature makes me do it"'. E. Wahl says bluntly that 'homosexuality is a learned disorder and it is not genetically inherited'.

The Biblical attitude to homosexuality is clear. When the destruction of Sodom had been determined, two angels were sent to warn Lot and his family to flee from the city. They lodged with Lot for the night, and the men of Sodom demanded that the two visitors should be brought out that they might 'know them'. Lot resisted the demand at his own peril and eventually offered to sacrifice his two virgin daughters to their lust. Only the intervention of the angels apparently saved his life (*Genesis 19: 1-11*). It has been argued by D. S. Bailey (in *Homosexuality and the Christian Tradition*) that the word 'know' simply meant that the Sodomites wished to become acquainted with the two angels and that their offence was against hospitality and was not one of lust. This view has been supported by others, but it is obviously untenable. Otherwise, why should Lot offer his virgin daughters as a substitute? The word was used, as it was frequently used in the Old Testament, in a sexual sense.

Similar arguments have been used in the incident described in *Judges 19: 1-30*, where the citizens of Gibeah demanded that his host should bring forth his Levite guest that they might 'know him'. The implication again was clearly sexual, and the visitor surrendered his concubine to their lust, to be raped all night until she died. It cannot be argued that the desire of the men was to become acquainted with the stranger. In both cases, judgment fell upon the offenders.

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### The biblical attitude to homosexuality is clear

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It has been argued that the record of the friendship of David and Jonathan implies the existence of a homosexual relationship between the two friends. In *1 Samuel 18: 3*, it is stated that Jonathan loved David 'as his own soul'. On Jonathan's death, David described Jonathan's love as 'wonderful, passing the love of women' (*1 Samuel 1: 26*). There is not the slightest indication of anything more than a deep devotion between two friends and there is not a vestige of support in the narrative for the importation of any sexual implication.

In *Leviticus 18: 22* and *20: 13* homosexuality was forbidden and was classified as a capital crime: the offender was to be put to death. The New Testament attitude is perfectly clear from *Romans 1: 26, 27; 1 Corinthians 6: 9; 1 Timothy 1: 10*, etc. There can be no doubt that the practice is condemned



in the Bible as a sin. As one writer remarks, 'A homosexual disposition may be a sickness, but homosexual practice is not an illness or an alternative life style. It is sin'. Yet N. Pittenger, in *Time for Consent*, writes, 'Homosexual acts between persons who intend a permanent union in love are not sinful nor should the church consider them as such'. This is a denial of the plain teaching of the Scriptures.

A plea is often made for sympathy and compassion, but it is misplaced if intended to secure justification for the practice. L. Barnett, in *Homosexuality*, asks, for example, 'Is it not flagrantly unchristian, unloving, ruthlessly to deny the gay person the right to exercise, responsibly and lovingly, his capacity for love—including sexual loving?' The premise, of course, is wrong: the homosexual cannot be denied a right which does not exist.

This will, of course, be described as lacking in understanding and compassion. But sin is sin! Roy Hession is completely right in *Forgotten Factors*, when he says, 'The first thing the homosexual . . . must do is to agree with God and call it sin'. As long as he defends it as a permissible way of life, due to factors over which he has no control, and demands that his conduct shall be recognised and approved, the situation is hopeless. The basic and primary prerequisite, if there is to be hope, is a recognition

that this is a sinful habit.

T. la Haye writes pertinently in *The Unhappy Gays* (p. 109), 'Clearly it is ungodly, vile, against nature, and shameful. It leads inevitably to a "reprobate mind", that is, a mind with a conscious bent towards sinning'. Romans I 'explains the arrogant, open defiance that characterises many of the leaders of today's militant homosexual movement—they have a reprobate mind, plus their obsessive selfishness, and you begin to understand why they are so driven to make their depraved life-style widely accepted.'

But, through the work of Christ, there is salvation. For the repentant sinner there is forgiveness, for the one held in the shackles of a sinful habit and sinful desires there is deliverance. A new way of life is possible in Christ. The Holy Spirit of God still waits to sanctify the body He indwells. Whatever the problems and difficulties, Christ is sufficient.

To talk of a Christian homosexual, as some people do, is surely a contradiction in terms. The homosexual's characteristic loneliness certainly attracts sympathy, but, in every circumstance, the Christian must realise that Christ is his life and sufficiency. That involves his willing co-operation with Christ in rejecting all that is wrong and in the full surrender of his life to Christ's control. □

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Tea Tickets and further information from Counties Evangelistic Work, 221, Kings Rd., Reading, Berks. RG1 4LS.

Correspondence for this page should be sent to Mr. Peter Cousins, M.A., B.D.,  
The Paternoster Press Ltd., 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW marked 'Harvester Question Page'

## Question and Answer, with Peter Cousins

### Dedicating Children

#### Question 154

*I have heard it suggested the practice of dedicating infants is wrong because they are 'born in sin and shapen in iniquity' and because the practice has more in common with the Old Testament one of circumcision. What is your opinion?*

Certainly, this practice (like, for example, Women's Meetings and Sunday Schools) is nowhere enjoined in Scripture. But this fact does not show it to be necessarily wrong or even undesirable—merely that no fellowship should make it obligatory. There is scriptural justification, of course, in *Matthew 19: 14*. Here parents literally brought their children to the Saviour, asking for his blessing. The attitude they showed is one that all Christian parents will surely share. It seems quite appropriate that on a single occasion they should publicly do what they propose doing continuously and in private on behalf of the children they love. It is equally fitting that this should be done in the presence and partnership of the whole fellowship. In this way the church is reminded of its responsibility for the spiritual formation of the children associated with it.

People sometimes quibble as to whether it is the parents or the child who are being 'dedicated' on such an occasion. The obvious answer (in different senses of the word 'dedicate') is: both. As for the 'sinfulness' of children—this does not seem to have prevented the Saviour from blessing them on this occasion. And perhaps *Matthew 18: 10* is also relevant here.

### Free—or 'Slaves to Sin'?

#### Question 155

*In view of passages such as John 8: 34 and Romans 7: 18, 19, how far is it right to speak of man as having free will?*

If man had *not* free will, then he could not be held responsible for his actions and God would be unjust to judge him for them. In fact, of course, human beings can choose to behave in ways that everybody recognises as "good" (*Matthew 7: 11*). We recognise this in daily life when we thank people for acts of kindness, thus assuming that

they have chosen to perform them.

But such acts leave us as far from God as ever, still in rebellion against him. So far as salvation is concerned, we are utterly helpless. We certainly choose our actions—but the actions we freely choose are sinful, being the actions of unbelieving and unrepentant sinners. Our freedom of action can do nothing to change our standing with God. So far as this is concerned, our wills are in bondage.

### '... before the Son of man comes'

#### Question 156

*How do you interpret Matthew 10: 23b? I find it difficult to believe that the 'coming' of the Son of man can refer to anything else than the parousia.* Comparison of the material contained in this chapter with that which appears elsewhere in the synoptic gospels makes the composite nature of the chapter clear. We should possibly understand this saying, not as a prediction about the length of time that must elapse before the Lord's return, but rather as an exhortation to the followers of Jesus. In an unspecified and generalised future, their mission to Israel must continue. Never, until the parousia, might they regard it as completed. Thus the community was and is faced by Jesus with the challenge of an unfinished task. Some interpreters, as you imply, understand the verse as referring, not to the Saviour's final coming, but to other and nearer events. Christians today may find it difficult to accept that references to 'the Son of man coming' could refer to anything apart from the parousia. Yet certain passages in the New Testament should make us reconsider this attitude. In *Mark 9: 1*, Jesus says that some of his followers will not die before they see the Kingdom of God come with power. In *Acts 2: 19f*, Peter describes the (Easter and) Pentecost event in terms that the Old Testament uses of the Day of the Lord. If we might hesitate to use such language in this context ('sun turned to darkness and moon to blood . . . blood and fire and vapour of smoke'), then perhaps we should think again about the importance of some New Testament events that we tend to take for granted.

The death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus marked the end of Satan's power and the beginning of a new age. The fall of Jerusalem was just as clearly a judgement upon and the termination of the old order. There is a good deal to be said for understanding this eschatological language as having a fulfilment before the parousia.

# THE HARVESTER STUDENT'S CHURCH DIRECTORY 1979

Listed in this directory are those churches of 'Christian Brethren' which have indicated that they will give a special welcome to students from local universities and colleges. In some cases, but not all, special students' activities may be arranged. Full details should be obtained from the addresses shown. The editor of *The Harvester* is always glad to hear from churches wishing to be added to the directory.

Address and Travel Notes	Contact	Main Services	Notes
<b>ABERDEEN</b>			
Hebron Evangelical Church, Thistle Street. (off Rose St., which turns off Union St. Most city buses)	Dr. David Short, 20 Queens Rd., Aberdeen AB9 2PL, (Tel. 53853)	<i>Sun.</i> 10:30, 18:30, 20:00 (YP), <i>Wed.</i> 20:00	Lunch available at 20 Queens Rd. every Sunday during term.
<b>ABERYSTWYTH</b>			
<b>BANGOR, Gwynedd</b>			
(Nearest-Gospel Hall, Mill Rd., ('The Village') Llanfairfechan. Bus or train (bus stop—the crossroads): lifts by car are available. The CU can also put students in touch with churches in Bangor)	Mr. Lewis, Hafod-y-Bryn, Bryn Rd., Aberystwyth.  Dr. W. E. Beer, Nilgiri, 1 Llandegai Village, Bangor (Tel. 53874) <i>or</i> Dr. Daisy Ronco (Warden), Neuadd Rathbone, University Coll. of N. Wales, College Rd., Bangor.	(Llanfairfechan) <i>Sun.</i> 10:45, 18:00 16:00 (summer) open air on promenade <i>Wed.</i> 19:30	University C.U. meets in Old Students Common Room <i>Sat.</i> 19:30 etc. Students welcome at Dr. Beer's house <i>Sun.</i> 19:30-22:00.
<b>BELFAST</b>			
Crescent Church, University Rd., Belfast. (A few minutes walk from University main gate. Buses from City centre, train to Botanic Ave.)	Mr. William Walker, B.D., 9 Stranmillis Rd., Belfast (Tel. 662546) <i>or</i> 9 Wynchurch Ave., Belfast (Tel. 641343) (Mr. Walker is chaplain to the Queens University)	<i>Sun.</i> 10:30, 11:40, 19:00 <i>Tues.</i> 20:00 <i>Thurs.</i> 20:00	For activities of the Christian Union or International Friendship Assn., contact Mr. Walker.
<b>BIRMINGHAM (see also Walsall)</b>			
(Mr. Eric H. Holt, 128 Warwards Lane, Selly Park, Birmingham B29 7RD, tel. 021-472 0585, has offered to give information or help to any enquirers. He lives near the University)			
1. Bearwood Chapel, Bearwood Rd., Smethwick, Warley, W. Mids. (6 bus to terminus, 11 to Sandon Rd., 9 to Kings' Head)	Mr. Geo. F. Stickley, 9 King Charles Rd., Halesowen, W. Mids. (Tel. 021-422 3133)	<i>Sun.</i> 10:15, 11:30, 6:30 <i>Thurs.</i> Prayer & Bible study 20:00	Birmingham and Aston Universities: students are regular visitors. Hospitality rota.
2. Beeches Evangelical Church, Beeches Rd., Great Barr, Birmingham B42 2HL. (52 bus to Beeches Estate stops at Cottage Stores)	Mr. A. Cardwell, 252 Walsall Rd., Perry Barr Birmingham B42 1UB. (Tel. 021-356 5756)	<i>Sun.</i> 11:00, 18:30 <i>Wed.</i> 20:00	Students from Aston University, Birmingham Polytechnic etc. attend regularly.
3. Duke Street Chapel, Duke St., Sutton Coldfield. (Buses 102, 103, 104, 110 to Cottage Hospital stop)	Mr. Nigel Crowther, 34 Clarendon Rd., Sutton Coldfield (Tel. 021-308-6725)	<i>Sun.</i> 10:45, 18:30, 20:00	Annual students' service, 1st <i>Sun</i> in Sept, 18:30.
4. Helier Chapel, St. Heliers Rd., off Frankley Beeches Rd., off Bristol Rd. South (A38), Northfield, Birmingham. (Buses 61, 62, 63 to Lockwood Rd. from city or to Frankley Beeches Rd. towards city)	Mr. A. J. Marks, 16 Hazel Rd., Rubery, Birmingham B45 9DX (Tel. 021-453-3330)	<i>Sun.</i> 10:15, 18:30, 20:00 YPF. <i>Tues.</i> 19:45 Prayer & Bible study	
5. Hope Chapel, Reddings Rd., Moseley, Birmingham B13. (45, 50 & 35 buses to King David's School)	Mr. A. E. Timms, 88 Eastwood Rd., Birmingham B12 9NB.	<i>Sun.</i> 11:00, 18:30 <i>Tues.</i> 19:30 <i>Wed.</i> 19:45	<i>Tues.</i> Bible Study in rear hall.
6. Pheasey Evangelical Church, Romney Way, Pheasey Estate, Great Barr, Birmingham B43 7TL (Buses 90 from City centre, 352 from W. Bromwich or Sutton Coldfield to 'Trees' Hotel)	Mr. P. B. Swain, 129 Beacon Rd., Gt. Barr, Birmingham B43 7BX (Tel. 021-360-9488) <i>or</i> Mr. J. Crowton, 264 College Rd., Perry Barr, Birmingham 44 (Tel. 021-356-9958).	<i>Sun.</i> 10:30, 18:30 <i>Thurs.</i> 20:00 <i>Fri.</i> (YPF) 20:00	



7. Selly Oak Gospel Hall, 27 Tiverton Road, (off main Bristol Road) Selly Oak, Birmingham, B29. (Buses 2, 61, 62 & 63 to Bournbrook Hotel)

Mr. E. H. Holt F. C. P. 128 Warwards Lane, Selly Oak, Birmingham B29 7RD. (Tel. 021-472 0585) or Mr. H. Lanchbury, 196 Lickey Rd., Rednal, Birmingham B45 8TE.

Sun. 10:15, 12:00 (Bible Study), 18:30 20:00 (Youth). Thurs. 19:45

5 mins. from University, Hospital & local Colleges. Sun. 20:00 is a youth 'Borderline' feature. Approx. 40 attend.

## BOLTON

Students on courses at The Institute of Technology, Technical College and Technical Teachers College requiring advice or assistance please contact Mr. Brian Elliott, Senior Lecturer in Management Studies, Bolton Institute of Technology, Bolton. (Tel. Bolton 28851 Ext. 278 or (home) 0704-35604)

## BOOTLE

Northfield Gospel Hall, Northfield Rd., corner of Fernhill Rd., Orrell, Bootle 20, Merseyside. (56 bus alight Keenan Drive, walk down Keenan Drive and turn right at bottom—hall on left; 57a, 58, alight Fernhill Rd. opposite hall; 61 outer circle ditto)

Mr. J. A. Salisbury, 33 Marmion Ave., Orrell, Bootle, L20 6HN or Mr. L. E. Porter, 42 Grosvenor Rd., Claughton, Birkenhead, L43 1TL.

Sun. 10:45, 12:00, 18:30 Tues. 18:30 Thurs. 18:30, 20:00

Small assembly in populous working-class area with little other evangelical witness, affording excellent opportunities for outreach. Real need for help, especially with Sunday School and youth work.

## BROMLEY (Kent)—see London

## BRISTOL

1. Bethesda Church, Alma Road, Clifton, Bristol BS8 2ES (Buses 1, 22, 23, 87, 88, to Clifton Down Station)

Dr. David M. Cunningham, 23 Carnarvon Rd., Redland, Bristol BS6 7DU. (Tel. 0272-43051)

1st Sun. in month 10:30 Evang. Guest Service followed by refreshments. 18:30 Worship & Communion Service. Other Suns. 10:30, 11:30 Bible Address and Junior Bible Group, 18:30. Tues. 20:00 (Home Bible study groups at members' homes). Thurs. 20:00

A particular welcome to home Bible study groups (Clifton, Stoke Bishop & Redland) and to Church Fellowship teas (approx. 6-weekly).

2. Etloe Evangelical Church, Cossins Road, Bristol BS6 7UD (Bus 83 to Coldharbour Rd., St. Albans Church)

Mr. Allan Farmer 14 Ravenswood Rd., Bristol BS6 6BN. (Tel. 0272-39930)

Sun. 11:00, 18:30 Thurs. 19:30, 20:15

Students' tea 16:45 Sun., and YP Fellowship 20:00. Also week end houseparties. Severnside Youth Fellowship Sun. 20:00.

3. Kingsholm Church, corner of Southmead Rd./Kingsholm Rd., Southmead, Bristol. (Bus 87 to Doncaster Rd. Southmead Rd.)

Dr. Trevor Hunt, 50 Kingsholm Rd., Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol.

Sun. 11:00, 18:00 Wed. 19:45

## BRUNEL UNIVERSITY—see London (Uxbridge)

## CAMBRIDGE

1. Panton Hall, 14 Panton St., (off Lensfield Rd.), Cambridge CB2 1HP. (Trumpington St. buses to Leys School, Regent St. & Hills Rd. buses to Catholic Church)

Mr. L. K. Chilton, 38 Church Lane, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4JR. (Tel. 833081) or Dr. G. C. Shepherd, 41 Tenison Rd., Cambridge CB1 2DG. (Tel. 61783)

Sun. 11:00, 18:30 Tues. 19:45 Sat. 19:45 (YP Bible Study)

Students conduct special street outreach. Near city centre and most colleges: a warm welcome is given to students, a number of whom are already active members. Lunch at chapel, 1st Sundays. Active welcome to students.

2. Queen Edith Chapel, Wulfstan Way, Cambridge. (Tel. 45584) (Buses 185, 186 to Queen Edith's Way)

Mr. David Jones, 69 Holbrook Rd., Cambridge. (Tel. 45595)

Sun. 11:00, 18:30, 20:00 (YP) Wed. 19:45

3. Roseford Chapel, Perse Way, Cambridge (Various E. Counties buses)

Mr. W. P. Cowell, Slate Hall Farm, Huntingdon Rd., Lolworth, Cambridge. (Tel. Crafts Hill 80684)

Sun. 11:15, 18:30  
Tues. 19:45

A number of students and past graduates are members. Care is exercised by some who specialise in student activities.

A new fellowship (started May 1976) on a large urban housing estate.

4. North Arbury Chapel, Cameron Rd., (off Northfields Ave.), North Arbury. (Buses to N. Arbury estate)

Mr. E. H. Collins, M.A. (cantab), 213 Milton Rd., Cambridge. (Tel. 58149) or Mr. David Ball, 34 Madingly Rd., Cambridge. (Tel. 62459)

Sun. 10:00, 11:00,  
18:30 Tues. 19:45

## CARDIFF

1. Bethesda Chapel, Fair Oaks, Murch, Dinas Powis. (Buses, Cardiff-Dinas Powis-Barry route. Stop at Dinas Powis infants school. The chapel is next to Murch Junior School)

Mr. B. Osbourne, 20 Millbrook Rd., Dinas Powis, Cardiff. (Tel. 513376)

Sun. 11:30, 18:30  
Tues. 19:30

Young People's Fellowship Sun. 20:00

2. Ebenezer Gospel Hall, Corporation Rd., Grange-town, Cardiff. (buses from all parts of city; alight Cambridge St. or Avondale Rd.)

Mr. W. T. Groves, 180 Cardiff Rd., Llandaff, Cardiff CF5 2AD

Sun. 11:00, 15:00,  
18:30 Mon. 19:30  
Tues. 19:30 Fri. 19:30  
(YP Bible study)  
Sun. 11:00 Wed. 19:45

A very warm welcome will be given to students and other visitors.

3. Glenwood Church, temporarily at Springwood School, Llanedeyrn Estate.

Mr. A. R. Harker, 216 Hillrise, Llanedeyrn, Cardiff.

Students have been closely involved in activities of this fellowship in the making.

A small fellowship which would warmly welcome visitors, and help from students.

4. Leckwith Gospel Hall, Leckwith Ave., Leckwith. (City Circle bus to Leckwith Rd.)

Mr. Keith Matheson, 14 Redcliffe Ave., Victoria Park, Cardiff.

Sun. 11:00, 14:45,  
18:30 Mon. 19:45  
Fri. 19:30 (YP)

5. Mackintosh Hall, Mackintosh Place, Roath Park, Cardiff. (Buses 1, 2, 7, 8, 54, 56, 57, 58, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 109 to Mackintosh Place)

Mr. R. G. Tetstall, 50 Llanedeyrn Rd., Cyncoed, Cardiff. (Tel. 492136)

Sun. 11:00, 18:30  
Wed. 19:30

6. Minster Evangelical Church, Sturminster Rd., Roath, Cardiff. (Bus 24 to Arran Place: right down Albany Rd., into Newport Rd., 1st left Minster Rd.)

Mr. Roger Cruwys, 52 Syr Stafford Close, Caerphilly (Tel. Cardiff 884204) or Mr. I. Howe, 32 Axminster Rd., Cardiff. (Tel. 496569)

Sun. 11:00, 15:00,  
18:00 Mon. 14:30  
(Womens' metg.) Wed.  
19:30 2nd Tues.  
Ladies' night.

## CHICHESTER

- Swanfield Chapel, Swanfield Drive, Chichester, Sussex.

Mr. P. R. Grosvenor, 43 Grosvenor Rd., Chichester. (Tel. 783893) or Mr. M. Baggott, 9 Terminus Rd., Chichester. (Tel. 788961)

Sun. 10:00, 16:00,  
18:30 Thurs. 19:30  
Sat. Rallies Oct-Apr.

Half mile from Bishop Otter College and St. Richard's Hospital

## CLACTON-ON-SEA

- Cambridge Hall, Cambridge Rd., Clacton-on-Sea, Essex. (Between Wellesley and Old Rds. E. Natnl. buses)

Mr. T. Anness, 125 Dulwich Rd., Holland-on-Sea, Essex CO15 5LU.

Sun. 11:00, 18:30  
Tues. 19:30 Thurs.  
19:30 (PM)

For St. Osyth College of Education, etc.

## COLCHESTER

- Maldon Road Chapel, Maldon Rd., Colchester, (Buses 1, 1a, 6 & 6a to Burlington Rd.)

Mr. B. J. Taylor, 109 Prettygate Rd., Colchester CO3 4DZ. (Tel. 73785) or Dr. J. Knight, 79 Magazine Farm Way, Colchester CO3 4EN. (Tel. 40650)

Sun. 11:00, 15:00  
(Bible Class), 18:30  
Mon. 19:45 Wed. 19:45  
Fri. 19:30 (YPF)

## COVENTRY

- Canley Evangelical Church, Charter Ave., Coventry CV4 8DA. (Bus 18 to 'Half Sovereign' from Lanchester Polytechnic: walking distance from Warwick University)

Dr. Eric Avery, 51 John O' Gaunt Rd., Kenilworth, Warks. (Tel. Kenilworth 54065) or Mr. Michael Grima, 14 Treedale Close, Tile Hill, Coventry (Tel. 466907)

Sun. 9:30, 18:30  
Wed. 20:00

Attended by students for many years. Also caters for students from Hereward College for physically handicapped.

## DUBLIN

Merrion Hall, Lower Merrion St., Dublin 2, Eire.  
(approx 100 yds from Merrion Square: buses 6, 7a, 8,  
44, 45, 46a, 62, 63, 84. Pearse Rly. Stn. 3 mins. walk)

Mr. Reginald H. Fry, 'Aureen', 37 Farmhill Rd.,  
Goatstown, Dublin 14 (Tel. 984075)

Sun. 10:30, 11:45,  
15:30, 19:00 Mon.  
20:00 Fri. 20:00

Highway Club, Sats  
18:30, YPF Sats 19:30

## EDINBURGH

1. Bruntfield Evangelical Church, 70 Leamington  
Terrace, Edinburgh EH 4JU. (Buses 9, 10, 11, 16, 23,  
27, 45)

Mr. Graham Edwards, 51 Fox Covert Ave., Edinburgh 16.  
(Tel. 031-334 1444)

Sun. 11:00, 12:15  
(School), 12:45 (Bible  
Class), 18:00 (PM),  
18:30 Wed. 19:30 Fri.  
19:45 Winter Sats.  
(monthly) 19:00  
Sun. 11:00 Lord's  
Supper, 19:00 Evening  
service, 20:15 YPF.  
Thurs. 19:45 Prayer &  
Bible study. Wed.  
19:30 Women's Hour.

YPF Sats 20:00 at  
9/4 Merchiston Park.  
Youth outreach Tues.  
20:00 Younger ladies  
outreach second Thurs.  
20:00  
Young People's  
Fellowship. Special  
on-going visitation  
programme.

2. Ferniehill Evangelical Church, 19 Ferniehill Rd.,  
(off A7), Gilmerton, Edinburgh. (Buses 3, 8, 31 or  
33 to Ferniehill Drive at Gilmerton Rd.)

Mr. J. Gordon Birss, 21 Gracemount Rd., Edinburgh 16  
or Dr. J. Hannah, 46 The Spinney, Gilmerton,  
Edinburgh

Sun. 11:00, 18:30  
Mon. 19:30

A favourite student  
church for many years

## EXETER

1. Belmont Chapel, Western Way. (near city centre)

Dr. Charles Sims 34, Barnfield Rd., Exeter. or Mr.  
Peter Cousins, 120 Topsham Rd., Exeter. or Dr. Cecil  
Heron, West Windy, Exton, Nr. Exeter  
Mr. J. Crews, 29 Queens Rd., St. Thomas, Exeter  
(Tel. Exeter 72971)

Sun. 11:00 18:30 21:45  
(YP summer) Tues.  
19:30 Fri. YP (varies)

A smaller fellowship  
warmly welcoming  
students.

2. Buller Rd. Gospel Hall, St. Thomas, Exeter EX4  
1BJ. (Buses B, C, D, F, to St. Thomas shopping  
centre)

## GLASGOW

1. Albert Hall, Skirving St., Shawlands, Glasgow.  
(Buses 21, 23, 38, 38a, 45, 48, 57 to Shawlands  
Cross)

Dr. Robert Walker, 'Rominar', Erskine Rd., White-  
craigs, Glasgow (Tel. 041-639-4808)

Sun. 10:30, 18:30  
Wed. 19:45.

Youth circle, Sats  
19:30 at various homes  
Students are warmly  
welcomed by the  
fellowship.

2. Greenview Hall, 1439 Pollokshaws Rd.,  
Pollokshaws, Glasgow G41. (Nr. Leckie St. and  
Shawlands Station. Buses 45-57 to Shawlands  
Station).

Mr. Ian MacDonald, 5 Hillside Rd., Glasgow G43  
(Tel. 041-649-7601)

Sun. 11:00, 19:00  
Thurs. 19:30

Youth Fellowships  
Sun. 20:30. A good  
number of young  
people.

## HUDDERSFIELD

Lindley Evangelical Church, Stanley House, Acre  
Street, Lindley, Huddersfield. (Buses 70, 71, 73 from  
Westgate to 'Bay Horse' roundabout—then 200 yds.  
along Acre St; 92, 93 from Milnsbridge and Newsome)

Mr. David Ingleby, 41 Bankfield Park Ave., Taylor  
Hill, Huddersfield HD4 7RD (Tel. 41911) or at Com-  
puter Section, Huddersfield Technical College.

Sun. 11:15, 18:30  
Wed. 20:00

Opposite Royal  
Infirmary and within  
walking distance of  
Holly Bank Technical  
Teachers Training Col-  
lege and Huddersfield  
School of Nursing.

## GUILDFORD

Manor Road Hall, Manor Rd., Stoughton, Guildford,  
Surrey. (98 bus to Grange Rd.)

Mr. P. G. W. Rogers, 22 Rydes Hill Rd., Guildford  
GU2 6ST.

Sun. 10:00 (summer),  
14:45 (winter)—SS  
11:15, 18:30 Tues.  
19:45

Several years of  
contact with the CU  
at the University

## KINGSTON-ON-THAMES—see London (Kingston)

## LANCASTER

Moorlands Evangelical Church, Balmoral Rd., corner  
of Dumbarton Rd., Lancaster. (Any buses to Cathedral;  
from S. Martin's 15 mins. walk; from Univ. bus to  
Royal Infirmary, then 10 mins. walk)

Dr. John S. Andrews, University Library & 270  
Bowerham Rd., Lancaster (Tel. 66856) or Mr. Graham  
K. Rand, Operational Res., University & 36  
Newmarket Ave., Lancaster. (Tel. 69071)

Sun. 10:45, 10:00 when  
monthly Family Service  
held at 11:15, 18:30,  
Wed. 19:30 (Prayer  
and Bible Study)

A small assembly (30-  
40) offering fellowship  
and opportunities for  
service.



**LEEDS**

Hope Hall Fellowship, Scott Hall Grove,  
Leeds LS7 3SL (Near Prince Philip Playing Fields)

Laurie and Nancy Beynon, 15 St. Chad's Rise, Far  
Headingley, Leeds LS6 3QE (Nr. Beckett's Park College)  
(Tel. 785388) or Nigel Mc Quoid, 4 Wharfe Close, Adel,  
Leeds LS16 8JE (Tel. 611602) (School of English 3rd yr.  
Student, University of Leeds)

Mr. H. E. Pope, 25 Prince Edwards Rd., Lewes, Sussex.

Sun. 11:00

For University of  
Sussex.

Mr. John Knipe, 190 Deyes Lane, Maghull, Merseyside  
L31 9AW. (Tel. 051-526 3804) or Mr. K. G. Platt, 18  
Leighton Ave., Maghull. or Mr. Alex McMinn, 10  
St. Bede's Close, Aughton, Lancs.  
Mr. Platt lectures at Liverpool Polytechnic and Mr.  
McMinn is Director of External Relations. Also con-  
venient for Edge Hill College of Education.

Sun. 10:30, 19:00  
Tues. 20:00 Fri. 21:00  
(senior youth group)

A new work in new  
building with one third  
of members under 25.

Mr. H. Williams, 12 Rathmore Ave., Liverpool 18.  
(Tel. 051-724 1443 or Mr. A. M. Sax, 10 Dovedale  
Rd., Liverpool L18 1DW. (Tel. 051-733 4716) or Mr. A.  
R. Gall, 80 Cooper Ave., North Liverpool L18 4PQ.  
(Tel. 051-724 3568)  
Students' welcome: tea early October. Active part in  
student activities.

Sun. 11:00, 15:00,  
18:30 Wed. 19:45,  
20:30

YPF Suns. 20:00;  
Informal students  
gathering. Suns. 20:00  
at 10 Dovedale Rd.  
(midway between  
chapel & University  
Halls of Residence)

Mr. Roy Woolgar, 21 Hayes Rd., Bromley, Kent,  
BR2 9AF (Tel. 01-460 7604)

Sun. 11:00, 18:30  
Tues. 20:00 (Family  
services one Sunday a  
month)

A familiar student  
centre for many years.

Dr. Neil Summerton, 52 Hornsey Lane, London N6  
5LU. (Tel. 01-272 0643) or Mr. Peter Webb, 7  
Myddleton Park, London N.20 (Tel. 01-445-6744)

Sun. 11:00, 19:00  
Wed. 20:00

Mr. Richard Harris, 3 Queensville Rd., London SW12  
0JL. (Tel. 01-674 0092)

Sun. 10:45, 18:30  
Tues. 20:00. House  
groups on various  
evenings.

Youth activities Fri.  
19:30 and Sun. 20:00

Mr. H. J. Vernon, 100 Norbiton Ave., Kingston-on-  
Thames. (Tel. 01-546 2931) or Mr. D. Williams, 91  
Arundel Rd., Kingston upon Thames, Surrey. (Tel.  
01-949 2733)

Sun. 10:45, 18:30  
Tues. 20:00

YPF Sun. 20:00  
(differing venues) and  
and Sat. activities.  
(Kingston Polytechnic  
and Gipsy Hill College  
of Education.)

Mr. R. N. Sheldon, 129 Roding Rd., Clapton E5 0DR.  
(Tel. 01-985 1532)

Sun. 10:30, 14:30 (sch.),  
15:45 (covenanters),  
18:30 Wed. 20:00

A small assembly (25/  
30 members) who  
would be glad of  
active help.  
Also regular conver-  
sational Bible readings.

Mr. E. Davidson, 132 West End Lane, West Hampstead  
NW6 (Tel. 624-8875) or Mr. G. Simpson, 35 Estelle  
Rd., Hampstead. NW3. (Tel. 01-267 4151)

Sun. 11:00, 18:30  
Thurs. 19:45

Mr. R. Baylis, 45 Mariner Gardens, Ham, Richmond  
(Tel. 01-940-6392) or Mr. D. Bell, 40 Grosvenor Ave.,  
East Sheen, London SW14 8BX (Tel. 01-878-2973)

Sun. 09:45, 18:30  
Wed. 20:00

Hospitality on Sun.  
usually available.  
YPF 20:00 Sun.

**LEWES**

at Christian Alliance Hall, Mount Place, Lewes.

**LIVERPOOL** (and see **Bootle**)

1. Maghull Chapel, 85 Foxhouse Lane, Maghull,  
Merseyside L31 9AW (310 bus to Foxhouse Lane,  
340 bus to Moss Lane. Merseyrail Maghull Station)

2. Ramilies Road Chapel, Liverpool 18.  
(5, 72, 73, 80, 86 buses in southerly direction. 46  
cross-town bus. Ramilies Rd. runs between Smith-  
down Rd. and Penny Lane)  
(Chapel is 10 mins. walk from most of University  
Halls of Residence and on bus route from St.  
Katherine's College of Education)

**LONDON**

1. (Bromley, Kent). Brook Lane Chapel, 29 Brook  
Lane (off Southover), Downham, Bromley, Kent.  
(Buses 94 or 126 to Southover request stop. Rail  
Grove Park or Bromley North then bus as above)
2. Cholmeley Evangelical Church, 272 Archway Rd.,  
Highgate, N.6. (Buses 43, 104, 134 etc., Under-  
ground to Highgate (Northern Line) exit signs to  
Shepherds Hill)
3. Endlesham Church, Endlesham Rd., Balham  
SW12. (Buses 88, 155, 181, 189, Balham Stn., SR.  
& Underground)
4. (Kingston-on-Thames) Canbury Park Christian  
Fellowship, 234a Canbury Park Rd., Kingston-on-  
Thames, Surrey. (Buses 85, 213, 213a, to bottom of  
Kingston Hill, 65 to Canbury Park Road. Rail to  
Norbiton or Kingston Stations)
5. Paragon Chapel, 233/241 Glyn Rd., Clapton,  
London E5 0JP. (corner of Lockhurst St., buses  
22, 22a, to Chatsworth Rd., 38, 55, 106, 253 to  
Hackney Baths)
6. Parkhill Chapel, 17 Fleet Rd., Hampstead NW3.  
(Buses 24, 46 to Mansfield Rd., Rail to Hampstead  
Heath or Gospel Oak, Underground to Belsize  
Park, 187 bus to Hampstead)
7. (Richmond, Surrey), Sheen Hall Evangelical Church,  
Upper Richmond Rd. West (corner Gordon Ave.)  
East Sheen, Richmond. (Buses 33, 37, 73, rail—  
Mortlake Station, B.R.)

8. Rossmore Hall Evangelical Church, 1 Rossmore Rd., London NW1 6NJ. (off Lisson Grove, by Marylebone station)
9. Salway Evangelical Church, Salway Hill, High Rd., Woodford Green, Essex, IG8 9BP. (20a bus, Central Line to South Woodford)
10. (Uxbridge, Middx.), Gospel Hall, Cowley Rd. (corner Derby Rd.) Uxbridge.
11. Victoria Hall Evangelical Church, Melody Rd., (corner West Side) Wandsworth Common, London SW18. (Buses 77 to Heathfield Road, 37, 39, 77a/c, 168 to Melody Rd., or East Hill, 19 to West Side. Rail to Clapham Junction and then bus as above, Underground to Clapham Common then 37 bus)

#### MANCHESTER

1. Ford's Lane Evangelical Church, Ford's Lane, Bramhall, Cheshire.
2. Mount Chapel, 32 Eccles Old Rd., Salford M6 7AF Lancs. (corner Langworthy Rd. Buses 8, 9, 28, 56, 57, 64, 66 to Langworthy Rd.)

#### NEWPORT, Gwent

1. Caerleon Christian Fellowship, St. Cadoc's Hospital Chapel, Caerleon. (Entrance opposite College Crescent. No. 2 bus to Caerleon)
2. Nant Coch Church, 68 Fields Park Rd., Newport, Gwent. (Bus 1 to Jews Wood, 13, 19a to Ridgeway public house)

#### NORTHAMPTON

Duke St. Gospel Hall, Northampton

#### NORWICH

1. Douro Place Chapel, Douro Place, off Dereham Rd., Norwich (Dereham Rd. buses to Douro Place)
2. Oak Grove Chapel, Catton Grove Rd., Norwich.

#### NOTTINGHAM

1. Aspley Evangelical Church, 531 Aspley Lane, Aspley, Nottingham. (16, 16a, 32, 74 buses to Ambleside Rd.)
2. Clumber Hall, High Cross St., off Broad St., Nottingham. (Most buses to Old Market Square, 5 mins. walk from hall. Within walking distance of Polytechnic)

ORMSKIRK, Lancs.—see Liverpool (Maghull) and Parbold

Mr. M. Flatow, 83 Lauderdale Mans., Lauderdale Rd. Maida Vale, London W9 1LX.

Mr. N. W. Murray, 6 Monkams Drive, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 0LQ. (Tel. 01-504 9415) or Mr. D. J. Neale, 78 Forest Approach, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 9BU. (Tel. 01-504 5641)  
Mr. D. C. Hinton, 72 Park Lane, Hayes, Middx. (Tel. 01-573 4618)  
Mr. J. W. Baigent, 6 Windmill Road, Wandsworth Common, London SW18 2EU. (Tel. 01-870 0776).

Mr. S. Ashburner, 137 Woodford Rd., Bramhall (Tel. 061-439-3491)  
Mr. J. F. Henderson, 29 Moorfield Rd., Salford M6 7EY. (Tel. 061-736 1094) or Mr. E. E. Costello, 50 Worsley Rd., Worsley, Manchester M28 4SH. (Tel. 061-794-2632)

Mr. W. Plumley, 'Nythfa,' 18 Glen Usk View, Caerleon, Gwent (Tel. 420791) or Mr. L. Plumley, 'Chosen Way', Caerleon Rd., Ponthir, Newport, Gwent. NP6 1GZ. (Tel. Caerleon 420014)

Mr. G. G. Brown, 98 Allt-yr-yn Ave., Newport, Gwent (Tel. 64399)

Mr. John Lawes, 34 West Leys Court, Moulton Leys, Northampton. (Tel. 0604-46300)

G. A. Oakes, 1 Bluebell Crescent, Bluebell Rd., Norwich (Tel. 0603-52730) or Mr. P. H. Earl, 19 Park Lane, Norwich (Tel. 0603-24753)  
Mr. J. H. Rout, 'Inverloch' 34 Spixworth Rd., Norwich NR6 7NF.

Mr. B. M. Harris 8 Court Crescent, Wollaton, Nottingham. (Tel. 0602-284711) or Mr. H. J. Riisnaes, 3 Shepherds Wood Dr. Aspley, Nottingham.  
Mr. J. G. Reed, 13 Melbury Rd., Woodthorpe, Notts. NG5 4PG. or Dr. I. F. Storey, 22 Sandy Lane, Bramcote, Nottingham.

Sun. 11:00, 18:30,  
20:00 Mon. 20:00  
Wed. 20:00

Sun. 10:45 Mon. 20:00  
Thurs. 20:00  
Sun. 10:15, 18:30,  
20:00 Thurs. 20:00

Sun. 11:00, 18:30  
Wed. 19:45  
Sun. 10:00, 11:30,  
19:00 Wed. 19:45  
20:30

Sun. 11:15, 19:00  
Wed. 19:30 (at Baptist  
Chapel)

Sun. 10:45, 19:00

Sun. 10:30, 18:30.  
Wed. 20:00

Sun. 11:00, 18:45  
Tues. 19:45 YP rallies  
last Sats. Sep-Apr.

Sun. 11:15, 17:30  
Wed. 19:45

Sun. 11:00, 18:45  
Wed. 19:30

Most central assembly. Much scope for participation in numerous activities. Near to Halls of Residence, Queen Mary College, University of London.

Near Brunel University  
Hospitality for lunch & tea usually available (Suns.). Active Youth Group.

Many youth activities  
Basic Bible teaching at 11.30 Sun.

Coffee bar Tues. 20:00 at Memorial Room, Town Hall. Other YP activities. Near Gwent College of Higher Education. Near Allt-yr-yn College of Technology.

Nene College CU meets Thurs. lunch time

Formerly meeting at Dereham Rd. Gospel Hall, now in a new development area.

Squashes in main hall Sun. 20:00 well attended by students from University & Polytechnic. For Edge Hill College of Education.

**OXFORD**

James Street Church, St. Mary's Rd., Oxford.

Mr. & Mrs. R. Bell, 45 Weyland Rd., Headington, Oxford. (Tel. 66284) or Mr. & Mrs. D. V. Clay, 19 Ashlong Rd., Marston, Oxford. (Tel. 61902)

Richard Bell can also be contacted at the Bodleian Library—Tel. Oxford 44675.

**PARBOLD, Lancs**

Parbold Evangelical Church, Chorley Rd., Hilldale, Parbold, Lancs.

Mr. Stan Thompson, 200 Appley Lane North, Appley Bridge, Wigan, Lancs. (Tel. Appley Bridge 3389)

Sun. 11:00, 14:30,  
18:30 Wed. 19:30  
Youth—Sun. 20:00,  
some Sats. 19:00

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**PENRITH**

Gospel Hall, Queen St., Penrith, Cumbria (200 yards from Sandgate Head bus stn).

Mr. Stanley Clarke, Cemetery Lodge, Beacon Edge, Penrith, Cumbria. (Tel. Penrith 2152).

Sun. 10:45 18:30  
Wed. 19:30

Mr. Clarke gives a welcome to his home. Help with children's work would be appreciated.

**PORTSMOUTH**

South Road Church, South Rd., Drayton, Portsmouth. (5, 143, 148 Corpn. buses, 331 Southdown)

Dr. D. Rosevear, 50 Brecon Ave., Cosham, Portsmouth. (Tel. Cosham 84467) or Mr. J. Fowler, 10 Mulberry Ave., Cosham (Tel. Cosham 71233)

Sun. 11:00, 19:00  
Thurs. 19:30

YP Bible Studies Wed. 20:15 at 141 Hawthorn Cres., Cosham, Portsmouth.

**READING**

Argyle Chapel, Argyle Road. (off Oxford Road), Reading. (Buses 17, 18 to stop before Reading West station)

Mr. J. Hernal, 'Allyn,' 28 Ashcroft Close, Caversham Heights, Reading. (Tel. 476003) or Mr. A. Baker, 48 Prospect St., Reading. (Tel. 582016)

Sun. 11:00, 18:30  
Thurs. 19:45

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**RICHMOND, Surrey**—see London (Richmond)

**SALFORD, Lancs.**—see Manchester

**SHEFFIELD**

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Mr. D. J. Holme, 59 Den Bank Drive, Sheffield S10 5PF (Tel. 0742-304972)

Sun. 10:30, 18:30  
Mon. 19:30  
Suns YP 20:00 at various homes

'At Home' fellowship tea at the chapel Sun. 14 Oct. 17:00—all students welcome.

**SOUTHAMPTON**

Portsmouth Church (Evangelical), Portsmouth Road, Southampton. (Nr. junction of Portsmouth Ave. and Brookvale Rd., with Portsmouth Rd. Buses 11, 11a, 12, 13, 14 and 17 to Brookvale Rd.)

Mr. John Carrick, 76 Westwood Rd., Portsmouth, Southampton. (Tel. 556659) or Mr. Hugh Paisley, 21 Dawn Gardens, Winchester (Tel. Winchester 63352)

Sun. 10:00, 11:00,  
18:30 Tues. 19:15

20:00. Sun. After-Church Fellowship at 76 Westwood Rd. Mr. Carrick is the church's full-time worker.

**SUSSEX UNIVERSITY**—see Lewes

**SWANSEA**

1. George St. Gospel Hall, George St., Swansea, (Buses 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, from west, 26, 31, 32, 14. Also most other local buses)

Mr. W. F. Burt, 14 Lon Cedwyn, Cwmgwyn, Swansea. (Tel. 0792-22318)

Sun. 11:00, 15:00 (SS),  
18:30 Mon. 19:15  
Wed. 19:15 (Sep. to June)



2. Castleton Chapel,  
Newton Rd., Mumbles, Swansea. (Buses 1, 2, 3 to  
Oystermouth Bus station)

#### TIVERTON

King St. Gospel Hall, King St., Westex, Tiverton,  
Devon

Mr. P. E. Davies, 3 Willowbrook Gdns., Mayals,  
Swansea SA3 5EB. (Tel. 0792-67956)

Mr. S. J. Webber, Higher Crazelowman, Tiverton  
(Tel. 3482) or Mr. R. J. Thomas, 1 Anstey Cresc.,  
Canal Hill, Tiverton, (Tel. 56508)

Sun. 10:30, 18:30  
Tues. 19:30, 20:00

Sun. 11:00 Worship,  
14:30 YP Bible Study,  
18:30 Gospel Service,  
20:00 Youth Fellow-  
ship. Wed. 19:30  
Prayer Meeting. Sat.  
20:00 Focus Youth  
Group (fortnightly)

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UXBRIDGE, Middx.—see London (Uxbridge)

#### WALSALL

Caldmore Gospel Hall, West Bromwich St.,  
Walsall. (Walsall-W. Bromwich bus, Little London  
stop)

Mr. F. Daniel, 173 Longwood Rd., Aldridge (Tel.  
52515) or Mr. L. Hubbard, 60A Jesson Rd., Walsall  
(Tel. Walsall 31508)

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Thurs. 20:00 (Sun.  
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20:00).

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Leamington Spa (Tel. 37521) or Ian & Sue Atkinson,  
31 Verdon Place, Barford (Tel. 624593)

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Service, 18:30 Breaking  
of Bread, 20:00 YP.  
Mon. 19:45 Thurs.  
20:00 Woman to  
woman. Fri. 20:00  
Youth Club.

Also House Fellow-  
ship groups various  
evenings

WARWICK UNIVERSITY—see Coventry

WIGAN—see Parbold

#### WOLVERHAMPTON

Westbury Chapel, Westbury St., off Broad St.,  
Wolverhampton. (Polytechnic 3 mins.; Randall Lines  
House 6 mins.)

Mr. Alan R. Davies, 11 Cherrington Gardens,  
Compton, Wolverhampton WV6 8AJ. (Tel. 762719)

Sun. 10:45, 18:30,  
20:00 Young People

Prayer meeting  
Thurs. evening.

#### YORK

St. Andrews Gospel Hall, Spen Lane, off St. Andrew-  
gate, York. (3 mins walk S.E. of Minster, in Aldwark  
district)

Dr. R. A. Reid, Provost, Alcuin College, University of  
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peoples' homes,  
seminars and debates  
on contemporary  
issues.

Edited by Kathleen White, 60 Bowood Road, Swindon, Wilts.

## Kathleen White's Column

### Outside Activities

'I could scarce reconcile myself at first', he said, 'to this strange way of preaching in the fields . . . having been all my life (till very lately) so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order, that I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin if it had not been done in a church.'

These words were uttered by John Wesley later in his career, after he had travelled down to Kingswood to hear George Whitefield preaching to the miners out in the fields. Prejudiced against work in the open air because of the traditional church formality, he soon realised the value of this kind of service and it became a way of life for him from that time onwards.

I was reminded forcibly of this statement recently during a spate of outdoor activity in our area. Summer is usually a period for camps, barbecues and beach missions but the 'happenings' organised in Swindon during July were rather unusual and off-beat.

Inevitably, I suppose, it was a case of building bridges towards people who would never have been persuaded

songs. Music in the contemporary idiom soon attracted a crowd and people were scattered around on the grass, listening to the groups and a few words of witness and testimony in between.

The next Saturday saw a more ambitious programme launched. It had been preceded by a great deal of publicity and *Harvest*, a group of university students from Glasgow, had been playing and taking lessons in many senior schools the previous week. A large marquee was erected in a park with a seating capacity of several hundred.

The new Counties van, ably manned by Brian Mills, was situated alongside and the helpers showed films and dispensed literature throughout the day. Two smaller caravans served as an office and a counselling room.

Various groups entertained the audience with songs interspersed with short comments. One stall at the back sold Christian books, another Tear-craft goods and also craftwork made by Thai refugees.

One novel (at least for me) feature was the inclusion of the talented group of street theatre players *Breadrock*. They performed sketches and mimes and sang, getting their message across with sincerity and clarity. Needless

. . . it was a case of building bridges towards people who would never have been persuaded into church . . .

Christ himself set a pattern for out of doors evangelism

to enter an indoor service in a church. And in terms of positive results, it's difficult to make an immediate assessment. Messages have been heard and literature received by quite a cross-section of the community; that is all one can say at the moment.

The first event was held in a friend's large garden in the country. Invitation cards had been sent round asking folks to a demonstration of sheep shearing. David, the shepherd, arrived with his two dogs and a cattle truck containing several sheep and a large, curly-horned ram. First, he and the dogs showed how with patience and skill the animals could eventually be rounded up and contained within a metal pen. At one stage they all managed to escape from the garden through a gap into an adjoining one which created a hilarious uproar. Later they were released one by one into David's capable hands and shorn of their rich, heavy fleeces. As he finished off the process and then leaned against the fence to recover and cool off, he told the story of Jacob, the liar and the cheat whose life was changed by God. Onlookers who had been interested and amused by the demonstration listened attentively to the teaching in that very informal setting. 'Hot dogs and cokes' completed the evening and many guests stayed on for chats and discussions.

The following day, the song 'Jesus is alive' came powerfully across the loudspeakers in the Town Gardens. It was good to hear that phrase repeated again and again, assailing the ears of families taking a Sunday afternoon stroll. *First Fruits*, a group belonging to a house meeting in the town, had arranged a short concert of gospel

to say, their art is very different from that of groups putting on full-length productions, but none the less effective. With a minimum of props and a very short script they managed to communicate with their audience. One item was the 'Story of the Unjust Steward' which came through remarkably well to young folk, many of whom were completely unfamiliar with the Bible.

I would welcome more use of *Breadrock* or similar companies in ventures of this kind. Most hold secular jobs although there are one or two drama students, so they find it difficult to rehearse. Often they have to travel long distances for performances.

They have an important function to perform, speaking and acting in the idioms of today.

It was an ambitious project both in time and money but attracted a great deal of interest and publicity. Also, for many Christians it was an exercise of corporate teamwork which brought together in unity many people from different churches.

John Wesley had an audience of 10,000 hearers when he preached out of doors in Cornwall (and even double or more that number on some occasions) speaking on 'Christ, our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.'

He would have been rather mystified and even probably shocked at the methods late 20th century young Christians used to spread the gospel to their contemporaries but at least he would agree that their aims and objectives were laudable.

Christ Himself set a pattern for out of doors evangelism and it is still a valid means of witness today. □

# Looking at Books

## Swanwick 1978

### The Official Report

#### WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?: THE FUTURE OF THE BRETHREN

Edited by Alan G. Bamford. H. E. Walter Ltd. £2.95 (paperback).

The publication of the addresses given at the Swanwick Conference of Brethren (1978) is warmly to be welcomed because the vision of the speakers is such that they merit a wider audience. With the customary succinctness that we have come to expect of the Editor of *The Harvester*, Roy Coad's penetrating analysis of 'Where is here?' sets the tone for the whole symposium. Dealing with questions of strategy, tactics and personnel he effectively makes the contrast between traditional pseudobiblical legalism which has so often caused "the angel of our churches to weep his heart out", and a forward-looking sensitivity to problems of communication and relationship. Michael Griffiths' biblical but practical approach to leadership and Christian maturity took this reader back fifteen years to a missionary breakfast where the same speaker firmly rejected a paternalist role for the missionary. In his ministry at Swanwick the same emphasis on the leader as servant is apparent. Victor Jack on Membership and John Polkinghorne on Ministry are likewise realistic, truthful—even when it hurts, but always constructive in their criticism.

Two particular emphases recur and rightly so. The first is upon the baneful effects of 'meeting-orientated Christianity' and the other is on the vital need for a satisfactory relationship with the local community. Once Brethren grasp the need for what Griffiths calls 'body-life' as opposed to meetings, and for community involvement, their perspective will be such that peripheral questions will not assume the importance which they often are given.

#### A MAN OF IMPORTANCE

**Hans Rookmaaker: A Biography** Linette Martin. Hodder and Stoughton. 178 pp. £3.50 (paperback).

Hans Rookmaaker (1922-77); educated at Leiden High School and at the Dutch equivalent of Sandhurst; imprisoned by the Nazis, 1940-45, for his work with the Underground resistance movement; converted in prison after three months spent reading the only book in his cell, the Bible; after his release he studied art and taught successively at Leiden High School, Leiden University, finally becoming Professor of Art History at the Free University of Amsterdam in 1965.

But more important than the biographical outlines of his life are the views Rookmaaker presented with such force and conviction in an academic career spanning over thirty years: that God is profoundly at work in history; that Christians are meant to be 'Salting salt in this world . . . even as salt

Over the years, Brethren have often claimed that they are not a denomination but a number of independent churches who recovered some biblical attitudes which 19th century Christianity had all too often lost or abandoned. Increasingly however—and the Brethren may have played a decisive part in this—evangelical churches of other traditions have rediscovered some of these 'brethren' emphases. For example, Roy Coad refers in both of his Swanwick addresses to the Anglicans' *Nottingham statement* and reminds us that while we have been congratulating ourselves on our understanding of the inadequacy of 'one-man-ministry' this has often been a *theoretical* appreciation and in fact other churches often 'have very much more to teach us about the effective use of all the gifts within a church than we know ourselves'. In consequence it can be argued that, except where they are fossils from the past, Brethren Churches are having a less 'distinctive' witness than they used to. Of course they have a historic identity, but where they are alive as opposed to petrified, they are in practice just a few among many Evangelical Churches. This is well reflected in much of the substance of these Swanwick Papers which deal basically with the crucial problems of the evangelical church at large rather than those of the Brethren. To anyone with a wide vision of the Church of Christ, this must be a cause for rejoicing, but at the same time it leads on to another aspect of the book which is for one reader at least, an occasion for some anxiety. The second half of the volume consists of some discussion arising out of the addresses, and here one sees some of the 'brethren' parochialism creeping back in. Questions are asked relating to the rôle of women, the way in which we break bread, itinerant ministry etc . . . and to anyone engaged in presenting Christ to the non-religious world such problems seem quite extraordinarily irrelevant or at the most, peripheral. To treat these as major issues is symptomatic of a more fundamental myopia in our thinking. The principle addresses in this book face up to this shortsightedness admirably. We must continue to pray that the response among Brethren will not be a blinkered and parochial one, but rather that they will look outward to the wider horizon.

Review by Timothy C. F. Stunt, Aiglon College, Chesières, Switzerland

stops decay and gives taste to things'; that a Christian is called upon to 'redeem culture turning it godwards any way he can, with words, music, architecture, movement, poetry, paint or clay'; that Christianity is intended to be relevant to every area of life—in the early seventies he startled the Christian Union President at Oxford (an economics student) who had been talking airily about the opportunities for evangelism at university, by asking him: 'How have you related your Christian faith to your economics?'; that Christians are to take an interest in art for its own sake—'I give you two reasons to make a work of art: that you love God and that you love your neighbour. Remember where the problems of your own age of history lie. Then go to work.'

Unconventional, occasionally unwise, almost invariably merciless in argument and debate, he had an immense influence amongst students in Europe and America in the sixties and seventies: the concentration camp inmate had truly become a guru. He was of course a distinctly uncomfortable figure for



Christians with pedantic or rigidly pietistic views, but to wrestle with Rookmaaker's thoroughly 'Christian mind' is far more rewarding than listening to a score of messages which are unrelated to the demands of everyday life and thought. He was a formidable man who deserves better treatment than this work which is fuzzy in biographical terms and insufficiently detailed in its analysis of his *magnum opus*, *Modern Art and the Death of a Culture*. But it is a highly readable account which hopefully will be the forerunner of further assessments of the life and work of this truly remarkable Christian scholar.  
Review by John Peters, Charterhouse School

# CHARISMATICS AGAIN

**A Charismatic Theology: Initiation in the Spirit** Heribert Mühler, E. T. Edward Quinn, Thomas Linton. Burns and Oates (New York, Paulist Press), 360 pp. £4.95 (\$9.95) (paperback).

The Charismatic or Pentecostalist movement has long been with us, but whereas in earlier years it ranked with the less respectable fringe of evangelicals and fundamentalists, connected in the public mind with the excitable emotionalism of the American deep south, now it has penetrated the most decorous ecclesiastical groups, high presbyterians, anglicans and even catholics. Fr. Mühler, drawn by the influence of friends into charismatic circles, found not only spiritual reality but 'the fruit of Catholic-Protestant solidarity... the chances of healing of the past can lie only in setting out afresh towards the common future'. He writes with enthusiasm, though at first he did not take easily to the idea of personal entrance into Christ's presence: 'a scholar is inclined to shrink from such immediacy'. He came to realise the reality of 'initiation', though he doesn't always use the normal language of Christians describing conversion.

The book is intended as a *vademecum* for fellow pilgrims. Each of its two halves provides seven weeks of daily meditations for a local study group. The first, 'doctrine and exhortation' is mainly for the leader; the second, 'expectant prayer' suggests prayers for all the participants. Several points will command general assent. First, the gifts of the Spirit need personal cultivation. Second, the local church and not the higher echelons of the hierarchy are the proper level for discussion and action. Thirdly, the aim is not to form a new charismatic church but to revivify the spiritual life of the existing churches.

But there are features which must raise doubts. Most serious, the whole outlook and tone recalls those books on transcendental, and other, meditation, which give a mechanical, almost 'do-it-yourself' handbook to the spiritual life. Secondly, scripture is frequently quoted, but rather carelessly. Rev. 3: 19f. is quoted as referring to the 'grace of conversion' (p. 150), the biblical context addresses it to backsliders. The chapter on healing (pp. 160 ff.), quotes 15 scriptures, but not Jas. 5. 14f. P. 156 seems to date Mark a century after Christ! Thirdly, in his dialogue with non-catholics there is an impression of patronizing; one feels that Mühler is playing to both the ecumenical and pentecostalist galleries. These strictures do not arise from anti-catholic bias, but rather from disappointment at what the reviewer feels an inadequate exposition of a significant contemporary work of the Spirit of God.

Review by Laurence E. Porter

# PROPHECY AND THE SECOND COMING

Waiting for Christ's Return II. Veldkamp. Norfolk Press. 127 pp. £2.50.

This book is not really a commentary on *First Thessalonians* but rather a series of short, pithy homilies based on a number of texts taken from that letter. Because of this, in a way, I found it disappointing. I expected the author to deal with the issues in some depth and discovered, instead, a series of mini-sermons.

Having said this I feel that the book could be of real blessing if used devotionally. The author tries to take up the themes of

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First Thessalonians and make them relevant for the believer today. Considering that this is a translation from the original Dutch, the language flows and is easy to understand, and the points made are telling.

Review by John F. Balchin, London Bible College

**Hal Lindsey and Biblical Prophecy** C. Vanderwaal. Paideia Press (Canada). (publ in Gt. Britain & Commonwealth by Norfolk Press). 139 pp. £2.50 (paperback).

**The Battle of the Ages** Dr. E. J. Miller. Obtainable from Author, 85 Warren Rd., Banstead, Surrey, or P & I (London) or S.U. bookshop (Croydon). 184 pp. £2.50 (paperback).

**The Two Jerusalems in Prophecy** David Clifford. Loizeaux Brothers, P.O. Box 70, Neptune, New Jersey. 192 pp. \$3.50 (paperback).

*Hal Lindsey*. This is a critical essay on what the author calls the 'error of Darbyist dispensationalism', and in particular Hal Lindsey's application of it. In the early sections he denounces 'exaggeration and sensationalism' and 'revolutionary tendencies' in the dispensational school, and affirms that 'the spiritual descendants of Luther and Calvin have succumbed to a hermeneutical anarchy adorned with Bible texts'. He sees the N.T. church as a 'continuation of Israel', with the Jews who rejected the Messiah having no further claim to the covenant titles; this is the point on which everything hinges. The *Book of the Revelation* is not 'a time-table spelling out the future' but a 'covenantal message' for the people of God. There follows a detailed critique of Lindsey's best seller *The Late Great Planet Earth* with some references to *There's a New World Coming*. To associate H. L. with seers, soothsayers and horoscopes seems too harsh a criticism, or to regard all Biblical prophecy as pre-written history to be 'a fundamental error'. However, it comes as a salutary warning lest 'sensationalism and speculation to satisfy curiosity about the future should take the place of the believer's assurance of faith', or that the Bible may become merely 'a political almanac'. In bold type, the book makes easy reading and stimulates Biblical research on the subject of prophecy.

*The Battle of the Ages*. Dr. Miller, a scientist, claims that he has put forward 'for the first time, a reasonable and consistent interpretation of all the relevant prophecies' about the future, though what is meant by consistent is not immediately obvious. He is a pre-millennialist and follows basically the dispensational school. The first section is O.T. history and includes the 'Parallel Significance' of Daniel's 'Image Dream and the Beasts' Vision'. Like Lindsey, Dr. Miller finds references in scripture to present-day conditions and states (Russia, China, Rome, the EEC and Germany). Seven 'appendices' include a note on recent versions of the Bible ('a sign that we are approaching the end of the age'), on evolution, and the chronology of man (the year 1989 may be significant). Dr. Tatford in his Preface describes it as 'a careful study of history and prophecy' which 'will hold the reader enthralled'. Some readers may find its interpretations somewhat strained and speculative.

*The Two Jerusalems*. David Clifford's main interest has been the training of young people for Christian service, and he was the founder and for nineteen years principal of Moorlands Bible College. His ability as a teacher and educationist has enabled him to produce a book which is interesting, instructive and inspiring. He sees 'prophecy and Jerusalem as inseparable'; the Old City will be the earthly throne of the heavenly king, the New the heavenly home of a redeemed people. The 'comparisons and contrasts between the two cities, their inhabitants, their positioning and the timing of their appearances and functioning is the purpose of the book'. He takes the dispensational view but acknowledges that 'there are difficulties in interpretation with every school of thought'. There are five 'Artist's Impressions' and an adequate bibliography. In all a refreshing book, written with conviction and humility.

Reviews by E. L. Lovering

## Replies to Professor Bruce

### The July Question

Sixty-five years ago, in *The Principles of Open Brethren* (p. 124), Professor Rendle Short wrote: 'Few, if any, Brethren speak on political platforms; a fair number use their vote, but probably the majority abstain.'

This question is sent in during the General Election campaign, which brought Professor Short's remark to my remembrance. Could any readers estimate what the situation is today? On the eve of a general election in the 1950s I said, while ministering in a rather traditional local church, that Christians who voted were responsible to the Lord for the way in which they voted, and that Christians who abstained were responsible to the Lord for their abstention. At the end of the meeting more than one senior member of the church approached me and said, taking care not to be overheard, 'We've always been told we shouldn't vote, but I've always voted!' It seemed to be assumed that I had given them the green light for using their vote, but of course I had done no such thing.

### Mr. P. J. Smith replies:

Regarding Professor Bruce's July question on the voting issue, it is interesting to recall an article in *The Harvester* for April 1964 on this subject - 'Should a Christian vote in the General Election?'. The article was in two parts. One by Edwin Lewis entitled 'Of course he should'. The other by P. F. W. Parsons 'Most definitely not'.

After reading the first article you find yourself agreeing wholeheartedly with the specious arguments for they seem to be unanswerable. You then turn to the other and you feel you must award him full marks for you cannot possible fault him. In other words there is no answer to the problem.

There is no particular verse of Scripture to appeal to, for governments in Bible times were for the most part autocratic and democracy was unknown.

In my own assembly two speakers have made references in the Sunday evening service to voting and the recent general election. Although they did not specifically say that they had voted one could read into their remarks that they had done so. My belief is that the stance taken by Prof. Short simply would not have occurred to them. My opinion is that although in Prof. Short's time the majority abstained, to-day the majority vote.

### Mr. H. L. Ellison replies:

A caste Hindu will not kill a cow. In fact in some Indian states the slaughter of a cow is illegal, and in some others, it may not be done before the age of about eleven, though I have not heard that the production of a birth certificate is demanded. Yet it is not considered wrong to allow the cow to die of starvation, or to pass it on to a cow sanctuary, where the same result is likely to be reached less publicly and a trifle more slowly.

This is a parable of how we treat our sacred cows. Few would dare to stand up and state publicly that they are nonsense and damage the work of the Church, but they are increasingly banished from discussion and allowed to die of inanition.

So it is with voting in elections, parliamentary or other. In the formative years of the Brethren movement, the rotten boroughs had not yet been abolished (1832). In fact the Test Act, which effectively prevented any sincere dissenter from

## Readers' Forum

*Readers' Forum* is open to contributions from readers. Please send suggestions from practical experience, related to church activities or Christian living; doctrinal or expository questions; useful experiences; what-you-will; to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX. Questions, to which other readers will be invited to submit replies, will also be published from time to time as they are received. It is hoped that readers will take full advantage of this feature.

Mr. F. N. Nickels of Cardiff finds a difficulty in different interpretations of a familiar scripture. Can our readers help?

The verse which tells us 'By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God' (Eph. 2: 8), has long been a battle-ground of theologians. Some believe that the words 'and that not of yourselves' mean that even the faith to take the gift of God has to come from God Himself. They see the verse as containing *two* gifts—salvation, and the faith to appropriate it. Other Bible students say there is only *one* gift in this verse, and that is salvation. They say that the faith spoken of is the same faith that we exercise day by day in our dealings with persons and things.

Many believers might dismiss this difference of opinion as being of secondary importance, not realizing that far-reaching matters of doctrine are bound up with it. To take one side of this controversy is to range oneself alongside of a well-known theologian of a few centuries ago who so emphasised the sovereignty of God that he made doctrines of conditional salvation, irresistible grace, etc.

Is Scripture behind us when we believe that God has given saving faith to us and denied it to others? To believe this cannot fail to make us feel superior and privileged, and to give us to think that we are the special objects of

divine favour. Such verses as 'Chosen in Him before the foundation of the world' (Eph. 1: 4) and 'Elect according to the foreknowledge of God' (1 Pet. 1: 2) would seem to confirm us in our conviction that salvation is *all* of God. We are further encouraged when we listen to speakers who would tell us that if any part of salvation was left to us we would be sure to fail in that particular aspect. We regard ourselves as weak and incapable spiritually, and that God has all the responsibility of our salvation, and we have none.

Those who believe that saving faith is special and God-given have another argument in its favour. It is that man is utterly depraved and dead in trespasses and in sin. Being dead he cannot possibly respond to God's offer of salvation. No response can possibly be expected from a corpse and so God has to give the faith which the repentant sinner puts in Christ.

This view of saving faith is very desirable if only it were true, but is it either scriptural or reasonable? If God gave us special faith to put in Christ for salvation it would be like a baker putting loaves of bread in his shop window and then giving us the money to buy them! Why should God need to give us faith when we already have it, and use it daily? It was ordinary everyday faith which the Roman centurion put in Christ which so pleased Him ('I have not found so great faith, no, not in all Israel' Matt. 8: 10). It was ordinary faith which the Syro-Phoenician woman put in our Lord which caused Him to re-act with the words: 'O woman! Great is thy faith!' (Matt. 15: 28). These two instances (others could be cited) show that unregenerated people *can* put faith in Christ. They upset the belief that mankind is totally depraved, with no ability to exercise saving faith in Christ. Was the Roman centurion given the faith by God, or the woman, when they both put the same saving faith in Christ that we put in Him for our salvation?

Eph. 2: 8, the verse which so many think teaches us that saving faith is God-given, has for its context the subject of salvation being the free gift of God, and not of works. The words 'through faith' are put in to tell us that we must stretch out the empty hand of faith. Is not the real meaning of the verse 'By grace are ye saved . . . and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God'?

### Replies to Professor Bruce (continued)

sitting in Parliament, had been repealed only in 1828. In addition, until the Reform Bill of 1867, very little depended on the result of an election. It was very much the case of Tweedledum and Tweedledee. So it is easy to understand why little interest was shown in politics in Brethren circles. This was reinforced by the belief that things were rapidly going from

bad to worse, because the coming of the Lord was at hand.

Today, when the result of an election can deeply affect the life, work and income of every citizen, and when stress on an imminent return of our Lord is less often met, the probability is that the proportion of 'Brethren' voting, at least among the younger ones, is about the national average.



## Correspondence

Letters should be sent to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX.

### Tape-recordings

From Mr. J. McQuoid

Dear Sir,

I should be most grateful if you or your readers could supply me with the names and addresses of individuals, or organisations, from whom I could borrow cassette tapes of ministry or Christian music to use amongst housebound Christians.

With thanks and greetings.

15 Wilmuir Crescent

Larne

Co. Antrim

BT40 1QE

Yours truly,

J. McQuoid

### Uniformed Youth Organisations

From Mr. K. G. Argent

Dear Sir,

I was interested to read two recent letters in your correspondence columns regarding uniformed youth organizations (from Mr. J. B. Robertson in March and from Mr. L. Reveley in June).

I felt Mr. Reveley's contribution particularly relevant and valuable in emphasizing the importance of Christians carefully considering the objectives of the youth organization in view and investing their talents where they will be most effective in the Lord's work. Without doubt, many youth organizations originated with high Christian ideals and have been used by the Lord, but it needs to be clearly recognized that without a clear and determined objective, coupled with appropriate spiritual standards that safeguard the objective, all organizations leave themselves wide open to the degenerating influence of the Adversary, who constantly seeks to undermine the Lord's work. Many churches have been tempted, under

Publication of letters does not imply that views expressed are endorsed by the Editor or the Trustees.

the pressure of keeping the organization functioning, to accept non-Christian leadership. In many cases the administrative headquarters of the organization concerned quite happily accept such a situation, and it is this apparent indifference to proper spiritual standards and objectives that has undermined the credibility of some youth organizations in the eyes of those who have a genuine concern for the true evangelization of boys and girls and young people.

Mr. Reveley speaks with appreciation of the work of the Covenanters and I would thoroughly endorse his comments. Your readers will also be interested to know that the central aim of the uniformed *Campaigner Youth Movement* is nothing less than 'to bring boys and girls to a personal knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour and God and train them in Christian discipleship'. In order to achieve this objective they *insist* that every leader be a 'born again' believer with a personal experience of the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and conviction in the authority of God's Word. Whilst recognizing and indeed encouraging whole-hearted loyalty to the local church or fellowship, the rule about converted leadership is one that cannot be broken at any cost. The *Campaigner Movement* is aware of the apparent spiritual degeneration of some other organizations and strives to be constantly alert so as to avoid any dilution of the high objectives and standards that have been maintained through nearly 60 years of service in the Lord Jesus Christ amongst young people.

Whilst appreciating Mr. Robertson's enthusiasm for Christians to become involved in the world, I believe that his recommendation for Christians to involve themselves with organizations that do not have the kind of standards outlined above, to be ill advised. Undoubtedly some of the organiza-

## Going to College?

From Dr Kenneth Wycherley

Dear Mr. Coad,

September will mean the start of a new era in life for many young people as they go to college or university for the first time. The student world can appear glamorous and a little frightening, but it certainly provides many opportunities: to make new friends and discover new things. For the Christian, it can be stimulating and demanding.

Christian students have recognised the pressures and the opportunities facing them at college and have formed Christian Unions with the aim of better understanding the pressures and of making the most of the opportunities. Not the least of these is the open-ness of many students to consider the truth about Jesus Christ. CUs now exist in all the universities and many of the colleges (e.g., polys, techs, agriculture, art, further ed., etc.) aiming to

strengthen the faith of their members and pass on the truth about Jesus Christ to fellow students. These groups have been making preparations to welcome new students but, faced with large intakes, they value any help which they can receive. In some colleges where there is as yet no Christian witness it may be possible to start one by linking up new Christians.

If any of your readers will be students or have friends going to college next September who would benefit from links with other Christians, we should be very pleased to hear from them and to link them up with the Christian Union at their future place of study. If they write to me, Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship, 38 De Montfort Street, Leicester, LE1 7GP, giving details of college/university, term address and subject (as much information as possible to help us make a speedy link-up), I will pass on the news to the CUs. I can supply introductory leaflets too which may help to set the scene more fully for new students. I am sure that an early link with other Christians helps new students to quickly settle into their new life and makes for a continuing growth of Biblical witness in the student world.

UCCF  
38 De Montfort St.,  
Leicester LE1 7GP

Yours faithfully  
Ken Wycherley  
Universities' Secretary

tions to which he refers operate effectively and spiritually in the local church situation, but what happens at combined events and camps? The young people you have carefully nurtured in spiritual things throughout the year suddenly find themselves in a non-Christian environment where spiritual standards they had accepted in the home fellowship are flaunted and completely disregarded by leaders who have come from different churches. The careful sowing of the Gospel seed through 51 weeks of the year can be up-rooted and all but destroyed by one week at such a Camp! Campaigners, whilst being interdenominational amongst evangelical churches and fellowships *guarantee* that young people attending national camps and similar combined events, will always continue to come under the sound of true Gospel ministry and converted leadership, and the leaders themselves rejoice in the fellowship of being with other 'born again' leaders—all one in the Lord Jesus Christ, even if there are doctrinal differences on lesser matters.

May I urge your Christian readers, contemplating youth work, not to settle for second best, but to carefully examine the objectives of the youth organization in view, and only to become involved when satisfied that the spiritual standards are right.

Campaigner House  
Colney Heath  
Herts AL4 0NQ

Yours sincerely,  
Kenneth G. Argent  
General Secretary  
Campaigner Youth Movement

From Captain R. D. Symons, R.A.O.C.

Dear Mr. Coad,

I read with interest Mr. Dunning's article on *Every Boy's and Every Girl's Rallies*. Unlike Mr. Robertson, I met up with EBR when serving in Northern Ireland in 1972 and was delighted to see that the walls of prejudice had been breached—in some Assemblies, at least!

But I was very much in sympathy with his letter which clearly expressed my own thinking regarding existing uniformed organisations.

I was saddened, therefore, to read Mr. Reveley's letter in the June issue. Not, I hasten to add, that I have anything against the Covenanters or Mr. Reveley; but because his letter is representative of so much conservative Brethren thinking.

It may be that both correspondents have written subjectively, from their own personal experiences of uniformed organisations—I don't know. For my part I must declare my Scouting interest as a uniformed leader in the Organisation. For a moment, while reading his letter, I thought Mr. Reveley shared this interest for he says 'Our prayer is that youngsters will . . . develop to their full potential spiritually, mentally and physically'. These are the declared Aims of the Scout Movement. I believe that the present day failure of the Movement to develop the boys spiritually is due almost entirely to the prevailing attitude of Christian Youth Leaders who withdraw from involvement with secular organisations to the relatively comfortable environment of those which are Christian sponsored.

Many young people who are members of EBR, Covenanters and similar Movements will also hear the Gospel in Sunday School, Bible Class, Church Youth Group or from Christian parents. Of more than 400 children associated with Scouts and Guides in this District, less than 25 attend any place of worship other than our monthly Church Parade, and not more than a dozen hear the Gospel clearly presented outside the Scout Movement.

To suggest that the claims of Christ cannot be presented by Scout leaders clearly displays ignorance of the Movement. Lest I be carried away by my own enthusiasm and thus give a biased picture, let me quote from one of many handbooks which are used by leaders and Scouts alike. The Handbook for the Advanced Scout Standard has this to say regarding the Scout Promise (page 95 para 8):

'Every Scout promises to do his "duty to God". What does this mean? Are you a Christian? Most people say

they are, but are they really committed? In the way that the early Christians were? Would they die for their belief that Christ is the Saviour of the World? Are they so convinced about their faith that they want to share it with others?

- What does your faith mean to you? Have you found any cause in which you so passionately believe that you would rather die than give it up?
- How much do you really know about your religion? Is your knowledge based on what you have read for yourself or on what other people have told you? Isn't it time you found out for yourself?
- If you want to know more about the Christian religion, read St. Mark's Gospel (an easy place to start!). Think also about John, chapter 14 verse 6; Romans 3: 23; Romans 6: 23; Hebrews 9: 27; John 3: 16-17; Acts 4: 12; Romans 8: 1-2; John 1: 12; Mark 10: 45; and a verse especially for teenagers, 1 Timothy 4: 12 (All in the New Testament). What does it mean to you? Does it tie in with your understanding of what a Christian is?

What Christian Scout leader could fail to take advantage of a God given opportunity like this?

My wife looks after Cub Scouts and Beavers, covering the ages 6 to 11. She regularly visits the parents of all the boys and points out what we believe and what we teach concerning faith in Jesus Christ. As a Group Scout Leader I was responsible for 75 boys and their leaders. Now as, District Commissioner, I am responsible for the recruitment and training of leaders in my District. Every activity starts and finishes with prayer, and emphasis is placed on spiritual development of both boys and leaders.

In the year and a half we have been in Cyprus it has been a difficult and uphill task to find leaders who are prepared even to consider spiritual development, and there have been times when my wife and I have considered withdrawing because of the opposition; but then we think of the children who listen to what we say and see the way we live, and our hearts are revived.

It seems to me that, within the Christian family, we still need to learn tolerance; that, while we may be right, others may be, too.

c/o Detachment RAOC  
B.F.P.O. 58

Sincerely yours in Christ Jesus,  
Roy Symons  
District Commissioner  
Eastern Sovereign Base Area (Scouts)

# The London Convention

From Mr. Fred Fairclough

Dear Sir,

How refreshing to attend the London Convention on Sat. 14th July, and hear again precious truths ministered by faithful men of God, unaffected by the unpopularity abounding in Christendom, and alas in some assemblies, to these fundamental truths.

It rejoiced my heart to hear again of the sure and certain hope of the imminent personal return to the air of Our Lord Jesus Christ for his 'complete church' preached unadulterated by partial rapturism, tribulationism or any other 'ism'.

I would like to thank the organisers of the Convention who must have been encouraged by the goodly number of saints gathered, which proves there are still those anxious and eager to earnestly contend as Jude exhorts us, for 'the faith once delivered unto the saints'.

Events like Swanwick prove that the Coming of the Lord surely draweth nigh.

13 North Common Road,  
Ealing, London, W5 2QB

Yours Sincerely  
Fred Fairclough  
Superintendent Bethany Eventide Home  
(late of Merseyside)

**Charismatic teaching—the March 'Readers Forum'**  
*From Mr. Stanley Linton*

Dear Mr. Coad,

In the March issue of *The Harvester* you kindly published the statement produced by the elders of Birkbeck Chapel about the question of so called 'charismatic' teaching. This was referred to in the May issue by a letter from Mr. Ellison in which he posed a particularly pertinent question. He asked how the balance in the whole area of this teaching could be maintained between the traditionalist and the enthusiast—and pointed out the need for a second statement by Birkbeck Chapel or some other group as to how this could be achieved. So far no one has seemed able to reply and as the elder largely responsible for putting the statement together I feel that perhaps I should say something. My comments are of course strictly my own.

Before looking at this problem however it might be helpful to deal with another question put to me by some who read the original statement. They asked what progress we had made in putting into effect the contents of the statement with particular reference to the gifts of the Spirit to the Church as set out in *1 Cor. 12*. Although the statement represented the unanimous findings of the elders I can only report that to a large degree it has only received intellectual assent so far. We have not been able to make very much practical progress. This perhaps is disappointing; on the other hand it represents quite a radical move away from the traditional Brethren view that the gifts of the Spirit are not relevant today. It may require another generation to come fully into the good of this. At least we have got something down on paper!

Turning now to the question put by Mr. Ellison on whether it is possible to achieve harmony in this difficult sphere I can only say that we have not been able to achieve the 'golden mean' he refers to. The whole of the so-called charismatic teaching, even in its mildest form, does produce conflict, anguish and unhappiness. I have spent a lot of time wondering why this should be and I keep asking myself why some react with so much hostility. I just am unable to come up with an adequate answer. There are however a number of observations that can be made and which may help in trying to understand the problem in more depth.

Generally, although not entirely, the greatest difficulty in coming to terms with the subject seems to lie with the older generation and particularly those with a more traditional and conservative outlook to life, both spiritually and in other ways. The idea of any kind of change to established patterns can be painful and can pose a threat to security. We now have a supplement to our morning meeting hymnbook which we produced ourselves and which we extensively use. However the anguish we went through some years ago to secure this 'radical departure' was almost unbelievable. Extreme terms such as 'over my dead body' were used and yet today it contributes in a worthwhile way to our worship. Earlier still we had quite a task to persuade some to have a musical instrument on Sunday morning! The more open and less formal approach to worship and the different kind of structure in hymnology associated with the charismatic approach do seem to pose a very real threat to established practice and on this score alone generate a hostile reaction.

There is a very considerable communication gap both in terminology and experience between the two sides and there is great difficulty in finding common language to try and convey genuine concerns and apprehensions—and this applies equally to both sides. I have often asked the question—'Why do you get so upset?' and the reply so often is 'I just cannot stand the whole thing and I have great difficulty in even staying in the meeting when you sing those kinds of choruses'. But it is very difficult to give a rational explanation of the very deep seated anxieties that exist. A similar reaction sometimes occurs over the question of the raising of hands in prayer or worship. To some the raising of hands can be a very meaningful act—when done as an indication to the Lord of a heartfelt devotion (and not because someone else is doing the same). But this gesture done in deep sincerity can produce the most

hostile of reactions in someone else. Again it is difficult to get a rational explanation of why this should be.

Thirdly, and perhaps the most significant, is the existence of real fear—fear about the whole area of spiritual experience. The past ten years or so have produced some unhappy and sometimes frightening excesses in the charismatic movement, and a number of people have been deeply hurt and the very foundation of their personal faith disturbed. Although done with the very best of intention on the part of the persons concerned I was brought into a very harrowing experience myself and came very close to an end of myself with dreadful thoughts that I might have grieved the Lord almost beyond recall—and then He spoke to me and calmed my troubled mind and His peace was so wonderful.

I am sure that there are other reasons—but the question is—'where do we go from here?' Where is the 'golden mean'? It seems as elusive as the crock of gold at a rainbow's end. Sometimes I am even tempted to opt out; the trouble is that I cannot get rid of this deep hunger after the Lord!

27 Selbourne Road,  
Sidcup, Kent

Yours sincerely,  
Stanley Linton

**Why so few factory workers?**

*From Mr. H. L. Ellison*

Because of my deep appreciation of Mr. Frank Potter's contribution in the July issue, I want to ask him a question. Why should there be any large number of factory workers in the assemblies? Should not the question be, How many factory workers are there in the Church?

He must know better than I what a change it would make in the average assembly, if there were a large influx of factory workers, and he is doubtless aware that in the average assembly there is a strong body of opinion that is not prepared to make these changes. Since the mere fact of making these changes would not of necessity bring the factory workers in, there is no reason why I should suggest some of them.

What is important is that we should be prepared to return to first principles. When the assemblies started, it was clearly realized that there were certain Scriptural principles without which unity could not be reached—not without which God could not be acceptably worshipped and proclaimed. Unfortunately certain practices were deduced from these principles, though they cannot be found in Scripture, and these have become as sacrosanct as the original principles, and it is largely these that will bring the converted factory worker, and many others, into other forms of Christian fellowship.

14 Rosyl Avenue,  
Dawlish, Devon

Yours sincerely  
H. L. Ellison

## And a reminder

Have you booked in your diary for:

**The Bible Teaching Conference**

Winchester 7-9 September

(Mr. C. L. Judd, 60 High Beeches, Banstead, Surrey. Tel. Burgh Heath 60048)

**The Swanwick Conference**

Swanwick, Derbyshire, 28-30 September

(Mr. G. Cartmell, Hyde Mill Cottage, Arlesey Rd., Ickleford, Hitchin, Herts)

**The CBRF Autumn Seminar**

London Bible College, 20 October

(See p. 253. Reservation not necessary)



# The News Page

Press Day, October 1979, Monday, September 3rd, for Displayed Advertisements, Prayer List, Forthcoming Events and news items (Please send direct to Publisher at 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW)

## Out and About

**Christian Literature Crusade** announced the election of a new leader for the British field. Les Coley and Mrs. Coley have been involved mainly in bookstall ministry, first in the city of Leicester, and for the past 22 years in Birmingham.

## Evangelism

**Birmingham City Mission:** the Mission has recently begun what is probably the largest project it has yet undertaken. In the winter of 1978, it had opened its doors as a temporary night shelter for men who had been turned out into the snow, following a fire at St. Chad's Crypt. For some years a need had been felt for more consistent follow-up for men with a desire to be rescued from alcoholism and other attendant evils. The '78 emergency intensified the desire to provide these with accommodation. In May 1979, hearing that the Church Army Hostel would be closing at the end of the year and the local brewery intended to buy it(!) the BCM approached the Church Army. An offer was made and accepted.

The intention is to provide a night shelter as the extension of the work in Bromsgrove Street. Also to provide a temporary shelter for homeless women. Also a sick bay where people not ill enough to go into hospital but who need care and attention for a few nights may stay. Likewise a place for those discharged from hospital who have no proper home to go to. And to provide long stay hostel accommodation for a limited number of people, pending the arrangement of more satisfactory accommodation for them. The financial burden will be considerable but the Mission believes that the project is of major importance to the City.

**Christian Colportage Association:** the Hull branch recently celebrated its centenary year with an afternoon rally, a birthday tea and an evening meeting of praise and thanksgiving. The speakers were the two local evangelists, John Bugg and Ivan Gravell. News of the event reached the *Harvester* from an interesting source. Twenty-four years ago, a church magazine handed out by Ivan Gravell led Lilian Taylor to an evangelical church where she was brought into a personal living relationship with the Saviour. Subsequent invitation leaflets brought her to victory after a particular time of testing; convicted her of the need of believer's baptism; and drew her husband to a church where he was eventually converted. After his conversion, Brian Taylor sold his business and became the manager of the Good News Bookshop near Hull's main shopping centre. In the seven subsequent years, the Bookshop and the inter-church Bible Stall have brought blessing to thousands in Hull and elsewhere.

**News of workers:** Donald Meadows has recently been encouraged in personal work. At the outset of Exmouth Beach Mission, Tony Blackburn was happy to see large crowds attending. Ken Brighton and his wife

have taken over the responsibility of organising the work at Woodcroft Christian Centre near Chepstow. Already busy with youth work, they are planning a week's residential teaching programme for 1980 and would value prayer for this. Their address is now: Woodcroft Christian Centre, Woodcroft, Gwent.

**A Don Summers' Tent Crusade** to Wolverhampton during June and July proved once more that multi-racial areas of the country are responsive to this kind of ministry. The total budget of this two-week crusade in a 1000 seated tent was less than £10,000.

**Forthcoming Events:** West Indian and white Christians in Birmingham are planning a large festival in Handsworth Park on Saturday, September 22nd. Support for the venture has come from West Indian, Asian, Chinese and white leaders from the Midlands and beyond. From the week beginning September 15th, Negro singer—Danniebelle, formerly with Andrae Crouch and the Disciples, will be giving a series of concerts around the country, then on September 22nd the celebrations come to a head with the festival in Handsworth Park. Eldridge Cleaver, the former Black Panther leader, now a Christian, will be one of the main contributors. Various other participants are currently being finalised. Already the media are showing considerable interest in the presence of Cleaver, formerly renowned for his racial militancy and advocacy of violence in securing political and social ends. The main events on Saturday 22nd will be a City centre rally at midday, then the main festival running in Handsworth Park from 2.30 p.m. Various stalls, Punch and Judy shows, and contributions from local artistes are planned around the park before the staged part of the festival. This will include musical contributions as well as those from Cleaver and leaders of various political and economic groups within the country. Proceedings will come to a climax with a united act of worship.

**The Hiding Place:** a brand new musical written and composed by Nigel Swinford (musical director at the Jesus Centre, Birmingham) will be presented at the Hippodrome Theatre from October 9-13, 1979. All enquiries regarding this should be directed to the theatre—tel.: 021 437 2274. Other information from Chris Bell or Nigel Swinford, c/o The Jesus Centre, Ethel Street, Birmingham, B2 4BG.

## News from the Scripture Union

Giving sixth formers a taste of inner-city life was one of the aims of a Play Scheme run in Camberwell, South London, by an Inter-School Christian Fellowship team of leaders and sixth formers.

In the evenings the sixth formers and their leaders discussed, from the Christian viewpoint, issues raised by the day's events, such as discipline, swearing ("All the kids swear like troopers") and "What do Christians have to say to backward kids?"

"We run a Christian Play Scheme to show that the Church cares and does something practical," said the leader, Roger Luther of the ISCF staff. The Play Scheme programme for the children included a daily half-hour-Bible-story-and-singing session.

The Play Scheme at Camberwell had the help of a grant of £150 from the local authority, towards the cost of outings, etc.

## News from the Tear Fund

TEAR Fund has been involved in three major areas where ordinary people have been suffering daily through political upheavals. In *Nicaragua*, grants have been made to CEPAD, the consortium of evangelical churches and agencies actually working amongst the 50,000 people displaced by disturbances in the capital, Managua. A grant has also been made to the World Gospel Mission in Honduras where Don Hawk is administering relief assistance to refugees, who are mainly women and vast numbers of young children, mostly abandoned or orphaned. In Costa Rica also, help has been given through the Salvation Army. Beds blankets and tents have been supplied in two camps, one in La Cruz, 10 miles from Nicaragua, and one in Liberia, 50 miles from the border. In *Uganda* money has been provided for vital materials, equipment and medical supplies, including generator parts and fuel, a water tank and filter, a refrigerator and cholera vaccine. Funds have also been sent for roofing materials agricultural tools and implements, seed and fertilisers, repairs to water supplies and provision of basic commodities such as salt, soap and cooking oil which are beyond the means of most people. TEAR Fund will also be involved in long term agricultural and medical work. Meanwhile, the needs of *Indo-China* have not diminished. Although various agencies have supplied food regularly to refugees in Hong Kong, basic hygiene supplies have been very limited. TEAR Fund has helped the Christian and Missionary Alliance, not only to distribute 50,000 blankets to refugees and to provide an out-patient clinic, but also to supply packages of basic supplies, including a bucket for laundry, a towel, a face-cloth, soap, a sleeping mat and a Vietnamese/English beginners test book. TEAR Fund is also helping refugees in France and in Britain.

### Turkey

Very little is heard of Christian work in Turkey but during November it will be possible for assemblies to receive up-to-date information. Steve Richards will be visiting Britain from November 17-25. Commended to the work from South Bay Gospel Chapel in the USA, he has worked for ten years in Turkey and for the last three years he has been working amongst Turks in Germany. Anybody who wishes to hear about this work should contact Peter Maiden (UK Director of Operation Mobilisation) at his home address—49 Fusehill Street, Carlisle, Cumbria (Tel.: 0228 20303).

## News from World Vision of Europe

### News from World Vision of Europe

It was a remarkable and imaginative development when *Seasweep*, World Vision International's relief ship, sailed from Singapore harbour on a mission to Vietnamese boat refugees. James Tysoe, Executive Director for World Vision of Europe Ltd, who visited the ship in Singapore, emphasised that the purpose of *Seasweep* was not to pick up refugees but to assist them. He said, "We will strictly obey international law which forbids us to direct them to any particular port but we will show them where they are and give them maps and compasses to guide them". A ten-ton crane on board the *Seasweep* will enable World Vision

ship personnel to lift some refugee boats out of the water for repair. Mr. Tysoe stated that the charter of the relief mission remains unchanged from last year. "We will sail a service and supply mission. Our objective is to keep the refugees alive so that they can reach land safely."

## Home-Calls

**Mr. James Landers** of Luton on June 28, 1979—aged 86. Remembered for his cheerfulness, fearless and consistent witness, and love and devotion to the Lord's people. His home, "Ebenezer", was a haven for many and in particular to large numbers who served in the forces during 1939 to 1945.

**Mrs. Ida Morley** on June 22, 1979, at the Royal Infirmary, Lindley, Huddersfield—aged 71. Converted in early life, she met with believers at Skelmanthorpe, and of recent years was associated with the Lindley Assembly where her attendance at meetings was excellent. Her presence was always of great spiritual help to those who attended the weekly women's meeting and the monthly hospital services because of her lovable testimony and delightful Christian character. She leaves memories of a deep abiding love for the Lord Jesus, calm and complete faith in her Lord, love for fellow believers, and zeal and concern for the unconverted. Prayer is requested for her son and daughter-in-law, and other members of her family.

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Mr. and Mrs. W. Coates  
Phone: Windermere 3532

### BIBLE READINGS 1979/1980

Autumn—13th-20th October Mr. A. J. Last  
Spring—12th-19th April, 1980 Mr. S. Emery

# Vague-rancy?



She is a very keen Evangelical Christian.

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# People and Places

## Stewardship

**Missionaries' Children's Fund:** 29 Queen Street, London, EC4R 1BH. Gifts for the last quarter were as follows: April £132.00, May £256.00, June £220.00.

**Home Workers Fund**  
Equity House, 450 Hackney Road, London, E2 6QL. Gifts received during the month of July amounted to £394.10.

**Retired Missionary Aid Fund:** 12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies for the month of July amounted to £3,115.35. Anon.—£50, £5 and £10.

## Prayer List

Stamped letters addressed c/o **The Paternoster Press, Paternoster House, 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter, EX2 4JW** will be forwarded to any of those whose names appear below.

**Workers** are requested to include their names on their cards when returning them each month. We are still receiving anonymous contributions from time to time.

**Blackburn, A. G.:**  
Woodbury 2; Paignton 9-17; Bristol Home Workers' Cfce. 22-25; Ashburton 27; Torquay 30.

**Burnham, A. E. J.:**  
Waterlooville 2; Wembley 9; Portsmouth 12; Fareham 19; Bristol 22-25; and at other places.

**Campbell, B.:**  
Callington 2; Falmouth 4, 14, 27, 30; Carbis Bay 16; Bristol 21, 26.

**Clifford, D. L.:**  
At Winchester, Portsmouth, Salisbury, Arras (France) and Bournemouth during the month.

**Galyer, W. S.:**  
Barnstaple Fair and various meetings 15-23; Bridgwater Fair and various meetings 24-30.

**Grimsey, A. W.:**  
Deputation visit of meeting from Kings Lynn at Mr. Grimsey's house 6; Kings Lynn 14; Leigh-on-Sea 16-19; Fittleworth 22-24; Markbeech 30.

**Lowther, G. K.:**  
Grimsby, Humberside and Lincolnshire 1-20; Kendal 22-27; Swanwick 28, 29; Stapleford 30.

**Meadows, D.:**  
Weymouth 2; Twynham, Christchurch 10, 17; Winton 16; Gosport 27; and the remainder of the time in Bournemouth and District.

**Mills, B.:**  
Wokingham 9; Camberley 12, 19; Islington 13; London 17; Cardiff 18.

**Mountstevens, S.:**  
Glastonbury 1; Bridgwater 2, 3; Whitstable 9; Horne Bay 16; Deal 24; Village Mission follow-up 12, 13, 14.

**Phillips, C.:**  
North Harrow, 2, 9, 16; Greenford 2; Enfield 3, 10, 17, 24; Acton 4, 11; Brentwood 5, 12, 19, 29; Emerson Park 6; Gosport 8; Kingston 16, 23; Tottenham 18, 25; Hemel Hempstead 20, 27; Harlow 22; Tolworth 29; Thirlmere St. Albans 30.

**Short, S. S.:**  
Aldershot 1, 2; Langford 4; Leominster 5; Crews 6; Liverpool 9, 11; Chester 10, 13; Hoylake 12; Wokingham 16; Perth 19; Stirling 23, 25; Oban 30.

**Tatford, F. A.:**  
S. Wales and N. Devon 8-14; Tavistock 16-18; Okehampton 19; Plymouth 20, 21; Rugby 26-30.

**Thurston, A.:**  
Balsall Common 1-8; Dawlish 9; Strete 10, 14, 17, 21, 24; Torre, Torquay 11; Chillington 12, 13, 19, 20, 27; Exeter 16; Paignton 20; Bristol Home Workers' Cfce. 22-25; Kingsbridge 18, 30; Dartmouth 26.

**Tryon, G.:**  
Bath 2; Camberwell 5, 30; Dewsbury 8-14; Ossett 16-20; Loampit 23.

## Forthcoming Events

The Publishers regret that, owing to demands on space, it is not possible to insert an announcement in more than one issue. Correspondents should indicate clearly in which issue they wish their announcements to appear.

**Bexleyheath:**  
Bethany Hall, North Street, Woolwich Road, Sept. 29 at 7.00 p.m. Speaker: E. Parmenter. Subject: Rev. 4 & 5. Oct. 27 at 7.00 p.m. Speaker: A. Leekie. Subject: Rev. 12.

**Bognor Regis:**  
Bible Convention held by Bognor Regis Evangelical Fellowship, Aldwick Free Baptist Church, Aldwick, Oct. 9, 10, 11 at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Rev. Francis Dixon. Theme: "The Life that Wins". (Oct. 9—"The Cleansed Life", Oct. 10—"The Indwelt Life", Oct. 11—"The Witnessing Life")

**Boscombe:**  
Ann. Cfce. Drummond Hall, Drummond Road, Oct. 13 at 3.00 and 6.00 p.m. Speakers: E. Hughes, J. Harrison.

**Bracknell:**  
Ann. Cfce. Netherton Emmanuel Church, Wildridings, Sept. 29 at 3.00 and 6.00 p.m. Speakers: J. Knight, A. Cheale.

**Bristol:**  
Centenary Meetings, Zetland Evangelical Church, 4-6 North Road, St. Andrews (formerly at Stokes Croft and Eugene Street) Oct. 6 at 3.00 and 6.00 p.m. Speaker: G. Harpur, with tea at 4.30 p.m. Oct. 7 at 6.30 p.m. Speaker: Dr. B. Stone.

**Bristol:**  
Homeworkers' Cfce. Broadmead Baptist Chapel, Sept. 22 at 3.30 and 6.30 p.m., Sept. 24 at 3.45 and 7.00 p.m., Sept. 25 at 7.00 p.m. Speaker: A. Nute.

**Carehalton:**  
Ladies' Missy. Cfce. West Street Chapel, Oct. at 3.15-5.15 p.m. Tea at 5.30 p.m. Speakers: J. R. Taylor (Argentine), P. Levett (Colombia), and ministry—Mrs. W. Hart.

**Chester:**  
Kingsway Chapel, Grasmere Road, Newton. On the first Sunday of each month the Breaking of Bread Service will be held at 6.30 p.m.

**Edinburgh:**  
Missy. Rally and Exhibition. Bruntsfield Evangelical Church, Leamington Terrace, Sept. 29 at 7 p.m.

**Falmouth:**  
Ebenezer Hall, Trevethan Road, Sept. 8 at 3.30 and 6.00 p.m. Speakers: T. Aitken, J. Dyer.

**Grimsby:**  
Wellowgate Chapel, 67 Wellowgate, Oct. 13 at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: H. Riisnaes. Slides of Israel illustrating the New Testament.

**Kendal:**  
Parr Street Church, Sept. 22 at 3.30 p.m., 24-27 incl. at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: G. K. Lowther.

**London:**  
Cfce. Alexandra Hall, Alexandra Road, Hornsey, N8, Sept. 8 at 3.30 p.m. (tea at 4.30 p.m.) and 6.00 p.m. Speakers: J. Jackson and T. Watt.

**London:**  
Evangelistic Mobile Unit Rally, Trafalgar Square, Sept. 15 at 3.00 p.m. and Orange Sheet Report Meeting at 6.30 p.m.

**Luton:**  
Ann. Cfce. Onslow Road Gospel Hall, Sept. 15 at 3.00 and 6.15 p.m. Speakers: A. Cundick and J. Riddle.

**Maidenhead:**  
Ann. Cfce. Parkside Hall, St. Luke's Road, Sept. 22 at 3.30-5.15 p.m. and 6.15-8.00 p.m. Tea in interval. Speakers: J. Riddle, Dr. R. Townsend.

**North East England:**  
N.E. England Missionary Weekend, Sept. 14-17. Meetings held simultaneously at Teeside, Tyneside, Wearside. Speakers: J. Burnett, W. Grunbaum, T. Hill, R. W. Tushie, D.

Treadgold, T. Wales. Full details from W. Archbold, 12 Claveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Tel.: 70507.

**Oldham:**  
Ann. Cfce. Werneth Gospel Hall, Railway Road, Oct. 6 at 3.15 and 6.00 p.m. Speakers: C. Goldfinch, Mr. Howlison.

**Plymouth, Exeter and Barnstaple:**  
Devon United Offering Meetings, Wolseley Hall, Plymouth, Oct. 5 at 7.30 p.m. Belmont Chapel, Exeter, Oct. 6 at 3.00 and 6.30 p.m. Grosvenor St. Chapel, Barnstaple Oct. 8 at 7.30 p.m.

**Stapleford:**  
Central Hall, Eatons Road, Oct. 1 at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: G. K. Lowther.

**Worthing:**  
Missy. Cfce. Bedford Row Evangelical Church, Bedford Row, Oct. 13 at 3.30 and 6.00 p.m. Tea in interval. Speakers: R. Howe (Thailand), C. Phillips (Colombia).



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AT THE

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St. Albans 29th September 6.15 p.m. Thirlmere Christian Fellowship, Cell Barnes Lane, St. Albans.

Dorking 6th October 2.45 p.m. & 5.45 p.m. United Reformed Church, West Street, Dorking.

Exeter 10th November 2.45 p.m. & 5.45 p.m. Belmont Chapel, Western Way, Exeter.

### CCA MISSION FOR HOME EVANGELISM

(Christian Colportage Association)

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## Personal

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Kingsway Gospel Hall, 133 Babbacombe Road, Torquay. Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11 a.m. Gospel Service 6.30 a.m. Thursdays: Ministry 7.30 p.m. Visitors warmly welcomed. (9)

### CLIFTON HALL

Whitehorse Lane, S. Norwood, SE25, welcomes visitors. Sundays 11.15 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. Thursdays 8.00 p.m. (Almost opposite Crystal Palace Football Ground.) (9/78)

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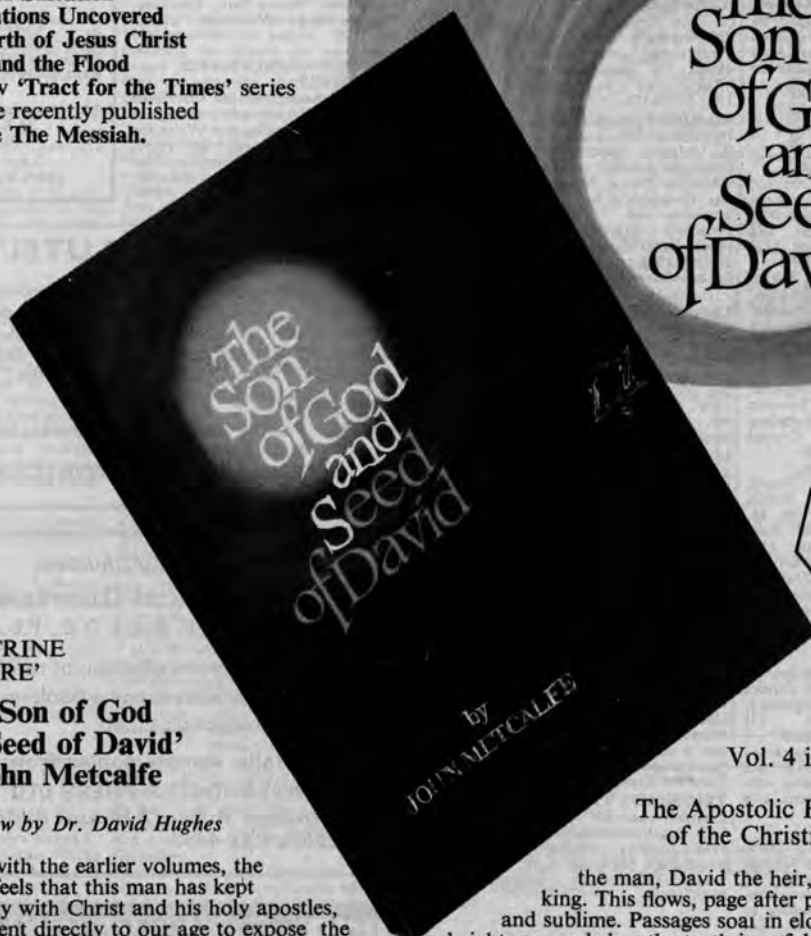
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*A Review by Dr. David Hughes*

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October 1979  
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'TASK OF THE CHURCH'

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# The Harvester

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Inside: Thomas Barnardo: the man and the myth





## The Right Contact

Every Scripture Reader knows the importance of making the right contact when visiting a barrack room. The scene was well set for a Reader in Northern Ireland. A group of men were watching T.V.; a card school was in progress and one man was sitting on his bed listening to the radio. To this man the Reader spoke for over an hour. The man seemed so interested and responsive to all set before him.

Returning later to that billet he heard from the soldier that he had that very night trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour. Evidence of progress is apparent. He has since been posted to Germany and has requested another Reader to visit him—evidence again of a right contact that has switched the soldier on to Higher Command.

*Please continue to pray for our contact among men and women in the Army and Royal Air Force. The Services are a strategic mission field within our nation today; hundreds of young men are being faced with the Gospel in their earliest days within the Services. Details of SASRA'S role can be obtained from their General Secretary at 75/79 High Street, Aldershot, Hants, GU11 1BY.*



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# The Harvester

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## Editorial

### Things Hard to Understand

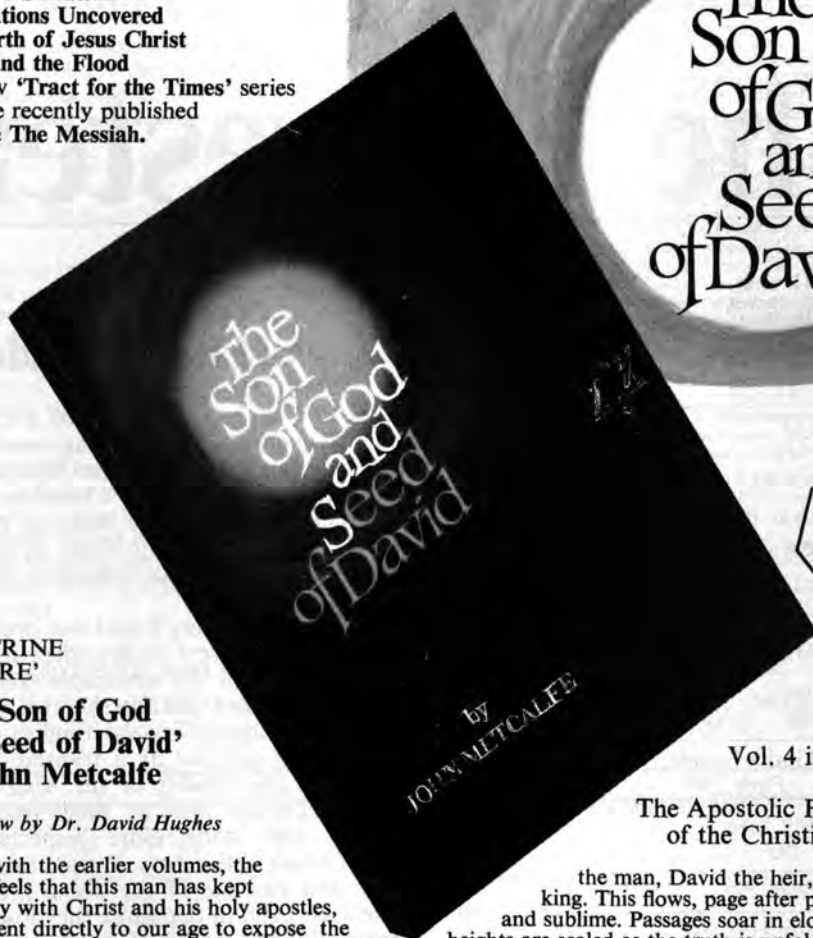
It was once suggested to me—by a Christian leader whose judgement I respect—that one of the reasons that modern translations of the Bible meet with such fierce opposition in some Christian circles is precisely that they make the meaning too plain! It is ironical that the very simplicity of the language in such versions can make difficulties stand out more vividly.

The comment of my friend was brought forcefully to my mind in recent weeks when reading through the Pentateuch in the admirable *New International Version* (a version not far short of the *Good News Bible* in its straightforward English, and probably closer to the original as a translation). Somehow, the almost epic quality of the *King James Version* (not completely lost in more recent revisions) softened and made more respectable the hard facts of much of the story. We are used to reading of blood and carnage in the noble prose of Shakespeare's day, and in that guise they lose much of their impact. But the matter-of-fact contemporary prose, that could have come from some present-day newspaper of quality, permitted no such escape.

The difficulty was heightened by the immediately preceding context of the offending chapters. The deliverance from Egypt of the oppressed and tortured Israelites is one of the great basic themes of the Bible: the paradigm of God's delivering greatness, to which the Old Testament constantly recurs; Israel's great and overwhelming proof of the reality of his God; the pattern and sign of New Testament redemption. Was it possible that this delivered nation was being urged by its delivering God, within a few chapters, to a deliberate policy of genocide (a crime for which, in modern profession, though not alas practice, no excuse can suffice)? To a deliberate course of extermination of nations secure in their own homeland? To a pitiless zeal for its God, that rang too ominously close to precisely what the same morning's paper had to say about the actions of a certain Ayatollah Khomeini in unhappy Iran? Where and how could this be reconciled with One who, Himself God-made-flesh, preached 'love your enemy . . .'?

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T.C.F. Stunt

## Thomas Barnardo: the man and the myth

*An extended review of Gillian Wagner, **Barnardo** (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979) £8.95. Mr. Stunt, a historian, teaches at Aiglon College, Chesières-Villars, Switzerland.*

One of the greatest challenges to Christian integrity occurs when we are faced with information which casts doubt on cherished preconceptions, and when we are tempted to dismiss as unreliable evidence that we would rather forget. The lives of several 'Heroes of the Faith' have recently been subjected to a closer scrutiny and accordingly we have had either to revise our sometimes idealised portraits of them, or to do violence to our professed concern for the truth by sweeping this unpalatable information under the carpet. A few years ago I raised precisely this problem in an article in *The Witness*<sup>1</sup> drawing attention to the extraordinary honesty of the Old Testament writers who told us the whole truth about men like David, and mentioning some of the recent reassessments that historians have had to make about men like Shaftesbury, Kingsley, Gladstone, and others. More than one reader protested that what I had written was unedifying. One in particular, who had just read Ian Bradley's *The Call to Seriousness*<sup>2</sup> and had been encouraged by its account of what he called 'Great Britain's heroic period of history,' was very distressed 'to have some of these great names smeared'. In my defence I can only say that the Scriptures refrain from the sort of stained-glass presentation that my critic would prefer, and add that a selective approach to truth which only listens to agreeable and pleasant information is very dangerous, as it can lead to spiritual deafness.

These reflections are prompted by reading the excellent biography of Dr. Barnardo that was published earlier this year. Let us make quite clear from the outset that Lady Wagner's study is neither hagiographical nor a debunking operation. Rather it is an honest and sensitive approach both to the man and the world in which he worked, and as such provides us with a convincing and valuable reassessment of this dynamic man.

The Brethren in Dublin had been greatly strengthened as a result of the 1859 Revival and it was in this milieu in 1862 that Barnardo first began to respond to the kindness and concern of men like William Fry, builder of Merrion Hall. In her account of Barnardo's conversion Lady Wagner omits the part played by John Hambleton though she later mentions him together with Richard Weaver, Henry Varley and Harry Moorhouse as a genre of popular preacher with whom Barnardo was naturally associated<sup>3</sup>. For a time after his conversion Barnardo continued in the Anglican church, but soon insisted on believer's

baptism and then threw in his lot with the Brethren. Lady Wagner, unlike many other writers on this period, recognises the importance of the millennial perspective of the circle in which Barnardo was moving, and the part this played in the sense of urgency that characterised his career both then and later. It is clear that even at this stage, although Barnardo worshipped at Merrion Hall where he was also a Sunday School teacher, he was nonetheless mixing with a wider evangelical grouping. The revival meetings at Aungier Street were not only supported by Brethren like William Stokes and Thomas Ryan, but by the Anglican Dr. Marrable and by Dr. Gratian Guinness who though often associated with Brethren had at the same time a much wider ministry. It was Guinness who brought Hudson Taylor to Dublin, and was thus indirectly responsible for the challenge that fired Barnardo with the ambition to evangelize China's millions. On the other hand it was three elders at Merrion Hall who provided the small allowance which enabled Barnardo to study medicine in London.

In some of Barnardo's later accounts he implied that his work for destitute children in London began immediately in 1866 when he arrived, but Lady Wagner has tracked down an early report in *The Christian* (1872) which makes clear that his celebrated encounter with Jim Jarvis who showed him the sleeping haunts of homeless children, occurred only in 1869-70. Previous to this he had been with the Brethren in Sidney Street, Stepney, while

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### 'An honest and sensitive approach to the man and his world'

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engaging in open air evangelism around his lodgings at the Mile End Road, as well as teaching in a ragged school. Courage, boundless energy, resourcefulness and readiness to experiment can all be discerned as early as 1867 in Barnardo's attempts to bring the Gospel to the outcast population of the East End. In 1869 he founded a mission in Hope Place, but even then the primary object was evangelism and not providing a home for the homeless. The title of his first report ('The first Occasional Record of the Lord's Dealings in connection with the East End Juvenile Mission') reflects Müller's influence, but from the start young Barnardo had no qualms about appealing for money. At least two of his later staff-workers were converted at this time through his preaching, though Barnardo—still only 23 years old—was far from sure about his future. He was still studying medicine and it was only during November 1870 that, in a conversation with W.T. Berger,

Barnardo finally allowed his candidature for the China Inland Mission to lapse. On the other hand it is apparent from Berger's correspondence with Hudson Taylor that Berger had decided some time before that the 'talented' but 'overbearing' Tom Barnardo was far from an ideal candidate.<sup>4</sup>

One of the strengths of this biography is that its author is completely at home in the philanthropic world in which Barnardo was rapidly to become involved. Lady Wagner, who was awarded a PhD. by the University of London for her thesis on 'Dr. Barnardo and the Charity Organization Society', and who is Chairman of the Barnardo Executive Council, knows her way around the 'maze of family relationships and connections'—more often than not, evangelical ones—which composed the

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'... the "talented" but  
"overbearing" Tom Barnardo was  
far from an ideal candidate'

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'dynamic network' which controlled most charitable activity in England at that time. Barnardo already had excellent credentials for acceptance among these people through his links with the YMCA, the CIM and the Brethren, but his most vital asset was his friendship with Richard Morgan, the Editor of *The Christian*—a magazine which regularly carried Barnardo's reports and always gave him a good press. It was at Morgan's home that he met D. L. Moody, and Lady Wagner perceptively draws attention to the similarities in the outlook and personality of these two remarkable men, the mutually high esteem in which they held each other, and, most important of all, Barnardo's evident imitation of several of Moody's unconventional methods for drawing a crowd and gaining publicity.

Although Barnardo will always be remembered for his homes, one of his most remarkable achievements occurred in 1872. Pitching a mission tent (seating 2000) opposite the Edinburgh Castle, 'a flourishing and notorious gin palace in the Rhodeswell Road', Barnardo, with the help of 'Fiddler Jos' (Joshua Poole, a converted drunkard) entertained and preached to crowds throughout the summer. By October, trade in the gin palace had fallen off so badly that the 'citadel of Satan' was put up for sale. Unwavering, Barnardo raised the money and bought the Castle, transforming it into a 'British workman's coffee palace . . . where men can sit, smoke, read and drink and think and return home safely', while it also provided the location for the meetings of Barnardo's mission church. This was a non-denominational foundation 'leavened by Brethrenism and Quakerism', some of its trustees, like John Sands and John Eliot Howard, being Brethren.

There has always been some doubt as to when and why Barnardo's association with the Brethren came to an end. Lady Wagner herself is unable to resolve

the matter—Barnardo himself was probably not sure about it—but simply quotes the letter that he wrote to Lord Radstock (c.1892) saying that 'within the last fifteen or sixteen years' he had resumed communication with the Church of England though he begged his correspondent not to talk of this 'for it only refers to my personal feeling'.<sup>5</sup> Lady Wagner suggests that this withdrawal from full fellowship with Brethren was at least partly because his homes were increasingly running into debt and Brethren took very seriously the injunction to 'owe no man anything'. There is another possible aspect to the question. Although Barnardo's brother George was also spiritually a child of the 1859 revival, it is clear from the autobiography<sup>6</sup> of George's son Frederick (a book which does not appear in Lady Wagner's bibliography) that sooner or later George became an Exclusive Brother. It may be that, as has so often been the case, the brothers were at least partly reacting on each other, as they moved in different directions. It would be interesting to know more about this relationship, but the only reference made in this biography is to Frederick's 'exuberant personality' enlivening Barnardo's family life when he was living with them in 1897.

There is however, as might be expected from the introductory remarks above, another side to Barnardo which we would be wrong to ignore. Lady Wagner is well acquainted with the seamier side of the philanthropic world in which Barnardo played a vital part. The rivalry between him and Frederick Charrington led an embittered Baptist minister named George Reynolds to write some slanderous accusations against Barnardo, who in turn wrote some inexcusably vitriolic replies. Of these he later denied the authorship, though as Lady Wagner makes clear, the evidence against him is very strong. Then there was his questionable use of the title 'Dr.' before 1876 when he finally took his Diploma at the Royal

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'... it may be that the  
brothers were reacting on  
each other. . . '

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College of Surgeons in Edinburgh, and his even more dishonest claim that the University of Giessen had awarded him a degree—a claim that he tried to substantiate with a forged letter. Likewise the charge that some of Barnardo's 'Before and After' publicity photographs were not genuine but posed, seems very hard to discount.

All these criticisms and a great deal of other dirty linen was aired at length, first in the press and later in the law-courts between 1874 and 1877. The fifth of Lady Wagner's work devoted to these 'scandalous controversies' is scrupulously fair and completely devoid of the scorn for all evangelical enterprise which many another writer might have adopted when confronted with such an episode. As a result the

reader has to take her assessment all the more seriously. On the one hand Barnardo had vision and charisma, but at the same time he was evidently inclined to be dictatorial, even tyrannical, and quite unable to brook interference in his work from outside. His relations with the trustees of his homes were stormy at times and when his own financial straits forced him in 1883 to accept an annual salary as Director he found it very humiliating. When finally the trustees succeeded in limiting Barnardo's expansionist borrowings which were putting the Homes into colossal debt, it is clear that he bitterly

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**'God used him . . .  
imperfect as he was'**

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resented it. Likewise, in his fierce anti-Catholicism which resulted in a further bout of litigation over the custody of children, Barnardo's unbending self-confidence in the rightness of his cause, led him to behave in a very high-handed manner, and, it would appear, to deceive the courts with some fake correspondence. On the other hand we repeatedly encounter the Doctor's unquestioned compassion for the underprivileged and the exploited, whether cripples, destitute children, or the prostitutes among whom he was unashamed to work. In this context it is perhaps worthy of mention that Lady Wagner compares him favourably with Sir Robert Anderson whose attitude to the prostitutes murdered by Jack the Ripper was a 'typically Victorian' one, showing no 'trace of pity for the victims nor any understanding of the economic and social conditions which made prostitution such a feature of Victorian London'. Incidentally, although Lady Wagner recognises Anderson's support for Barnardo, both as friend and member of his committee of management from its inception, she seems unaware that in fact Anderson knew Barnardo even before his conversion and has left us with a striking description of him as he then was, saying that there can seldom have been a person 'less likely to do anything for anyone else—particularly for a dirty or diseased child'.<sup>7</sup>

At home, however, Barnardo seems to have treated his family as something of a supporting cast in the dramatic venture that his life had become. Often he neglected his children because of his tireless efforts on behalf of the institution in which he was always the king-pin. On his own admission he was inclined to laugh at his wife's abilities, which were far inferior to his own, and his children must often have felt that they had been relegated to second place, especially when away at boarding school. His daughter Syrie (always known as Queenie) who was expelled from her school at Eastbourne for sliding down the banisters on a tea tray, might later have become a financial asset to the Homes when she married the

wealthy and charitable Henry Wellcome, but in fact the marriage came to grief soon after Barnardo's death, as also did her second marriage (unmentioned by Lady Wagner) to the novelist, Somerset Maugham.<sup>8</sup>

So then, what are we to make of this unusual career and personality? How much of the traditional story must be jettisoned as myth? In all probability surprisingly little. We now know that Barnardo's father was a Prussian Jew (but not of Italian origin) who had married his deceased wife's sister who in turn was not Abigail Drinkwater, but Abigail O'Brien.<sup>9</sup> Likewise we now know that the young man of 21 who arrived in London in 1866 did *not*, in the space of one year, discover his mission and establish a Home in Stepney. Rather the process took four years—only a little less remarkable! Another episode that Lady Wagner shows to have been embellished somewhat in Barnardo's later accounts, is his description of his taking Lord Shaftesbury and other aristocrats by night around the hidingplaces of the homeless urchins of the East End. Apart from a few corrections like these, Lady Wagner's task has been to give fuller details of the circumstances in which Barnardo was working and of the episodes that his admirers preferred to forget. Far from shattering the old portrait she has made it much more convincing and realistic.

Writing some 18 years ago, Roy Coad described Barnardo as 'a man of incredible energy who packed into every day what a normal man would have taken a week to accomplish . . . an unsparing driver of himself and others'<sup>10</sup>. Lady Wagner demonstrates the astonishing outworkings of that energy, redirected, as it was after his conversion, in the service of Christ. As is the case with most of God's workers, there were undoubtedly some elements of selfish ambition and unbridled human energy which mingled with Barnardo's concern for the glory of God. Clearly these led him astray at times, into self-deception and uncharitable behaviour, but nonetheless God used him, imperfect as he was, to achieve something of lasting value. How easily might late-nineteenth century Christians have let slip from their hand the torch that Shaftesbury had passed on to them, and how easily might charitable concern have become the sole preserve of non-Christian, secular organizations! Barnardo's anxiety, not only about the eternal welfare of the deprived, but also for their present needs, put many of his contemporaries to shame. A truly Christian orientation has always driven men and women to act on behalf of the underprivileged, and it must be our prayer that those Christians engaged today in such work will not fail for want of our support. There could be no greater judgment upon Christianity than for charitable enterprise to be confined to the work of secular institutions. □



Footnotes to Thomas Barnardo

- 1 'The Past: Fact or Fiction', *The Witness* (May 1977).
- 2 Ian Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness: The Evangelical Impact of the Victorians* (1976). In fact Dr. Bradley is quite as critical of the Evangelicals as I have ever been, but his scorn is gentle and spread throughout a whole book rather than concentrated in a single article.
- 3 A fuller account of Barnardo's conversion is to be found in Henry Pickering (ed.) *Twice Born Men* [1934] pp. 90-92.
- 4 Lady Wagner does not indicate the location of the Hudson Taylor Papers. Presumably they are in the Archives of the Overseas Missionary Fellowship.
- 5 The letter was originally cited in Mrs. Barnardo and James Marchant, *The Memoirs of the late Dr. Barnardo*, (1907) pp. 231 ff.
- 6 Frederick A. F. Barnardo, *An Active Life* (1963).
- 7 Robert Anderson, *The Lighter Side of my Official Life* (1910) In fact Sir Robert has appeared in an unfavourable light in several recent publications and I propose to discuss his career in a subsequent article, if the opportunity arises.
- 8 Robin Maugham, *Somerset and all the Maughams* (1966)
- 9 This was in fact revealed in Norman Wymer, *Father of Nobody's Children* (1966). Previously Barnardo's widow concealed the fact because she felt it was too shameful for her husband to have been related to a Roman Catholic family.
- 10 Roy Coad, 'Men of His Right Hand,' *The Witness* (March 1961).

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# Sidelights from the Old Testament

H. L. Ellison

## 1—The Human Family

*The first of a series of Biblical word studies from Mr. Ellison.*

Hebrew in itself is a relatively simple, concrete language, with relatively few abstract nouns and adjectives. Its vocabulary is fairly limited, though both the evidence of Arabic and of other Semitic languages, some known to us only through the evidence of archaeology, suggest to us that it is only the limited amount of old Hebrew literature that has survived, and its predominantly religious nature, that has caused some common words from daily life not to appear in it.

This relative paucity of vocabulary means that some words have a wider meaning than their normal English equivalent, and their metaphorical usages may be unsuspected. The purpose of this series is to look at some of the commoner words more closely.

For reasons that do not need mention or explanation it is almost impossible to transliterate the Semitic languages satisfactorily. A simplified system that will be understood but not satisfy those that know Hebrew, and that can be read by those that do not, has been adopted. 'represents alep and 'ayin, two letters not normally pronounced in modern Hebrew; q = k pronounced far back in the throat; ch is pronounced as in the Scotch loch; b = v and p = f.

Here we shall do best to deal with the basic words dealing with the human family in general, leaving it to the next article to look at the relationships within the individual family.

*Gen. 1: 26, 27* tells us that 'God said, "Let us make man ('adam) in Our image, after Our likeness" . . . So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created Him; male and female created He them."

This indicates the peculiar shade of meaning in 'adam. It includes the female as well as the male, and is in fact a collective, meaning mankind irrespective of race or sex. Adam as a proper name does not appear until *Gen. 4: 25* (so Jer.B.). The apparent exceptions in RSV, NEB, NIV are due to a following of mistaken rabbinic tradition. Just as the woman could not become Eve until she had borne a child, even so Adam was mankind until then, for his wife was literally part of him.

There is no plural of 'adam; where one is needed *ben'adam* (sons of man) is used, and where the context allows, this includes women. Where the stress is on women, we have *bnot ha-'adam* (daughters of man) in *Gen. 6: 2, 4*—the expression is probably used to stress that these were mortal women in contrast to the angelic 'sons of God'.

While older commentaries mostly derive 'adam

from 'edom (red), referring to the colour of man's skin, the more probable, and today more popular, derivation is from 'adamah (ground, i.e. tillable soil), the more so as the two words are linked in *Gen. 2: 7*. That which binds mankind together is a common body-stuff; that which gives him individuality is his spirit, which can look outwards and upwards to the Creator. Mankind is further linked together by its dependance on the soil. The fact that the soil had a curse laid on it (*Gen. 3: 17*) does not imply only man's humiliation in finding the ground in rebellion against him, or the agriculturist's difficulties, but also points to a fundamental disharmony as man's body-stuff and the ground on which he lives are no longer at peace with each other.

The mention of male and female in *Gen. 1: 27*, the words used being the basic terms applied to animals as well as man, shows that the creation of woman after the man was no afterthought and did not imply any degree of inferiority. Humanity was to share in the basic sexual differentiation that runs through creation and finds its unity only in the Creator Himself.

Parallel to 'adam we have also 'enosh, cf. *Gen. 5: 6*; an example of the parallelism comes in *Psa. 8: 4*, with 'enosh and *ben 'adam*. It is found mainly in poetry, especially in Job and the Psalms. It is claimed that it comes from a root meaning to be weak or sick, and as such it would be an excellent description of humanity in its lost condition, but the etymology is uncertain.

It is equally uncertain whether the usual words for a man ('ish) and woman ('ishshah) are derived from the same root. Indeed, it remains uncertain whether the well-known linking of the two in *Gen. 2: 23* is etymologically justified, or whether it is merely based on assonance. English is one of the few languages where the force of the Hebrew can be naturally represented.

We should notice that the Hebrew gives full stature to the woman. It was mentioned earlier that the later creation of the woman did not imply inferiority. It was for practical reasons, that the man should experience his incompleteness, that it was later in time; she is, apart from sexual differences, the man, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. This finds its expression also in the New Testament, 'He who loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever hates his own flesh' (*Eph. 5: 29*). That is why 'a man'—not a woman—'leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife', though as a result of the Fall it was seldom true then as it is seldom true now.

If any would stress 'she was taken out of man' ('ish), let him remember that he exists only because

he was taken out of woman, and that when the perfect Son of Man came into the world, He came solely through a woman.

The need was felt, however, to express a man in full vigour, and for this *geber* was used, but the

English versions seldom try to bring out its force. This can be deduced from the fact that its feminine, *gebirah* or *geberet*, is used for the mistress of a slave, for the Queen Mother or a lady in a ruling position. The intensive *gibbor* is a valiant man or hero. □

## 100 Years of Witness at Bearwood

L. G. Barton

During the month of June the Assembly at Bearwood, Smethwick, located in the Midlands, celebrated their centenary. Bearwood in 1879 was but a village with a population of approximately 1,200. At that time there was a renewed interest in spiritual activity in the area with the Congregationalists and the Established Church planning expansion of their work into the district. Previously to 1879 an Assembly of 'Open Brethren' were meeting in a place called the Central Hall in Great Charles Street, Birmingham. Included in its membership of approximately 300 were Mr. and Mrs. Swaine Bourne who resided at Elford House, 298 Hagley Road, on the outskirts of Bearwood. In 1879 Mr. and Mrs. Bourne were exercised about a testimony in the village of Bearwood similar to that radiating from Great Charles Street. Meanwhile in a building in Bearwood rented by a Mr. Edward Palser, the Lord's Supper was spread in an upper room. No actual day is given for the commencement of the Lord's Supper in Mr. Palser's upper room but we know from records, meticulously kept over the years by Mr. Swaine Bourne, and later his son Kendrick Swaine Bourne, that Mr. and Mrs. Swaine Bourne joined Mr. and Mrs. Palser and another sister in 1880 for meetings in the 'upper room.'

Shortly after, Mr. Swaine Bourne who owned some property in Bearwood added a wing to his shops to provide a place of worship, the first to be built in Bearwood. This new building, affectionately known as the Old Meeting Room, was opened on Saturday, 15th January 1881, with prayer dedicating the work to God. There were thirteen brethren and six sisters present and the opening was followed by a fellowship tea at Mr. Palser's house.

The Old Meeting Room was used exclusively for meetings from 1881 to 1896 and during this period of the Assembly's history outstanding saints of God such as Robert Chapman, Campbell Morgan, Dr. J. Morrison, William and Mary Hake, Peter Anderson and others honoured the place with their fellowship. Towards the end of the 19th Century the records show visits to the Old Meeting Room by missionaries to Spain, Germany and Sweden. Henry Payne and Don Pedro gathered for fellowship in 1892 and in 1894 Stanley Arnot, missionary to South Africa was a guest at Elford House, and preached the gospel in 'the Room'. The year 1893 saw the opening of a Sunday School under the super-

intendency of William Bennett. It commenced with seven teachers and seventeen children. At the first anniversary the school had seventy children on the registers and eight had been saved over the twelve months.

In the initial seventeen years the Assembly and Sunday School had increased appreciably and in 1896 Mr. and Mrs. Swaine Bourne, who had been married 25 years, commissioned an architect to present plans for a New Meeting Room (later called Bearwood Gospel Hall and now known as Bearwood Chapel). The building was ready for opening in June of the same year, close enough to the 25th wedding celebrations on 29th May 1896. The New Hall was opened on 20th June 1896. There were sixteen brethren and eight sisters present. The theme of the opening ministry was related to 'Christ in the midst of His People.'

Many believers have been baptised over the hundred years of witness. Membership has grown over the life of the Assembly from five believers to one hundred and twenty four—the latter in 1978 being the highest in any one year.

The celebrations held from 17th to 24th June of this year included special efforts in the various aspects of the work of the Assembly including the Sunday School, Young People and that arranged for Women. In addition two Gospel Meetings and two Meetings for Ministry were held. The Mayor and Mayoress of Sandwell attended the second public meeting for thanksgiving and the proclamation of the Gospel, and the local press gave a feature page on the history of the Assembly. Two coffee mornings were also held, and past and present members joined on the second Saturday for a re-union. There was much rejoicing and thanksgiving during the week and this was reflected in the singing by a choir formed especially for the celebrations. Much more could be written of the history of Bearwood Assembly. In fact, much more has been written and this is contained in a souvenir brochure entitled *One hundred years of witness*. There are a limited number of copies of the brochure still available from the compiler, Mr. L. G. Barton, 64 White Road, Quinton, Birmingham B32 2AG at a price of £1.05 each inc. postage. The contents of the brochure will appeal particularly to past and present members of Bearwood Assembly. It nevertheless has a universal appeal to believers in fellowship in Assemblies and while stocks last is available to anyone who desires a copy. □



An Open Letter

## Humble Suggestions to Young Brethren

As a person of some experience (I would not say—dare not say—pillar of the Church) I should like, as occasion permits, to make the results of a few of my more mature reflections available to younger brethren, particularly to those with ambitions for the pulpit.

I should say without doubt that one of my most important discoveries is the fact that by emphasising those doctrines I *know* to be right, and dwelling more lightly upon certain others which are obscure, presumptuous to enquire into and which are apparently difficult to reconcile with those doctrines *sound* people hold dear, it is possible to formulate an overall conception of the Truth which has strong scriptural support. Neither is there need, as some insist, to apply the criterion of the courts of our land: that *all* facts must be considered, and that *no* verdict shall be given while *any* evidence remains unaccounted for. British law courts are human institutions, and as such are fallible. But a verdict arrived at through the authority of Scripture leaves no scope for argument: it is infallible.

Certainly there will be misguided persons who will argue that much of the evidence put forward amounts to little more than scriptural hints. A close investigation will generally reveal they are persons with no past and very little future, and against such

two safe witnesses can be brought. They are Pride and Preconception. If the outcome is still in doubt Prejudice can also be subpoenaed. Then if matters are still unresolved, and I doubt very much that this will be so, it might be wise to instruct counsel. Experience has brought two excellent men my way, but before introducing them give the matter thought, for they can never appear on the same side.

In cases where the argument hangs upon words, Superior-Knowledge is your man. A tantalising advocate this. His grasp of original language is such that he can make one original word say any one of a dozen different things. For the sit-up-all-night spiritual slugging match I should recommend that seasoned old campaigner, Ignorance. He knows nothing of original language, does not want to know and suspects anyone who does. Furthermore he has this going for him: he will not sit down until he has thrashed the opposition out of sight.

Thus with a fair weighing of the evidence it will have been made clear that Scripture is of no private interpretation, and it will be evident to unbiased minds that your case, my young brother, is by the plain statement of Scripture confirmed beyond reasonable doubt.

Your humble Elder,  
L. James

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Correspondence for this page should be sent to Mr. Peter Cousins, M.A., B.D.,  
The Paternoster Press Ltd., 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW marked 'Harvester Question Page'

## Question and Answer, with Peter Cousins

### A Concordance for Modern Translations

#### Question 157

*To what extent is it possible to use a concordance with modern translations?*

There are concordances specially made for some modern versions. For example, Pickering & Inglis publish one for the Revised Standard Version, and there was one for the Moffatt Translation. I do not know of any based on the New English Bible, Jerusalem Bible, Good News Bible, or New International Version. However, a concordance is available for the New Testament only which covers several of these. It is the *Modern Concordance to the New Testament* published by Darton, Longman and Todd. Like Young and Strong it refers from the various English words employed back to the Greek. Any serious student of the New Testament who is not familiar with the words of the King James Version would find it useful. Concordances are used for two purposes. One is to compare different passages where the same word is used. Doing this is easy with the translation such as the Revised Version of 1881 which, so far as possible, used the same English word at every appearance of the corresponding Greek one (cf its use of 'authority' for *exousia* and 'power' for *dynamis*, unlike the King James Version which has 'power' indiscriminately). Modern versions, by contrast, tend to translate the same word differently according to context so that a work such as the *Modern Concordance* mentioned above is even more complex than Young and Strong. Some idea of the complexity of the problem may be seen by the fact that modern translations use twenty - different translations for the word 'flesh' in Greek. In addition, 'no flesh' in Greek can appear in English as: 'no one', 'no living thing', 'no man', 'no human'. The other use of a concordance is to locate a half-remembered text by means of a word or phrase. Sometimes it is possible to do this even using the modern version and a concordance based on the KJV. Words such as 'water' or 'light' are the same, after all, in every translation. (There are exceptions, of course: see the KJV and RV of *John* 5: 35). It is helpful if one can remember certain common translation variants: thus, where the KJV has 'righteousness', a modern translation, for good linguistic reasons, will often have 'salvation' or 'victory' especially in *Isaiah* 30-66. Similarly 'congregation' or 'assembly' often appear for 'church'.

But any translation based on dynamic equivalence (such as the GNB) is extremely difficult to use with a concordance. Take as an example *Psalms* 23: 5b. One might imagine that the presence of such simple words as 'head' and 'oil' would make this easy to locate but both words disappear in the GNB!

The difficulties of using a concordance with some modern versions in particular provide additional reasons for suggesting that any serious student of the Bible would do well to use a fairly literal version such as the RSV or NIV for detailed study.

### 'Immediately' in Mark's Gospel

#### Question 158

*Regarding your answer to Question 153, do you by the same token take the view that the words 'straightway' and 'immediately' which occur so often in Mark's Gospel do not indicate the Servant character of our Lord?*

The words *euthedōs* and *euthus* (straightway, immediately) occur forty-seven times in Mark and this is undoubtedly of significance. However, it is clear from e.g. 1: 21 that this usage is sometimes more a feature of Mark's style than a historical reference. However, the usage is by no means indiscriminate and it is right to look for some reason underlying it. Interestingly, no fewer than fourteen occurrences are found in chapters 1 and 2 where they combine to give an impression of intense activity. Furthermore, Mark uses the device at several points in his narrative for dramatic effect (5: 29, 30, 42; 6: 25, 27; 9: 15, 20, 24; 14: 43, 45 and 15: 1). In point of fact, fewer than a quarter of the occurrences refer to actions of Jesus so that the reference of the word is by no means exclusively to him. Of at least equal significance are the eight occasions (1: 31, 42; 2: 12; 5: 29, 42; 7: 35; 9: 20; 10: 52 and possibly 5: 13) when the term emphasises the immediacy and completeness of the cures brought about by the Saviour. There is little to be said for interpreting the whole Gospel by focusing on so small a proportion of Mark's usage. So far as the terms under discussion are concerned, they are probably best seen as indicating Mark's sense of the crisis announced in the presence and ministry of Jesus, a crisis suggested also, perhaps, by Mark's use of the historic present. Taking a broader view, we should ask what he meant by referring so explicitly to Jesus as 'Son of God' (1: 1); we might indeed discover that for Mark this includes the role of Servant.

Edited by Kathleen White, 60 Bowood Road, Swindon, Wilts.

## Kathleen White's Column

### Ambassadors for Christ

One of the compensations of growing older is the excitement of seeing how God is training and equipping younger generations to carry out His work in many different spheres of service.

Take Phil, for instance. Delicate at first as a baby, he grew up in the happy environment of a Christian family with two brothers and a sister. His life followed the pattern of school and then Teacher Training College.

By the last year of college, certain dominant facets in his personality were clearly emerging, a strong urge to travel, an ability in his main subject, Art, and a desire to be involved in some form of Christian service.

Then ensued several months of the Lord seemingly saying 'No' to a succession of plans for his future. Although elected CU President at College for his fourth year, Phil was denied the chance to stay on and take his B.Ed. degree. However, he soon overcame his disappointment with the prospect of VSO work in Nigeria. Due to leave on September 2nd having completed his training, he received a telephone call on September 1st advising him that a political coup had upset all the arrangements. Next he was offered the alternative of Tanzania but again the scheme fell through because Nyerere held elections.

As VSO had no other vacancies for his particular skill of pottery, he applied and was accepted by UNO to travel to Bolivia and work as a potter in an Inca village. Again, as the date for his departure drew near, an obstacle arose. Phil developed mumps and was too ill to set out on the journey. At this stage, God gave a positive indication in His plan for Phil's life when he was given the post as an art teacher in a local school.

This left Phil in a position he had neither planned nor foreseen, living back at home again and working with the Covenanter group in his own church. It looked as though his aspirations to travel had been quenched, at least temporarily.

Two years later, in God's perfect timing, came the opportunity to fulfil his earlier hopes. Phil was offered the post of art teacher at an American school in Algiers. This secular job ensured Phil's entry into the country.

'It's an embassy school', Phil told me over coffee one morning on a recent holiday at home, 'children from over twenty nationalities attend there from the ages of 6-14. Parents are usually from embassy staffs or running businesses in the country. I am engaged there for three days every week.'

'Where do you live?' I asked him.

'With Gerry and his wife who originally came out as WEC missionaries. Gerry is also the chaplain of the English speaking church in Algiers. There have been some thrilling developments in the city since I came over to take up my appointment. The Bible Society bookshop has reopened. It's run by an old Algerian Christian and we have been able to obtain Bibles in several different languages. Many varying nationalities work here.'

'Then, too, it seems as though God has been prompting Christians to come here and in a remarkable way we've all blended into a team in spite of our mixed temperaments and backgrounds.'

I asked Phil to explain the personalities in the team.

'Well, Gerry and his wife Judy are from New Zealand and they lead the Bible Society work as well as Gerry pastoring the church. Dave from USA helps him in this and is also involved in Arabic student work. His parents were missionaries in France and he himself is a trained pastor. One day he turned up on our doorstep offering to help and we've been so glad of him. He's learning Arabic so has good contacts.'

'Birgitte from Sweden is Gerry's official secretary and is also the secretary for the Bible Society. Being trilingual, she's a tremendous asset. Clive from New Zealand and Chris from Great Britain are evangelical Catholics working with the British Council. Wayne from USA teaches in school with me.'

Having heard from Phil's parents a little about the team effort with the Monday School Club, I probed Phil to find out more details.

Phil laughed. 'It's MAS—Monday after school and mainly consists of children from our school and the French school. As soon as lessons are over we collect the children and ferry them down to church. First we have half an hour for singing and other activities, and then we go into classes for three quarters of an hour and back together for the last few minutes. It's held in term time only but has tremendous potential.'

'Too, we have trips out with climbing and camping activities. Once a month we hold a family service, occasionally we invite folks to a barbeque and we have camps in the mountains with the help of parents.'

Later in the week Phil spoke and showed slides about his work. Seeing the tough climbing assignments it reminded me of Phil's previous training for this sport in England, once again underlining the fact that God makes no mistake in choosing just the right person for a particular job.

Phil mentioned in addition their happy association with Rene Harris who lives next door. He described



their plans for increasing house meetings in various centres and appealed for more people with vision and a desire for outreach to join them in their efforts.

'There are large groups of Europeans in mining camps in the South, cut off from society for spells, who would welcome a visit'. (Phil's younger brother flew out for a week before Christmas to play and sing at the camps but Phil is hoping he may eventually be able to organise whole Christian groups to go out there for longer periods to entertain them and communicate the Gospel.)

And so, before returning by plane the next day, Phil shared his enthusiasm and his hopes for the future concerning the Monday School, the English church, the house meetings and the outreach to the camps, with his own local church back in England.

He himself has many personal aspirations including the possibility of book illustration and art work for Scripture Union, perhaps not immediately but in the foreseeable future. As a church, I think we have been motivated to back him more wholeheartedly with continuing prayer for all the established projects and the difficulties they encounter from time to time. It is stimulating to share the vision of that dedicated and committed team that God has brought together to carry out His work in that vast country of Algeria. □

## Professor Bruce Asks

In *Where do we go from here?* (p. 83) Dr. Michael Griffiths makes a distinction between congregations with which, despite various differences, we may well have fellowship because Christ is there, and 'apostate bodies' from which we can only urge the people of God to come out, because 'Christ does not manifest Himself among them in their public character'. I have a problem with regard to the latter category: how can I, 'standing on the outside', be sure whether Christ is present or not inside?

*Correspondence, please, to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey, SM5 4NX by 15 October.*

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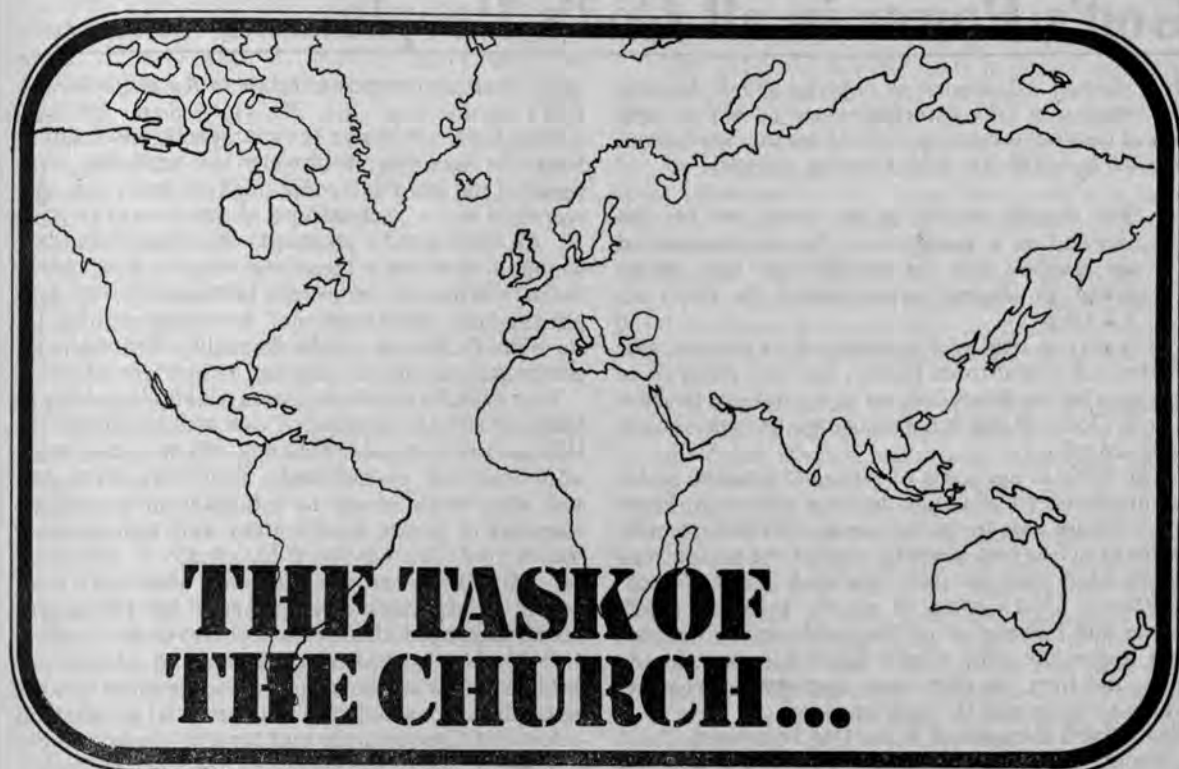
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## Editorial: Holy Spirit in Mission

Man peculiarly considers himself to be self-sufficient. He prides himself on his own achievements, his scientific and technological progress, his ability to better himself socially and economically. Whether believing in an empirical or existential philosophy, man is still emphasizing his own importance, and his own imposed or experienced belief in himself.

How tragic when such a humanistic attitude is reflected in so much that passes for 'Christian' activity. Sometimes lip service is given to the 'leading of the Spirit', when what is meant is 'I thought it was a good idea'. Too many give God little thought when planning, preparing, preaching or pontificating—it's all *our* ideas, *our* opinions, *our* words, *our* actions, *our* effort, *our* achievements, *our* activities (albeit in the name of God) that are clearly apparent. No wonder what we say and do lacks authority, that 'extra something' that marks it out for God, from God and in the power of God.

The conscious real presence of the Holy Spirit in His people as the 'life of God in the soul of man', in each local church as the corporate expression of all

that makes Christians one in the family of God, and in mission as the revelation of God's power to heal in body, mind and spirit is the dynamic of God's life that makes ours part of His, and His part of ours.

The Lausanne Covenant affirmed 'We believe in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Father sent His Spirit to bear witness to His Son; without His witness ours is futile. Conviction of sin, faith in Christ, new birth and Christian growth are all His work. Further, the Holy Spirit is a missionary spirit; thus evangelism should arise spontaneously from a Spirit-filled church. A church that is not a missionary church is contradicting itself and quenching the Spirit. Worldwide evangelization will become a realistic possibility only when the Spirit renews the church in truth and wisdom, faith, holiness, love and power. We therefore call upon all Christians to pray for such a visitation of the sovereign Spirit of God that all His fruit may appear in all His people and that His gifts may enrich the body of Christ. Only then will the whole church become a fit instrument in

*continued on page 291*

# God's Power in all God's People

Hugh D. Mackay

*As a former Missionary in Nigeria, Hugh Mackay was engaged in Bible translation work. Until recently he was involved in running U.K. missionary workshops. He now is fulfilling a Bible teaching ministry.*

**'For though we live in the world, we are not carrying on a worldly war, for the weapons of our warfare are not worldly but have divine power to destroy strongholds.'** (2 Cor. 10: 3-4 RSV).

It is easy to read such a statement as this and give intellectual assent to its theory, but how many of us can say that we know it to be true—not just because it is in God's Word, but because we have personally experienced it?

The Bible is our basis of faith and practice and a definitive record of God's dealings with men. From these we are able to deduce certain permanent principles of action and blessing 'so that the person who serves God may be fully qualified and equipped' (2 Tim. 3: 16-17 GNB). If we are to know God's power and blessing in our lives and service, we must first appreciate what God's Spirit has done in the past, and then, on that basis, appropriate what He wants to do in and through us today.

## God's Spirit Recognized in the Old Testament

From the beginning, God's power through His Spirit has been actively involved in the history of mankind. The Hebrew word *ruach* translated 'Spirit' means literally 'wind' or 'breath' and thus He was a prime mover in the initial act of creation bringing order out of chaos (Gen. 1: 2), imparting life to the first human being (Gen. 2: 7), acting as the medium of influence in God's dealings with men (Gen. 6: 13), and the means whereby God was especially in communication with those who served Him (Gen. 41: 38).

God's Spirit was recognized to be able to control and empower His people with abilities way beyond their natural means, e.g.: Joseph (Gen. 41: 38-39), Bezalel and Oholiab (Ex. 31: 3-6), Gideon (Jud. 6: 15, 34), and David (1 Sam. 16: 6-13), etc. All through the Old Testament we read phrases like 'the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon . . .', 'was poured out upon . . .', or 'filled' different people at different times to equip them for specific tasks: craftsmen to build the tabernacle (Ex. 35: 30-36: 1), judges of the nation like Moses and the seventy elders (Num. 11: 17, 25), Joshua and Othniel (Deut. 34: 9, Jud. 3: 9), warriors like Samson (three times in Jud. 14: 6, 19, 15: 14), for the endowment of wisdom like that given to Daniel (Dan. 5: 11), or to speak a message directly from the Lord (e.g.: Isa. 61: 1, Ezek. 11: 5, Mic. 3: 8 etc.).

Prophets, priests and kings were anointed by the pouring of oil upon their heads, symbolizing the Holy Spirit being poured upon them, thus setting

them apart and empowering them for a life-work in God's service (e.g.: Ex. 28: 41, 1 Sam. 10: 1-10, 1 Kings 19: 16 etc.). It was specifically said of Saul, for example, following his anointing, 'the Spirit of the Lord will come mightily upon you, and you shall be . . . turned into another man' (1 Sam. 10: 6). 'The Lord's anointed' thereafter became a common term for a theocratic king (1 Sam. 12: 3, 24: 10). When David prayed in Psalm 51: 11 'take not thy holy Spirit from me,' he recognized that his sin with Bathsheba could disqualify him from his power and position as king (cf. 1 Sam. 16: 14).

Two expectations were forecast and longed for in Israel. One was the hope of the Messiah (from the Hebrew word *mashiah* meaning 'the anointed one') who would be perfect, holy, full of God's Spirit, and who would come to establish an everlasting kingdom of peace, bringing joy and righteousness (Isa. 9: 6-7, 11: 12, 61: 1-11, cf. Lk. 1: 35, Rom. 14: 17). The other was the day when all God's people would become empowered by His Spirit. Moses expressed this in embryo form in Numbers 11: 29. Isaiah, Ezekiel and Joel prophesied its fulfilment, the last enlarging its scope from Israel's descendants to include 'all flesh', that is, all mankind—Jew and Gentile, male and female, young and old (Isa. 44: 3, Ezek. 36: 24-28, 37: 14, 39: 29, Joel 2: 28-29).

## The Spirit anticipated in the Gospels

We read of the coming of Jesus being conceived by the Holy Spirit coming upon Mary (Lk. 1: 35), and announced by angels to be 'a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord' (Lk. 2: 11). The word 'Christ' in English is transliterated from *christos*, the Greek form of the Hebrew word for Messiah meaning 'anointed.'

Though Jesus was therefore the Anointed One, holy and the Son of God from birth, yet He must needs be visibly 'anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power' at His baptism (Jn. 1: 32-33, Acts 10: 38). He was marked out as the Messiah of the Old Testament by the visible coming upon Him of the Holy Spirit (Jn. 1: 41, Lk. 4: 18, Acts. 5: 42, 9: 22 etc.) who thereafter guided and empowered Him for His mission (Lk. 3: 22, 4: 1, 14 etc.). The first public demonstration of that heavenly anointing took place shortly afterwards in Cana (see Jn. 2: 11 LB), and, from the Lord's statement in the synagogue at Nazareth, it is evident and highly significant that all Jesus said and did in His ministry derived from that act of the Spirit coming upon Him and anointing Him to preach, heal and set at liberty those oppressed by the devil (Lk. 4: 18-21).

John the Baptist made two prophetic statements about Jesus which were to fulfil Israel's longing and the angel's declaration: (i) 'Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world' (Jn. 1: 29)



—that is, Jesus as Saviour—and (ii) 'This is He who will baptize with (or 'immerse in') the Holy Spirit' (*Jn. 1: 33* NIV)—that is, Jesus as the Christ, the Anointed One, who was also to become the Anointing One.

This latter prophecy was so important and crucial as to be reported in each of the Four Gospels (*Mt. 3: 11, Mk. 1: 8, Lk. 3: 16, Jn. 1: 33*) and referred to twice in *Acts* (*Acts 1: 5, 11: 16*). (Note: the same phrase also occurs in *1 Corinthians 12: 13* where the Greek preposition *en* is similarly used and by comparison should mean 'in' rather than 'with' or 'by' the Spirit, see RV, NEB, BFBS Translator's NT).<sup>1</sup> From these it is clear that in each case Christ is the Baptizer who 'plunges' or 'immerses' in the element of the Holy Spirit (cf. *Jn. 7: 37-39*).

The night before the cross, Jesus told His disciples of another Comforter who would be with them for ever, 'even the Spirit of truth . . . for He dwells with you and will be in you' (*Jn. 14: 16-17*). He was to be 'in them' with new life as well as 'with them' in blessing. As Jesus had been physically born of the Spirit, so participants in his kingdom would be reborn by the Spirit (*Jn. 3: 5*). As He had been led of the Spirit, so His disciples would be led in all things (*Jn. 16: 13, Rom. 8: 14*). As He had received power from God to perform miracles, so His followers would receive power to do the same and even greater works by the same Spirit coming upon them also (cf. *Jn. 14: 12, Acts 1: 8*). As Michael Green has put it, 'The Spirit who equipped Jesus for his mission (was to) equip the disciple to carry on.'<sup>2</sup>

'The day is coming', Jesus said to the Samaritan woman, 'when true worshippers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth' (*Jn. 4: 23*), and He promised that from those who believed in Him would constantly flow rivers of living water to others—signifying the Spirit they were to receive (*Jn. 7: 38-39*).

Even as God breathed on Adam in creation, so, on the first day of the resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples and breathed on them, saying, 'Receive the Holy Spirit' (*Jn. 20: 21-22*). The Greek word for 'Spirit', *pneuma*, means 'wind' or 'breath' like the Hebrew word, and the verb tense here is aorist imperative, with the sense of 'Receive now, once and for all'. Thus the disciples that day became re-created and alive to God through His indwelling Spirit, and so it is with everyone who is born again of the Spirit (*Rom. 8: 9*). Jesus had come not that we might merely have life, but power to live victoriously for God (*Jn. 10: 10*). For this they needed to wait for Pentecost (*Acts 1: 3-5*).

### The Spirit demonstrated in the Acts

The Holy Spirit is emphasized again and again as the source of the early church's power (e.g.: *Acts 1: 8, 4: 31* etc.). Luke had written of 'all that Jesus began to do and teach' in his former book, the Gospel. Now, by implication, he writes in *Acts* of what Jesus continued to do and teach through His followers by the power, direction and control of His

Spirit—for we see from *Acts 16: 6-7* (RSV) that the Holy Spirit is equated with the Spirit of Jesus.

When the Spirit initially came in power upon the disciples at Pentecost, it was variously described in the first two chapters of *Acts* as 'the promise of the Father' (*1: 4*), being 'baptized with the Holy Spirit' (*1: 5*), receiving power 'when the Holy Spirit has come upon you' (*1: 8*), being 'filled with the Holy Spirit' (*2: 4*), a 'pouring out' of the Spirit (*2: 17*), and receiving 'the gift of the Holy Spirit' (*2: 38*). As Thomas Smail has commented on this, we should not try to assign different meanings to each of these phrases because Luke is trying 'to describe the different facets of the incomprehensible thing that has happened.'<sup>3</sup>

We can see from the broad definitions of the event that, for the church as a whole thereafter and for us as individuals, it was a many-sided experience which David Watson beautifully describes as 'an overwhelming of the love and power of God which so strongly transformed the timid disciples that on and on they went, rejoicing, praising and witnessing. Nothing could stop them, not just because of the theological fact of their Christian initiation, but because of the overwhelming of the Spirit in terms of personal experience.'<sup>4</sup> Sadly, this freshness and power is so often lacking in Christian activity today.

As with the first disciples, regeneration and indwelling by the Spirit is very different from the Spirit's coming upon us in power. This may be understood more clearly if we appreciate a subtle difference between the use and non-use of the article in Greek. It is used with proper names such as in referring to the person of the Holy Spirit, but without the article it more usually refers to His attributes and power, e.g.: in *Acts 2: 38* when the believers received the gift of Holy Spirit (power). Similarly, Paul was not asking the Ephesians if they had received the person of the Holy Spirit when they believed (*Acts 19: 2*), but rather His power through some manifestation.

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*Editorial—continued from page 289*

His hands, that the whole earth may hear His voice.'

Mission, in evangelistic terms, is impossible without the Holy Spirit (*John 16: 7-11*). We can't live a Christ-like life without the Spirit, for it is He Who produces His fruits in us (*Galatians 5: 22-26*). The church cannot serve God on earth without His Spirit—for it is His supernatural gifts in action (not just human and natural) that cause men to glorify God.

Mission is not our work—it is God's—we are merely the agents, the channels. It will achieve results to the glory of God, when we come again to admit our failure, our self-centredness, and humbly seek an endowment of His power for His praise and glory. Let us not be those who have a form of godliness but deny its power, or, as Paul enjoined, we will be avoided (*2 Timothy 3: 5*).

In each of the instances recorded about the Samaritans, Paul, the house of Cornelius and the Ephesians being filled with the Spirit there were differences of order: some repented, believed, were baptized and then were filled—others were filled before being baptized (*Acts 8: 16, 9: 17-18, 10: 44, 19: 4-5*). Sometimes these things happened immediately one after the other; other times they were days or weeks apart. Sometimes it happened spontaneously, but more generally through God's servants laying hands upon them. The important thing though was not the timing, the method or the order (there were background reasons for each), but that all progressed through all the various stages to become effective and powerful witnesses in the fellowship of others. David Pawson concludes about these different elements, that 'the important question is not "Have you been converted?" but "Have you been fully converted?"'<sup>5</sup>

As a result of the filling and empowering of the Spirit it is specifically mentioned that the early church was given supernatural gifts (*Acts 2: 4, 10: 45, 19: 6*), became bold to speak out (*Acts 4: 31*), was given visions (*Acts 7: 55, 10: 19*), was comforted and strengthened (*Acts 9: 31*), filled with praise (*Acts 10: 46*) and joy (*Acts 13: 50-52*).

In *Acts 6* the seven helpers in the church were required to be men who manifestly were filled with the Spirit and wisdom (*Acts 6: 3*). Of Stephen it is recorded that he also had a gift of faith (*6: 5*), was full of grace and power, performing great miracles and wonders (*6: 8*). It was the Holy Spirit speaking through New Testament prophets who called and commissioned individuals for service (*Acts 13: 1-2*), directed them in their work (*Acts 16: 6-7*), warned the church of impending famine and imprisonment (*Acts 11: 28, 20: 23, 21: 11*) and appointed overseers or elders (*Acts 20: 28*).

### The Spirit experienced in the Epistles

It is always assumed that believers in a local church would have been fully initiated. So Paul writes to the Romans assuming that they had all been baptized (*Rom. 6: 2*). John likewise assumes that all his readers had been 'anointed by the Holy One' (*1 Jn. 2: 20*).

The Holy Spirit is said to dwell in us (*Rom. 8: 9*) to produce the fruit of the Spirit—the Christlike life (*Gal. 5: 22-23*). He is also said to be poured out upon us in renewal (*Tit. 3: 5-6*)—just as the power of Christ and the spirit of glory and of God is similarly said to rest upon us—so that the gifts of the Spirit may become manifest (*1 Cor. 12: 7*).

Spiritual gifts were given to the New Testament church for its up-building as a direct evidence that the Lord, risen and ascended, had conquered sin and death—like the returning triumphant Roman generals who distributed the gifts of spoil to their armies (*Eph. 4: 8-10*). Christ's gifts to His church are sometimes people with a God-given calling

(*Eph. 4: 11*), sometimes supernatural abilities (*1 Cor. 12: 4-11*), and sometimes natural talents dedicated to and controlled by Him. They may also be developed in those who do not possess such abilities naturally (*Rom. 12: 1-8*). But gifts are given in the context of the body of Christ and always for the benefit of others. 'To each person was given some manifestation of the Spirit for the common good' (*1 Cor. 12: 7, cf. 1 Peter 4: 10*).

That such gifts were expected to continue and equip the church for its task until the Second Coming is evident from Paul's statement in *1 Corinthians 1: 7* where he thanks God that the Corinthians were not lacking in any spiritual gift as they waited for the Lord's return. Some gifts will pass away 'when the perfect comes' (*1 Cor. 13: 10*), but the context shows that that cannot be yet, for 'now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, then I shall understand fully' (*vv. 12-13*). This cannot be true of me until I am changed to become like Him and I know as I am fully known (*1 Jn. 3: 2*). Meanwhile, gifts are given to help our imperfection and make us effective in service. We are still in 'the dispensation of the Spirit' today (*2 Cor. 3: 8*) and 'stewards of God's varied grace' (*1 Peter 4: 10*).

The Bible ends with the confirmation that the Lord anoints His people to be kings and priests to our God (*Rev. 1: 6, 5: 10*)—to rule in authority with Him (*cf. Eph. 1: 20 with 2: 6 in GNB*), and to be set apart to serve Him and declare His wonderful deeds (*1 Peter 2: 9*). We are commanded to be filled with the Spirit continually (*Eph. 5: 18*), to walk in the Spirit (*Gal. 5: 16*) and to pray in the Spirit (*Eph. 6: 18*). If we were doing so today, would not the same results recorded in *Acts* be seen?

### Conclusion

The Christian life is a spiritual life, involving us in a spiritual battle, for which we need spiritual equipment and power (*Rom. 8: 2, Eph. 6: 12, 1 Cor. 12: 4-11*). This life can be entered only by spiritual birth and maintained by constant spiritual renewal (*Jn. 3: 5, Eph. 4: 23-24*). Misunderstanding or neglect of all that life in the Spirit involves results in spiritual barrenness and stagnation—something very different from those 'rivers of living water' of His Spirit—and this can be true of us individually in our lives and service or collectively as churches. Conversely, we can only be effective in extending His kingdom and building up His church as we personally and collectively appreciate and appropriate the power still available to us by the grace-gifts of His Spirit (*Acts 2: 39, Gal. 3: 14, Eph. 4: 7-16*).

1 For an alternative view of *1 Cor. 12: 13* see *I Believe in the Holy Spirit* by Michael Green (publ. Hodder), pp. 139-147.

2 *ibid.* p. 60

3 *Reflected Glory* by Thomas Smail (publ. Hodder), p. 138.

4 *One in the Spirit* by David Watson (publ. Hodder), p. 68.

5 *Truth to Tell* by David Pawson (publ. Hodder), p. 107.

# The Spirit in Everyday Life

Jim Harris

*Jim Harris is involved in a full-time teaching and pastoral ministry among a group of assemblies in the Staines/Kingston area of Greater London. He was formerly Assistant Secretary of the Christian Colportage Association.*

Writing about the Holy Spirit is like trying to explain the wind. The man at the Met. Office is likely to give us a scientific explanation of its performance; the yachtsman's description will be very practical as he is concerned with its effect upon his immediate situation. This article comes into the latter category. Experience of the Holy Spirit in Old Testament times was more limited than that granted to Christians. He came upon men for functional purposes, whether creative, prophetic or in leadership. The Christian, however, also enjoys fellowship with God through the Spirit, so he has a deeper, fuller, richer, more permanent experience of the Lord. God's promise in *Ezekiel 36: 27* 'I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees' anticipated this development and is finding its first fulfilment in this era in those who live 'according to the Spirit' (*Romans 8: 4*). In trying to grasp the wind through its effects our first consideration will be.

## His Converting Power

The Holy Spirit turns us round from self-shaped, self-filled lives to begin a new life of fellowship with God. Theologically, regeneration predates actual conversion, for without being born again it is impossible to see or enter God's kingdom; but we become aware of what is happening when we start to take an unplanned interest in spiritual realities. This leads to conviction, repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus which, in turn, brings awareness of a new nature and outlook, a different direction in life and the realization that there are resources available to maintain our commitment to Christ.

Through conversion a person moves from self-centred existence into fellowship with the Lord and all His people. He no longer lives in mental or practical isolation: he has been baptized into the body of Christ (*1 Corinthians 12: 13*), and fitted into the building which will 'become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit' (*Ephesians 2: 22*). This spiritually-created unity of life is the basis on which he joins in worship, fellowship and evangelism with other Christians. Making the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk and the dead to live, is a profound work which God achieves at conversion, but the question is sometimes raised as to whether this is a complete work out of which the rest of our experience will grow, or is a 'second blessing' necessary to complement the Spirit's work in regeneration, so that we may enjoy the fullness of God's blessing in our lives? Doctrinally, I believe the New Testament is quite clear on this, but what happens in life does not always match the ideals of doctrine! Because

the Lord is gracious and wants men to be saved, He will often draw them to His Son through a most inadequate presentation of the gospel. This does not excuse our faulty preaching but it does help to account for the weakness in some Christian lives and to explain why the need arises for a realization and entry into the work of the Holy Spirit, subsequent to conversion. A singular emphasis on the work of the Lord Jesus, without a corresponding emphasis on the work of the Spirit to apply the benefits of that work today, inevitably leads to an intellectual rather than a life-related Christianity. Another factor is disobedience, which leads to loss of joy, power and love for the Lord. Whenever the prodigal returns and renews a full and permanent commitment to his father there is a marked awareness of the occasion, both in participants and observers. Over the years, various movements with an assortment of phrases have sought to resolve this practical tension by developing a line of teaching which, by implication, applies to all believers—entire sanctification, total commitment, Calvary love, baptism in the Spirit. Praise God that He goes on renewing His people regardless of the attempts we make to 'doctrinize our experience' and confine it to a first or second blessing. *John 1: 16* tells us that 'From the fullness of His grace we have all received one blessing after another'. We also need to know.

## His Directing Influence

One of the most commonly-used verbs to describe the Christian life is that of walking, literally 'walking about', which is the simplest means of personal locomotion. It is part of our all-day, everyday experience, so we have a cluster of verses urging us to 'walk in the Spirit' (*Galatians 5: 16 and 25, Romans 8: 4*). This expression describes the normal Christian life. Those who do so fulfil God's high ideals for their lives, not because they are operating at some rarely-attained height of spiritual accomplishment, but because they simply allow the Lord to direct their daily affairs through His Spirit. 'Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God' (*Romans 8: 14*) and this is not just for supersaints but all saints! Being 'led by the Spirit' does not refer to specific guidance or impulsive action but to the basic truth that our whole lives are given that sense of purpose and direction which being in living touch with God is bound to bring.

Yet, this doesn't seem to be the way many Christians live. For them, awareness of the Lord and His direction is occasional and fleeting rather than the abiding norm. Shape is given by the structure of collective Christian activity, such as Sunday services; direction comes mostly through listening to other people's sermons; life is held together with the nuts and bolts of accredited evangelical practices—perhaps twelve verses from the Bible before break-

*Continued on page 296*



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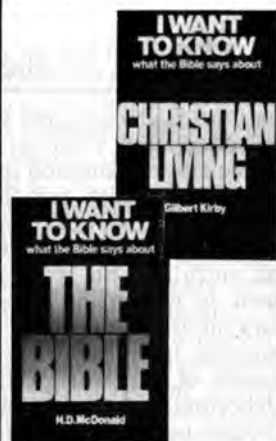
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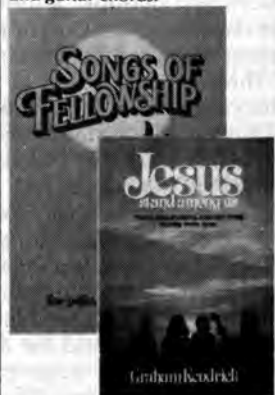
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fast and twelve words of prayer before bed with a spiritually barren day between? 'Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit' (*Galatians 5: 25*). Christianity is a co-operative venture: it involves the 'fellowship of the Holy Spirit' and fellowship is always a two-way process. It means making room and giving time and attention to the Lord, so that He can create within us a continuous sense of His presence and invest every day with a significance way beyond its merely natural dimensions. As we submit ourselves, in love, to the Lord we find that prayer, Scripture and the fellowship of other believers become means that God's Spirit uses to fill, feed and fashion daily life. The fact of being married creates in a man an outlook from which he cannot, and normally does not want to, escape. That he is a married man is with him all the time and everywhere. It shapes his attitudes, governs his relationships and controls his actions. In a healthy marriage the life-style a couple adopt expresses the commitment they have entered into; it is born out of love, understanding and need. That commitment is not maintained by the way they live—it exists in its own right and daily life just brings it out where it can be seen and enjoyed. 'He who unites himself with the Lord is one with Him in Spirit' (*1 Corinthians 6: 17*). The delight of being directed every day by the Spirit of God is the dowry of each Christian: let us claim and enjoy our privilege! In considering.

#### His Providing Care

we have to pick up several strands of thought. First, that all we need is provided through the goodness and love of our Heavenly Father (*Matthew 6*). Then, that the Lord Jesus Christ is the repository for the blessings and mercies God has to share with us (*Ephesians 1: 3; Philippians 4: 19*). Thirdly, bringing us to our theme, it is through the Holy Spirit that the Lord ministers to us and meets all our needs, whether spiritual or material. *John 16: 14-15* seems to bring together these ideas and state them very simply.

Let us look at them in some detail. It is quite inadequate to think of God providing for us in the bare sense of 'commodities' without recognizing at the same time that He also helps us understand His ways and how we should use what He provides. For example, the Lord may prosper us materially so that we have more than we actually need, even taking into account wise provision for the future. Alongside this abundance comes the knowledge that we are stewards, not owners, of this wealth. It has been given so that it might be given: we are accountable to God and responsible to others, so the Holy Spirit undertakes a teaching programme in stewardship. Sometimes the lesson comes through Scripture—maybe *2 Corinthians 8 and 9*—alternatively, He applies pressure through practical circumstances until we have 'got the message' and made practical arrangements to implement His word to us. Also, He distributes His spiritual gifts 'to each man just as He

determines' so that we are able to serve the Lord and one another in the body of Christ. But He provides more than the gift: with it comes power to make it operative and opportunity to make it useful, both emanating from the same Spirit. Not only have we been baptized into one body but we have all been 'given the one Spirit to drink'. Sometimes a Christian feels that he is in a local situation where his gift just cannot be used; it is neither welcomed nor needed! Believing firmly that the Lord the Giver will open up the way for His gift to function, it is better to accept the discipline of that situation and wait for change, rather than move off immediately into more congenial and open circumstances. He is still Jehovah-Jireh! In this connection, Paul's exhortations to the church at Rome have particular relevance, 'Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer' (*Romans 12: 11-12*).

Let us remember too, that through the resident gift of His Spirit, God makes it possible for us to relate to each other even when, naturally speaking, we are hopelessly incompatible. Response to the Lord's words in *Matthew 5: 24 and 18: 15* about reconciliation, is effective because the ground of our approach and appeal is spiritual, not natural. Teaching about submitting to one another 'out of reverence for Christ' follows the command to 'be filled with the Spirit' (*Ephesians 5: 18-21*). We can 'make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit' because there is 'one body and one Spirit' (*Ephesians 4: 3-4*). This is excellent theory but even better practice! It works because God provides both the means and the motivation for meeting His requirements. He does not set unrealistic targets before us; all God's commands are perfectly possible in practice. Hallelujah! Our final-section tackles the matter of

#### His Guiding Hand

This is well-travelled territory and the safe paths are clearly defined. Being consistent, the Holy Spirit does most of His guiding through Scripture. That's why He inspired men to record His revelations to them; why He preserved those records through many centuries and even more adventures; why He has made them available in a vast number of languages; why we have had a spate of new translations in English this century. He wants us to know His will and His ways. So we must read and absorb, master and be mastered by the Word of God. Constantly opening ourselves to Him in this way, the Spirit of God renews our minds so that our thinking processes become spiritual instead of natural, God-centred rather than rationalistic. We become capable of giving 'a judgement as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy' (*1 Corinthians 7: 25*), whether in our own lives or in discerning God's will more generally.

Occasionally, and because He tailors experience to our needs, the Lord will speak to us in an excep-



tionally clear way through an individual text, but trying to live and get regular guidance on that basis alone is rather unnerving and produces immaturity and instability. Sometimes the Spirit forms within us certain convictions which must then become a reason for action. Such convictions need to be tested by the Bible and the circumstances in which we find ourselves, but once confirmed as valid we have to respond or be guilty of playing fast and loose with the Lord. From time to time a Christian feels an overwhelming urge to follow a course of action. He may have been thinking about the matter for a long while or it may erupt suddenly, like a volcano; either way, it is important to establish the source of this prompting before proceeding to act on it. It could come from the Holy Spirit and there are documented cases, both within the Bible (*Acts 8*) and outside, showing that He does sometimes act in this way. It could be Satan, especially if there has been an undisclosed area of persistent disobedience in that Christian's life. Given a foothold, the enemy is not slow to throw his weight against us, disguising his role in the affair in the hope that we will be deceived. More likely than either, it could arise from within ourselves, being, perhaps, a resolution of conflicting tensions which have long been submerged rather than dealt with, or the fulfilment of a deep-rooted ambition which needs the trappings of apparent spiritual authenticity to justify the attention and advantage it will bring to us. Let us test these promptings—by comparing them with Biblical teaching on the matter; by weighing them against our current situation with all its commitments; by exposing them to the criticism and counsel of other Christians; by submitting them to the rigours of specific, patient prayer, and by costing the exercise in terms of personal sacrifice.

Moving on from the purely personal aspect of guidance, there is a most instructive statement on discovering God's will, in *Romans 12: 1-2*. These words are addressed to a church, as a church, and should not just be interpreted as applying to individuals. Paul speaks first of our bodies (plural) being offered to God as one living sacrifice. Then we are to be transformed (plural) by the renewing of the mind (singular), so that we may together prove what is God's good, pleasing and perfect will. Through our corporate availability to the Lord where He has placed us, and through the corporate development of our understanding so that we become the shape and condition He wants us to be, the Holy Spirit guides each group of Christians into a practical fulfilment of His will for us. It is probably not too extreme to suggest that we become the expression of God's will in that situation.

The Holy Spirit converting, directing, providing and guiding. The Lord help us to trim our sails to the wind and go steadily on to know Him practically in our lives with increasing certainty, love, power and joy. FOOTNOTE: All Scripture references are from the New International Version.

## For Reflection

'The paradox of this age is inadequacy while unlimited power is available, weakness when unbounded strength is offered to us, and ineffectiveness when effectiveness is ours for the asking. Pentecost was a demonstration of weakness being made strength, of ignorance being made wisdom, of ordinary men being made extraordinary, by the power of God. That God-generated power was transmitted to the multitudes, and from them to the world. If Christendom is to cope with the needs and demands of the world in which we live, we must rediscover the power of the Holy Spirit.' (Billy Graham)

'If we are ready to accept that our task is still so largely unattempted, then the institutions have to become less guardians of the tradition and more movements of the Spirit.' (Unknown)

'For Christians who are filled with the Holy Spirit and who are eager to redeem the time by reaching others for Christ, the loss of momentum is a cause for genuine sorrow. When we see our churches developing into middle-class clubs or politically oriented social agencies with no solid Gospel content or clear spiritual message, we are hurt.' (Unknown)

'Our own evangelism will start with our own deeper conversion to our relationship with Him (Christ). Wind and fire are the symbols and the words which we use to describe the action of the Holy Spirit. It is not without significance that these are elements which human beings heavily insure against.' (Unknown)

'Get on fire for God and men will come and see you burn.' (John Wesley)

'The Holy Spirit baptizes in fire. Spirit filled souls are ablaze for God. They love with a love that glows. They believe with a faith that kindles. They serve with a devotion that consumes. They hate sin with a fierceness that burns. They rejoice with a joy that radiates. Love is perfected in the fire of God.' (Samuel Chadwick)

'The baptism of the Spirit is a baptism of love, the filling of the Spirit is a filling of love, the power of the Spirit is the power of love. God's transcendent love becomes incarnate in human flesh and moves out where the action is. Jesus' Power is love power, and it's the only medicine that will cure this sick planet.' (Unknown)

'The right time for seeking God is always now.' (Bernard of Clairvaux)

'Oh God, you are my God, and I long for you.'

*Continued on page 300*

# God is the Lord of the Harvest

'Onesiphorus'

*Analysis of some of God's workings, contributed by a Christian visitor to Eastern Europe, who wishes to remain anonymous.*

**Zechariah 4: 6** 'Not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.' This was the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, and encouraged him in the completion of the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem—'For whosoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel' (v. 9-10). This chapter concludes with a further reference to the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

In these verses we see linked in prophecy the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the building of the Temple of God. We see stressed the power of the Spirit (v. 6) and the importance of small beginnings (v. 10) which led to triumphant endings.

In Eastern Europe there are a great variety of local situations. Some concern small meetings still young in experience, while others have grown immensely. I want to try and relate some examples of this principle: *that from a small beginning everything is possible through the power of the Holy Spirit*. The early Christians believed this and saw it worked out in practice.

Poland is a land which for centuries was virtually closed to the Gospel because of the strength of the Roman Church, but during the last two decades, in the sovereignty of God, the Gospel has spread more widely. One evidence of this is the sale of Scriptures through the Bible shop in Warsaw. During the first 123 years of its existence up until 1939, approximately 2 million Bibles, New Testaments and portions of Scripture were sold. During the 30 or so years since its rebuilding after the war, about 5 million items have been sold, making the rate of increase ten-fold. God's sovereignty is seen in the new Bible in modern Polish prepared by the Bible Societies in conjunction with the office in Warsaw; in the hunger of the people for reading, and the various printing projects carried through; and in the sowing of the seed through Gospel Radio programmes. Over a ten year period 40,000 letters were received by one of the offices producing the 'Voice of the Gospel'. Gospel literature has been provided for interested listeners, and a number have been converted to Christ. Groups of believers have commenced meetings as a result. One brother tells of an example north of Warsaw in the country. Responding to a call for a visit, long belated through pressure of other work, this Christian worker came with other colleagues to the home in the village. They were greeted at the door by the words 'so you've come at last'. This family had heard the Gospel over the radio, written off for Gospel literature, and through reading had been saved. Their understanding of the Scriptures had led them to leave the Roman Church, and then

to resist the teaching of the Jehovah's Witnesses. So, a small group of believers, they were now awaiting further Scripture instruction. Our friends were offered the main room for a meeting.

In the north several years ago, a crippled girl in a country village was saved through the radio and literature testimony. Last year her mother was baptized and now there are four believers in the family. These are in close touch with the nearest meeting 60 kms. away, where 12-14 have been baptized in the first year after opening. In that northern district during one year four or five new evangelical meetings were opened.

In a south-eastern city a Christian worker in the local meeting said that five full-time workers would find it difficult to follow up all the interested radio listeners. The local meeting has grown by thirty in the last two or three years. In a nearby town a group of ten believers had sprung up from a beginning three years ago through radio witness.

In the industrial south there are about twenty meetings which are more autonomous. In some there is the vision to reach out and evangelize, and visit radio listeners. In a period of three years or so, commencing from a small meeting of 12-15 believers, through visiting, five or six new places of Gospel Testimony have commenced in surrounding areas. At one of them, in a Roman Catholic centre, where there are two or three believers, up to forty gather in the home to hear the Gospel. The warmth of these house meetings and the fellowship following is something which we all need to re-experience.

Czechoslovakia has had an evangelical presence for maybe four centuries, dating from the Reformation—and today there are many evangelical churches and assemblies. Some gave their lives for the Gospel, and the fruit of their sacrifice is still seen today. 'The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.' There are today approximately 150 open assemblies, which persevere and seek to make the most of the opportunities. The following examples illustrate the calibre of some of the disciples—men whom God can use today in spreading the Gospel. A young man in Slovakia was converted and made a fine stand for Christ. His father was then a communist. The son was told he was a fool to hold such views, and if he embraced those of the Party he would have a house and a good job and a secure future for his children—otherwise he would 'bury them alive'. His words are typical of many in Eastern Europe—'I could tell you that I did not believe in Christ—but it would not be true—I cannot deny my Lord.' He is now an elder with special responsibilities; although he has angina, he continues to serve and minister to others. Two of his sons preach the Gospel, and are married with Christian wives. No compromise means the blessing of God.

About 25 years ago a qualified Czech young man with a doctorate was relegated to a road-sweeping job for 12 years because he would not cease preaching Christ. Today he is still preaching Christ full-time and producing a Gospel magazine regularly. Where such a courageous spirit prevails, others are stimulated to follow, and fine work is quietly done amongst children in teaching them the Word of God.

For a number of years now permission has been sought and granted, after perseverance and prayer, for Easter meetings to be held in a central Moravian town. No publicity is permitted, but over 1000 believers usually attend for the two days, and meetings are held from 10 a.m. Saturday until 10 p.m. Sunday (with normal breaks). On the last occasion 3 souls found Christ during the weekend. It is encouraging to see the Slovak brethren following suit, and in September a similar Conference was scheduled to be held in the Eastern republic, the second of its kind in 21 years. Let us be 'followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises' (Hebrews 6: 12).

Yugoslavia is a land of very mixed religious backgrounds—Roman Catholic in the West, Serbian and Macedonian Orthodox in the East. The Turkish occupation of 500 years has left a strong Moslem influence over the southern half of the country. It is in this setting and in the current ideology of dialectical materialism that a Gospel testimony commenced early this century is maintained with perseverance and faith. Each winter in the north-eastern fertile Danube plain, a series of Gospel campaigns are held, usually a week or so in length, in some of the ten or more assemblies there. Many attend the preaching and there are converts. Usually each summer a baptism is held in a suitable canal. It was a privilege to be present in 1978 when 26 were baptized. This number included four Macedonians—from 400 miles to the south. Several had been converted through faithful visiting and testimony and now a small assembly of twelve or more believers bears a faithful testimony in the extreme south near the Albanian and Greek borders. 'Who hath despised the day of small things?' Other small assemblies persevere in faith in strategic centres. Another work of faith is that of publishing Christian literature—a Gospel magazine in two languages—and small expository works—all printed on the local town press.

Romania is a land of colour and variety. The religious background is largely Romanian Orthodox and some Catholic, but there is a large Protestant minority in Transylvania in the centre and north-west. This is due to the earlier influence of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. There are many evangelical Christians, and open assemblies number about 250. The influence in the north-east is probably due to the vast spiritual work in the Ukraine. There are some 44 assemblies in the north-eastern province alone. The testimony of an evangelist from one

central assembly is striking. Coming from the north of the country he was converted late in his teens and immediately set about evangelizing wherever possible. Many were saved and many meetings grew. Our friend remained single until he had to move to a central industrial town. There he set up home and continued evangelizing, while working in a factory. The local assembly was already quite large when some twelve years ago other premises were taken over and altered. Last year he told us that, since that time, some 500 believers had been baptized in the meeting. We have been present at one baptism of 37—probably more young brethren than sisters. It was moving for us to hear the third question asked of each believer to be baptized. After affirming their faith in Jesus Christ as Son of God and personal Saviour each was asked to promise to be faithful to Him, even unto death.

Having assented, they were then baptized. There are always more waiting to follow. Our friend mentioned in passing that each first Sunday in the month is a day of fasting and prayer. The morning meeting for worship, breaking of bread, ministry and Gospel usually lasts from 9.30 till about 12.30 with one small break. Many would then stay over for prayer instead of going home for lunch. There must be a connection between the extraordinary blessing and the urge to pray with zeal and to fast as a means to prayer. Over past visits it has been a privilege to see the Lord working in conversion. The brethren do not know how many there are in the meeting—which obviously carries with it problems as well.

A memorable journey was made to the north with this friend and his wife and three children. We visited seven towns or villages where there are meetings. In five out of the seven, new premises were either already occupied, or being occupied, or soon to be occupied—and all because of spiritual expansion (cf. 1 Chron. 4: 10). In one of these seven, an industrial town, ten years ago, 150 believers were meeting in a smaller old house. Finally they bought larger premises, but the earthquake of March 1977 severely damaged these. Nothing daunted, they set about rebuilding, and in August 1978, two weeks before our visit, the new meeting hall was opened when 500 were present. They are permitted no publicity—only a small plaque on the wall which states 'House of Prayer of Christians meeting according to the Gospel.'

In another northern country town the labours of reconstruction 2 years ago had been rewarded. The new meeting hall and balcony was filled on the Lord's Day with 300—i.e. 200 baptized believers and 100 young people and children. One of the elders, when the number of believers was noted, said quite naturally 'fasting and prayer helps'. Another northern meeting began in a house with a handful of believers, and now there are 100 baptized believers in fellowship, and new premises have been purchased in the town. There must be countless other similar



examples of God's gracious working in this land of spiritual expansion. 'Thy people shall be willing, in the day of Thy power. . . ' (*Psalm 110: 3*).

Our friend was out preaching with others in a hired car. They were involved in an accident in which a guard dog was killed and the motor was ruined by fire, but they were unharmed. A crowd gathered, and as a result of conversations, three were saved, the guard began reading the Bible, and the local policeman also. From all this we see that some at least of God's people are always mobilized, ready on their toes, to do His bidding. *Ephesians 6: 15* describes this as a readiness to witness for Christ. May these 'shoes of readiness' be always on our feet.

In the Soviet Union, when God planned to evangelize this great land, He prepared several choice instruments. During the last century these greatly opened up the evangelical witness and distributed many Bibles. During this century countless believers have suffered persecution, exile and death for Christ's sake. Many were sent to Siberia. Yet today there are over 5500 evangelical meetings belonging to the Official Union of Evangelical Christians and Baptists in which many assemblies of inter-war years became associated. There are also many unregistered meetings. Truly 'the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church', for there are many very large meetings—of hundreds in fellowship—as there are also in Siberia. In the Ukraine it is estimated that in the registered meetings alone there are over 200,000 believers. Conditions and reports vary, some are persecuted and imprisoned, while others enjoy a reasonable measure of freedom to meet together. There are many evidences that God is at work in

His own way. Letters via friends during the past 18 months or so gave two examples of many converts. In one meeting in the west of the Ukraine 58 professed faith in Christ on one day; and from the east this year came a report of 100 saved in one day—and these were not isolated examples of God's blessing. 'This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes' (*Psalm 118: 23*).

One more example comes from a personal conversation eighteen months ago: An elder brother in a Polish meeting returned home after a visit to his previous home town in the USSR. This he had left 20 years earlier. Then there had been 200 believers in the town. The prayer house had then been confiscated. Now, he told me, there were 1000 believers meeting in 15 different homes! The previous Lord's Day 200 of them had met in one house for worship in the morning; and in the afternoon, 300 went down to the local river to baptize 35 young believers. The meeting lasted two hours for the preaching of the Word and then the baptism took place. Praise God that the Spirit of the early church is alive today! (*Acts 5: 29*).

So we are forcibly reminded that God is sovereign—He is Lord of the harvest—the One who opens and closes doors (*Revelation 3: 7, 8*). But till He come, He sets before us the challenge—to be examined prayerfully in faith by every believer—enshrined in these two commands to His disciples—'Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest'. (*Matt. 9: 38*) 'Go ye therefore and teach all nations'. (*Matt. 28: 20*) 'Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS' (*Mark 16: 15*).

**For Reflection—continued from page 297**

My whole being desires You; like a dry, worn-out, and waterless land, my soul is thirsty for You.' (*Psalm 63: 1 GNB*)

'It is the heart that is not yet sure of its God that is afraid to laugh in His presence.' (George MacDonald)

'Revival is the inrush of the Spirit into a body that threatens to become a corpse.' (D. M. Paton)

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# Looking at Books

## FOLLOWING CHRIST—IN LIFE AND DEATH

**Jesus Christ is Lord** Peter Toon, Marshall, Morgan and Scott. vi, 154 pp. £2.25 (paperback).

Peter Toon is on the staff of Oak Hill Theological College, and well known in evangelical circles as educationist, scholar and writer on a wide range of theological and allied topics. *Jesus Christ is Lord* aims at restoring to the familiar statement some of the excitement and thrill it had for those first heard it uttered. The Greek *kyrios* was perhaps already becoming in the first century AD a polite or honorific title of respect, but it still retained something of its primary sense of supreme sovereign. 'Within the Christian community', says Dr. Toon, 'and to those who made this declaration (that Jesus Christ is Lord) these four words summarized a very high estimate of the carpenter's Son, Jesus of Nazareth . . . and a conviction about the purpose and future of the universe.'

In ten chapters Dr. Toon discusses the exalted Jesus, Jesus Messiah and Lord, the meaning of the Ascension, Jesus Lord of the nations, of the church, of the universe, of all religions, the exalted Jesus and the creeds; leading to a final consideration of Jesus, my Lord. The reader will probably gather from the contents page that the book has clear devotional overtones, but this approach does not exclude a solid theological basis, the more interesting because its emphasis is unusual.

The life of Jesus falls naturally into two parts; first from His birth to His crucifixion, about thirty-three years; and, secondly and much longer, from the resurrection and the ascension to His return in glory. The resurrection as a starting point for the second period is natural enough; what is unusual in Toon's approach is the closeness with which he links the ascension with the resurrection. A careful examination of the four gospels leads him to the conclusion that the experience on the Mount of Olives might well have taken place on the evening of the first Easter day. He does not rule out the possibility of *ad hoc* reappearances during the ensuing days; the 'forty days' of Acts 1 could be as indefinite as the frequent indications of this period in the Old Testament. Such speculations will no doubt disturb some, especially in circles which hold to a hyper-inerrant view of scripture.

But there is nothing anti-scriptural here: 'Resurrection and Ascension are two parts of the great action of God . . . the exaltation of Jesus the Christ to the spiritual centre of the universe, that is into heaven to the right hand side of the Father'. It would be a great mistake to dismiss this book on the false assumption that its author sits light to the inspiration of scripture. This is a heart-warming, Christ-exalting and thoroughly spiritual encouragement to the Lord's people to acknowledge and proclaim His Lordship during the present time of His heavenly session. A book which will repay careful study.

Review by Lawrence E. Porter.

**God's Way to be Man** Geoffrey Preston, O.P. Darton, Longman & Todd. 105 pp. £2.40 (paperback).

Geoffrey Preston, who died two years ago at 41, was the son of a Cheshire blacksmith and Methodist. He read history at Durham with a view to schoolmastering, and started there the spiritual pilgrimage which was to lead him via Anglicanism to Roman catholicism, and made of him a Dominican novice master and later Prior with a strong taste for the monastic life, mysticism and spiritual communication.

This volume, *God's way to be man*, consists of 'meditations on following Christ through scripture and sacraments, post-humous texts prepared, with a memoir, by Aidan Nichols, O.P.' Preston was foremost a preacher, and in these Meditations we glimpse what his preaching must have been like, clear, simple yet profound, and scriptural—Nichols mentions his use of the Authorized Version. Yet he was a catholic, a convert, and like many converts, *plus royaliste que le roi*.

There are 13 chapters, dealing alternately the steps in which we seek to follow Christ; our baptism, confirmation, forgiveness, marriage, ministry and the eucharist; with the series of crises in the life of the Incarnate Son recorded in the gospels; His birth and infancy, His baptism, temptation, transfiguration and entry into Jerusalem, His death and resurrection. The whole is rounded off by an interesting though rather curious epilogue on 'the assumption of Mary and the goal of the sacraments.'

One or two impressions remain after perusing the book. First there is its constant appeal to scripture, usually quoted in the AV. Of 91 footnotes gathered in a final appendix, no less than 60 are to verses of the Bible. Then there is a felicitous gift of explaining doctrine simply; even when we do not agree with what he says, we can usually see what he is getting at, except when he uses quasi-technical theological language: 'Mary instantiates the church as reciprocal and antiphonal to Jesus' (p. 101).

He often has wise words to say; on the charismatic theme much debated in contemporary catholicism: 'It may be that the message of the gospel is given to us in a charismatic way, so that the words seem to come from us . . . but it also may be, and . . . often will be, a matter of craftsmanship and professional competence. The Spirit who gives men the gift of tongues is also the Spirit who is the source of our craftsmanship'. But the main impression is that unlike so much (allegedly protestant) theology today, it regards the Incarnation as a fact to be assumed, rather than as an unscientific dogma to be explained away. There are a few misprints, *deepen* for *depend* (p. 73); *Here for her* (p. 102).

Review by Lawrence E. Porter

**Christianity with a Human Face** Ranald Macaulay and Jerram Barrs. Inter-Varsity Press. 207 pp. (paperback).

This book is written by staff workers of the L'Abri Fellowship in England, and the dedication is to Francis & Edith Schaeffer. It is unlike any other book I have read in that it repudiates many 'evangelical' assumptions and offers instead a thoroughly Biblical argument for the human-ness in spiritual experience so often ignored or rejected. This is a book which should have a wide circulation among those with a smattering of philosophical knowledge, those confused by liberal views about the Bible and those discouraged by their inability to live on the spiritual plane advocated by many today.

Some of the chapters are easier to read than others. At one point the writers attempt to trace how Platonic thought and teaching has permeated present-day Christian thinking. Well-known names are mentioned and also books which are widely read by evangelical Christians. Because this material has to be compressed, some sections take a lot of reading, and some re-arrangement into shorter sections might be advantageous when reprinting.

The aim of the book is to emphasise our human-ness. God's original intentions in creation are explored and Christ's redemptive work is central at every stage. There are many Scriptural references to every book in the NT except II and III John, and many as well from the OT. This is a sane, balanced book and will offer relief to those who have been made to feel guilty because they cannot aspire to what some teach, and will reassure others by the book's emphasis on the importance of using the mind and the reason when reading the Bible.

Chapter 9 on 'The Family' is very helpful. The starting point is *Genesis 1: 27; and 2: 24*. The true human-ness of relationships are described with a refusal to be either restrictive in the way they are worked out or 'spiritualised' into a parody of God's intention.

This is a book to buy, to read, to study, to lend and to read again.

Review by Marion A. Timmins

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**The Way of the Preacher** Simon Tugwell, O.P. Darton, Longman & Todd. 216 pp. £3.95 (paperback).

Not only is the author a well-known charismatic writer but the letters *OP* following his name show that he is a Dominican, a member of the Roman Catholic Order of Preachers. This book, with its eight appendixes and fifty pages of notes, examines the early traditions of the Order, founded by Dominic at the start of the thirteenth century. Dominic believed that the best way to reclaim people from heresies such as Catharism was to follow the apostolic example of acting as 'pilgrim preachers' (to use a later term), living in simplicity and speaking to whoever would listen.

Students of church history will certainly find much to interest and even to amuse them in this study. But there is a more general reason for taking it seriously. It is not just about the Dominicans but also—and intentionally—about preaching and preachers. Whereas other orders emphasise the importance of contemplation or worship or service to others, the Dominicans saw their distinctive spirituality as based on the call to preach. This leads the author to consider how one may know that a person is 'called' to preach, the relationship between preaching and inward personal holiness, the conflict between inner humility and the element of exhibitionism that seems inseparable from preaching.

It is impossible to read a book that discusses these and many other related issues without reflecting on the nature of preaching and the life of the preacher. Indeed, it raises questions about the mission of the whole church to communicate Christ.

*Review by Peter Cousins*

**A Time to Die** William Purcell. Mowbrays. 157 pp. £1.25 (paperback).

William Purcell, the author of this short paperback, states that the purpose of the book is to state clearly what a Christian's faith has to say about death. First, that they 'may be able to have a message for those whom death and bereavement have touched', and secondly that they may be able to look death in the eye themselves, because he believes there is weakness of the Christian voice in this area, to combat the 'conspiracy' of silence. He believes that Christians need to be involved in the whole of death, not just in a selected few parts of it such as signing of forms etc., because they follow a Saviour who was made man, who lived as one and died as one.

He firstly tackles the problem by considering the Christian Hope. Embodied in the idea that God is Love, is that immortality follows as a consequence. The immortality described is that which Christ Himself described in *John 11: 25*. The author very clearly links the resurrection of Jesus with the very heart of the problem 'We will all rise because Christ has risen'. I thought the author's treatment of the New Testament concepts was superficial, but (given that he attempts to be not only theological but practical) he has succeeded in giving hope and assurance, which could easily be passed on to others in bereavement.

He firmly makes the point that death is not an illness which has gone wrong, but the end of a life; and this needs to be thought about as something distinct from physical decay or malnutrition which may lead to it. 'Living and dying are part of one whole'. He suggests attitudes of mind to enable people to adjust themselves to death. First, to consider the world of less importance; second, to be prepared for it by the practice of faith and trust in God and His purposes for us. His practical advices of what to do and say in the presence of a dying person have the ring of a real practical experience.

After death, the author explains, Christians have a duty to the bereaved; they can say and do things to help. He considers the arguments for and against cremation, the anxieties of a non-Christian burial. He deals with the problem of the child who has become an orphan, with the same practical wisdom suggested by a real experience of handling the problems.

I think this book will contribute valuably to the understanding and practical abilities of those who deal with the problem of death.

*Review by Dr. Peter Webb*



## MISSIONARY MATTERS

**The Open Secret** Lesslie Newbigin. SPCK. 214 pp. £3.95  
**Methods of Mission** B. R. Hoare. Epworth Press. 97 pp. 90 p.

In the light of the paucity of good books on the theology of mission one can only rejoice that Bishop Newbigin has contributed to this subject from the wealth of his own missionary experience. He bases his approach in the first half of the book on the theology of the Trinity and it is good to see mission grounded firmly on this key theological foundation. Likewise his approach to the oft-debated question of the Kingdom of God is clearly Christ-centred. Mission is therefore 'the proclamation of the kingdom, the presence of the kingdom, and the prevenience of the kingdom'. In mission we proclaim the reign of God over all things, we invite all men to share in the presence of the kingdom through union with the crucified and risen life of Jesus, we act out the hope of the Spirit 'who is the living foretaste of the kingdom'. In the context of this theological affirmation the author has an interesting discussion of the currently hot issue of universalism and also a helpful section on the relationship of universality and particularity in the working of God.

In the second half of the book Bishop Newbigin turns his attention to various current debates. He is helpful in what he says about Liberation Theology and the whole question of justice—inevitably there is much more that could be said on such a huge subject, but his balanced and biblical approach gives clear guide-lines. He is somewhat critical of some aspects of the Church Growth movement and compares them with the older classic approach of Roland Allen. The 'Gospel and Culture' debate then comes under his scrutiny with useful insights, but perhaps some may feel that the Willowbank Report (published by Scripture Union) has already said it succinctly. He touches lightly on contextualization of theology, but this is obviously not his forte and he makes no attempt to tackle this huge and controversial subject. On the relationship of Christianity to other religions Bishop Newbigin is fairly conservative, but lays himself open to criticism with such statements as 'there is no distinction between Christian and pagan because the same Lord is Lord of all and bestows his riches upon all who call upon him'.

*Methods of Mission* is a much lighter volume of collected essays on practical topics concerning evangelism in this country. The British Church is grappling these days with how to be more effective in evangelism, so these hints on how to do it will be appreciated. City evangelism, mission in rural areas, evangelism in a pop culture, the use of music, films and literature in evangelism, personal evangelism—quick hints in a few pages each will hardly satisfy the more thinking or experienced Christian worker, but others will find this a useful introduction.

Review by Martin Goldsmith, All Nations Christian College.

**Drunk Before Dawn** Shirley Lees. Overseas Missionary Fellowship. 215 pp. £1.15 (paperback).

In view of the current interest in the work of the Holy Spirit in renewal the Christian public will welcome a book which contains a first-hand description of a recent revival movement. Writing for the Jubilee year of the Borneo Evangelical Mission, Shirley Lees has extensively researched the early development of their work, tracing it through to spectacular mass conversions in the '50s and to the equally amazing group revivals in this decade.

The rather laboured style and mass of historical and geographical detail may prevent this book from enjoying a wide circulation among those with no deep interest in the area. However the author's style gains in pungency when she enters the modern era in which she herself was involved. Additional interest is provided through several delightful line-drawings and some clear maps which greatly aid the reader's understanding of the situation.

In several instances the author presumes on a considerable background knowledge for the reader (e.g. unexplained references to the Brunei rebellion or to confrontation with Indonesia). However the book should prove of real interest to those with a concern for East Asia; and it is hoped that those who are hungry to learn more about the power of the Holy Spirit in men's lives will be able to glean some encouraging lessons from its pages.

Review by Elizabeth Goldsmith, All Nations Christian College

## MISCELLANEOUS

**The Pilgrim's Visitors and Address Book** Scripture Union. £3.95.

I suppose every publishing firm, however untarnished their reputation in the past, is still prone to error and capable of making a momentous aberration. That is the only way I can explain to myself *The Pilgrim's Visitors and Address Book* published by SU as 'An Original Gift Book' at the unmerited price of £3.95. It's a strange marriage of drawings from their new edition of *Pilgrim's Progress*, (perfectly acceptable in their original context but completely irrelevant in this setting) and spaces in alphabetically arranged pages where visitors can record their name, address and nationality. These spaces, incidentally, are far too small to write any address or comment of normal length. Sorry, S.U., someone has blundered! I certainly wouldn't want anyone to spend that amount of money to give me the book as a present; equally, I would never buy such an expensive white elephant for anyone else.

Review by Kathleen White

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# Replies to Professor Bruce

## The August Question

It is commonly said that, of the multiplicity of English versions of the Bible now available, some may be suitable for one class of reader or for certain purposes, and some for others. One may think of such various occasions as school assembly, coffee-bar evangelism, private devotion, public reading in church, detailed Bible study and so forth. It is unlikely that any one person will have experience of all these situations and the version most appropriate for them, but if those with experience of one or a few of them could say which version or versions they have found most helpful, I should be glad to know. Will readers please co-operate in this?

### Mr. Edward N. Skinner replies:-

Soon after the publication of the TEV (*Good News Bible*) New Testament I began using it in RE lessons at school and have now reached the point where I would use no other version. As I am in a Junior High School (11-14 yrs.) and have no examination courses to run I have, perhaps, greater freedom in this respect than colleagues in all-through schools.

Two factors have been primarily responsible for my wholehearted enthusiasm. First, when we are making use of the Bible in class and I ask if anyone would like to read, I find the most unlikely pupils—academically speaking—volunteering to read a passage. Although I have conducted no research into this, and my comments are purely subjective, I am convinced that their willingness to read is because they recognise the vast majority of words in front of them, set out so clearly with section headings and illustrations. The absence of most 'technical' words from the TEV may cause it to lose some of the original nuances of meaning but if it encourages our semi-literate pupils to want to read it for themselves then I deem the gain to be out of all proportion to the loss.

Secondly, I have one lesson when I break all the rules of educational method and simply read the story of the crucifixion to classes of 14 yr. olds. They follow from their own copies and I intersperse the reading with what I consider to be appropriate comments. Despite the fact that throughout the year I make full use of the wide range of audio-visual materials now available for RE teachers I consider the above lesson to rank as one of the best for keeping children's interest and attention. Again, I place much of the credit for this on the forceful, simple language of the TEV.

If this letter is read by any RE teachers who still—for valid personal reasons—continue to use the RSV in their lessons, I hope it will inspire them to invest £50 of their capitation next year and give the TEV a fair trial. I believe they will be pleasantly surprised.

### Mr. H. L. Ellison replies:

What is commonly said is very often incorrect, because it normally oversimplifies, ignoring the many exceptions, and this is true of the opinion quoted by Professor Bruce, though I do not doubt that he knows this full well. It is obvious enough that in a given situation a certain version will be preferred by many, it may be a majority, of those present, but it may actively repel others.

For simplicity and brevity I shall confine myself to the adolescent, but the principle applies with changing emphasis to all age groups. In a typical meeting for adolescents there will be a minority for whom the language of the AV (or RSV) is familiar. The proportion of those who have been familiarized with the TEV in school, both day and Sunday,

will steadily increase. Then there is the mounting problem of the virtually illiterate, whose reading is confined mainly to comics and the tabloid newspaper, and who have opted out of standard English. The experience of the Scripture Union seems to suggest that no version in common use is likely to be of much use to them.

Then there is the other side. There are few things worse than when there is an observable gap between the language of the speaker and that of the Bible version he is using. How is the audience to understand what is happening, to take a simple case, if the speaker refers to God as 'you', but uses a version that calls Him 'thou'? For that matter a speaker who uses academic English sounds odd, if he uses some highly popular version.

Those responsible for the meeting should at least suggest to a visiting speaker what version is normally used, though insistence on it—as in the case in some places with the AV—may mean no speaker. Beyond that it is difficult to see what rules can be laid down.

### Dr. R. H. Kipping replies:-

To me personally, the value of the various editions is that the rigid thought patterns from one translation are broken up; the truth therefore penetrates better and is more fruitful. Some years ago at 6 a.m. I pulled out Phillips' translation by mistake from my bedside 'library'. Finding my mistake I took a random reading and opened at Luke's account of the conversation between Peter and the Lord; 'Whom say men that I am' etc., to be followed by the declaration, 'If a man will come after me let him deny himself'. I knew the phraseology so well, but Phillips brought home the truth as nothing in a lifetime had ever done: 'If a man will come after me let him give up all right to himself. . .'. I knew in that second that this was something I had never done. It shattered me. How about you?

I am going back to KJV for public occasions especially Sunday morning. I am afflicted with failing sight and remembered verses are a real help. Archaic English, though, is no substitute for intelligent scripture or intelligent prose. I took Flag Break Services for many years for the Bucks County Summer Cadet Camp of the St. John Ambulance Brigade (300-400 persons). It is not a question of versions, or the sower or waterer, but of God who giveth the increase. It is the word that God takes up that is fruitful. Most of the time this is kept hidden from us, or we are too blind to see it.

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## Readers' Forum

*Readers' Forum* is open to contributions from readers. Please send suggestions from practical experience, related to church activities or Christian living; doctrinal or expository questions; useful experiences; what-you-will; to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX. Questions, to which other readers will be invited to submit replies, will also be published from time to time as they are received. It is hoped that readers will take full advantage of this feature.

Recent editions of *Readers' Forum* have featured questionnaires used for different purposes. Mr. Peter Lowman has supplied the following as a suggestion for door-to-door visitation.

### DOOR-TO-DOOR QUESTIONNAIRE

*The following questionnaire is based on one compiled by John Gallacher and others, and used some time back for a Sunday night outreach at Glenwood Church, Cardiff.*

1. Have you heard of our church?
2. How do you feel the church can best serve the area?
3. How do you feel the church can best serve your family?
4. How often do you go to church?
5. How often do you read the Bible?
6. Do you on the whole admire Jesus' teaching?
7. Do you think Jesus practised what He preached?
8. Jesus said that He was God and the only way to God. What is your reaction?
9. What do you think happens after physical death?
10. Do you believe Jesus Christ rose from the dead?
11. If it were possible for you to know God personally, would you be willing to do so?

### NOTES

- a. These questions are intended to provide jumping-off points for discussion
- b. Q.5 serves often as a useful reminder of the true state of affairs!
- c. Q.6 and 7 serve to preclude certain responses to Q.8!
- d. A working knowledge of the evidence for the resurrection is obviously of importance in discussing Q.10
- e. Q.11 may often provide a good opportunity to explain the gospel.
- f. It is a very good idea to have some home bible studies set up at the time of the visitation, so that contacts can be invited along for further explorations.
- g. Results of the questionnaire, together with comments, can be summarised on a duplicated sheet, and the distribution of this will provide contact.

## Correspondence

Letters should be sent to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX.

Publication of letters does not imply that views expressed are endorsed by the Editor or the Trustees.

### Guide to Giving

*From Mr. S. Phillips*

Dear Mr. Coad,

On Page 228 of the August issue some facts to stimulate thought are given on the question of giving. Mention is made of the rise in the Retail Price Index, of average earnings, and of house prices. Then the question is posed concerning our gifts to the Lord; has our gift increased?

This leads me to mention that concerning our gifts to the Lord, that there is no problem, it is simply summed up in one word *tithe*. Many may say they cannot afford to tithe; on the other hand, many will say we cannot afford not to tithe.

41 Goodwin Court

Halls Lane

Brackley, Northants

Yours sincerely,

Sid Phillips.

### The Brethren and Books

*From a Book Agent*

Dear Mr. Coad,

As a book agent with a bookstall in a fairly standard assembly of a hundred or so, I was very interested by the article and letters on the subject of books. I thought readers might be interested in an analysis that I have done of my book sales over the past year, which has given me much cause for thought and just a little encouragement.

First I divided all my sales into four categories: (a) books for personal reading, (b) books bought as gifts (c) bibles and (d) miscellanea (which included Sunday School materials and a very few magazine subscriptions) then I divided the buyers into three groups: young people, young marrieds and over 35's; worked out in which category each purchase fell and made a table of the results.

Some facts were immediately obvious:-

1. Of the hundred or so separate purchases, only a quarter were made by over 35's, who form three-quarters of our fellowship, and the buyers were only a very small minority. In all only *seven* books were bought for personal use by this group, which considering that only perhaps 20% of them ever attend teaching meetings, seems to indicate that complacency and stagnation have set in, or that in that age-group the T.V. reigns supreme.

2. The situation among the young marrieds was fairly encouraging, with almost 50% of purchases to their credit, and especially a high sale of NIV Bibles. Gifts to others were common, especially at baptisms. N.B. however, they form only about 15% of the fellowship.

3. The young people who bought anything were a minority but the proportion of books for personal use was quite encouraging—this seems to support the idea that reading is generally a dying habit, but to show that those who do read are reading purposefully.

It is obvious from this that my major tasks are as follows: to sell the idea of Christian books as useful aids to the non-literate 80% of the fellowship, especially older members; to encourage and to expand the work among the young marrieds despite escalating costs; and to persuade the young people that reading is not really hard work!

The depressing part of all this is that the leadership of our churches is likely to remain for some time in the hands of a generation who having given up the habit of reading and have no inclination to learn by other means; the major question to me is—will the thinking members of the younger generation stay long enough with us to change things, or will they drift away to other churches, or to nowhere?

To save embarrassment, I sign myself only  
(Name and address supplied)

Bookagent



From Mr. C. H. Bartlett

Dear Mr. Coad,

Mrs. Kathleen White's letter in the July *Harvester* agrees with my experience. Many brethren, even preachers, do seem to be uninterested (not disinterested which has a very different meaning) in books. When possible I question the preachers and find that older books, which are still the best to be had, are unknown to them.

Over fifty years ago the late J. M. Shaw wrote several articles on preaching which were published in *The Witness*. He was an outstanding and fearless preacher of the Gospel, including at Speakers' Corner. He wrote: 'I would almost go as far as to say that no young man should preach until he has read *The Gospel and its Ministry* by Sir Robert Anderson'. Republished about ten years ago, it has a foreword by Herbert Lockyer in which he says that when he was a young man he wanted a handbook on the doctrines of the Gospel, this book exactly met his need, as it does mine. It is often referred to by me after so many years.

Recently a preacher had been urging his hearers to believe and then made this extraordinary appeal: 'And if you haven't got the faith, ask God to give it to you'. If he had read Anderson's book he would not have made so foolish a mistake.

I urge brethren, especially preachers, to try and get hold of any of Anderson's books, and in particular *Human Destiny*, *The Silence of God*, *The Lord from Heaven*, *The Hebrews Epistle*.

It is surprising, too, that Campbell Morgan's books seem to be unknown to many brethren. *The Parables and Metaphors of our Lord* is a must.

J. N. Darby's *Introduction to the Bible* in his *New Translation* is very valuable. It can be had as a small book published by the Stow Hill Bible and Book Depot.

One would love to go on and tell of books that have been specially helpful but space will not permit.

360 Molesey Road,  
Walton-on-Thames,  
Surrey. KT12 3PG.

Yours in Christ,  
C. H. Bartlett

#### Why use Latin?

From Dr. A. G. Newell

Dear Mr. Coad,

May I rise to your bait and seek leave gently to disagree with your Editorial 'Why use Latin in our services?' (August, 1979)? The issue is more complex, I believe, than you suggest. 'Plain English' is a highly desirable quality, which was pursued by the Royal Society in its earliest days as well as by Sir Ernest Gowers much more recently. One monosyllable is preferable to ten polysyllables when it can convey an equivalent content. Other matters, however, are at stake.

So let's recognize that there is an evangelical jargon which can be traced from the Reformation to the present day. Outsiders have always mocked it because they find it largely unintelligible; strict Churchmen have always decried it for its apparent irrelevance because it freely and naturally uses scriptural phraseology and assumes a personal relationship with God; others have attacked it as a glib disguise for hypocrisy. These objections were well founded. But the growth of the jargon can be explained, on what I take to be impeccable historical and sociological grounds, as inevitable. Each denomination or grouping evolves its own variant of the jargon: how hard it is, sometimes, to try to avoid dropping into Brethren language!

Then we have to remember that the language of the church necessarily contains an element of the technical. You can't talk about Christianity without depending on the historical theological vocabulary available. The traditional words must remain—incarnation, redemption, atonement, righteousness, justification, propitiation. We can explain the great concepts of the faith, but it is virtually impossible (and, I submit, far from desirable) to try to speak of them only in paraphrases. There is nothing to be ashamed of in possessing a jargon and a technical vocabulary. For *evangelism* and *teaching* the former is reduced to a minimum and the latter carefully explained.

Where these measures are taken there should be no hindrance to effective communication, especially when we recall that the normal pattern leads us to expect a convert to experience a number of contacts with Christians and Christian activities, and therefore to develop some elementary familiarity with Christian thought and expression, before the point of commitment is reached.

But the *worship* of God is the highest possible human activity. For my purposes I am limiting its meaning to the public verbalizing in the church of genuine personal response to the divine love. It ought to stretch us intellectually and emotionally. (Other cultures, and some British charismatics, will place greater emphasis than we usually do on the expression of the emotions in worship.) The public expression of divine worship can attain its proper level it seems to me, only when the language used is the most appropriate. Clichés, pomposities, jargon-ridden routine utterances upset and irritate; so, equally, does English which is modelled on journalese or the pop sub-culture. Worship in the church expressed at the level of 'Oh God, you're great!' is acceptable once, or, perhaps, from different speakers, very occasionally—but if it remains there and fails to progress, it surely indicates that no development of understanding has taken place. The language we use is a measure of our grasp of what we are talking about. With growth in knowledge and understanding goes improvement in articulation. (There are also, of course, factors of practice and experience.) Public worship, therefore, should be couched in the best possible English available to the speaker. It is uttered before and to God on behalf of the congregation and handles concepts which transcend human capacity.

What is the best possible English? It should be that which is both traditional and fitting to the circumstances in which it is used. Tradition plays a large part in maintaining a stable society: the expected, the recognizable, make for security. We need to touch our ancestors across the centuries in order to profit from the stable order we live in, and one way is to use the words they used—much as some fortunate people in our ancient cities see every day what their forefathers saw, the church, the cathedral, the castle. When we use certain expressions we thereby join ourselves to multitudes of Christians through the years, proclaiming a real continuity of belief and worship. The Queen's court still practises a measure of ceremonial. So it should: there is only one monarch and subjects should behave decorously in her presence. Her Guards do not perform their ceremonial duties in the battle kit they wear in Belfast, but in scarlet and bearskin, cuirass and helmet. They guard the sovereign in a manner which is both expected and fitting. This is how I believe we should speak to God and of Him in the public worship of the church—in traditional, decorous, measured English which is appropriate to the behaviour of loving subjects in the presence of the King of kings. Mid-Atlantic English or the simplistic incoherences of the pop world may well be essential for evangelistic and teaching purposes especially with young people (sociologists have suggested that the only symbolism young people can now appreciate is that which derives from pop music, football and motorcycles and cars—see Mr. Ellison's letter, same issue, p. 242), but not in the *worship* of the church in Britain, even in 1979.

If we resort to anything but the best English, we deprive ourselves of the numinous, of the great traditional, meaning-filled resonances of Christian worship, and *our* worship will be the poorer. In the expression of praise and prayer (beyond a few simple petitions) in the congregation those 'latinate sonorities' you mentioned, used properly, fulfil an essential function. We can't afford to ape society at large and sever ourselves from our heritage—in this instance, the great tradition of the AV and the Prayer Book. If the Anglicans want to jettison these, along with much else of value, that is their affair. It will be a sad day for us if our congregational worship is to be conducted in *Living Bible*-type English.

'Christon',  
45 Lang Lane,  
West Kirby, Wirral  
Merseyside L48 5HQ

Yours sincerely,  
Tony Newell

# The News Page

Press Day, November 1979, Wednesday, Oct. 3rd, for Displayed Advertisements, Prayer List, Forthcoming Events and news items (Please send direct to Publisher at 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW)

## Out and About

### Africa

It has become increasingly clear that the effects of eight years of lawlessness and destruction under the Amin régime cannot be easily eradicated. The war of liberation itself left people in desperate need of the basic necessities of life since what they possessed had been largely destroyed or looted in the process of "liberation". Such basic necessities included food, medicine, clothes, bedding, agricultural supplies, household equipment, and construction materials. In the longer term, the country needed economic restoration. No less serious, however, was the moral and spiritual need. According to Archbishop Wani, what the country needs more than anything else is the reconstruction and rehabilitation of its people, morally, mentally and spiritually. Ugandans have to learn once again to trust one another and to love one another. Never was a spirit of love, reconciliation and forgiveness more needed. This work of spiritual rehabilitation challenges not only the church in Uganda but Christians everywhere who can help in it by prayer.

The situation has not been made any easier by the abrupt change of government that followed liberation. Four religious leaders have indeed appealed to the government to clarify and regularise its constitutional position. Not surprisingly, they requested that the army keep clear of politics and asked the government not to schedule rallies at times when people would normally be at public worship.

## News from Europe

**Ireland:** Ireland Outreach report that £6,800 of the £50,000 required to cover the proposed additions to camp dormitory space and office accommodation has already been received. However, the building cost estimate is dependent on the presence of volunteer workers such as block layers, carpenters, plumbers, painters and labourers. "Please pray that we will be able to commence this vital undertaking before winter begins so that much-needed facilities will be available for use in late 1980."

The Irish postal strike, which crippled so many businesses, did not begin until the 1978/79 Bible study courses had been sent out. The only problem has been getting them back for correction, grading, comment and counselling. Some were brought back by the teachers or collected from Dublin schools, but these together constituted only a fraction of the usual numbers. "We are praying that more will be returned and that a future pattern will not be set for the teachers not returning them."

## Evangelism

The Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism continues to develop. It began with three events in 1975/76. One was the call to the nation of the two Archbishops in October 1975. The second was the move for bringing back Billy Graham and the report "Let my People Grow" which had very wide attention but a rather frustrating response. There was too much support to let the matter drop, but not enough for it to be implemented as it stood. The third influence began in Nairobi at the W.C.C. Assembly in January 1976 where a convergence was noted on evangelism from the Evangelical, Ecumenical and Roman Catholic wings of the Church. Following a meeting of all who were seeking a way forward in evangelism on a national scale, held on October 20, 1976, it was suggested that there should be a Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism.

Representatives of all the major denominations have united to produce a study pamphlet on evangelism, *The Debate on Evangelism*, as part of the Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism's plan to stimulate church growth. The aim of the study pamphlet is to encourage Christians to join in the current debate on evangelism. It is hoped that this will promote a greater understanding of what evangelism is, and how it should be carried out, and will result in an increased willingness to work together. One remarkable fact emerged during the preparation of *The Debate on Evangelism*. Although those compiling it came from diverse backgrounds, they were in complete agreement on the basic beliefs which motivate evangelism. It was discovered that differences simply arise over the way the task is viewed. This unity of thought is reflected in *The Debate on Evangelism*. Statements of belief, followed by suggestions as to their interpretation and application, are set out under four headings: The World—what God has done for it; The Christian Message—the need for a personal faith in Jesus Christ; The Christian Witness—the various ways of communicating this message; The Church—its responsibility as the body of Christ. Questions are given at the end of each section. These are particularly useful as discussion-starters for groups attended by Christians with differing views or from more than one denomination and would be suitable for Lenten study groups. Copies of *The Debate on Evangelism* are available, price 25p (post free) from N.I.E., 146 Queen Victoria Street, London, EC4V 4BX.

**News from Workers:** On July 21 about 150 people met at Southgate Hall, Crawley, to celebrate A. W. Grimsey's 40 years of Christian work and 65th birthday. Mr. Grimsey hopes to continue doing all that is physically possible in adult ministry and personal work. David Iliffe felt that time spent training children's workers from 19 countries in Holland during the summer was greatly rewarding. Derek Stringer has found the open attitude of many young people to God's Word a source of great encouragement. Summer House Parties in 1979 were better than any in previous years for seen results. George Tryon attended children's holiday clubs during August in Staines, Market Deeping and Quadring. He remembered that the work at Market Deeping and Quadring was established by his great grandfather in the early nineteenth century.

**Mobilising for Evangelism:** Spring '80 is a joint event sponsored by the Evangelical Alliance, Buzz Magazine and British Youth for Christ—in association with Scripture Union. It will comprise two events of national significance. First is the National Congress on Evangelism from 1600 hours on Tuesday, April 8 to 1200 hours on Sunday, April 13. It will primarily aim to help local church leaders, both ordained and lay, to gain inspiration, practical information, and means to develop both a local and wider strategy for evangelism. It forms part of the Evangelical Alliance's plans for a decade of evangelism.

During the same week and subsequently from 1600 hours on April 14 to 1200 hours on April 20, Spring Harvest—Weeks 1 and 2, will be taking place. These weeks will major on the rôle that young adults, and families of all ages, can play in making Christ known.

In addition to the programme of Bible teaching, seminars and worship, there will be an organised recreation programme. Spring '80 will take place in twin holiday villages in Prestatyn, North Wales, and among the speakers and musicians who have agreed to participate are Luis Palau, David Watson, Michael Green, Dick Lucas, David Pawson, Eric Dolve, Dave Pope and Graham Kendrick. The price for accommodation in self-catering chalets will be about £18 plus VAT for five days. Booking forms and further details are available from Spring '80, 11 Princess Chambers, Princess Street, Wolverhampton, West Midlands, tel. 0902 29353.

#### **Far East Broadcasting Association**

Following the retirement of Wally White, who has headed the Home Department since 1971, Peter Bayes has been appointed as Home Director of the Mission. Commissioned with his wife, Molly, to full time service from the Worthing Tabernacle in 1960, Peter Bayes joined FEBA in 1974 as an Administration Manager after 13 years of service with the Bible and Medical Missionary Fellowship and the Andes Evangelical Mission. Since 1977 he has been Administration Director.

#### **London City Mission**

The Mission announces two future events: a day conference on "Christian Youth Club Work" on Thursday, October 18 at 9.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. Christians involved in youth work are warmly welcome to this conference. (Fee including buffet lunch and tea—£1.50). Also 'Another Youth Alive Weekend'—a youth weekend from Friday, November 23 to Sunday, November 25 (lunchtime). They should bring their own sleeping bags. The weekend cost is £9.00 including full board and training notes. Details of these conferences can be obtained from L.C.M. Youth Dept., 175 Tower Bridge Road, SE1 2AH. Tel. 01407 7585.

#### **Media**

Release Publications has organised an important conference, *The Media and the Message*, to take place in Manchester on October 27. Speakers scheduled to appear at the conference, which aims to relate the experience of professional communicators to the local church's task of evangelism and communication are: Baden Hickman, church correspondent of the *Guardian*; Jerry Davey of Send the Light Trust

Publishing; Frances Tulloch, a television researcher; John Butterworth, journalist and author; Bryce Cooke, of Piccadilly Radio, Manchester.

There will be a number of workshop groups with conference speakers and others on Writing and Journalism, Producing and Using Literature, Art and Design, Television and Radio. Full details and booking form can be obtained from Release Publications, 142 Dantzic Street, Manchester, M4 4DN. Tel. 061 834 5317.

#### **Monkton Combe, 1979**

Monkton Combe was bursting at the seams this year, with over 200 young people from as far afield as Bury, Bodmin, Bedford and Birmingham. All the speakers were new to Monkton, but were quickly woven into the traditions of 'Piano Stool', the spinning of a funny mealtime yarn, and other strange habits which make up the fabric of Monkton. Derek Stringer guided members through the prophecy of Zechariah (after giving them twelve hours' notice to find it!). He gave a series of four fascinating talks under the titles 'God is at work today'. Several conference members admitted that they had never even read Zechariah, and would certainly not have understood it without such a clear and thorough exposition. Robert Scott-Cooke's three practical talks on relationship with God in worship, prayer, Bible reading, and daily walk, illustrated so honestly from his own experience, were an inspiration. Before the end of the conference some members were already following his suggestions on how to meditate and praise God each day. Nigel Swinford, the composer and conductor, offered new insights into the meaning of praise, and the place of music in worship. He also trained the 'Monkton *ad hoc* singers and instrumentalists' to present the beautiful worship song 'Jesus, how lovely you are', as well as delighting all with impromptu performances of Tchaikovsky and Scott Joplin.

Missionaries, Robert and Muriel Williams from Thailand, and Miriam Pavey, preparing to go to Malaysia, were living illustrations of how the Lord can take up ordinary people dedicated to him, and tailor them into people suited for his particular work. The whole atmosphere of the weekend was surely summed up in a memorable Sunday evening of Communion and Worship.

For all those who missed Monkton this year, the advice must be—book early for next year. There were not many at the conference who were not determined to come again for more. We understand that there are more beds available, but we shall have to build an extension on to the Piano Stool room. . .

Daphne R. Ryland

#### **Luis Palau**

British Youth for Christ and Buzz Magazine have sponsored a nationwide series of presentations to take place in January 1980 featuring Argentinian evangelist Luis Palau, and a team of Christian musicians including Dave Pope, Graham Kendrick, John Pantry and Barry Crompton. The tour, titled 'Our God Reigns', will visit ten major cities and towns from January 4 to 14. It begins at London's Royal Albert Hall and moves through Wales and the West Country to the Midlands, ending in the North. This, the first major British preaching tour of the Argentinian evangelist, is designed to celebrate the way in which



God has been working in British churches over the past ten years. Luis Palau will also present a challenge to Christians as they face the 1980s. It is intended that the series will also generate money to support evangelism in Britain during the 1980s. At least one third of the ticket income will be designated for this purpose. Further information can be obtained from Mike Morris at 0902 20353.

#### Quebec Hall

Various changes have recently taken place in connection with this home for retired Christians. Quebec has 17 bedrooms and was once a country house. Set in four acres of grounds and gardens, it has also 44 one-bedroom bungalows in its grounds. These can be purchased from the Trust by those who wish to live independently and yet be linked to a Christian community. Quebec Hall will in future be run as a home primarily for 'retired believers who are associated with the Lord's People and who are in assembly fellowship'. All residents must be able to take care of themselves fully upon their arrival as it is not a Nursing Home. Details can be obtained from Mr. and Mrs. K. Miller, Quebec Hall, Dereham, Norfolk (0632 2504).

#### Wycliffe Bible Translators

"Where are the men?" asked Dr. John Bendor-Samuel, Director of the British Summer Institute of Linguistics and Wycliffe's Africa Area Director. For the first time in the history of the British School there were exactly twice as many women this year as men. In other years there have been three women to two men. He asked, "Is it God's will that twice as many women go overseas as men? Do the men really take seriously the great commission? There are unlimited opportunities still for the gospel to be proclaimed. Many are waiting to hear the Good News". Dr. John Bendor-Samuel waved four letters which had one thing in common. They were all recent letters from Zaire with the request: "Can you come and help us? We would like to have the Good News, God's Word translated into our language." "Where are the men as well as the women who will go and share the Good News?" asked Dr. Bendor-Samuel.

During the evening meeting of the annual Open Day, Dr. John Bendor-Samuel also expressed his concern that out of the 200 students attending the various summer courses, only 42 were from the British Isles. This 22% is the lowest in 25 years of SIL. There were some exciting developments as well, Dr. Bendor-Samuel stated. For the last nine years the summer courses have also been taught in French. Next year plans are to open a French School of linguistics in the Paris area. This development will enable more young people to be trained to share the Good News especially in the French-speaking world.

Another exciting development he mentioned is that during the Easter vacation a special course "Introduction to Bible Translation" is held. Out of the 32 students who attended this year's course, two thirds discovered they had the ability and potential to do translation work. And seven returned for more training this summer!

Ten banners in different languages declared the theme of Open Day. "This is a day of Good News; if we are

silent . . . punishment will overtake us; . . . let us go and tell . . ." 2 Kings 7: 9. "This theme", said Dr. John Bendor-Samuel, "is not just for Open Day but expresses the real purpose of the School. This School exists to tell Good News, to make it possible that men and women around the world hear the Good News and understand it." He urged folk to pray for at least 60 students from the British Isles for next summer's training courses.

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Address:

# People and Places

6, 28; Berkhamsted 7; Aylesbury 7; Wembley 10; Parkhill Chapel 11, 18; Seven Kings, South Park 14, 16, 21, 30; Woodford, Salway 17, 24, 31; Sydenham 19, 20, 22; South Ruislip 29.

## Pierce, D. H.:

At Barnstable during the entire month.

## Short, S. S.:

Oban 3, 4; Ardenshaig 6; Campbelltown 7; Carlisle 9; Weston-Super-Mare 11, 18; Bristol 13, 14; Bath 15; Cheltenham 21, 22; Tetbury 23; Worcester 24; Eastbourne 28-30; St. Leonards 31.

## Stringer, D.:

Bournemouth 1-30; Westminster Chapel Convention 13; Saffron Walden 31.

## Tatford, F. A.:

Balham 1; Leeds 6-8; Horley 13, 14; Eastbourne 18; Bridgwater 20-24; Weston-Super-Mare 25; Alresford 28, 19; Southsea 30.

## Thurston, A.:

Strete 1, 5, 8, 15, 19, 22; Kingsbridge 2, 9, 23, 30; Newton Abbott 3; Chillington 3, 21, 24, 31; Plymouth 4, 11, 18; Dartmouth 7; Brixham 10, 14, 17; Dartmoor Prison 12; Ledbury 26-30.

## Tryon, G. C.:

Camberwell 1-8; Cambridge 14-21, 28.

## Stewardship

**Missionaries' Children's Fund:** 29 Queen Street, London, EC4R 1BH. Gifts received during the month of July amounted to £478.09, and those for the month of August amounted to £389.95.

**Retired Missionary Aid Fund:** 12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts for the month of August amounted to £2,109.62.

## Prayer List

Stamped letters addressed c/o The Paternoster Press, Paternoster House, 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter, EX1 4JW will be forwarded to any of those whose names appear below.

Workers are requested to include their names on their cards when returning them each month. We are still receiving anonymous contributions from time to time.

## Burnham, A. E. J.:

Andover 4; Romford 14-18; Bedhampton 25; Maidenhead 28; and at other places.

## Campbell, B.:

Falmouth 1, 6, 21, 31; Redruth 7, 13; Callington 14; Plymouth 18, 20.

## Clifford, D. L.:

At Winchester and Haven School of Evangelism, Pembroke.

## Galyer, W. S.:

Weston-Super-Mare, Edington 1; Edington 2; Guildford 7; Fetcham 14-19; Kings Heath, Birmingham 21-28; Kingston 30.

## Gillham, S.:

Three Cross 2; Wallisdown 3; West Moors 6; Weymouth 7, 13; Tricketts Cross 8-12; Three Cross Crusade 14-28; Swanage 29-31.

## Grimsey, A. W.:

Norwich 2; Cromer 4; Kings Lynn 5; Crawley 7; Portslade 9; Redhill 10; Dorking 11; Balham 14, 15; Gillingham 21; Sevenoaks 28.

## Iliffe, D. J.:

Newquay 1-6; Dorking 7; Littlehampton 10; London C.E.W. 12, 13; Worthing 15; London Evangelical Alliance 16; Selsey, 17, 18; Chichester 20; Sydenham 21; Huddersfield 24-31.

## Lowther, G. K.:

Stapleford 1; Grimsby 2-5; Staplehurst 6-8; Southborough 9, 16, 23, 30; Ilford 10, 17, 18, 22, 24; Whetstone (N20) 10; Fleet 11, 18; Streatham (SW16) 14; Beckenham 17; Greenford 21, 22; Pinner 23; Walthamstow (E17) 24; Sydenham (SE26) 25; Dagenham 28; Leytonstone (E11) 29; Manor Park (E12) 30; Tottenham (N17) 31.

## Mountstevens, S.:

Ramsgate 4; Gillingham 6; Twydale 14; Gravesend 23; Village Missions follow up 24, 25, 26.

## Phillips, C.:

Hornchurch 1, 8, 15; Eastbourne 2; St. Leonards 3; Kenton 5, 12; Enfield

## Forthcoming Events

The Publishers regret that, owing to demands on space, it is not possible to insert an announcement in more than one issue. Correspondents should indicate clearly in which issue they wish their announcements to appear.

## Brierfield:

Ann. Cfce. Brierfield Baptist Church. Oct. 13 at 2.45 and 6.15 p.m. Speakers: A. Naismith, T. Renshaw. Rally. Hebron Hall, Walter Street. Oct. 27 at 7.00 p.m. Speaker: R. Parnaby.

## Chesham:

Gospel Hall, Station Road. Oct. 27 at 6.30 p.m. Speaker: H. R. Ruston. Subject: Acts 24: 1-23.

## Colyton:

The Gospel Hall, The Butts. Oct. 27 at 7.00 p.m. Speaker: T. Ledger. Subject: The Triune God.

## Dorchester, Dorset:

Missy. Weekend. Acland Road Evangelical Church. Oct. 28/29. Speaker: C. Phillips of Colombia.

## Grimsby:

Monthly Rally. Wellowgate Chapel, 67 Wellowgate. Nov. 3 at 7.30 p.m. Evangelistic Film "My Son, My Son!"

## London:

Bloomsbury Meetings. Bloomsbury Central Church, Shaftesbury Avenue. Meetings on Nov. 3, 10, 17, 24 at 7.00 p.m. Speakers: A. Nute, V. Jack, H. Rowdon, K. Howard. Subject: "Return to Me"—A Call to Repentance.

## Luton:

Onslow Road Gospel Hall. Oct. 20—Ministry 4-5.00 p.m., Conversational Bible Reading 6.30-8.00 p.m. Speaker: T. Proffit. Subject: 1 John 1: 1-2; 2. Maidenhead: Monthly Cfce. Parkside Hall, St. Luke's Road. Nov. 3—Address 6.30-7.30 p.m., Refreshments, Discussion 8.15-9.00 p.m. Speaker: C. Phillips. Subject: "Jesus' birth and life".

## Maidstone:

Jubilee Thanksgiving Services. Evangelical Church, Boxley Road (formerly Salisbury Hall). Nov. 3 at 3.30 p.m. followed by tea and fellowship and Nov. 4 at 11.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. Speaker: Eric Plumridge of Croyley Green. All former members cordially invited.

## Walthamstow, E17:

Missy. Weekend. Folkestone Road Hall. Oct. 6/7-Sat. at 6.30 p.m., Sun. at 8.00 p.m. Speakers: P. Levett, D. Threadgold.

## GOOD INTENTIONS . . .

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# URGENT APPEAL: BOAT PEOPLE

People are fleeing Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam in one of the greatest mass exoduses in history. Some face a long haul overland, in fear of starvation, booby traps and troops. Most – the Boat People – set sail in fragile fishing boats and leaking tramp steamers, without adequate food, water or navigation equipment. They may meet death through thirst, exposure, typhoon, or massacre by Vietnamese soldiers. Or marauding Thai pirates may strip them of their last possessions, hacking the men to death while the women face multiple rape. Even if they do find land they may be turned back, and hundreds of thousands have perished in this wholesale flight for freedom.

Those who reach South East Asia's make-shift camps are the 'fortunate' ones – with a chance of resettlement. Yet over 300,000 are still languishing in these camps – often appallingly overcrowded, each with just a small mat on which to eat, sleep and live.

And little or no hygiene and medical facilities. Their situation can – and is – being relieved although resources are stretched to the very limit.



In Hong Kong, Tear Fund is co-operating with the Christian and Missionary Alliance, providing basic supplies – including buckets for laundry, toilet paper, sanitary towels, soap and blankets. Simple items we wouldn't know what to do without.

In the Philippines, Tear Fund has set up a contingencies fund through the Far East Relief and Development Services for similar work, as well as making a specific grant for children who suffered greatly during their voyage. And in Thailand, Tear Fund has given Southeast Asian Outreach operating capital to extend handicraft production by refugees who have been awaiting resettlement.

Fulfilling immediate needs is vital – but it treats only half the problem. Refugees are victims of circumstance and the aim in helping them must be to change those circumstances in a permanent way. That includes resettlement and integration into a new community, with all the problems of bereavement, culture, language, employment and accommodation. That's why Tear

Fund has assisted CAMA in France by providing a Cambodian Christian Centre and supporting a Laotian secretary in Paris; and extending Vietnamese refugee facilities in Toulouse, including the support of an administrative secretary.

In England, Southeast Asian Outreach is responsible for establishing refugee assistance groups and they urgently needed a refugee centre. Tear Fund has responded to meet that need, and has agreed to support a secretary for three years.

Tear Fund is anxious to extend the help given to refugees from Indo-China – wherever the need exists, wherever the opportunity arises – but Tear Fund's resources are limited. Tear Fund is merely a channel – for caring Christians in the UK to express their love and concern for those who do not have the world's riches, who have been oppressed and rejected. At this moment one of the most pressing needs is to help these refugees from Indo-China. They need help *now* – before we all realise it's too late.

Please use my gift of £  
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### BRIGHTON

It is with regret that the Brethren of High Street Chapel, Brighton, wish to notify readers that they have now ceased to function as a church. (10)

### CLIFTON HALL

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### CROYDON AND DISTRICT

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It is anticipated that a scheme will shortly be made by the Charity Commissioners, and pensioners will then be appointed. Applicants must be of retirement age, conscientious objectors, in Brethren fellowship and in receipt of income excluding the government retirement pension and supplementary benefits not exceeding £208.00 per annum. Applications for pensions should be addressed to UKET (Inc.), Equity House, 450 Hackney Road, London, E2 6QL. (10)

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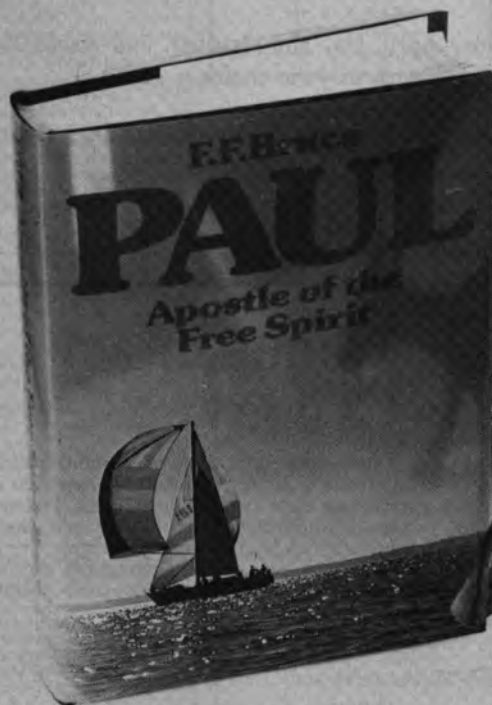
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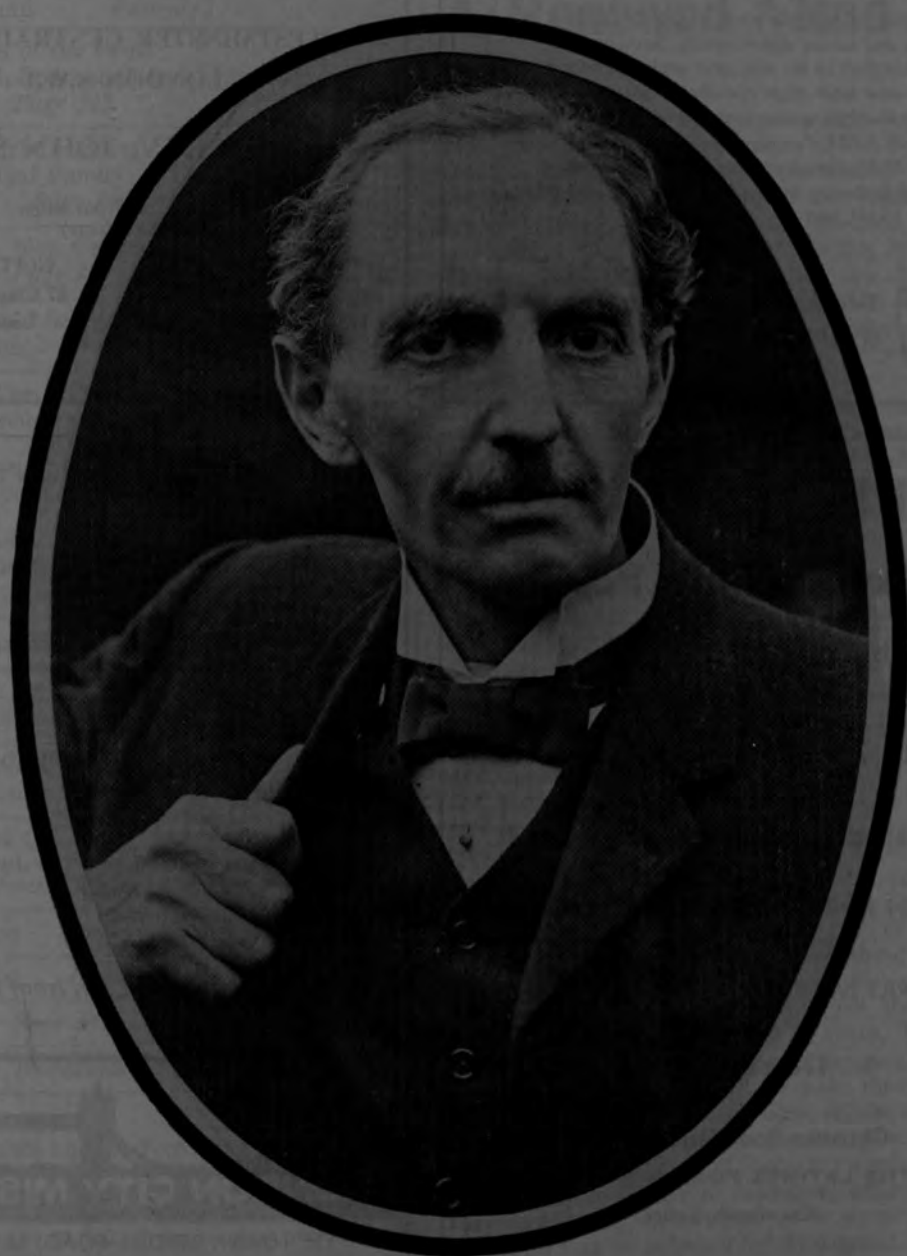


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Editor: Roy Coad

40 PAGES  
IN THIS ISSUE: AUTUMN  
BOOK SUPPLEMENT

# The Harvester



Inside : C. T. Studd, Sportsman and Missionary

## ALL IS WELL

It is a good thing when it can be said of our souls that 'All is Well'. A Scripture Reader stood outside a barrack room to read in clear letters on the door 'All is Well'. He was able to ask the soldiers 'Is it really?' He explained there was a hymn where the writer claims that because of his relationship to God 'All is well with my soul'. None of the lads could claim that for themselves but listened with rapt attention as the truth was shared with them and the claims of Christ pressed home. So many are soon exposed to the sniper's bullet and we long that many more soldiers can say 'All is Well.'

*A Scripture Readers's work consists very much of making and taking opportunities. Sometimes he sees open fruit to his ministry; sometimes the reaping is done at a later stage elsewhere but the imperative thing is that the sowing is done properly. Further details of SASRA's unique role as a 'faith mission' among H.M. Forces can be obtained from the General Secretary at 75/79 High Street, Aldershot, Hants. GU11 1BY.*



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# The Harvester

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Cover Picture: *Worldwide Evangelization Crusade*

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## Editorial

### A Renewed Mind

In December 1978 a newspaper article—appearing, of all places, in the financial pages of *The Guardian*—told the story of an American scientist, 'probably the most skilled bomb designer the United States has ever found', who had turned, revolted, from his task. What had led him into it in the first place? The war that had just ended; the hope that if war were made sufficiently horrible it could be abolished? He rationalised so, he tells us, but now considers that his motive was more simple. It was simply free scientific enquiry—the imperative to find out.

The article quoted Einstein himself as saying, when he saw the nuclear bomb, 'I wish I had remained a locksmith!'; and the scientist just quoted—'The worst invention in physical history was also the most fascinating'. Is it possible that man's urge to find out could ever be restrained by consideration of the consequences? Is it even desirable that it should be so restrained? The debate continues hotly; but some suggest that if it is not restrained, man's curiosity will ultimately destroy him.

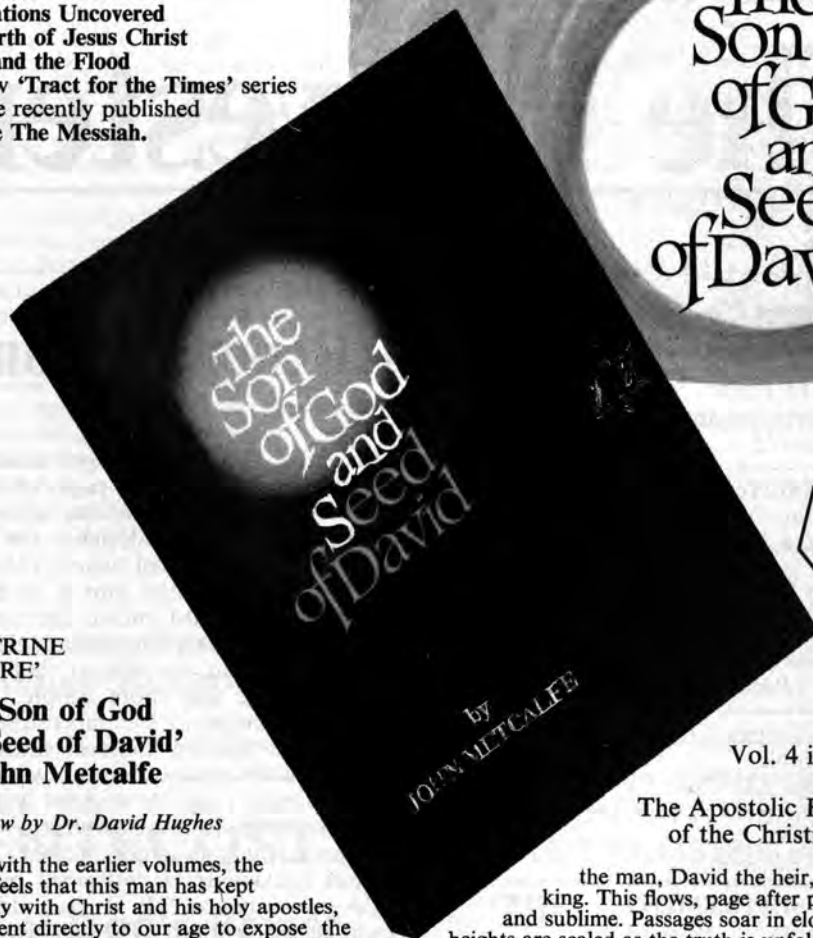
But even more significant were the words with which the article closed. A new science must be developed, wrote the journalist author: 'to have any chance, it must have as its bedrock a new ethical or religious system.'

A pipedream? I could not but think of his words as I read some of the articles in this issue. *Is* there anything to be added to what our Lord and His apostles taught nearly two thousand years ago? Is it just that man has proved incapable of such a new initiative, and rejects the proffered help of his God?

Even within the church, the new mind has been sadly absent. The very urge to defend the truth has at times proved its worst enemy. Still, we tear and savage each other in the name of truth. Too often, religious belief—even evangelical religious belief—has seemed to diminish men, to make them less than human in their attitude to their fellow men, even their fellow believers. When one sees others assailed in words of bitterness and sarcasm (words no better if they are quoted from scripture) simply because they see truth differently: is it surprising that the world sees no solution for its wounds? □



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*A Review by Dr. David Hughes*

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## 1—C. T. Studd, Sportsman and Missionary

*John Peters continues his series on the lives of outstanding Christians.*

Charles Thomas Studd's life was truly remarkable and quite unlike the lives of most other missionaries: in fact, the original 'riches to rags' story. Born in 1862, he was the third son of Edward Studd, who had made a vast fortune as a planter in India and had returned to England to enjoy himself in a constant round of pleasure and indulgence. But it did not work out like that because in 1877 he was dramatically converted under the preaching of D. L. Moody, and thereafter his life was spent in dedicated Christian service. Religion in the Studd household before this had been a tame affair—a matter of form with little inner conviction—so that Edward Studd's conversion caused quite a stir in general, and was a source of amazement to the boys, Kynaston, George and Charles, who were at Eton College. In 1877 they were all members of the First XI there, and later they created another record by captaining the Cambridge University cricket team in successive years: George in 1882, Charles in 1883 and Kynaston in 1884.

They were accustomed to meeting people from the sporting, racing and theatrical worlds at their home in Tidworth (then Tedworth), but now their father brought home evangelists and preachers. One weekend in 1878 a man they regarded as being rather soft and 'wet' persuaded all three brothers, quite

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independently of each other, to become Christians. Initially, his conversion meant little to Charles; he confessed to being a poor 'witness' at Eton where his main preoccupations were cricket, rackets and fives. Learning did not feature prominently in his programme at school, but he earned the reputation as one of the best cricketers to represent Eton. Then, following the traditional pathway for the rich at that time he went on to Trinity College, Cambridge where in his 'freshman' year (1879 and 80) he was awarded his 'Blue', scoring 52 in his second innings against Oxford. He reached the zenith of his cricketering career in 1882 when he played a notable part in the university's epic victory against the previously unbeaten Australian team, scoring 85 not out in the first innings and 15 not out in the second innings. Then, in August 1882, he played in the historic test match at the Oval when England lost by just eight runs to the Australians after victory had appeared

a formality. This defeat came about after one of the most astounding batting collapses of all time: at one stage England had only to score 35 runs with eight second innings wickets standing. It was after this match that the term 'Ashes' came into existence, and all modern encounters between Australia and England are for the mythical 'Ashes'. The redoubtable Dr. W. G. Grace was in the England team for this match, in which C.T. was left not out at the end, not having received a single ball in the second innings. He 'came down' from Cambridge in 1884.

More a cricketer than a Christian at this time, C.T. was brought face to face with the transitoriness of life and worldly fame when it looked likely that his brother George was about to die from a serious illness. George did recover but the experience profoundly affected C.T. and later he said of this period: 'The Lord met me again and restored to me the joy of his salvation'. Henceforward there was no turning back for him and he began to 'witness' to his friends, including members of the England cricket team, about the Lord Jesus Christ, and years later he wrote:

I cannot tell you what joy it gave me to bring the first soul to the Lord Jesus Christ. I have tasted almost all the pleasures that this world can give. I do not suppose there is one that I have not experienced, but I can tell you that those pleasures were as nothing compared to the joy that the saving of that one soul gave me. I went on working for some time, and then the cricket season came round, and I thought I must go into the cricket field and get the men there to know the Lord Jesus. Formerly I had as much love for cricket as any man could have, but when the Lord Jesus came into my heart, I found that I had something infinitely better than cricket. My heart was no longer in the game; I wanted to win souls for the Lord. I knew that cricket would not last, and honour would not last, and nothing in this world would last, but it was worthwhile living for the world to come. During those meetings one of my sincerest friends was brought to know that his sins were forgiven.

After a further period of prayer and meditation he concluded that to spend his time seeking worldly or sporting pleasures was wrong:

It seemed so thoroughly inconsistent. God had given me far more than was sufficient to keep my body and soul together, and, I thought, how could I spend the best years of my life in working for myself and the honours and pleasures of this world, while thousands and thou-

sands of souls are perishing every day without having heard of Christ?

In an act of total surrender he began to seek God's plan and direction for his future life and it came in clear, unequivocal terms: it was to go to China. Not surprisingly C.T.'s family opposed such a venture, but he remained steadfast and unmoved and, in February 1885, he sailed for China as an associate member of the China Inland Mission, whose director was James Hudson Taylor. He was accompanied by six other prominent men and together they formed the so-called 'Cambridge Seven'. On arrival they proclaimed their identification with the local population by adopting Chinese dress as well as pigtailed. During these early and difficult months in China he learned several vitally important lessons. The first was to depend entirely on the Word of God.

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**'I see more and more how  
much I have to learn of the Lord'**

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From this time onward it became a principle of his life to read the Bible, almost to the exclusion of other books, marking it copiously and receiving it in the attitude of a little child, in simple dependence upon the Holy Spirit to illuminate the Word to him. Thus, living in direct communion with God through the Spirit and the Word, he never afterwards felt the need of Conventions or other help from man to sustain and guide his spiritual life. He had learned the secret of walking with God alone. (*Grubb*)

The second was the need to begin each day with prayer and meditation—as he said:

The Lord is so good and always gives me a large dose of Spiritual Champagne every morning which braces one up for the day and night. Of late I have had such glorious times. I generally wake about 3.30 a.m. and feel quite wide awake, so have a good read, etc., and then have an hour's sleep or so before finally getting up. I find what I read then is stamped indelibly on my mind all through the day; and it is the very quietest of times, not a foot astir, nor a sound to be heard, saving that of God. If I miss this time I feel like Samson shorn of his hair and so of all his strength. I see more and more how much I have to learn of the Lord. I want to be a workman approved, not just with a 'pass' degree, as it were. Oh! how I wish I had devoted my early life, my whole life to God and His Word. How much have I lost by those years of self pleasing and running after this world's honours and pleasures.

He needed such refreshment, because the problems facing him were enormous, including the acquiring of an extremely complex foreign language, the vast difficulties inherent in such a pioneering work, the

hostility of the native population, the desperate shortage of funds, and finally chronic asthma. He pioneered the work in China for ten years—he married Priscilla Stewart there—and saw God answer prayer in remarkable ways. But in 1894 he returned to England for a much-needed furlough, as he and his wife were in ill health.

He then felt compelled to fulfil the dying wish of his father to take the gospel to India, and from 1900-1906 he was Pastor of the Union Church at Ootacamund, South India. With burning zeal he was able to preach the gospel to a wide section of the population, ranging from the Governor of Madras and the government officials, on the one hand, to the planters in Mysore and Madras, the soldiers and the poor, on the other hand. Again God blessed his ministry, and Norman Grubb records that Mrs. Studd in a letter home to England said, 'I don't think a week passes here that Charlie does not have one to three conversions'. His church in Ootacamund must have been a dangerous place for unbelievers! There followed two years in England, but then came God's call to Africa, the third and greatest challenge of C.T.'s life. It came about like this. Visiting Liverpool in 1908 he saw a notice which read: 'Cannibals want missionaries' and he decided that he would blaze the trail into that great continent. Now almost fifty, penniless, his body wracked with asthma, he wrote to a friend:

My soul is on fire to do the work of Christ. I seem to hear Jesus saying, 'Go over and possess the good land of the world. Every place your foot shall tread upon (thank God I have large ones) to you have I given it.'  
and later to his wife:

Somehow God tells me all my life has been a preparation for this coming 10 years or more. It has been a rough discipline. Oh, the agony of it! The asthma, what not has that meant, a daily and nightly dying! The bodily weakness! The being looked down upon by the world folk! The poverty! And have I not been tempted? Tempted to stop working for Christ! Doctors! Relatives! Family! Christians! Who has not declared I tempted God by rising up, and 'going at it' again? It has not been I, it has been Christ Who has carried me through; I know it. And now the Hill is won.

On 15th December, 1910, he left for Africa and made a three and a half months' journey into the interior of the Southern Sudan from Khartoum, during which time he heard of the vast population of the Belgian Congo who had never been acquainted with the gospel. He became convinced that God was calling him to evangelise the Belgian Congo and, eighteen months later, with Alfred Buxton as his sole companion, he arrived at Niangara, in the very heart of Africa, as the first pioneer of the Heart of Africa mission, later the World wide Evangelization Crusade.



He defined the objectives of the mission like this:

Our method is to search and find out what parts of the world at present remain unevangelized, and then by faith in Christ, by prayer to God, by obedience to the Holy Ghost, by courage, determination, and supreme sacrifice, to accomplish their evangelization with the utmost despatch.

Each member of the society was to subscribe to five conditions:

1. Absolute Faith in the Deity of each Person of the Trinity.
2. Absolute Belief in the full Inspiration of the Old and New Testament Scriptures.
3. Vow to know and to preach none other save Jesus Christ and Him Crucified.
4. Obedience to Christ's command to love all who love the Lord Jesus sincerely without respect of persons and to love all men.
5. Absolute Faith in the Will, Power and Providence of God to meet our every need in His service.

The work grew rapidly and new workers were urgently needed, so C.T. returned to England to enlist helpers. He appealed for them by his writings and by addressing countless meetings all over Britain. One of his most famous appeals read like this:

Christ's call is to feed the hungry, not the full; to save the lost, not the stiff-necked; not to call the scoffers, but sinners to repentance; not to build and furnish comfortable chapels, churches, and cathedrals at home in which to rock Christian professors to sleep by means of clever essays, stereotyped prayers and artistic musical performances, but to raise living churches of souls among the destitute, to capture men from the devil's clutches and snatch them from the very jaws of hell, to enlist and train them for Jesus, and make them into an Almighty Army of God. *But this can only be accomplished by a red-hot, unconventional, unfettered Holy Ghost religion, where neither Church nor State, neither man nor traditions are worshipped or preached, but only Christ and Him crucified. Not to confess Christ by fancy collars, clothes, silver croziers or gold watch-chain crosses, church steeples or richly embroidered altar-cloths, but by reckless sacrifice and heroism in the foremost trenches.*

By July 1916 he was prepared to leave for Africa: he never saw England again. By 1923 there were forty crusaders on the field. Meanwhile, back in England, Mrs. Studd had made a stupendous recovery from illness—he called it the 'greatest miracle' he knew of—and she became a world-wide ambassador for the mission travelling literally all over the world. Her zeal was more than matched by his in Africa where food, clothing, holidays, comforts were all irrelevant: 'If Jesus Christ be God and died for me,

then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for him, is how he expressed his burning desire for converts and their growth in holiness. Only once in thirteen years—in 1928—did he see his wife and that for two weeks only. Norman Grubb has described their parting at the end of her visit:

The parting was terribly hard, and Mrs. Studd did not want to go, but the hot season was starting and the home end of the work urgently needed her. They said farewell to each other in his bamboo house, knowing that it was the last time that they would meet on earth. They came out together from the house and down the path to the waiting motor car. Not another word was said. She seemed completely oblivious of the group of missionaries standing round the car to say good-bye, but got in with set face and eyes looking straight in front of her, and was driven off.

From 1928 C.T.'s life was one of increasing ill health, but never of any slackening in his conviction that he was doing God's will, and towards the end of his life he wrote home:

As I believe I am now nearing my departure from this world, I have but a few things to rejoice in; they are these:

1. That God called me to China and I went in spite of utmost opposition from all my loved ones.
2. That I joyfully acted as Christ told that rich young man to act.
3. That I deliberately at the call of God, when alone on the Bibby liner in 1910, gave up my life for this work, which was to be henceforth not for the Sudan only, but for the whole unevangelized world.

My only joys therefore are that when God has given me a work to do, I have not refused it. C. T. Studd died on 16th July, 1931; his last word was 'hallelujah'.

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'I have but a few things to rejoice in  
... that God called ... that I acted  
... that I gave my life'

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C.T. Studd was *unique* in many ways, not least in his willingness to obey—whatever the cost—the precepts and teaching of the Bible. The most striking example of this was his response to the command Christ gave to the rich young man: 'go sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven'. Once convinced that this edict applied to him, C. T. arranged to give away the whole of his inheritance (estimated at £29,000) from his father, and on 13th January, 1887, sent off four cheques of £5000, one each to D. L. Moody, George Müller, George Holland (to be used for the Lord's work amongst the poor in London) and Commis-

sioner Booth Tucker, for the Indian branch of the Salvation Army; the rest was disposed of a little later. He was also a man with a vision, like James Hudson Taylor, for the whole unevangelised world, and today the mission he founded operates in almost fifty countries. A man of action he certainly was: 'We are frittering away time and money in a multiplicity of Conventions and Conferences, when the real need is to steam into battle, with the signal for "close action" flying'. Alfred Buxton rightly described him as a 'cavalry leader' whose career profoundly affected missionary activity. Once he was sure of the right—God-given—course to follow he went full steam ahead and obeyed. He went to China in the face of family opposition, to India

### 'His life will be an eternal rebuke to easy going Christianity'

despite the opposition of his doctors, and finally to Africa despite the combined opposition of his family and his doctors. His assurance to proceed was forged in the crucible of prayer and meditation on the Word of God. In Africa, the day invariably began—at about 2-3 a.m.—with several hours reading the Bible; his only 'luxury' there was a new Bible (he preferred the Revised Version) each year, so that he would not depend on old notes (preachers beware!). His attitude to sermon preparation was typically uncomplicated 'Don't go into the study to prepare a sermon. That is all nonsense. Go into your study to go to God and get so fiery that your tongue is like a burning coal and you've got to speak'. Perhaps the essence of his faith and pioneering—indeed heroic—spirit is best summed up by

quoting the stirring appeal with which he ended his famous booklet, *The Chocolate Soldier*:

To your knees, man! and to your Bible. Decide at once! Don't hedge! Time flies! Cease your insults to God, quit consulting flesh and blood. Stop your lame and lying and cowardly excuses. Enlist! Here are your papers and oath of allegiance. Scratch out one side and sign the other in the presence of God and the recording angel. Mark God's endorsements underneath:

#### HENCEFORTH

For me	For me
To live is Christ	Chocolate my
To die is gain	name
	Tepidity my
I'll be a militant	temperature
A man of God	A malingerer
A gambler	A child of man
for Christ	A self-excuser
A hero	A humbug
Sign here	Sign here

C. T. Studd could truly have echoed the words that General Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, wrote in King Edward VII's autograph book: 'Some men's ambition is art; some men's ambition is fame; some men's ambition is gold. My ambition is the souls of men'. For the 'souls of men' C.T. sacrificed fame, fortune, a glittering sporting career and a settled family life. As Alfred Buxton said of him: 'C.T.'s life stands as some rugged Gibraltar—a sign to all succeeding generations that it is worth while to lose all this world can offer and stake everything on the world to come. His life will be an eternal rebuke to easy-going Christianity. He has demonstrated what it means to follow Christ without counting the cost and without looking back'. □

## Professor Bruce Asks

In a discussion reported in *Where do we go from here?* (p. 129), the question was asked: 'What is more delightful than to be able to hear a young brother, fresh to a meeting, announce a hymn?' I suppose that the question was a rhetorical one, since the speaker evidently felt he was carrying his hearers with him. My own reaction, on reading it, was to add a clause: 'unless it be to hear a young sister doing so'. Would readers regard this addition to the question as equally rhetorical?

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#### Bibliography:

Norman Grubb, *C. T. Studd: Cricketer and Pioneer* (Lutterworth Press, 1933); article in *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, edited by J. Douglas; quotations are from Grubb's work and are for the most part from the letters of C. T. Studd himself; *The Chocolate Soldier*; John Pollock, *The Cambridge Seven* (Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 1966 edition).

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i.e. worthy of being beaten (*Deut. 25: 2*); 'sons of death', i.e. worthy to die (*1 Sam. 20: 31; 2 Sam. 12: 5*). In the same way 'sons of the prophets' were not necessarily physically sons of prophets, though they could be, but members of prophetic groups. The same applies to *Isa. 19: 11*, where NIV translates well, 'I am one of the wise men, a disciple of ancient kings'. □

(To be continued)

# Sidelights from the Old Testament

H. L. Ellison

## 2—The Individual Family

In *Josh. 7: 14* we have the main divisions of Israelite society enumerated. The largest group was the tribe; in fact the bond of unity between the tribes was less the claim to common origin in Jacob-Israel, and more that they had all participated in the covenant ceremony at Sinai. The tribe was divided into clans (*mishpachah*, RSV 'families'), the clans into families (*bayit*, literally houses, RSV 'households'), and the families into what we should regard as family units—Achan was a married man with children (*7: 24*).

From this it should be obvious that our 'nuclear family' played a much smaller role in Israelite society than what the modern sociologist calls the wider family, the *bayit* or *bet 'ab* ('father's house', cf. *Exod. 6: 14 seq.*) Though the system broke down gradually under the monarchy, the original system was a natural result of the method of land tenure. The tribal portion was divided between the clans (*mishpachah*)—this is still the popular term among Jews for the widest known circle of relationship—and the clan divided its land at the first among 'the fathers' houses'. Since the area of tillable land very soon reached its limits, younger sons could not simply move to pastures new. In addition, apart from potters, crafts developed slowly in Israel. So the sons of the family, when they married, settled down next to the father's house and helped in the family fields. One example of a very large family may be found in *Jdg. 8: 30; 9: 5*. Since Gideon was an old man when he died (*8: 32*), it is obvious that most of his sons must have been married. So, granted the normal span of life and the usual age of marriage, not above twenty for the man—for the woman it was shortly after puberty—in the average enlarged family there will have been three and very often four generations living in close proximity, and the dominating influence will have been that of the old male head.

The fifth commandment was not merely an ideal. Commandments like 'Whoever strikes his father or mother shall be put to death', 'Whoever reviles his father or mother shall be put to death' (*Exod. 21: 15, 17*, with which may be compared *Lev. 20: 9* and especially *Deut. 21: 18-21; 27: 16*) show that due respect and seemly behaviour were not based purely on the strength of the father's arm.

Should any reader dream of a revival of the distant past, let him remember that there was another side to all this. The warning attached to the second commandment, 'For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me' (*Exod. 20: 5*), stresses the danger that could not be avoided in the wider family. The wrong attitude of the aged family head to God, shown especially in the use of inadequate and dishonouring images, was bound to influ-

ence all in the family group. This is expressed in the phrase that runs through the history of Israel like a knell, 'Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin'.

Though this closely integrated society had largely broken down by the time of Christ, thanks to the evils of the monarchy, exile and foreign domination, the ideal still existed. This underlines what must have been for His hearers the enormity of Jesus' words, 'If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his own father and mother . . . he cannot be My disciple' (*Lk. 14: 27*). In fact, one of the less recognized aspects of Israel's developing history is the way in which it gradually enabled the individual to stand alone before God.

The fact of the wider family can be seen in the use of 'ab. While literally this means father, there are many cases where grandfather is meant, e.g. *Gen. 28: 13*, and so son (*ben*) can equally well mean grandson, e.g. *Gen. 31: 28, 43, 55*, where grandchildren are meant, cf. also *2 Ki. 9: 20* with *9: 14* and *Ezr. 5: 2* with *Zech. 1, 7*. In fact so common was this that omissions in genealogies needed no explanation, e.g. *Ezr. 7: 1-5* and *Matt. 1: 8*, where Ahaziah, Joash and Amaziah are omitted. So much is this the case that NIV, mg. suggests in *Gen. 5: 6-26; 10: 8, 13, 15, 24, 26* that 'father' may mean 'ancestor', while for 'sons' (*Gen. 10: 2-7, 21-23, 29, 31*) it suggests the possibility of 'descendants'. Linguistically this is quite possible.

A wider connotation may be seen in *Gen. 4: 20, 21*, where father means the originator of a skill or manner of life. Similarly in *1 Chr. 4* it frequently means the founder of a town or village.

The father as head of the family is its protector; it is used of God in *Psa. 68: 5* and also of Job (*29: 16*) in this sense, and of Eliakim as the vizier or Hezekiah's chief minister in *Isa. 22: 20*. When Judah, as the erring wife, calls God 'my Father' (*Jer. 3: 4*) she implies that her only hope is in Him.

When the coming child is called 'abi-ad in *Isa. 9: 6* it means literally Father of Eternity. We cannot object to the rendering 'Father for ever' or 'Everlasting Father', but it can also be understood as Creator or Controller of Eternity, cf. *Heb. 1: 7* 'through whom also He made the ages' (RV, mg.).

Just as father expresses authority, so son implies subordination, but also a reflection of his father's character and will. So God says to the king, 'You are My Son' (*Psa. 2: 7*). Equally, however, *ben* may be used metaphorically of a man's dominating characteristic or certain fate: 'sons of belial'—not a proper name!—i.e. worthless or wicked men (*Deut. 13: 13, 1 Sam. 2: 12*); 'children of rebellion' i.e. rebellious men (*Num. 17: 10*); 'a son of stripe',

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# God's Work in New Creation

A. E. Long

*The second part of a double article.*

Man was made lord over Old Creation, God's vicegerent on earth, having dominion over the lesser creation—"Let them have dominion over . . . the earth, or, as *Psalm 8* says, 'Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.' God's purpose for man is stated in the context of his creation in the 'image' and after the 'likeness' of the Creator. Such 'image' and 'likeness' can only be spiritually understood, since 'God is a spirit', without 'form' (cf. *Lk. 3: 22; Jn. 5: 37*). As created, man could be said to have resembled God; first, in his tripartite being, 'spirit and soul and body', answering to the Trinity; secondly, in his personality, answering to the Divine personality; and thirdly, in his rationality, as being able to weigh evidence and make a rational choice therefrom, as is true of God Himself.

Christ is said to be 'the image of God' (*II Cor. 4: 4; Col. 1: 15*). In manhood, He perfectly mirrored God, being God's 'impressed character' (*Heb. 1: 3*). It is likely that when God created man in His own 'image' and 'likeness', He had Christ in mind as the prototype, to Whose 'image' redeemed humanity will eventually be 'conformed' (*Rom. 8: 29*).

When Seth was born to Adam and Eve, he was in his father's 'own image, after his likeness' (*Gen. 5: 3*). This is in contrast to Adam's own original 'likeness' to God, as stated in verse 1. Indeed, since the Fall had intervened between Adam's creation and Seth's birth, it can be said that the 'image' and 'likeness' that Adam transmitted to Seth was 'the likeness of sinful flesh'. We need not assume, however, that the Fall altogether effaced God's 'image' and 'likeness' in man, for even fallen man often still retains some traces of the Creator's 'likeness'. But man's resemblance to God has been greatly obscured by sin, so much so that Jesus said to some Jews of His day, who claimed that they had 'one father, even God', 'ye are of your father the devil'. This was evident in their attitude to the Lord Whom they sought to kill; had God been their Father, they would have loved, not hated Christ. So, far from revealing God's workmanship in him, unregenerate man exhibits Satan's handiwork, as Paul wrote of the Ephesians—"Ye walked according to . . . prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience." 'Disobedience' to God was a measure of the obscuration of God's 'Image' and 'likeness' in them.

In Old Creation, God 'rested on the seventh day from all his work'. His 'rest' was destined to be shortlived, as the next chapter records the entrance of sin into the world and, with it, the necessity of a new initiative in the work of New Creation. When the Lord healed the sick man at the pool of Bethesda,

it was done on the Sabbath day, the Jew's obligatory day of rest. They regarded the Lord's work of healing as a breach of the Sabbath, as also the action of the healed man in taking up his couch, as instructed by Jesus. To the charge of Sabbath breaking, the Lord significantly replied 'My Father worketh even until now, and I work.' In the fact of the Father working was the Lord's justification for healing a sick man on the Sabbath; His work only reflected that of the Father's redemptive activity, which 'work' he had come to 'accomplish'. The Jews were the more enraged by His words, which they understood as constituting a claim to equality with God.

The Father's 'work' was that of New Creation, as was also Christ's work. God's purpose in New Creation is to restore His 'image' and 'likeness' in redeemed man, first by destroying 'the works of the devil' in his marring of man's original resemblance to God, and then by recreating it in that 'image'. *Ephesians 2: 1-10* shows this process. It points the contrast between Satan's work and God's 'workmanship', corresponding to *Genesis 1*, where God is seen at work bringing cosmos out of chaos, in Old Creation. *Ephesians 2: 1-3* describe Satan's work, issuing in spiritual chaos, and the ensuing verses describe God's work in bringing order out of chaos, summed up in verse 10—"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works". Every Christian is an authentic work of New Creation, 'created in Christ Jesus', in whom Satan's destructive work has been arrested and reversed and God's constructive order established.

Paul writes of this experience as issuing in 'the new man' i.e. in contrast to 'the old man', which is after Adam's 'likeness' and 'image', whereas 'the new man' is after Christ's 'image'. The Ephesians were exhorted to 'put away . . . the old man. . . And put on the new man, which after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.' Paul used the same imagery in *Colossians 3*—"Ye have put off the old man . . . And have put on the new man, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of him (i.e. Christ) that created him (i.e. "the new man")". 'The new man' transcends all earthly distinctions, whether racial, religious, cultural or social (v. 11). 'Renewal' is an essential characteristic of 'the new man' (cf. *Rom. 12: 2; Eph. 4: 23; Col. 3: 10*). Such renewal is not immediate, but gradual and progressive, as Paul's words contrasting Moses' experience at Sinai with that of Christians show—"But we all with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory. . . . Moses' face reflected a declining glory; the Christian's face reflects a developing glory—"from one degree of glory to another" (ANT). It bespeaks a growing likeness to Christ.

To be 'in Christ' is to form part of New Creation

# How Man should See the Universe

H. F. Thompson

Today there is a growing awareness among men and women in many walks of life of man's responsibility for the welfare of the Universe. On the one hand, we have enlightened people who really care for the natural world, and are alarmed at the way it is being misused and abused. On the other hand there are those who, in their blindness, are wilfully destroying it. 'The modern world', writes Max Picard, 'is concerned only with the profitability, the exploitability, and the revolutionary possibilities of things'. It is not the purpose of this article to go into the details of the foolish things man does which have a ruinous effect on his natural home, but rather to give reasons why he should care for it.

We learn from the book of *Genesis* that when God had prepared a home for mankind he created man in the image of Himself. Man is the crowning act of creation, all else was created for his benefit (*Gen. 1: 26*). In the last book of the Bible, the book of *Revelation* (The Apocalypse) there is a vision of heaven where 'living creatures' join together in giving praise to Almighty God, which is the true end of their existence. 'Worthy art thou, Our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created' (*Rev. 4: 11*). The natural world can be seen as an expression of God's mind, and the field in which His thoughts are being actualised. By contemplating Nature, we can learn something of the workings of the divine mind. 'Behind every landscape' said Alain Fournier 'I feel the landscape of my paradise'. Teilhard de Chardin, an outstanding Christian and a scientist, held the view that since the material and the spiritual worlds are both God's handiwork and belong to God, there should be no separation between them. 'Lord' he prayed, 'which is the more precious of these two beatitudes—that all things are a means through which I can touch You, or that You Yourself are so "Universal" that I can experience You and lay hold on You in every creature?' Surely, God's revelation to man, and in particular through the Incarnation of

His Son, shows the value He places on his creation.

St. Francis of Assisi had a wonderful sense of the harmony which existed between himself and the rest of creation, and he expressed it in one of the greatest of all Christian hymns:-

'Be praised, my Lord with all Thy works what'er they be. Our noble Brother Sun, whose brightness makes the light by which we see—Be praised, my Lord, for Sister Moon and every Star. . . . Be praised, my Lord, for Sister Earth, our Mother, who nourishes and gives us food and fodder . . .' (*The Canticle of the Sun*).

The late Dr. Albert Schweitzer had a deep reverence for all life, and he warned people of the consequences of failing to treat all God's creatures with the respect due to them. 'Until Mankind can extend the circle of his compassion to include all living things, he will never himself know peace'. The priest in Dostoevsky's novel, *The Brothers Karamazov*, exhorted his people to love all God's creation: 'Love every leaf, every ray of light. Love the animals, love the plants, love each separately. If you love each thing you will perceive the Mystery of God in all'.

With God, man should embrace all creation. The apostle Paul writes: 'God's plan, which he will complete when the time is right, is to bring all creation together, everything in heaven and on earth, with Christ as head' (*Eph. 1: 10*). Every creature then, even the humblest, is meant to attain to its own perfection. But, unhappily modern man has become so dazzled by the wonders of scientific discoveries and advanced technology, that he has to a large extent severed his roots in nature, and has built up for himself a mountain of restlessness, discontent and fear. It is Christianity that constantly recalls man to subject the application of all scientific discoveries to the immutable laws of the Creator of the Universe. Teilhard de Chardin has sounded the following timely warning: 'The day is not far distant when humanity will realise that biologically it is faced with a choice between suicide and adoration' (*Le Milieu Divin*). □

(continued from facing page)

—'Wherefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature (or, creation); old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.' Such an experience clearly anticipates the extension of New Creation to the whole cosmos, as announced by God in *Revelation 21*—'the former things are passed away. And he that sat on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.' Christians are the nucleus of this New Creation, for in them God has begun a work which will eventually encompass all creation, whose 'earnest expectation . . . waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God.' □

## SOME SHORTER NOTES

1. The recent UCCF Annual Report contains interesting comments on students and local churches, on the durability of student Christian commitment, and on pressures for Christians involved in student politics. Obtainable from UCCF, 38 De Montfort St., Leicester LE1 7GP.
2. Students of Brethren history will be interested in the publication of a definitive bibliography of the writings of Philip Henry Gosse. *Philip Henry Gosse, a Bibliography* is obtainable from Dawson Publishing, Cannon House, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5EE at £12.
3. A history of the Bristol City Mission, *Mission of Mercy* by Ronald Cleves is obtainable from C.H. Publications, 95 Hill View, Henleaze, Bristol BS9 4QQ at 95p (post 17p). Many readers will be interested by it.

## Think About These Things—3

B. C. Martin

Whatever is honourable

*Mr. Martin continues his series based on Phil 4: 8.* The A.V. rendering 'honest' has far too confined a meaning now, adequately to express the Greek *semnos* which is translated as 'honorable' in the RSV (American spelling) and 'honourable' in the RV.

It is difficult to find an English word exactly to fit *semnos*; the margins of the AV and RV help us with 'venerable' and 'reverend', and the Pastoral Epistles have 'serious' (RSV). Clearly therefore we have wrapped up in this word, the things which men venerate.

Certainly it is a concept common to all, that some things are serious and should be taken seriously.

These are values which are independent of time and which time cannot change—however hard men try to change them.

Man being who he is, a creature in his Maker's image, is related to certain things which have a permanent significance for him. He may seek to avoid them, but they are constantly on his track—and in his heart he holds them in honour, awe and reverence. Hence the oft-repeated scriptural injunction 'Remember!'

The things that are honourable are those basic elements in man's constitution giving him the potential for co-operation with his maker; and 'religion' is his attempt to unravel, as far as he can, these powers which are greater than himself but with which he has to do, and reconcile himself to them.

The Christian has the secret, because he has God's written revelation which tells him that all comes from God's creative hand, from which it follows that all creation (however corrupted by sin) is *intrinsically* holy.

Habitual veneration of all God's creation will have a powerful effect on a believer's attitudes. He will not only regard his fellow-men in a proper light, but also the animal kingdom and even the earth itself with all its resources.

Paul bids us dwell in thought upon the honourable. And it is in fact a result of Christians having obeyed this injunction that many good institutions have arisen for the benefit of mankind generally. Like his Master before him, the believer should always give pre-eminence to the spiritual and eternal, but this should not involve an ignoring of temporal needs. When Jesus met a company of ten lepers, only one turned back to him and heard His word 'Thy faith hath made thee whole'. But each of the ten was healed.

All religions have arisen from man's sense of unseen powers beyond his control—above, around and indeed within him. But as we have seen, unless there is obedience to God's Revelation there is little moral strength; so the good he knows is over-mastered by the evil he knows. Through the ages

there have been many human Utopias on man's drawing-boards, but there has been neither the united will nor the moral fibre to put them into effect: and so the menacing gloom grows darker in every generation.

Reverence for the life God has given each individual as a special and unique gift, precludes treating it unworthily and cloaking its seriousness with an air of frivolity, gossip and preoccupation with petty self-centred interest. Christ has a deeper joy for the Christian than any dubious happiness thought to be obtainable through an unseemly levity. This does not mean that a sense of humour and geniality in all circumstances is ruled out! On the contrary these in their proper form derive from the very respect for those things which should be respected, of which we have spoken.

Flippancy may be appropriate amongst flippant things; but flippancy applied to the ultimate things of life is blasphemy. Man knows this. Listen to what Cicero the Roman said a century before Christ; 'Only a madman could maintain that the distinction between the honourable and the dishonourable, between virtue and vice, is a matter of opinion, not of nature.'

Every Christian has been brought close to these honourable things. God has made it easy for him to think about these things producing an attitude which sees things in their right perspective, thus enabling him to be a living signpost indicating the right direction.

Changing the metaphor, he is 'the salt of the earth'. His sense of the honourable through Christ is a savour which may help arrest the putrefaction amongst men in his diverse societies world-wide, whose innate reverence of unseen values becomes overlaid with inordinate desire for the ephemeral 'things that are seen'.

How important then for the Christian not to lose his savour: which is only too possible! He will keep his savour if he does as Paul bids, and thinks of whatever is honourable i.e. God-centred instead of man-centred.

The thinking will lead to a genuine and happy worship and a desire to be made a blessing to his fellow men, each one of whom he will respect as being made in God's image, with a potential perhaps greater than his own.

And this worship will lead us to discern the venerable in all God's good creation, so that we live in a constant atmosphere of wonder, gratitude, expectancy and love.

All of us ourselves, our natural environment, our friends, our dear ones, prosperity, adversity, sun, cloud, mist, snow—everything from God is honourable, moving us to praise and imparting inward peace. □



# Exegesis or Experience?

E. L. Lovering

*A continuation of Mr. Lovering's series of occasional articles*

To some, accuracy in interpretation and correct scriptural exegesis is of minor importance when compared with a live and exuberant spiritual experience. They say that the Bible is a book designed not for scholars and specialists but for ordinary folk, that it is a book concerned principally with spiritual matters, with the heart rather than the head. As the poet often comes nearer to the heart of nature than the scientist, who analyses, dissects and divides, so the man of faith and feeling knows more of religious experience than the exegete. To support this view we have often heard the quote 'the letter killeth but the spirit maketh alive' (II Cor. 3: 6), a meaning which we suggest is far removed from its context. There are others, who are concerned almost exclusively with correct doctrine and accurate apologetics. As is so often the case, the truth lies not in extremes but in a complementary balance. Creed and conduct, precept and practice, doctrine and deeds must surely be close companions.

## Historical Situation

'The revelation of the highest truth needs both words and works for its completeness; what is found in the Gospel narratives, in the form of precept or teaching, reappears in *The Acts of the Apostles* in the form of practice or example; so the great truths taught about the Holy Spirit in the farewell discourses recorded by John, are in the book of *The Acts* illustrated and illuminated being exemplified and applied in actual history' (Dr. A. T. Pierson *Acts of the Holy Spirit*). Luke in his introduction to *The Acts* treatise reminds the noble Theophilus that he has already dealt with 'all that Jesus began to do and teach'. The order seems significant for our Lord's perfect and exemplary life was itself the 'exegesis' of the Father (Jn. 1: 18).

'This' is 'That'—Pentecost. The story of the Holy Spirit in His mission and ministry is one of spontaneous activity, 'each new page flames with some surprise . . . nevertheless every story reveals principles and laws, operating with undeviating regularity. There is the glorious regularity of the irregular in the work of the church by the Holy Spirit . . . a powerful argument against the stereo-typed in Christian organisation and method, and consequently a plea for room for the operation of that Spirit, who, like the wind 'bloweth where it listeth' (Dr. G. Campbell Morgan *The Acts of the Apostles*).

Pentecost was an experience of historical significance which required explanation. A new day had dawned in human history, it was the fulfilment of that which had long been expected. The crowd, amazed, perplexed and arrested at what they had seen asked, 'What meaneth this?' Some with sarcas-

tic humour concluded that 'they were drunk with new wine', to which Peter replied that 'they were not drunk in the way that they supposed'; that would be a false and destructive method of attempting to realise life in its fulness. Rather it would be realised only as 'they were filled with the Spirit' (Eph. 5: 18). Dr. Campbell Morgan comments, 'the signs were evidences to arrest attention but they never produced conviction, that comes through prophesying in the power of the Spirit'. So, 'this' and 'that' are linked in Peter's explanation, for 'this is that which hath been spoken through the prophet Joel' and what they now saw was nothing less than prophecy fulfilled.

## Theological Implication

The subject matter of theology is God, with His activity and every thought and experience which is affected by belief in God. I. Howard Marshall comments, 'we might be tempted to think that Christian theology is based primarily on the introspection of believers as they ask themselves what it is they believe—and there might be as many different theologies as there are believers. But the source of Christian theology is not primarily Christian experience but rather divine revelation. Christian theology is not simply a descriptive statement of what Christians believe; it expresses what Christians *ought* to believe on the basis of God's revelation'. He continues, 'the Bible is a doctrinal book, but it is not a systematic statement of doctrine. Paul, for example, did not set out to write systematic theological treatises when he wrote the epistles (with the possible exception of *Romans*); he was writing occasional documents, meant to deal with the current problems and needs of particular congregations. But his writings pre-suppose his understanding of Christian theology . . . the theologian tries to work out from his epistles the systematic character of his thinking'. A theology based upon experience alone can only be 'subjective' since it has no reference to an external standard. To describe a religious experience as theological doctrine can be dangerous, for faith and feelings might easily be confused. Christian 'experience' frequently depends upon circumstances, emotional sensitivity and temperament and is consequently inconsistent. Sooner or later one must ask, 'which of my experiences do I trust? how do I know whose experience is right?' Neither is reason the key to the theology, for it is but finite and cannot fully grasp the infinite. Experience and reason can only be tested by the objective standard of God's revelation of himself in the Bible, which is both historical record and explanatory comment woven into one.

The work of the Holy Spirit in the believer and the church is an activity which has created considerable contemporary discussion. This centres on two distinct problems, the first of which concerns the 'bap-

tism of the Spirit'. Some (confining themselves to New Testament exegesis) conclude that the 'baptism of the Spirit' is *not* a post-conversion experience, neither do they attach any theological significance to this 'pentecostal' experience. On the other hand, there are those who (having received this experience) are content to assert its genuineness without reference to exegesis and any difficulties it appears to raise. The second problem concerns the gifts of the Spirit and their place in the church's life and ministry. In the church at Corinth, spectacular and supernatural manifestations of the Spirit were expected. Paul realised that in this spontaneous worship there could well be problems of order and prestige. The more spectacular gifts could appear more important than the humbler ones and those possessing them assume a position of superiority. An abundance of supernatural phenomena had not produced greater spirituality, so Paul writes concerning 'spiritual gifts' (*I Cor. 12: 1*). Ecstatic experience is common to many religions and the Corinthians themselves had apparently known the experience of 'being led' before their conversion (*I Cor. 12: 2*). What matters is not whether you are under supernatural influence but whose influence you are under.

John Goldingay in his exposition of *I Cor. 12-14* observes that the activity of the Spirit of Christ is indicated not by the nature of the experience but by its direction (*ch. 12: 3*); the acknowledgment that Jesus is Lord is the sign of spiritual perception which can only come about through the direct activity of the Holy Spirit. He continues, 'the criterion of the Spirit's activity is not all that is ecstatic but all that glorifies Christ, and this will be true for *all* gifts not only for healing and tongues but of interpreting and expounding the scriptures. The gifts are not rewards for Christian proficiency of which we might well be proud, but just unearned gifts (*12: 4*)—*charismata*, God's grace gifts to the church. It is the Spirit's will and not man's spirituality that decides their distribution (*12: 11*), not just a spiritual privilege for private enjoyment or self-cultivation but a spiritual responsibility to be exercised for the edification of others, 'the common good' (*12: 7 RSV*). In his booklet *The Baptism of the Holy Spirit—biblically explained*, Dr. S. S. Short notes that, as evangelical believers affirm 'the inspiration of the scriptures' (*II Tim. 3: 16*), they should 'observe with extreme care the particular words which scripture uses in describing the various operations of the Spirit of God'. He comments further that there has developed of late a great laxity in the use of biblical terminology in relation to this subject, for example in the assumption that the 'baptism of the Spirit' and the 'filling of the Spirit' are synonymous. He concedes however, that in some cases the two operations might occur simultaneously as he believed happened at Pentecost (*Acts 1: 5, and 2: 4*). We should use the words of scripture as God given because 'linguistic confusion can develop into doctrinal confusion. We should not

dismiss this as a pointless verbal quibble, because experience has shown that Christians who allow themselves to describe the 'filling of the Spirit' by the phrase 'baptism of the Spirit' almost invariably land themselves before long in doctrinal error'. It is contended that the baptism of the Spirit accompanied by the gift of tongues, gives added spiritual power in prayer, devotion and witness, and consciously or otherwise members of the fellowship are divided into 'first and second class' Christians. It should be noted that the believers in Corinth 'were *all* baptised in one Spirit into one body' (*I Cor. 12: 13*) despite their low spiritual condition and Paul acknowledged that '*all* would not speak with tongues' (*I Cor. 12: 30*). It should be the earnest endeavour of every believer to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, as members of the same, one body of Christ.

### Practical Application

We conclude with some practical reasons for a prayerful and consistent study of the scriptures.

*Governed by its principles.* To study the Bible comprehensively will furnish principles for a life of obedience to the will of God. Wm. Barclay wrote, 'knowledge only becomes relevant when it is translated into action'. Beware of the indiscriminate use of 'proof-texts' from all parts of the Bible to justify a course of action, as is so often done by false cults. 'Happy are those whose lives are faultless, who live according to the law of the Lord' (*Ps. 119: 1*).

*Guided by its precepts.* In the journey of life any moment may become a crisis, so there is need for constant reference to the Guide Book. 'Your instructions give me pleasure; they are my advisors . . . I will eagerly obey your commands because you will give me more understanding . . . your Word is a lamp to guide me and a light for my path' (*Ps. 119: 24, 32, 105*).

*Guarded by its power.* Only by a diligent study of the scriptures can we discriminate between good and evil, truth and error and withstand successfully the attacks of the Evil One. 'How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to thy Word . . . I have laid up Thy Word in my heart that I might not sin against Thee' (*Ps. 119: 9, 11*).

*Grow by its provision.* Peter wrote, 'like newborn babes, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation' (*I Peter 2: 2*). We may add one further ingredient, 'how sweet are thy words to my taste! yea sweeter than honey to my mouth!' (*Ps. 119: 103*). As others witness our enjoyment of God's word they, too, will be attracted to its author. The Lord Jesus said, 'not everyone who says, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who *does* the will of my Father who is in heaven' for the wise man is he who 'hears these words of mine and puts them into practice' (*Matt. 7: 22, 24*). 'Hearing' and 'doing' is summarised in one word—'obedience'. □

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## Question and Answer, with Peter Cousins

### How large were the teraphim?

#### Question 159

*Some translations, such as the NEB, seem to suggest that the image Michal used to trick Saul's men (1 Sam. 19: 11-16) was placed on the bed rather than inside. This would surely have been pointless if the purpose was to deceive them into thinking David was there—or is there some reason for doubt?*

The image is described as 'teraphim' which is a plural word and would most naturally be understood to indicate that more than one image was involved. They have traditionally been understood as household gods such as are found in many different societies. Certainly they were familiar to Israel's neighbours: not only did Rachel bring them away from Haran (*Genesis* 31: 19), but *Ezekiel* 21: 21 shows them in use among the Babylonians as an aid to divination. In *2 Kings* 23: 24 where we read of how Josiah abolished them, they appear in a regular 'black list' of abominations. In *Hosea* 3: 4, by contrast, they appear almost as part of the nation's 'establishment' although once again, and possibly not without significance, they are mentioned alongside an aid to divination, although a legitimate one, the ephod.

If they were household gods of some sort, then one would expect them to be small; the ones referred to in *Genesis* 31: 19 certainly were, since Rachel was able to hide them by sitting on them (v. 34). Possibly the teraphim of *1 Samuel* 19 were life-size. But even if they could not be mistaken for a human figure, then the presence in, on or by the bed of these sacred objects would have daunted the men who came for David. It is also possible that, whatever the goats' hair article was that Michal used (and the meaning of the Hebrew is not clear), it may well have been sufficiently bulky to deceive a casual glance.

### The Purposes of the Four Gospels

#### Question 160

*Since you do not accept (Question 153) that Mark's Gospel presents the Lord Jesus as Servant, what is your view of similar descriptions of the other Gospels (Matthew—Son of David; Luke—Son of Man; John—Son of God)?*

I should say that there is good biblical evidence for each of these summary phrases, provided however that each is carefully interpreted. 'Son of David', for example, gives some idea of the Jewish interest in Matthew although the genealogy in Chapter 1 in fact traces Our Lord's descent from Abraham, not only from David. It should also be remembered that 'Son of David' was a title that he himself never directly accepted.

Similarly, 'Son of Man' will possibly serve as a reminder of Luke's apparent intention to present Our Lord as a remarkable and attractive human being, though here again the genealogy (*Luke* 3: 23-38) suggests 'Son of Adam' as more appropriate. This reservation is not a mere quibble although *adam* does signify 'man'. For to use the phrase 'Son of Man' in this sense is to depart quite significantly from general New Testament usage. In the New Testament, 'Son of Man' does not usually mean 'human being'. It is a somewhat mysterious but special title applied to the Lord Jesus alone and in this sense no more the concern of *Luke* than of any other gospel.

Only in the case of *John* (20: 21) do we find explicit biblical support for one of these phrases. But in this case the term, 'Son of God', is identical with that used by *Mark* in 1: 1. For that matter, each Gospel stresses the Saviour's claim to be in some unique sense 'the Son'.

This qualified acceptance of the phrases you mention is subject to a further limitation. For while we may find them helpful as 'pointers' to the purpose of the Gospel, we shall be misled if we allowed them to limit our understanding. Great works of literature (and the Gospel may certainly be described thus) are far too complex to be adequately disposed of in a phrase. Even *John* 20: 21 suggests that the Gospel might equally be described as presenting "Christ the Lifegiver". The way in which teaching material is arranged in *Matthew* is one reason for seeing the Christ of this Gospel as 'the Greater Moses'. And when we notice now greatly *Luke* has reduced the horror of the Passion narrative as compared with *Mark* we shall realise that there is more to his Gospel than the "Son of Adam/Man" motif.

The three phrases, rightly understood, are useful aids to thought but in no way a substitute for it.

### A Common Policy?

#### Question 161

*Would it not be a good thing, and avoid confusion, if there were some uniformity of practice in the assemblies concerning the place of women?*

If you are implying that it is a pity that there are some fellowships where sisters are not treated with the same concern and humanity as was shown by the Lord Jesus and by the Apostle Paul, then I am bound to agree. But if what you're referring to is the public ministry of women, then you are raising a rather different issue. Concerning this, there are differences of opinion between wise and godly men equally concerned to obey the teaching of Scripture. Each church should be guided by its elders in accordance with what they and the fellowship as a whole judge to be the will of God.

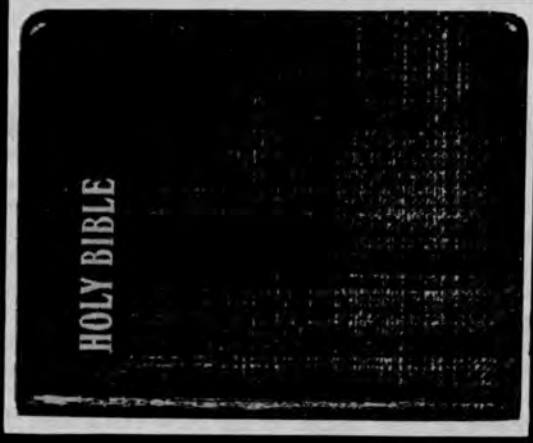


# We can feed him on solids.



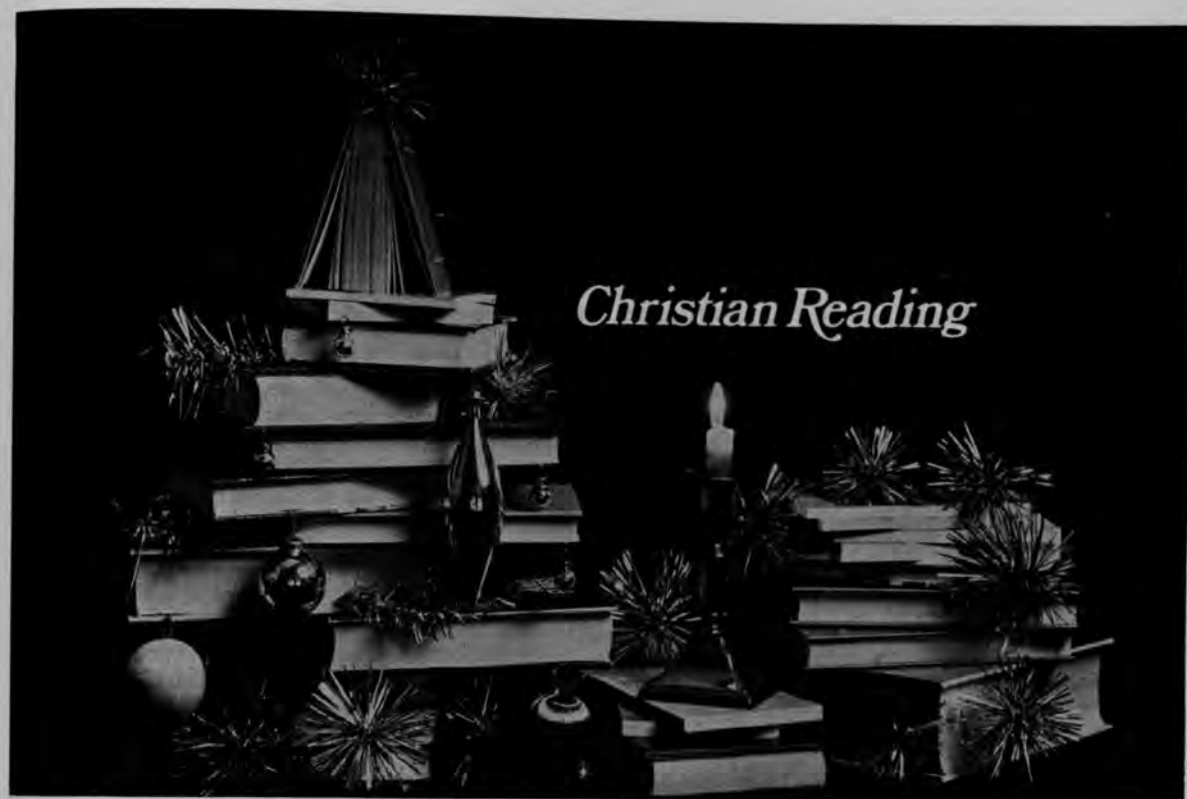
He is about to have a liquid lunch.

Whats on the menu today? Is it cider, metal polish, Meths? He'll take what he can get.



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## Christian Reading

# Eight Months of Books

Only a small proportion of the Christian books that are published can receive an extended review in the pages of *The Harvester*: a fact that we and our readers doubtless regret as much as the publishers who generously supply copies of their new productions for that purpose. But time and space are inexorable masters—not to mention our readers' and reviewers' patience. Nevertheless, we hope to do some justice in an unjust world by our regular twice-a-year book supplement, in which we can not only clear some of the accumulation of extended reviews, but also survey more generally the events in the Christian publishing world in recent months. Who knows: a brief mention in the general survey may be more useful to the prospective purchaser than a longer notice that he puts by to read at a more convenient season.

### A NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENT

For readers of *The Harvester* the publishing event of 1979 must surely be the appearance in October of the complete volume of their 'own' commentary on the Bible. **A BIBLE COMMENTARY FOR TODAY**, edited by G. C. D. Howley with Prof. F. F. Bruce and H. L. Ellison as consulting editors, is still a 'future' publication as I write, price £17.50 (£15 to 31 Jan). But by the time this article appears it will be in the shops. When the New Testament section appeared by itself in 1969, under the title *A New Testament Commentary*, it received a warm welcome across a wide spectrum of churchmanship, and was an eye-opener to many readers as to the range of expository talent within Christian Brethren circles. For the Old Testament section, the editorial eye has gone a little outside Brethren circles—but

only very little. The veteran editor (for Cecil Howley can surely now agree to receiving that honourable adjective) and Pickering and Inglis the publishers are to be congratulated on a handsome and valuable production that will surely be on the shopping list of every one of our readers. We hope to carry a full review of the work in a later issue, but an adequate review of such a publication can plainly not be an overnight task.

## FOR THE BIBLE STUDENT

Which brings us directly to other books of service to the Bible student. We try to cover most books under this heading in our more lengthy reviews, and this supplement contains a selection of such notices. Two other recent publications of a more general nature call for notice here, however. In the first place, the appearance of the second volume of Ralph P. Martin's **NEW TESTAMENT FOUNDATIONS** (Paternoster Press £9.00) cannot be overlooked by any serious Bible reader. Covering *Acts to Revelation*, the book is an essential resource for anyone concerned to understand the background and thought of the New Testament and its world. The name of its author is ample guarantee of the quality and careful conservatism of its scholarship, as well as of the widely informed foundation on which that scholarship rests.

Also, available from Pickering and Inglis, and in some ways a competitor to their *A Bible Commentary for Today* is **THE EXPOSITOR'S BIBLE COMMENTARY** (£12.50 for Volume I, covering the Introductory Articles). Inevitably fuller than the single volume Commentary, it is originally produced in the U.S.A. under the editorship of Frank E. Gaebelin, with J. D. Douglas from this side of the Atlantic as Associate Editor, and calls on a wide range of better known evangelical scholars from the English-speaking countries. Reviews of other volumes in the series are in hand.

Turning from the heavy-weights, we pick up a selection of books more easily digestible, and less daunting to the reader with the pressures of life hard on him or her. Some, which might fall under the category of 'Theology for Everyman', appear in a new series of paperbacks from Hodder and Stoughton at £1.25 each. The names of the authors are sufficient recommendation: **I Believe in the Holy Spirit** by Michael Green, **I Believe in Evangelism** by David Watson, **I Believe in the Great Commission** by Max Warren, and **I Believe in the Resurrection of Jesus** by George Eldon Ladd. Good, sound stuff for the church bookstall! A little booklet from The Paternoster Press **Can We Trust the Gospels?** by Nigel Scotland (60p) will help any who are concerned about the authenticity of the basic documents of the Faith, while the reprinted classic, Charles Hodge's **The Way of Life, a guide to Christian belief and experience** (Banner of Truth £1.25) is a solid and sober run-down of the basic doctrines of salvation.

For daily Bible reading, the Salvation Army's *Armoury Bible Lessons 1980 Living and Believing* are published by Hodder and Stoughton at £1.25, and John Eddison takes one day by day to the scriptures, in a style similar to that of *Daily Light in Step by Step* (Henry E. Walter, £2.95).

Biblical comment in a straightforward devotional vein is contained in Luis Palau's two little books **The Schemer and the Dreamer** (on Jacob and Joseph) and **The Moment to Shout** (Joshua) (both £1.00 from Lakeland) and George B. Duncan's **A Preacher's Life of Jesus** (Hodder £1.40).

## EVANGELISM AND CHURCH LIFE

More evangelistic in theme are three paperbacks that concentrate on our Lord Himself: **The Man from Outside** (Gordon Bridger, IVP £1.25), **More than a Carpenter** (Josh McDowell, Kingsway 95p) and **Why Bother with Jesus?** (Michael Green, Hodder 60p). A little more oriented to peoples' questions are **How Can We Believe?** (Robert Dean, Kingsway £1.25) and a reprint of answers to questions in *Evangelism Today* by Prof. Verna Wright **My View** (Evangelism Today, 90p).

Which brings us on to books on evangelism in church life. **Evangelism—Now and Then** by Michael Green (IVP £1.25) and **Share Your Faith** by Leith Samuel (Pickering and Inglis £1.25) are both from practical masters of their subject. **Going Places** by Elizabeth Goldsmith of All Nations Christian College (IVP 60p) helps with preparation for Christian service.

But, of course, there is much much more to church life, and a great deal that needs to be rectified if evangelism is to be effective. Some books dealing with varying aspects of the life of the churches are **We Belong Together** by Bruce Milne (IVP, 95p) on getting along together, **Hush Hush—it's time to pray, but how?** by Jill Briscoe (Pickering and Inglis, £1.40) on prayer—the result of a solid and shared learning experience despite its unfortunate title, and an excellent primer on prayer and prayer meetings—and **Moses and the Venture of Faith** by Michael Baughen, which deals unexpectedly with financial matters in church life (Mowbrays £1.25).

Finally, under this heading, no church or Christian who has to deal with neighbours of other faiths can afford to miss **Jesus Christ the Only Way** on Christian responsibility in a multi-cultural society, containing a wide range of lectures from men and women with direct practical experience of their subjects, and under the general editorship of Patrick Sookhdeo (Paternoster Press £2.40).

## DEVOTIONAL

Among the devotional books received appear many favourite authors' names, and readers will take their own choice among them. Michael Harper's **You Are My Sons** (Hodder £1.00) sets out to answer the question 'What does it really mean to be a child



of God? Veteran missionary Charles Marsh writes in **Into Action** (Send the Light £1.25) on the life of commitment to Christ, and Francis Schaeffer lets us into his own spiritual struggles in **True Spirituality** (STL £1.25). Many readers will enjoy Phillip Keller's **A Shepherd Looks at the Good Shepherd and His Sheep** (Pickering and Inglis unpriced), while others will appreciate the little paperback of meditations by Jean Coggan **Through the Day with Jesus** (Mowbray £1.25).

Collections include Herbert Stevenson's **Light Upon the Word** (Mowbrays £4.75—hardback £6.75), an anthology of evangelical spiritual writing ranging from Wesley to John Stott, and an excellent bedside companion; A. Skevington Wood's **For All Seasons, sermons for the Christian Year** (Hodder £3.50)—with a biographical sketch of the author by Dr. F. A. Tatford; and a collection of Colin Morris's radio scripts **Get Through Till Nightfall** (Collins, Fount Paperbacks, 95p).

## PERSONAL PROBLEMS

Some helpful books on personal problems are also included among the 1979 vintage. Three stand out—**Where is God When it Hurts?** by Philip Yancey (Pickering and Inglis £1.50), with a commendation from Joni Eareckson, Miss Eareckson's own book (in collaboration with Steve Estes) **A Step Further**—a sequel to *Joni* (Pickering and Inglis £1.50), and Edith Schaeffer's **Affliction** (Hodder and Stoughton £3.25).

On more specific problems there are **Creative Loneliness**, on the positive use of loneliness, by William E. Hulme (Lakeland 95p), **Cannabis: Is Hash Safe**, an invaluable little booklet from Pater-noster (90p), and a beautifully produced hardback dealing with youthful entanglements in love, sex and abortion through the sensitive medium of an exchange of love letters between two young people—**Love Letters** by Ann Warren (Scripture Union £3.95—and I hope that a cheaper paperback edition will not be long delayed).

Finally, Lion produce the first two of a projected series of excellent little handbooks, practical and sympathetic, on what to do in some of life's acuter moments. **Getting Married in Church** by Mary Batchelor and **A Death in the Family** by Jean Richardson cost 75p each.

## BIOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

Then there is the usual crop of biographical and historical paperbacks. **Bibles Across the World** by Neville Cryer is the story of the British and Foreign Bible Society (Mowbrays £1.25). On China comes Leslie Lyall's **New Spring in China** (Hodder £1.40) a report of a recent visit to Red China by a veteran expert on that country, and (a little more highly coloured) Pai Ye Loh (a pseudonym) **The Chinese Connection on Bible smuggling**, with a foreword by Brother Andrew (Kingsway 95p). The story of the

recent Elim martyrs in Zimbabwe Rhodesia, Phyllis Thompson's **The Rainbow or the Thunder** (Hodder 95p) is a highly topical account of that tragedy, and equally topical is Georgi Vins's moving autobiography **Three Generations of Suffering** (Hodder £1.25). **Walk Through Flame** by Alice Panaiodor (Pickering and Inglis £1.50) is the story of a fellow prisoner of Richard Wurmbrand in Romania. Going back to the Second World War, we have Corrie ten Boom's story of her father **Father ten Boom, God's Man** (Kingsway 95p), and Myrna Grant's **The Journey** (Hodder £1.10), the story of a Hungarian Christian Jewess in the concentration camps of Nazi Germany.

A more normal missionary story is **One Vision Only**, the life of Isobel Kuhn, by Carolyn Canfield (Hodder £1.25), and Phyllis Thompson's **Within a Yard of Hell** (Mowbray £1.25), the story of Doreen Gemmel, Church Army worker in the seamier strata of London's life. Fred Lemon in **Going Straight** (Lakeland £1.25) tells the story of the life of a former convict after his conversion. **I Dared to Call Him Father** by Bilquis Sheikh is the story of the conversion of a high-ranking Pakistani Muslim woman (Kingsway £1.00). **The Story of Anton Schulte** of a German evangelist, by Bill Spencer (Evangelism Today, unpriced). Then, good old Billy Bray at last appears in **The Glory Man**, by Cyril Davey (Hodder £1.00). Finally—the only hardback in the list—those who have been interested by the intense publicity surrounding the recent journeys of the Pope might be interested in the recent biography from his personal friend M. Malinski **Pope John Paul II—the life of my friend Karol Wojtyla** (Burns and Oates £6.95) (a devotional paperback by the same author appears at the same time from the same publishers **Our Daily Bread** £2.95).

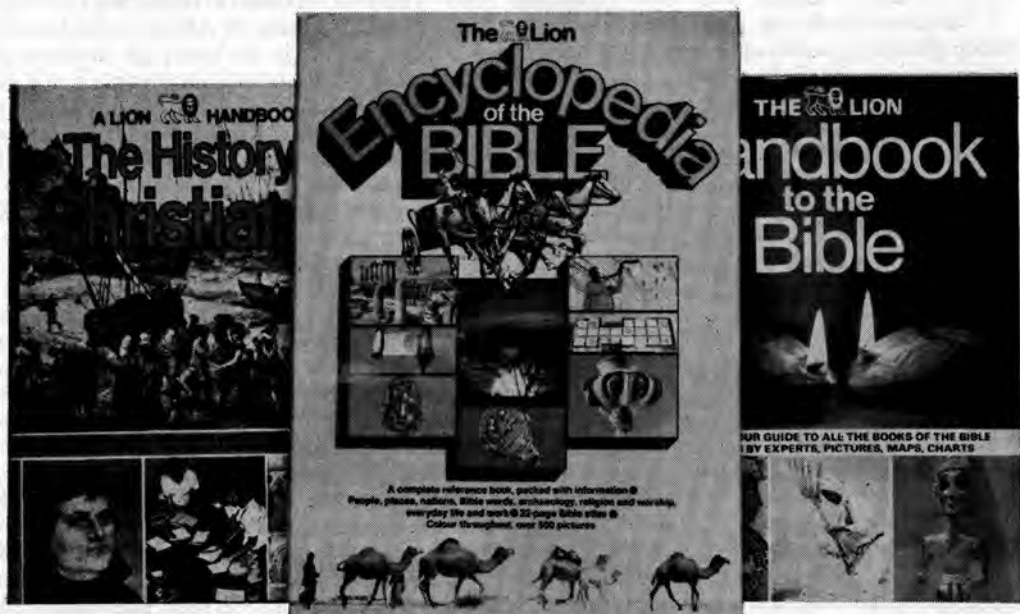
## ... AND FINALLY

And a few miscellaneous books. Malcolm Muggeridge always produces a stimulating read. His **Christ and the Media** (Hodder 90p) is no exception, containing a revision of his 1976 London Lectures in Contemporary Christianity. Malcolm Doney has given an excellent account of the Rock Music movement from a Christian viewpoint in **Summer in the City** (Lion £1.25). Stuart Jackman has added a sequel to his updating of the story of the New Testament as a modern media event in **The Burning Men** (Lion £1.50)—this time on Pentecost to the death of Stephen. Finally, the health-food buff (and any who like a tasty natural recipe) will go for Anne Arnott's book on health foods **Fruits of the Earth** (Mowbray £4.95).

Not in fact *absolutely* finally, for we have omitted to mention a handsome book of the coffee-table variety: SPCK's **The Land of Christmas** (text by Mary Phraner Warren) £7.50, containing also some superb reproductions of nineteenth century engravings and drawings of the Holy Land. □



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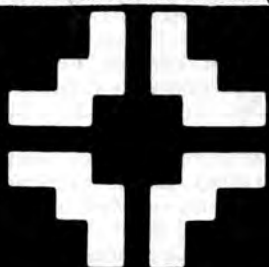
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# WALTER



# Of Prophets and the Past

More Books on the Old Testament

**The Theme of the Pentateuch** D. J. A. Clines. JSOT, Department of Biblical Studies, The University of Sheffield, Sheffield S10 2TN. 152pp. £5.95 (paperback).

David Clines here speaks to the very heart of a major problem currently confronting the world of Old Testament scholarship, but with results that lay preachers would do well to ponder. For over a century the primary concern of academic study of the Pentateuch in particular has been with origins, breaking the text up into its constituent (hypothetical) sources and smaller units in order to see how the present complex came into being. The result has been a library of commentaries which are often frustrating to the Bible student because they rarely answer the type of question he is asking.

Recent work, however, has begun to question whether this is the only legitimate approach, so that talk of 'the final form of the text' is becoming fashionable. Here, however, with breathtaking boldness, Clines sets out to explore the theme, not just of a section, nor even of a book, but of the Pentateuch as a whole. He himself summarizes it as 'the partial fulfilment—which implies also the partial non-fulfilment—of the promise to or blessing of the patriarchs. . . The promise has three elements: posterity, divine-human relationship, and land. The posterity-element of the promise is dominant in *Genesis 12-50*, the relationship-element in *Exodus* and *Leviticus*, and the land-element in *Numbers* and *Deuteronomy*'. The most valuable part of the book consists of the exposition of this statement from the texts themselves.

Clines's primary aim is to address his fellow academics. He is neither uncritical nor anti-critical; indeed he is content to attempt to relate his conclusions to those of the dominant critical theory of Pentateuchal origins. But this should not be allowed to deter readers of *The Harvester* from tackling at least the central chapters of this book. For one thing, Clines writes with an enviable clarity of style. More importantly, evangelical Christians have too often been accused (with justification) of not reading the Biblical literature 'as a whole', but only selected texts. For reasons quite other than those of Biblical scholars, we too may need to re-learn how to approach the Bible from the kind of angle here advocated by Clines.

Review by Dr. H. G. M. Williamson, Cambridge University.

**Promise and Deliverance (Vol. I From Creation to the Conquest of Canaan)** S. G. de Graaf, translated from the Dutch by H. E. and E. W. Runner. Norfolk Press. 473 pp. £6.95.

The late S. G. de Graaf was a minister in the Reformed Church of Holland, who became known especially by the stress he laid on the teaching of the Bible to the young. He was faced with the problem that even when they had learnt its main stories, they seldom made a coherent unity. This three-volume work is his offer of an answer to the problem.

He was concerned with the fact that the choice of stories offered in Sunday Schools, and for that matter in Christian day schools, seemed arbitrary, often being motivated by what was thought to be of interest, or for the sake of the moral that could be drawn from them. So he set out to link them to one dominating theme that

should bind them together. This he found in God's eternal purpose in His dealings with men, which, being a strong Calvinist, he expressed in the covenant which he found running from Eden to Christ.

We need not accept Covenant Theology to profit from the book, or to accept that all our understanding of Scripture must be focused on one theme. Scripture is always wider than the strait-jackets we like to place it in. His main concern is indubitably correct and applies not merely to our teaching of children but also to the adult unbeliever.

Prefaced to each main story there is a more technical discussion of what is involved in it and then a retelling of it in simpler language, which, however, is meant to be assimilated by the teacher, not read by him to the children. If any such temptation existed, it would be nipped in the bud by the style, for a peculiarity of Dutch seems to be that it is almost impossible to translate it into easyflowing English.

In spite of its price this is a work to be recommended to all concerned with the teaching of the Bible, especially to the young.

Review by H. L. Ellison

**Samson: a Secret Betrayed, a Vow Ignored** James L. Crenshaw. SPCK. 173 pp. £6.95.

James Crenshaw, Professor of Old Testament at Vanderbilt University in the USA, in this book turns his hand from the study of wisdom literature, for which he is well known, to the story of Samson, which itself contains some wisdom motifs and forms. This study involves what he terms 'aesthetic criticism' which entails a 'sensitivity to the beauty and art of a literary piece'.

After an introduction in which he presents several earlier interpretations of the Samson narrative as myth or saga of one type or another, Crenshaw analyses the literary and stylistic forms of the story in Chapter 1. He uses the increasingly popular approach of comparing biblical accounts with folk-lore motifs (such as the barren wife or the quest for a deity's name). This reviewer is still not convinced of the usefulness of this pursuit, which only appears to be a matter of categorisation rather than an interaction with the purpose or meaning of the text. The style is also analysed not only as regards the customary language and grammar aspects but also as to the use of various rhetorical devices such as repetition and contrast. In the conclusion of this chapter Crenshaw states that 'the story entertains and teaches. Where it contains history, that element is incidental to the story's purpose'. While the story can indeed be analysed and appreciated on the literary level, a cavalier approach to the essential historicity of the events recorded will leave some uneasy.

After demonstrating the unity of the story by the motif of the woman in Samson's life (Chapter 2), Crenshaw studies the riddles in the account (Chapter 3). This area of inter-disciplinary study has only been inadequately explored, so many of the author's observations are illuminating. One does wonder, however, if his sexual interpretation of so many of the riddles, not only here but elsewhere in near eastern literature, is justified.

In the final chapter, the tragic dimension of Samson is explored. The theology of the piece is also touched upon.

In this chapter, the story of Samson is traced into later literature, especially Milton's *Samson Agonistes*.

All of Crenshaw's analysis provides interesting insights into the story of an enigmatic Old Testament figure, although it is not clear how Crenshaw would make the story relevant to the church today. If nothing else, this book will cause us to read the familiar stories with new eyes and new questions in order to find this relevance for ourselves.

Review by David W. Baker, formerly of Tyndale House, Cambridge.

**A Guide to Isaiah 40-66** E. John Hamlin. SPCK, 230 pp. £4.50 (limp).

*Isaiah 40-66* contains some of the best-known and much loved passages in the Old Testament; but that does not mean that Christians know or understand this section as a whole. It is important not only because it is an essential background for understanding the New Testament, but because it relates to a time of crisis in the history of God's people very similar to that which faces Christians today. Like the Jewish exiles in Babylon and like those who returned to Jerusalem after the exile, Christians today need to think out afresh for themselves who they are, who God is, and how they should serve him. A study of *Isaiah 40-66* will help us to do just that.

John Hamlin, until recently President of the Thailand Theological Seminary, and now teaching at Trinity Theological College, Singapore, provides us with a study guide which will enable us to get to the heart of the prophet's message and to see its relevance to our situation today. As with others in this series (Theological Education Fund Study Guides), we are given not so much a commentary as a do-it-yourself Bible study course, intended in the first instance for those overseas preparing for the ministry but eminently suitable for any individual Christian or group of Christians wishing to come to grips with this part of God's Word. In addition to the suggestions for studying the meaning and discussing the application of the text, there are helpful notes on historical background and authorship, and studies on major themes and ideas. The author presents his views with commendable reserve and humility and no one who differs from him need feel threatened. The practical nature of the exposition is underlined by the topical photographs which are interspersed throughout the book. Review by John W. Baigent, West London Institute of Higher Education.

**Daniel: An Introduction and Commentary** Joyce G. Baldwin. IVP. 210 pp. £2.65 (paperback).

**The Lord is King: The message of Daniel** Ronald S. Wallace. IVP. 200 pp. £2.65 (paperback).

**Dreams and Dictators: On the Book of Daniel** Herman Veldkamp. Norfolk Press. 251 pp. £3.50 (paperback).

Here indeed is a feast, better by far than Belshazzar's! The book of *Daniel* served up in three different ways, each interpretation good according to its own recipe. It is with some reluctance that I review the first, having already been a little involved with it, as the preface kindly acknowledges. There too the author admits that the study of *Daniel* is particularly fertile and vibrant at the present time and that this book is an interim one, 'going out before it is ready'. Indeed one does wonder occasionally whether she has entered into genuine mental dialogue with opposing viewpoints, and it is to be hoped

that eventually a revised edition may appear, reflecting others' and her own subsequent insights. But it is not intended to underestimate Miss Baldwin's achievement, especially in marshalling academic arguments in support of the traditional position in the long Introduction that necessarily takes up well nigh a third of the book. This *Tyndale Commentary* ably maintains the standards set by its predecessors. The commentary itself is marked throughout by care and by consideration of contrary views. The fourth kingdom is explained as Rome, and a Messianic interpretation of 9: 25, 26 is adopted. The time indications of 7: 25; 9: 27b and 12: 7 are differentiated from that of 8: 14.

Our second volume is a worthy addition to the useful expository series *The Bible Speaks Today*. Its author writes from an experienced background as a pastor and lecturer in theology, and it is for its pastoral and theological insights that his work will be valued. It is stimulating to see how he wrestles with the text in a thorough, disciplined manner and relates it to the New Testament and to contemporary life. A recurring theme is obviously the relation of the believer to society. For example, he is called 'to cooperate but without compromise', p. 39 on chapter 1; 'If Disraeli was an Englishman and Kissinger an American, Daniel was a Babylonian', p. 104 on 6: 3. I liked his quotation about angels: we have to be 'on our guard against two extremes—that of a "vulgar incredulity" and that of a "presumptuous incredulity"', p. 160. Generally his conclusions are predictable as representative of majority evangelical thinking, such as his detached view of the four kingdoms of chapter 7 ('Daniel in this vision saw these beasts and horns not simply as each having its own historical identity but also as each being a typical example of the kind of empire . . . that can and will arise . . . as time moves on to the fulfilment of God's purposes with mankind', p. 131), his sitting lightly to the eschatological chronology of the book, and his interpretation of the figure of chapter 10 in terms of a pre-incarnate revelation of Christ. A reviewer (himself an academic) of a previous contribution to this series wondered whether it was not too intellectual. The book does not bear the IVP imprint for nothing: it is aimed at an evangelical constituency whose minds have been trained to think. For all such this book will be thought-provoking and rewarding.

I came to the third book ready to find it a shabby relation of the other two. It would be a tedious manual of Reformed theology in thin disguise. It proved to be nothing of the sort. It consists of thirty-five written sermons. Various modern versions are used. It is addressed, one might say, to a lower middle class audience of evangelical Christians. The author, now deceased, did his exegetical homework well before mounting his pulpit and succeeds, I think, in translating the intention of the book of *Daniel* into a preached form. I was sorry not to see a message on the poignant 'But if not' (3: 18) but its gist is included elsewhere. It is all very readable, though translated from the Dutch, and speaks to our own situation as easily as to its own religious setting: 'We may inflate ourselves so much with our knowledge of the "Reformed truths" that we forget about doing with that revelation what God intended us to do', p. 43. He refuses to get bogged down in 'prophetic' interpretation of times and seasons but stresses the contemporary value. 'You may be inclined to ask whether Daniel had one of the leaders of our time in mind. To this I can only answer by

saying that Daniel has the tyrant Antiochus in mind. Anyone who claims to spot this or that person of our time in this chapter is embarking on a perilous journey, for he is separating the application of the Scriptures from their historical background. . . The person sketched in Daniel II is doubtless only a prefiguration and forerunner of the Antichrist. This means that the Antichrist will not be like him in every last respect', pp. 226-227. I liked his contrast of Nebuchadnezzar's dream of world empires in terms of 'culture and beauty and power', 'gold and silver, copper and iron, steel and concrete' with Daniel's vision of them as 'beasts of prey possessed by the love of power and destruction', pp. 146-147.

Review by Dr. Leslie C. Allen, London Bible College

**The Farmer from Tekoa: on the Book of Amos** Herman Veldkamp. Norfolk Press. 236 pp. £5.95.

The late Herman Veldkamp served as a minister with the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands and, to judge from this the first of his works to appear in English, was a right zesty interpreter of the Old Testament prophets. In thirty-three short chapters, furnished with such catchy titles as 'Sodom's Poison', 'Of Cows and Fish' and 'The Great "Because"', Veldkamp imaginatively reconstructs the background to the various oracles always as the prelude to some contemporizing blasts against the compromised attitudes and frequent double-think—'seasonal righteousness and occasional Christianity' as he puts it in one place—of our own day. This is occasionally done with the aid of the Heidelberg Catechism, which for some of the readers of the Dutch original must sound like the invocation of the Sinaitic covenant. Theodore Plantinga's translation, it should be said, has the great merit of not reading like a translation.

Amos may not have been a habitué of the drawing-rooms of Samaria, but he was neither impoverished nor boorish in the way he is sometimes depicted. Noting that the description used in *ch. 1: 1* is the same as that translated 'sheep-breeder' in *2 Kgs. 3: 4*, in reference to the king of Moab, Veldkamp characterizes Amos as 'a well-to-do farmer'—a farmer who knew 'the culture of the Spirit': 'Thus the words of the book of Amos are the words and vision of the prophet and poet and artist and sheep breeder and sycamore planter whom we call Amos.'

Review by Dr. Robert P. Gordon, Cambridge University.

**The 'I' of the Storm** Ian Barclay. Walter. 63 pp. Price unstated (paperback).

It would be an advantage if, from the title of a book, one could deduce that book's theme. With the book under review this cannot be done. Nor is there a subtitle to unlock the secret. This is, in fact, a brief exposition of the book of the prophet Jonah. One presumes that we have here the substance of seven addresses delivered by the author on this Biblical book; for the treatment is given in a racy, homiletic style, with plenty of apt illustrations. We are told on page 16 that 'a programme for a performance of Handel's *Messiah* was once misprinted. The anthem called "The Lord God Omnipotent Reigneth" was declared to be "The Lord God Omnipotent Resign-eth"'. We take the point; but we doubt the truth of the story since the words in question are not a separate anthem, but come in the middle of the 'Hallelujah Chorus'.

The historicity of the story of Jonah is wholeheartedly accepted; and the possibility of a man being swallowed

by a whale and later ejected alive is established from three instances during the last century when this actually happened. The writer considers that the fish in question was a cachelot, or sperm whale; and he quotes a Northumbrian preacher of Victorian times, Peter Mackenzie who, in his lecture 'Jonah the Runaway Prophet', said with regard to such a creature's throat: 'There was room enough for Jonah; even if he had been married, there would have been room enough for himself and his wife and the wife's sewing machine.'

It would seem that the book bears the title that it does because Jonah is shown to be rather self-centred; and attention is drawn to the fivefold occurrence of the word 'I' in his brief prayer of *ch. 4: 2-3*.

Review by Dr. Stephen S. Short.

**When Prophecy Failed** Robert P. Carroll. SCM. 250 pp. £7.50.

When the Old Testament prophets predicted judgment it usually came sooner or later, in one way or another—unless the people responded with repentance (cf. *Jonah 3: 10*). But when they predicted salvation it rarely came in the way in which they described it (e.g. with the restoration of the Davidic monarchy; with Israel's supremacy in the world). Dr. Carroll, a lecturer in Old Testament in the University of Glasgow, has set himself the task of exploring the nature of the predictive elements in Old Testament prophecy and studying the reactions and responses of later generations when these predictions failed to materialise. Apart from a very careful analysis of the prophetic traditions, the main contribution of this book is the use made of the findings of social psychology in relation to change in attitude and expectation. Dr. Carroll takes the theory of 'cognitive dissonance', propounded by Professor Leon Festinger in a classic study of a modern group which predicted the destruction of the world and lived to see the failure of that prediction, and uses it as a tool for uncovering the ways in which post-exilic Judaism coped with the apparent non-fulfilment of the glorious predictions of the pre-exilic and exilic prophets. Not everyone will be happy with the author's assumptions about the growth of the prophetic traditions, or convinced that the problem of non-fulfilment was as serious as he maintains. Above all, his treatment of Old Testament prophecy as a totally human phenomenon, leaving no room for divine involvement, will hardly commend itself to readers of this magazine. Nevertheless, it is good for us to be forced to think about the nature of Old Testament prophecy. There are, moreover, aspects of the problem which also relate to New Testament eschatology. It is not an easy book to read but well worth the effort for the serious student of the Old Testament.

Review by John W. Baigent, West London Institute of Higher Education.

## FUTURE BOOK FEATURES

A considerable number of more important books received recently will be receiving extended reviews in our columns during coming months. We hope to carry the New Testament opposite number to this month's feature in a near issue.

December will see a note on recent children's books and a list of recent reprints.



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## Kathleen White's Column

### The Songs of Zion

'The good Lord must get very depressed on a Sunday with some of the hymns that are addressed to Him throughout the day'—quote by Gerald Priestland, BBC Religious Affairs Correspondent on the *Sunday* programme a few weeks ago.

This commonsense statement must have met with an instant response from many people, including myself. For some time I have been concerned about a number of hymns sung fairly frequently which are either sentimental, couched in archaic terms, incomprehensible, or put forward ideas which are not to be found in Scripture.

It is bewildering that, although in the main most modern versions or even paraphrases of the Bible are accepted for reading and study amongst Christians, when we address Divine Persons in song, we so often express ourselves in words of mid-Victorian cloying sentimentality.

That is not to say we should do away with all but 20th Century hymns. On the contrary, some of the old classics will continue to stand the test of time for generations to come. Both the Wesleys and Isaac Watts, to quote but three, were undoubtedly inspired poets. Going back even further, Bernard of Clairvaux, a monk from medieval times, has written religious verse in the purest, simplest terms which are still moving and evocative of true worship today. Every age must produce its own hymn writers and, although we may deplore some that we still use as not being couched in the modern idiom, we can acknowledge their effectiveness in the past. Many of the 1200 items in the Moody and Sankey collection, admittedly used for blessing in the great crusades that these two outstanding evangelists organised, have served their purpose but are no longer useful for communal worship today.

What we sing can only be meaningful if we understand the words and share the sentiments contained therein. Literacy is an increasing problem in this country, so clarity and directness of language are of primary importance. Of course, we must remember that the approach of the poet to a subject may be different from that of the prose-writer. Licence must be allowed to him so that he does not feel fettered and constrained in giving expression to his thoughts. But the fact remains that he should be the voice of his contemporaries, his imagery must be familiar to the society of his day.

And that is not true of much of our past poetic imagery. I often wonder what is the reaction of many of our young converts from non-Christian backgrounds when they are confronted with such phrases as 'The Father's bosom' and 'There is a fountain

filled with blood, drawn from Immanuel's veins.'

I must confess I have no idea of the meaning of the following lines when I sing them—

Then we shall be where we would be  
Then we shall be what we should be,  
Things which are not now, nor could be,  
Then shall be our own.

Leafing through *Hymns of Light and Love*, one is confronted by so many hymns of a truly lugubrious philosophy of life: 303 'Amidst the gloom of night'; 370 'Where in this waste unlovely world, The dreary desert stood'; 412 'Created things once pleasant, Are bearing death's sad stamp', that it is hard to associate them with praise and worship.

Now, nearly everyone is subject to moods of despondency and frustration from time to time, but never could I describe any one single day as a journey trod through a waste, unlovely world, like a dreary desert. There's usually some compensatory circumstance like a gorgeous sunset, a warm loving relationship or merely some small creature comfort that takes the edge off the bitterest day. For me there's always the 'clear shining after rain' or 'the joy that cometh in the morning.'

God has given us all things 'richly to enjoy' and although He may be refining us and chastening us as sons and daughters, the outlook should never be completely black. How can we expect people to want to become Christians if we in our worship service describe life in such terms?

Why need we employ song for worship? Wouldn't verbal participation be sufficient? Quite clearly, song is scriptural because of the evidence of David and later of Christ Himself. It stimulates our thoughts and emotions and enables everyone to take part in the service. Beautiful voices and skill in playing instruments are God-given gifts.

What thoughts do we wish to express in song to the Lord? No doubt to praise and thank Him. Some hymns may be songs of testimony to others about the greatness and compassion of the Lord, while others may contain a simple prayer for guidance, help and protection.

It would be humanly impossible to achieve an ideal hymnbook. Human nature is so diverse and reactions to life so different that no final agreement could be reached in the selection to be included. Progress has been made during the last decade with the publication of *Youth Praise* and their songs of social concern; again more recently, the collections of Scripture choruses have heightened our worship even if some have been repeated in excess.

S.U. have done much to remedy this situation with their choruses and later *Sing to God* and other child-orientated collections. I sincerely hope we shall never be tempted to use, for instance, those like 879 in *Hymns of Light and Love*—

In heathen lands they bow  
To blocks of wood and stone. . .  
There Jesus' precious name

Is never lisped in prayer,  
Darkness and cruelty abound  
And sin and suffering there.  
Here we are taught to read  
The blessed word of God.

There is still a dearth of meaningful hymns for many important occasions, particularly those suitable for the marriage service.

Both in *Ephesians 5: 19* and *Colossians 3: 16*, Paul mentions psalms and hymns and spiritual songs: in the first instant they are to be used for 'singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord', in the second for 'teaching and admonishing one another, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.'

I am certain that several hymns which are contained in current collections would not pass Paul's requirements. Until other hymns are composed to fill the gaps in our range of worship, let us hope that anyone choosing a hymn for a communal service will be sufficiently sensitive to select one that is meaningful, scripturally based in content and comprehensible to the congregation as a whole. □

## Report of a Meeting

On Thursday 6th September World Vision of Europe jointly with Life of Faith, arranged a seminar at All Souls, Langham Place, under the chairmanship of Nick Page.

Dr. Carl F. H. Henry, the distinguished American theologian, based his address on the theme The Message is Messiah. He was followed by Mr. Robert McLeish from the B.B.C.

For myself, it was not the proliferation of spoken words that brought home to me the true purpose of the conference. During the interval we were able to examine an exhibition of very moving poems by Steve Turner and compelling photographs which were the work of Sylvester Jacobs, both on the subject of Refugees.

Then came a preview of the BBC *Everyman* film *Desperate Voyage* which was later screened nationally on Sunday September 16th. This described a mercy trip by the World Vision's ship *Seasweep* to rescue a boatload of refugees drifting perilously on the open sea. Many of the sequences were very disturbing, showing the plight of people insufferably crowded together in thoroughly inhuman conditions. It was a pity insufficient time was given by the director in describing the constitution of World Vision itself, its motives and future programme.

However, if the delegates came away with an increased awareness of the urgency of the problem confronting the world at this time, the conference must have justified all the work which must have gone into its organisation. □

Kathleen White

# Replies to Professor Bruce

## The September Question

In my younger days as a preacher, I preached very frequently on our Lord's parables. It occurs to me that during the past twenty years or so I have preached on them very little. This is probably due in large measure to a feeling that by preaching on a parable I might obscure the point which it was intended to make. Perhaps the simple re-telling of a parable, suitably translated into contemporary terms, could be as directly effective today as the original telling was to its first hearers. What do readers think? I should be particularly interested to have the opinion of those who have had experience of preaching on the parables.

### Mr. Arthur Henderson replies:-

A parable is a neat way of making a philosophical point to those who are unaccustomed to thinking at that level (the common people) or to those who resist it as too revolutionary (the religious leaders). It catches the attention of the listener through the familiarity of its setting and can be recalled if he does not hear immediately at the philosophical level.

A first-century Eastern setting gets the attention of the twentieth-century Western mind if there is already some insight or a will to hear, so the presentation of bible parables with careful explanations is acceptable to a bible-reading or church-going audience. But to get the attention of our contemporaries to a spiritual message, we do well to follow the Lord's method of using settings which are familiar to them.

On Sunday afternoons in-patients at our local hospital are invited to the out-patients' lounge for a half-hour service, informally conducted, when one of our team has the opportunity for five minutes of presenting them with some aspect of the Christian faith. Many are or have been church attenders, but many are not. Their attention and interest is usually sought through a modern 'parable'—news item, a personal experience on an anniversary, or an everyday event—before the introduction of a scripture—a phrase, a passage, or sometimes a parable; occasionally a brief reference to scripture precedes the illustration, just as the lesson of a parable sometimes preceded and sometimes followed it.

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**A parable is a neat way of making a point . . . it catches attention by familiarity of setting**

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As an example I recall that, when my wife attended as a patient during her last illness, she remarked on the impact of the story of the missing wedding garment when it was read after references to uniforms in hospital, the patients' own dress, an embarrassing mistake in the hospital corridor that afternoon, and observations of dress at some Western weddings from the stylish to the off-beat.

One advantage of following the Master's parabolic teaching methods is that significant truths can be presented in a quarter of the time of a traditional gospel address. There remains the risk, explicitly accepted by the Saviour, that hearers may receive the illustration without hearing the truth. A more serious danger for the speaker is to enthuse over the illustration and blunt its point; entertainment must not usurp his primary objective of presenting gospel truth.

### Mr. H. L. Ellison replies:-

I should not venture to suggest why Prof. Bruce has to some extent modified his use of the parables in his preaching. I suppose that any preacher who keeps a record of his sermons will be able to discover a tendency to change over the years. But it is possible to suggest some reasons why the parables may seem to be more appropriate as sermon material at one time than at another.

As presented by Matthew the nature parables have an inward unity, which can be brought out only if the possibility of consecutive preaching exists. In addition they will tend to have less attraction for those that live in our large conurbations—Paul's parables show clearly that he wrote his letters to people living in large towns. If we have to explain too many points as we go along, the grip of the story tends to get lost.

To some extent the same is true of the other parables. Their background often demands explanation, and, at least in the 'Gospel' address, a suitable modern story, which is known to be true, is likely to grip and carry conviction more readily. Among believers, however, where the parable is already known the explanation of obscure points may very often increase the interest of the hearers.

It was interesting to discover on a recent visit that the assemblies in Rumania seemed to be particularly interested in the parables, not that I was led to speak on them, for on a short visit other topics seemed more appropriate.

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**Every time that Jesus told stories, He was talking to adults . . . today we have stories only at family services or as children's talks**

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### Mr. Archie Baker replies:-

In my capacity of producing material for teaching to young people in churches, I frequently come across the problem described.

I am convinced of the value of the method of teaching by parables—indeed Jesus himself at one stage 'did not speak to them without a parable, but privately to his own disciples he explained everything' (Mark 4: 34). A fellow Scripture Union staff member remarked recently that every time that Jesus told stories he was talking to adults (children, of course, were presumably around as well sometimes). Yet today, too often, we are content to have stories only at family services or as children's talks. In fact it is often the adults who gain most from the stories told. Weeks later it is usually the story that is remembered, not the sermon!

Interpreting parables into contemporary terms has considerable value. One danger, however, must be avoided, that of the interpretation gaining too much authority, with possible alterations of emphasis or even distortion of the intended truths. The modernisation must serve to make the original more clear, not to replace it.

Explanation of a parable is not to be denigrated. A 'story with a message' should provoke a reaction from 'those who have ears to hear'—'What does it mean? Tell us more!' Jesus did not hesitate to explain everything to his disciples when they asked. He was no doubt delighted by their desire to learn.

May Christians continue to use stories and particularly the inspired parables of the Lord Jesus Christ to captivate interest and awaken hunger in hearers to want to know more.



## **FREE! The National Institute for Healing of Addictions**

(Director: George N. Patterson)

is recruiting Volunteers with Vision and  
Compassion for a National

## **BEFRIENDERS ADDICTION COUNSELLING SERVICE**

The pioneering medical/spiritual venture, Pharmakon Clinics, for the treatment of chemical and behavioural addictions, in addition to its detoxification and therapeutic rehabilitation programme, will require a parallel national supportive and educational organisation to help with patients and to co-operate with the patients' families, doctors, nurses, employers and pastors in the re-structuring of their lives. A massive programme of instruction in the causes, problems, consequences and care of chemical and behavioural addictions is required on a national scale to fill the present gap in knowledge and treatment. Governments have no money, doctors have no time, psychiatrists have no answers, hospitals have no room, and an uncaring society apparently has no interest and no ideas.

Addiction to drugs and alcohol has been declared by a U.N. body to be the world's 'greatest social problem', and it is our intention to, certainly ameliorate, and if possible, conquer this problem.

If you are interested in becoming a partner in this venture, write (enclosing a stamped, addressed envelope) for further information to:

**George N. Patterson,  
The Director,**

**FREE! The National Institute for Healing  
of Addictions,**

**Broadhurst Manor,  
Horsted Keynes,  
SUSSEX RH17 7BG**

## **Readers' Forum**

*Readers' Forum* is open to contributions from readers. Please send suggestions from practical experience, related to church activities or Christian living; doctrinal or expository questions; useful experiences; what-you-will; to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX. Questions, to which other readers will be invited to submit replies, will also be published from time to time as they are received. It is hoped that readers will take full advantage of this feature.

This month's contribution is from a reader who asks to appear anonymously. He has given us his name and address.

Thank you for your editorial comment (August 1979) on the use of archaic language in Brethren services. It raises a matter which demands serious consideration.

Many years ago, I compiled a long list of old-fashioned phrases used not only in prayers and preaching but also in the giving out of hymns (e.g. 'Let us rise up and rejoice before the Lord in the language of hymn number one') and in making announcements (e.g. 'We covet the prayers of the saints for those of our number who are laid aside on beds of sickness').

I have stopped collecting but continue to be concerned because archaic language adversely affects the quality of our worship and the effectiveness of our preaching.

Such language is not a suitable vehicle for the expression of spontaneous worship or original thought. It limits the Holy Spirit in His work of guiding our spirits in giving praise and thanks and is thereby dishonouring to God. A stringing together of a random selection of well-worn clichés with a snatch of Scripture and the odd line of a hymn is a refuge for the brother who is not bubbling over with gratitude.

In our intercession, old-fashioned phrases distance us from the subjects of our prayers, mask a lack of genuine concern and waste valuable time.

Church members who have not been brought up in this tradition, aware of their lack of expertise with the in-language, are hindered and sometimes prevented from taking part.

In preaching, either 'the ministry of the word' or 'the proclamation of the gospel', archaic language often obscures the meaning of things that should be clearly stated and dulls the edge of what should be a cutting remark; e.g. 'a lost eternity' which seems nowadays to be an acceptable euphemism for 'hell'.

How many young persons have stifled a desire to invite a friend to a meeting through being ashamed not of the gospel but of our presentation of it?

Inevitably, but sadly, we have exported this curious mode of speech. An Indian brother wrote, 'Let me exhort you to let your light shine in your corner of the vineyard'.

In preaching and in prayer, archaic language has a soporific effect, soothing the accustomed sometimes into slumber, but mystifying children making them restless and mischievous. Am I alone in deprecating the practice of bringing an armful of crayoning books and bags of sweets to occupy and pacify the twos to tens during services?

I believe the root causes for the phenomenon of Brethrenese are a lack of original thought which would have to go into ordinary language; a lack of consideration for the uninitiated which shows a certain arrogance; and a misguided sense of reverence which forgets that God demands sincerity and truth.

There is, of course, a danger of swinging to the other extreme—local or imported slang; e.g. 'Gee, it's real good to be fellowshipping in this place, Lord.' □

## Correspondence

Letters should be sent to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX. Publication of letters does not imply that views expressed are endorsed by the Editor or the Trustees.

### The late Wilfred Durham

From Mrs. J. Puckey

Dear Sir,

I am collecting as much information as I can on the life and work of the late Wilfred Durham who served the Lord in India from 1933 to 1951. My aim is ultimately to write his biography.

Wilf left Gloucester in 1933 and first went to serve the Lord in Bangalore. About two years later he moved North to Bombay. Here he established the Gospel Literature Service and, during the war years, he commenced the Gospel Team movement that took the Gospel to servicemen stationed all over India. I should be very glad if people who knew Wilf Durham would write to me with their memories of him. Any photographs or papers they might send I would, of course, gladly return.

20 Avebury Close  
Tuffley  
Gloucester

Yours sincerely  
Jane Puckey

### A matter of feeling

From Mr. Jack Heap

Dear Mr. Coad,

In his letter headed 'The London Convention' in the September issue, Mr. Fred Fairclough ends with 'Events like Swanwick prove that the Coming of the Lord surely draweth nigh.'

May I kindly ask our brother, through your columns, to say: (a) What he means by this statement, supported by clear Scriptural authority; (b) Why he saw fit to add it at the end of his appreciation of another Christian conference; and (c) How many 'Swanwick' conferences he has attended—which is the only practical way of understanding its relevance to Bible truth and the oneness of all Christians (John 17: 21).  
198 Abbots Road  
Abbots Langley  
Watford Herts.

Yours sincerely  
Jack Heap

From Mr. J. L. Marsh

Dear Sir,

How good it was to hear Mr. Fred Fairclough expressing his enjoyment of the London Convention (September issue), at which he witnessed the much-needed proclamation of the Parousia, no doubt one of the fundamental truths to which he refers earlier in his letter.

Yet I was left somewhat puzzled by his closing statement, 'Events like Swanwick prove that the Coming of the Lord surely draweth nigh.'

33 St. Helens Road  
Prescot  
Merseyside  
L34 6HN

Fred, please explain!  
Yours sincerely  
James L. Marsh

### The RV and the NIV

From Dr. J. S. Andrews

Dear Mr. Coad,

On pp. 118-25 of Herbert Dennett's *Graphic guide to modern versions of the New Testament* (Bagster, 1965), now unfortunately out of print, he briefly explains why some modern versions omit words, phrases and even whole verses that appear in the *Authorised Version*. The AV includes them generally because they are in the Greek *Received Text*. He lists 25 of 'the more important passages concerning which there is a query as to the authority of the Greek text on which they are based'. There are other passages in doubt; but, according to Dennett, his list includes all the most important ones. He comments in some detail on a few of the 25, namely: *Matt. 6: 13; Mark 16: 9-20; John 5: 3-4; John 7: 53-8: 11; Acts 8: 37; and 1 John 5: 7-8*.

Dennett shows that in 18 of the 25 passages the *Revised Version* of 1881 omits words represented in the AV, although it usually adds an explanatory note. In each of the remaining 7 passages the RV includes the words but again with a note.

The policy of the *New International Version* is of interest. In 21 of the passages it omits the words, usually adding notes; in each of the remaining 4 it includes them but again with a note. In 2 cases the policy of the current (1979) UK edition of the NIV differs from that of the first (1973) edition.

The concluding phrase of *John 3: 13*, rendered in the AV as 'which is in heaven' and retained in the RV with a note, was in 1973 silently omitted, while in 1979 the fact that 'some manuscripts' contain these words is recorded.

In *1 John 5: 7-8* the AV read '... in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth'. The RV simply omitted these words, presumably because the manuscript authority was so unsound as not to need explanation. However, the 1973 NIV recorded them in a footnote with the introductory phrase, 'Vulgate adds'. The note in the 1979 revision amplifies this slightly: the introductory phrase reads, 'Late manuscripts of the Vulgate'.

Why is the NIV more 'radical' in its attitude to the *Received Text* than the RV was? In the June and July issues of *The Witness* Dr. W. J. Martin has explained the principles underlying the NIV. The translation is a fresh one, not a revision of any older one. According to the preface to the 1979 NIV the Greek text used was eclectic. 'Where existing manuscripts differ, the translators made their choice of readings according to accepted principles of New Testament textual criticism. Footnotes call attention to places where there was uncertainty about what the original text was. The best current printed texts of the Greek New Testament were used.'

Although this statement leaves much unexplained, it does suggest that the wide spectrum of evangelical scholarship behind this translation has, as Dr. Martin makes clear, regarded as its 'master' not any other translation however venerable but the original text in so far as that could be established.

Those like myself with no competence whatsoever in this field may take comfort from Dennett (p. 123). None of the variations indicated in his 25 passages 'affects any Scripture doctrine, and taken all together they form but a very small proportion indeed of the text of the whole New Testament. This is indeed re-assuring in connection with documents which originated almost two thousand years ago.'

270 Bowerham Road  
Lancaster LA1 4LP

Yours sincerely  
John S. Andrews

### Why so few factory workers?

From Mr. Frank Potter

My dear Mr. Coad,

I deeply appreciated Mr. H. L. Ellison's letter in September Harvester in response to my *Readers' Forum* contribution. I trust that my response to the questions he puts to me will be taken as a mark of my appreciation over the years of his writings, and his keen perception of the kernel of the matter.

He asks 2 questions:- why should there be any large number of factory workers in the assemblies? (First let me modify that from 'factory workers' to the more comprehensive 'manual workers') Simply because manual workers make up a large proportion of society, and so in a balanced gathering the same ratio could be expected. Furthermore as it is the practical and simple and easily grasped form of service that I can understand and follow, that stamps the pattern of Gospel Mission Halls, there is formed an immediate bond between the lay-preacher recognized as one of like life-style, and the

man-in-the street. We missed out (I suggest) when we changed from 'Gospel Hall' to 'Chapel' or 'Church' or whatever the latest compromise to fashion is. Twenty or more years ago we changed these, and perhaps we have lost the link so lovingly forged by those brave humble stalwarts, of who Leslie James reminds us.

The answer to his second question of 'How many—?' is simply 'not enough'. If by 'Church' is meant the Church of God, then I cannot tell, because I read of thousands in Korea and elsewhere, but few in England and modern countries.

Stand outside a Catholic Church, watch their procession, weep as I have wept, at the sight of those who turn from our doors to enter another. My tears are for our failure to reach where others have reached. Let me ask a question; 'How many overseeing brethren are factory-workers, in proportion?'

But let us rather remember that I was really trying to recapture a vision: to link again the assemblies with those who

## OF GRACE AND FAITH:

### 1. MR. A. J. SHELDRAKE

The interesting query raised by Mr. F. N. Nickels in the September 1979 issue of *The Harvester* is basically the age-old question of God's sovereignty and man's responsibility, both of which are presented in scripture, from which it appears that they run on parallel lines.

As Mr. Nickels states, *Ephesians* presents man as 'dead in trespasses and sins' (ch. 2: 1). This from the context, is clearly moral and spiritual death and is the immediate consequence of the fall of Adam—in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die' (Gen. 2: 17).

However, in contrast, *Romans* shows us man as lost and far away from God. In chapters 1 and 2 there is a threefold portrait of man in his sins followed by a summing up in chapter 3 which faces us up to the fact that 'all have sinned and come short of the glory of God' (verses 22 and 23). Man is from this point of view responsible to repent and believe the gospel of God's grace.

The two viewpoints are brought together in *Luke* 15: 24: 'This my son was dead and is alive again: he was lost and is found.'

I accordingly believe, and consider it to be supported by scripture, that man is responsible to repent and believe the gospel (Mark 1: 15). However, at the time a man believes, God works in his soul through new birth. This new birth must surely be God's work alone. 'Ye must be born again' (John 3: 7) is a fact, not a command. Our spiritual birth, like our natural birth, is not dependent on conscious action. Thus from this point of view, God gives us faith to believe.

This is borne out by *Romans* 12: 3 'God has dealt to every man the measure of faith' and *II Peter* 1: 1 'to them that have obtained like precious faith with us.'

Mr. Nickels' analogy of a baker himself providing the money to buy the bread in his shop window seems to me apposite. We are indeed told that the Gospel is 'without money and without price' (*Isaiah* 55: 1). But I do not agree that—to quote Mr. Nickels—'we already have it (faith) and use it daily' unless we are, of course, already believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The centurion in *Matthew* 8 implies that Christ, like himself, was 'under authority'. From where did he get

## Readers reply to the September

that idea? The Syro-Phoenician woman in *Matthew* 15 addressed Christ as the Son of David and when the Lord made it clear that she had no claim on him on that ground took the place of a dog under the table. How was she able to grasp that this was her place? (cf. *Eph.* 2: 12). Surely the answer is that each had God-given light in their soul—and is this not just what faith is?

Mr. Nickels speaks of stretching out the empty hand of faith and this is precisely what each of us in responsibility must do to get God's free gift. But like the man with the withered hand in *Matthew* 12 we have no power to do it till the Lord commands. Thus we are responsible to exercise faith and as we accept that responsibility God gives us the faith needed to obey His word.

### 2. MR. ROBERT A. LIMB

In his comments around *Ephesians* 2: 8, Mr. F. N. Nickels has raised a number of theological questions which, as he says, are far-reaching. The question of the nature of faith must absolutely be resolved, as it touches on the fundamental question of salvation.

In *Ephesians* 2: 1-10 Paul is reminding Christians of the great miracle wrought at their conversion—it is no less than a resurrection! God makes us alive together with Christ; he is the author of the salvation of those who are in the Son. The unregenerate are therefore dead because of the sins they have committed. Dead, but not inert, for Paul says that they are *walking* in their sins. They are living dead (2: 3). In order to understand this apparent contradiction we should remind ourselves that death is not (as the world would have us believe) non-existence. We will be conscious after physical death, whether we are saved or not. In Scripture, the idea of death is primarily one of separation. So Paul says that the unregenerate are spiritually dead (separated from God) and that the Christian has 'died to sin' (*Rom.* 6: 2). The death-image in *Ephesians* 2 does not therefore, as is often supposed, preclude the possibility of an active response to the Gospel from the unregenerate. This fits in with the biblical doctrine of free-will. Man at the first could choose to obey God, or not; and the people of God could actively resist his will (*Rom.* 10: 21 *et pass.*)

However, man is saved entirely by God, and not



seemingly seldom are reached as once they were. I spend 2 or 3 nights a week—every week—on the streets of London talking about the love and compassion of our Lord. I meet a drunk and take him to the Salvation Army, a down and out and take him elsewhere, another to the Church Army. I have written to some meetings about a contact and never had a reply.

In his last paragraph our brother gives a hint as to our wandering away from first principles. He will know better than I how far we have left them, and the steps required to give the first place to first principles. Many of us are in the assemblies not because of family association or convenience but from a detached view of conviction. Nevertheless we would by far rather see factory workers, or any other human soul inside the Church, whatever its name or form of service.

A last question: does all this, really, diminish our responsibility?

38 Pams Way  
Ewell Surrey

Yours sincerely  
Frank Potter

#### Homosexuality: second thoughts

From Mr. M. K. Johnson

Dear Mr. Coad,

To denounce sexual sin and advocate a strong authoritarian line is merely to make oneself a pitiful spectacle to the generation which grew up with post-Freudian fall-out in its bones. Is not Dr. Tatford, in his denunciation of homosexuality, like a little boy doing mathematics, who looks up the answer in the book and puts it down full of confidence in its rightness? But the teacher gives him zero, because he has not shown the working of the problem, has not exercised his reasoning power to reach the answer.

Reasoning alone is no certain guide. But the fact is we do apply our minds to the Bible. It is not to be understood merely in flashes of inspiration. Those injunctions which do not appeal to our reason (e.g. foot-washing, greeting with holy kisses, dietary restrictions, women to wear long hair, enrolment of widows, forsaking all for Christ) we calmly side-step.

Dr. Tatford calmly side-steps the difficulties which exist in

## 'READERS' FORUM'

because he deserves it. This is the message of *Ephesians 2: 8 and 9*. Man is saved by grace. In parentheses, Paul reminds us of the *means* of our salvation; it is through faith. Grammatically, 'that not of yourselves' probably refers to the whole concept of salvation by grace, as both 'grace' and 'faith' are of feminine gender, whereas the pronoun 'that' (not of yourselves) is neuter. Moreover, the phrase 'not of works etc.' refers to the same thing, grammatically, as the phrase 'that not of yourselves'. Paul would hardly be saying that grace or faith was not of works: salvation not of works is his doctrine. I would therefore applaud the RSV translation: For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God. (Incidentally, this confusion does not occur in French, where the genders are the same as in Greek).

However, Mr. Nickels' basic question still remains unanswered: even though Paul may not be saying so here, is faith a sovereign gift of God?

If we answer by an unqualified yes, we enter into uncharted territory, for the following conclusions must be drawn:

1. If God gives faith, he exercises choice, as all do not believe. As faith is the means unto salvation, God therefore denies salvation to some whilst offering it to others.
2. On this thesis, God therefore chooses certain individuals either on an arbitrary basis, or on merit.

Because of this, I cannot help but see this view of faith as neither desirable, nor true, for it denies the very nature of God, as well as Scripture. God's will is that all men be saved (*II Peter 3: 9*), and the whole of Paul's life was given to proving that men are not saved on merit.

How then are we saved by faith? Surely it is, as Mr. Nickels says, an everyday thing. A man hears the Gospel, accepts it as reasonable, decides to put his trust in Christ, and therefore obeys the Gospel. This is the process described by Paul in *Rom. 10: 14-17*, summarised in the words 'Faith comes by hearing'. This is not to deny the rôle of the Holy Spirit in conversion, for the power of the Word is that of the Spirit (*Eph. 6: 17*).

Perhaps the difficulty here stems from the feeling that in some way even belief and obedience are meritorious. This is not the case. May I borrow Mr. Nickels' analogy of the baker? We look in through the bakery window, but have no money to buy. The baker does not go through the comedy of giving us money; he simply calls to us: come in and eat. If we believe the bread is real, if we trust in the baker's goodwill, and if we betake ourselves into the shop, we will be fed. But our trust and our entering the shop does not make the bread any less a gift. We have not so *earned* it. So God requires our confidence (*Hebrews 11: 6*) and our obedience (*Hebrews 5: 9*) before bestowing His free gift of salvation upon us. It is a proof of his respect for the liberty he gave to his creature. So Christ pleads 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him' (*Rev. 3: 20*).

#### 3. MR. H. L. ELLISON

In the 'Readers' Forum' for September Mr. Nickels asks a question, which, if answered adequately, would take up more than one issue of *The Harvester*. Because I am incapable of suggesting an answer briefly as to how predestination and free will are to be reconciled, I shall content myself with laying down a general principle.

When we find believers, equally devoted to the study of the Scriptures equally qualified to express an opinion, equally Spirit-filled, so far as man can judge, clashing headlong on a point of doctrine of major importance, we must assume that both sides are right, and that both are wrong. It is unloving and unchristian to write off one side or the other as having completely misunderstood the mind and purposes of God, as was done when the Arminian-Calvinist controversy was at its height, and as sometimes happens today.

I have been asked to write a small and simple(!) booklet on the subject, which will probably be rejected by the extremists on both sides, but until it is written, and afterwards as well, I would suggest that we should be happy to accept that God's salvation is greater than we realize, and His ways and wisdom are beyond our grasp. When we are sure of being right, it is safest to assume that we are in many respects wrong.

the traditional interpretation of his proof-texts on homosexuality. When a large number of orthodox Christians, some of them quite intelligent, have come to a new understanding of certain scriptures, it is foolish to imagine one can refute it with 'This is a denial of the plain teaching of the Scriptures'. (So was the hypothesis that the earth moves round the sun, or that the bread and wine are not changed into flesh and blood).

Dr. Tatford states that between David and Jonathan 'There is not the slightest indication of anything more than a deep devotion between two friends and there is not a vestige of support in the narrative for the importation of any sexual implication'. This naive remark gives a clue to the nature of the generation gap. To many elderly people, sex and sexual activity means either lust and genital coupling, or else something very elevated, sanctified within the marriage bond, achieved with the union of two spirits as though bodies and minds were hardly involved at all.

However over the last thirty years many people, even sound Christian folk, have become less frightened of their own sexuality, the interplay of attraction between minds and bodies, the adoption and change of male and female roles. It is possible to admit that one's sexuality enters into all relationships, all of life, and that this is a gift and blessing of God, not something to be repressed or scoured out of one's system. This generation and future ones will simply not attend to those trumpeting against sex which are based on reflex rather than reason. And within the Church sober reasoning has been notably lacking in this area because for both advocates and opponents of sexual freedom it is a highly charged emotional issue.

The reasons behind Biblical sexual laws seem to be as follows: 1. To minimise genetic malformations, make clear a baby's paternity, and provide it full family support to grow up in. 2. To protect women from exploitation and rapid successive pregnancies. 3. To promote social order and minimise the destructiveness of sexual jealousy. 4. To give opportunity for the individual to grow in love, faith, trust and hope through intimate commitment to others. These reasons carry a lot more weight with the younger generation than does the old magical formula 'The Bible says so.'

Reasoning needs to be applied in three sorts of modern sexual questions: a) An old problem on which the Biblical position is no longer clear (e.g. homosexuality). b) An old problem on which the Bible says nothing directly (e.g. paedophilia, fetishism, masturbation). c) A new situation which did not occur in Biblical times (e.g. World over-population; the widespread availability of efficient contraceptives).

Applying Biblical sex reasoning to homosexuality: protection of children and wives does not enter in (except where adultery occurs, which Christian homosexuals condemn as much as Christian heterosexuals). It is a question of two people acting and reacting together in certain ways, privately and publicly. Where exactly does the *offence* begin? It is generally accepted that e.g. in the armed forces, people of one sex may live together for long periods without the company of the other sex. In most countries deep friendships and displays of affection are considered normal between people of the same sex. (The British are unusually cold and inhibited!)

Unmarried women missionaries are positively encouraged to operate in pairs and one sees many such couples who are quite as clearly married to one another as many a man and wife, loving and caring for each other, providing for psychological needs (as well as the grit and gripe known to every married couple). I shared house for a year with a man whose wife had left him, and we shared housekeeping expenses, cooking, shopping, chores, living space, entertainment and our troubles and thoughts on life. But I don't recall getting physically closer than a thump on the back.

So the area of offence narrows down to genital stimulation and erotic desire. Same-sex couples may be told, in effect, that to live together, love and care for one another, to embrace affectionately, to offer commitment and trust for future care, all this is beautiful. Only they must never do anything each others genitals; otherwise the whole thing suddenly

becomes vile, abominable, Empire-destroying, soul-searing. At this point the reasoning begins to sound more like ranting!

I am not *advocating* homosexual marriages. I am asking for a much fuller and calmer discussion of where the offence lies, if it does lie. The Catholic Church is consistent in its teaching so far as I understand it, by condemning both homosexual intercourse and contraception for the same reason: that the genitals are employed without the possibility of generation. (Should they then in fact be considered *genitals* at all? Having a child-free marriage, I am in the same position as a homosexual before the Catholic Church). However, the Protestant Churches by and large accept the pleasure of genital stimulation is a blessing of God by itself. Looking at an analogy, few Churches maintain that the mouth and taste-buds may be used only when there is satisfaction of hunger involved. A single hostess may, for example, cook delicacies, decorate and perfume her apartment and play the violin, all for the express purpose of ravishing the senses of her married guests, without being accused of adultery!

Christian believers who are primarily or exclusively attracted to members of the same sex will almost all agree that promiscuous sexual behaviour or the breaking of faith with one's partner, are sinful whether homosexual or heterosexual. Likewise that to covet possession of another's body alone, or to be obsessed with one's own sexual gratification, is incompatible with the Spirit of Christ.

St. Paul bluntly puts the remedy for those whose passion overcomes them: get married. How unspiritual! Surely he should recommend more prayer, a charismatic experience, a visit to a Christian psychiatrist, or at least regular cold baths! But Paul was a realistic leader of the Church, and knew the danger of binding heavy burdens on people. 'It is better to marry than to burn' is a concession to human weakness, like Moses' concession on divorce, and both men must have been howled at by the hard-liners, the legal rigorists of their time. I wonder how they would see the homosexual union today?

(Address supplied)

yours sincerely,  
M. K. Johnson

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# The News Page

Press Day, December 1979, Monday, Oct. 5th, for Displayed Advertisements, Prayer List, Forthcoming Events and news items (Please send direct to Publisher at 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW)

## Out and About

### News from Barnardo's

Publication of a new biography of Dr. Barnardo may well focus interest on the work that he started. But few people realise how greatly this has changed. The orphan image clings to Barnardo's. If it is inaccurate, because orphans today are fortunately rare, at least it reflects their concern for children. But the majority for whom they care are with their own families in their own homes which is where every child should be, ideally. Following a massive reorganisation some ten years ago, Barnardo's moved its staff from headquarters to the more densely populated areas where the needs are greatest and local authority sources under most pressure. Each of the Divisions has a Director of Child Care and a team of social workers. There are 149 establishments and projects.

Fostering is very important for children who cannot live in their own homes. Barnardo's provides them "professional" foster parents appointed as full members of their staff. They also try to arrange foster parents among members of the general public. In adoption, by contrast, the link is permanent and legal. As a registered adoption agency, Barnardo's finds itself today trying to supply a new family for older children, those of mixed race, and those with a small degree of physical handicap. They also provide a Samaritan style phone-in service for anyone with any kind of problem connected with adoption.

A good deal of effort goes into trying to keep families together. Community workers visit homes and organise mothers and toddlers clubs. There are Advice Centres to give information on a wide range of problems, a Family Care Service to keep an eye on difficult situations including one-parent families. A Family Rehabilitation Centre offers family flats for a three-month training period to families who want to learn how to cope independently. In addition, there are Day Care Centres—16 of them in all—which ease pressures on the family and thus contribute to keeping the parent-child bond intact.

Barnardo's point out that they receive no money from the government or other official bodies for anything except the cost of caring for the children and local authority's place with them. They proudly claim that out of every pound of their United Kingdom income, over 80p goes to provide necessary care and accommodation for children in need and only 2.8p on administration at Head Office. The treasurer of their central London region is at Tanners Lane, Barkingside, Ilford, Essex, IG6 1QG.

### Conference Report

The Women's Weekend Conference on 'Practical Praying' took place at Swanwick from 14th-16th September. Mrs. Amy Ginnings acted as hostess and gave 'Lift up your Hearts' sessions in the mornings. Mrs. I. Sturdy of Sussex spoke on the 'Why' and 'How' of prayer, reminding her hearers that the call to prayer in Ephesians 6 was preceded by instructions to put on the

whole armour of God. Mrs. June Kennedy of London described prayer as a relationship rather than a ritual, communion as well as commuting, a privilege rather than a problem. Woman Police Inspector, Ruth Morrison, from Lancashire, informed conference members about various developments taking place in our society and testified to the changes that grace had made in her attitude, her use of time, and her priorities. Mrs. Darling of Accrington gave the closing talk.

### Europe

The West German Evangelical Alliance has obtained the co-operation of the state churches, the free churches and independent evangelical groups in promoting a 'Year of Mission' in 1980. The Evangelical Alliance in the German Democratic Republic plans a parallel effort. The British Evangelical Alliance is encouraging evangelicals within local churches to regard the 1980s as a Decade of Evangelism. This is the EA's contribution to the Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism in which all the main denominations are co-operating. In French-speaking Switzerland a three-year plan to mobilise the local churches for evangelism starts in 1980, and SAFE, the Swiss organisation for united evangelism, plans a gathering of thousands of Christians in Bern on June 7 and 8, 1980, as a public celebration of their faith.

### Evangelism

**Counties Evangelistic Work:** The administration of Counties Evangelistic Work is being transferred to Westbury, Wiltshire, by the end of September. For four years the search has been on for alternative premises to accommodate the expanding ministry in evangelism; now at last suitable premises, with office planning permission, have been obtained. The new address will be 30 Haynes Road, Westbury, Wiltshire, BA13 3HD. The new premises provide accommodation on three levels in a detached house. The facilities will provide enough space for the present ministry of Counties Work and, with the land attached, it will provide scope for extension when the need arises. It is anticipated that the double front shop will be retained as a retail outlet for Christian literature. Ron Davies, the Administration Secretary, moves with his family to Frome, whilst Brian Mills, General Secretary, remains for the time being in the Reading area. The Counties Evangelists have enjoyed a summer of intense activity with missions in over 100 places. Camps and houseparties have proved fruitful in almost every case with not only many being converted but also with a number of Christians experiencing rededication to the Lord, as the Spirit of God worked afresh in their lives. Many of the missions held have not been as responsive as was anticipated, although some of the highlights have been outstanding.

**London Mobile Units:** A correspondent has sent us an account of the September Rally. 'It was a very fine day and there was a shifting audience of thousands. Unfortunately, however, someone in the Ministry of Environment had forgotten to switch the electric power on to the plinth, and the S.W. Unit had to be used as a substitute for the normal loud-speakers. Consequently, it was impossible for the Freeway Group to operate, and they in their turn, were substituted by Harry Duckworth and his ukulele. Actually Harry had come down from Dereham to be



our guest speaker at the after-rally Report Meeting. Obviously he was God's choice. We were well supported by believers on the Square and the messages were listened to with more than usual interest, some folk in the vast moving crowd stayed to hear a whole message through. Only some 50 to 60 attended the tea and after-rally Report Meeting in Orange Street Church. There was much to encourage us at the response to the Gospel, both on the streets of London, and on the various unit tours into the country. One brother had given out 1,800 *Contact for Christ* cards, and 67 had been handed in, which he, and no doubt most others present, thought was a good percentage return on his effort. Truly, in spite of modern thinking, the good old Gospel is still God's power unto salvation. Raymond Reed, who was in charge of the Literature Table, reported that thousands of tracts, etc. had been distributed on the Square during the afternoon, not only in English, but in foreign languages as well. The only cloud on the whole horizon was the continual shortage of workers, and that was a cloud much bigger than a man's hand.

**Ireland Outreach:** The summer team of over 30 team members from 10 different nationalities succeeded in visiting over 45,000 homes, 40,000 of which accepted free gospel literature. Many scores of people were willing to stand and listen as the team members shared the gospel message, and two people accepted the Lord as personal Saviour while the team members witnessed to them right on their doorsteps; one of these was the wife of an ambassador. There was a special week of gospel meetings in Dun Laoghaire City Hall, during which nearly 2,400 people attended and approximately 150 stayed behind to discuss salvation on a personal level. More than 25 are known to have professed conversion.

**Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism:** An impressive cross-section of English church leaders has jointly called for a Day of Prayer in all churches on the first Sunday of the 1980s. A letter being distributed to churches of all denominations carries the signatures of the Archbishops of Canterbury and Westminster. Other signatures include the heads of the Methodist, Baptist and United Reformed Churches and they are joined by the leaders of the British Council of Churches, and the Free Church Federal Council and the Evangelical Alliance. Britain's many black churches are expected to join with this unprecedented move as the letter is also signed by the Chairman of the Afro-West Indian United Council of Churches. The theme for the Day of Prayer is for an increased sharing of the 'Good News'. The letter calls upon every local church to pray for evangelism and to rededicate itself to Christ's service in the country. The move is part of a recently formed joint churches initiative designed to put more urgency and effort into the business of sharing the Christian message at all levels in society. It is hoped that on January 6, 1980, churches will make use of a special act of rededication based upon the Methodist Church Covenant Service. In this service everyone in the nation's pews will be asked to 'give themselves anew' to God and to pray for 'a new experience of God's power'. Specimen forms of service can be obtained free of charge from the Nationwide Initiative for Evangelism, 146 Queen Victoria Street, London, EC4V 4BX.

Meanwhile churches all over the country are benefiting from the help given by consultants who are assisting local churches in preparing outreach plans.

**Oasis** is the name of the Redditch Inter-Church Fellowship which has been witnessing at Sunday events at Abbey Stadium, providing a rest tent for visitors. Visitors were invited to walk through the Good News Grotto, a display borrowed from the Liverpool City Mission which focused attention on the relevance of the Bible today. Literature was available including 'Word in Action', gospels, tracts, stickers for children, and also Flexidiscs, small records with a Christian message. Oasis members took the opportunity of chatting with and answering questions from those who visited the marquee, with chairs being available. The marquee had been lent by a church in Worcester. The Postal Sunday School of Worcestershire had a stand, and several dozen children were enrolled. Christian records in various styles were played over a public address system. Other local churches may wish to consider the possibility of engaging in this type of joint witness. **Scottish Counties Evangelistic Movement:** The 14th Annual Report, available from 342 Argyle Street, Glasgow, reports that 108 young people and leaders formed the 1979 Outreach Teams. Small groups of believers in rural situations benefited tremendously from the teams' ministry, there were hundreds of doorstep conversations about Christ, an encouraging response to the free offer of a Bible correspondence course, and some who made definite commitment of their lives to the Saviour.

**News of Workers:** A. G. Blackburn reports an encouraging crusade at Gerston Chapel, Paignton. There were conversions and the chapel was full to overflowing for family services. Eric Hutchings gives notice of a new broadcast over 205 metres medium wave (1466KHz) to be heard every Sunday at 10.55 p.m. and entitled 'Don't you know?'—a new style broadcast to reach outsiders and help believers. D. Leighton reports over 200 counselled in tent crusades during the summer. Their ages ranged from 4 to 85 years. S. Mountstevens had an encouraging beach mission lasting 4½ weeks at Margate. He is still in touch with teenagers who came to jeer but were eventually moved to seek counsel and to take literature.

### Leprosy Mission

When the members of OPEC decide to raise the price of oil or limit supplies of it, they probably do not take into account the world's fifteen million leprosy sufferers. But modern leprosy care is essentially a *mobile* programme. Patients are encouraged to live at home and attend local clinics; these are often set up at the roadside by the mobile leprosy team. School surveys, village surveys, contact surveys—all call for men and women who take the road often—and far. In undeveloped areas Land Rovers are as essential to medical teams as medicines or bandages. So dearer fuel presents organizations like The Leprosy Mission with yet another problem: how do they cope? It affects not only their field work, but also the equally important fund-raising and educational activities in supporting countries. If it were only a matter of cost, it would be possible to carry on as before and try to raise the extra money. But supplies are also threatened, and ways of saving fuel must be found.

The Leprosy Mission's Executive Committee is recommending that its various centres and field units should review their work and consider using diesel instead of petrol, two-wheel drive vehicles instead of Land Rovers where roads have improved, motor cycles instead of cars, and cycles instead of motor cycles. In fund-raising activities smaller vehicles can be used, meetings can be arranged in local clusters, to avoid unnecessary travel, and more use made of audio-visuals which can be sent through mail. The controlling principle, says the Committee, is clear: 'the patient must not suffer. . .'

## News from Tear Fund

Over the past few years TEAR Fund has gained something of a reputation for offering unusual and original Christmas cards, and to celebrate the International Year of the Child, they have produced a set of three colourful designs featuring children in the Third World. A pack of six, two of each design, costs 50p. They have also revived their original Christmas card/year planner which aroused so much interest when it was introduced in 1976. This "Christmas card made to last" costs 80p for five which is much cheaper than conventional diaries. For the second time TEAR Fund has produced a full colour wall calendar, with a month to a page and space for engagements. This year's, however, is an eye-catching large format, featuring scenes from life in the Third World. The front cover has been cleverly designed to incorporate eight smaller versions of the calendar pictures as tear-off postcards. The price is £1.50, which includes a hard-backed envelope. TEAR Fund also has available its new Tearcraft 1979/80 mail order catalogue, with plenty of original ideas for Christmas presents and many at very reasonable prices. The catalogue is free and, as with the cards and calendar, can be obtained from TEAR Fund, 11 Station Road, Teddington, Middlesex, TW11 9AA.

**News of Relief Work:** TEAR Fund reports work in two hard-hit areas. In the Dominican Republic and Haiti, not only have whole communities been devastated—the crops have been ruined and all supplies for the next twelve months have gone. TEAR Fund has arranged for a total of 125 tons of rice to be made available. 800 tons is to be shipped into Cambodia, together with an airlift of basic medical requirements—this last in conjunction with TEAR Fund of Holland.

## Homecalls

**Adeline Mary Ellison**, wife of H. L. Ellison, on September 28, 1979, aged 75. For nearly 43 years her husband's whole-hearted partner, she was called home unexpectedly, suddenly and very gently. Early saved and baptized, she went out to Bucarest as a teacher in a Jewish missionary school, where she met her future husband, who, with three daughters, survives her. To know her was to love her.

**Mrs. L. A. Rebekah Lowther** on September 24, 1979, in the Intensive Care at Grimsby. Saved early in life,

she was baptised at Elim Hall, Harrogate on 'Good Friday', April 10, 1925. She entered fulltime service on her marriage to G. K. Lowther on May 18, 1934, at the Gospel Hall, Blackley, Manchester. Subsequently she helped in planting and establishing assemblies: first in Dorset, and for the past 34 years at Grimsby, whence she was able to accompany her husband when he ministered in Scandinavia and Iberia, as well as in the UK. She was godly, consistent, faithful and lived always in the light of the Saviour's glorious appearing. She leaves a husband, son, two daughters and ten grandchildren, who 'call her blessed' (Proverbs 31: 28).

**Mrs. Mary Ann Simmons**, aged 86 years, on September 10, suddenly at home. Orphaned at 3 years of age, she spent 14 years at Muller's Orphanage at Bristol, where she came to the Lord when 13. She was the wife of Philip Simmons one of the editors of *Echoes of Service*.

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# People and Places

## Stewardship

### Home Workers Fund:

Equity House, 450 Hackney Road, London, E2 6QL. Gifts received during the month of August amounted to £329.38 and for September the amount was £85.00.

### Missionaries' Children's Fund:

29 Queen Street, London, EC4R 1BH. Gifts received during the month of September amounted to £328.86.

### Retired Missionary Aid Fund:

12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts for the month of September amounted to £3475.78.

## Prayer List

Stamped letters addressed c/o The Paternoster Press, Paternoster House, 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter, EX2 4JW will be forwarded to any of those whose names appear below.

Workers are requested to include their names on their cards when returning them each month. We are still receiving anonymous contributions from time to time.

### Blackburn, A. G.:

Exmouth 1; Southampton 4; Torquay 6, 25; Silvertown 8; Seaton 10; Teignmouth 11; Plymouth 13; Ashburton 15; Chagford Crusade 18-23; Beer 29.

### Brighton, K. W.:

Gideons Meeting, Woodcroft 2; Newport 3; Chesham 4, 7; Caerleon 14; Wokingham 21; Ashbury 25.

### Burnham, A. E. J.:

Ash 4; Wembley 25; and at other places.

### Campbell, B.:

Falmouth 1-7, 23-28; Leedstown 18, 19; Camborne 21.

### Clifford, D. L.:

During November at Haven School of Evangelism, Andover, Wimbome, Lapford and Ilfracombe.

### Galyer, W. S.:

Dorking 1, 3, 8; Kingston 6; South Bank Polytechnic Christian Union and Teddington 7; Exeter 10-16; Eastbourne 18-25; Wembley 27; Tolworth 28; Staines 29.

### Gillham, S.:

Swanage Crusade 1-4; Charminster, Bournemouth 5, 7, 20; Parkstone 6; Sherborne 8; 3rd Dorset Youth Houseparty 9-11; East Chaldon 12; Weymouth 13, 18, 26-28; Winton 15; DATC Camp Reunion 17; Dorchester 21; West Moors 22, 24, 25, 29; Chickerell 23; Wimbome 29.

### Grimsey, A. W.:

Dane Hill 4; Briston 6; Kings Lynn 9; Guildford 11; Burnham Market 25.

### Iliffe, D.:

Hucclecote 1, 4; Bishop Luffa School 5; Littlehampton 7; St. Leonards on Sea 11-21; West Moors 24-25; Southbourne 26-30.

### Lowther, G. K.:

Rochester 1, 4; Harrow 5; Reading 6, 8, 11, 13, 15, 18, 20, 22, 25, 27, 29; Four Marks 7, 14; Bitterne, Southampton 21; Fleet 26; Hornchurch 28. Regretfully some engagements in September had to be cancelled owing to the illness of Mrs. Lowther.

### Mills, B.:

North West Tour 1-4; Woodley 8; Guildford 12; London 13, 22; Rugby 17, 18; Nuneaton 19; Northampton 20, 21; Wokingham 25; Egham 27.

### Mountstevens, S.:

Margate, Herne Bay 1, 8, 14; Ramsgate 4, and every Monday for children's meeting; Gillingham 11; St. Nicholas

Village Mission 14; Minster Village Mission 15; Whitstable 25; Broadstairs 29; Monkton Village Mission 30.

### Phillips, C.:

Elmfield, North Harrow 1, 8, 15, 22; Maidenhead 3; North Kensington 4, 11, 18; South Ruislip 5, 12, 18; Crouch End 6, 13, 20; High Wycombe 7, 14; Oakleigh Chapel 11; Ewell 18, 29; Cholmeley, Highgate 21, 28; Lincoln 24, 25, 26.

### Short, S. S.:

Bexhill 1; Bristol 2; Walthamstow 4, 6, 13, 20, 27; Sidcup 5, 12, 19, 26; Woodford Green 7, 14, 21, 28; Tunbridge Wells 8, 11, 15, 22, 29; Southborough 10; Weston-Super-Mare 18; Highgate 25; Whetstone 30.

### Tatford, F. A.:

Portsmouth 1-4; Farnham 3; Nuneaton 7; Tring 13-15; Belfast 24, 25, 29, 30; Portsteward 26-28.

### Tryon, G.:

New Milton 1-4; Tolworth 9, 14, 21; Peckham 8, 15; Rochester 11; Eltham Park 13, 28; Guildford 18; Worthing 22, 29; Staines 25; Kingston 27.

## Forthcoming Events

The Publishers regret that, owing to demands on space, it is not possible to insert an announcement in more than one issue. Correspondents should indicate clearly in which issue they wish their announcements to appear.

### Brierfield:

Rally, Hebron Hall, Walter Street. Nov. 10 and 24 at 7.00 p.m. Speakers: H. Booth (10), C. A. Oxley (24).

### Boscombe:

Conversational Bible Readings. Drummond Hall, Drummond Road, Dec. 1 at 7.00 p.m. Speaker: K. Morris. Subject: Daniel 7.

### Chesham:

Gospel Hall, Station Road. Nov. 24 at 6.30 p.m. Speaker: G. B. Fyle. Subject: Acts 25: 1-27.

### Colyton:

The Gospel Hall, The Butts. Nov. 24 at 7.00 p.m. Speaker: H. Bell. Subject: "The Authority of Scripture".

### Croxley Green:

Fuller Hall, Fuller Way. Nov. 24 at 7.00 p.m. Speaker: Dr. R. Townsend.

### London:

The Federation of London Christian Unions Anniv. Thanksgiving Service. Hall of the Merchant Taylors, 30 Threadneedle Street, EC2 (Gracechurch Street end), November 20 at 6.15 p.m. (Tea and biscuits served from 5.15 p.m.) Speakers: Rev. John Stott, Mr. Derek Edwards.

### Luton:

Onslow Road Gospel Hall, Vincent Road, Leagrave. Nov. 17—Ministry 4.00-5.00 p.m., Conversational Bible Reading 6.30-8.00 p.m. Speaker: C. Stewart. Subject: 1 John 2: 3-2: 27.

### Maidenhead:

Monthly Cfce. Parkside Hall, St. Luke's Road. Dec. 1—Address 6.30-7.30 p.m., Refreshments, Discussion 8.15-9.00 p.m. Speaker: J. Hadley. Subject: "Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension."

### Nottingham:

Gospel Hall, Victoria Road, Netherfield. Nov. 17 at 7.15 p.m. Speaker: E. Turner. Subject: "I am the Bread of Life".

### Remford:

Missy. Cfce. United Reformed Church, Western Road. Nov. 17 at 4.00 and 6.30 p.m. Emerson Park Chapel. Nov. 16 at 7.30 p.m. (Sisters only) and Nov. 18 at 8.15 p.m.

### West London:

Cfce. Dean Hall, Williams Road, W. Ealing, W13 (behind Marks and Spencers Store). Nov. 10 at 6.00 p.m. Speaker: John Knight, Gospel Outreach—Report and Ministry. Refreshments at 8.00 p.m.

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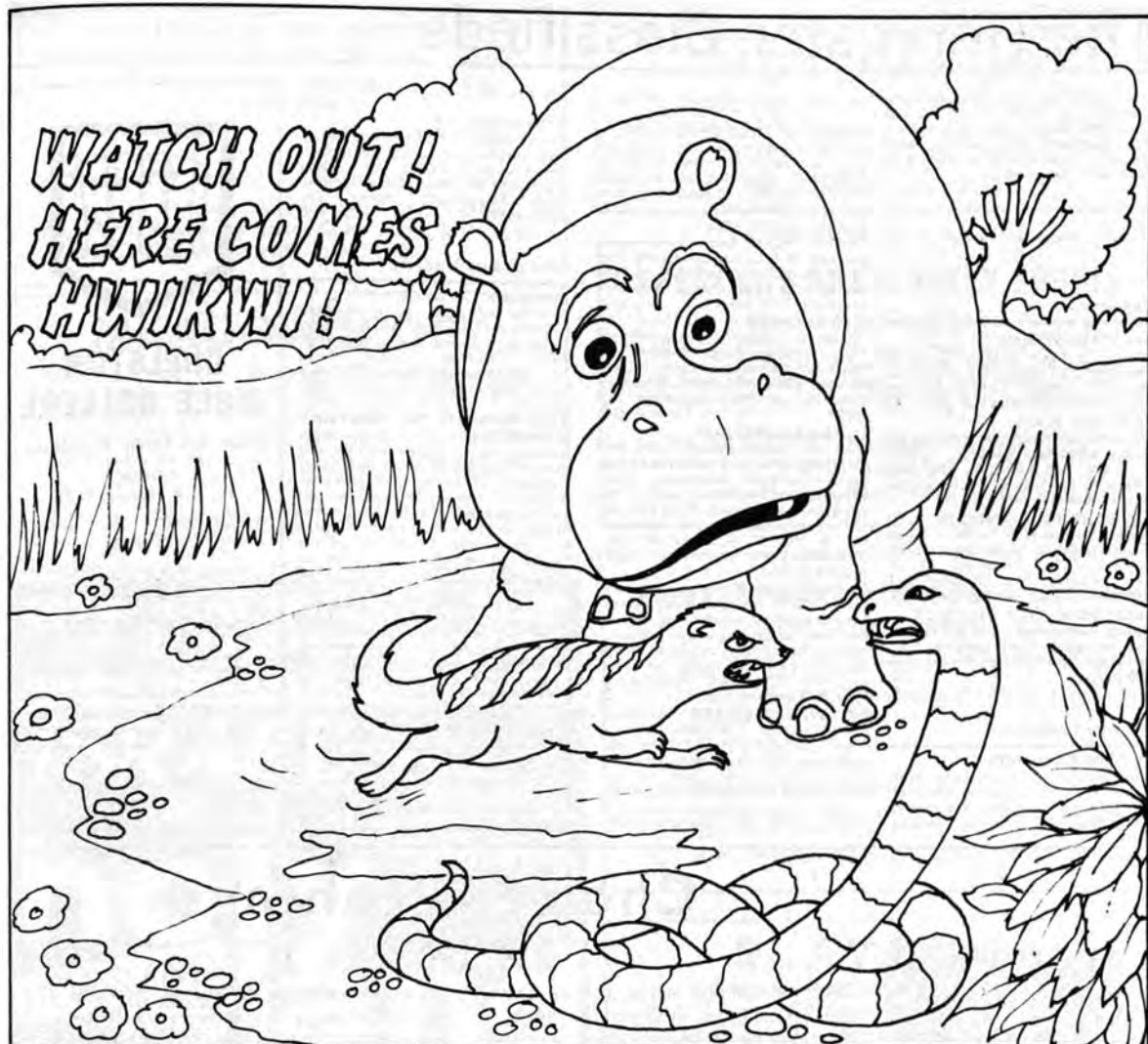
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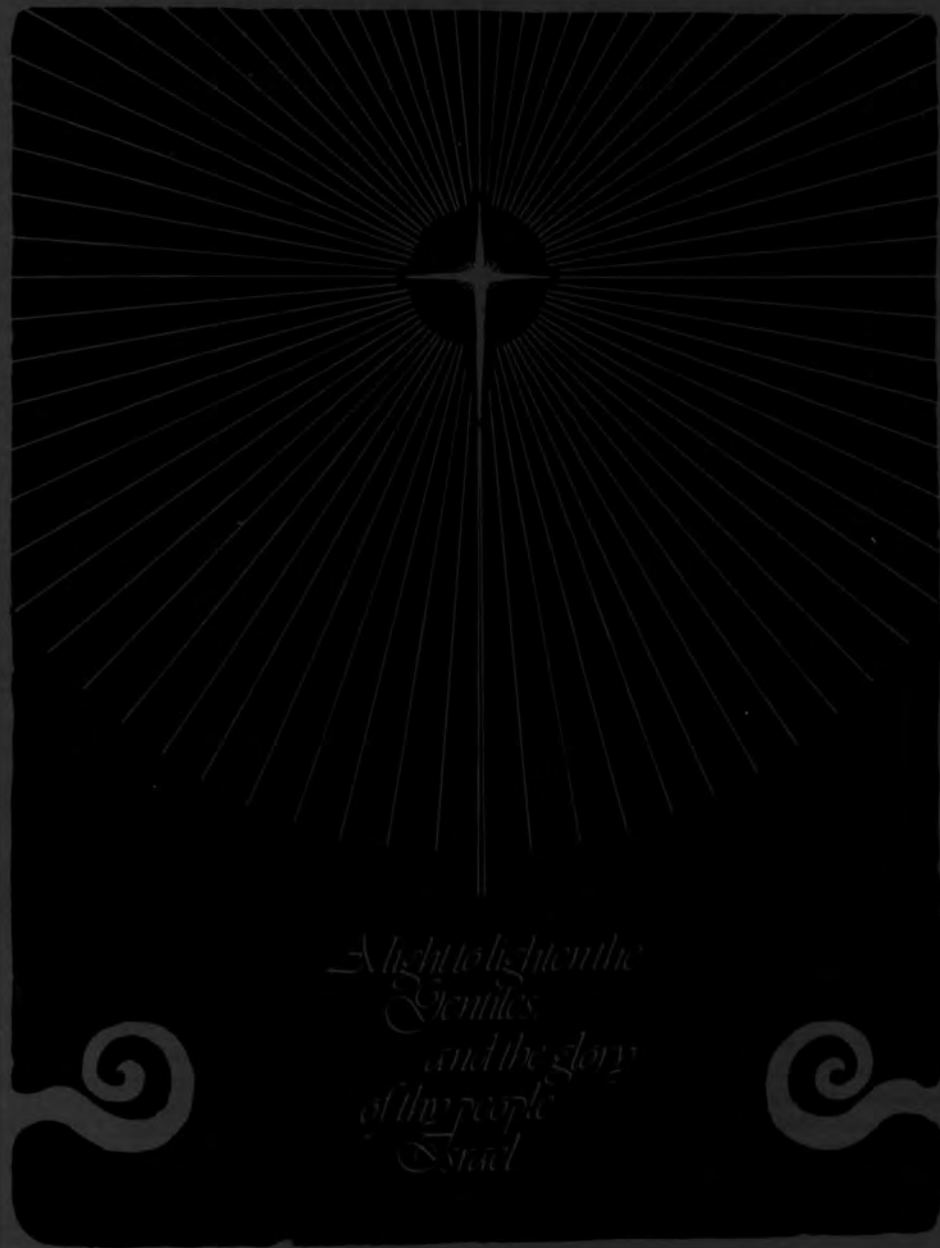
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LOUIS G. FORD  
The Man God Taught to Profit  
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# The Harvester



*A light to lighten the  
Gentiles  
and the glory  
of thy people  
Israel*

## MINISTERING TO BEREAVED

The tragic events in N. Ireland during the past year have highlighted the truth that God is always previous. He is first on the scene in the matter of our salvation. To the men of the 2nd Bn. Parachute Regiment He was first on the scene in sending His Word to numerous men before the tragic outrage at Warrenpoint that took many lives. Such events bringing an aftermath of tragedy have afforded Scripture Readers an opportunity of sharing with bereaved families how the Comfort of God may be truly known.

We thank all who have stood with us in prayer and by gift to ensure that hundreds, nay thousands of men and women in a strategic mission field have heard the Gospel during 1979, some for the first time in their lives. Converts are not counted but rather weighed!

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# The Harvester

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## Editorial

### Goodwill toward all?

Christmas, the season of goodwill. It is an old and hackneyed cliché; but the sentiment is none the worse for that. It is appropriate that the Editor should begin this last issue of the year 1979 by sending his sincere goodwill and his thanks to all his readers—and not least to those who have disagreed strongly with some of the things that he or his contributors may have said, but have nevertheless remained and borne with us, and lifted us up when our spirits might have flagged.

His freedom is something which any editor values as essential to the exercise of his craft; to ask an editor to surrender this for the sake of an 'official line', or in the interests of a party, or for any other reason, is to ask something which ought to be unthinkable. But an editor must also be prepared to allow correspondents a similar freedom: within the limits of literacy and decency, any correspondent writing in good faith ought to be entitled to his moment in print (as he is said to be entitled to his day in court.) For that reason, we have published letters whose contents have not been congenial to ourselves; but our respect for our public insists that they have their claim upon our space. (The balance is usually redressed by other contributors: that is the value of free expression of opinion).

This is not to say that there is not a type of controversial writing which ought not to see the light of day. We dubbed it 'evangelical pornography' in a distant issue: for it exercises a similar fascination and addiction over those susceptible to it. Anthony Norris Groves spoke of it as long ago as 1845: 'Instead of this being a day in which love "thinketh no evil", it seems to me a day in which man glories in paradoxes; shows how love not only exists, but that it is an eminent proof of it, to think nothing good, but everything evil of a brother; to diminish nought but exaggerate everything; to call nothing by a gentle name, but to designate the most ordinary acts by the most vituperative appellations'. If and when such material should appear in *The Harvester*, then (we trust) our readers will leave us in no doubt of their disapproval: for such glory as there might have been will have departed indeed.

We pass into a new year and a new decade. In it, the grace of God will not fail. □

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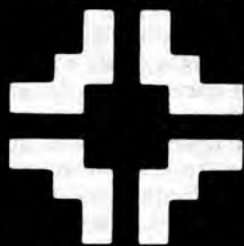
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# WALTER

# The Best Laid Schemes

## A Christmas Meditation

Kathleen White

*In place of her usual column, Kathleen White gives us this Christmas meditation.*

It was strange that winter how so many people found their lives turning out differently from what they had been expecting. Mary herself had been looking forward to her marriage with Joseph in a few month's time. Although her friends had been quick at first to point out the considerable gap in their ages she didn't let that influence her. She knew with a deep inner conviction that hers would be a quiet happiness, a security and support she had never experienced before.

The amazing message of the Angel Gabriel had momentarily disturbed and troubled her, like a

---

**The message had disturbed  
her . . . but her anxiety was  
met by the comfort of promise**

---

heavy stone thrown suddenly into a still, calm pool. But her anxiety had been allayed by the comfort of his promise. 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God.' Spontaneously she replied, 'I am the handmaid of the Lord: let it be to me according to your word.' After that, no remarks passed by the villagers behind her back had the power to upset her because she had accepted, without reservation, God's plan for her life.

It was perhaps more difficult for Joseph. All his thoughts and plans had been centred round Mary as he worked at the bench with his plane and saw and chisel. Then suddenly his bright bubble of happiness had burst as he realised that the virgin he loved so devotedly was carrying a child. Even then his concern was to spare her unwelcome publicity, perhaps by releasing her from their betrothal. Once more, though, God had unmistakably made plain the path of his duty. 'Do not fear to take Mary as your wife.'

Their personal relationship was relegated to second place; for the present his solemn priority was to care for her and the extra special baby. Any natural frustration was sublimated in his overwhelming tenderness to protect and shield her. While he painstakingly fashioned with his tools a tiny crib for Mary's baby, his heart was filled by a quiet dignity and thankfulness that he had been chosen to become the earthly guardian of that Holy Seed.

Far, far away in the East, some learned seers, reared in a completely different environment from the humble Jewish parents, were preparing to play their part in the historic drama soon to be enacted. When they had received the long-awaited signal,

they embarked on their tortuous journey to pay homage to the new-born baby king. Strong in faith, they followed the leading of the star in their search for the object of their pilgrimage.

On the surface, Herod's polite queries had appeared reasonable. At his suggestion, prompted by the advice given by the chief priests and scribes in Jerusalem, they set off once more to reach their goal in the ancient city of Bethlehem. 'It has been a long and weary journey,' they conferred with each other. 'We shall do well to report back to Herod once we have delivered our gifts and then return to our own country with all possible speed by the same road.'

But, man proposes and God disposes. Being warned by Him in a dream, they abandoned their preconceived plans. By-passing Jerusalem in a long detour, they travelled back home by a zig-zag route, often doubling back on their tracks to confuse any would-be pursuers. Yet the additional miles and the extra weeks spent in the hard leather saddles on the backs of the camels with their rolling gait seemed no burden at all to them, for they felt secure in the knowledge that they were obeying the commands of Almighty God and being used by Him to lay a false trail away from that precious baby.

For Herod, too, it was unsettling. It had almost seemed, prior to the arrival of the Magi, that he had finally dispensed with all the claimants to his throne. Not only had he killed his wife Mariamne and three of his sons, but scores of other innocent victims, unrelated to him by ties of blood. Stifling his remorse in a feverish programme of activity, he produced lavish spectacles of games and started on ambitious building schemes.

Just when he could relax and his suspicions were allayed, came the worst possible news that a baby

---

**Of them all, only Herod gained  
his own way . . .  
but it was a hollow victory**

---

had arrived in Bethlehem, purported to be born King of the Jews. He might have dismissed this as idle gossip had it come from the vulgar mob in Jerusalem but it was impossible to shrug off lightly a message from the three learned and eminent strangers who had appeared at his court.

Furious with jealousy and quenching the last flickerings of his warped conscience, Herod awaited their return with impatience. When they had failed to show up, bringing with them details of the infant prince, he erupted in an insane fit of anger. 'Kill all the children under the age of two years,' he shouted to his soldiers. The whole land was filled with the anguished wailing of bereaved mothers. He hadn't



even the satisfaction of knowing for sure that he had extinguished that vital spark of life. It was unthinkable—he, a mighty and wealthy king being held to ransom by an ignorant peasant's child. But he knew no peace of mind from that time onward.

And so, by the end of the winter, Mary and Joseph, as refugees in the land of Egypt, far from resenting their change of circumstances, tenderly watched over their baby son. Away in the East, the wise men often reminisced over their strange adventure and their narrow escape from unwittingly delivering the Holy Child to certain death.

Of them all, Herod was the only one to gain his own way; but it was a hollow victory. Haunted by his crimes, he awaited in his lonely palace the inevitable approach of the final victor, Death. Well aware that no-one would grieve at his passing, he gave orders that when the dreaded moment arrived, the principal Jews were to be imprisoned in the circus at Jericho and killed there so that at least the sound of mourning would be heard throughout the land.

But even in this last wicked design he was frustrated. It was the rejoicing of the prisoners who had been mercifully freed, not loud lamentation over them, that broke out in joyful celebration as his evil spirit was at last released from the decaying wreck of his loathsome body. □

## **The Campbell Reid Memorial Fund**

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Committee members are John Adkins, Archie Frame, Peter Lewis, Bob Mawer, Eleanor Reid, Dick Saunders and David Standing.

**Dick Saunders and the Way to Life  
wish Harvester readers a very**

**Happy Christmas**

---

**thank you for  
your prayers and support**

---

# Sidelights from the Old Testament

H. L. Ellison

## 3—The Fringe Members of the Family

As one tries to envisage the typical Old Testament family, one must remember that it had a considerable number of fringe members. For this there were a number of reasons, but the chief was that the possession of land was the real basis of social status.

We can perhaps best start with the Hebrew slave (*Exod. 21: 2-6*, cf. *Lev. 25: 39-43*, *Deut. 15: 12-15*). It is now generally agreed that 'Hebrew' in this context is not primarily an ethnic but a social term. It designates an Israelite, who for one reason or another had dropped out of organized society, the most common being the loss of his land. He could, of course, become a hired servant, but Christ's parable in *Mat. 20: 1-16* is sufficient evidence how precarious this could be in a time of unemployment, and *Job. 7: 1, 2* is some indication of how hard his life could be. *Deut. 24: 14, 15* is proof enough of how easily he could be defrauded. Many, therefore, preferred to sell themselves as slaves for six years, the purchase price probably being used to pay off the debts that had brought them to their desperate position. *Jer. 34: 8-17* shows, however, that to become a Hebrew slave could with an unscrupulous purchaser mean jumping from frying pan into fire.

It is usual in Christian devotion to regard *Exod. 21: 5, 6* (*Deut. 15: 16, 17*) as a beautiful type of a Christian's devotion to his God, and there is no reason why it should not be so used, but the rabbis regarded the piercing of the ear as a mark of shame, for the man who had heard the words of the Law proclaiming him a son of the Lord, e.g. *Deut. 14: 1*, should not have been willing to enter into lifelong slavery to any man. This interpretation is probably correct.

The selling of a daughter as a slave is taken for granted (*Exod. 21: 7-11*). This will have normally been to meet a debt: *II Ki. 4: 1-7* shows that sons could be taken for the same reason. Their position, however, was different. It is assumed that they would be fully incorporated into the family, either as wife of the family head or of one of his sons. Behind this seems to lie the concept that children were a woman's right.

*Lev. 25: 44-46* takes the possession of non-Israelite slaves for granted. In the course of time their descendants might become full Israelites and achieve freedom. In *Ezr. 1: 55-58* the sons of Solomon's slaves and the Nethinim (RSV 'temple servants') had slaves, presumably non-Israelites, as ancestors, but by the time of the return from exile they were obviously regarded as full members of society.

By New Testament times, among the pious, slavery had very largely vanished. The Pharisees laid such strict limitations on the use of a Jewish slave that most regarded them as more of a nuisance than anything else. Gentile slaves very soon grew

wise to the fact that they could improve their position by becoming Jews. Of course this did not apply to the rich and powerful who ignored the Pharisaic interpretation of the Law.

One of the more difficult words to translate is *na'ar* (feminine *na'arah*). The AV offers no less than seven renderings, ranging from 'babe' and 'boy' to 'young man' and 'servant'. Whatever the derivation of the word, its use seems to show that it was used indifferently of anyone who had not obtained full status in society. It was used of a son, or daughter, of the family who had not yet married.

The rather cold-blooded story in *II Sam. 2: 12-17* shows how little the life of one without wife and family was regarded, while in v. 21 of the same chapter Abner's suggestion that Abishai should seize one of the young men is hardly a sarcastic suggestion that this would be a better match for him than war-hardened Abner, but rather the recognition that no one would be likely to start a blood-feud for a young unmarried man.

I have elsewhere argued that Abraham's calling Isaac a lad (*na'ar*) in *Gen. 22: 5* is no indication of his age, but is simply an expression of his status in his father's house so long as he was unmarried. It is questionable whether his father would have had the right to sacrifice him once he had his own family.

When the word is used of a servant, who was presumably a slave, this is normally clear from the context. In many cases this also shows that no young man is intended, e.g. *Ruth 2: 5*, *II Sam. 16: 1*.

We should be careful where AV, and to a great extent RSV, uses the term 'young' in translating. In *Gen. 41: 12* Joseph was thirty at the time (*41: 46*), so all that *na'ar* indicated was that he was a slave. Since Joshua had been Israel's general in the fight against Amalek, it is doubtful whether he was as young as *Exod. 33: 11* might suggest. In *Ruth 2* there is no stress on the age of Boaz' workers, but simply on the fact that they were his servants. There is no point in going further along this line beyond stressing that we have obtained some glimpse into the measure in which the structure of Israelite society varied widely from ours and that the whole family concept, both in its wider and narrower form, had little resemblance to ours.

It could offer far greater stability and security, but, on the other hand, misused it could stifle a man's initiative and make it very difficult to follow God's call. It is clear that for Jeremiah his rejection by townsmen and family was his most painful experience (*Jer. 11: 21; 12: 6*). That is why the experience of exile and the loss of lands had to loosen up the family structure, though not to the extent of the modern West, before the Gospel with its demands on the individual could be truly heard. □

Leslie James

## Louis G. Ford—the man God taught to profit

Trade union friends, and I do have some, appear to doubt that a big-time business man can also be a humble follower of God: the marriage of Prosperity and Pilgrim is, at the most, no more than a high sounding sentiment. No doubt most honest people, who walk this world with their eyes open, will agree that the progeny of such a union is small, but there have been, are, and will be, the Abrahams, the Arimathaeas, the Frank Crossleys, the John Laings, and the Louis G. Fords.

Louis G. Ford. I seem to have always known the name, which is not surprising seeing his vans were trundling around our district from away back before I could remember. As I grew up I occasionally heard of the affluent, slightly enigmatical figure behind the name. He had built a hall at the Langney end of Eastbourne; that much I knew for we passed it whenever we went to town. According to some learned people, and there seemed to be quite a lot of them around, he was rather 'wide'. Long before those theologians uttered opinions, however, Cardinal Richelieu had said: 'If you give me six lines written by the most honest man, I will find something in them to hang him'. But at the time, of course, I was not even aware that the Cardinal had existed.

Be that as it may, however, there Louis G. Ford was, a vague part of the Eastbourne scene, living, for all I knew, in a castle as big as the Burlington Hotel. It was not until 1957 that I learned he lived rather more modestly.

We first met in an unexpected manner. I was supposedly in the aftermath—or still in the grip of—the strange malady known as *dementia praecox*, schizophrenia to the layman, Jekyll and Hyde to the greatest psychoanalyst of them all—Robert Louis Stevenson. Whether I was really a schizophrenic or being interfered with by an evil spirit we will not discuss, for this story is of a greater than I. Suffice it to say I was low. The man to whom I could tell odd secrets, George Pilbeam of Three Cups, had passed on, and his loss was not easily compensated. Then one day a Covenanter leader at Hailsham Church of England suggested that St. Anthony's Hall in Seaside might hold the key. He was either very wise or led of the Spirit—possibly both—for I did find help and Louis G. Ford, himself, was immediately a friend, and that at a time when friends were not exactly queuing up. The media have nourished, might have even engendered, an ill-favoured infant who has grown into something of a monster. Its name is Generation Gap. Louis G. Ford was old enough to be my grandfather with a bit to spare, and the only gap between us was one of intelligence: he had more brains, but I was hardly to blame for that.

At first sight he reminded me of my uncle, the late Aaron Porter. Both were unassuming with that rather

disconcerting *I am sizing you up* kind of look. Visions they undoubtedly had, but neither would be sucked in by vague generalisations or abstractions. Both looked as if they had made a lot of money, and would make a deal more before they closed the books. That is where the likeness ended. The superficial prattler who sought to impress Uncle Aaron might have saved something on his fare, while Louis G. Ford for his part would not welcome anyone who knew all about God and what He would do

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### Is the marriage of Prosperity and Pilgrim no more than a high-sounding sentiment?

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in every circumstance, and, after all, if you are that clever you don't need much assistance, not from ordinary mortals anyway. I was always at home with Louis G. Ford, never altogether with my uncle. But then, although a favoured child of Prosperity, Uncle Aaron was no offspring of Pilgrim.

We might have known more of Louis George Ford, L.G.F. to most who knew him, if he had kept a diary, but as he was obviously too busy to do so we have to rely upon friends for information, mainly Mr. Eric Ford, his son, Mrs. Kathleen Ford, his widow, and Mr. and Mrs. Jagot of Langney. From these sources we learn that he was born on 1st August 1879 at Mortimer in Berkshire, the first of two children of Andrew and Ann Ford—and as it happened, just under two months before John Laing was born in Carlisle. When she married Andrew, Ann was the widow of a Mr. Lamdin with quite a large family of her own, with the result that Louis and his sister Cicely were blessed with several half-brothers, who, if an old photograph is anything to go by, look as determined a bunch of young Calvinists as you could wish to meet.

When he left school at fourteen our hero joined the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway. There he stands, fixed in one of those remarkably clear ancient photographs, among his colleagues on the platform of Sheffield Park Station, which is now part of the famous *Bluebell Line*. Officially he was a booking-clerk, but he is dressed in the same smart uniform as the rest, and as he stares at us from under his peaked cap, we get an uncanny feeling that here is a lad who might be going places. He would not go far on his salary of ten shillings a week (50p); that was for sure. His half-brother, Arthur Lamdin, who appears to have hovered on the borders of business genius himself, obviously thought he had prospects. He soon persuaded Louis that the Railway held no future for a boy with ambition, and found him a job with a Bexhill ironmonger. His next



step proved to be a significant one: he joined Esau Hubbard, Ironmonger, of Junction Road, Eastbourne. Now whatever value this particular Esau placed upon his birthright we are not told, but he was certainly an ironmonger of uncertain temper. Not that small things like that hindered young Louis, for in 1900 he married Esau's daughter, Florence Catherine Hubbard, known to her friends, of whom she had a considerable number, as *Dolly*. She must have been quite a girl for throughout their long life together she was to keep pace with one of the most remarkable men, certainly one of the busiest, some of us ever met. Incidentally, Eastbourne was given a sharp reminder of the redoubtable Esau during the last war when a Luftwaffe tip-and-runner bombed Junction Road. After the dust settled, there in large letters uncovered from the past, was the sign, *Esau Hubbard, Ironmonger*.

Just when L.G.F. was converted is uncertain, except that it was early in life. We know that during his ten or eleven years at Hubbards he met with an Exclusive branch of the Plymouths known as the *Tunbridge Wells Brethren*, probably because their headquarters was in Tunbridge Wells. The Eastbourne Assembly met in an *upper room* in Station Street. They had leanings towards Kelly, and in later years, when L.G.F. had gone elsewhere, they joined the Kelly Brethren.

Around 1910-11 Esau Hubbard died and the business changed hands. After spending a short time with the new owner, Louis moved to Bromley in Kent where he had been offered a post as manager at Oscar Jones, Ironmonger. He now had four children, and might have stayed with Oscar, but one day he heard that a number of shops under construction near Eastbourne Railway Station would be available to rent when completed. After much prayer Louis and Florence decided to have a go. So it was one morning in January 1912 that Louis G. Ford, Ironmongers, set up business at No. 12 Station Parade, opposite the General Post Office. A customer was waiting for him to take down the shutters. He opened at 8 a.m., and five minutes later the first five shillings (25 p) was in the till! Now five shillings was a little more than loose change at a time when a loaf cost 2½d (1p), coal was 30 shillings (£1.50) a ton, and income tax, for the rare birds who paid it, cruised along comfortably at one shilling and two pence (6p) in the pound! More significant from our beginner's point of view would have been the fact that his first customer was a well known haulage contractor. His Heavenly Father had underwritten the enterprise. A reflective reader might also suppose that this modest, straight-dealing, little Exclusive had already built up a large balance of goodwill with the local building industry during his eleven or so years at Hubbards. So was planted an insignificant looking little acorn which was to grow into one of the biggest trees of its kind in England. By the founder's decease, in 1968, there were nearly thirty branches

operating. This is not to be wondered at for a business where God, Himself, is President of the Board, can't lose. He was always consulted before major decisions were taken, and there was not an A.G.M. or business conference which did not commence with prayer. Whether this is so today we are not certain, for the Company is now part of a major industrial Group, and has been since 1969.

But let us leave the business, for there it is spread over several counties for everyone to see. Let us rather consider what we feel L.G.F. would prefer us to consider: his place in Eastbourne and his permanent impact upon the town and district.

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### ... this assembly of Exclusives was doing things we would have thought Exclusives incapable of doing

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Around the time he returned to Eastbourne the Exclusives had moved, or were about to move, to Junction Road. The Fords continued to meet with them, and when the First World War broke out L.G.F. became very active among the soldiers who were stationed along the South East Coast which, as always, was a launching pad for France. This was probably where his active witness began. He developed into an enthusiastic open air preacher, and Eric can remember as a boy going with him and a group of Exclusives in the summer months to preach at the corner of Gildridge Road, Cornfield Road, and near the large oak which stood where the War Memorial now stands in Memorial Square. They did not lack audiences for, apart from the troops, by 1914 Eastbourne was already a popular seaside resort. This extraordinary group of Exclusives also used to witness outside their own place of worship in Junction Road, and invite the soldiers in! L.G.F. and Florence made a few life-long friends in this way; Eric particularly remembers two young Canadians who were stationed at Newhaven. One was a useful open air preacher, and the other a fine singer; both belonged to Canadian Exclusive Assemblies, and both survived the war. Really this Assembly of Exclusives was doing things we would have thought Exclusives incapable of doing. They never preached on the sea front, however, for those positions had been allocated to others of a more liberal persuasion. After all, the pedigree Plymouth position had to be maintained. But let us Open Brethren admit, however grudgingly, they were *great* people.

As the war, which was supposed to have been over by Christmas, or at least shortly after, ground on, and the fields of France were churned from the *rich earth* of poor Rupert Brooke to the red quagmires of Wilfred Owen, Louis joined the Non-Combatant Corps, that much maligned outfit where you could be blasted into eternity while crawling into the Flanders mud as a stretcher bearer, and still registered *conchie yellow* by the bespangled gentle-

men sitting far away on tribunals or sticking pins in maps. There, there; it is surprising what a little propaganda can do, and in those patriotic days, when the hunt was in full cry for Kaiser Bill, things were rough—very rough indeed for the N.C.C. Great men from all walks of life were in their ranks: the sanctified Christian to the left wing atheist; the philosopher to the labourer. They were given the lousiest jobs, and in some cases the most blatant offences could be committed against them with impunity. It was into this hotch-potch of humanity that Louis, who was now thirty-eight, was thrown, and he found therein a band of true believers knit together by an invincible conviction of solidarity. Perhaps to his astonishment he also discovered they were not all Exclusives.

Did this experience inject doubts into the mind of an astute thinker? We do not know, but one thing is certain: by the late 1920s L.G.F., and presumably Florence, had grown completely disillusioned with the Exclusive position. After worshipping in various places including their own home, Louis began to be increasingly aware of the need of a Gospel work in the Seaside area. He was one of those men of whom Lawrence of Arabia tells us who *dream with their eyes open*, and as his dream was to the glory of God, it finally came to fruition. The work began in an ex-Royal Naval Air Service hut at Langney. Then the Duke of Devonshire donated a site in the St. Anthony's area, and on it L.G.F. erected St. Anthony's Hall. It was designed by Hugh Hubbard Ford F.R.I.B.A., one of the founder's sons. It was opened in 1930, and today is one of the four Open Assemblies in Eastbourne. How many have found Christ in the building eternity alone will tell. Some prominent names in the Evangelical world have stood on its platform, and it was always the founder's pleasure to recall that Billy Graham had preached there when he was comparatively unknown. In fact, L.G.F. was one of the sponsors of the organisation which first invited the famous evangelist to this country.

The amount of work Louis G. Ford got through staggers lesser mortals. He and Dolly ran an open house for anyone who meant business with God, and L.G.F. appears to have possessed a knack of sorting out those who did not mean business. He engaged in hospital visitation, local preaching, and even a holiday was just another opportunity to distribute tracts. Many of his activities were of national importance: he was for many years treasurer of *British Youth for Christ*, took an active part in *The Gideons International*, was a founder member of *The Society for the Distribution of the Holy Scriptures to the Jews*, and *The Eastbourne Christian and Professional Men's Association*. He became president of the latter in 1960. If he can observe the present scene he will be more than a little pleased to see his granddaughter, Rosemary, married to the British president of the Gideons.

During 1949 Florence Ford passed on, and Louis subsequently married Kathleen Church from Bath, who was his companion in his declining years.

There can be little doubt that Louis G. Ford exerted an influence upon Eastbourne as notable as any in modern times, particularly upon the evangelical life of the town. From the number of lesser people we have seen elevated, we can say without much fear of contradiction that honours must have come his way had he sought them. He did not seek them, for he was a citizen of no mean city whose mansions are built of a more durable fabric than the castles in the air of men. He passed into those mansions on

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... his love for Jesus  
Christ pervaded every department  
of life ...

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September 4th, 1968, in his ninetieth year. To-day the communion cups, presented by the firm, remind all of us at St. Anthony's of the grand old friend who worshipped among us not so long since.

One thing more I am sure he would like remembered: at his passing he was the oldest surviving member of *The Institute of Heating and Ventilating Engineers*.

During his memorial service George Cummings said among other things: 'As I have been thinking of Mr. Ford as I knew him during the twenty-one years or so of my ministry in Eastbourne, there is one text that has come particularly to mind. . . "He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith" . . . as we recall him now, and as each of us tries to remember that about him that we know best, we would all agree that for him life was not a mere series of pigeon holes, one of them marked "business," another marked "home", another marked "social life" or "church life" as if they were all separate compartments of life . . . spiritual things were always such a priority to him that his love for Jesus Christ pervaded every department of life. . . I always felt that Mr. Ford was unimpressed by business success, and here he differs from so many who are engaged in the world of business as we know it today, unimpressed by the great success that he enjoyed. He was not interested in financial rewards as such. There was always a feeling of disinterest, indeed almost detachment from this side of business life, and I know I am not exaggerating the position at all this morning when I say that success never spoilt him . . . it seemed to me indeed that when I first came to Eastbourne, and began to be involved in various aspects of Christian work, that Mr. Louis Ford was always there.'

As a person who has spent most of his adult life in government service, I knew little of L.G.F. in his business sphere, and did not particularly want to; I knew him as a grand old friend who helped me when I needed it, and who gave me further evidence that Jesus Christ is no longer in the tomb, but walking

on earth in the company of men. I last heard my old friend preach when he was around eighty. Like George Pilbeam, he was not a powerful preacher, but the value of the words are surely in the personality of the person who utters them. Eloquent, powerful men I heard often enough, until sometimes, like Sydney Smith, I could have welcomed a few stammerers. L.G.F.'s power and eloquence was in his life, and to some at least that spoke a good deal louder than words. He was still writing to me up until 1967. It is evident that he retained his sense of humour to the end. Mrs. Kathleen Ford tells us: 'I remember . . . bending over him early one morning to see if he were awake; he said, with his eyes half open, "He's still here". Thinking he might have been dreaming, I asked, "Who is still here?" After a pause came the reply—"L.G.F."!'

There is so much more to be said of Louis G. Ford, but to do so at this juncture might tempt us to strain after effect, and to that he would never have been a party. Therefore, let us say *au revoir* with a quotation used by Mr. Alan Walder at his funeral service: 'Lord when thou seest that my work is done let me not linger on with fading power adown the weary years . . . a workless worker in a world of work, but with a word just bid me home and I will come right gladly, yes right gladly will I come.' □

"There are no problems of old age" she said "but there are



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## Professor Bruce Asks

The reading of Stanley Linton's letter in the September issue of *The Harvester* confirms me in the belief that a great deal of dogmatism, maintenance of entrenched positions, and resistance to change can be put down to a deep-rooted and unsuspected insecurity. There is nothing in Brethren principles as such that encourages these attitudes: the innovations that marked the beginning of the movement must have been breath-takingly radical. When I was in my teens the reading of a book by G. H. Lang convinced me that when people make a deliberate effort to reproduce the pattern of first-century Christianity, their successors in due course will reproduce the pattern of second-century Christianity; and reactions to Montanism in the second century have their counterpart in reactions to the charismatic movement today. My question therefore is this: should we not have more ministry designed to deal helpfully with insecurity and its causes, even when those for whom it is provided do not at first realize their need of it?

Correspondence, please, to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX by 15 December.

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# The Holy Trinity

J. E. Todd

The doctrine of the Holy Trinity seems to be something of a mystery to many Christians; whereas to many heretics it seems to be rather ridiculous. Perhaps both the mystery and the supposed folly of the doctrine are best expressed in the popular (but quite untheological) statement that the doctrine of the Trinity is, 'God is three persons in one person'; the mystery being how three can be one and one be three, and the folly being that the statement is a flat contradiction of itself.

When we consider the doctrine of the Trinity, we are considering the very nature of God. In considering such a subject, certain things must be borne in mind.

First, the nature of God is unique. When statements are made that the Trinity is like such-and-such, we know that we are on the wrong track, because the nature of God is unlike anything else in the universe. God is the sole eternal spirit, all else is created.

## To some a mystery . . . to others ridiculous

Second, out of the resources of our own experience and knowledge, we human beings know nothing about God. 'The world did not know God through wisdom' (*1 Cor. 1: 21 RSV*); 'No one has ever seen God' (*John 1: 18*); 'Who alone has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has ever seen or can see' (*1 Tim. 6: 16*). For us to express opinions about the nature of God is merely guesswork, a sheer waste of time and mental effort.

Third, we are entirely dependent upon revelation for our knowledge of God and the nature of His being. It is only because God has graciously chosen to reveal Himself to mankind, that we have any knowledge of Him at all. Therefore the nature of God comes to us as objective truth; we cannot manipulate this truth to better fit our 'understanding' of things. If we are not satisfied with the nature of God when He reveals it to us, then we must remain unsatisfied! This desire to rationalise the doctrine of the Trinity as revealed in scripture, to make it more acceptable to human reason, is the cause of all heresy on this subject.

Fourth, we are dealing with a subject which passes out of the range of our understanding. This is the only sense in which mystery attaches itself to the doctrine of the Trinity. If the human intellect could comprehend the nature of God, then God would be very small indeed! Some have foolishly concluded that if a doctrine cannot be fully comprehended by the human mind, then the doctrine is not true. Intellectual arrogance indeed! Does the fact that some people cannot understand algebra, disprove the science of mathematics?

What precisely is the doctrine of the Trinity? It is not often realised that the doctrine of the Trinity is the combination of three doctrines. These are, there is one God, the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ and the personality of the Holy Spirit. If these three doctrines are taught in scripture, then it follows that God has a triune nature. For if both the Son and the Spirit have personality and deity, they must be equal to the Father, and yet the oneness of God must be preserved. The doctrine of the Trinity may be stated thus; there is one God, and He eternally exists in the form of three persons, namely the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The three persons are a unity but not identical with each other, they are distinct from each other but not separated. 'The name (singular) of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' (*Mat. 28: 19*).

In describing the unique nature of God, because it is unique, our ordinary language does not contain the words necessary to precisely describe such a subject. Therefore words are pressed into service, but with a specialised meaning attached to them. The word 'person' is not only used in a way somewhat different from its common use, but it is also used twice in connection with the Trinity and each time with a different specialised meaning. No wonder there is confusion!

In common usage the word 'person' means an individual human being, intelligent and reflective. A personality entirely separate from all other persons and at unity with itself. The person comes into existence at birth and is located in a body.

First, in connection with the Trinity, the word person is used of the entire Godhead, when it is said that God is a person. By this is meant that God is an intelligent being separate from all other intelligent beings of His Creation. But we do not mean that God is localised in a body, for He is an omnipresent Spirit. Nor do we mean in any way to deny His eternal existence. Nor do we necessarily mean that His nature must only be a unity.

Second, when we use the word 'person' of the individual members of the Godhead, again we mean that they are intelligent beings having their own distinct personality. But we do not mean that they are entirely separated entities.

To sum up the meaning of the doctrine of the Trinity, and to avoid the ambiguity of the word person, we may speak as follows. That there is one God, who is an intelligent being; within this unity exists three distinct beings, each one possessing full deity; distinct from each other, that is not identical; distinct from each other, but not separate from each other so as to destroy the unity of the one divine nature.

But does the Bible in fact teach these three doctrines which together form the doctrine of the

## Trinity?

The Bible teaches that there is one God. Of all the strange doctrines which heretics have sought to fasten on to scripture, polytheism is not one of them.

'The Lord is God; there is no other besides him' (Deut. 4: 35).

'The Lord our God is one Lord' (Deut. 6: 4).

'I am the Lord, and there is no other' (Isa. 45: 18).

'There is no God but one. . . There is one God' (I Cor. 8: 4-6).

The deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, that is that He is truly God, is also taught in scripture. This fact is best demonstrated by simply quoting the scriptural statements.

'The Word was God. . . The Word became flesh' (John 1: 1 and 14).

'The only God' (John 1: 18, footnote).

'Honour the Son, even as they honour the Father' (John 5: 23).

'I and the Father are one. . . Make yourself God' (John 10: 30 and 33).

'He who sees me sees him who sent me' (John 12: 45).

'He who has seen me has seen the Father' (John 14: 9).

'My Lord and my God!' (John 20: 28).

'Christ, who is God over all' (Rom. 9: 5, footnote).

'Christ, who is the likeness of God' (II Cor. 4: 4).

'The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ' (II Cor. 4: 6).

'God was in Christ' (II Cor. 5: 19).

'He was in the form of God . . . equality with God' (Phil. 2: 6).

'He is the image of the invisible God' (Col. 1: 15).

'In him the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily' (Col. 2: 9).

'God was manifested in the flesh' (I Tim. 3: 16, footnote).

'Our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ' (Titus 2: 13).

'He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature. . . Thy throne, O God' (Heb. 1: 3 and 8).

'Our God and Saviour Jesus Christ' (II Pet. 1: 1).

'This is the true God' (I John 5: 20).

The Bible also teaches that the Holy Spirit is a person.

But first a much misunderstood point must be cleared up. Although the English language is much maligned, yet it is quite logical in the gender of nouns. The feminine gender is reserved for female members of the human race and the animal kingdom, and the masculine gender for the males. All other nouns, being neuter objects, are referred to as 'it'. However, other languages are not so logical. In French for example, the book is masculine (le livre) and the door is feminine (la porte)! In the original Greek of the New Testament, nouns are divided into

three genders, masculine, feminine and neuter. The word for spirit (*pneuma*), which also means wind or breath, happens to be a neuter noun. Therefore according to the rules of grammar, the neuter pronoun 'it' must be used in the place of the noun 'spirit', as the pronoun must always be the same gender as the noun, e.g. Rom. 8: 16 A.V. But as the Greek word for wind or spirit happens to be a neuter noun, this does not deny the personality of the Holy Spirit. The nature of the Holy Spirit is *not* determined by the rules of Greek grammar. For, daring to state the obvious, the eternal Spirit of God existed before any language or grammar was formulated. Therefore in English translations of the New Testament the references to the Holy Spirit as 'it' are grammatically correct, but tell us nothing of the nature of the Holy Spirit. The point is further illustrated when the Holy Spirit is referred to as 'the Comforter' (AV) or 'the Counsellor' (RSV), the original Greek word being a masculine noun (*paraklētos*). So in John 15: 26, the masculine demonstrative pronoun is used (*ekeinos*, literally 'this one'),

## The nature of the Holy Spirit is not determined by the rules of Greek grammar

translated 'he'. But the rules of grammar are deliberately broken in John 16: 13 and 14, when the Spirit of truth (neuter) is referred to by the same masculine demonstrative pronoun, 'Howbeit when he' (v. 13, AV) and 'He shall glorify me' (v. 14 AV).

The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit is a person, because the Holy Scriptures always refer to Him as such.

The Holy Spirit speaks, 'The Holy Spirit said' (Acts 13: 2, also 8: 29 and 10: 19 etc.).

He sends forth and restrains His ministers, 'Rise and go' (Acts 10: 20), 'Having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit' (Acts 16: 6-7).

He exercises His own will 'The same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as He wills' (I Cor. 12: 11).

He teaches, 'Taught by the Spirit' (I Cor. 2: 13, also Luke 12: 12, John 14: 26 and 16: 8).

He can be grieved (Eph. 4: 30) and He can be lied to (Acts 5: 3).

To attribute these things to a mere influence is to reduce scripture to the level of nonsense.

Once it is accepted that the scriptures teach the unity of God, the deity of Christ and the personality of the Holy Spirit, an obvious problem must be faced. How can there be one God and yet there are three persons possessing full deity? There are three possible ways of avoiding this apparent contradiction.

First, to deny outright the unity of God and accept three gods. This alternative has never been taken up in the face of the scriptural teaching of the unity of God. 'There is no God but one' (I Cor. 8: 4).

Second, to down grade the Son and the Spirit in some way to less than deity and so leave the Father as the one God. This has always been the alternative of heresy. Some have down graded Christ to being man alone (Unitarianism). Others have placed Christ as a created being (Jehovah's Witnesses), therefore less than divine in the full sense of that word. Some have denied the personality of the Holy Spirit (Christadelphians and Jehovah's Witnesses). Others have denied the very existence of the Son and the Spirit, and said these are merely manifestations of the Father, this is the old heresy of Sabellianism. Yet others, as reportedly United Pentecostal Church of America, believe that Jesus Christ alone is God, and that 'Father' and 'Holy Spirit' are merely his extra titles. But all these efforts deny the scriptural teachings of the deity of Christ and/or the personality of the Holy Spirit.

Third, the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which has always been the mainstream teaching of the Christian Church. This is to accept the revelations of the teachings of scripture, without any attempt to rationalise these to square with human 'logic': thus accepting that there is one God who eternally exists in the form of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, each of whom possesses the full attributes of deity.

This is as far as we can go; to go beyond divine revelation is to enter the realm of human speculation. A dangerous realm indeed in matters theological!

But one obvious question remains to be answered. Does it matter? Were the long and bitter theological battles fought out in this arena really necessary? Yes. The vital Christian doctrines of the atonement and the new birth rest upon the foundation of the Holy Trinity. This is practically demonstrated in that those religious groups which deny the Trinity also deny both the assurance of salvation and the new birth. This is true of the Unitarians, the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Christadelphians and the Mormons.

The New Testament doctrine of the atonement is based upon the triune nature of God. God forgives sin, He does not just forget it or ignore it. God can only forgive sin in a manner which harmonises with His own law. For God's law is an expression of His own nature, and He cannot deny Himself. Therefore God can only forgive sin after the penalty demanded by the broken law has been paid. If the penalty is borne by the sinner himself it would mean eternal punishment without hope of salvation. If the penalty is borne by a third party, that is an angel, Satan or any created being, instead of the sinner, this would be a contradiction of the very justice which the law was created to uphold. Only God, the one who created the law, the one who upholds the law, the one who has been sinned against, only God could act. In the person of the Son, God became a man, born under the law, lived to keep the law and uncondemned he died to bear the penalty instead of his fellow human beings who had broken the law.

Therefore at the cross God's justice is exhibited in

that the penalty demanded by the law has been paid. God's love is expressed in that the judgment is removed from the repentant and believing sinner. God's mercy is extended in that the opportunity of salvation is available for all mankind.

The vital doctrine of regeneration is also based on the doctrine of the Trinity. If the Holy Spirit is not a person, he could not give a new nature to us (*John 3: 6*). If the Holy Spirit is not God, he could not give a divine nature to us, 'Partakers of the divine nature' (*II Peter 1: 4*), and so making us children of God.

These two doctrines, the forgiveness of sins and the new birth, are the very essence of the Christian gospel. This shows how absolutely vital the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is in practical terms. The doctrine of the Holy Trinity is not mere intellectual fodder for theological debate, but a foundational truth delivered to the saints. 'The faith which was once for all delivered to the saints' (*Jude 3*). □

## The Accountants' Christian Fellowship

The objects of the Fellowship are to promote fellowship among Christians preparing for and engaged in accountancy and thus to seek to extend the Kingdom of God.

The programme arranged for 1979/80 includes three evening discussion meetings on practical subjects:-

- (a) Oct. 9 Is 'Profit a dirty word'?
  - (b) Dec. 6 Are business ethics the law of the jungle?
  - (c) Apr. 24 Is artificial tax avoidance a moral issue?
- (The speaker here is the well-known expert and broadcaster, Halmer Hudson).

The meetings are being held in St. Edmund's Hall, George Yard, Lombard Street, London EC3. Discussion begins at 5.30 p.m. and ends about 7.30. Coffee and biscuits are available beforehand.

In addition to these arrangements, meetings for Bible study and prayer are held at 1.00 p.m. on the first working Monday of each month, except July, August and September. A City meeting is held at the Church of St. Peter-upon-Cornhill, London EC3 and a West End meeting in the Board Room of the Bible Reading Fellowship, 2 Elizabeth Street, London SW1 (near Victoria Coach Station).

Members, non-members and their friends will be very welcome at all these meetings.

Membership is open to all who are engaged in or studying accountancy in all its fields. Forms and information are available from the Membership Secretary, R. J. Carter, 3 Ashley Court, 17 Hayne Road, Beckenham, Kent (01-650-0487) (01-434-1533).



Correspondence for this page should be sent to Mr. Peter Cousins, M.A., B.D.,  
The Paternoster Press Ltd., 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW marked 'Harvester Question Page'

## Question and Answer, with Peter Cousins

### Representations of Deity

#### Question 162

*It is increasingly common for the deity to be represented in dramatic presentations of one kind and another. Many people find it hard to accept even paintings and sculptures showing the Lord Jesus—but is not the use of an actor going altogether too far?*

This question raises quite a number of issues. The first is that since the Sinai Covenant and the Second Commandment ('You shall not make yourself a graven image or any likeness . . .'), the Incarnation has taken place. The 'risk' of being represented in some way has, so to speak, been taken by God. To depict the Man from Galilee is not at all the same thing as attempting to portray what Isaac Watts refers to as 'the Eternal One'. In this respect, the Christian position is bound to differ significantly from that taken by the Jew or the Moslem.

Another important point is often overlooked by people who are concerned for the strict observance of *Exodus 20: 4*. This verse forbids the making of any representation of anything in the whole of creation. If it were interpreted in the same simplistic manner as some people would wish us to apply to Scripture generally, then no Christian would dare confess to owning a landscape picture, or even a calendar with three kittens in a basket! Once again, Jewish and Moslem art show the effect of such an interpretation although even the Old Testament allows for the portrayal of pomegranates. The answer to this problem (if it appears as one) is found in *Exodus 20: 5*—the apparent veto on representational art is in fact a prohibition of idolatry. What is forbidden is the making of a representation with a view to worshipping it. Few readers of this page are likely to be involved in a situation where such a danger need be taken seriously. Yet, idolatry apart, no prohibition is found in Scripture.

There is also a certain ambiguity in the term 'representation of deity'. It is not uncommon for the Trinity to be visually represented by a triangle but this practice would scarcely be described as making a 'representation of deity'. The triangle is merely a sign or a symbol—no one would suggest that it represents God in any other sense than this. Perhaps the situation is not very different when somebody draws a dove to 'represent' the Holy Spirit. And if, in a mediaeval miracle play (to choose an example which has been neutralised by time!) God the Father is shown as a figure standing at the top of a ladder, then it is doubtful whether anybody ever believed that God really looked like that. (Any more, for that matter, than anybody

really thinks that God speaks with the same accent as those we hear reading the Scriptures in public worship.)

All this is not to imply that no problems are raised by the use of sacred pictures, images and drama. Our worship and our apprehension of God can very easily be distorted so that we come to depend, for example, on images or a certain kind of music, or even pre-17th century language. But I remain unconvinced that these arguments have much to do with, for example, a Sunday School nativity play. Or are 'actors' more dangerous than sculptures and pictures?

### The Son of Man—Individual or Group?

#### Question 163

*What ground is there for the suggestion, which I have heard, that the title 'Son of Man' is not to be understood of an individual but refers to the church, or to the Lord Jesus and his disciples?*

Questions about the meaning of this title are not easy to answer. To understand why the Lord Jesus used it of himself we should need to know both what it would imply to his hearers in Palestine in the 1st century and also how far his own understanding of the term differed from that which was current at the time. Certainly it occurs in a book called the *Similitudes of Enoch* (1 Enoch 37-71) and there the Son of Man is a supernatural heavenly being destined to be revealed as judge at the end. In *Psalms 8: 4* the term simply refers to man, seen as frail and insignificant yet given divine authority.

However, it seems more likely that Our Lord's use was based upon *Daniel 7*. Here we find four beasts who stand for successive Gentile powers which dominate God's people. The fact that they are represented as beasts implies their inhumanity and cruelty. One of them is said to have made war against the people of God and to have defeated them (v. 21, 25). The vision comes to a climax when the beasts are defeated and replaced by a human figure ('a son of man') who is then given authority by God himself to rule over the earth. This transaction, described in *Daniel 7: 13, 14*, is referred to in v. 22 as the time when God's people receive a verdict in their favour and are given kingly authority. (See also v. 27.)

We should probably be wrong, however, to imagine that the Son of Man must be either an individual or a group. Although the four beasts described as 'four kings' in v. 17, the fourth one, with its various forms, obviously stands for a number of kings (v. 24), so there is room for both interpretations.

## Reports of Two Conferences

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### Winchester

#### Good News for Today's World?

*Colin Pratt writes on the Winchester Conference, 7th-9th September 1979*

If it is true that this year's conference may have been the last such to be held at Winchester, then the series has certainly ended on a high note. Indeed it seems rather incongruous to be writing a report on a conference in which the overwhelming message was to get out and do something about what we had heard, rather than just add to our stock of knowledge. As I write now, a few weeks after the event I find myself wondering whether the message got across to me...

The question mark in the conference title *Good News for Today's World?* was not without significance. In the sub-title the organisers posed the additional question; Why do we seem ineffective in our attempts to bring people to God? Ernest Oliver, secretary of the Evangelical Missionary Association, spoke of the tremendous success and growth of the Church in many parts of the Third World today. The picture he painted was very encouraging, but threw into stark contrast the lack of widespread

success in our own country. Charles Martin, Principal of a Sixth Form College, discussed the state of present society in Britain, the culture of the world in which we have to communicate the gospel. The picture was the all too familiar and bleak one of man struggling without God, but he made the telling point that by patterns of thought and life-style, Christians are in a difficult position to communicate with their fellow men. He suggested that we need to do some homework to understand how people feel and think today, particularly the underprivileged, if we are to communicate the gospel effectively to them. However, it was left to Brian Tatford, who has been doing missionary work in France for many years, and particularly youth work, to give the punch to the conference. With great enthusiasm he put over the need for a dynamic Christian life-style and an aggressive effort to reach the world outside, whatever the cost.

The startling thing to me was that I came away believing it might all be possible even in the context of the local church today. The step of faith we need to take does not seem to be that big!

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### Swanwick

#### A Revival of Confidence?

*Geoffrey Robson reports on the 1979 Swanwick Conference*

The conference of Brethren at Swanwick in the autumn of 1978 was widely (if rather fancifully) reported as reflecting a crisis of confidence. The Autumn 1979 conference *Where is your God?* remarkably affirmed Christian confidence—but in God alone.

The handout had suggested that the conference might grapple with the revival of Eastern faiths, both in their heartlands and by immigration into Britain,

and with the God-denying cultures of the West and of Marx. The opening and closing speakers, however, struck at roots much nearer to the Brethren situation. Both are educationalists. Peter Kimber's childhood in India and service in Antarctica may have contributed to a startlingly fresh approach. Alan Bamford is from Birmingham's Selly Oak colleges, but nothing could have been less drily academic than his address. All was pointedly practical.

*Genesis 3: 1-7* (said Kimber) precisely describes 1979 man's predicament. Man is now his own god. Death has emerged in the very act of self-worship;

his insatiable lust for self-glorification has been followed by the plummeting fall. Nietzsche's 'step forward into the abyss' as Superman, has become only a step forward into the abyss. The Genesis serpent has absorbed so much into himself as to become the great dragon. Marx's dictum that, as love won't change the world hatred will, has simply reproduced ancient Carthage in modern Cambodia.

By contrast, Christ went down to the humiliation of the cross, leaving the exaltation to God. The Christian must go the same way: he must not set himself in the centre of his vision, but be ready to go down with the idolaters. We dare not protest that we are not responsible for their rejection of God. Are we not participants in the same arrogance? Is ours a religiosity, which we call faith when it is in fact superstition? Is a church full of 'born-again' Christians sterile? Is our faith formal and innocuous?

Alan Bamford's conclusion to the conference was poignantly beautiful. He turned the question 'Where is your God?' back to his brethren 'Where is He? Show Him to us! Will you show Him in a life which is utterly dependent on Him?' (Kimber had said that all religions are false which leave man to acquire merit—which prevent his being utterly dependent on the salvation of God.) Will you show Him in a life which suffers all, but still endures as seeing Him who is invisible? Show him the life of Jesus in your mortal life! Those who look and can see only the fires might see another walking with us. Could you say 'Come with me to the Lord's table' in the confidence that they would say 'God is among you'? Dare we say 'Come and see the redemptive work of Christ?' Can we help those who say 'I have seen so much . . . but haven't yet seen'? The more time we spend looking at Him the more we will want to go in there.

Jim Fairbairn, drug plant research professor, pursued the theme that science is a fundamentalist search for facts. The greatest fact is that 'God is God is God'. Never would the facts clash with the Fact. The greatest thinkers—Socrates, Plato, Aristotle—had not made the discoveries of science, precisely because they had tied their own minds with their philosophical theories of matter. Not until the Reformers' conviction of a God who could be relied on to have created, and to sustain, was it seen that the rational would not be capricious. Out of fifty years' study of Scripture and of science, Fairbairn was certain of the rationality of the universe, under God alone, and of evil being circumscribed.

Four full-scale Bible expositions, shared between Alan Nute and Paul Marsh, complemented Fairbairn's statement of faith. Marsh, for fifteen years a missionary in Pakistan, and now responsible for the book publishing of Scripture Union, had to expound the Christian understanding of One God (in contrast to the unmitigated monotheism of Islam) and of the Father (in denial of the Muslim affirmation that God

can never beget). He pointed to the basis of Mahomet's confusion: an unbiblical Christianity which seemed to teach 'God the Father, God the Son, and God the Virgin Mary'. J. R. Taylor, the veteran Argentina missionary, pointed out that he had always to preach to his Catholic friends and fellow-believers in Jesus—that in God our Father is all fatherhood and all motherhood. As Nute was to stress God redeeming and reigning throughout the Old Testament, so Marsh stressed His fatherhood over Israel; but the Messianic triumphalism of *Psalm 2* was to be fulfilled in the quiet revolution of *Gal. 4*. Our life was to be based on a personal relation with a father—but not governed by emotional trivia.

Fairbairn, Marsh and Nute all looked at the phenomena which seem to deny creating, sustaining, redeeming, ruling, fatherly goodness; and at statements such as those of *Hosea 2: 8-9*, *Amos 3: 6 or 4: 6-8*, or *Habakkuk 1: 13*. Nute opted for the version behind the RSV of *Rom. 8: 28* 'in everything God works for good with those who love Him'. Questioners in the extensive open sessions were unsure whether there is randomness, to which all, believers and unbelievers alike, are exposed. We live as a privileged generation in the west, but at a time when there was never more suffering in a world whose moral ecology seems to 'lie in the wicked one'. Yet the magnificent homiletical eloquence of Nute left us with the conviction that we may rest on the redeeming sovereign God of all the Bible.

Swanwick 1979 demonstrated that there is still the original life and power, even though only three of the original attenders of 1953 were present. With the cooperation of H. E. Walter Ltd., the conveners intend to make the substance of the conference available to the general Christian public in the new year. And they have provided places for 300 attenders at Swanwick for a conference on leadership, 26-28 Sept. 1980. □

## Some News Items

### Books for Africa

This new scheme by the Scripture Union provides for selected much needed Christian books to be sent to the book-hungry Christians in Africa, at a nominal cost. Why not help? Details from Books for Africa, Scripture Union, P.O. Box 38, Bristol BS99 7NA.

### Students' Discount Scheme

25% off students' books! An imaginative new scheme by The Paternoster Press. Write to them at 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW.

### And congratulations . . .

Some of the more notorious publications of the SCM Press have not always been the first favourites of evangelicals! But what riches have been found in other books on their list! Many of us have real reason to be grateful—and tender our warm congratulations (and wistful hopes?) on their 50th anniversary.



# Looking at Books

## Childrens' Books for Christmas

In this section, books you might give to children; to the younger ones on the whole, but at what age does the comic strip cease to appeal . . . ?

**Activity Books.** Kingsway have a colourful series of *Craft Books* at 85p. *Paper . . . Card . . . Plastic . . . and Mixed Things*. Big clear print and illustrations (but those kids are a little too good to be true when the Bible stories are told them). **Lion** have reprinted their *Discovery Books* again at 75p., and they are as irresistible as ever.

**Bible Stories** come in allsorts. **Ladybird/Scripture Union BibleBooks** as colourful as ever at 75p.; **Lion** have their attractive *Little Lions* each telling its own Bible story in pictures and the simplest language, 25p., and in larger format their comic

strip *Men of Action* (Paul, Abraham) at 95p.; the **Bible Society** its own *Bible Comics* at 45p., and **Hodder & Stoughton** their *Bible Albums*, stories from the life of Jesus, with the full NIV text at the back, at £1.

And those favourite characters. . . **Paternoster** more variations on the ever-popular *Jungle Doctor* in *Jungle Doctor Comics* (18p.); **Lion** their four *Hafertee Hamsters*, *The Very Worried Sparrow*, *Papa Panov* and *The Day it Rained in Colours* all at 75p. (*No Two Zebras Are Alike* is £1.95, hardback); **Collins Hippy Dog** series (from the Falcon filmstrips) at 40p. each.

Next month . . . resource books for those who are parents or teachers. . .

### Kathleen White on books for young people:—

**Sunday Gang Special. Lion. 65p.**

A thoroughly contemporary paperback this, based on the Sunday Gang show screened at 9.15 on Sunday mornings which has enjoyed a series of four runs. This annual-type of presentation with a mixed bag of jokes, stories and cartoons will no doubt appeal to children. It is light-hearted but the message is still there although it's camouflaged in modern dress. Most upper Juniors would welcome this but it could do to be stapled together more firmly. My inspection copy fell apart in spite of very careful handling.

**Modern Stories for the School Assembly, ed. D. M. Prescott and V. B. Frampton. Blandford Press: £3.50.**

Apparently D. M. Prescott has been editor for sixteen previous books in this series but I think this most recent one is rather special. It has been put together following requests from many teachers for stories set in our contemporary world. Each episode has taken place in the 20th century and many in the last few years.

Some of the longer stories are more suitable for general reading than to be used in the context of a brief school assembly. All, however, contain a challenge and message of hope to young people. They are not all cut and dried with magically happy endings but show how by courage, faith and resourcefulness, difficulties can be either surmounted or used as a stepping-stone to ultimate achievements.

**Understanding Bible Topics. John Edison. S.U. 75p.**

This slim book contains 40 topics of general interest to Christians. John Edison gives a brief summary of the Bible teaching on each one, listing in the margin relevant Bible passages. There is also room at the end for making one's own notes. It's certainly not just valuable for non-Christians; it's crisp and concise and the information inside will help to clarify nebulous thinking on the part of Christians too. Just try testing yourself on a page and I'll guarantee you'll learn something from it.

**Moses and the Laws of God and The Kings of Israel. Molly Cox. Collins. £3.95.**

These two books are third and fourth in a set based on the B.B.C. television series *In the Beginning*. Mollie Cox has written a very fine text, not over-simplified for children but completely intelligible and has still managed to retain some of the poetry of the original. The paintings by Paul Birkbeck and Graham McCallum are superb and in the best modern tradition of Biblical illustrations. Children cannot fail to feel involved in the drama when they see the magnificence of the court of Solomon, the tension in the cave as David cuts off a piece of Saul's robe or the tragedy of the death of the first-born in Egypt.

I hope that these books will deservedly become classics both in the schoolroom, the church and at home for their extremely appealing visual and textual presentation of basic stories of early Bible days.

**Popular Bible Quiz Books 1 and 2. ed. J. B. Foreman. Pickering and Inglis 80p.**

There must still be a demand for these quiz books as the latest reprint is listed on the title page as 1978. The first contains 855 questions and the second 900, arranged in sections with a heading for each describing the theme for the questions on each page. And indeed I can see an obvious use for books of this kind in Sunday School and Youth work from time to time. I must confess that the presentation of the answers annoys me. In order to cater for the individual reader, they are concealed by a key on each page which makes them impossible to read at a glance. The topics are very varied and cover a wide scope but I feel there is room for a variety of different puzzles to be included to vary the straightforward quiz.

**Is Anyone There? Michael Proctor. S.C.M. Press £1.60.**

I liked Michael Proctor's new book at the first superficial glance, it's refreshingly different, eye-catching and informative without being pedantic in the least. I liked it even more after a closer scrutiny. It is so worthwhile because it doesn't just dole out facts and ready-made solutions to problems, it involves the reader and compels him to work out many of his own answers to the questions posed.

At the front we are told the theme is about living with others and with God. Some of the material is deliberately provocative. He doesn't just set out to publish the views of the establishment. His primary object appears to be to encourage young people to think honestly about their relationships with fellow humans and with God.

The pages are arranged in an interesting layout with sketches photographs, quotations and queries. I consider it would be well worth the expense for leaders to buy copies and study it with their youth groups. There's a mass of material which could be incorporated in a flexible and definitely different programme.

**See All the Things We Share. Jean Watson. Lion. 25p.**

This is a small book of short poems with a difference for juniors. Attractive pictures and meaningful verse depict children of various nationalities, emphasising the underlying sameness in their understanding and appreciation of the wonders of life, despite their dissimilar backgrounds and culture. In a quiet way this could do much to promote understanding between children.

## Some Recent Reprints

Pride of place among recent reprints must go to a striking edition of **The Screwtape Letters** by C. S. Lewis, illustrated by Papas, and brought out by Collins at £3.95. Hardback, and handsome, it will delight old familiars and win more friends for this witty work.

Other collections of essays previously printed elsewhere include Edith Schaeffer **A Way of Seeing** (Hodder £1.75)—papers which originally appeared in *Christianity Today*—and a selection of R. Arthur Matthews editorials from *East Asia Millions*, **Born for Battle** (OMF Books, 90p.).

### Other reprints are: New in paperback

Karl Barth and Eduard Thurneysen **Come Holy Spirit** (Mowbray, £1.75).

Elisabeth Elliot **Shadow of the Almighty** (STL £1.50).

Billy Graham **How to be Born Again** (Hodder £1.00).

J. I. Packer **God Has Spoken** (Hodder £1.00).

A. W. Tozer **The Divine Conquest** (STL 95p.).

Sheldon Vanauken **A Severe Mercy** (Hodder £1.25).

### Pickering and Inglis

W. Graham Scroggie **The Great Unveiling, an analytical study of Revelation** £5.50.

Kregel Publications, P.O. Box 2607, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49501, USA

Wm. Arnot **Studies in Acts** \$10.95.

Martin Luther **Commentary on Galatians** \$10.95.

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F. B. Meyer **Devotional Commentary on Philippians** \$3.50.

R. F. Weymouth **New Testament in Modern Speech** \$9.95.

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### Banner of Truth Trust

Wm. Cunningham (1805-61) **The Reformers and the Theology of the Reformation** £5.00.

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Lachlan Mackenzie (1754-1819) **The Happy Man** £2.75.

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E. J. Young (20th century) **Daniel** £3.50.

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## Replies to Professor Bruce

### The October Question

In *Where do we go from here?* (p. 83) Dr. Michael Griffiths makes a distinction between congregations with which, despite various differences, we may well have fellowship because Christ is there, and 'apostate bodies' from which we can only urge the people of God to come out, because 'Christ does not manifest Himself among them in their public character'. I have a problem with regard to the latter category: how can I, 'standing on the outside', be sure whether Christ is present or not inside?

Mr. H. L. Ellison replies:-

Since I do not possess the book from which Prof. Bruce quotes, I cannot, in the absence of the context, guarantee that my answer will in fact be fair to the writer.

In the first place I have from time to time had fellowship with 'the people of God' in bodies which many would undoubtedly consider to be apostate. They were my brothers and sisters in Christ. I did not urge them to come out—and without previous fellowship I could hardly have urged them—for I

**'I could trust their Lord and mine  
to bring them out, when He wanted  
them so to do'**

could trust their Lord and mine to bring them out, when He wanted them so to do.

Then, when we consider the state of the churches in Sardis and Philadelphia, these were surely apostate churches, but there is no call to any to come out. The same applies to the churches to whom Galatians was written. The operative principle is *1 Cor. 7: 24*. It would make my answer too long, if I were to list cases of those in apostate and 'dead' bodies, who remained there with the Lord and gradually brought life to those around them.

### Comment by the Editor

Regrettably, production difficulties in connection with the October issue meant that most readers did not receive their copies in time to send comments on Professor Bruce's letter before the deadline. In the circumstances, the editor may perhaps be allowed a brief comment.

Dr. Griffiths's reference was, of course, to A. N. Groves's well-known Open Letter of 1833 *On the Principles of Union and Communion in the Church of Christ*. I do not think that it is unreasonable to deduce from the remainder of Groves's letter that his reply would have been a simple one: before he was found 'standing on the outside' (his own words) he had first been inside to find out for himself! As he had written so movingly just before: 'If my Lord should say to me, in any congregation of the almost unnumbered sections of the Church, "What dost thou here?" I would reply, "Seeing Thou wert here to save and sanctify, I felt it safe to be with Thee".'

Nevertheless, it is interesting that Groves certainly indicates that in his view there were 'apostate bodies' (as distinct from congregations—for he refers to 'congregations of apostate bodies'). He does not indicate which, if any, he regarded under this category: perhaps for the very good reason that he retained an open mind and a deep sense of the breadth of the grace of God. We, with the experience of the past 150 years' opening of barriers and of closed minds, have even more reason to emulate him in that.

## Readers' Forum

*Readers' Forum* is open to contributions from readers. Please send suggestions from practical experience, related to church activities or Christian living; doctrinal or expository questions; useful experiences; what-you-will; to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX. Questions, to which other readers will be invited to submit replies, will also be published from time to time as they are received. It is hoped that readers will take full advantage of this feature.

Ron Smith, General Secretary of *The Fishers Fellowship* (96 Plaistow Lane, Bromley, Kent BR1 3AS) contributes this month's Readers' Forum, as a follow-up to the October contribution by Peter Lowman.

I was interested to see the 'Door to Door Questionnaire' in the October *Harvester*. We have been encouraging this method of visitation among many others for many years now. We do suggest however that if a questionnaire method is used that it is made a genuine questionnaire and the results are carefully collated and copies made to take back to those who show interest.

We use a rather shorter one, on a postcard size card containing the following questions.

1. Do you believe in God?
2. How do you know that there is/is not a God?
3. Who was Jesus Christ?
4. Why did He come?
5. What is a Christian?
6. Why do people need to become Christians?
7. Would you like to receive a free correspondence course which gives the Christian answer to these questions?

Just a few practical suggestions for those engaged or who hope to be in this kind of outreach.

We have found a pre-visitation letter very helpful. It is delivered a few days before the actual call and clearly states, who we are, where we are from, why we are calling and the day and approximate time we shall be calling. It is delivered with a suitable leaflet. We use *Day by Day* or *Man and Woman* both by S.G.M. We will gladly send a copy of this pre-visit letter upon request.

When the call is made the letter is held in the hand and in many cases the occupant is reminded of the visit and prepared for it.

It seems to me that the important things with regard to the visitation ministry are; adequate prayer, never visit longer than you pray, a realistic mental attitude, that among the many refusals and disinterest, there *will* be God given contacts; and the right objective, to discover those individuals to whom we can communicate the gospel as we come to know them through subsequent visits—and inviting them to our homes!

It has been very encouraging to see so many Churches—I would say an increasing number of Churches—wanting to engage in this excellent means of outreach evangelism.

## Correspondence

Letters should be sent to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX.

Publication of letters does not imply that views expressed are endorsed by the Editor or the Trustees.

### Things hard to understand

From Mr. C. R. Boswood

Dear Mr. Coad,

May I reply, as follows, to the question posed at the close of the October Editorial?

Should we not always bear in mind both the goodness and the severity of God (Rom. 11: 22)? His judicial ways involve cities (Mat. 11: 20, 24) and nations (Mat. 25: 32) as well as individuals. Centuries before the Exodus, Abram had been told that because 'the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full' (Gen. 15: 16) there would be a long interval before his seed returned to occupy the promised land. The moral state of the occupying nations when that iniquity reached its peak is graphically described in Lev. 18: 24-30. They may well have been 'secure in their own homeland' but they had so defiled it that the land itself would vomit out its inhabitants! Israel was, I take it, the instrument of God's wrath just as Cyrus and the Medes were His battleaxe in relation to Babylon (Jer. 51: 20). In the former case His people should have had some understanding of why they were so used.

These considerations may help us to a balanced view of the 'offending chapters' and also alert us afresh to the inevitable end to the present moral débâcle in this and other Western European countries.

16 Lancaster Avenue  
St. Anne's-on-Sea  
Lancs FY8 1DL

Yours sincerely,  
Charles R. Boswood

(While one respects Mr. Boswood's suggestion which is similar to that put forward (if my memory serves me correctly) by Sir Robert Anderson, does it really solve the problem? In effect, it amounts to saying that the nations deserved their fate for their sexual malpractices. But is this really the scale of justice that we have learned from the Bible: or is this really the character of our God? Does the teaching, and the example, of our Lord Jesus Christ indicate that sexual sins are thus to be ranked as the most heinous of all offences? Perhaps other correspondents can add more.—Ed.)

### Uniformed Youth Organisations

From Mr. J. B. Robertson

Dear Mr. Coad,

Having read the letters by Mr. Reveley, Mr. Argent and Mr. Symons about uniformed organisations, prompted by my letter in your March issue, I am tempted to comment on one or two points which were raised. It is most difficult to be brief, but I shall do my best.

One reason why the administrative headquarters of some organisations seem to Mr. Argent to be quite happy to accept non-Christian leadership may possibly be because they do not have much choice, partly due to the monastic attitude of so many Christians, as pointed out by Mr. Symons. Those Christians who do not believe in working in any organisation or establishment which does not have born-again Christians as its leaders will either have to seek only Christian employers, become self-employed or else abstain from employment altogether, with all that this entails. The argument that pay-

ment for services alters the situation can carry no weight with the convinced Christian.

I can read between the lines that Mr. Reveley *does* agree with me that a major uniformed organisation can attract a far greater number of children of primary school age (6 to 11 years) than his own organisation, the Covenanters. He may be right in saying that his organisation is more attractive to teenagers than a uniformed one, but surely primary children are just as important as teenagers or adolescents—perhaps more so.

I heartily agree with Mr. Argent that the Covenanters and the Campaigners (not forgetting the Every Boys' and Girls' Rallies) are doing a wonderful work in presenting Christ to boys and girls. (This demolishes all Brethren objections against them). However, we cannot close our eyes to their two great drawbacks. They reach only a small minority of the children of this very needy land of Britain, and they are little-known (sometimes even in Christian circles). They do not carry the vast bulk of weekly recreational work among primary children in our country today.

Both Mr. Reveley and Mr. Argent strongly stress the need for Christians to choose, with prayer and care, between working among children in a Christian environment within their own churches and working among children in a less Christian (or even non-Christian) environment outside them. This is sound advice, but while the younger Christian should be with other Christians as much as possible, the more mature Christian need not necessarily be so. There is, however, one thing which both correspondents have failed to grasp. Not all Christians have the choice which they describe. We are not all so fortunate as to belong to churches which have enough personnel, freedom from legalistic prohibitionism and the absence of annihilating competition from better-known, long-established organisations in the neighbourhood, to be in a position to set up a thriving weekly work among children. What do they think a Christian should do in such a situation (besides praying about it)? Should he/she abandon his/her God-given, strongly-felt call, with the all-too-available assistance of fellow church members, to engage in Christian service commonly regarded as far more important? Or should he/she travel 20 miles or more to the nearest group of the Covenanters, Campaigners or EBGR (assuming that his/her church leaders allow this!)—perhaps only to find sufficient staff in the group already—while Cubs, Brownies, etc. in his/her own area are desperately short of leaders?

I do not believe that our Christian child-leadership resources are as limited as Mr. Reveley thinks them to be. I am quite sure that all over the country there are untapped reservoirs of personnel, created by geographical isolation or Christian restriction and opposition. We evangelicals can soon find the necessary personal support when it suits us and when we put our minds to it. We can fill whole weeks with Bible lectures and Gospel addresses in our own churches and hire transport to attend them in others. Clearly, where there's a will there's a way. Unfortunately, in comparison with other forms of Christian outreach, there appears to be little will among evangelicals for practical work among children, as has become very evident to some of my friends and myself as the result of an advertisement placed in a well-known Christian magazine a couple of years ago.

I am at least one person who is living proof against the nub of Mr. Reveley's argument. I had to wait 15 long years before I could do the Christian work in which I was intensely interested, partly due to the indoctrinated prejudices of selective evangelism. Meanwhile, Christians specialising in preaching, teaching and tract distribution were being given every encouragement and support and opportunity to exercise their talents. I know of a few Christians who have had the same frustrated interests and smothered abilities as myself. How many more of us are there, I wonder?

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Hallglen  
Falkirk  
Central Scotland  
FK1 2PP

Yours sincerely,  
James B. Robertson

# Preaching the Parables

From Mr. F. C. Lucas

Dear Mr. Coad,

Referring to Professor Bruce's September question.

As an Army Scripture Reader during the years of National Service I would sometimes read one of our Lord's parables to the men in the barrack room whilst they were busy preparing for the next day's parades. On one such occasion whilst reading the parable of the Prodigal Son a man became visibly distressed saying 'that's me! that's me!' When I left the room he followed me and asked if I could spare him a few minutes. He then said he was a Regular and had left home three years previously being fed up with his parents' religion and had not been home or written to them. The parable had got under his skin and he asked what he should do. Briefly, he was advised to first get right with his Heavenly Father then contact his parents and get right with them. This he did and it was a great joy to receive a letter from his parents telling of their reunion with their wayward son.

I find in my ministry today amongst older people, as in earlier days with the youth, that there is always a readiness to listen to the reading of parables when it is interspersed with contemporary illustrations: e.g. the boy leaving his country home to hit the high lights in the city and getting caught up with drug pushers and alcoholics etc. always finds a response.

I would add that the late Alfred MacDonald Redwood first aroused my interest in preaching and teaching from parables—by correcting my interpretation of the teaching of The Pearl of Great Price! If only we had more teachers of his calibre today.

'Beechmount'  
57 Beechmount Ave.  
Hanwell London W7 3AF

Yours sincerely,  
Fred C. Lucas

# Different versions

From Mr. L. L. Fox

Dear Mr. Coad,

The October *Harvester* includes letters about the multiplicity of English versions of the Bible, the Brethren and books, and the 'use of Latin'. It seems to me that these letters touch one another at some points, and I should be grateful if you would allow me to comment. May I first make clear that in general I am not against sonorous Latin-derived words—quite the reverse.

Dr. Newell feels that 'we can't afford . . . to sever ourselves from our heritage—in this instance, the great tradition of the AV'. According to Prof. Bruce, 'change is necessary to life on earth' and 'only when a language becomes dead does it cease to change'. The AV is written in the language commonly used 350 years ago. I do not know whether the language(s) in which the Lord Jesus spoke when on earth had changed much during the previous 350 years. But if there were any changes, it would seem incredible that our Lord, when in a particular town, spoke to its inhabitants in the language of their ancestors 350 years before! Surely we want the most accurate translation we can secure, in today's language. Even so we might reflect that in the August *Harvester*, Dr. R. P. Gordon wrote 'Irrespective of the vicissitudes of transmission

and translation, the Spirit who caused the autograph manuscripts to be written has seen fit to use the imperfect texts and copies which have been available to the Church throughout its history. There never has been a generation which has had access to the whole of Scripture, or even to a substantial part of it, "as originally given". That this is so would seem to place a query against a too rigid adherence only to the AV or any other version.

Older people probably tend to prefer the AV because they have become familiar with it; but we ought to think, not of ourselves but of the coming generation. As to addressing the Lord when we gather, I would much rather hear a young convert from the pop scene say, if from the heart, 'Oh Lord, you're great; thanks a million for dying for me', than hear a polished recital of hackneyed phrases, however sonorous, delivered in the special 'Sunday-morning' voice we have long become accustomed to hearing. Too often the pattern of words that will be used is known in advance! Must we not guard against setting store by gathering to a performance of religious rites?

There were once some young people who addressed God as 'You'. An older brother's reaction was 'Oh yes, they will learn'—i.e. to address God as 'Thou'. What such a brother says in effect is 'They will learn to adopt our liturgical turn of phrase'. The people of God are a family and should be allowed to talk to their Father in the language their hearts dictate. The tendency to ritualism is one of our besetting sins.

With regard to the purchase of books, I submit that young and even middle-aged couples with families often find themselves without the means to purchase many books, or the time to read them. For hundreds of years most Christians could not read, and congregations stood to hear the word of God read to them. Probably most Christians are not of a studious bent and do not read, much less purchase, many books about the Bible. It is mainly those whom the Lord has made teachers of the word, and some elders, who will dig and delve, perchance consulting and acquiring several books; and so teach and feed the flock of God, whetting the appetite of its members for the scriptures. Incidentally, a lending library in the assembly might encourage more to read books, especially ones that have given pleasure to previous readers.

Scarcely any two Christians—least of all ones 'well taught in the word'—will be found to agree on all points of doctrine. As a perceptive younger man with a Brethren background remarked to me 'The Brethren have had a fellowship of doctrine; and when they disagreed they separated from one another. They should have had a fellowship of love.'

In sum, let us speak and present the scriptures in language that all, even the young and less able, can understand; let us shun ritualism in all its forms; let those God has gifted study and so feed the flock of God; and let our gatherings be characterized by spiritual life and love rather than by time-hallowed phrasing.

9 Warden Close  
Maidstone  
Kent ME16 0JL

Yours sincerely,  
L. L. Fox

# More on Grace and Faith

From Mr. Colin Porteous

Dear Mr. Coad,

Mr. Nickels' contribution to Reader's Forum (*Harvester*, Sept. 79) creates the unfortunate impression that belief in personal election inevitably leads to spiritual pride: 'To believe this cannot fail to make us feel superior. . .'. Surely this is gross exaggeration. It is unfortunately true that some Calvinists (for want of a better term) suffer from a misplaced superiority complex; but then, no school of thought has a monopoly of the works of the flesh, and it is to be hoped that most people of this persuasion can say with our father Jacob 'I am not worthy of the least of all Thy mercies' (*Gen. 32: 10*). Such an attitude is the logical result of the realisation that salvation is *all* of God.

If, as one suspects, Mr. Nickels is referring to John Calvin as 'a well known theologian of a few centuries ago', it may be



of interest to point out while Calvin elsewhere beautifully describes faith as 'the Holy Spirit's masterpiece', he does not base this conviction on Eph. 2: 8, about which he says, 'Moreover, this passage is usually badly explained when this word *gift* is restricted to faith alone. For it should be understood that St. Paul repeats the previous sentence in other words. He does not therefore mean that faith is a gift of God, but that salvation is given to us by God, or that we obtain it by a gift of God' (*Commentary in loc*). Both *The New Bible Commentary* and *A New Testament Commentary* rightly state that *touto*, 'that', being neuter, cannot refer simply and exclusively to the word 'faith', which is feminine. That which is 'not of ourselves' must therefore refer to the whole process of salvation by grace through faith. However, it must be emphasised that this process does include faith! It will simply not do to drop out the words 'through faith'. No Christian would be fool enough to suppose that *grace* was 'of ourselves'; on the other hand, the very case in point shows that many are tempted to think that *faith* is of our own doing! Perhaps they did not go through the harassing experience of trying in vain to believe in the Gospel, as others have done, before receiving God's great package gift, salvation by grace through faith!

Is there anything ludicrous in comparing God to a baker who puts loaves in the window and then gives us the money to buy them? Is not this the very spirit of Is. 55: 1? '... he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price!' This is the very essence of the Gospel.

Surely your contributor's treatment of Mt. 8: 10 and 15: 28 is begging the question, not to say self-contradictory. If the faith of the Roman centurion and of the Syro-Phoenician woman was so 'ordinary' and 'everyday', why was the Lord astonished at it? And what right have we to decree that these two Gentiles were 'unregenerated'? They are illustrations of the Lord's prediction that 'many shall come from the East and from the West, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of God'; which Kingdom only the regenerate can enter (Jn. 3: 5). They could only come to Christ because the Father drew them (Jn. 6: 44). The Bible knows nothing of natural faith. Wisdom and loyalty should lead us to use biblical terms in biblical ways. Scriptural faith is founded on revelation, and revelation is the peculiar work of the Spirit; 'He shall take of what is mine, and declare it to you' (Jn. 16: 14). These two Gentiles could only come to Christ because they had heard of Him, and 'faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ' (Rom. 10: 17). Now, if the apostles required the Spirit of faith in order to preach the Gospel (II Cor. 4: 13, I Pet. 1: 12), are we to suppose that sinners can believe without the working of the same Spirit? What God has joined, the Spirit and the Word, let no man put asunder!

We all agree that 'we must stretch out the empty hand of

faith'; but some of us are happy to identify ourselves with the man with the withered hand who was *unable* to stretch it out until the Lord worked in him both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

'All the fitness He requireth is to feel your need of Him; This He giveth, 'tis the Spirit's rising beam'. Amen, Hallelujah!  
20 Rue Florimond Laurant  
Le Havre 76620  
France

Yours sincerely,  
Colin Porteous

#### Were they church meetings?

From Mr. Tom Carson

Dear Mr. Coad,

I would like to comment on Mr. Ellison's letter concerning I Cor. 11 and 14 in the July issue. I am personally inclined to believe that the view which he rejects is the correct one. It has been accepted by many of the ablest expositors, although they may have expressed it somewhat differently.

For example, C. J. Ellicott in his commentary on the epistle (not the one he edited where a similar view is expressed by T. T. Shore, but his own) wrote as follows on ch. 11: 5: 'Perhaps at the first the usage, which probably would not have been common, and confined to devotional meetings of a limited and informal nature, was left unnoticed, until brought into prominence by the utter *ataxia* (disorder) of an uncovered head. The Apostle is not now concerned with the circumstance of their praying or prophesying, but with the manner and guise in which they did it'; and on ch. 14: 34: 'in the larger and public assemblies of the church, which alone are under consideration in this chapter'. The great German exegete, H. A. W. Meyer, also wrote on ch. 11: 5 that 'what the Apostle therefore has in his eye here... must be *smaller* meetings for devotion in the congregation, more limited circles assembled for worship'. More recently Herman Ridderbos, after mentioning other views, wrote: 'One is to think of this praying and prophesying of the women as restricted to pneumatic utterances outside the official gathering. The proscription apparently applies to women speaking in public' (Paul p. 462).

With regard to the 'new section', Meyer wrote as follows: 'In chap. 14 it is the *public assembly of the congregation the whole ekklesia*, that is spoken of (vv. 4, 5, 12, 16, 19, 23, 26ff, 33). There is no sign of such being the case in the passage before us.'

Notice also the reference to their coming together in vv. 17, 18 and 20 of chap. 11, with the additional 'in church' in v. 18, and it will appear that J. N. Darby had good reason for saying that 'in I Cor. 11 it is only with verse 17 that the directions for the assembly begin' (Letters 1: 197).

To many the reference to their coming together in vv. 17, 18 and 20, with the additional 'in church' in v. 18, will confirm the words of J. N. Darby that 'in I Cor. 11 it is only with verse 17 that the directions for the assembly begin' (Letters 1: 197).

In the next paragraph Mr. Ellison questions whether there was any distinction in New Testament times between formal and informal meetings. But it is plain that the meeting described in ch. 14, where the whole church was gathered (v. 23) was a large one (cf. Acts 18: 8, 10, 11), and a formal one, for it was controlled by strict rules (see vv. 27-32). And I should think that it is practically certain that at other times groups of believers met for fellowship in less formal circumstances.

In the last paragraph Mr. Ellison says that this view does not explain how what is done legitimately on an informal occasion becomes shameful on a more formal one. But I see no problem there. From ch. 14: 35 it appears that Paul considered that what was legitimate in the privacy of the home did become shameful in the publicity of the church.

Certainly true prophecy can never be shameful, but a prophet might prophesy in a shameful manner. If he were to go about 'barefoot and naked' like Micah (ch. 1: 8), it would be counted shameful in many places.

3 Stanley Rd. Epping  
N.S.W.  
Australia

Yours sincerely,  
T. Carson

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# The News Page

Press Day, January 1980, Monday, Dec. 3rd, for Displayed Advertisements, Prayer List, Forthcoming Events and news items (Please send direct to Publisher at 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW).

## Out and About

### Counties Evangelistic Work

The 1979 Annual Meeting was held during October and thirty evangelists reported on their work. A number of reports emphasised the vital need for Christians of all denominations to unite in prayer and support for missioning. Barrie Leete (Bucks) spoke of complete failure during a Milton Keynes mission. The mission suffered one setback after another, including almost total neglect from local Christians. This was in complete contrast to a previous mission which saw fifty children converted and now attending a regular Bible Club—the result of a year's concentrated prayer from Anglican, Baptist and Methodist Churches. "Isolation spells failure," said Barrie. John Hall (National), Victor Jack (Suffolk) and Glyn Morgan (Gwent and Glam.) all witnessed to the power of God revealed in crusades where Christians broke down barriers of age, denomination and attitude to pray and fellowship together. John Hall spoke of a church whose notice board read "... a part of God's family in this town", and of the oneness of God's people in a crusade which resulted in many conversions, rededications and restorations.

Victor Jack appealed to churches to return to a spirit of repentance, to be set free from the deadness, coldness, worldliness, arrogance and pride seeping in. "We need to be set free from the pettiness and pride which has characterised our thinking," he said. "We worship the same God, preach the same Lord Jesus, we are indwelt by the same Holy Spirit. We have no excuse for treating our brothers and sisters in Christ as foreigners instead of fellow believers." Colin Holmes (Hampshire) and Clayton Dougan (E. Sussex) stressed the need for regular teaching, concentrating in a small area for pastoral care and evangelism. Clayton spoke of the difficult task ahead as he moves into a new work with a church in Eastbourne. It would be a work of co-operation with the elders to develop a 'whole church' evangelistic ministry. "If Jesus is Lord in our assemblies we dare not use gifts God has NOT given us he said, "and if Jesus is Lord, we dare NOT neglect the gifts God HAS given us."

Roger Chilvers (Glos.), spending much of his time with a church near his home in Hucclecote, reported on evangelism through 'home evenings'. Twelve homes (often non-Christian) were chosen as a base to contact whole streets of families with invitations to attend coffee mornings, Tear Craft mornings, book parties, film showings—building up to a 'special effort' in the church each month. Many more non-Christian visitors now attended the church and much time is spent in counselling. "The crux of the matter is NOT the language used, the Bible version chosen, the times, or the activities—but what the world sees of God at work in HIS people," he said. In the final section entitled 'Reaching a Young World', John Riddell (W. Sussex) reported that through his involvement with youth, he had come to realise that 'to reach a young world we need to reach a young church'. 'Young' elders were needed to understand and sympathise with the needs

of youth. "There is a desperate need for church families to open their homes, to love and cherish their young people into a total life in the church," he said.

### Evangelism

A. G. Blackburn had an encouraging crusade at Coventry with good attendances at meetings. P. J. Widdison and W. S. Galyer report blessing at London Colney and Weston-Super-Mare respectively. Stephen Gillham looked back on Summer 1979 as outstanding because of the number of people who helped with the work. "The help, involvement, fellowship and joy of labouring together has often been a real tonic for us. It was a definite answer to prayer." David Iliffe found his preaching, lecturing tour of Egypt was a great experience. "In Alexandria 120 nationals from the Coptic Church came together for six days of intensive training in children's work and one—a graduate engineer—was called to be the first ever full-time worker amongst the ten million children in Egypt."

### Drug Addiction

FREE!—The National Institute for Healing of Addictions report that they have had to postpone their Opening Day. But all permits are being granted and all contracts signed so that the work should be finished by December 21, and patients admitted on January 2, 1980. The official Opening Day will take place later, possibly in the spring.

### Leprosy

People often imagine that leprosy is 'on its way out'. But the World Health Organisation's recent publication, *A Guide to Leprosy Control* reveals a disturbing situation. The sheer scale of the problem is hard to envisage. WHO's admittedly conservative estimate is that there are 10,595,000 leprosy sufferers in the world. 'Conservative' is the operative word. The report recognizes that official data do not reflect the real situation; that some countries deal with patients who stop coming for treatment by deleting them from their statistics; and, most significant of all that, even where statistics are based on satisfactory leprosy control programmes and procedures, evidence suggests that a further 75% of undiscovered new cases exist. Where there are less efficient control schemes, the number of known patients should be increased by 300% or more to get the true figure. There were, in 1975, some 2,583,325 cases under treatment, according to the records. But if 'treatment' is defined as receiving at least 75% of the recommended dosage of anti-leprosy drugs, that number must be halved. So that of the well over ten million sufferers, only about 1½ million are actually getting adequate treatment.

Moreover, because of population increase and other factors, in the many areas where control programmes are inadequate, the evidence suggests that leprosy is actually on the increase—in spite of the existence and availability of effective anti-leprosy drugs. And, says the report, leprosy creates more problems in community relationships and more personal distress and unhappiness than any other disease. The whole situation is aggravated by the emergence of drug-resistant leprosy bacilli, usually the result of low or irregular dosages of dapsone. The report suggests that there is a real possibility of leprosy control becoming ineffective. Furthermore, it is now clear

that viable bacilli may persist for long periods in patients who have had regular treatment. The picture is not all gloomy; there is progress in research towards finding a vaccine, or at least being able to test a person's susceptibility to infection. But overall the situation is seen as serious and in some areas menacing.

The report recognizes the limited resources which many Third World governments have available for anti-leprosy programmes; and it pays tribute to voluntary organizations—of which The Leprosy Mission is one. They have a degree of flexibility and initiative which, coupled with their special concern for patients as people, enables them to make a distinctive contribution to meeting the continuing needs of the unfortunate and uncared-for victims of leprosy. They look like being needed for many years yet.

#### London Bible College

The new academic year started with two hundred and ten students, over 25% of whom were from overseas. The Ninth Laing Lecture was given on November 13 by Mr. Alan Millard: the subject was 'Solomon in all his glory—a study of Israel's richest king in his ancient context.'

#### Radio Work

Trans World Radio announces that it is following a policy of introducing more British broadcasters to late night listeners. Hosts on Saturday night from 11.00 p.m. are evangelist Don Summers and Justyn Rees of Hildenborough Hall. Frank Cooke speaks regularly at 11.15 p.m. on Fridays.

A note from Gospel Broadcasting in Portugal serves as a reminder that this form of outreach is costly—from January 1, 1980, the rate for the broadcasts is to be increased by approximately three times. "This is a staggering increase," they comment, asking for prayer that God will guide and overrule in 'this crisis'.

**Release Nationwide** is continuing its ministry to churches interested in using print to keep in touch with people in the neighbourhood. A new section of 'Say Something Simple', their manual of communication in the local church which comes out each quarter as part of 'Release Nationwide' is entitled 'A Manifesto for Evangelism'. It discusses strategy and organisation for local church communication in a highly realistic and graphic manner. Churches interested in proving their outreach, using print, should certainly get in touch with Release Publications, 142 Dantzic Street, Manchester, M4 4DN.

#### Relief Work

Tear Fund's Director, George Hoffman, was badly shaken by what he saw in Kampuchea. "Like most people, I had read something of the situation before I went. But whatever I thought it would be like, it was far worse. I have had nightmares as the scenes in those camps have returned to me, and I feel a righteous anger that people are dying unnecessarily because of international wrangling."

Tear Fund's immediate plans include:

Buying a £100,000 building for relief, resettlement and evangelistic work among the Vietnamese refugees

in Hong Kong. The centre will be staffed by the Christian and Missionary Alliance.

Allocating a £10,000 discretionary fund for work among the Hong Kong refugees and a similar sum for work in Thailand. Both are being overseen by experienced Christian workers on the spot. Giving nearly £8,000 under the Childcare programme to provide school kits, English lessons, health care and education, as well as clothing, sleeping mats and blankets to the Vietnamese children in Hong Kong. Sending Tear Fund's newly-appointed medical and health care consultant, Dr. John Townsend, and his doctor wife, Anne, out to Thailand early in November to co-ordinate all the agency's work in Indo-China. Recruiting specialist medical staff to work with groups and at sites indicated by the Townsends. Active also is World Vision International which has been given permission by the People's Republic of Kampuchea to establish a relief and rehabilitation programme in the capital city of Phnom Penh. World Vision is committed to provide at least one million dollars worth of supplies to the Kampuchians.

**Religious Book Foundation:** Mr. Norman St. John Stevas, the leader of the House of Commons and Mr. Len Murray, General Secretary of the T.U.C., both well known for their Christian attitude, will be the speakers at a lunch on February 18 next year to launch Christian Book Fortnight. The lunch will be in London but booksellers throughout the country are enthusiastically supporting the 'fortnight' which runs from February 24 to March 9 and replaces the 'week' previously held in the autumn to promote Christian books.

Mr. Christopher Chew, Director of the Religious Book Foundation which is organising the 'fortnight', is delighted with the response to this change of duration and date. As well as the leading Christian bookshops such general booksellers as W. H. Smith and Sons, Menzies, Hammicks, Preedy's and Midland Educational have agreed to participate and promote a wide range of Christian books. "This is exactly what we hoped would happen" said Mr. Chew, "as we are certain there are many good Christian books people would enjoy if they were readily obtainable. Christian bookshops are doing a splendid job but as specialist booksellers they reach only a comparatively small number of people. Next year everybody should be able to see contemporary Christian literature for themselves." In Scotland, the 'fortnight' will be launched on February 19 at a meeting in Edinburgh when the speakers will include the Rt. Rev. Professor Robin Barbour, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and the Bishop of Edinburgh, the most Rev. A. I. M. Haggart.

#### Homecalls

**Donald R. Meadows**, on September 24, at Bournemouth, aged 77. Brought up in a Christian home and converted at the age of 11, in 1926 he married Ivy Saxton who taught with him in Sunday School. Challenged by a message of the late H. P. Barker based on Romans 12, he was active in open air work and preaching around Southend, while at the same time working in his father's business. Following some



years in London, he moved to Bournemouth in 1941 and in the following years was commended to full time service by all the Bournemouth Assemblies. He was associated with the foundation of the Hants and Dorset Christian Youth Camps, was founder of the Totton C.Y. Convention and involved in many other activities. Although travelling far and wide as an evangelist, he was, for nearly three quarters of the fifty years Cranleigh Chapel has been in existence, its leading member. For most of the time he was an Elder and at times bore the whole burden unaided. He is remembered for his decisiveness, compassion, sympathy, and hatred of hypocrisy and cant. Many also remember him as the one whom God used in their conversion and building up in the faith.

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# People and Places

## Stewardship

**Retired Missionary Aid Fund:**  
12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields,  
NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies for the  
month of October amounted to  
£2,519.60. Anonymous gifts; Swindon:  
£5.00, London: £5.00.

## Prayer List

Stamped letters addressed c/o  
The Paternoster Press, Paternoster  
House, 3 Mount Radford  
Crescent, Exeter, EX2 4JW will  
be forwarded to any of those  
whose names appear below.

Workers are requested to include  
their names on their cards when  
returning them each month.  
We are still receiving anonymous  
contributions from time to time.

**Blackburn, A. G.:**  
Brixham 2; Woodbury 7; Plympton  
9; Newton Abbot 12; Exmouth 23.  
**Campbell, B.:**  
Falmouth 1, 8, 10, 17, 20, 28; Carbis  
Bay 9; Carn Brae 18; Carnhell Green  
30.

**Clifford, D. L.:**  
During the month of December at  
the following places: Pittsburg St.  
Clair; Harrisburg Pa.; Fanwood, N.J.;  
Belmar, N.J.; Middlesex N.J.

**Gillham, S.:**  
Three Cross 1, 8; West Moors 2, 6,  
7, 9, 14, 22; Wallisdown 5, 16;  
Christmas Schools Visits 10-19;  
Merriott 15; Ringwood 16; Ferndown  
17; Boscombe 23; Dorchester 30.

**Grimsey, A. W.:**  
Melton Constable 2; Kings Lynn 7;  
Yaxham 16; Briston 30.

**Lowther, G. K.:**  
Grimsby 1-7; Nuneaton 8-10; South  
Humberside and Lincolnshire 12-31.

**Mills, B.:**  
Dorking 2; Reading 6, 13, 20; Worcester  
9; Evangelists Conference 10-12;  
London 13; Ascot 16.

**Short, S. S.:**  
Coventry 2; Gloucester 3, 10, 16, 17;  
Ross-on-Wye 4, 11; Northway 5, 6,  
12; Malvern 7; Bedford 9; Newent 18;  
Hereford 19; Aberdeen 23, 30.

**Stringer, D.:**  
Weymouth 1-4; Cambridge 5; Rise  
Park 6; Swindon 7-9; Loughton 10;  
Edgware 11; Saffron Walden 12;  
Romford 13; Kenton 14; Enfield 15;  
Ruislip 16-17; West London 18;  
Cambridge 19; Essex area 20;  
N. London area 21-24; Rise Park 27;  
Harrow 28; Cambridge 29-30;  
Chelmsford 31.

**Tatford, F. A.:**  
Portsmouth 1, 4; Fareham 3; Nuneaton

7; Tring 13-15; Portstewart 24-28;  
Belfast 29, 30.

**Thurston, A.:**  
Paignton 2; Strete 3, 7, 10, 14, 17, 21,  
28, 31; Chudleigh 4; Kingsbridge  
4, 11, 18, 30; Chillington 5-6, 12-13,  
19, 20, 27; Dartmouth 9; Teignmouth  
10, 13; Okehampton 12; Ashford,  
Umbrellagh 23.

**Tryon, G. C.:**  
Kingston 2, 18; Reigate 2; Carshalton  
3; Plumstead 5, 12; Lee Green 6;  
Cambridge 9; Merton 16; Kenton 16,  
23; Balham 30.

**Widdison, P. J.:**  
Boreham Wood, Walthamstow 2;  
Wroughton 5, 12; Witney 6, 13;  
Sladebrook 9; Bracknell 20; Sand-  
cross 23; Swindon 30.

## Forthcoming Events

The Publishers regret that, owing  
to demands on space, it is not  
possible to insert an announce-  
ment in more than one issue.  
Correspondents should indicate  
clearly in which issue they wish  
their announcements to appear.

**Brierfield:**  
Christian Rallies. Hebron Hall,  
Walter Street. Dec. 8 at 7.00 p.m.  
Speaker: K. Melling.

**Colyton:**  
The Gospel Hall, The Butts. Dec. 29  
at 7.00 p.m. Subject: The Church and  
the Churches. Speaker: D. West.

**Maidenhead:**  
Monthly Cfce. Parkside Hall, St.  
Luke's Road. Jan. 5 at 6.30-7.30 p.m.  
(Address), 8.15-9.00 p.m. (Discussion).  
Refreshments served in between  
sessions. Subject: "In our home and  
occupation". Speaker: A. E. Phillips.

**Nottingham:**  
Clumber Hall, High Cross Street.  
Jan. 5 at 7.30 p.m. Subject: "The  
Fruit of the Spirit". Speaker: G. K.  
Lowther.

**Nottingham:**  
Gospel Hall, Victoria Road, Nether-  
field. Dec. 8 at 7.15 p.m. Subject:  
"I am the Light of the World".  
Speaker: G. Neilly.

**Nuneaton:**  
Manor Court Rooms. Dec. 8 and 10  
at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: G. K. Lowther.

**Prestwick:**  
Bute Hall Ann Cfce. Town Hall, Prest-  
wick. Jan. 2 at 1.00 p.m. Speakers:  
W. Craig, J. Lightbody, P. Maiden.

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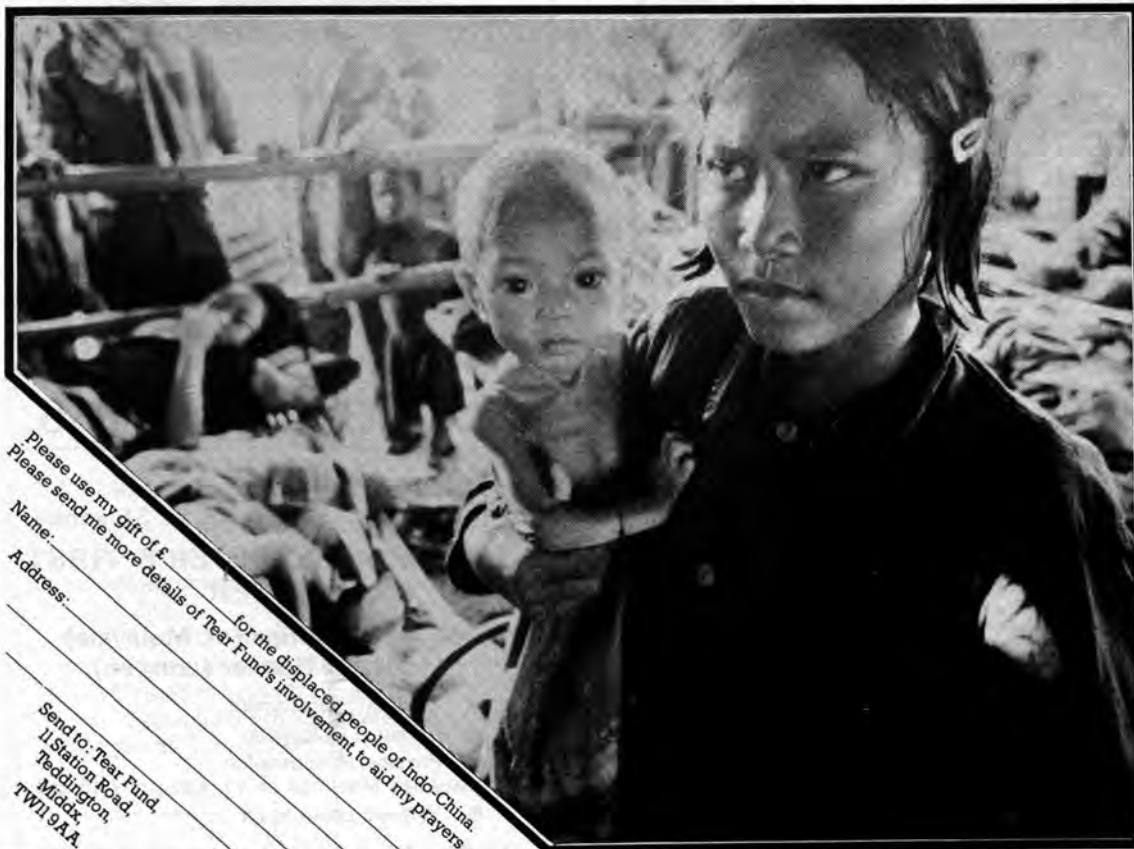
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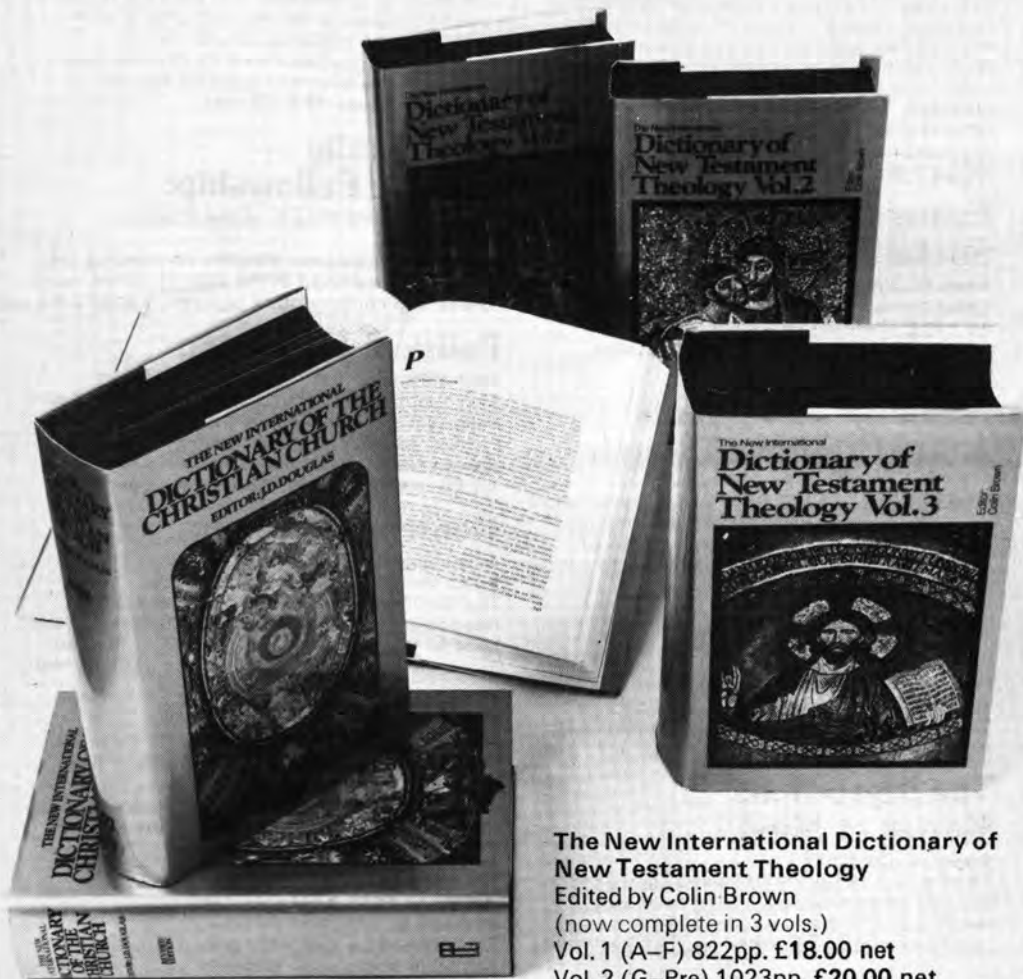
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